I love media so much...

A guide to beginning a job search in media.

by Stephanie M. Buzan
Somebody give me a calculator and a pencil with a good eraser.

This guide is for the person who is primarily interested in a job in media and wants to know more. I have included my career objective so you have an understanding of my point of view when I put this handbook together.

My career objective is to find a job in a mid-size to large advertising agency's media department where I can learn about all facets of media including broadcast, print, transit, outdoor and special advertising opportunities. I am eager to crunch numbers and follow media trends.

All of the information in this guide has been compiled during my classroom activities, internships, interviews, reading and research.

The sole purpose of these pages is to help get you started in the right direction researching a career and planning your job search. Don't stop after page 21. Pick up another book and another book and another book. Information is power. It will get you where you want to be.
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The Job
What do those media planner/buyers do?

A media planner/buyer is responsible for providing detailed rational and justification for media decisions to the client. Decisions such as how many prospects need to be reached, the media to use, which vehicles, how often each prospect should see an ad, the markets that the ads should be placed, when the ads should appear and how the money should be allocated.

To do this, a knowledge base of marketing, research and the creative strategy is important. The media plan is one part of a communication plan. So, to incorporate and integrate a well devised plan to meet the client's marketing objectives, the media planner/buyer must be able to read a situational analysis and know what the media objectives and strategies should be. Also, a good understanding of the relationships between reach and frequency are vital to strategic decisions.

Here is a quick look at the skills needed for a media planner/buyer. You must be right and left brained. (Analytical and creative.) A media planner/buyer must be able to work well with numbers and love it. Organization is the name of the game. There are many details to constantly keep in order. Having an aggressive and progressive mind is important for the nature of the business. The media are always changing.
Other options in media.

Sales Representative
A media planner/buyer must buy from someone. That person is a sales representative for whatever medium: television, radio, magazines, outdoor, newspaper, etc. The job in sales requires travelling to check on various accounts in a defined territory. Each representative is given promotional kits to help with the presentation.

Buying Service
A media planner/buyer doesn't always have to be in an advertising agency's media department. There are media buying services that do exclusively media buying. The client does the creative in-house or hires an advertising agency.

In-house Agency
This job is similar to an agency media planner/buyer. The main difference is the number of clients – one, the company you work for. The media department works hand-in-hand with the marketing department on a daily basis, concentrating on one set of marketing objectives.
Let's talk money.


From a study on salaries, 42.3% of advertising professionals feel media planners are underpaid. There is good money in advertising if you're good.

Of course, your salary will depend on the geographical location due to the cost-of-living. It is important to have a general idea what the industry standards are from entry-level positions to upper management. A media planner/buyer's average salary is $21,000 - $25,000.

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<tr>
<th>Media Buying</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media Director</td>
<td>$34,000 - $45,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sr. Media Buyer</td>
<td>$31,000 - $41,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media Buyer</td>
<td>$20,500 - $27,000</td>
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<td>Entry-level</td>
<td>$17,000 - $21,000</td>
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<th>Media Selling</th>
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<td>Newspaper Advertising Manager</td>
<td>$33,000 - $37,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magazine Sales Promotion</td>
<td>$25,000 - $45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine Advertising Director</td>
<td>$35,000 - $100,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>TV General Sales Manager</td>
<td>$63,000 (average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV Assistant Sales Manager</td>
<td>$45,000 (average)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Radio General Sales Manager</td>
<td>$29,000 - $75,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entry-level sales</td>
<td>$20,000 (average)</td>
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Where can I work?

Where you work is based on many different decisions of your own. You may wish to work in a certain area of the country or even a specific market. If you want to work with the "big bad boys of advertising," New York, Chicago and Los Angeles are the cities you need to concentrate on.

The Top 10 Advertising Agencies in Chicago

1. Leo Burnett Co.
2. Foote Cone & Belding Communications Inc.
3. DDB Needham Worldwide Inc.
4. J. Walter Thompson USA
5. Tatham/RSCG
6. Ogilvy & Mather Chicago
7. BBDO Chicago
8. Campbell-Mithun-Esty
10. Young & Rubicam Chicago
The Job Search: Getting Started
The key to getting your foot in the door.

Advertised jobs in trade publications and newspapers account for 25% of all job openings. The other 75% are part of the hidden job market. While it is important to read the help wanted sections of the newspapers and trade publications, the majority of your time and money should be spent penetrating the hidden job market. Networking is the key to finding these jobs.

Networking is the interpersonal method of gathering information and advice from experts to assist you in your job search. Successful networking communicates your qualifications to potential employers by demonstrating your capabilities within an organization. Your network should consist of friends, family, distant relatives, teachers, doctors, local business people and ministers. These are only a few. You never know who might have a cousin working for the agency you dream about.

Devise your job search around a careful plan to penetrate the hidden job market. Remember, your job search should concentrate on one factor – helping an employer solve his or her hiring problem.
Your approach must be honest, sincere, subtle and professional. Be yourself. When contacting people, let them know you are conducting a job search, but emphasize that you are only doing research. Ask them for a few moments of their time to discuss your information needs. This puts the person at ease, so they don't think you are asking them for a job. Putting them in the position of expert-advisor immediately flatters them. Therefore, they are more willing to meet with you.

Begin with your core contact list of friends and family. Each person will give you about two to three referrals. You should continually develop new contacts while maintaining communication with prior contacts. Ask them to keep you in mind if they hear of anyone who might be interested in your qualifications. Try to contact one to three new people everyday. Over a two-month period, your efforts could result in 1,000 new contacts and referrals!

**Prerequisites for success**

- Patience
- Perseverance
- Positive attitude
Are you just another fish?

What makes you unique?

Your USP – Unique Selling Proposition.

You need to define your USP. This is the way to market yourself differently from the competition. This is exactly the way we market products. They have benefits and features, then it is determined what makes them different from the other product lines.

For example, all laundry detergents clean clothes, but Cheer "washes clothes in all temperatures." That's why it's "all-temperature Cheer." So find your USP and market yourself.

Be a shark!
Who am I?

Understand yourself. You need to think about a career direction that coincides with your values, personality and skills. Recognizing your skills requires evaluation of your technical, functional, transferable and personal abilities. Technical skills are specific skills such as computer training in computer science. Functional and transferable skills are related to job tasks that can be performed at any job. Personal skills deal with the way you adapt to a particular work environment.

You also need to evaluate your values and priorities. Some considerations include salary, job security, power, authority, leisure time, independence and working with people. Decide whether these are very important, somewhat important or not important.

Planning and setting goals can put you where you want to be. Short-range (one year) goals and long-range (five year) goals should be set for your career and for personal gain. Be sure to state them in a clear and concise manner. Goals should only be written with you in mind. Make them realistic and attainable within a set time frame. Remember, they can always be reevaluated and adjusted.
The Job Search: The Tools
Your Resume. Not just *any* piece of paper.

Attend workshops and learn about functional and chronological resumes. It is important to understand the ingredients of a "formal" or "standard" resume. Read examples. Look at different layouts and styles. Prepare one for yourself. THEN, just like advertising, put a *twist* to it.

Take your USP and run with it. Make sure your resume has the standard information that a prospective employer would need, and present it in a manner that makes someone *want* to read it.

Be careful not to do a gimmick – this will only appeal to a few people. Just do something that is different. *Make yourself stand out from the clutter.*

30 Second Rule. Employers do a 30 second scan of each resume, so you should make it easy for them to read. Well, rules are made to be broken.

Stephanie's 30 Rule. Make them spend 3.0 minutes enjoying your resume, and then 30 minutes showing everyone in the department, then in 3.0 days, call them. (That's, of course, if they haven't already called you.)

Sell yourself. You only get one chance to make a first impression.
Some ABCs of letter writing.

Three Ps of letter writing
Practice
Personalize
Prompt

Writing skills are very important for cover letters, thank you letters and "I'll call you" letters. These letters may also be the first impression an employer has of you. It is always an opportunity to show them your writing ability and your professionalism.

Tips.
1. Write thank you letters no later than 48 hours after the interview or phone conversation.
2. Be clear and concise. Use journalistic style.
3. Always have the name and title correct. Most importantly spelling and pronunciation.
4. Use business style format.
5. Always type, with no typos.

Be sure to attend workshops on writing cover letters. Read several examples. Again, use your own style and sell your USP.
What do I do when I'm sitting in their office?

Well, your foot's in the door. Now sell yourself. The interview. There are two kinds, informational interviews and formal job interviews.

An informational interview is when you set up an appointment to meet with an expert in your field of study. It is part of the networking process. It gives you an opportunity to ask for information and advice without pressuring the person for a job.

Advantages to informational interviews and networking.
1. You are less likely to encounter rejection, because you aren't directly asking for a job.
2. You meet with people in higher level positions.
3. You encounter little competition.
4. You go directly to the people who have influence in the hiring process.
5. You are likely to be invited to job interviews based upon the referrals you receive.

5 Rs to receive during informational interviews.
1. Reveal useful information and advice.
2. Referrals to others for additional information and advice.
3. Read and
4. Revise your resume.
5. Remember you for future reference.
The formal job interview... Tim Leahy, a recruiter from Leo Burnett, shared these tips during the 1992 Chicago Ad Club Career Day.

1. Turn your nervousness into confidence, not cockiness.
2. Enjoy yourself. Sell yourself. Support what you learned from your experiences. Have some depth to your experience with three or four example prepared. Emphasis what impacts you made to organizations you were involved in.
3. Be enthusiastic.
4. Be focused and concise. Don't go on and on. Listen to what is being asked. It is okay to have silence. Think first, then answer.
5. Be ready to defend you point of view. Hear rational.
6. Be honest and sincere. Know your shortcomings and what you need to work on. Show qualities and traits that you have.
7. Don’t over rehearse answers.
8. Take the ball, when given the opportunity. Don't have your own agenda.
9. Be analytical. Not only answer what and how, but also why.
10. Ask insightful questions that you really want to know. Prove your were listening by going back to something previously talked about.
The Next Step
Where to read more.

**What Color is Your Parachute?**
by Richard Nelson Bolles
This is an annual guide to job hunting and career changing. You can learn a systematic approach to the job search.

**Networking Your Way to Job & Career Success**
by Ronald L. Krannich Ph. D. & Caryl Rae Krannich Ph.D.
This is a guide to tapping into the hidden job market by using networking. You will learn how to use and maintain your network.

**Graduating to the 9 to 5 World**
by Jerry Bouchard
This book is written so college graduates know what to expect, so they won't be shocked at what awaits them. You can find out the hows and whys to this difficult transition.

**How to Break into the Media Profession : Getting that First Job in Publishing, Broadcasting, Public Relations, or Advertising**
By Caroline A. Zimmermann
This book gives you step-by-step instructions to getting you on the right path. You can discover what companies are looking for and the inside track to climbing the corporate ladder.
And more.

*Making it in the Media Professions*

by Leonard Mogel

This book discusses opportunities in newspapers, magazines, books, television, radio, the movies and advertising. It will give you realistic information about how the industry functions, various job descriptions, salaries, breaking into the job market and career paths.

*MEDIAWEEK*
published by A/M/S Communications

This weekly magazine covers media trends and people in media. Newsworthy media accounts and buys are also reported.

*ADWEEK*
published by A/M/S Communications

All aspects of the advertising business are covered weekly. Special editorial sections discuss the people in the business as well as accounts up for review.

*Advertising Age*
published by Crain Communications

This weekly tabloid has articles about the advertising industry. It also has interviews with people in the different areas of the business.
Good Luck!

This may be the last page, but it really is just the beginning.