

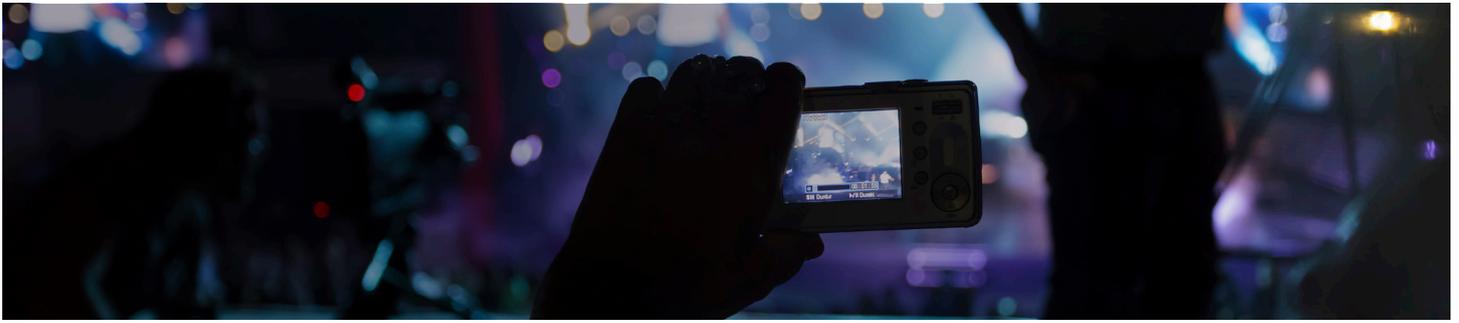
Executive Opinion

Javier Campos, EMEA CIO at GroupM

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

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Javier explains more...



Javier Campos is EMEA Chief Information Officer (CIO) at GroupM, one of the world's leading media agencies, owned by global marketing and advertising group WPP. We spoke to Javier about the growing need for effective data management in the media industry.

Before 'Big Data'

The media industry has changed significantly in recent years and continues to do so, due to the emergence of new media consumption types such as tablet and mobile, the generation of massive amounts of user data, location services, programmatic buying, and many new business models. "Our business is undergoing great changes and will look quite different ten years from now. In the past the advertising industry was all about volume; the more advertising you bought the better rates you could achieve, but this is now changing," explains Campos. "New channels have also led to huge growth in the volume of consumer data which can be utilised to gain insight into consumer behaviour." This means marketers can work with a much more complete rich dataset rather than a small representative sampling. Today, the key is being able to manage and use that data cost effectively to drive crucial insights about the way individuals are consuming media.

"Effective data management enables us to plan, process and analyse the success of an advertising campaign better than ever before," says Campos. "This means that as an industry we are able to plan our strategies and campaigns more effectively as a result of this new data."

Data management challenges

There are challenges to overcome, however. One of the main issues is the sheer volume of the data involved; the world's per capita capacity to store information has doubled roughly every three years since the 1980s. This volume, alongside the complexities of modelling complex consumer behaviours, represents a challenge for the entire industry.

The global nature of organisations such as GroupM presents yet another challenge. While the high-level data may look the same,

the reality is that in-depth local data varies greatly. This is due to the fact that each office tends to have its own systems in place, often labelling data entities differently. This lack of uniformity can be problematic, making it difficult to have effective control of the master data.

Data quality is another major problem, as many organisations have traditionally used workflows such as spreadsheets to input data. This has meant a high degree of manual intervention, which can lead to errors and inconsistent data.

Clear objectives are key to achieving business benefits

To avoid spending money on the wrong approach, it is crucial to be clear on exactly what you are trying to measure before starting any Big Data project. "In the advertising industry we are essentially trying to model human behaviour, which is quite complex. We had to set clear objectives and find the right model for what we wanted to achieve." Establishing reduced proof of concepts – with its associated proven value – before starting any larger project is highly advisable.

As well as the obvious benefits of improving business efficiency and campaign effectiveness, effective data management can also help businesses uncover potential revenue streams or products. Campos comments, "In our experience, Big Data is not linear like most other IT projects. On one hand, the revenue potential can be far greater than the upfront spend, but on the other hand you can spend a relatively large amount of money and obtain hardly any return."

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**Javier Campos
EMEA CIO
GroupM**





Go to the experts

One of the main challenges GroupM faced with its Big Data project was finding staff with the required technical expertise; data managers are increasingly in demand and hiring someone internally was a challenge. “We needed someone with technical expertise, best practice and the right knowledge, so for us the best option was to use an expert third party like Hitachi Consulting (formally Information Management Group Ltd). to help us see the project through,” says Campos.

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