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The big switch over

CJ Services' Sales Director Tom Garner investigates how an increasing proportion of marketing spend is going into the "moment of truth": the time of purchase

For brands and retailers, reaching their target audience used to simply be a case of securing a select number of TV spots on one or two commercial broadcast channels.



Today, consumers and media buyers are overwhelmed by choice, with a plethora of terrestrial, digital channels and on-demand online services. As a result, brand owners are increasingly looking at ways to influence the point of purchase to increase sales.

Few would argue that traditional marketing is having less impact than it once did. In tough economic climates, advertising budgets are always typically among the first to be slashed. However, whilst TV spend is reducing marketing spend is continuing elsewhere, with the money shifting into below-the-line media, because it is so targeted. And nowhere is this more evident than in-store. Whilst most involved in TV would argue that the medium is the best format for building brands and so should be the last thing to be cut from marketing budgets, many brands now openly recognise that PoP is every bit as important as traditional brand building, especially when it

comes to new categories.

Today, it's all about optimising reach and effectiveness of media spend. Research suggests that recall and brand choice are much stronger after these point-of-purchase experiences than after traditional advertising alone. As a result, an increasing proportion of marketing spend is going into promotion at the "moment of truth"; the time of purchase, with research now starting to show that marketing at retail can prove itself in return-on-investment analysis. With developments in both understanding and technology, PoP is now more targeted and engaging than ever and remains the only medium that brings the shopper, the product and the opportunity to buy together in one place.

And to remain front of mind, brands are also concentrating on communicating messages to consumers before they enter the shopping environment, with the area

just outside of the store becoming just as important as traditional aisle and shelf PoP. It's a well-practiced tactic by UK Supermarkets, but less so by high street retailers—in stark contrast to our European counterparts who regularly make use of external poster and digital PoP opportunities to engage shoppers, in addition to store fascia and window displays. The result is an increasingly sophisticated medium that is perfectly placed to fit in with the hectic, time-sensitive lifestyle of modern consumers. Despite this continuing shift in favour of below-the-line marketing, an integrated retail marketing strategy will always win the day, delivering messages that are relevant and stand out in an ever increasing and cluttered arena. So far from current trends signalling the end of TV, it will hopefully see the PoP enjoy a more representative share of marketers media spend.