



Local Area Marketing rules in a new world.

Strong LAM strategies are a vital piece in the marketing puzzle. In a world that has become constrained by a universal travel embargo and stay-at-home outlook, the last 12 months have made the local neighborhood much more prominent in the marketing landscape. Will things return to 'normal' in a post pandemic world? The commonly held view is that the world has changed and changed for good, so marketers need to reframe their plans accordingly.

[Recent research](#) by McKinsey shows that supporting local business has become a lot more important to communities in the US – 'driven in part by greater

confidence in their quality and safety.' In the [UK](#), almost two thirds of the population have indicated they are more likely to shop locally than ever before – data that is reflected in a 69% boost in local retail sales during 2020. McKinsey observes that managing such a focus on local business will require marketers 'to rewire their operating model to provide a more granular presence at scale.' This has implications for personalization, trigger based messaging and agile test and learn approaches.

LAM is different.

Successful LAM strategies are not like general marketing - they need to employ slightly different techniques and methods in order to locate, reach, engage and attract local people. But what is 'local'? Loosely speaking, we're talking about a market area

of roughly 50 miles (80 kms), although that can vary significantly - for instance, franchisees may have much more strict operating zones - as will car dealers with their own Prime Marketing Areas (PMAs).



These days, LAM also encompasses local search marketing (aka Local SEO). These techniques ensure that local businesses are pinpointed in search results, yielding location pages and maps (with directions and distances to the business) plus contact details. In the new world, brands are able to update their Google Business profiles to include COVID friendly approaches like online appointments, low touch service, curbside delivery and collection. And positive reviews make a difference when customers are selecting a local supplier – particularly when it comes to handling safety protocols.



Real opportunities at the local level.

For the franchisee or the network operator, the challenges are coming thick and fast. But the great news is that the power of Local Area Marketing has never been more evident.

The online world has become more sophisticated, allowing more targeted and customized interactions with local buyers. Shoppers have access to brand and business information at their fingertips and they are using that information to buy better, locally.

So, for Head Office Marketing teams of large organizations (and Franchisors), there is the unique opportunity to empower their networks (and Franchisees) with the right tools to conduct ruthlessly efficient LAM strategies, turning local prospects into local customers.



But first, the challenge is to understand the local customer - to really understand them. A thorough analysis of the local market to fully comprehend the audience characteristics within each PMA (Prime Marketing Area) is essential to gauge buying behavior. Head offices should work with the local network operator to assist in developing a clear picture of their target. This will lead to a more targeted approach, more effective LAM campaigns and less 'hit and hope' marketing initiatives. Local business operators need access to key marketing data such as:

- **Demographics**
- **Lifestyle**
- **Interests**
- **Media consumption**
- **Community and Sponsorships**
- **Social Community Database**

With a good grasp of the local customer profiles, the next step is to activate and adapt national campaigns for this audience. Effective local marketing which is founded in strategic national campaigns, yet tailors the overarching message to a local audience gives brands the chance to increase their market penetration and increase response rates.

The key here is to deliver an authentic message to the local buyer, but at the same time making sure the branding is not diluted. This delicate balance can be achieved by providing operators within a sales network with the right tools to create powerful LAM campaigns that hinge off a nationwide campaign rolled out by head office marketing teams. Not only does this optimise the sales in local communities, it also mobilizes the sales network, getting them focused on targeted marketing.

THANK YOU FOR SHOPPING LOCAL

For franchise and sales networks that have always driven their own marketing, this can be a challenge and will require a shift in thinking. This is where Brands need to step up to create systems that allow the messaging to be more nuanced across their networks, while existing under the broader brand umbrella. This goes well beyond simple 'Brand Guideline' playbooks and basic instructions on how to set an ad campaign up. The entire local network needs access to a Branded Template system that allows them to customize national campaign assets to suit their local communication needs. Assets available to the network need to cover all elements of a modern campaign including all media (Social/electronic/traditional print and press) together with customizable elements that allow for messaging and visual elements that 'speak' to the local audience.

Typically such systems allow for customization that suits local audiences. For instance, city-based users would naturally opt for imagery that was more relevant for their use – selecting urban backgrounds for their content over rural imagery which might be more suitable for those in country regions. Content can also vary to accommodate different seasons and different product range requirements. For instance, 'Winter Range' clothing will obviously vary with geographic location. In warmer climates, heavy winter clothing is not as relevant as it is in colder regions, so users need the flexibility to tailor product selection for inclusion in locally relevant content creation. Community support content is also an important inclusion in the customization matrix, where users can upload imagery of the sporting teams or community groups their operation supports.



Streamlining campaign rollouts - a challenge for CMOs.

For most CMOs, the 'rollout pain' is the same from industry to industry. From briefing the advertising agency, sitting through concept presentations, the occasional requirement for re-briefing and sitting through more presentations to finally arriving at the concept you will roll out across your network - it's a month-long process. Maybe longer. And that's not to mention the need to get buy in from the network - (which could include key franchise business owners and Business Development Managers/Sales Managers) the complexities of traversing media proposals, modifying the campaign to suit different regions and target markets - the list goes on.

At last, the campaign. Now for the rollout.

Finally, you've arrived at a national marketing strategy around this creative concept, executed an expensive advertising shoot (including stills and moving footage

across all media types) and you may have even created some regional and language specific assets to assist the local teams in your network to execute the marketing strategy. Now it's time for the rollout – distributing the campaign across your marketing network with efficiency and vision.

This is where the challenges of ensuring your campaign is executed consistently in local marketing become evident. The balance of strategic marketing thinking on a larger scale and the adaptability and application on a local level is one of the hardest aspects for CMOs to achieve. The forward-thinking ones will look to incorporate a local market strategy with a strategic implementation program – but rarely is there as much attention to implementation compared to the effort put into creative development.



Network usage and application.

So you distribute your files across the network (together with a sales bulletin outlining the key points of the campaign). Files now dispatched, you wait with anticipation of how the market will respond to your strategy – albeit with a certain trepidation around how the various local areas will apply the campaign within their market and how they will utilize the assets.

And this is where the problems begin.

Approvals, workflows and asset management.

Firstly, there's a difference between distributing the files and assets to your network and systematically sharing them with clear approvals processes and usage controls.

To do this manually from a marketing office located in a distant part of the country can be tricky. If you're relying on good faith from the network and your team 'policing' the campaign execution from afar, what you're likely to experience is significant variance from the campaign during rollout and local area application. Apart from watering down your umbrella concept, this

can open you up to serious Rights Management issues – particularly on photographic assets that involve professional talent. There is a real likelihood that there will be secondary costs after advertisements with sensitive assets hit the market.

Working with many brands across varied industries, MyAdbox has encountered these problems regularly. The asset management issues are seemingly never-ending, files are shared with little or no transparency around where they've been shared, when they've been shared, nor who they been shared with. Brands can lose complete visibility on assets and find it difficult to report on their effectiveness and usage. Rights management can add further to the complexity, where imagery being applied to advertising puts you at risk of potential legal action around misuse (unintentional or otherwise).

The approval and workflow processes can be even more complex: Who's authorized to make the call on application of assets and content in that region? Why didn't Head Office see how local businesses had changed the visuals? Who approved the new headlines they're now using in that State?

SALE



LAM creative interpretation.

As if the task of launching your nationwide campaign isn't difficult enough.

Now for the even more monumental task of ensuring the campaign you've chosen doesn't get watered down and reworked in Local Area Markets. The big question is, how do you ensure the integrity of the concept and your brand position in far-flung regional markets?

Return On Investment.

Measuring ROI is a challenge for all Marketing teams. But effectively monitoring campaign rollout, engagement and accurately gauging performance in very different geographic markets is nearly impossible without software.

There are platforms out there right now that control and distribute the ever-growing asset management database. They also enable users to create local content that is founded in the principles of the overarching global brand position and provide diagnostics that are key to analyzing ROI.

There are end-to-end solutions to all of the above brand and campaign challenges.

National and Local Area Marketing made easy with Brand Management software.

Forward thinking marketers will look to incorporate a local market strategy with a tactical implementation program. CMOs who are drawing on new technologies to control their brand and their marketing rollouts are benefiting the most. In particular, we're talking about Brand Management software, which has made life a lot easier for marketing teams. It has also empowered their networks rather than force-fitting marketing that has little flexibility to resonate at a local level.

DAMs - A single source of truth.

Brand Management software must incorporate a sophisticated Digital Asset Management (DAM) Platform. With the right DAM, brands are able to completely organize and distribute media files to their entire network in a centralized portal. Within this platform, they can deliver and control which assets are downloaded and used within their network. Rights managed imagery is controlled, sharing of files is monitored, and approval workflows are established to ensure imagery is applied correctly across all

advertising and communication collateral. The DAM you select must allow asset version control, metadata tagging for search functionality and sorting, Rights Management permission protocols, expiration and activation controls, archiving procedures and more.

Apart from the sheer logic of storing, controlling and distributing your assets in one platform, there is also the enormous time savings achieved with a good DAM. [Studies](#) have shown that without a DAM, nearly 20% of a marketing team's time is lost in the hunt for digital assets and the endless back and forth with network users around which assets they can access and use. That's a lot of wasted time if you extrapolate that number across a marketing team.

Remote sharing of centralized assets has always had a place in nationwide networks of multiple offices. But with many workers having to relocate home during 2020, the ability to search, manage, share, organize and store assets remotely has become significantly more important. Regardless of the extent to which work swings back to the office, remote access to assets is now a key driver of workforce productivity.





Empowering the network to create content.

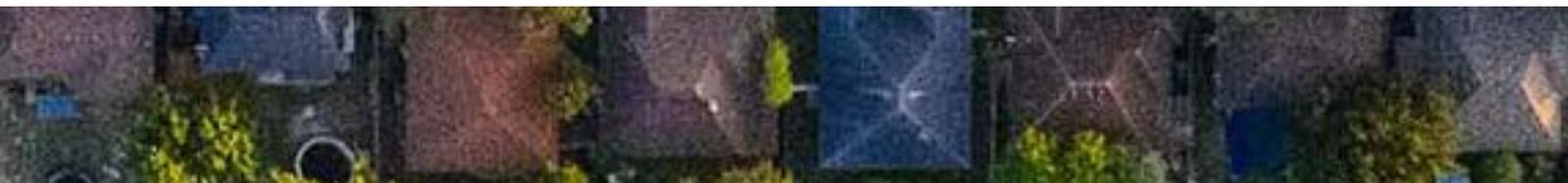
The second, equally important aspect of Brand Management software is a Content Creation system that rolls the campaign into editable templates for all network users. Sometimes known as an Automated Ad Creation system – it is a formidable component of Brand Management software, ensuring that local marketing teams are creating content that is 100% on brand, 100% of the time.

Good Content Creation systems are capable of producing content into all mediums including TV, social, digital, video, print, outdoor etc. Importantly, this software will also incorporate in-built workflow approval processes that can be implemented from a macro brand level right down to a Local Area Marketing level. This will give brands complete control and visibility on how advertising is working (or not working) against sales results and provide them with the intelligence to adjust accordingly.

Tailor the local message for extra impact.

Another important element to consider in selecting a Brand Management platform is its capacity to automate processes that allow users to create content in multiple languages and character sets. There are pockets of our retail landscape that speak English as a second language, and lateral thinking Local Area Marketers will identify the opportunities to sell to them in their own language.

With a templated content creation system this is an easy task - strategic variations on content can be made swiftly and put into market fast, providing you with the capacity to conduct A/B testing on this content to lift your conversion rates.





Security is paramount.

Last, but not least, is the ever-present issue of data security and privacy. Serious Brand Management Software will safeguard your brand at all times, with robust cloud-based solutions using a network of servers that incorporate the highest security levels and are scalable to cater for growth. Security details like Single Sign On authentication and SSL Certificates ensuring encryption in data transfer are also important.

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While it's true that restrictions in travel during 2020 have accentuated the shift to 'local' – there is also a new ['sense of community'](#) that has been brought about by the pandemic. It has undeniably changed the way people shop and the implications for strong and consistent branding strategies that can cut through are significant.

Above the Line messaging is more important than ever - in uncertain times consumers are leaning towards brands that are strong and true. But equally, this messaging needs to integrate with a local strategy that speaks to community audiences. Marketing teams that are yet to implement Brand Management Software that unleashes the brand and empowers Local Area Marketing networks are leaving substantial gains on the table.

This White Paper was brought to you by MyAdbox – providers of leading Brand Management Software used by some of the world's biggest companies. **For more information around introducing the MyAdbox platform into your business, contact Andrew Baker – abaker@myadbox.com or visit myadbox.com**

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