

The Media Planning and Buying Blog

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Create Brand Awareness with the Right Media Strategy

When they know you, they're more likely to care about you. That's how it works with **brand awareness**: the degree to which your brand is correctly recognized by potential customers.

With higher awareness, customers may:

- Consider your services or products first when they begin to explore their options.
- Recognize and choose your services / products over others at the point of purchase.
- Maintain higher loyalty to your brand (and the loyalty you inspire can attract even more new customers.)

Though brand awareness is an important part of the sales funnel, it's commonly overlooked in favor of objectives that are more easily quantified or that offer a more immediate return, such as growing purchases.

Companies that don't pay attention to their brand awareness may face a tougher fight further down the sales funnel. Fortunately, an effective media strategy can help.

What a Media Strategy Can Accomplish

Brand awareness is one of the objectives that our [media buying agency](#), Capitol Media Solutions, helps clients achieve. Here's an example of how it can work.

Imagine a company that manages the payroll needs for large businesses. This company is established in the market and it's growing, but it's still behind the three or four other major providers of outsourced payroll services. This will be the "client" in our scenario.

Now imagine the decision-makers at these large businesses. They're the ones that our client, the payroll company, wants to influence. Some of these decision-makers are familiar with the payroll company; a lot more aren't.

So, the payroll company comes to an agency like ours with the aim of increasing awareness among its target audience. It's our goal to:

- Help the client identify where its brand awareness stands.
- Plan a [media strategy](#) that will target the right decision-makers in the right way.
- Take a second measurement of brand awareness and see growth.

Evaluating Brand Awareness

Services like [comScore](#) conduct surveys to help measure brand awareness metrics such as message recall and intent-to-purchase. It's particularly useful for [digital media buying strategy](#), but the data can be applied across media.

A client like this payroll company might use comScore to conduct a survey. It could ask a group of "decision-makers" to name a number of payroll providers. Now, assume that the client has a 1% awareness rating, while the biggest payroll providers—our client's competition—has somewhere around a 70% awareness.

This gives an indication of how large the gap is, but it also provides a sense of the opportunity: **even increasing the awareness of the client by a single percent** can make a major impact on a growing company, especially when an individual sale can mean huge money.

Implementing the Media Strategy

Since the aim of this campaign is get the decision-makers to know and remember who the client is, the media strategy may differ in several ways from a strategy focused on increasing sales.

The creative may not use a specific call-to-action. When the services that a company is trying to sell are a significant B2B decision for the target audience, it's unlikely that a "Click Here! Buy Now!" type of message is going to get the job done.

Instead, the creative might focus on helping the client's brand stand out and making the experience with the brand memorable. The creative might also connect to content marketing; digital placements could drive the audience to the client's website where there are videos, whitepapers, and other information.

Reach is important for the media strategy. It measures the number of unique individuals who were exposed to an advertisement. TV [media buying](#), [radio](#), [print](#), [outdoor](#), and digital all have different methods for tracking reach.

Based on a thorough review of the target audience, our agency might identify that print and digital are the media that are most likely to reach the payroll company's audience with the greatest efficiency. We might also recommend a limited TV and radio buy that focuses only on programs that attract the decision-makers. We have to balance these strategic choices with the overall budget and the length of the campaign.

Frequency is also important. The frequency is the minimum number of times a person sees the ad during the campaign. As memorable as ad creative may be, repetition is vital for keeping the audience familiar with the client's brand and for ensuring that people associate the message with the right company.

To increase frequency, our agency might recommend that the client purchase digital advertisements on a different basis (CPM, CPC, etc.) so that it can achieve more impressions for a lower cost. We might also sacrifice prime placement in certain publications for the ability to bump up frequency.

Leveraging the Investment

Let's get out of the hypothetical and talk about the reality: a brand awareness campaign requires time and a significant enough ad buy to make a difference in the way that your brand is perceived.

When your media buying agency manages it effectively, however, you won't just be growing the general knowledge about your company. You'll be preparing for a more successful second phase of media.

In the follow-up campaign—which could be more focused on making a sale—the businesses that see your advertisements will be more receptive to your message. They will know your brand. They will trust your services and your products, and you will have laid the foundation for the relationship. Now all that's needed is closing the sale.

If your company is considering a campaign and wants to raise brand awareness, [call or email Capitol Media Solutions](#).

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