

### Paul Lenhart

Senior Director Strategic Partnerships,  
OUTFRONT Media

#### **It's a great time to re-imagine the role and effectiveness of each medium within today's media mix.**

In this era of increasing complexity, with on-demand content, consumer empowerment and personalization, continued fragmentation and even societal elements including urbanization, it is no question that the media landscape is changing more rapidly than ever.



Having spent almost 15 years on the media agency side – leading local strategy for national brands, planning national Upfronts, integrating local buying teams across media channels, and developing integrated investment solutions – I've witnessed both the challenges as well as the emergence of new solutions as the marketplace has evolved at an accelerating pace.

I've repeatedly listened to strategy teams across brand disciplines, from packaged goods to finance, and everything in between, ask how to develop the best approach to market in light of the seismic forces reshaping the advertising industry.

They all ask similar questions: How can we deliver on client goals in this complex marketplace? What can we do to satisfy the modern consumer who has control over the media they engage with today? How do we stay relevant in an environment that demands clear measurable results across every channel?

The brands themselves are unsure how to tackle real-time sales data to regionalize their message. They wonder how they can build better creative to leverage the wealth of local information they receive while also incorporating their social assets to target influencers and build those crucial relationships.

This is happening across sectors as creative strategists have come to me wondering where they can best showcase their work. Creative content is optimized and set to deliver relevant messages to major points of action at just the right time, but which screens will deliver most effectively?

The more I understood the growing challenges modern media buyers and planners (and creatives) faced today, the more I thought about the untapped potential of out-of-home, and the opportunity for the age-old platform to reinvent itself. Not only is out-of-home still a powerful branding vehicle and the perfect blank canvas to showcase beautiful brand work, it now integrates all the critical back-end capabilities, including location data, audience targeting and social amplification, necessary to stay relevant in advertising today.

In a nutshell, data and technology are reshaping OOH strategy – how it's bought, sold, measured, and evaluated.

Today, canvases throughout cities are covered in brand artwork sparked by meaningful insights, planned with real-time data and tied together with built-in social and mobile activity at their core. The very nature of the medium delivers more impressions, at a lower CPM and in a format that inspires sharing through social media. It's evident from



the parade of celebrities and influencers with robust social followings posting pictures of themselves in front of their billboard creative.

The path to purchase or action is no longer a linear journey but rather requires us navigating a complicated ecosystem; OOH speaks to consumers on that path who are able to activate a mobile purchase at any point on that journey. Consumers are armed with real-time information at the tips of their fingertips along with a strong aversion to being advertised to, which means creative marketing solutions are needed more than ever before.

While I'm not advocating for a total shift of all marketing funds to out-of-home media solutions, it is clear we must reevaluate the tools we have to measure channel "effectiveness." Out-of-home cannot be blocked or skipped. It is measurable. Out-of-home can add valuable content and information to an environment. It can reach those who consume less traditional media. Out-of-home is digital, flexible, relevant and able to deliver the best message at the best time.

Once we begin to really answer today's marketing challenges, I imagine a far more prominent role for the outdoor medium.