

In Transit with an Outdoor Media champion

Author : BrandKnew

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***Jason Cotterrell** is the Managing Director of UK Based **Exterion Media**, one of the heavyweights of the UK OOH industry and obviously loves the great outdoors. Which is the reason why he refuses to miss the bus when it comes to Exterion Media keeping pace with the rapid evolution of the OOH/Transit media space. Here he rides a freewheeling conversation with **Brand Knew**:*

BrandKnew: You have had a long stint in the Outdoor/OOH industry. What attracted you to this in the first place?

I love the media industry, the brilliant people and minds that are attracted to it and all things bus! It's great to be able to work across two industries – the media industry and the transport/property sectors. I also love being part of an ever-changing medium, driven by the advent of **digital**, and the way DOOH and OOH are increasingly working together to make bigger and better campaigns.

BrandKnew: The OOH/Transit/Outdoor space has evolved and witnessed a huge metamorphosis over the years. What is your perspective on the changes?

There has been a huge evolution across OOH, from market consolidation, standardisation of formats, packaging, new research to the transition from paper and paste to data and **digital**. The next stage involves making better informed OOH decisions through audience-led data, research and greater connectivity. **Digital** and greater levels of insight are driving OOH growth worldwide, with the UK leading the way. Advances in **digital** displays and back-end technology have enabled **brands** to tell dynamic stories better than ever before, and this will only get bigger and better in the future.

BrandKnew: The Digital invade has affected every communication touch point and OOH/Transit etc is no different. How is Exterion riding and keeping up with the dynamism in this space?

We are introducing new **digital** assets across our environments and working in close partnership with technology providers to keep us at the top of our game. We are also

implementing innovative technologies like beacon technology of buses. This initiative recently won the Most Innovative Use of Technology award with Proxama at the DailyDOOH Gala Awards.

Data and new technology means that OOH is innovating rapidly, engaging with Millennials who consume ads 2.5 times faster than the Boomers (according to Facebook's recent survey on consumer behaviour). OOH has the ability to capture this market that refuses to be attentive by using insight and data to create efficient, contextual and targeted campaigns.

Digital technology pervades planning, through data informed decisions, automated channels and delivery, and DOOH assets.

BrandKnew: Exterior Media is the exclusive partner for London's Transit media (Trains/Buses/Platforms/Tube station escalators) - how has the experience been? And what is the kind of response/growth that you are envisaging to resonate with the huge investment that would have gone into it?

We like working closely with our partners to make ordinary experiences extraordinary. It's about making **advertising** engaging but it's also about improving the whole passenger experience. We are continually investing in DOOH as well as partnerships to enhance our propositions across all our environments, including partnerships with TfL, Telefónica and **social** media start-ups like TINT.

BrandKnew: What is the total duration of this Exclusive understanding that Exterior has?

Every contract is different. We're working very closely with London Underground, One New Change, Bus and Rail operators and Westfield, to name but a few, to ensure we maximise the potential of each estate. Everything we do is based on the foundation of supporting our franchise partners and helping them to improve customer experiences and their economic performance.

BrandKnew: Do you see brands and media buying units scaling down on advertising spends in the Outdoor/OOH space? Or do you see it growing?

Advertising spend in Outdoor is growing. It's driven by DOOH, which according to our OOH trade body, Outsmart, has grown 312% in the past 7 years, and this is underpinned by data and connectivity. It's also driven by greater insight into how people move and spend more time OOH and the increase in understanding the effectiveness of the medium.

We can't forget mobile - one of the OOH industry's biggest game-changers. Without the true realisation of mobile in the Outdoor space the OOH industry will always remain partially static. OOH and mobile must therefore work as complementary mediums, helping connect consumers to **brands** wherever they are.

OOH delivers target audiences and is the medium where campaigns get talked about and

noticed. Therefore, we expect the customer base to grow significantly as more data and technology allow people to reach and understand audiences in interactive and engaging ways. We also expect OOH to be a key strand to any media schedule as it truly binds together audiences and other media channels.

BrandKnew:What is your team size at Exterior? And sales initiatives are MBU focused or brand focused?

We have a sales and **marketing** team of approximately 150 highly-skilled employees. This includes National Sales, Local Sales, Research and Insights, **Marketing** and Creative Solutions teams. In terms of sales initiatives, I would say that we are 80% MBU and 20% **brand** focused.

BrandKnew: Data, insights, real time analytics etc seem to be the flavour of the season- how is Exterior addressing these demands from advertisers and MBUs when it comes to measurability & impact?

Insight is at the heart of what we do. We have our very own award-winning consumer panel called **work.shop.play.**, which is a vital source of insight for us. The panel has grown to more than 10,000 members over the last three years and is made up of people aged 16+ who spend time working, shopping or playing in the UK's towns and cities. Using **work.shop.play.**, we can really get under the skin of urban audiences across the UK, enabling advertisers to understand the value of our assets.

Data drives **innovation**, increasingly enabling OOH media owners to facilitate personalised experiences, interactivity and the creation of bespoke content. Furthermore, OOH is becoming increasingly measurable thanks to data and this is useful when **brands** like to make **marketing** decisions based on assumptions proved by data learnings. By fusing locational intelligence with modelled, qualitative, behavioural and real-time data and successfully leveraging this, we can optimise the sale of our unique **advertising** propositions to become a market leader.

Alongside traditional forms of data, we're getting closer to leveraging real-time and behavioural data. We use third party data to track consumer's movements and behaviours to help advertisers select what OOH media sites to deploy to increase **advertising** awareness. In the future, we will see a shift towards using real-time data, such as travel, client and mobile data, rather than simply using historical data as a predictor. The IoT will be an enabler of this.

BrandKnew: What type of brands realise the best ROI from Outdoor/OOH media investments? Any particular case study that you may want to share from the Exterior stable?

Many types of **brands** realise the benefits and ROI from OOH media investments. This year, we have dealt with 19 of the top 20 UK advertisers.

Zoopla deployed a London bus campaign to increase **brand** awareness and drive traffic online to their site. We measured the impact of **Zoopla's** campaign over a 6-months period and found that the bus ads drove traffic online, with the test group being 65% more likely to search

properties online using **Zoopla**. Spontaneous **brand** awareness was also high, with 57% of those exposed to the bus ads recalling **Zoopla** unprompted, which demonstrated clear campaign messaging.

BrandKnew: The Start Up fever is gaining incredible ground in the UK- is it helping Exterior realise better volumes/yields as they rationally or irrationally splurge on advertising?

We are in partnership with a number of start-up companies and we develop different approaches to help them deal with the challenges facing start-ups. Our assets reach early adopters and people who can make new ideas grow. In fact, we have a dedicated team for this business. We ensure that we build campaigns that meet a start-up's needs and we build a rational case for them to advertise. We want to be a key part of their growth journey - being a partner in their early days and when they are FTSE businesses.

We know it's important to stay fresh so we work actively with start-up media businesses that bring new technologies and thinking to the sector.

BrandKnew: Just a bit of crystal ball gazing- where do you see the Outdoor/OOH/Transit industry headed and what kind of disruption do you see coming?

Increasing amounts of data, combined with new technology, growing urban populations and the smartphone boom means that OOH is innovating rapidly.

The emergence of Internet of Things technologies is projected to become a key enabler of business success. As the DOOH landscape continues to grow, we are making movements towards using the IoT by implementing innovative technologies, such as beacons, and developing new partnerships to super-serve our advertisers with targeted and efficient campaigns.

Also, programmatic and automation have been disrupting the wider ad industry and we're testing and learning how best to utilise this in OOH.

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