



2020H VISION

The year ahead for Out of Home

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IT'S NOT GOOGLE-ABLE



‘There is quite literally only one certainty about predictions, and that is how the future is not Google-able’ – William Gibson

Rational analysis of evidence surrounding the status of the Out of Home sector at the end of 2019 points in an upward trajectory. Increased advertiser investment, growth in new advertisers, emerging new categories and exciting new formats are all reasons to be cheerful. But, our excitement should really be reserved for what’s coming, not what has already been.

That retrospective rigour needs future focus. It’s simple physics: if we’re looking back, we can’t also be looking forwards.

There’s no denying that what has come before provides security; a comfort in turbulent and unpredictable times... But it’s this realm of ‘next’ that provides us with myriad opportunities to build, sculpt, code, and invent the future of OOH.

We’re all architects of that future; burdened by the responsibility of building it. A future that will be fuelled by technology, data, collaboration, and good old-fashioned creative thinking.

So, we may ask - and be asked - what exactly will the future hold? And our answer will always be:

‘Whatever we want it to be’.

The future will be whatever those that dare to dream, to create, to invent, to question, to analyse, to think...decide it will be.

The future is certainly not Google-able.

But it is buildable.

So, let’s crack on.



1. DATA REVOLUTIONS

We are swimming in almost infinite data lakes. And the key to staying afloat is understanding exactly what data we are using, why we are using it, and how we are using it. For example, using only one source of data in planning location-based campaigns is never a good idea. Our data strategy, for example, is based on the principle of 'no single point of truth'.

We already use multiple sources to create the very best solution for each campaign. And this is only going to increase and evolve.

The world leaves digital footprints as deep pools of data sets, many of which exist outside of what we consider the norm (weather/temp/traffic etc.) in advertising activation.

But it's not just about turbocharging targeting, we will see the ongoing shift towards using data to derive exciting insights and forge new ways to interpret and apply these findings. After all, everything happens somewhere, so therefore using location as the lens to examine various data sets and extrapolate insight is the ultimate in understanding on-the-go human behaviour.



2. A DIGITAL ECO-SYSTEM

More than one in every four OOH euro spent in 2019 was on a digital screen. The distinction between 'digital' Out of Home and the sector generally is becoming less marked and less relevant. Digital is no longer a subset of the wider medium – it is an integral part of the medium. Digital formats have a significant presence in all major OOH environments, and an important step on this journey was taken in 2019 with the launch of various large format roadside panels along with networks of digitised bus shelters and converted Digipanel.

Ireland now boasts a diverse eco-system of 3,500+ networked, quality screens across roadside, retail, commuter and leisure environments. For advertisers in 2020, this means greater opportunity for optimisation at scale, complemented by the power of classic OOH to build brands and influence audiences.

3.

AUTOMATE TO OPTIMISE

With digital networks established and growing, and at a scale that is delivering countless combinations of audiences, the focus in 2020 must be how advertisers can optimise creative output to efficiently manage their message. Pioneer brands such as McDonald's, The National Lottery, Cadbury and Guinness have led the way in recent years, integrating first or third party data into their Out of Home creative and serving optimised ads through PML Group's Liveposter platform.

Data triggers used on OOH campaigns in the past twelve months include weather, location, time, sports scores and social media feeds. This event-based impacts approach means advertisers can have their own unique campaign parameters acting across multiple networks from a single source platform. As networks expand so do the opportunities for brands, and all delivered via scaled and automated systems. So, automation and optimisation is a simple process in 2020 – delivered only when you need it and under agreed data parameters.



4. UNLEASH THE WILD MINDS!

According to the recent Peter Field/IPA report 'The crisis in creative effectiveness', as a result of the ongoing frenzy for short-term metrics, creativity (and long-term brand building) is collapsing. And it's something we all see every day... Field states that 'we have arrived in an era where award-winning creativity typically brings little or no effectiveness advantage'.

Advertising has forgotten how to have fun. We're an industry of privilege, in that we are paid to build real-world emotional responses between brands and people. That's the long and short of it. And OOH especially should be fun!

So it's time to change. Because the short-term and the long-term doesn't have to be an either/or choice. And the reams of evidence supporting creativity as the greatest effectiveness tool should be ignored at every brands peril. And that doesn't just mean 'do more special builds', it means applying more creative thinking to everything we do in the quest for solutions that resonate with real people.

Great creative thinking is what decides the winners in this business of brands – across all disciplines. 2020 will find us learning to value true creative thinking again (and giving people the space and time to do this), not as a 'nice to have' but rather to reframe it as non-negotiable hygiene factor.

Because *gulp* not everything that counts can be counted....



5. EXPERIENCE THE REAL WORLD

Part of what elevates a brand experience is making customers feel special and making the experience unique. The best experiences happen in the real world, sharing them with other people. The Out of Home environment is uniquely suited to accommodating real world, shared brand experiences. It has the ability to put 'brand in hand' and engage directly with consumers. Done well, these experiences can bridge the physical and the virtual, offering brands a 'best of both worlds' scenario. Out of Home experiential activations have long since been more than simple sampling exercises. Creative flair supported by technology and bravery are adding sophistication and more of a wow factor to such events. An experience can also be relevant because its personal, which brings us back to optimisation and a more audience relevant approach to content.



6. DOOH THE RIGHT THING

One of OOH's greatest strengths (existing in the physical and non-skippable world), also means that as an industry we must continue working towards sustainable solutions for brands in the Outdoor space. Globally, media owners are developing extraordinary solutions for advertisers, and the roll-out of products with a long-term outlook towards minimising impact to the planet should of course be applauded... and utilised as soon as possible. PML Group is endeavouring to apply relevant and meaningful solutions for clients for now and in the years to come.

But we must also look to how our medium is utilised. Out of Home is a trusted channel and a part of people's daily lives. It is a powerful force and can help shape society for the better. Using the space for more work like the Transport for Ireland anti-racism experiential piece or Carlsberg's living billboard is beneficial to the world around us. Let's see some more in 2020.

LET'S BE MORE NOW.

Location
Based
Marketing

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