

# Exploring the Media, Part 2

## Beyond Traditional

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Increasingly, advertisers have come to realize that traditional media are not as effective in conveying messages to consumers as they once had been. This is true for various reasons, including consumers taking greater control of their media consumption, as well as their ever-busier lives making it harder to reach them through the traditional media covered in Chapter 4. At the same time, many advances in technology have led to the development and growth of several new forms of advertising communications. In this chapter we will explore some of these less traditional disciplines that today's media specialist needs to know about. Once relegated to specialized units of divisions within an agency, these communication forms are now considered as important (and in some cases more important) than the 30-second TV commercial or full-page magazine ad. We call them "beyond traditional." They include point-of-purchase (retail or in-store), sponsorship, word of mouth, Yellow Pages, mobile and social networks. They encompass forms that have been around for decades as well as those just recently introduced. They are tangible or intangible, electronic or not, focused on consumer or trade audiences. And while each brings its own distinct set of benefits and drawbacks to the consumer and the advertiser, what they all share is a different way of conveying brand messages that go beyond simply displaying an ad in a medium.

### **Yellow Pages: When Your Fingers Do the Typing**

Although placed in the Beyond Traditional category, Yellow Pages advertising has been in existence for almost as long as the telephone directory itself. Offering advertisers (and consumers) another type of classified advertising, the Yellow Pages generated nearly \$14 billion in advertising revenues in 2008. There are nearly 7,000 different Yellow Pages directories in the U.S., distinguished not just by location (Chicago versus New York) but also by target (the "silver" pages targeting senior citizens or the gay/lesbian directory for that consumer group). This can sometimes make

it harder for advertisers because of the lack of standardization in terms of ad sizes or guidelines.

People use the Yellow Pages to look up information and services. More than one-fifth of the time, the search is related to business needs. The top three categories that people turn to are food, dining out and entertainment, and automotive. The top three headings in Yellow Pages directories in terms of the number of listings are restaurants, physicians and surgeons, and auto parts.

According to Mediamark Research, Inc. (MRI), 11 percent of the population has used the Yellow Pages in the past seven days, while more than half (57 percent) have done so within the past 12 months. But 61 percent of the 4 percent of the country who used a moving van in the past year used the Yellow Pages to look up information about moving and storage, as did 27 percent of the 99 percent of the country who ordered a pizza. The “average” profile is someone who is between the ages of 25 and 49, has been to college, and has an annual household income of \$60,000 or more.<sup>1</sup>

Within the past few years there have been some new developments in Yellow Pages advertising. First, the industry has attempted to attract more national advertisers, who accounted for just 15 percent of total revenues in 2004. For most consumers, the Yellow Pages are usually considered a means of finding local information. In 2004 the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) hired one company to provide measurement for a new syndicated Yellow Pages service that uses telephone surveys to estimate usage of the medium and recall overall and in key product categories.<sup>2</sup>

Today, there are other places to go for Yellow Pages information. Most prominent among these is the Internet, where sites such as switchboard.com or 411.com let people search for what or who they want, online. For most people, however, the Internet and printed copies of the Yellow Pages are not mutually exclusive. One survey found that 80 percent of the people who had shopped online in an average month had also looked at the printed version in that same timeframe.

The most popular categories looked up online are given in Exhibit 5.1.

The availability of color in the Yellow Pages has helped some advertisers gain additional attention from consumers. In a study conducted by Fernandez and Rosen, ads were seen as more informative and noticeable when color was included.<sup>3</sup> Research by Laband and Abernathy looked at the impact of different sized Yellow Pages ads and, as expected, larger size ads generate more response, though not in an exponential fashion, while the number of competitive advertisers under the same heading has a negative impact on response.<sup>4</sup>

Exhibit 5.1 Top Categories Searched in Yellow Pages Websites

Rank	Category
1	Restaurants
2	Physicians & Surgeons
3	Hotels
4	Auto Repair and Service
5	Florists

Source: Yellow Pages Association, 2008.

### Benefits of Yellow Pages to Advertisers

The two key benefits for advertisers of the Yellow Pages are consumer selection and measurable response.

#### Consumer Selection

Unlike many media, especially traditional forms, consumers are almost always *choosing* to look at ads in the Yellow Pages. Whether it is simply an alphabetical listing of plumbers' names and addresses, or the display ads that appear on the pages, the person whose drain is blocked is seeking out the ad in order to solve a problem or find information—so that message is desired by the consumer, leading to greater impact.

#### Measurable Response

The fastest way to determine if your Yellow Pages ad is working is to measure the response. Whether in print or online, the use of distinct phone numbers or web addresses allows the advertiser to know precisely how many calls or emails he received directly as a result of placing that ad. That makes it a lot easier to calculate his return on investment.

### Drawbacks of Yellow Pages to Advertisers

Drawbacks for Yellow Pages advertising include clutter and infrequent usage.

#### Clutter

When you open almost any page in a Yellow Pages book, or search within a Yellow Pages website such as 411.com or yp.com, you are likely to be rapidly overwhelmed. You want to order a pizza? Which of the 50 listings

should you choose? How do you find the best auto body shop when your car's bumper gets damaged? Online, you are either looking for a specific company (in which case you will really just be looking for a phone number to call or website to go to), or if you are in need of a particular type of business, you'll search within a category, and likely face the same kind of dilemma as on the printed page.

### ***Infrequent Usage***

The downside of the Yellow Pages medium always being there is that you generally only turn to it at a time of need. Unless your carpets need cleaning, you won't turn to that page filled with carpet cleaning companies. So while it is a very measurable medium, the measures may show such infrequent usage that it is questionable whether the investment is worthwhile. But it is typically a low-cost medium, so that even the few calls or sales generated may be cost-effective advertising.

### **Retail: Closest to the Point of Purchase**

Just like Yellow Pages advertising, the notion of placing advertising messages inside stores is not especially new. Signs and promotions have been available in stores for more than 25 years. Today, however, more and more advertisers are including in-store media explicitly in the media plan, acknowledging this as advertising rather than simply a promotional expense. Advertisers have doubled their spending in this venue since 2004, although it still only represents about 6 percent of total advertising spend. The in-store industry moniker covers various forms such as point of purchase, point of sale, or below the line. Indeed, research suggests that nearly nine in ten consumers make an unplanned purchase when they are in a store.<sup>5</sup>

One of the main reasons for the increased popularity of this media type is that it is the most measurable of all media. Thanks to electronic scanning at the cash register, advertisers are able to see what happens at the checkout counter when their messages are in the store. Some of the most popular locations for in-store messages are on the shelf displays, on TV screens at the checkout, or "floor signs" next to the freezer cabinet or in the aisles. In addition, messages or coupons can be generated at the checkout counter when people pay for their goods, tailored to the purchases that have just been made. This form of advertising has moved from grocery stores to a wide variety of retail outlets, large and small, including Wal-Mart and Einstein Bagels.

In-store advertising effectively eliminates the time between seeing the message and buying the item. Drawbacks include the possibility that the target misses the ad somehow, either by not paying attention or by its

being covered up in some way. In addition, in-store advertising is not especially cheap. It tends to have its greatest effect among current brand users rather than persuading buyers of the competitor's brand to switch. The time for message exposure is very short, so messages tend to focus on price and be extremely brief.

In 2008, the industry tried to launch an in-store measurement service, using Nielsen to capture consumer exposure to in-store advertising offerings. The venture, known as PRISM (Pioneering Research for an In-Store Metric) involved major marketers such as Procter & Gamble and Wal-Mart. The venture failed to gather sufficient industry support, however, and was shut down in early 2009.

There is fairly limited research available on the impact of retail advertising, though it is becoming a more popular area of study as recognition grows that the variety of media forms within the store provide interesting opportunities to better understand what influences consumer purchases.<sup>6</sup>

### **Benefits of Retail Advertising to Advertisers**

Retail advertising offers the benefits of being closest to purchase and visual stimulation.

#### ***Closest to Purchase***

There is no form of communication closer to the point of purchase than in-store advertising. Seeing ads for grocery products in the grocery store or sporting equipment in the sporting goods store can act as the final reminder to consumers of why they should purchase that particular brand rather than any other, even if they have seen many TV or magazine ads for the competing brands right up until the moment they stepped into the store to make the purchase.

#### ***Visual Stimulation***

Although a retail ad can be as simple as a sign with the brand name placed at the end of an aisle, more often than not it is something more striking and distinctive. It could be a life-size picture of a Sara Lee frozen cheesecake staring at you on the freezer door, or a three-dimensional version of a Nike running shoe sitting on the display table of Sports Authority. In either case, such forms of communication are difficult to miss and may make a crucial impression on consumers minutes before they make the purchase decision.

## Drawbacks of Retail Advertising to Advertisers

The drawbacks to retail advertising are that it may come too late to be useful, and it can be costly.

### Lack of Influence

Although proponents of retail advertising claim that its location is inherently persuasive to consumers, there are others who argue that at the point someone walks into a store, their mind is already made up and no number of pretty pictures or displays will make a difference to her decision. If you go to the grocery store to buy Kraft cheese, will the picture of Sargento's brand in front of your face really make you switch brands? There has been too little research on this to know for sure, but it is something to consider before embarking on a widespread retail campaign.

### Costly to Implement

It may not seem like it would cost much to put stickers on freezer cabinets or create cardboard cutouts of products. And it is not. The expense comes in the form of "allowances" that must typically be paid to the retailer to allow those items to be placed in the store. While such costs may come out of a promotions budget within the marketing mix, rather than the advertising budget, you as the media specialist should know how much they would cost before recommending them to your client.

## Sponsorship: Making Your Mark in the Mind

As advertisers have had to work harder to reach their target consumers, one of the beyond-traditional forms of communication they have turned to is sponsorship. This involves paying an organization a fee to put a company or brand name at the head of an event or as the key sponsor of that event. Examples include State Farm Insurance's sponsorship of an Ice Skating competition, to Visa's sponsorship of the U.S. Olympic team, to the renaming of sports stadiums after companies (e.g., Pepsi Center in Denver, Philips Arena in Atlanta, and Staples Center in Los Angeles). The practice of sponsorship is now estimated to be worth \$9.5 billion.

The majority of sponsorship spending (69 percent) goes toward sports-related events, followed by entertainment tours and attractions (9 percent), and festivals, fairs and annual events (8 percent). A rapidly growing area within the sponsorship area is cause-related marketing, where companies link up with non-profit groups and become "sponsors" of their causes. Examples include Avon's support of an annual three-day walk to

raise funds for breast cancer research, and Tanqueray's sponsorship of a bike ride each summer to raise money for AIDS. Even though sponsorship is generally considered to be undertaken to reach a national audience, there are often significant local opportunities too. Sponsorship of local sports teams can enhance a business' reputation in those particular markets, while companies that choose to sponsor a local annual festival often receive positive coverage in the local media. There are also benefits to be gained by sponsoring grassroots or community festivals and fairs, especially among ethnic audiences.

The reasons companies choose sponsorship instead of (or more likely in addition to) traditional advertising are many. They include the opportunity for heightened visibility for their brand name, thereby increasing the chances of shaping positive consumer attitudes ("I like ice skating, therefore since State Farm sponsors a skating competition, I like State Farm more too"). Sometimes, sponsorship works well for smaller companies. While they may have smaller ad budgets compared to bigger competitors, their sponsorship of a key event or attraction can make them seem an equal in consumers' eyes. MillerCoors Brewing Company spends far less on advertising than Anheuser-Busch, but when both companies are sponsoring racing cars at Nascar events, the viewer or attendee does not see one company as a "better" or necessarily bigger sponsor than another. One of the potential downsides of sponsorship was seen in 2002 when the giant energy trading company Enron found itself bankrupt and subject to numerous criminal investigations for its financial practices. The company's earlier purchase of the naming rights for Houston's arena, now called the Enron arena, no longer seems as smart a decision as before.

In economic downturns, however, sponsorship can suffer. For example, Nascar, one of the sports that is most heavily sponsored by corporations, started seeing many of the 400 firms that had spent \$1.5 billion as race sponsors try to pull out during the 2008 recession partly as simple cost-cutting measure, and partly out of fear that, as attendance declined, their logo-covered cars would be seen by fewer people.<sup>7</sup>

The media are getting more actively involved in creating sponsorships for advertisers. *Cooking Light* magazine created a "healthy" house filled with products of its sponsoring companies, such as Reebok (exercise equipment), Lennox Industries (air conditioning), and Whirlpool (appliances). The magazine promoted the house in its pages, and attracted thousands of visitors to its Birmingham, Alabama location. After the promotion ended, the magazine was able to sell the home privately. Sponsorships are not only aimed at adults these days. Procter & Gamble sponsored a shopping mall tour featuring the singer Rihanna to promote the launch of a teen body spray brand, Secret. A MySpace page was created, linked to the tour and the brand, which let people purchase concert tickets and get product information.<sup>8</sup>



## Benefits of Sponsorship to Advertisers

For advertisers, sponsorship offers the opportunity to surround consumers with a brand and enhance brand image and associations.

### *Surrounding the Consumer*

Whether you attend the Sprint Cup Nascar race or watch it on TV, you can't help but notice that Allstate is the sponsor. From the brief "billboard" messages that appear on the TV airing, to the signage at the racetrack to the mention of the insurance company every time the race is talked about, Allstate's sponsorship surrounds the consumer. Promotions tied to the sponsored event can enhance the value of the sponsorship even more, such as online competitions to meet a Nascar driver. All work to connect the company with the sponsorship in a way that, it is hoped, will lead the consumer to feel more positively about that brand.

### *Enhanced Image and Associations*

When you see or hear that Bank of America has sponsored your city's annual marathon, the desired response by the advertiser is that there is a positive association made between event and brand. That is, consumers may be grateful for the corporate support of a charity race or pleased that "their" chosen brand or company has decided to associate itself with an event or sport or charity that they like. Research has indeed demonstrated that such positive associations do in fact lead to greater purchase consideration.

## Drawbacks of Sponsorship to Advertisers

A mismatch between sponsoring company and event, and imprecise measurement are two of the drawbacks for advertisers involved with sponsorships.

### *Sponsor Mismatch*

For sponsorship to truly make a difference, it needs to change a consumer attitude or behavior, or influence opinions on the brand or company. If not done right, the sponsorship can actually backfire. Having a cooking festival, for example, sponsored by an indigestion product might lead people to feel worse, not only about the festival ("these recipes will give me indigestion") but also potentially about the brand ("Are they encouraging me to eat so much I feel ill?").

## *Imprecise Measurement*

You can tell sponsorship works—when it works! Event attendance may increase, perceptions may improve, sales may even go up. But proving that it was caused by the sponsorship is a tricky proposition. Some research has been done to assess the financial fundamentals of a company employing sponsorship, but even here, it can be challenging to determine cause and effect. Did the company's fortunes change due to the sponsorship, or was the sponsorship the result of the company's situation?<sup>9</sup>

## Word of Mouth: Who Says What?

While considered by many to not be a true "medium," per se, word of mouth is becoming an increasingly popular way for advertisers to promote their brands. It is sometimes referred to as "viral" marketing, using the metaphor of spreading good words about a brand the way that a virus can spread among people. In particular, products that are new or are targeting specific groups may lend themselves to this form of promotion. At its simplest, word of mouth involves getting the (positive) word out to people who are considered opinion leaders in a particular category, so that they will then influence others to consider the brand. Some marketers take it further, and plant people in key venues where the brand is being used (such as a new vodka in a bar), and have them talk to the people around them about the wonders of this product. Those consumers are unaware that the individual has been paid to promote the brand, so critics have complained that this is a deceptive, or even unethical practice.

The use of word of mouth marketing has spread to cell phones. The goal of viral mobile messages is to have the message spread from person to person. Some ringtones have actually spread this way, particularly among teens and young adults. However, there is the danger that these messages will be considered "junk" or "spam," and ignored or discarded.

Perhaps the most important venue for word-of-mouth advertising is online, on blogs (originally referred to as "web logs," then abbreviated). Whatever the topic, someone somewhere will have created a web page and filled it with content that others can read and, in most cases, comment on. For some these are an online equivalent of a written diary, while others like to share their knowledge on a topic (electronics, fashion, finance). Advertisers are only starting to determine how best to put paid messages on these sites, whether overtly through banner ads, or clandestinely by paying the author to promote an item on their blog.

## Benefits of Word of Mouth to Advertisers

The primary benefits of word of mouth are consumer-driven communications and minimal cost.

### Consumer-Driven Communications

When people are asked if they are affected at all by advertising, a majority always responds no. But when questioned on what made them choose a particular product or brand, the answer is often the recommendation of a friend or relative. This benefit, the fact that the “advertisement” was, in effect, from someone they know, clearly works to the advantage of word of mouth.

### Minimal Cost

Due to the viral nature of word of mouth, it is an extremely cost-efficient means of communication. If done correctly, word of mouth acts like a pebble dropped in a pond, with ripple effects that go far beyond where the brand mention started. And the marketer only has to pay for that initial mention!

## Drawbacks of Word of Mouth to Advertisers

Two drawbacks of this type of communication are lack of control and weak measurability.

### Lack of Control

It is always serendipitous for a brand to generate positive word of mouth without even trying (as happened to BlackBerry when President Barack Obama announced he could not give up the device), but there is no guarantee that the reverse will not occur, with celebrities or even regular consumers creating a negative “buzz” about the product. Either one is hard if not impossible to control, and this should be taken into consideration when implementing a WOM campaign.

### Weak Measurability

There is an increasing effort on the part of research suppliers to provide measurement of word of mouth, but it remains nascent. The two main forms are panels of consumers who report on what they are talking about, and with whom, and online passive data capture from blogs which automatically monitors the online “conversation.” While the latter can

track vastly more data, it cannot necessarily get to the nuances of human conversations. The former can do so, but typically with smaller samples and the unreliability of self-reported data.

Research on Word of Mouth is just starting to build.<sup>10</sup>

## Mobile: Location, Location

Within the past few years, the mobile phone (cell phone) has moved from being a way to make phone calls to a full-blown communications and advertising medium. Today’s mobile marketing, as it is generally called, includes text or picture messaging, video, television, and downloadable applications such as games, podcasts, or ringtones. With the growth of Internet access, improvements in screens, the addition of keyboards, today’s mobile phone is seen by both consumers—and increasingly, by advertisers—as a mobile computer that delivers messages to target audiences wherever they are, with the ability to generate a direct response. Indeed, in 2008 it was estimated that there are a total of 3.4 billion mobile phone subscribers worldwide, a figure more than three times greater than the 1 billion who have access to a PC.<sup>11</sup> Forecasts for mobile phone growth suggest that by 2013 more than 5 billion people will own the device.<sup>12</sup> The phone can reach many consumers in places where PCs have not yet penetrated broadly, such as the high-potential global markets of China and India.

Initial use of the mobile phone for advertisers focused on interactive voice response (IVR) where phone subscribers can respond via their phone to marketers’ promotions or contests. This includes voting on popular TV shows such as *American Idol*. Right behind IVR in terms of popularity, and growing fast, is text messaging, or SMS. Here, consumers can respond to marketers by sending a text to a special phone number. In Brazil, 46 radio stations combined together for a promotion that generated 1.3 million text messages in a three-month period in 2008. For Adidas, text messages were used during the National Basketball Association that encouraged those who saw the Adidas ads during NBA games to send a text and hear a message from one of the basketball players that told them to go to a special website. There, they could send messages to their friends recorded by the players. Then to create a retail element, Adidas could send texts to players and get recommendations on the products.<sup>13</sup>

This example demonstrates how mobile marketing can work in an integrated way with the Internet. This may in fact be the greatest value of the mobile phone for advertisers. An estimated 40 million mobile phone subscribers had browsed the Internet from their mobile phones in the U.S. in an average month in 2008. This might include checking emails (14 million do that with Yahoo! Mail each month), or keeping track of

sports scores during the World Cup soccer tournament or Olympics, or watching short-form TV programs from subscription services such as MediaFlo.

Another use of the phone for advertising is to deliver coupons. Companies such as Borders or CVS let members of their “rewards” programs sign up to receive mobile messages to get coupon promotions that can then be taken into the store and redeemed. And in late 2008, several airlines began offering passengers mobile boarding passes that permitted them to check in by showing their phone at the gate.

Mobile search is also on the rise. In August 2008, an estimated 44 percent of mobile subscribers in a survey said they had used Google search on their phones.<sup>14</sup>

### **Benefits of Mobile Marketing to Advertisers**

Advertisers considering the use of mobile marketing can benefit from its ubiquity and direct response mechanism.

#### **Ubiquity**

Although mobile marketing is still in its infancy, the ubiquity of the phone holds out huge potential for ad messages. It is the only video-based advertising medium that is geographically specific; that is, ad messages can be sent based on the location of the phone user. This makes the phone an “everywhere” ad medium.

#### **Direct Consumer Response**

As a two-way communications device, the mobile phone allows advertisers to generate immediate behavioral response from consumers. That is, Starbucks could send someone a text message offering them \$0.50 off a coffee if he goes to his nearest store in the next 48 hours. When he presents the coupon, via his phone, the company can quickly tally just how effective that advertising was. And as noted above, mobile phones play a very significant role these days in viewer response to reality shows on television, making it easy for people to text or call in with their opinions and choices.

### **Drawbacks of Mobile Marketing to Advertisers**

When advertisers are considering mobile marketing, they must keep in mind that there remain technological limitations and consumer irritation may be high.

### **Technology Limitations**

While there are many articles about the promising future of mobile marketing, the reality right now is that most consumers do not have phones that are technologically advanced enough to take advantage of the many features under discussion or development. That, in turn, becomes a catch-22 situation, because advertisers are less likely to invest in creating custom-built ads or applications for the phone until there are enough consumers able to utilize them.

### **Consumer Irritation**

Research has been conducted with consumers to determine how open they are to the idea of receiving advertising on their mobile phone. While published results always indicate an openness and willingness to see it (especially if it offsets any costs incurred in phone use), it remains to be seen whether that will turn out to be the case, or whether the public will ignore or avoid any marketing messages that appear, out of irritation at yet more commercialization in their lives.<sup>15</sup>

### **Guerilla Marketing: The Element of Surprise**

What many of this chapter’s communication forms have in common is that they are not restricted to a particular page or screen or location. Perhaps the ultimate version of going “beyond traditional” is what is variously referred to as guerilla or ambient media or, on occasion, ambush marketing. It may be as simple as staging an event around a brand or as complicated as creating virtual landscapes that consumers believe to be real.

One version of this type of communication is to recreate a scene or an experience so that consumers can touch or feel the product. When Ikea opened a new store in Japan, the company took over a train and outfitted the cars with items that could be purchased in the new store, including price tags. In addition to the benefit of having consumers look at the products, Ikea was sticking to one of its strategic objectives of demonstrating how it can help people furnish small spaces.

A very different way to use a subway was seen in Toronto, where the tourism bureau of the province of Alberta, to encourage visitors to travel there, recreated scenes from its rocky mountain scenery, changing rail seats into ski lifts and surrounding commuters with photos of the idyllic landscape. Visits to the bureau’s website more than doubled during the two months of the campaign.

A variation of guerilla marketing is ambush marketing, where brands that cannot get into “official” sponsorship or communications use

alternative means to spread their message. This has been a common tactic during the quadrennial Olympics. Nike, for many years, purchased so much local media in whatever city the Games were held that, despite not paying for or being an official sponsor of a country or team, survey after survey would show that consumers believed them to be one. Even small businesses can use these tactics. A coffee brand in Hawaii that was forced out of being an official sponsor of the Ironman World Championship found a creative solution to communicate to the participants by creating a coffee bar on the water offshore from the island of Maui where the competition was held. Not only was the bar floating in the ocean but billboards placed 20 feet under the sea's surface could be seen by swimmers during their practice, directing them to the non-sponsoring coffee brand.

Sometimes these marketing campaigns are not even real. To launch a new car model in the U.S., BMW created a pseudo-festival called Rampenfest that featured video of a BMW car driving on an enormous ramp in a tiny town in Austria. Except that the ramp, and the town itself, were not real, and neither was the festival. But the buzz that surrounded the campaign certainly was, with an estimated 10 million visitors to the vehicle's website.<sup>16</sup>

### **Benefits of Guerilla Marketing to Advertisers**

There are two main benefits guerilla marketing offers: consumer surprise and cost flexibility.

#### **Consumer Surprise**

If done well, consumers can be pleasantly surprised by guerilla tactics, whether seeing people dressed up on the street handing out product samples, or more elaborate recreations similar to those mentioned above. That good feeling toward the effort can translate to more positive attitudes toward the brand, as well as a willingness to purchase or repurchase it.

#### **Cost Flexibility**

Guerilla marketing, by virtue of its very wide remit, allows marketers great flexibility in expenditure. It costs relatively little to hire college students to perform street theater related to your brand. Building a platform out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean is a more costly proposition. Either way, the marketer is able to manage those expenses as necessary.

### **Drawbacks of Guerilla Marketing to Advertisers**

The two key disadvantages of guerilla marketing are strategic weakness and cool factor overload.

#### **Strategic Weakness**

There are often lots of ideas brainstormed by client or agency teams for "cool" or "unusual" promotions or events; the danger is in executing them for those reasons rather than because they are strategically aligned with the brand's meaning and message. Ikea's takeover of Japanese subway cars would not have been nearly as impactful (though still attention-getting) if they had not been trying to show how they could furnish a small space. So it is critical that any guerilla ideas are examined through a strategic lens.

#### **Cool Factor Overload**

Perhaps the biggest potential drawback for guerilla marketing is an extension of strategic weakness. That is, ideas are approved simply because they are novel and capture the imagination of the brand's decision maker. That was probably the case a few years ago when TNT Network created fake manhole covers on the streets of Boston to promote a new program. The covers were certainly cool and attention-getting, but they had large Xs on them that quickly caused a major panic that this was some kind of terrorist plot, practically shutting down the city for several hours while police were called in to investigate.

### **Which Media Should You Use?**

Now that you have some basic information on each major media category, whether traditional, as described in Chapter 4, or beyond traditional, as outlined here, we can start to consider why you might or might not wish to include them in your media plans. To make this process less cumbersome, we'll need to recap some of the most important advantages and disadvantages that each non-traditional medium offers. These are summarized in Exhibit 5.2, including the traditional media discussed in Chapter 4.

### **Summary**

In going beyond traditional media, the specialist must still focus on how each media type will enhance and achieve the plan's strategic objectives. Whether looking at Yellow Pages, retail, sponsorship, word of mouth,



Exhibit 5.2 Pros and Cons of Traditional and Beyond Traditional Media

	Pros	Cons
<b>TRADITIONAL</b>		
TV	True to life; pervasive; high reach	Expensive; brief message; clutter; ad positioning
Radio	Local appeal; targeted reach; imagery transfer; low cost; high frequency; flexibility	Background; short message life; fragmentation
Newspaper	Timeliness; desirable audience; editorial impact; local/regional benefits	Short issue life; attention span; black and white
Magazine	Upscale audience; selective exposure; long issue life	Long lead time; high targeted cost
Outdoor	Large size; mobility; low cost; ethnic reach; complement to other media	Brief exposure; environmental issue
Internet	Flexibility; reach; personalization; measurability	Consumer irritation; confusion; non-standard metrics
<b>BEYOND TRADITIONAL</b>		
Yellow Pages	Consumer selection, measurable response	Clutter; infrequent usage
Retail	Closest to purchase, visual stimulation	Lack of influence, costly to implement
Sponsorship	Surrounding the consumer, enhanced image and association	Sponsor mismatch, imprecise measurement
Word of Mouth	Consumer-driven communications, minimal cost	Lack of control, weak measurability
Mobile	Ubiquity, direct consumer response	Technology limitations, consumer irritation
Guerilla	Consumer surprise, cost flexibility	Strategic weakness, cool factor overload

mobile, or guerilla marketing, media experts need to assess the benefits and drawbacks of each, and how to incorporate them seamlessly into the overall media plan.

### Checklist—Exploring Beyond Traditional Media

1. Is there a need to go beyond traditional media in your plan?
2. Are the benefits of Yellow Pages (consumers selecting your ad and a highly measurable response) important to your brand?
3. Would the drawbacks of Yellow Pages (clutter and infrequent usage) potentially detract from the usefulness of the medium for your brand?
4. Does your brand have a retail presence that could be enhanced by the benefits of retail advertising (closest to point of purchase and visual stimulation)?
5. Do the disadvantages of retail advertising (lack of influence and cost to implement) suggest that this may not be the best use of your advertising dollars?
6. What potential events or causes could your brand sponsor?
7. Would the advantages of sponsorship (surrounding the consumer and enhanced image and associations) be significant contributors to your brand's success?
8. Do the disadvantages of sponsorship (risk of sponsor mismatch and imprecise measurement) lead you to not recommend sponsorship for your brand?
9. How and why could you generate word of mouth for your brand?
10. Can you justify how the benefits of word of mouth (consumer-driven communications and minimal cost) would enhance your brand's performance?
11. Do the downsides to word of mouth (lack of control and weak measurability) pose too great a risk for your brand?
12. Would the addition of mobile advertising, with its benefits of ubiquity and direct consumer response, provide value to your media plan?
13. In what ways might the drawbacks of mobile advertising (technology limitations and consumer irritation) be detrimental to your media plan?
14. How might the advantages of guerilla marketing (consumer surprise and cost flexibility) help you achieve your marketing, advertising, and media goals?
15. Have you considered how the disadvantages of guerilla marketing (strategic weakness and cool factor overload) might negatively impact your ability to achieve your objectives?