



The Media Handbook: A Complete Guide to Advertising Media Selection, Planning, Research, and Buying (2nd Ed.)

Katz, Helen
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The Media Handbook: A Complete Guide to Advertising Media Selection, Planning, Research, and Buying nearly accomplishes the impossible task of harnessing most of the elements involved in media buying. The text explains the complicated definitions, media terms, and empirical calculations used in the print and electronic media industries. The Media Handbook explains, in simple, easy to understand language, the basic concepts of broadcast advertising, outdoor advertising, and the presence of the Internet in developing media campaigns.

This thorough study, while at times dry, quantitatively laden, and occasionally redundant, is an uncomplicated and straightforward inclusive road map of “how to” purchase space and airtime for effective media campaigns. The chapters are thoughtfully divided and logically organized. The book moves from the tutorial section, asking, “What is Media?” to the sections explaining the benefits and drawbacks of each medium’s personality. The format of the book makes this manual very easy to use. The Media Handbook is a practical reference tool for media buyers. It is also a beneficial tool for those working inside media, who themselves would do well by reading this text as a refresher in assisting monolithic media types better understand how their respective mediums relate to other mediums, from their customers’ perspectives.

While The Media Handbook is a bit heavy on academic structure and formatting, and it gives the impression that small businesses have endless amounts of cash available for media buying projects and campaigns, Katz could have considered explaining the 15% agency rule, which is tacked on to, or deducted from, the client’s purchasing budget. Although Katz spends a great deal of time developing the media buy plan, she spends very little time developing how the plan will be evaluated for effectiveness. The Media Handbook, 2nd edition, is really not a complete guide to advertising, media selection, planning, research, and buying because it does not deal with branding, promotions, imaging, image building, and volume discounts. Katz could have

used a few more detailed real world examples of campaigns. Katz does not explore the complicated issue of media conglomeration and how it affects media buyer purchasing decisions. However, even with these omissions in this 2nd edition, The Media Handbook is certainly a formidable standard for those interested in learning and applying the fundamentals of evaluating media and potential media buying campaigns. This book is worthy of 3 out of 4 stars.