

In the beginning, there are questions...

By [Candy Dempers](#), issued by [MediaHeads 360](#)

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Media campaigns often start with an idea, a thought or a spark born from conversation or random inspiration.



Coupled with natural human intuition and that gut feel fueled by creativity, it is possible to deliver a concept that delivers on so much more than the numbers.

But the numbers are important.

We are an industry built on numbers and insight and the impact these have on campaigns and clients. The ability to equate investment with return is key and media strategy and planning is about balance and integration, the art and the science. It's all about finding measurable and quantifiable ways for brands to creatively and impactfully connect with the right audiences, in the right places, at the right time.

The Team at Mediaheads 360 is intrigued by both the art and the science. Research is key but you can't live and die by the numbers, in advertising you need to consider the intuition and wisdom which is always at play. As a team that specialises in content marketing and integration as well as telling impactful brand stories, it is especially important to understand this balance.

As a norm, research is often used to measure traditional media campaigns that focus on airing generic commercials. There are even benchmarks in place to help guide planners on required campaign weights. However, the practice of using research to guide performance tends to be less prevalent when evaluating campaigns with content marketing and content integration at their core. This can lead to challenges.

Procurement departments prefer to focus on the highest reach and performance at the lowest possible cost, in an effort to improve financial efficiencies. Attention is often diverted away from tailor-made campaigns that perform differently to the norm, even though they are likely to enjoy greater impact through improved relevance and tailored focus.

Media exposure achieved through content marketing and integration should not be evaluated against generic campaigns. These elements should rather be judged on how they synergistically impact the overall mix of a campaign. Certain marketing expenses enjoy the benefit of economy of scale whilst content marketing and integration delivers where generic scheduling can't. Integrated elements and content-driven placement increases engagement, amplifies brand personality, builds brand affinity and loyalty and can also add value to social media and public relation activities.

Content creators will often refer to context and how important it is to create the bigger brand picture. The two work in parallel and support each other when trying to capture the attention of the audience. The more context provided, the greater

and faster the comprehension of a brand message. Audience comprehension and uptake plays a huge part in whether or not a campaign is successful. While numbers provide some of the necessary context in terms of measurement and evaluation, other contributing factors can sometimes provide even greater context for the content.

To best serve the needs and strategies of clients it is important to consider the manner of execution, relevance of message, engagement required, reward offered, theme or topic of the concept and appropriate platform for delivery.



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As practitioners, we rely on research to assist with multiple criteria from channel and audience profiling to targeting and scheduling as well as performance and cost-effectiveness. Pre-analysis of these criteria assists with reducing the uncertainty in the decision-making process. Without this research, how could performance be measured? Without performance measurement, how could effectiveness from a cost and impact point of view be evaluated? And perhaps most importantly, how could a campaign's return on investment be evaluated? Without research, we would have no reference to any of these measurement staples that lay the foundation for the highly valuable and always sought-after, insights and learnings.

Tap into research that explores channel and audience profiling, which helps you understand where to find the target market sweet spot. Digging deeper gets us closer to a more refined media partner selection that aligns with the targeted demographics and psychographics. Selecting channels and stations that have a higher affinity amongst the defined target market sets the groundwork for improved results and audience wastage is minimised. Even more detailed investigations help to guide strategic scheduling of the various elements from concept, cost, key on-air moments as well as promotions, supporting generics and possibly live-reads. We give each campaign individual attention to maximise our ability to tailor-make relevant campaigns. In a rapidly changing media space the concept of a 'standard package' becomes challenging as there is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all concept in content marketing and content integration.

The team at Mediaheads 360 is passionate about seeing new places and travelling, it expands the mind and offers different perspectives. Planning a campaign and planning a trip are similar in many ways. The key to both is a 'route map', an idea of where one is going, how you're going to get there.

Research and maps:

- give context to where you are - a starting point and an end destination
 - provide direction for where you want to go, it's a broad compass
 - reveal that there is more than one way of getting to the end point
 - highlight areas of interest along the way
 - lead to discovering new approaches due to changing landscapes
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- when used often enough, entrench a better understanding of the landscape and its offerings

Establishing what to say and how to say it, to the right audience, is as important as finding them in the right place at the right time. Rely on research to inform creative concepts that fit with a consumer's mindset. Also understand that less measurable criteria such as lifestyles, cultural differences and relationships with selected channels should be considered in the process. Each campaign is a journey. If you are keen to travel, the Mediaheads 360 team are keen to help you navigate the map!

About MediaHeads 360

MediaHeads 360 are level one BEE media specialists that develop and implement integrated, strategic marketing campaigns across diverse platforms. Our services are inspired by our 360° approach and include idea generation, production, implementation, campaign tracking, syndication, research, branded content, mobile broadcast, non-traditional television and radio campaigns, social media amplification activations and influencer marketing. In addition, we leverage our excellent relationships with media owners to negotiate with platforms across the country.

We **activate** by creating holistic, result-driven campaigns within the right environment. We **captivate** through well-implemented and engaging campaigns with multiple touch points. We **amplify** and optimise your reach and impact with 360° solutions.

For more information, visit www.mediaheads360.co.za

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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