



# Three things that will make an impact on the Media Planning Industry, on the road to 2010

Media planning is no longer the fag end of the communications process.

It is now at the very beginning of the communications cycle. This is because audience and media fragmentation have ensured that creative messages need to be constructed keeping the media vehicle in mind (instead of the earlier 'one size fits all' approach).

The new media mantra is about creating engaging and holistic solutions, which are customized to address specific marketing tasks and are targeted at specific behavioural clusters of audiences.

Front end instead of back end, holistic rather than only above-the-line media, and engaging instead of intruding consumers – a lot is changing in the media industry. And to achieve success in this new paradigm, three things that are critical are:

1. People with passion – Industry must pull in fresh talent and importantly train them to go beyond the 'excel sheet' planning (based on some numbers generated by standard data software). These people must be inducted to

think beyond 'numbers'. This is particularly tough; given available talent pool and fragmentation of the industry, which leads of extreme competition to attract the existing mediocre talent.

2. 'Unconventional' thinking - Ability to offer out-of-box solutions will determine future success. This will need clients to involve media agency partners more as business partners and involve them at the very inception of strategy. On a parall, agencies will need to get more curious about their client business challenges and radiate eagerness to partner at every stage, rather than 'get briefed' at the stage of implementation.

3. Measuring 'Return On Investment' – As we begin to experiment with newer touch points (including digital, on ground events, point-of-sale activation, etc.) it will become critical to measure what is working (and what is not!) through advanced econometrics.

