A report for the IPA by
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Maximising
the value of media
About the authors

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Paul began his career as a Media Planner/Buyer with Walker Media before joining Omnicom Media Group in 2002. At OMG Paul joined the fledgling in-house econometrics team - ROI – that went on to form BrandScience. Paul rose to the role of Director at BrandScience having played a pivotal role in the successful growth of the consultancy, leading the development of proprietary tools to assess the effectiveness of marketing in both the UK and internationally. Paul left BrandScience in 2010 to lead the marketing analytics team for PwC in the UK, before returning to the realm of advertising. Paul is currently the Head of Modelling and Advertising Effectiveness at Mindshare UK.

Paul has led advertising and marketing effectiveness studies for some of the largest brands in the world. He has consulted on a variety of topics, ranging from supporting corporate acquisitions – via input into integrated financial and commercial reports providing due diligence – to optimising weekly advertising campaign laydowns. He also led the analysis of the UK TV advertising market as part of an Ofcom review in 2010.

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Andrew recently joined Posterscope following four years at Data2Decisions and two at BrandScience. During his time at Data2Decisions he developed their proprietary statistical modelling and optimisation software, Pioneer and PoleStar, as well as consulting on marketing effectiveness for a broad range of clients including Reckitt Benckiser, the Royal Navy and British Gas.

Prior to joining the media industry Andrew gained a BEng in Electrical and Electronic Engineering, a PhD in Fibre Optic Sensing and an ATCL in Music Performance. In 2004/05 he was a Royal Society of Edinburgh Enterprise Fellow focused on technology commercialisation. He is currently working towards a BSc in Mathematics from the Open University.
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Vic started his career at advertising agencies Davidson Pearce, Y&R, and Ted Bates, and the Burson Marsteller and Ketchum PR agencies. He went on to spend 13 years at The Media Business (now MediaCom) as a full board director in charge of research and planning. In the 1980s he set up and ran his own research company, working for major advertising and telecoms clients as well as the European Commission, conducting research in the UK and across Europe.

Vic is currently the course leader on the Buckinghamshire New University Advertising and PR degrees and its MSc in Marketing Communications. He has been part of a team from Bucks that has helped to set up a College of Advertising for the University of Business and Technology in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and is also the university’s representative on Edcom, the educational arm of The European Association of Communications Agencies.
Executive Summary

In this essay, the authors explain how the digitisation of media means that it is not only a tool for messaging and listening to consumers, but also allows many other functions: for example, as a sales channel, a tool for market research, product design, dynamic pricing and demand forecasting. The authors argue that, properly used and in conjunction with the right partners, media – in the widest sense of the word – has a greater value than ever.

Pre-digitisation, the use of media in advertising and marketing was relatively straightforward. Target audiences could be reached, at scale, through the use of a few channels. Client-side, C-suite executives could justifiably feel media was under control.

Today, the media eco-system is vastly expanded and more complex. Modern media is not just a broadcast channel. Active, paid-for, brand messaging makes up a shrinking proportion of media content. Peer-to-peer conversations and information are pressuring the share of attention brands were once able to command so easily.

Yet – somewhat paradoxically – digitisation has enabled brands greater opportunity to grab attention through enabling one-to-one conversations with customers. While many brands have gone global, the changes to the media landscape have meant that they are constantly under threat from small, nimble, disruptive challenger competitors, many of which have digitisation at their core, enabling the delivery of customised offerings.

Media is now much more than simply conveying a message. Media channels are also sales channels. They can be used for market research and customer service too. Due to the enormous amount of data now generated, the ability to listen and understand consumers is ever greater. As consumers create and use their own media, it allows advertisers to fully identify the interests of the consumer and modify activities accordingly. Although more complex, media now offers unparalleled opportunity.

As brand owners seek to focus on top-line growth, innovation is vital. Digitised media plays a critical role in innovation because it can be used in three critical ways:

- **Observation**: Digital media allows online behaviour to be tracked and stored, including activity along the purchase funnel. Multiple datasets can be integrated to allow fuller understanding of consumers.

- **Interpretation**: Data, in and of itself, cannot be used to prove anything, but it allows hypotheses to be tested. Media agencies have a natural affinity with data, and are adept at combining multiple datasets and, using ongoing evaluation models, to identify lines of action.

- **Response**: Given the multitude of media options open to brand owners, choosing, planning and executing a cost-effective response is complex. Using media without a full understanding of the options is like sailing a ship without a navigator.
Take these four examples of the role played by media and media agencies in enhancing corporate performance:

- **Brand transformation and share price improvement**: Easyjet used paid, owned and earned media to attract business customers and communicate product and operational transformation. Econometric modelling showed the contribution of media to incremental seat sales and an incremental boost to the airline’s share price of almost 10% during the period in question. OMD/VCCP

- **Demand forecasting and inventory management**: Kleenex worked with Google and social media platforms to analyse online data to predict flu trends by time and location. They linked commercial messaging and inventory management to this information. Mindshare

- **Media as a driver of incremental organisational improvement and change**: Everest changed its media mix and usage to an always-on approach, making incremental changes to its pricing strategy, website and customer contact procedures. The changes saw it remotivate its staff, improve leverage with suppliers and develop new products. MediaCom/MBA

- **Media as a customer service channel**: BT uses its social media channels for customer service, aiming to make ease of contact and information a key differentiator. It reports lower churn rates, higher customer advocacy rates and significant cost savings. BT

In this context, advertisers should no longer view media in isolation from the rest of their business. Media can be the engine through which companies can drive step-changes in corporate behaviour and performance. Clients can significantly increase their owned media assets at low cost, but the same also applies to individual consumers. Social media can enhance – and destroy – a brand’s reputation in hours or days.

If companies are to successfully navigate the ever-changing media landscape, interpreting media-generated data and acting upon it in a timely manner, they need agile partners who live in the media eco-system every day.

CEOs wanting to implement a step-change in performance should therefore seek closer relationships with their media agencies. Strong partnerships with media agencies can unlock the true value of media such that it can be used to drive performance across the enterprise.

Together, building on a foundation of media understanding, they can plan and execute with the utmost degree of agility, orchestrating across multiple channels for maximum harmony and impact.
Introduction

Because change happens

Media today is a complex business. Its influence spreads far and wide, not only in the way an advertiser reaches its customers, but how those customers talk to each other, and – using the data it generates – in the internal workings and behaviours of that advertiser.

Used in the right way, it is a strategic tool that can both deliver and communicate the brand message.

But maximising its true value isn’t easy. Organisations need the capability to map out the impact of media on the consumer, derive insights, and act on them. If they can get it right, media can be the engine that drives the multi-functional workings of the modern-day enterprise and help create long-term shareholder value.

This paper is part of a wider Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) initiative, titled Know the Value of Media, launched by the Media Futures Group. Its purpose is to help explain the role media agencies can play in helping advertisers get the maximum value from today’s complex media eco-system.

This initiative began with Media databases: The challenges and the potential in the age of convergence, a report by David Fletcher, which looked at the emergence of a new tool in the media landscape; the media database. Denise Turner then analysed the changing media landscape in Reaching consumers in an era of media proliferation. This third report examines the big issues that arise from these changes.

But first, a short history lesson.

Twenty years ago, an advertiser’s view of media was straightforward: it was the channel through which it could reach broad masses of consumers with commercial messages. Media agencies would identify target segments of potential consumers, who could be reached via two terrestrial and a handful of satellite TV channels, up to 10 newspapers, a selection of roadside posters and a small number of mostly local commercial radio stations. All that was required was an inventive and persuasive message, the province of the creative agency, and a cost-effective buying plan executed by the media agency.

It was an era when big brands dominated the media, with little to fear from upstart competitors who lacked the resources and advertising budgets. The media had a huge reach, and media prices were a barrier to entry for new brand entrants. Media was a one-way, top-down route, hence customer opinion or dissatisfaction passed unnoticed for the most part.

To an extent, the client’s marketing department could exist semi-autonomously, while the CEO and other C-suite colleagues dealt with more pressing challenges such as supply chain optimisation, IT or staff relations.

Today, things are very different. The big, powerhouse brands are not smaller. Indeed, globalisation has seen the rise of behemoths. But legacy brands
are everywhere challenged by newcomers, many threatening disruption.

The theme of disruption is multi-faceted. The media space in which brands and consumers operate has vastly expanded and changed. This giant space is filled, not just with active, paid-for, brand messaging, but user-generated content, conversations and information sharing between billions of consumers.

It puts pressure on brand messaging, shrinking the share of attention that brands command. Denise Turner’s paper, Reaching consumers in an age of media proliferation, shows how brands have responded to this by increasing the number of channels they use to communicate with consumers and to maximise the interplay between paid, earned and owned media.

In 1971 Stephen King said that the successful brand is one that ‘is able to bring in worthwhile profits over a long period.’ However, to do this the brand must be ‘a coherent totality, not a lot of bits. The physical product, the pack and all the elements of communication... must be blended into a single brand personality.’ This is still true today, perhaps even more so. The bottom line is the end objective. The problem is that a coherent totality is so much harder to pull off.

Furthermore, the distinction between a media channel and a sales channel has been blurred beyond recognition. A customer can view a digital advert and, with one or two clicks, buy the product immediately, unconstrained by time or location. This capability is available to consumers everywhere.

While mobile, for example, has a great deal of value as an advertising channel, it also accounts for around a third of global e-commerce transactions, according to research by Criteo. In the UK, mobile’s share of e-commerce is 41%, the highest in the West.

How then can advertisers continue to view media in isolation from the rest of their business?

This rapid expansion and change has left many advertisers adrift, struggling to operate in a world where the old certainties no longer hold. The brand image is no longer controlled by the marketing or PR departments. Every corporate action, whether labour relations or fiscal malfeasance, is potentially subject to consumer scrutiny.

A negative consumer experience can be shared by millions around the world before the CEO knows anything about it. And this in turn can have a real impact on share price.

Any part of the operation – sales, HR, logistics, customer relations – is vulnerable.

But this is where the change in media is critical. Modern media is no longer just about broadcasting. It’s also about listening and understanding.

Advertisers can now listen to what their customers are saying about their products and what they want. They can respond and enter into a dialogue. Crucially, they can use the vast amounts of data collected daily or in real-time to understand how consumers interact with their brands and modify their offer or service accordingly.

How much is the impairment or failure of companies like Blackberry, MySpace and Kodak the result of a failure to listen or analyse data?

In the words of one of the fathers of the marketing function, John McKitterick:

“The principal task of the marketing function...is not so much to be skilful in making the customer

1 PwC CEO survey 2013
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do what suits the interests of the business as to be skilled in conceiving and then making the business do what suits the interest of the customer."

It is exactly in identifying the ‘interests of the customer’ that media can play a vital role (further detailed in the IPA paper Media databases: The challenges and the potential in the age of convergence. As the author, David Fletcher, describes it, data has moved from being a static lake to a continuously flowing river, often of mixed and unconstructed data sets, fed further by stream of social media comment.

Aireen Omar, CEO of AirAsiaBerhad, said in 2013¹:

“Social media has become of growing importance to our business in the sense that you get instant feedback on your product. It is the best way for you to market your product effectively and in a more cost-effective way.”

As Richard Eyre, chairman of the Internet Advertising Bureau UK, told the IAB’s Engage conference:

“The fundamental impact of the internet on work, learning and play is not an evolution but a significant disruption of the marketing business. The challenge is not to reinvent the media plan, but to reinvent the company.”

So media is no longer just a commercial messaging tool or an advert. In this dramatically changed world, therefore, how can we attempt to quantify the value of media?

¹PWC CEO survey 2013
For many years the media and advertising industries have striven to make media and advertising more accountable, and the disbursement of budgets more scientific. The IPA’s Effectiveness Awards scheme, launched in 1980, represents a collective industry response to put accountability and measurement onto a firm footing.

All the major media agency groups have developed specialist units that, typically, use statistical or econometric modelling techniques such as market mix modelling (MMM).

These techniques retain significant value, and are backed up in work by analysts Peter Field and Les Binet (The Long and the Short of It, Marketing in the Era of Accountability), which untangle the effects of short-term promotions versus longer-term, brand-building campaigns.

Many MMM tools, however, were designed before the rise of new media platforms, and do not yet take account of the interconnectivity of brand communication across owned and earned channels.

This makes the true value of media – which goes beyond a typically short-term measure such as ROI (the short-term sales return divided by the cost of media activity) – harder to discern.²

What, for example, is the return of ensuring a brand remains relevant to consumers for another decade? How can the establishment or protection of a price premium be attributed? And how can brands ascertain the cost of using media to establish permission to diversify a product or service into new areas?

It is these areas, where media’s role can be so valuable, that the changing media environment now opens up to scrutiny.

So how, then, should CEOs react to this? To understand this, it is necessary to consider the role of media within the wider context of the business.

² See How to Evaluate the Effectiveness of Communications Plans (IPA, 2014) and the IPA’s ROMI calculator (romi.ipa.co.uk) for more information on calculating effectiveness and payback.
Because the purpose of business is to create a customer, **the business enterprise has two** – and only two – **basic functions**: marketing and innovation. **Marketing and innovation** produce results; all the rest are costs. Marketing is the distinguishing, unique function of the business.

*Peter Drucker*, The Practice of Management, 1954

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**The only way** in the long run for companies to survive and prosper is **by growing top line** rather than focusing on costs exclusively.

*Sir Martin Sorrell*, Davos, 2014
Three stages to using media effectively

Be all you can be

Although he may not have coined it in terms of media, management guru Peter Drucker’s timeless maxim is apposite.

The digitisation of all media is the platform from which both Drucker and Sorrell’s exhortations can be applied.

Digitisation, coupled with new technology, is the agent of change, allowing media to move from a one-way flow to a two-way, conversational form of contact, mixing paid media with the organisation’s media assets (owned), and those of the customer (earned).

This new media eco-system produces a constant flow of data that advertisers can use to inform and adapt their commercial messaging. The advent of programmatic trading also opens up the possibility of using this data to communicate in real- or near-real time.

Media is thus a responsive and highly controllable lever.

In essence, there are three stages in using media effectively in this digitised world.

Observation

The ability to observe people – their behaviour and, in a benign way, their conversations – is perhaps the most significant change to result from digitisation, taking advertisers way beyond sales as a key measure of corporate health. Today, online behaviour and conversations can be tracked and stored, and provide detailed information about the customer journey along the purchase funnel, all the way to a sale or non-sale.

Interpretation

But this data only has a value if it can be used to affect a decision. This is where interpretation, either by experts and/or expert systems, is required. The interpretation of data is a science where each new observation can support or repudiate a hypothesis.

It is a complex science. The difficulty of managing the huge volume of consumer data is compounded by the advent of new datasets from a multiplicity of sources, including media owner databases. One of the key areas of difficulty is the creation of meaningful hypotheses and their subsequent validation.

This is further complicated by the differences in behaviour between people who, on all available measures, appear to be similar. The advertising industry’s adoption of behavioural economics analysis techniques3 to answer some of the questions raised marks a significant step forward.

3See Behavioural Economics in Action, Nick Southgate (IPA, 2015)
And often, although they potentially offer great value, these datasets are incompatible. Modern datasets contain so much data that spurious correlations can be easy to make.

For this reason, industry experts are required to build the hypotheses that can be tested, thereby identifying actionable insights.

This is a critical function that can be played by the media agency.

**Response**

Finally, the response – what happens next? In such a complex environment, it is not sufficient to run a single cycle of observation-interpretation-response.

The key to reliably improving decision-making and increasing media effectiveness is to shift away from episodic or post-campaign measurement to a model of ongoing measurement. Once that is achieved, opportunities can be identified and the appropriate actions can be chosen, planned and executed.

But this move to ongoing measurement may expose organisational strains. The volume of data to be analysed is vastly increased; it arrives in real-time; it may sit in different parts of the client organisation; and it may not be compatible.

One solution is to look to partner with media agencies, who are better placed to take a holistic view. Media agencies have been focused on digital media since day one, are set up to handle data, and can manage the process through from observation to interpretation to response.
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Driving change with media

Have it your way

Media communicates messages and propositions, but it can also be used as stimuli to find out more about customers and what they want, for example to optimise existing products or in the development of new products or services.

Tech giants like Facebook and Google do this constantly. Small changes to Facebook interfaces are initially tested on user subsets, and data around engagement or time spent is collected and analysed to see whether the change improves the user experience. Digital publishers test website designs to A/B/C/D testing and mobile phone operators test different propositions by sending one message to subscribers with an even phone number and another to those with an odd number, ensuring randomness of targeting.

This experimental approach can help discover what works best overall, or what might work for different groups of people.

The key is to understand which media, and in which combinations, to use. This demands a full knowledge of the media options, how they are consumed by the target audiences, and how they work individually and in groups.

This role again is one best performed by media agencies, visible in some of the work that they have done, sometimes in conjunction with creative agencies, in recent years.

Brand Transformation

Easyjet used a combination of paid, owned and earned media, allied to data analysis, to attract affluent leisure and business travellers, communicating product, operational and cultural transformation. Easyjet head of marketing Ian Cairns said: “The campaign reinforced my view that marketing can inspire the product.” Econometric modelling showed that media drove 55% of incremental seat sales in six key markets comparing 2012/2013 with 2010/2011 and, given static media spend, at half the previous cost. Modelling also showed that the media spend had an incremental effect on the airline’s share price of almost 10%.

OMD/VCCP

Media as a Customer Service Channel

BT introduced social media as a key customer service platform, using ‘Net Easy’ – ease and efficacy of use – as a key differentiator and making the service function the customer champion. It identified that the difference between an easy customer service experience versus a difficult one was a reduction in churn rates of 40%.

With BT’s entry into TV and sports marked as crucial drivers of long-term growth, it wanted to signal to staff that improved customer service would be a key plank in achieving those ambitions.
Social media was a preferred method of communication for many customers (recording a 44% increase in preference scores) versus voice and email. Advantages of social include: multi-channel choice for customers; the automation of some parts of the customer journey; identification of hotspots, allowing BT to take pre-emptive action; and the opportunity for user-generated content and community-led problem-solving.

The initiative helped BT improve service and cut costs. It reports lower churn rates, greater customer advocacy, higher customer lifetime value, and cost savings of around £2m per year as a result.

**Media as Driver of Incremental, All-round Improvement**

Under new private capital ownership, window and conservatories company Everest wanted to halt decline and position itself for long-term growth. It changed its media strategy and media mix from seasonal bursts to an always-on approach, making incremental changes – tested and based on close data analysis – to its pricing strategy, website and customer contact procedure. As a result, it saw appointments with customers (the key sales lever) increase after years of decline; improve the cost per appointment by 10%; improve web conversion rates – now accounting for 60% of appointments – by 10%; and improve ROMI by 15% to £2.74. Across the wider business, the changes saw Everest return to growth, remotivate its self-employed salesforce, create a predictable growth path that allowed the new owners to focus on operational efficiencies (for example, by removing some seasonality), improve leverage with suppliers and develop new products.

**Product Innovation**

Walkers has run a number of campaigns over the last six years designed to crowd-source new flavours from consumers and, thereby, drive top-line growth. The initiative started as a means to get more closely involved with consumers who, while they liked and trusted the brand, were no longer excited by it or felt involved. Consumers were invited to suggest new brands, with the public voting a winner. Walkers deployed a multi-media mix, including TV, radio, mobile, e-CRM, in-store and PR. Over the course of the campaigns, consumers agreeing with the statement ‘Walkers have a buzz/excitement about them’ increased by 114%. Prices per unit have increased over time, suggesting the media strategy has supported price rises. Overall, ROI on TV spend has increased by 62%, allowing greater reach for less investment.

**Demand Forecasting and Inventory Management**

Working with Google search information and NHS Direct and GP visits data, Kleenex built a model that allowed it to predict cold and flu outbreaks at city level. Working with the model, Kleenex adapted media weights and targeting to maximise its budget. The media budget was used tactically, via radio, experiential and social media in regions experiencing cold and flu outbreaks. As a result, total sales increased by 40% – an incremental 432,500 boxes – during the first two months of the campaign. The strategy also allowed Kleenex to optimise inventory management and distribution.

**Media to Deliver Brand Promise/Employee Engagement**

British Airways launched its To Fly, To Serve campaign in 2011 as the central plan in a top-to-bottom overhaul of the brand. The campaign,
which built towards BA’s sponsorship of the 2012 Olympics, was designed to embrace internal and external audiences. It used multiple media channels, including TV, press, outdoor, social media and internal comms. As a service brand, where every customer touchpoint has an impact on the airline’s reputation, BA wanted to rebuild employee engagement and demonstrate to staff that, after years of cost-cutting, it was determined to get back to the top. It could not achieve that ambition without an engaged, motivated staff. After two years of the campaign, 91% of employees stated they were proud to work for BA, 87% said working for BA made them want to be the best they could, and 87% said they spoke highly of BA products. In 2014, the airline topped the Superbrands league table of the UK’s favourite brands. ZenithOptimedia/BBH
Understanding the connected consumer

Digitisation of media and other technical revolutions have changed what is possible across many aspects of business. But its impact is greatest in the ability to communicate with customers.

Unlike the previous mass-media dominated era, these channels are not dominated by a handful of mega brands. The space available is so great – virtually infinite, in fact – that it is neither feasible nor cost-effective to build a controlling share of voice. A start-up company can reach as many members of a narrow sub-segment with a comparatively small (and low-cost) digital campaign as a large brand with significant budgets for press, radio and TV. The rise of social media, including blogs, forums and review sites, as well as owned media, enables product or brand evangelists to promote brands within and across groups of communities. Thus challenger companies can gain traction quickly in the marketplace in ways previously impossible.

Crucially, however, the impact of the digitisation of media is much broader than simply the means of communicating or propagating a message. For brand owners or vendors, the ability to offer differential or dynamic pricing based on browsing history or previous activity allows a more sophisticated pricing strategy to be adopted.

For consumers, the ability to compare prices from many providers simultaneously exerts a downward pressure on market prices and an upward pressure on quality and service.

Are we then headed for the economist’s utopia of rational individuals equipped with perfect information in a perfect market? Not quite. When making a purchase, the consumer is unlikely to have knowledge of all suppliers and market conditions. Perfect information, certainly of aspects like quality of product or service, is missing. Into this knowledge void floods a cocktail of assumptions, hearsay, inference and, importantly, brand perception.

These are informed by reviews and reports in forums and social media, and at the same time transparency and volume of information means they can learn about how products are manufactured, sourced and delivered, thus allowing them to build a picture of a brand owner’s attitude to the environment, globalisation and social responsibility.

All these factors combine to create an anticipated quality, which can be weighed against price by a consumer. They may decide that they will pay more than the notional market equilibrium price to obtain an enhanced service or quality, or they may decide that a particular supplier is poor value compared to others.

So far, so straightforward. However, customer satisfaction is the gap between expectation and delivery. Poor service from a trusted brand is less forgivable than from an organisation without a track record. Equally, great service from a start-up can create staunch evangelists and loyalists, while that from an established, heritage brand is simply
meeting expectations. That, in the commercial jungle, is the power of the brand.

The winners of tomorrow are those companies that are moving to ensure that the brand promise is delivered consistently across all touchpoints.

In this context, delivery of the brand promise cannot solely be the responsibility of the marketing department; the responsibility runs right across the organisation, down to individuals, who are also influenced by what they read and hear about their employers.

Media also influences other stakeholders, from investors to government, to regulators, the media and suppliers.

Its effects are far-reaching, and therefore need to be understood and embraced by the entire organisation.
Conclusion

Think different

Maximising the value of media

All this change, stimulated by digitisation, creates uncertainty. There is no sector of business untouched by its effects. This change is continuous, disruptive and unpredictable.

Yet it also creates opportunity. Any company seeking to master this new environment needs to put media at the centre of a step-change in corporate behaviour. That is because media can be the engine of change across the entire organisation.

It has never been more dynamic, increasingly its impact can be tracked, and it is a strategic tool for business growth. Its key attribute is that it allows the customer to be heard, and their views acted upon.

David Fletcher’s paper on media databases (Media databases: The challenges and the potential in the age of convergence) looks at the impact of multiple sources of data about consumers on advertisers, and how they can impact audience targeting, insight, and evaluation.

Maximised, this data opens up the possibility of organisational change, impacting: customer service and relationship management; HR and the employer brand; brand reputation and corporate social responsibility; supplier and investor relations; operational management, internal structures and organisational silos; inventory management; pricing; and product development.

This is change right across the enterprise, engaging all members of the C-suite. Implemented correctly, it can create the conditions for top-line growth, the long-term development of the organisation, and drive shareholder value.

There is, of course, no ideal organisational blueprint that works across the board. However, there is a shift away from complex, fixed, organisational structures to networked entities with flexible roles and fluid responsibilities. This is the agile organisation, capable of absorbing multiple sources of data and information, and thinking and acting fast in a real-time environment.

In her paper Reaching consumers in an age of media proliferation, Denise Turner mines the IPA Effectiveness Awards database to examine the channel selection of the most successful advertisers. She compares the explosion of channel choice with that of a multi-sectioned orchestra. It can create sound, but the orchestra needs a conductor to create effective, harmonious, communications between brands and consumers.

Agile organisations need agile partners that understand and live every day in the eco-system. Media agencies are ideally placed to be those partners. Together, built on a foundation of media understanding, they can plan and execute with the utmost agility, and orchestrating for maximum impact and harmony.

There are many individual drivers of change for organisations. But few can be as dramatic and wide-ranging as an effective communications strategy, and a philosophy that puts media at the centre of an organisation.

To understand that is to truly understand the value of media.