



MERCER ISLAND GROUP

Media Management 2019:

*Creating centralized,
empowered and customer-
centric client-side media
operations*

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Media Management 2019

Modern marketers are creating centralized, empowered, and customer-centric client-side media operations to help drive better business results.

Introduction

The world of paid media has changed dramatically in just the past few years, and advertisers need to change, too, in order to succeed in this new landscape.

When the typical CEO began her career thirty-plus years ago, paid media management was pretty simple: it was all about managing traditional media investments in a handful of major mediums like TV, print, radio, and OOH. Measuring success was difficult; only direct response marketers had a very good measure of ROI, and their approaches were largely based on mailing lists and 800-number responses. Most advertisers had no real relationship with their audiences, and few really even knew who their customers or prospects were. The terms 1st party, 2nd party, and 3rd party data had not been coined. In this simple world, most responsibility for media management was outsourced to an agency.

Today, we are in the midst of a digital revolution that has changed how companies need to manage media. By centralizing media operations and empowering staff to drive change, companies can not only become truly customer centric in their outreach to audiences, they can also achieve desired business results. Advanced media management is now a strategic imperative for a modern corporation, one that requires new talent, technologies, and processes, all aligned under a cohesive and meticulously planned approach.

Six Paid Media Management Trends

In this whitepaper we look at six trends that are shaping how companies address the rapidly changing media landscape. In following some or all of these trends, forward-looking companies have positioned themselves to achieve enhanced effectiveness and increased efficiency in the media space.

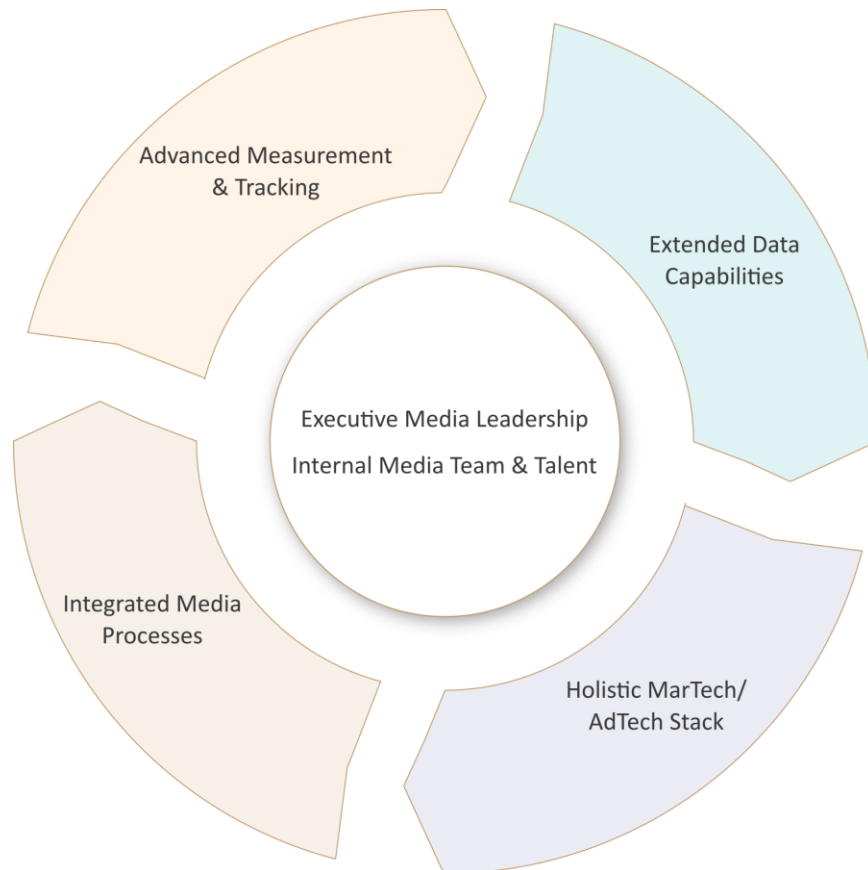
The trends highlight that companies are:

1. Extending their data capabilities to enable a more holistic view of the customer
2. Driving paid-media activities with a holistically planned and managed tech stack
3. Fully integrating and coordinating media processes for both efficiency and effectiveness
4. Utilizing measurement and tracking to enable a full view of how investments impact the customer journey
5. Evolving their approach to media structure and talent to take more control of their media effectiveness
6. Establishing media-leadership roles that have the authority to own and drive media transformation

These Six Trends are Driving Modern Media Operations

The model below describes media management best practices in 2019. The two foundational, organization-focused elements in the center enable the key approaches around the circle, which in turn reinforce each other.

Media Management 2019



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“Media is blurring into everything, and companies need to recognize that and realize that you need people who understand what that means and how that’s happening in order to continue to be relevant as a marketer, let alone as a company or brand.”

– Kristi Argyilan, SVP Media & Guest Engagement, Target

Let’s look at how each of these major trends are shaping modern client-side media management.

Media Management 2019: *Creating centralized, empowered and customer-centric client-side media operations*

Trend 1

Companies are extending their data capabilities to enable a more holistic view of the customer

As companies seek a more complete, centralized, and cross-channel view of their customers (whoever those “customers” may be, whether consumers or B2B buyers), many are examining ways to both better utilize the data they already have, as well as seek third-party solutions that can provide the data they lack. With the great volume of data any company has to sift through, these technical solutions to finding real insights have become increasingly important. Adobe Analytics’ John Bates put it like this: “If data is this new oil, then much of it remains under the earth.”¹

Companies are making major investments in extending their data capabilities

Data capabilities are being extended in several areas based on the type of data or application:

- **first-party data:** capabilities and considerations include collection, classification, storage & activation;
- **second and third-party data:** capabilities and considerations include establishing relevant partnerships and integrating with relevant technologies (CDP/DMP etc.) for greater insights and audience amplification;
- **segmentation:** capabilities and considerations include development and distribution of targeted audiences across paid channels;
- **privacy, PHI, and PII** (for regulated industries): capabilities and considerations include policy definition for appropriate use and analysis of data across business lines and internal teams, enabling more optimal, data-driven marketing executions.

Data Definitions

1st Party

- Your audience data collected directly from the source
- May lack scale

2nd Party

- Someone else’s 1st party data
- Sold in private data marketplace
- Purchased directly from source

3rd Party

- Aggregated from various sources
- Bought, sold via data exchanges
- Most scale

Lotame

Companies are leveraging advanced data technologies to better communicate with customers and prospects

Increased adoption of key tech-stack pieces shows that, whether or not companies are consciously planning for holistic media management, more and more have the tools to drive such an effort. According to a recent WARC study, “In the UK and North America alone, brands increased their MarTech budgets by 44% over the past year to \$52bn. Nearly a quarter (23%) of their total marketing budget now goes on MarTech, up from 16% a year ago.”² Technologies can include data lakes, CRM software, DMPs (“91% of advertisers have or plan to adopt a DMP”³),

¹ [“Adobe’s New Virtual Analyst Will Help Marketers Find ‘Lottery Tickets’ in Their Data,” Adweek, 2018](#)

² [“Global MarTech budgets are growing rapidly,” WARC, September 2018](#)

³ [Salesforce 2020 Digital Advertising Report](#)

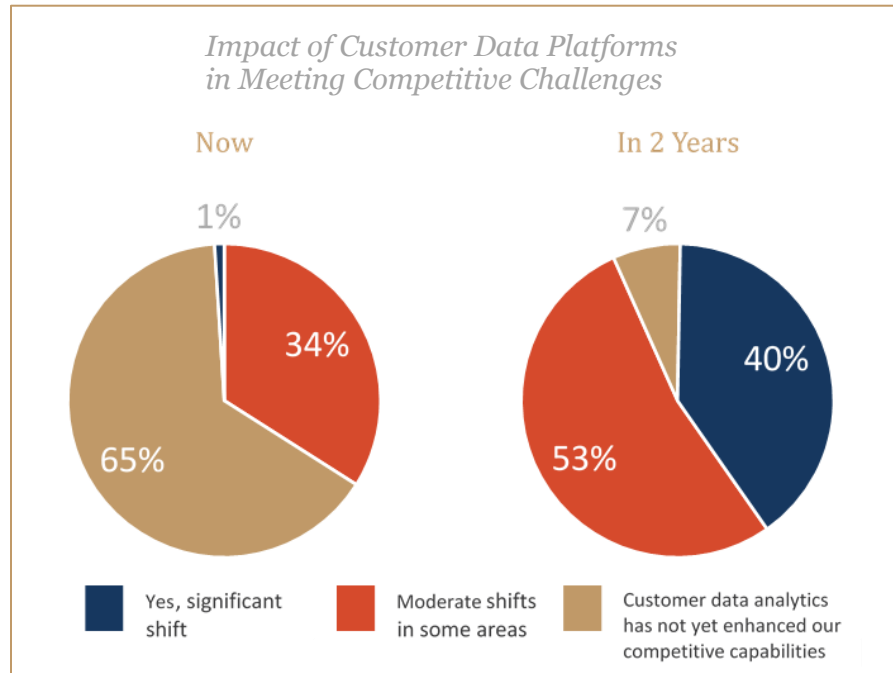
and the relative newcomer that acts as something of a catch-all for this tech: CDPs. We'll get to those in a moment. First, a look at some standard, data-centric pieces of the stack and how their adoption continues to rise.

Once relegated to technical uses, data lakes (non-discriminatory repositories that accept both structured and unstructured data) are increasingly open to the rest of the business for use. 55% of businesses taking a recent Eckerson Group survey⁴ have data lakes in production. CRM (customer relationship management) software became the largest software market in 2017 and was poised to be the fastest growing in 2018.⁵ Also growing is the DMP (data management platform) market: the global market was worth \$1.2 billion a year ago and is expected to grow to \$37 billion revenues by the end of 2024.⁶

Many organizations are turning to customer data platforms for a competitive advantage

Among the latest rising stars of the tech stack that companies are turning to in an effort to get ahead are customer data platforms (CDPs). A CDP unifies customer data from across the tech stack for a holistic view, and they're being widely adopted:

- 78% of organizations either have, or are developing, a customer data platform (CDP)
- 44% of executives report that a customer data platform is helping drive loyalty and ROI in their organization
- 40% of executives expect significant competitive advantage within 2 years⁷



Forbes: David Vs. Goliath – Customer Data Strategies to Disrupt the Disruptors, 2018

⁴ [Eckerson Group via Arcadia Data](#)

⁵ [Gartner](#)

⁶ [Persistence Market Research via PRNewswire](#)

⁷ Forbes Insights: David Vs. Goliath – Customer Data Strategies to Disrupt the Disruptors, 2018

DMP vs. CDP

While DMPs largely deal with 3rd party data and are mainly used for targeting audiences (often for acquisition), CDPs utilize 1st party data and are more about creating a single customer view (often for retention, engagement, or conversion).

Trend 2

Companies are driving paid-media activities with a holistically planned and managed tech stack

Companies are increasingly looking to integrate new technology-platform solutions into a cohesive stack or consolidate current solutions across internal groups where appropriate. While media-operations staff (either as a central group or split between business units) do not always hold responsibility for managing the entirety of the MarTech stack, they will undoubtedly be among the biggest benefactors of its integration as they plan for how, when, and where to best reach their customer.

Cohesive tech stacks and new expertise are leading to cost efficiencies and increased synergies

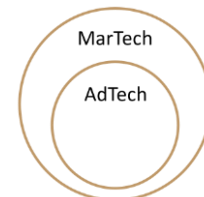
Cohesiveness means assembling the right components to maximize connectivity of data assets and systems (as well as knowing how to use those elements in conjunction – Capgemini, for one, recommends developing a MarTech blueprint that maps out “the capabilities, performance, and impact each technology investment has or will have on organization”).⁸ Many advertisers are realizing that connecting with customers in an effective, personalized, and reportable way begins with tech-stack integration.

The practical reasons for making this shift are myriad and compelling, beginning with minimizing cost and maximizing synergies: a holistically planned and managed tech stack allows organizations to identify redundancies and gaps across business or operating units, establish preferred relationships with platforms/vendors, and highlight opportunities for consolidation where they exist.

“A lot of brands can look to cut costs on that stuff. They don’t see the immediate value of AdTech and don’t want to pay for it and see it as overhead. In reality it’s core to measurement and brand safety. There are a lot of fundamental

MarTech and AdTech

MarTech and AdTech are closely related (and increasingly converging), but for simplicity’s sake, AdTech can be thought of as a subset of MarTech.

*What’s the difference?*

“Ad tech is about placing, buying and selling ads while MarTech is about building, managing, delivering and optimizing campaigns.”

AdAge

⁸ [“Are you Being Strangled by your Stack?” Capgemini, September 2018](#)

things you can't do well if you don't have that lined up. People who don't want to pay for that via agencies or in house are shooting themselves in the foot."

– Michael Bailey, Marketing Director – Digital Media, Google

Getting to the ideal, planful state, one where each system talks to every other and data flows freely across company divisions, will take a considerable amount of expertise on the technical and strategy side (never mind expertise in internal politics to get the engine up and running).

The model for making this tech stack work in an integrated way will largely depend on where the expertise sits: internally or through a partner/vendor. Once the tech stack is in place and operating as it should be, those experts, wherever they sit, can act as stewards to the rest of the organization, becoming a readily available resource for ongoing support and training.

Trend 3

Companies are fully integrating and coordinating media processes for both efficiency and effectiveness

Facing ever-changing and increasingly complex methods for reaching the customer on their own terms, particularly in the digital space, forward-looking companies have empowered media leadership to develop coordinated processes, standards, and operating models to provide a consistent approach to media throughout their organization, in part through sharing and leveraging internal best practices.

The focus on the marketing stack is so strong that there's now an award for the best: the Stackie Awards recognize impactful or noteworthy tech stacks, which are submitted by participants as single-slide graphics. 2018 saw submissions from 54 companies. As to what makes a winner, the MarTech Conference Program Chair, Scott Brinker, says, "When it comes down to it, a winning marketing stack is one that performed well for the company using it. That's all that really matters."

[*MarTech Today*](#)

Common AdTech

AdTech

- Data Onboarder
- DMP
- DSP
- Ad Verification
 - Viewability
 - Fraud
 - Brand Safety
 - Frequency
 - Geo, Demo, Context

Related

- MarTech & Data tech
 - CRM
 - CDP
 - SEO
 - Social & Influencer
 - ESP

The adoption of coordinated processes enables consistent execution

While every operating unit or department in an organization will have its own path for getting media in front of its customers, common and coordinated processes on an enterprise or marketing-wide level can set a common framework of approaches and expectations. Transparent Partners' Brandon Starkoff says that companies hoping to align on a unified, more

centralized approach can aim for the following targets in order to execute consistently across the organization:

- Clear roles and responsibilities are defined across all media strategy, activation, and reporting
- Processes, buying standards, and models for audience activation are consistent and effective
- A brand-safe programmatic operating model is deployed for adoption across all properties/business lines
- Media and creative work streams are being unified to align audience segmentation/personalization strategies and creative messaging/content
- The creative development and deployment process is streamlined through use of technology

Buying processes & media strategies deliver efficiencies

Even an organization faced with the challenge of multiple operating units with wide-ranging goals, functions, and audiences can benefit by some centralization and/or coordination of buying processes and media strategies. A coordinated approach can ensure that:

- Enterprise contracts are negotiated to enable pricing efficiencies and the standardization of integrations, data activation, and media execution
- Usage of disparate systems is minimized across operating units
- Budget fluidity is maintained across digital channels to maximize performance
- Digital media is strategically managed for cost and effectiveness

“Practice, platforms, and partnership. We have that established so that when our marketing team needs to start buying...they don’t have to go through the process of that technical selection. Instead they have that ready-built in a way that lets them feel relatively confident in terms of where to be able to operate.”

– Ian Mundorff, Global Head of Media, HP Inc.

Efficiencies & effectiveness are enabled by transparent practices

<i>Tactics Advertisers Use vs. Plan to Prioritize</i>	<i>Already done in 2017 or earlier</i>	<i>Major priority for 2018</i>
Ensuring we have a fully disclosed/transparent relationship with our programmatic partners	45%	41%
Addressing data segment markups and data arbitrage	14%	38% ⁹

⁹ “Programmatic Ad Tactics that Advertisers Worldwide Use vs. Plan to Prioritize” by WFA & dataxu, 2017

Finally, media transparency continues to be the topic du jour, even two years after the staggering ANA report¹⁰ on media transparency was released. A coordinated, informed commitment to enter only into fully transparent platform and media partnerships ensures that companies can see where their media dollars go and will have complete control over their own data.

Considerations to take into account for maximum efficiency and effectiveness include: ensuring transparent media-activation efforts (tech, labor, inventory, data); overseeing the creation of clear, specific contracts; ensuring ownership, access, and portability of all media data; and determining the most cost-effective outsourced-labor models (labor % or FTE).

Trend 4

Companies are utilizing measurement and tracking to enable a full view of how investments impact the customer journey

With an aim toward true media accountability, today's organizations are using what they learn on the back end of campaigns and customer outreach to better inform how they approach the customer, and when.

Measurement and standards enable optimization

Measurement and standards should be put in place to optimize campaigns and spending. Examples of what that looks like in an ideal state could include:

- Consistent measurement approach, KPIs, and success metrics are defined
- Global naming conventions and taxonomies are established for media and audience execution to facilitate consolidated measurement
- Consistent verification partner(s) are implemented across all campaigns and cost effectiveness of the standards is closely monitored
- Guidelines are established, monitored, and optimized (Measurability, Viewability, Ad Fraud, Frequency and Brand-Safety, Geography Verification)

Industry Benchmarks

- Fraud/NHT: < 3% of impressions
- Brand Safety: <5% of impressions are not brand safe
- Viewability: >70% (IAB) of impressions meet viewability standards

Transparent Partners

Advanced attribution models are a priority

Multi-touch attribution models are critical across geographies and business lines (where possible or relevant), and more companies are prioritizing these models in their journey toward a fully functional media-management operation. See the results from the WFA in the table following, where 52% of advertisers made putting multitouch-attribution modeling in place a priority in 2018.

¹⁰ [Media Transparency Initiative: K2 Report](#)

<i>Ad Tactics Advertisers Use vs. Plan to Prioritize</i>	<i>Already done in 2017 or earlier</i>	<i>Major priority for 2018</i>
Putting in place robust fractional/multitouch attribution modelling	7%	52%
Mastering cross-device path-to-purchase marketing & attribution	7%	41% ¹¹

“Gone are the days of ‘advertising’ when a company could promote their message through mass media channels to broad audiences and expect to have people pay attention. In today’s society with DVRs, Ad Blockers and On-Demand content, people don’t want to be interrupted – they need context and relevancy of a product or service offering in their daily life. They’re willing to share data for that relevance, and the companies that will be most effective will harness the power of that data to personalize the right message to the right person through the right channel at the right time.”

-Derek Nicoll, Vice President of Marketing, UnitedHealth Group

Trend 5

Companies are evolving their approach to media structure and talent to take more control of their media effectiveness

Savvy advertisers have grasped that approaching a new media landscape requires new media structures and talent internally. Regardless of how much a company is ready to take on internally (and, indeed, it’s extremely rare for a company to take a fully in-house approach to media), many companies are seeking what control they can, where it’s feasible for them to do so, over the myriad facets of today’s necessary media-management operation.

Philips is one such advertiser taking more media responsibility inside: Tomasz Lisewski, Philips’ global head of marketing, recently said, “We’re working more directly with Google, Facebook, and Amazon to the extent that the need for middlemen at media agencies between us and those platforms is becoming less and less. The support we’re getting from the platforms is good, but judging the effectiveness of them needs to come from us.”¹²

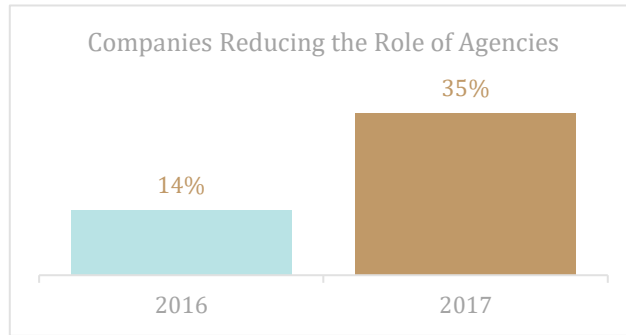
Companies are evolving traditional approaches to enable greater control over a complex media supply chain

The balance between advertiser and agency in terms of where each’s responsibility lies in a modern media-management operation is shifting, much like everything else in the media arena. It’s clear that companies today seek greater control over the media supply chain where they can get it. As just one example, 84% of companies surveyed by IAB are currently seeking greater

¹¹ “Programmatic Ad Tactics that Advertisers Worldwide Use vs. Plan to Prioritize” by WFA & dataxu, 2017

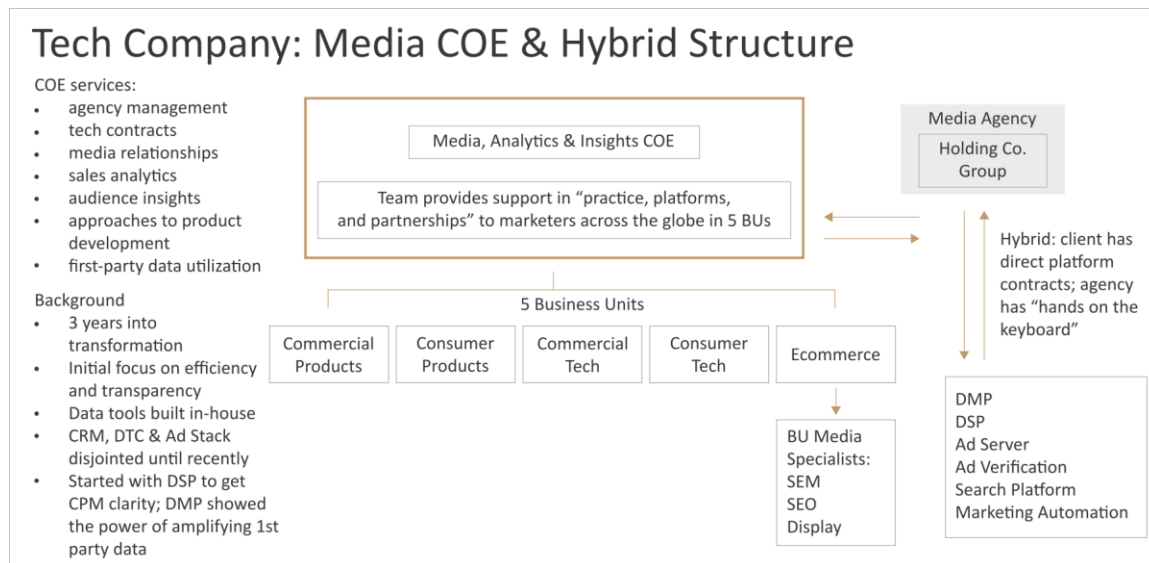
¹² [“There’s no need for middlemen’: Philips now works direct with the triopoly,” Digiday, 2018](#)

control of programmatic. As another, more companies are reducing the role of external agencies. In fact, the percentage of companies reducing the role of their external agencies (and taking more control of programmatic buying in house) increased from 14% in 2016 to 35% in 2017 according to a 2017 ANA survey¹³.



2017 ANA survey

A common outcome of this rebalancing of responsibilities is a hybrid model between client and agency. According to that same ANA report, 47% of companies are adopting hybrid structures where the client directly contracts tech & services (ad verification, etc.) while agencies manage the work. Companies adopting the hybrid model include many large, complex organizations like HP, Google, and Deutsche Telecom.



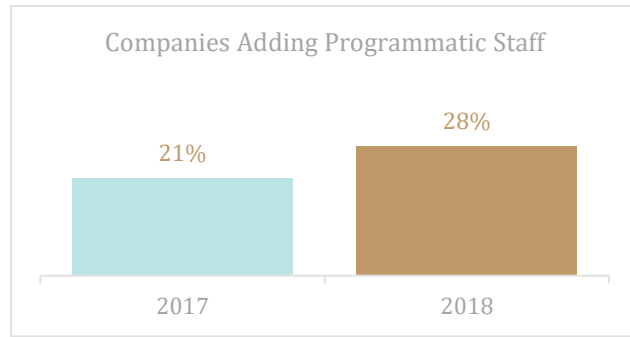
Sample Media Structure - MIG Interview

Changes to structure and talent are important

Large efforts like laying out the right internal structure and ensuring the proper talent is in place to manage a media operation each offer their own set of challenges, but each is crucially important. No matter how technically impressive the car, it needs an accomplished driver to get it up to speed.

¹³ [ANA via AdAge, 2017](#)

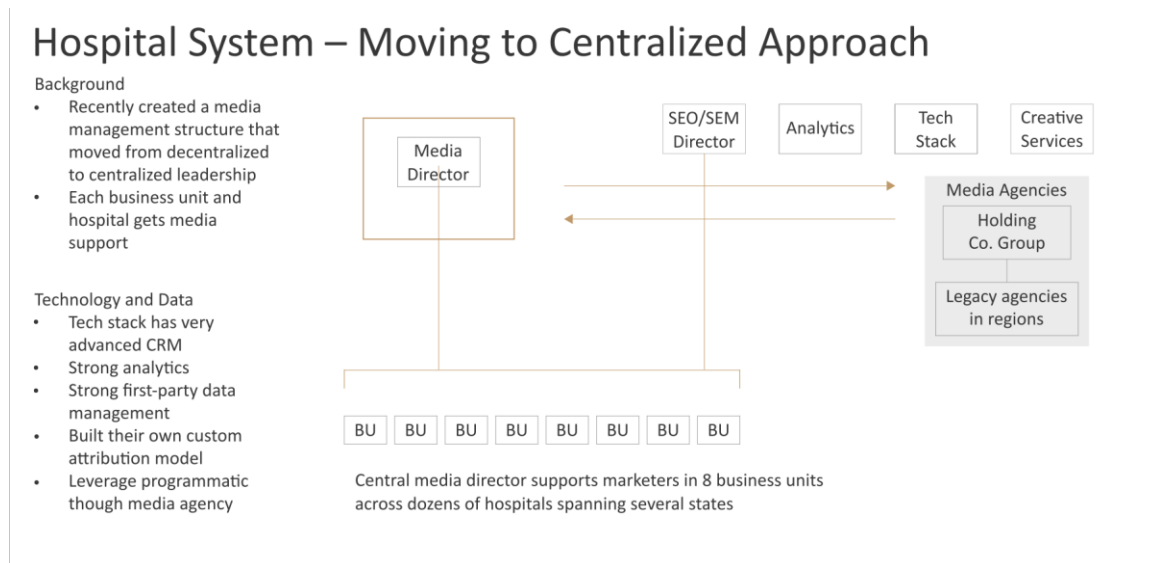
To face these challenges, companies are adding more dedicated media roles and teams, developing centers of excellence (with varying degrees of control or influence), and recruiting talented media professionals to drive their media operations. According to the 2017 WFA report¹⁴, 21% of advertisers added new internal staff to manage and steer programmatic in 2017 while 28% are expected to in 2018.



“Programmatic Ad Tactics that Advertisers Worldwide Use vs. Plan to Prioritize” by WFA & dataxu 12/17

“Having someone who really understands strategically, but also mechanically, how all of this works is incredibly important. That doesn’t mean any media person can come in and do that, but find the media people that have that left-brain, right-brain balance of experience, because they can be a big unlock.”

– Kristi Argyilan, SVP Media & Guest Engagement, Target



Sample Media Structure - MIG Interview

These structure and talent changes can bring many benefits, but certain role and responsibility considerations need to be taken into account before undertaking any organizational shift. New talent and/or newly centralized expertise could end up being responsible for any or all of the following: consolidated agency leadership and management, better media quality oversight,

¹⁴ “Programmatic Ad Tactics that Advertisers Worldwide Use vs. Plan to Prioritize” by WFA & dataxu, 2017

training (as from a center of excellence to the rest of the organization), AdTech-stack platform selection and management, direct contracting with partners, and media relationships. (To that last point, 17% of advertisers adopted more direct relationships with publishers and SSPs in 2017, while 34% expect to in 2018 according to the WFA.)

The benefits to this type of transition are plentiful. Desired outcomes of the transformational structure and talent changes include, but are not limited to, improved ad performance, greater cost efficiency and transparency, better control and management of data and targeting, enhanced real-time optimization capabilities, and full accountability with a focus on business and brand goals.

Trend 6

Companies are establishing media-leadership roles that have the authority to own and drive media transformation

Even the best-laid plans can run into political snags as internal departments chafe at the fear of losing control, other organizational efforts take precedence, or financial support dwindles. An empowered central voice, one with the authority to make the kinds of sweeping changes necessary for a fully integrated and customer-centric media operation, can help to overcome any of these. Conversely, without strong leadership, any one of these obstacles can derail transformative efforts. More and more, companies are recognizing that, with the changing media landscape, strong, media-focused leadership is needed to oversee how, and how quickly, they respond as a company.

“Having an understanding of how all the media pieces roll up into an effective marketing goal is key. We have executives that do that, and we didn’t always.”

- Media Executive at a Large Entertainment Company

ANA recommends that companies appoint a senior media executive

In their 2018 “Media Transparency: Prescriptions, Principles and Processes for Advertisers” report, the ANA recommended that advertisers appoint a chief media officer to head up media management at the executive level. It states:

Advertisers should appoint a chief media officer (either in title or function) who should take responsibility for the internal media management and governance processes that deliver performance, media accountability, and transparency throughout the client/agency relationship. On the most fundamental level, the chief media officer should drive the media strategy, partner with external agencies, and work with third-party suppliers to optimize the media mix and maximize ROI. This executive would be the centralized internal resource to drive integration and share best practices across internal brand teams and external agencies. The chief media officer would be the internal subject matter expert on the many important and complex media issues confronting advertisers today. Digital media expertise should be a foundational skill for this position. Furthermore, it is recommended that the chief media officer develop relationships with

key external media properties with whom the advertiser conducts business.

Media leadership roles at a senior level are now common

Many large companies already have senior media roles, including:¹⁵

- HP
- Google
- P&G
- Tesco
- Airbnb
- L'Oréal
- Unilever
- Abbvie
- McDonald's

In tracking this media-leadership trend, Digiday said at the end of 2017 that, “In just over a year, the number of LinkedIn members with English-language profiles who are chief media officers or have a similar job titles [sic] has risen by nearly 150 percent to 257.”¹⁶ Regardless of the title, organizations eyeing transformational change in how they manage media would be wise to consider placing someone senior to oversee their media operations.

Conclusion

The media landscape is nowhere near as simple as it was thirty years ago (and it's doubtful folks working in paid media at the time would have described it as anything approaching “simple.”) Thirty years of shifting media types and audience habits, and the last few years in particular, have added layer upon layer of complexity, to the extent that even today supposedly shared definitions of ideas like “MarTech” and “AdTech” differ depending on who you talk to across advertisers, agencies, and research consultants.

But given the confusion that comes with change, what's clear is that advertisers cannot stand still in their approach to paid media management. Neither can it be a piecemeal approach – the right talent, technologies, and processes must all be assessed (ideally from a central, empowered viewpoint, and as a package deal when and where it's politically and logistically feasible) to gain a foothold and ultimately an informed understanding of how to reach their customer in this new world.

The six trends we've explored in this whitepaper show that companies are:

1. Extending their data capabilities to enable a more holistic view of the customer
2. Driving paid-media activities with a holistically planned and managed tech stack
3. Fully integrating and coordinating media processes for both efficiency and effectiveness
4. Utilizing measurement and tracking to enable a full view of how investments impact the customer journey
5. Evolving their approach to media structure and talent to take more control of their

¹⁵ MIG research, Digiday, AdWeek, AdAge

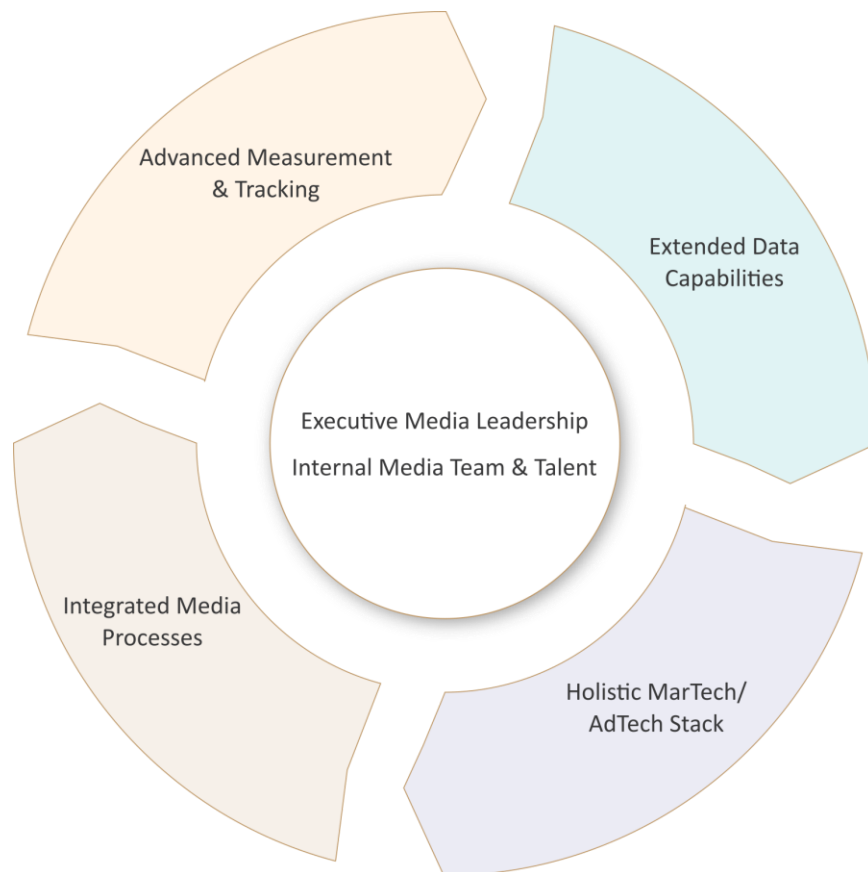
¹⁶ “Same title, different job: The rise of the chief media officer,” [Digiday](#), October 2017

media effectiveness

6. Establishing media-leadership roles that have the authority to own and drive media transformation

These 6 trends combine to form a powerful model for modern client-side media management, as expressed in the graphic below. Recall that the two organization-focused elements at the center enable the rest of the key approaches surrounding them, and these approaches in turn reinforce each other. No one piece of the media-management machinery can, or should, operate on its own if you're looking for maximum effectiveness, so while prioritizing which elements are most feasible for adoption is important, spending all political capital and financial resources on any one of these areas while ignoring the others would be self-defeating. The best approach is a wide-reaching effort to whatever extent possible given current constraints and logistical realities.

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Given the shifting pathways in media that lie ahead of us all, it's our hope that these trends and the resulting model offer advertisers (at least those who are eager to match or closely follow the pace of change) several places to start on their journey to media management sophistication and excellence.

Media Management 2019: *Creating centralized, empowered and customer-centric client-side media operations*

Getting Started

Media management is increasingly viewed as an integral area for any company looking to connect with their customers in the most efficient, effective, and personalized ways. Modern marketers are creating centralized, empowered, and customer-centric client-side media operations to help drive better business results. Getting started, however, can seem overwhelming – but it does not have to be! As Clorox’s Doug Milliken noted:

“The domain of media now is very broad, very deep, and rapidly changing. It’s hard to map out a plan for evolving your media capability; it’s pretty overwhelming. Many large companies are well along on the journey, but others – including many smaller companies – are not as far along. The challenge is: how do you get started on this journey? My advice is to think like a tech company – think big but act small. In other words, determine a bold and long-term vision for the role of media in driving the business, but then take very small, concrete steps to get moving in an incremental way. Use ‘use case’ thinking. This involves focusing on an area of strategic importance to the company, but then crafting one concrete action that addresses that and gets the company moving forward. That could be in analytics, audience planning, data strategy, or whatever is most relevant. One action will lead to the next. Over time, a series of small actions will result in big progress. It’s easy to get paralyzed not knowing where to start. Don’t worry about taking the perfect step. Just take a step.”

– Doug Milliken, VP Digital Consumer Experience & Brand Strategy, Clorox

We have worked with several firms on how to get started; based on those experiences and our interviews, our recommendations on how to get going follow.

MIG Recommendations - Getting Started

- 1. Senior Leadership Must Lead:** The journey to media management transformation is complex and requires prioritization. The organization must be committed – and commitment at the organizational level is expressed by resourcing. To ensure that media-management transformation occurs, companies need a senior leader and sponsor that can rally the organization while guiding, challenging, supporting, and funding the key activities necessary to making progress. Empowered media leadership is an essential piece to drive a truly aligned effort. Leadership and the right talent will enable the rest of the pieces of your media-management roadmap to come together.

This is not easy, especially for senior executives that are not deeply engaged in modern media management. The leaders need to know enough to be dangerous by attending key conferences, reading key publications, and asking their teams what needs to be done. As in any other important organizational initiative, leadership needs to set the pace.
- 2. Vision:** Companies that make the best progress towards modernizing their media management strategies typically know where they are heading: they have established a vision for the future of how media management can drive key business outcomes. This vision is their North Star, and it enables people from across the organization to know if their activities and decisions are contributing to the journey.

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3. **Self-Assessment:** A core starting point needs to include a clear view of the current state of media capabilities within an organization and what the gaps are that must be addressed to modernize media management. This work includes self-assessment of talent, tech, and internal processes to determine what's already in place and where priorities lie in terms of future investment of time, money, and energy. Rather than a sequential march to an ideal operation, of course, there will be many overlapping paths on the way to success; much will happen concurrently and under the purview of different teams. The self-assessment can help define the near-term aspects of the journey.
 4. **Team-Wide Education:** Companies that make the most progress often have both senior, engaged leadership as well as middle management that are pulling their companies towards the changes needed to become modern media marketers. To make the most progress, educate your teams – send them to conferences, sponsor and fund training efforts, and share your expectations that they will self-learn. Turn them into a demand function, one that demands that the organization makes progress towards modern media management because it is the right strategy for the business and the people.
 5. **Get Help:** The media landscape is moving too rapidly for most companies to make aggressive progress on their own. We've learned that *creating centralized, empowered, and customer-centric client-side media operations* is a team sport. Luckily, there are many resources available to help. Many marketers are leveraging assistance from external partners like their media agency, managed service providers, the large consultancies, and media-centric boutique consultancies focused on this area. We can certainly advise you if you have questions.

In the end, our best advice is that any start is better than no start at all; organizations who lag behind in media management soon won't just be playing catch up – they'll be running a different race entirely.

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Barry O'Neil, Senior Consultant

Barry O'Neil has been with Mercer Island Group for over a decade.

As a senior consultant, he has led numerous agency searches across varied client industries (retail, finance, healthcare, etc.) and agency practice areas (advertising, PR, brand design, digital, media, social, employee engagement, internal communications, etc.).

Barry has also led client/agency relationship management 360 review processes (in certain cases spanning the course of several years), for several major client/agency relationships.

Barry's work has spanned most key industries and has included clients like American Century, CommunityAmerica Credit Union, Sprint, Ulta Beauty, Clarisonic, CenturyLink, CustomInk, CFA Institute, TrueCar, U.S. Cellular, and many others.

He has also supported several corporate restructuring and repositioning initiatives for blue-chip clients and nonprofits alike, as well as efforts in client process realignment and agency new business/positioning reviews.

Barry headed up the most recent website and brand refresh at Mercer Island Group and has been involved in the creation of several whitepapers and video think pieces from MIG.

Barry can be reached at barryo@migroup.com.

Stephen Boehler, Founding Partner

Steve's experience includes key executive positions and consulting experiences with blue-chip companies like Procter & Gamble, Microsoft, Sprint, Starbucks, and dozens of other fine firms.

Earlier in his career, he was the second youngest group product manager in the history of Procter & Gamble and was the youngest division president Weyerhaeuser ever had. In his 10-year stint at P&G, he led marketing and turnaround efforts on businesses like Pringle's, Jif, and Duncan Hines in the food arena, and later was responsible for the Tide operation.

Steve founded Mercer Island Group in 1990 and almost immediately developed a significant "modern marketing management" practice. The firm has recently led very significant modern marketing roadmap projects supporting clients across a myriad of industries. Throughout the course of his career he has had extensive experience in helping firms enhance their marketing effectiveness, spearheading work with clients like Microsoft, Starbucks, Nokia, Qualcomm, Adobe, and many others.

He has also helped clients work more effectively with their agencies in areas like advertising, media, digital marketing, public relations, promotion, and marketing-strategy-development-related issues, and agency-selection processes. Steve has personally managed hundreds of client/agency efforts on behalf of clients like Sprint, Toshiba, Starbucks, McCaw, Microsoft, Rand McNally, Tyco Integrated Security, Abbott Laboratories, Kaiser Permanente, Holland America, Cox, and many others.

Steve can be reached at steveb@migroup.com.

Robin Boehler, Founding Partner

Robin Boehler is an award-winning strategic-organization-development, leadership, team-building, and training consultant, with over 25 years of experience across a broad range of industries in both the public and private sectors.

Robin is a Wexner Heritage Foundation Scholar, won Cornell University's "Outstanding Volunteerism Award," led fieldwork for a 100,000-member nonprofit and has many long-tenured clients. She has served on over two-dozen boards and is very active in industry and her community.

She has worked extensively with clients of all types and has led significant consulting and facilitation efforts for agencies and clients like:

- Starbucks
- Logan's Roadhouse
- Microsoft
- CFA Institute
- Havas
- GLG
- DaviesMoore
- Nintendo
- Cricket Wireless
- U.S. Cellular
- Redbox
- Digitas
- DNA
- Cactus
- Sprint
- PEMCO
- HTC
- SMART Technologies
- MullenLowe
- Assembly
- Starcom

Robin is a frequent speaker at agency and client functions and is a founder of Win More Business, an agency-centric business-development conference co-hosted by the Agency Management Institute each January in Orlando.

Robin can be reached at robinb@migroup.com.

About Mercer Island Group

Our vision is to help organizations succeed beyond their wildest dreams by engaging deeply and personally in what matters most.

Mercer Island Group helps executives succeed and companies build business. Our approach combines strategic discipline, creative brilliance, and tactical excellence with experienced executives to quickly deliver outstanding business results. We serve a broad range of B2C and B2B clients, including packaged goods, financial services, telecommunications, software, hardware, and marketing-service agencies.

We are a consortium of in-house and independent consultants that come together as needed to provide clients with the exact talent and experience necessary to get the job done. Because of this approach, we are not overhead driven, and you only work with experts. In addition, all senior consultants associated with Mercer Island Group have had significant line experience in the corporate world and therefore can truly understand a client's needs. We are not "career consultants" but have been there, in your shoes, faced with your issues.

We have three key practice areas:

1. Business strategy, including marketing, new products, and competitive assessment & research
2. Agency management, including relationship enhancement, selection, evaluation, and performance reviews
3. Organization design, including management & training strategies

Client Experience

We have consulted to a wide range of blue-chip clients:

Sprint	U.S. Cellular	UnitedHealth Group
Microsoft	Time Warner Cable	PetSmart
Holland America	Seabourn Cruises	VTech
HP	Stop & Shop	Toshiba
Qualcomm	Quantum	Tyco Integrated Security
Adobe	CenturyLink	Bushnell
Nutrisystem	SMART	Banner Bank
SuperValu	Tyco Integrated Security	Experian
Kaiser Permanente	Catholic Health Initiatives	Sharp Healthcare
Abbott Laboratories	UnitedHealth Group	Optum
CHI Franciscan	Bayer	Delta Dental

We have also consulted to agencies of all sizes and types, including:

Waggener Edstrom	Fleishman Hillard	Starcom
Mindshare	Ketchum	Cactus
Digitas	Hill Holiday	McCann
MullenLowe	Leo Burnett	DNA
GLG	Periscope	Weber Shandwick
Publicis Riney	Organic	Two West