

In-Housing Media Buying Helps Bring Control Back to Brands: An Interview with Jenny Chan of Cars.com

Article

As the relationship between **brands and their partner agencies continues to evolve**, more brands are looking to bring projects in-house, citing cost as a factor. For Cars.com, however, bringing digital media buying in-house was primarily motivated by the desire to have more control over data, though cost was another consideration.

Jenny Chan, senior director of brand and acquisition marketing at Cars.com, spoke with eMarketer about her experience transferring media buying capabilities internally.

What motivated you to bring your buying in-house?

We wanted to have better control of our data and get closer to all the innovation and development in the media industry. We're having direct conversations with media partners, and that's allowed us to do a lot of data testing and really stay in touch with latest developments and better understand what works best in a particular channel.

That's interesting. Many agencies cite cost as the reason they in-house.

Cost is certainly a factor. It's not the primary reason though. From a cost standpoint, we are able to do this in-house with fewer staff than how the agency had staffed our accounts. Previously, our agency had about 13 people working on our digital account. And we're staffing about half of that.

Which aspects of your digital marketing did you initially bring in-house and why?

We brought in social first because that was managed in a separate arm within our media agency. So it was an easier way to break off that piece. After a quarter of managing our social, we moved on to programmatic. But we still work with the agency now, primarily on our offline media.

Have you seen agencies adjust their business models in response to brands bringing work in-house?

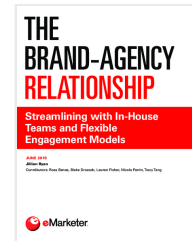
We've talked to some agencies recently who are offering things like training internal staff to use programmatic platforms or helping businesses go through the in-housing process as the initial setup. We've also seen some agencies offer up more audits. Those are just some examples of agencies evolving their offerings.

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Report by Jillian Ryan Jun 13, 2019

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