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Agency Exec Sees 'Plenty Of Upside' For Investing In Radio.

6 hrs ago



"Fasten your seatbelts." That's the advice for media and advertisers from a prominent ad agency exec in his 2019 Media Outlook. But among all the futuristic sounding ad trends in the forecast from Harmelin Media executive VP of Client Relations Scott Davis is the pronouncement that "what's old is new" and that advertisers should continue to invest in radio and other traditional media – because they produce results.

"Even though the digitization of everything continues, there is plenty of upside for investing in traditional television, radio, outdoor and print. No CMO gets excited in a boardroom talking about radio ads, but they do get excited about results," Davis writes in a new blog post. "And marketing mix modeling continues to demonstrate that traditional media works."

That last point from Davis is the latest signal that the availability of more radio data in the toolkit that advertisers and agencies use to allocate their ad dollars is providing a better picture of radio's impact. The recent addition of national radio data in Nielsen Media Impact – which is used by agencies, media owners and advertisers to get a handle on cross-media reach, frequency and duplication when drawing up media plans – is expected to give marketers a more accurate read on the outcomes from their radio campaigns.

"With all the worries about online brand safety (think YouTube), accuracy in reporting (think Facebook) and the general draining of dollars on the tech-toll road (think programmatic), the safety of traditional media becomes very appealing," the Outlook continues. Even with shrinking TV ratings, network TV ad rates continue to rise, underscoring the importance of media like radio and TV. "There just aren't many places left that can provide both scale and safety, and those that can are highly sought-after," Davis says. And while traditional media has its challenges, such as trying to make up for millions of political dollars that will evaporate in this non-election year, "this means more opportunity for other advertisers to capitalize on the power of these media," he adds.

The view from independent agency Harmelin Media, which counts Ford, Turkey Hill and Avis among its clients, also flags other trends to be on the lookout for in the New Year. Among them: Data collection will get trickier, due to consumer privacy concerns. The California Consumer Privacy Act of 2018, which goes into effect in 2020, is expected to have a ripple effect across the country. And a Senate subcommittee is actively discussing a bipartisan, national privacy bill. "This means more disclosures,

more opt-in requirements and more care taken with any sort of consumer data collection – the lifeblood of digital media,” Davis observes. “Clients who don’t start thinking about this in 2019 will be caught flat-footed in 2020.”

The agency exec also predicts tech behemoths Apple and Google will “keep bickering” in a cat and mouse game, with “Apple remaining focused on security and Google trying to work around Apple’s adjustments.” And count Davis among those who expect to see Amazon become a much bigger player in the ad world of 2019. “Amazon’s ad revenue potential has nothing but upside,” Davis suggests, calling for the world’s largest company to “post serious growth in 2019 and to begin to erode Google and Facebook’s dominance in the digital ad space.”