

Make it digital

 By [Jeanette Grove](#)

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Back in the day, when digital was a lonely silo in most "integrated" agencies, it was the norm to be approached with a poster or a TVC or some billboard artwork, and the inevitable, "So we've got this cool campaign/competition going live and we realised we should probably put something online too.... can you make it digital?" This was usually followed by extensive eye-rolls from the digital creative.



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I say back in the day. But this still happens. Often.

Fortunately, some agencies are beginning to understand the importance of being "fully integrated." What this means is that social and digital (as well as PR and media) are involved in campaigns from the get-go, and not pulled in at the bitter end as an afterthought, when the sudden need for a Facebook post or a GDN banner arises.

So why this need for integration?

1. The consumer has changed (and is changing all the time)

This is a bit of a weird analogy, but you could compare it to someone growing up. From the infant you could merrily spoon-feed with your one-way message, to a stroppy teenager that slams the door in your face and tells you that you don't understand them. Our audience is becoming more and more discerning. You can really no longer get away with pushing glaringly obvious brand messaging – people will call you out on it every single time. Online users want to be entertained; they want content that makes them feel something; stuff that's useful. If you can do all three of those things, you're on the right track.

2. Business problems very often have digital solutions

And then you don't need a TV ad or a billboard to be effective. A lot of successful campaigns are socially driven, and this will increase in the future. You can't just give the social team a print ad and ask them to post it on Facebook. Working out what's best for the client needs to be a collaborative process.



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3. Social and digital are super useful

When it comes to integrated campaigns, social and digital need to be involved from the concept stage. Use your social channels for effective (and cost-effective) target audience research* pre-campaign. Talk to your clever media people for very useful insights and more ways to reach your audience than you can shake a stick at. Use the data you gather throughout for a useful campaign analysis, and figuring out what to do better next time.

*Some proper audience insights could have prevented the recent Pepsi ad backlash - a perfect example of trying to be socially relevant but failing miserably. It's okay to experiment on social platforms. Just don't be daft – your audience will destroy you. Remember, you're having two-way conversations with people, not just feeding them brand message.



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A very real challenge is getting clients, that are still very much entrenched in traditional ways of thinking about advertising, to think about content and campaigns differently: brands being cool on social media don't behave like traditional brands. Have fun. Be authentic.



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The days of working in sad little silos are over. True integration is tricky, and always comes with a lot of meetings, but this is inevitable if you want everyone to be involved from the onset. Some agencies are starting to get it right, and I'm happy to say that Grey is one of them.

ABOUT JEANETTE GROVE

Jeanette is a multi-talented writer, ideas person, video editor, and director. She is fluent in four languages, and has the depth of knowledge and experience to lead social and content teams in telling a brand's stories online.
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