



dotmena

TAKING YOUR BRAND FURTHER

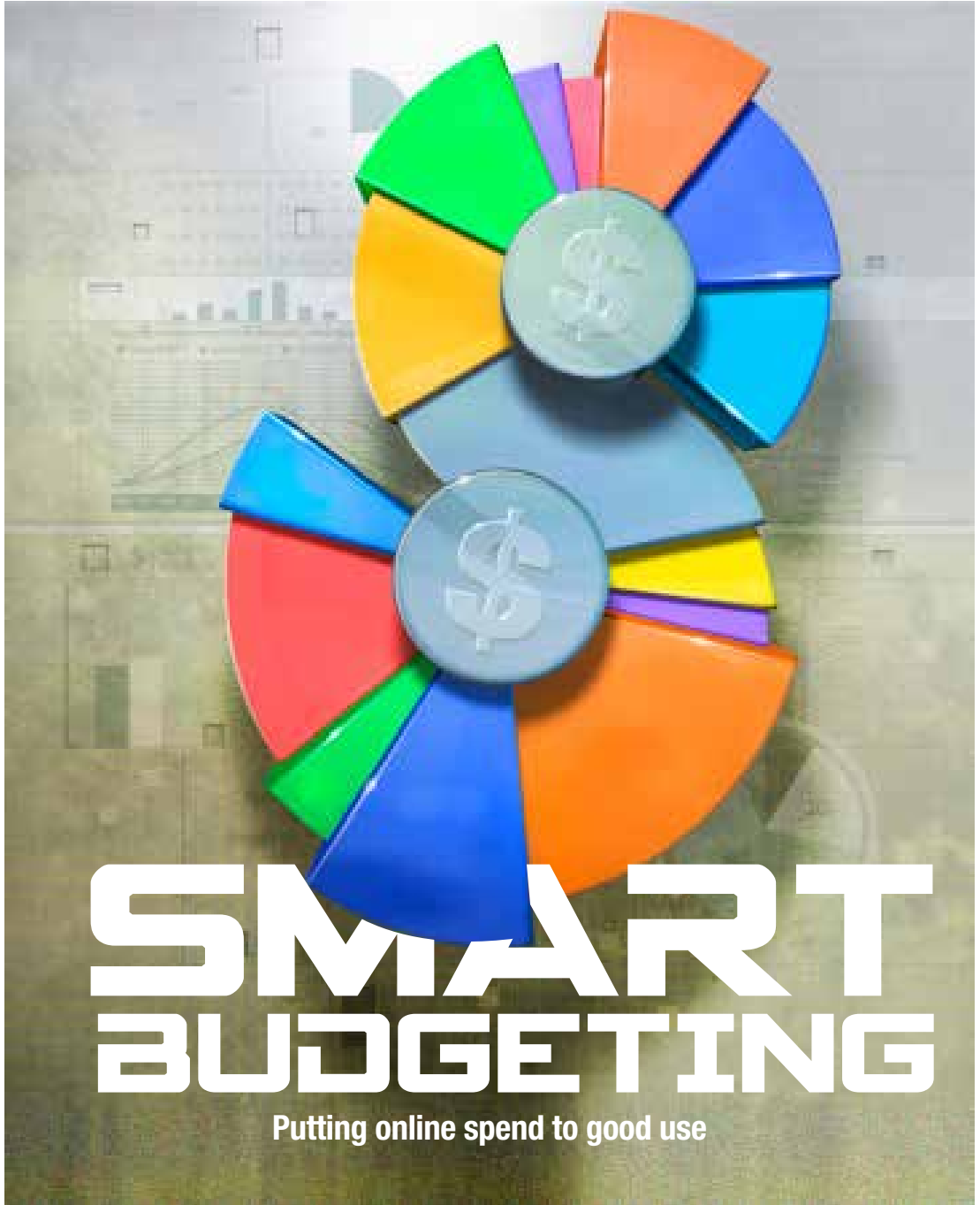
NEWSLETTER

+75 PREMIUM
WEBSITES

41 MILLION
AFFLUENT UV

262 MILLION
PAGE VIEWS

1 BILLION
IMPRESSIONS



SMART BUDGETING

Putting online spend to good use

WHAT IS REAL-TIME MARKETING?

Real-time marketing is when brands capitalize on an event or a cultural phenomenon that people are talking about online at a given moment, by using content, product placement and engagement to participate in the same conversation. This happens on social media channels and also happens using web personalization, when a brand customizes the user journey using pre-collected data for behavioral targeting – receiving a targeted e-mail that caters to your habits following an online purchase.

SUB-DEFINITION: RIGHT-TIME

Real-Time Marketing doesn't mean you have to be sitting at your computer all the time waiting for the "next big thing." A lot of time you can plan your content for major events and celebrations in advance, provided it's delivered in real time.

EXAMPLES:

- Samsung Oscar Selfie – The most re-tweeted photo ever.
- UK newspaper *The Sun* on the birth of Prince George.
- AT&T on September 11.



HOW TO DO IT RIGHT:

- **KNOW WHAT'S UP:** To make the most of an event, it takes a little bit of foresight and a lot of paying attention.
- **MONITOR:** You need the right data and insights to understand your audience, the platforms they're on, when they're available and how they spend their time so that you can properly target a message in real time.
- **CRAFTY CONTENT:** As always, you have to be innovative and creative when trying to stand out from the flood of content drowning the Internet. Make it entertaining, make it funny, make it informative – make it whatever your audience will be most likely to pick up and run with.
- **ACT QUICKLY:** Speedy, responsive interaction is the name of this game. You have to be on the ball with catching timely events and putting out content quick enough to keep up with the low attention spans of Internet users.

WARNING:

There are plenty of cases of failed real-time marketing. This is due to brands trying to jump on a bandwagon and look cool, sometimes by riding the coattails of other brands. This can backfire and result in an online backlash, so always test out any attempts at big RTM campaigns.



OSN APPOINTS FLIP MEDIA

Flip Media will now be looking after all of OSN pay-TV network's digital activities, including reporting, monitoring and strategy. OSN is hoping that Flip's extensive reach across Saudi Arabia will help further its 2015 plans in the region. ■



SMG wins performance marketing for InfoFort



Starcom MediaVest
GROUP

Starcom Mediavest Group is now in charge of performance marketing for InfoFort, a leading records and information management solution

provider in the region. SMG will look after optimization of organic and paid search for the year, as well as their SEO strategy for the region. ■

Xaxis sets up MENA operations

Global programmatic media and technology platform Xaxis has launched its new MENA branch, headquartered in Dubai. Xaxis brings to the region its second-screen solution, Xaxis Sync, through which advertisers can sync their TV spots with the ads viewed on secondary devices; Xaxis will also introduce Turbine, a next generation data management platform that creates proprietary and anonymous audience segments with real-time, data-driven programmatic media-buying decisions. ■



Buzzeff introduces video ad solutions

Online video advertising agency Buzzeff has launched its exclusive mobile video advertising formats in the MENA market. The two mobile solutions released are inRead Mobile and inFlow Mobile, both of which come with a high level of audience-targeting options, including targeting by geographic area mobility, device platform – such as Android, iOS or Windows, mobile or tablet device category, brand and mobile model reference or generation. These new formats promise to ease publishers into integrating video formats within their content, as well as create a new inventory and income. ■



UAE second-largest smartphone market worldwide

New research from **PayPal** and **Ipsos** has announced that the **UAE** is the second-largest smartphone commerce market, eclipsed only by **China**, while **Turkey** ranked third (**53 percent**). The report, which surveyed more than **17,500** shoppers in **22** countries, showed that more than half of Emiratis (**57 percent**) used a smartphone to make a purchase in the past **12 months**, while more than two-thirds of Chinese have done the same. The report further revealed that mobile commerce is increasing at nearly three times the rate of overall commerce. ■

THE CASH COLLECTIVE JOINS DOTMENA PORTFOLIO

Dotmena has brought onboard *The Cash Collective* fashion and lifestyle online magazine as the latest addition to its offering for women, 25 to 40. A digital magazine founded by Shannon Wylie in 2013 and featuring travel guides, beauty tips, trend coverage and interviews, *The Cash Collective* bridges the gap between fashion lifestyle publications and guidebooks; it targets tech-savvy, style-conscious women. ■



MEMob introduces in-depth post-campaign analysis

MEMob, Dotmena's mobile division, has introduced an in-depth PCA (post-campaign analysis) that helps clients understand how it participated in making their overall campaign successful. The analysis includes a channel performance, overall performance including CTR, engagement, interaction rates, etc. MEMob is very transparent regarding the overall optimization process, allowing clients to know how the work is optimized towards

better results. Furthermore, MEMob provides eCPA/CPM to help reduce unnecessary costs and work in the most cost-effective way, along with a campaign summary and recommendations for future developments. CPCV (cost per completed video view) holds a 15-30 second video and allows the client to pay only once a viewer watches the entire video. MEMob is one of the only vendors in the region that offer this buying metric. ■

Dotmena partners with Emblem for video content production

Dotmena has just inked an exclusive partnership with Emblem, a video production firm behind the concept of Cinematic PR videos – press releases in video formats instead of print.

Emblem will handle the production of all of Dotmena's video content, be it on behalf of clients or for in house purposes; while Emblem's Cinematic PR videos will be made available on Dotmena's various platforms. ■

MOVERS & SHAKERS



Global mobile video social network Keek, which boasts more than 73 million members worldwide, has announced the appointment of **Safwan Kanj** as regional sales director in the Middle East. Kanj will act as Keek's brand evangelist in the Middle East, with an emphasis on key markets such as Dubai and Saudi Arabia. Before joining Keek, Kanj held positions at Email Citi, Rotana Media Group and M.O.A. Digital Outdoor Media.



UM MENA has appointed **Rasha Rteil** as head of innovations. Rteil will be responsible for the development of consumer engagement solutions on international, regional and local clients. She will look after tech partnerships that will benefit brands in audience outreach efforts while providing measurable digital engagement. Rteil previously worked at Mindshare MENA.



Tarek Karzon has joined Initiative KSA as digital director in both Jeddah and Riyadh. Karzon previously worked as an e-marketing and e-commerce consultant and is experienced with digital training, sales and developing staff skills on e-commerce and SEO. He has also worked with Souq.com and Aegis Media.



Nicholas Coetzee is the new regional head of digital at Mindshare MENA. In Europe, Coetzee looked after strategy for Wunderman Interactive (WPP) across 21 countries. He had also previously launched two media agencies: inVentiv Health and KPI Boutique, a pay-for-performance media agency.



Jamal Senouci joined Starcom's data and analytics team as senior analyst. He leads on all modeling efforts and previously worked at London-based marketing effectiveness consultancy Ohal. ■



PUTTING ONLINE SPEND TO GOOD USE

As the categories blur between online media types and channels, advertisers are sticking by a few tested practices and newer technologies and certain industries already have enough insight on consumer habits to recognize which methods work in reaching their audiences.

It's already a no-brainer that today's advertising strategies are more heavily geared towards digital marketing than ever before and that traditional marketing channels are taking a backseat to rising online trends and consumer habits. According to a Strategy& report published for the 2014 Abu Dhabi Media Summit on "How Young Arabs Are Fuelling the MENA Media Market," TV, newspaper and radio are definitely not going anywhere, expected to stay relatively the same or drop slightly between now and 2019. However, brands, in the meanwhile, are becoming more educated on digital and digital spends are

seeing noticeable increases; by 2019, the digital ad spend is expected to account for one-fifth of the MENA advertising market, with 12 percent of this year's budgets aimed at digital platforms. As digital penetration and time spent online grow, so does innovation around ad technology and its many channels, from social media to display advertising and search. The differences between channels are more blurred than ever and online campaigns are becoming more integrated. Certain channels are leading the pack in online budget allocation, while others are falling behind.

We look into the ways FMCG, CPG and luxury brands manage digital advertising allocation and the channels that are providing the most impact online.

Mobile is where consumers are

Most agencies admit that a separate line for mobile advertising is no longer required and that campaigns automatically incorporate mobile into their plan indirectly. Content that is consumed on social media for instance, such as video on YouTube, is usually optimized for easy mobile viewing. "Mobile display advertising spends are not reflecting the fact that users are consuming content on mobile," says Kavita Dhyani, head of media services at Havas Digital Media. She believes content consumption is all headed towards dependence on handheld devices and will increase as data capabilities and technical advancements continue developing on Smartphones. "I think, in the next

two to three years, it's definitely being led by handhelds," she says.

Rima Nakhala, associate digital director at UM MENA, says that especially in the case of Saudi Arabia, mobile is huge. "It's also in terms of optimization, you see that the most performance is coming from mobile, so automatically while you have the campaign, you will shift the budgets." Nakhala says there are limitations to campaigns when a brand doesn't have mobile-friendly landing pages and that FMCG brands are putting global investment into mobile apps for this reason. "Everybody knows that is where consumers are, so nobody doubts the importance of mobile," says Ali Nehme, managing director digital at VivaKi MENA, adding, "So if it's youth-related, you don't need a site, all you need is a mobile app or a game for kids. If it's something to do with education, you might say you need mobile content and mobile apps." Brands and agencies recognize the



Rima Nakhala,
associate digital
director at UM MENA



Kavita Dhyani, head of
media services at Havas
Digital Media

importance of being present on mobile but need to develop mobile-friendly websites and content, which requires further investment in order to get there. “We know that if the platform of the actual experience is there, driving media to it is the easiest thing for us,” Nehme says. “The question is, how should the brand behave on mobile and what is the experience that is required for mobile.”

Make room for programmatic display and programmatic mobile

With mobile allowing the greatest access to audiences, agencies see programmatic advertising as the most innovative way to maximize reach on both display and mobile. The process allows agencies to drive performance and branding results through buying more targeted inventory. “I’m actually very excited about programmatic,” says Nakhala. “We’re pushing to go through programmatic, especially when talking about mobile advertising and display

advertising.” Nakhala says that programmatic is useful not only because of its lower-cost CPMs but also for its efficiency and transparency. “The most important part is that you’re following your audience.” Dhyani cites the programmatic trading desk with its access to all kinds of formats and inventories, native advertising opportunities and channel integration as powerful tools for the industry. “I think one of the myths current in the market and in the minds of people is that display will die – I do not see it as a new future. I think the level of innovation happening in display is much more rapid than on the side of search or social,” says Dhyani.

While advertisers recognize that channels for increased audience reach will be available through the likes of tools, such as programmatic advertising and mobile optimization, the type of content audiences are consuming is as important, not just with regards to mobile-optimized websites and landing pages. In fact, one of the main hindrances to success in brand strategies is a lack of branded content assets.

Reach through video and content

Across almost all industries, content and how it’s consumed is a huge part of making sure online brand messaging is effective, especially by using video. “Distribution doesn’t matter, whether you go to social media or if you go to a website,” says Nakhala. “At the end of the day it’s content and you have to reach your audience, wherever they are.” Luxury brands are focusing on building content relevant to consumer interests, both for mobile and web. UM MENA currently relies on distribution through partnerships with supplier publisher sites, Nakhala adds, especially for luxury brands. “We need to be sensitive about the image of the brand; we cannot be everywhere.” FMCG brands, however, have content developed through UM MENA’s in-house production, with distribution conducted through content-seeding networks and outreach to bloggers and social media. Even publishers are moving more into content, Nakhala says, and away from traditional display advertising.

“Of course, we will always have the display advertising, but the way we are negotiating with suppliers, I’m focusing on the content piece and whatever happens around it in terms of rich media is just an added thing.” Dhyani also sees audiovisual content, such as video, as a requirement, especially with luxury, which uses various cuts of global TV ads for online channels. She agrees that YouTube works better for FMCG because high volumes can be acquired, while super premium brands aren’t looking for massive reach volumes. “They don’t want to be seen like that,” she says, adding that premium, niche audiovisual platforms and channels are preferred for luxury advertising.

Slow growth: Wising up

Advances in advertising technology and increased audiences on certain verticals, such as mobile, also means revisiting established approaches to other online advertising practices, both new and old.



Ali Nehme, managing
director digital at
VivaKi MENA

Social media is no longer the flexible playground, it once was, for brands. Yes, that's where all consumer eyes are at, but it's not a free-for-all anymore. "Without Facebook even knowing that they did it, four years ago they told everybody to start creating pages for free without investing," says Nehme. "Every single brand started investing in social. And today nobody can see the message until they pay for it." It now costs quite a bit to grab attention on congested channels like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, whether it's through native advertising spends or on content production. It's also not enough to have millions of followers and no engagement at all, brands are recognizing. "Yes, I have three million people, but what does it really do for me?" asks Dhyani, adding that the main issue for brands now revolves around being more relevant to users and evaluating engagement over fan growth. This doesn't mean that brands are shying away from social media, though. "They're just looking for smarter ways of investing on social platforms."

Display advertising and native advertising

Display advertising, as it's traditionally known, is going through its own growing pains as it finds its place in the programmatic

advertising spectrum, while native advertising has also slowly made an appearance in the past year or so. "If you look at our spend four years ago, I think it was 90 percent display and 10 percent search. If you look at it today, now it's split almost evenly between social, video, and search," Nehme says. "Display is still the biggest chunk but it's the only one that's decreasing year on year. It's decreasing because the money is going elsewhere. And a bit on mobile, which is still not as big as all the rest."

As for native advertising, "A lot of publishers and partners are investing in that, but I didn't see any serious commitments before last year," says Nakhala, who's been testing platforms with different suppliers. "It's still under the testing phase." Nehme says native advertising is still in the single digits in terms of investment at VivaKi, and both Nehme and Dhyani see it more as another form of advertorial. "It's not another PR," Nakhala insists, however. "It's native, it has to be content. You have to give the consumers something that they will actually read – they click it and read," she says, adding, "I always push back with my clients; do not just push your PR content on native ads. It has to be something useful for your users." ■

GET ON WITH THE PROGRAM

The region is best poised to take the digital video market by storm – if only the industry does what it needs to do, says Mazher Abidi, social media manager at Initiative UAE.



One perennial pattern every January and February sees bold claims being made in advertising and tech media that the year in question will be the year of a certain type of technology: social, mobile, data, video – all have been featured in recent years.

Whether these predictions live up to reality is a moot point. Yet for 2015, all the evidence suggests that it's video's all-conquering march to be the dominant online communication medium that will see it as the preeminent media platform for the foreseeable future.

One only has to see the statistics on user engagement and adoption rates of video content over other formats; or alternatively notice how every major innovation in the

past six months, across all the social platforms, has been related to video. Facebook and Twitter went native with video and introduced specialist ad formats to support it, the latter also bringing TV targeting into the mix. Snapchat launched 'Discover' for real-time streaming from publishers; Instagram and Vine continue to refine their short format videos and even display advertising is supporting a more creative use of video formats.

Whichever way you slice it, the indications are that video will continue to be the way forward.

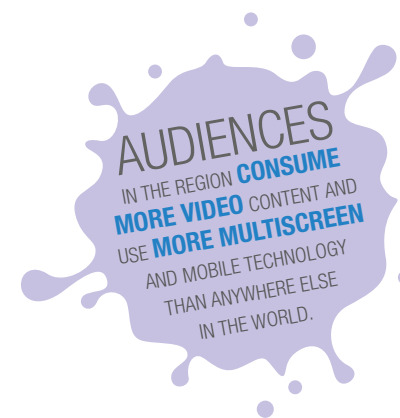
And the best thing about it for us is that the MENA region is well placed to lead the world in progressing the format.

This is no bold claim – the statistics back it up. Audiences in the region consume more video content and use more multiscreen and mobile technology than anywhere else in the world. In the past year, there have been countless campaigns that have used video to push campaigns viral, with three of my personal favorites being Mobily's hilarious World Cup campaign, J&J's super simple yet effective Grandparents photo frame idea and the hugely powerful Sapna campaign by SmartLife in the UAE.

So I believe that it is incumbent upon us to take collective responsibility to ensure we don't let this opportunity pass us by. The platforms are banging the video drum harder than ever. Creative agencies must keep innovating to weave video even deeper into their thinking, with media agencies continuing to be creative about placing video content to reach a greater number of people in more unique ways. Production houses can contribute by taking the visual appeal of the content to the next level and clients can do their bit by embracing the format wholeheartedly with their briefs and campaigns.

Creative work from the region continues to be awarded globally with increasing regularity. The region won its first Titanium Lion at Cannes last year, so we are proving that we have the talent, the momentum and, now, the platform to lead the world.

The stage is set for us in 2015. Let's harness the power of video. Let's make it our year. ■



MAZHER ABIDI, SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER, INITIATIVE UAE



