ADVERTISINGWEEK2020

2020

Advertising Week Debrief

OMD's views on the top themes coming out of Advertising Week 2020

Better decisions, faster.

OMD

AGENDA

01 Fast Start Spotlight

02 Agency Transformation

03 Disrupting Bias

04 Beyond COVID-19

“What is so important is that people can find themselves in stories. We need to represent everyone from every walk of life.”

Diversity & Representation in Media & Culture

Monday October 5th 2020

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Setting the scene

This year, Advertising Week became the next major industry event to be reimagined virtually. Historically, the event had taken place in 6 markets over the course of the year. However, given the impact of the global pandemic on events, Advertising Week pivoted to focus on one global audience and took place online over 8 days from September 29th to October 8th 2020.

The first week was broadcasted from London and the second week from New York. OMDers from OMD EMEA, OMD UK and OMD USA tuned into the vast array of sessions, where the topics of conversation ranged from changing customer insights and behavior to affecting change in the industry. The OMD reporters extracted observations and insights to bring back to our wider community.

OMD was also an active participant in the agenda, kicking off the event with an exclusive look at our Fast Start Suite (more on this in the Fast Start Spotlight on p.5) and then joining our clients and partners to share our point-of-view on everything from unlocking brand loyalty to setting new standards in digital advertising.

In this event debrief, we will be giving our views on the top themes coming out of AW20; pulling out key areas of focus and offering solutions, tangible advice and ways in which we can offer added value.

8 days

1000+ speakers

500+ sessions

12 channels

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01
Fast Start Spotlight

“ **Now more than ever, brands need help making Better decisions, faster.**

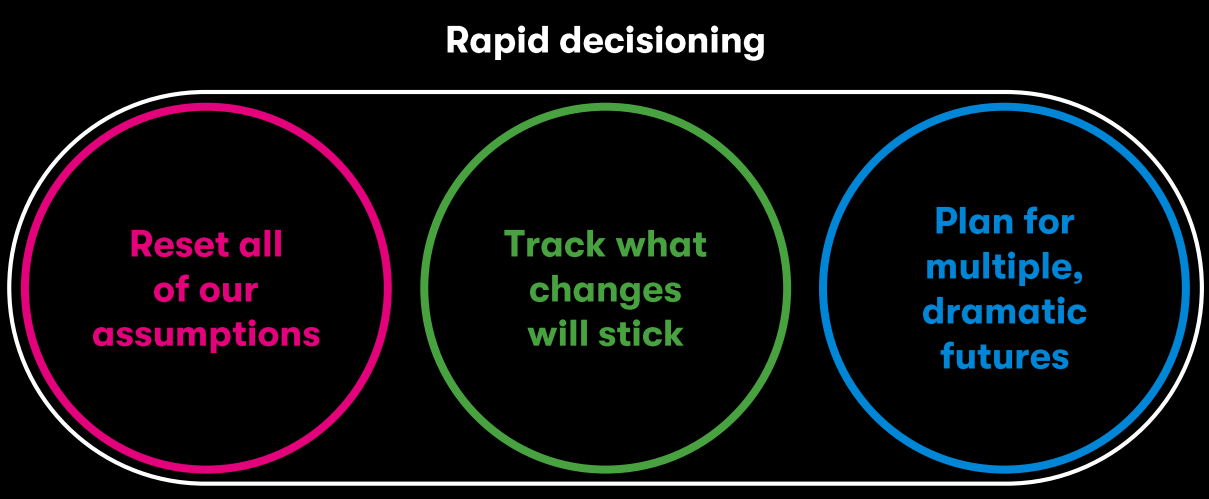
What are the three key questions you should ask now, to aid your brand's recovery for 2021?

At OMD, our brand promise of "Better decisions, faster", has never meant more than it does in today's challenging environment. Long before the Coronavirus, we had begun building tools and processes to evolve new ways to help our teams and our clients make smart, strategic, rapid decisions to create an advantage in the marketplace.

When COVID-19 hit, we needed to accelerate the development of these initiatives to unprecedented levels to reflect a landscape that had begun to change fundamentally on a daily, or weekly, basis in many markets around the world. To get there, we tapped into three core questions:

1. **How must we reconsider our assumptions?**
2. **How can we track change as it happens?**
3. **And how can we best prepare for possibly dramatically divergent futures?**

The tools we have built to aid during this time have proven their utility, and we are developing and entrenching them for use long beyond the recovery from the Coronavirus and into the future.



> “We all need to reset our assumptions”

New fundamentals

The first thing to understand is; we all need to reset our assumptions.

It is no surprise for clients to learn that audience clusters have changed in the wake of the Coronavirus. The consumers that brands were speaking to at the beginning of 2020 have shifted behaviors, attitudes, and patterns. Existing clusters may have morphed into new ones or split into multiple new consumer groups.

The data brands use to base decisions on needs to be reassessed. Brands must ask fundamental questions as though for the first time. Who is buying the product? Can they still afford it? How has their mindset and how have their need states shifted? In today's shifting cultural climate, how do brands need to be behaving?

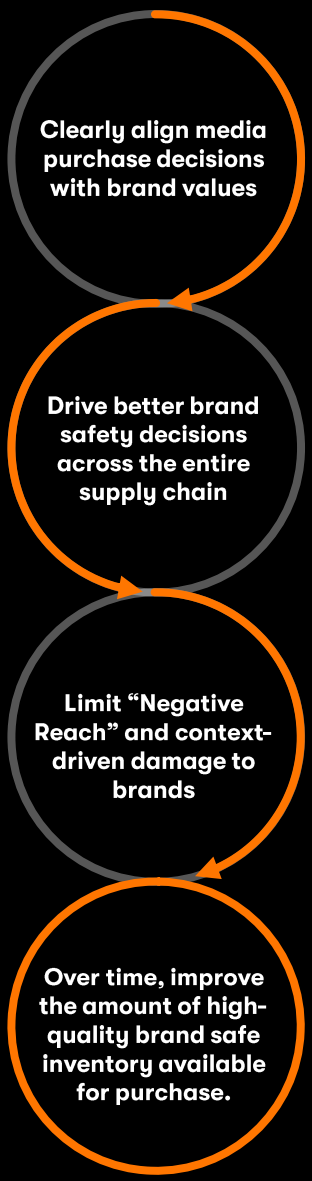
Tracking change as it happens

By creating a data-driven foundation for tracking what is changing on an ongoing basis, we can identify which changes are sticking and react quickly to those that aren’t. Analyzing business and market data, bringing together epidemiological, behavioral, media consumption, location and media pricing data, you can look to the data signals to monitor ongoing changes to consumer behavior and make smart predictions. Brands should be putting comprehensive tracking methodologies in place to enable a rapid response to these shifts.

For example, the UK and France both saw a significant shift to e-commerce across multiple retail sub-sectors during the first lockdown, whilst in Italy, people instead deferred purchases of jewellery and apparel until stores opened again in June.

It's particularly interesting to see how different retail categories changed based on local lockdown restrictions. In Germany, there was an overall decline in the consumption of apparel content at the height of the pandemic, but the discount retailers saw their share rise.

When considering how to navigate these decisions, brands should ensure their approach helps to:



Planning for scenarios of dramatic change.

Atop this foundation for planning, it's no longer sufficient to plan as events develop, and long-term plans are often outdated as soon as they are created. Instead, we have found it is necessary to plan across a range of futures so that you can react quickly enough to take advantage of changes.

For example, it is clearly critical to consider a "continuation" approach based on current conditions remaining similar through the end of the year, as well as at least one scenario in which lockdown returns on a Christmas timeline.

With a second wave now very much in motion, regional considerations must be taken by retailers. For example, Spain has seen a 3% overall decline in retail mobility, while Madrid, currently imposing stricter measures, is down a dramatic 40%. With some of the highest unemployment across the G5, consumer confidence is being hit hard for the second time in Spain. Compare this with Sweden which is already reacting to the changing situation even without a formal lockdown.

By using these types of market signals, advertisers can develop hypotheses to test and create multiple scenario plans for Christmas planning, learning from each market on consumer habits throughout different stages of lockdown.

Resetting brand alignment assumptions for a new world

From COVID-19 to racial injustice, to an increasingly intense political climate and fractious social media landscape, we are all navigating a tense and culturally important moment. At the same time consumers, many deeply affected by these events, are holding brands publicly accountable for their engagement with platforms and publishers who may be seen as contributing positively or negatively to these issues. Caught in the middle, advertisers have badly needed a quantitative, fact-based approach to deciding what publishers and platforms are aligned with who they are as brands and what they stand for.

Raising the stakes even higher, research indicates that there are fundamental business hazards for brands in misalignment. A study conducted by OMG in 2017 around 'negative reach', and since corroborated by similar work, indicates some media activity can leave consumers less likely to engage with the brand than not being exposed at all.

> **“ Brands are very familiar with using their values to help make decisions”**

The research, which focused on Millennials and Gen Xers, showed that 51% of Millennials and Gen Xers are less likely to purchase from a brand, even if the placement wasn't the brand's fault. These groups are three times less likely to recommend the brand and four times more likely not to consider purchasing the brand.

The need to re-examine and quantify assumptions around where to invest, align what our brands truly stand for, and then apply those decisions directly to the media plans in progress, as well as those that would need to be planned, lead to developing our proprietary Brand Decision Framework. A data-driven approach for aligning each brand’s individual corporate and marketing values and their media investments. Brands are very familiar with using their values to help make decisions as to how to proceed elsewhere in their businesses – this enables them to apply those same standards within their marketing activity.

At its core, the Brand Decision Framework enables us to measure conflicts between brand values and media partner behavior to understand how aligned a brand's values are with each partner and to establish comparative benchmarks. Those per-partners scores are then applied to investment levels to create a comprehensive understanding of how well aligned a brand's values are with its media activity, and to track that alignment over time.

As we expect the world to continue to change at an ever-accelerating pace, we are confident that these approaches – questioning assumptions, creating tracking methodologies to understand how the foundation for those assumptions is shifting, and proactively developing plans for potentially dramatic scenarios, to be applied as they develop– will only become more critical for advertisers.

How to make Better decisions, faster when the world stops, was presented at Advertising Week by Israel Mirsky and Jean-Paul Edwards, OMD's Global Executive Director of Global Technology and Emerging Platforms, and EMEA Chief Product Development Officer respectively.

To find out more on OMD's Fast Start Suite, including the Fast Start Dashboard and Brand Decision Framework, contact us at global.communications@omd.com.

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02 Agency Transformation

The changing dynamics of a client and agency

Better decisions, faster.

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Overview

The impact of COVID-19 has caused society to reassess what is important in their lives and as a result accelerated consumer trends. In the session, “Agency Transformation: Building for the Future Together, Now”, Jay Pattisall from Forrester shared their latest research with Google on changing consumer behavior and the impact this has had on brands’ needs from agencies. We are going through a massive industry shift in partner dynamics between a client and agency.

Agencies can no longer just be partners to clients, but allies. At OMD, we operate through the process of empathy planning, showing our clients what they “should” do rather than what they “could” do. There is not a fast or easy solution to this - brands and organizations have a responsibility to walk in consumers’ shoes in order to make a meaningful impact.

In the session, “Snap: The Future of Mobile Entertainment is Here” OMD USA’s Susanna Earnest talked about the responsibility agencies have to ensure brand suitability and that the content you choose to align your brand to, represents the values of your organization. It’s creating greater accountability with not only the brands and agencies, but also the publishers. As a result, brand suitability combined with brand safety will lead to real change in the marketplace.

There is an expectation on brands to build a better society. Therefore, there is a need to continue to invest in marketing and adopt innovative business solutions to meet new consumer needs, which can help grow or sustain a brands business at this time. Brands that are successful in doing so will expand their consumer base, and potentially be stronger post-COVID-19.

> “Transparency is the marketing of authenticity.”

Key takeaways

- The pandemic has accelerated changes we would have expected to see over a longer period.
- Every disruptive idea needs company-wide alignment, agility, and action for both the client and agency.
- Transparency is key to a partnership being authentic in the eyes of the consumer.

Stand-out sessions

September

Tuesday 29th

Agency Transformation: Building for the Future Together, Now

Great Minds Keynote: Why doing good is good for business: advertising in the Covid landscape and beyond

Corporate Meltdown: How Burger King lit a fire under the plastic debate

October

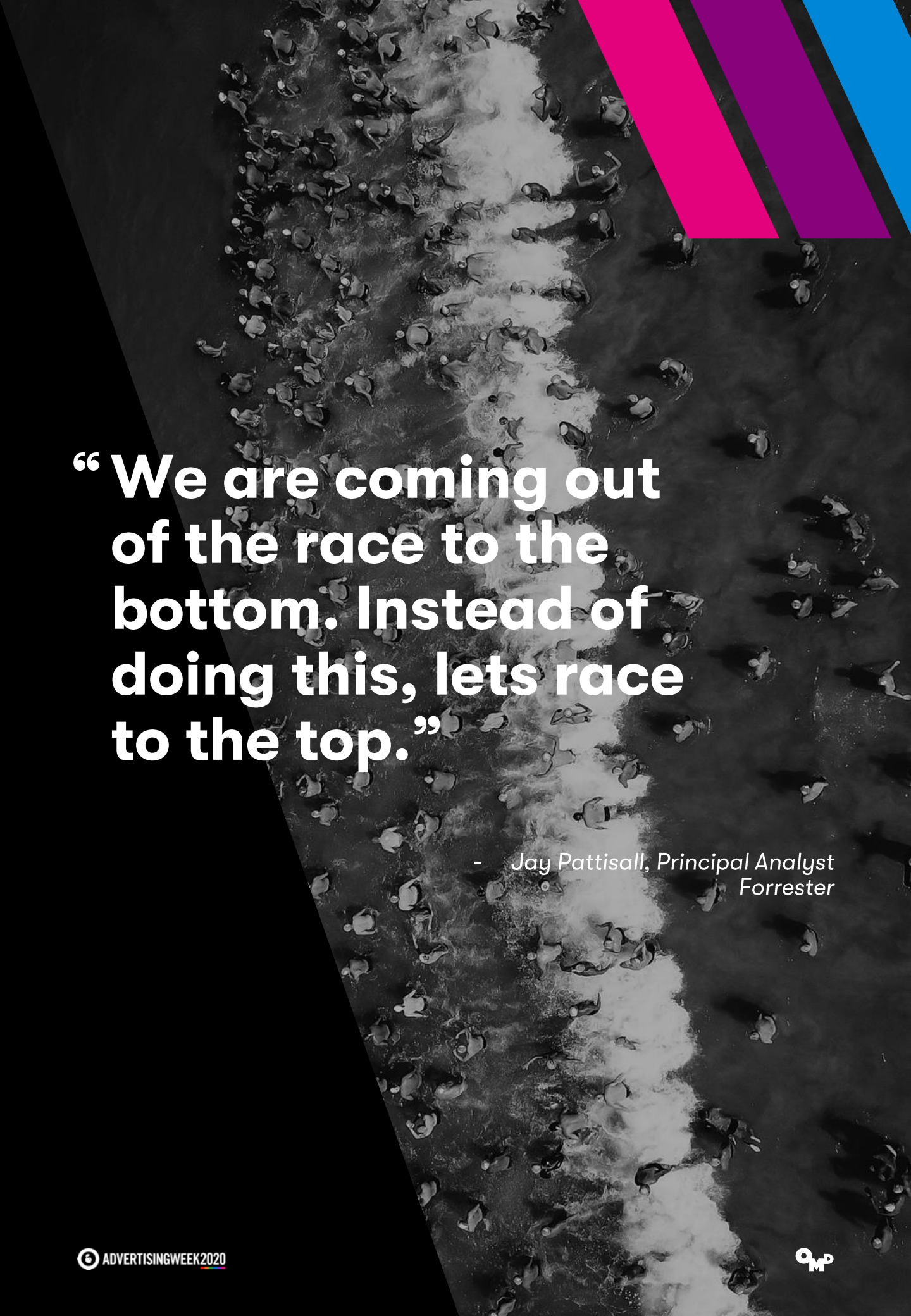
Monday 5th

How Agencies Can Help Their Clients Avoid Fake Allyship

Tuesday 6th

COVID + the CREATOR ECONOMY

Snap: The Future of Mobile Entertainment is Here


“We are coming out of the race to the bottom. Instead of doing this, lets race to the top.”
- Jay Pattisall, Principal Analyst Forrester
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OMD's point of view

Brands that are better positioned to provide value to their audience through purposeful services will emerge stronger, as will those that increase spend during this time of uncertainty and crisis. OMD's Brand Decision Framework allows for a clear alignment of media purchase decisions with brand values to drive better brand safety decisions across the entire supply chain.

It is our responsibility to show our clients that they are not targeting the same consumer they were pre-pandemic. The audience has picked up new buying and purchasing habits and expects more value. Our adaptive and data-driven approach allows us to quickly pivot and be more helpful to clients and consumers in a rapidly evolving environment.

OMD's Fast Start Dashboard and flexible strategy focused on better business outcomes enables us to take a fact-based approach to this alignment between brand values and media investment. This ultimately creates more clarity around how well rapidly changing partner conditions are coordinated with a brand's character and goals.

Understanding that new opportunities or threats can come up regardless of what is planned and having the measures in place for agile planning is key for long-term success. That's why having the right external and internal teams with the right data and information to support our decisions is key when it comes to disruptive and creative ideas. With the budgets significantly lowered due to the current landscape, it is important for our clients to leverage opportunities that will enable high reach with disruption, but still be in line with their brand objectives and vision. This will only be effective if there is leadership support, long-term commitment, and if it fundamentally makes sense to the brand's values.

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03 Disrupting Bias

Putting diversity & inclusion at top of the agenda

Better decisions, faster.

OMD

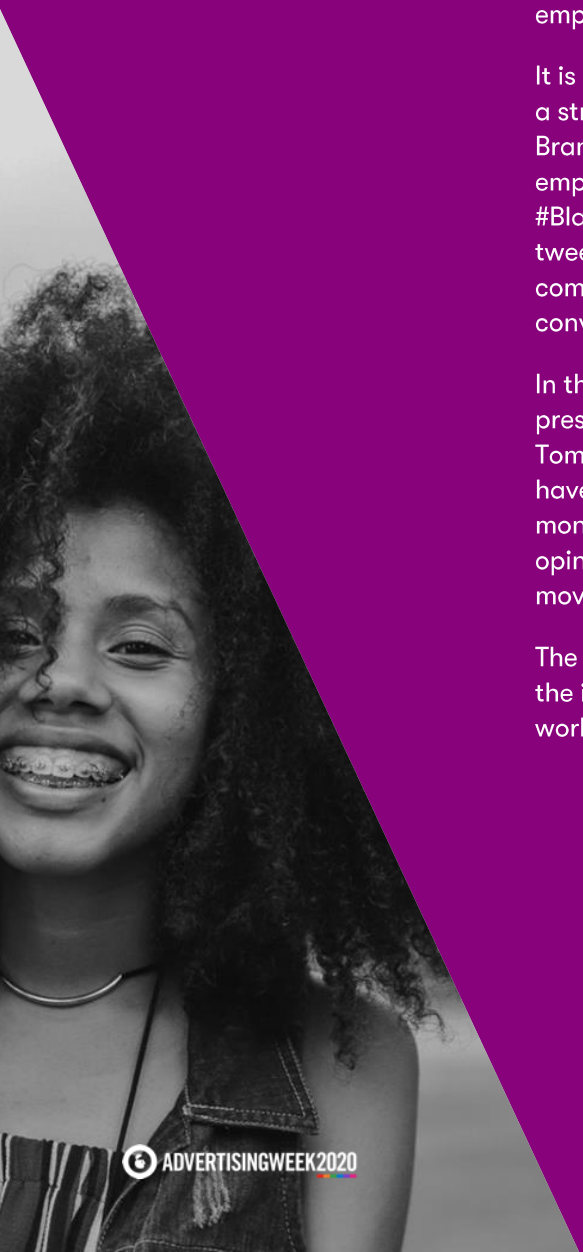
Overview

2020 has finally put diversity & inclusion at the top of businesses' agendas. The stage at AW20 was rightly used to remind the industry that it is here to stay. In the session "Disrupting Bias at Scale", Baroness Oona King spoke about the fundamental pillars that can bring about meaningful change within a workplace: Leadership, accountability & inspiration – leading by example, being accountable with transparent goals and inspiring employees to be part of the change.

It is not just within organizations that disruptive bias has become a strategic imperative, but in all areas of the advertising industry. Brands and media channels are striving to be kinder and more empathetic. Earlier this year, when the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter saw its highest spike ever on Twitter – 240 tweets per second – the media was reinforced as a space where communities can raise issues to the forefront of public conversation.

In the session "Sports & News: An Intersection on the Front Lines" presented by Disney and including President of Optimum Sports, Tom McGovern, the panellists discussed how news and sports have collided at the forefront of headlines over the last few months. As athletes continue to use the sports stage to voice their opinions and fight for racial injustice, it has become a powerful movement.

The societal unrest of this year has enacted agencies, clients and the industry to make systematic changes at a massive scale and work to implement plans for the changes quickly.



> “Now is the moment to try and drive forward meaningful change”

Key takeaways

- Right now, is a pivotal moment to drive forward meaningful change. Everyone should have their fair shot in life. This year has highlighted this is not the case due to disproportionate systemic issues that repeatedly hold marginalized groups back. People with privilege need to use their position to bring about long-term impactful change.
- Data and tech could play a big part in the future of detecting bias. This has been done in the Movie/TV sector by analyzing films at scale to identify gender/age/race bias. What would happen if we did the same in the advertising sector? Would there be an opportunity to eradicate lazy stereotypes, whilst raising the bar for more inclusive advertising as standard?

Stand-out sessions

September

Tuesday 29th	Disrupting Bias at Scale
	The Great Reboot: Meet the leaders reshaping Adland

October

Thursday 1st	Unlocking Brand Loyalty through Community & Belonging
Tuesday 6th	Is There a Place for Brands on the Frontlines of Identity-Based Activism?
Thursday 8th	Sports & News: An Intersection on the Front Lines

“The companies that succeed around diversity & inclusion are the companies that set clear goals. Diversity needs to be at the heart of your business strategy.”

– *Baroness Oona King, VP Diversity & Inclusion Snap Inc.*

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OMD's point of view

At OMD, we have a strong focus on diversity & inclusion. Our commitment to building a diverse and inclusive workplace will benefit our clients through the diversity of talent working on their business, that truly reflects their audiences. We are working with our own proprietary tech to identify more inclusive means of media planning, eradicating bias and easy stereotypes, to elevate the work we deliver for our clients.

The corporate conversation around diversity and inclusion is very important right now. Customers are looking at organizations to make sincere and long-term systematic change. Time will reveal the companies who have embraced and invested in the diversity & inclusion movement, and not just the moment.

Brands have the power to scrutinize creative and media output to make sure that inclusivity sits at the heart of the work and becomes a key measure of success. In the session "Unlocking Brand Loyalty through Community & Belonging" OMD UK Chief Planning Officer, Vicky Fox, and Reddit COO, Jen Wong, talked about "empathy" being at the heart of leveraging audience insights and how important it is for audiences to have control over their data and, therefore, identity.

Our clients not only need to be more data-driven and agile than ever, but also accountable for the messaging put in market. The messaging should be timely, inclusive and sensitive to the current cultural climate.

The industry has had a big wake-up call. Now, people are a lot savvier in knowing what is authentic and what is orchestrated. The new generation of consumers want brands to have gravitas and take action, and brands need to respond to this. This means ensuring we are advising our clients to honor their core values as well as always honoring ours as a business.

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04 Beyond COVID-19

Emerging media opportunities beyond the pandemic

Better decisions, faster.

OMD

Overview

Brands more than ever need to consider potential value exchanges to incentivise consumers to opt-in to share their data. AI has long been identified as an opportunity for brands who clearly illustrate how the consumer's data is being used to drive new services. However, there are several other emerging media opportunities that have proved to add value over the last few months, such as Connected TV (CTV), Audio and Augmented Reality (AR).

CTV is redefining what it means to watch TV; therefore programmers and advertisers need to establish new, effective methods for reaching viewers with precision and accuracy. Given the boom in CTV viewership, in the session "Great Minds Keynote: Building for What Comes Next, Google announced they would be rolling out Video Action campaigns over the coming weeks and will continue exploring ways ads can appear. There will also be testing for direct-response video ads on Connected TVs over the next year.

Meanwhile, just as social platforms disrupted advertising in 2004, audio platforms are shifting it yet again in 2020. In a year where consumers were looking to connect or escape, audio ad experiences commanded the listener's full attention to drive engagement, and like social, is both flexible and nimble.

As we all adjust to being apart a lot more; over the past six months, we've seen how technology has been key for bringing us together, and AR has cemented itself as a powerful strand to bridge the gap between the digital and the real world. For brands, it's a rich territory whereby the user is fully immersed in your content through a full-screen experience for an average of 20 seconds, and there are countless opportunities for brands to get their message in front of consumers by providing them with a valued & valuable experience.

> “There are countless new and unique opportunities for brands to show up”

Key takeaways

- COVID-19 has accelerated Connected TV trends and TV planning needs to begin to incorporate these CTV developments.
- When you advertise on digital audio channels, you reach people who are doing or thinking things that they would not be if they were on their typical digital marketing channels.
- AR is going to get even bigger with product trialling, especially since the pandemic has made shopping a very transactional process, and consumers are tending to stay away from bricks and mortar in favor of staying safe. Think trying on beauty products that haven’t been touched by anyone else, to test driving cars that haven’t been sat in by another person – the scope is endless.

Stand-out sessions

September

Tuesday 29th

Connected Through The Camera

October

Friday 2nd

The Storytelling Experience

Monday 5th

Mastering Addressability in a CTV-first World

Tuesday 6th

Great Minds Keynote: Building for What Comes Next

Audio is the New Social

“The possibilities are endless with the hybrid model of virtual and offline experiences coming together.”
The Storytelling Experience
Friday October 2nd 2020
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OMD's point of view

At OMD, it is our responsibility to make our clients aware of the changing landscapes and what this means for their brands, products and campaigns.

For Connected TVs, OMD are building a bespoke CTV overview and approach to educate the agency and clients, but also showcasing a roadmap of how we are approaching this emerging media opportunity. When it comes to Connected TV; the opportunity translates as less dependency on traditional media formats like linear TV, and suppliers who traditionally don't provide the flexibility brands have got used to within the digital world.

What's exciting for us is YouTube extending to CTV screens, as it gives us more opportunity to get our brands in front of consumers on the large screen. The new Google Video Action formats will offer new direct response options, allowing brands to continue the conversation with targeted messages and specific actions – from the big screen to the pocket. Furthermore, when bought programmatically, we can unlock even greater, consistent measurement across the entire media plan, with frequency controls across reserve and auction YouTube buys.

The challenge, and result of the plethora of influencers and channels on the platform, is curation and ensuring brand adjacency. We're working with Google and third parties to ensure we have the transparency and tools needed to ensure our brands thrive on YouTube.

In recent times, audio has undoubtedly been identified to have increasing value to consumers and therefore has greater value to marketers. There has subsequently been an increase in investment and a higher ROI that has caught brands' attention. Audio as a medium is more intimate and allows for brands to connect with consumers in a more authentic way. The nature of podcasting, for example, allows for a more transparent, fluid conversation than you would expect from social channels. Also, consumers are typically using digital audio as a companion to other activities, and therefore feel less bombarded with multiple marketing messages than they would in front of a screen.

When it comes to AR, it is our role as agencies to educate our clients on the benefits by showing how AR fits in to media plans, and how layering it on to a campaign can add a ripple effect. At a time when we're craving human interaction and seeing people in real life, there is a real opportunity to use AR to bring people closer together – especially during the upcoming holiday season, where it's unclear if we'll be able to physically be with our loved ones. Even though "digital" cannot fully replace the impact real life events can provide, digitalization of experiences and emphasis on amplification now provides a great opportunity for brands to find ways to create experiences which will be more efficient with increased reach.

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Better decisions, faster.