

**JAMES G. ELLIOTT CO., INC.**

MEDIA SALES • MARKETING • RESEARCH

[www.jamesgelliott.com](http://www.jamesgelliott.com)

## Upcoming Speaking Engagements

**DIGITALNOW**, May 29th  
Orlando, FL - Walt Disney Swan Resort  
*Increasing Profitability in this Digital Age: It's Time to Rethink How We do Business* – Stephanie Holland (ACS), Brian F. O'Leary (Magellan Media Partners), Michael Winkleman (Leverage Media), Jim Elliott

**ABM & Information Industry Summit**, June 14th, Washington DC  
Mandarin Oriental  
*Trends in Media Planning & Buying* – Steve Davis (President, Kantar Media SRDS & Kantar Media Healthcare), Jim Elliott

**AM&P ANNUAL MEETING**, June 17  
Washington DC, Ronald Reagan Building & International Trade Center  
*Inside the Mind of the Media Buyer* – Steve Davis, Jim Elliott



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2015 Issue #2

## Off to a Great Start!

### President's Letter

As we celebrate our 30th year in business, I have been thinking about the challenges and opportunities that helped the James G. Elliott Co., Inc. to become what we are now: a complete advertising sales, marketing and consulting solution for national clients. Founded as a regional media sales firm based in Los Angeles, we now serve as the entire sales force for media owners. I am personally very grateful to the clients who have trusted us to build their businesses, and to the employees who have brought us this far.



*“...digital technology has fundamentally changed the way we do business.”*

For me, one development stands out over these three decades: digital technology has fundamentally changed the way we do business. Our company operates in both the digital and the print world, and we now sell more digital products than print.

Why does one particular reader pick up a magazine or turn to an electronic device? For me, the key seems to be understanding the job to be done. Sports scores, stock market tables, and breaking news can be served to their consumers faster and better through digital media, increasingly in mobile formats. Print vehicles that used to be the only way to get that sort of information are in trouble, but other magazines are doing well. Social media offers quick feedback and rapid creation of communities. A whole generation has grown up accessing information through digital technologies, and they have an unprecedented choice of tools to accomplish any particular information job.

My early training in media planning and research helped me understand that no one media tool is a panacea. From an advertiser's point of

view, it all depends on the objective and what will influence the intended target audience. Is the goal to create awareness? Establish a brand? Close a sale? Sometimes magazines work best; other times, television, radio, direct mail, or billboards. A combination of several media is often necessary. Perhaps that is why the advent of digital media didn't scare us; websites, digital newsletters, and social media are just more tools to be evaluated in relationship to everything else.

Many publishers are building out their offerings to provide more comprehensive services for their readers, and are training their salespeople to sell all of them together. Our joint research with Kantar Media SRDS proves beyond a doubt that media planners and buyers do not have time to waste. The integrated sale is becoming more important, and the best salespeople learn how to show the unique strengths of their media to help advertisers meet their goals in today's environment. ■

### Know Your Market 2015 Kantar Media SRDS & JGE Media Planning & Buying Study

The newest Study of Media Planning & Buying (January 2015) confirms much of what Kantar Media SRDS and the James G. Elliott Co. learned in the first study: agency media planners and buyers are experiencing tremendous time pressure for a variety of reasons, which has significant impact on the way advertising is bought and sold in today's market.

On March 17, 2015, Dr. Samir Husni's Mr. Magazine™ Blog featured an in-depth interview with Steve Davis, President of SRDS and Kantar Media Health Research, and Jim Elliott to put the study into perspective from the buyer's and seller's points of view.

Samir spoke with Steve and Jim about the study's purpose and the objectives they hoped to attain, which include:

- To understand the habits of media planners and buyers.



Photo credit: Samir Husni

- To learn about the types of clients and plans that media planners and buyers are working with.
- To determine the types of resources used for planning and buying.
- To understand what factors have an impact on media selection.
- To understand the media planning and buying information needs of media planners and buyers at agencies.

He wrote, “Their responses and the information uncovered may surprise you. So, I hope you enjoy this very informative discussion with two gentlemen who know their way around the roadmaps of publishing, both digitally and in print, and who have made it their priority to uncover comprehensive media solutions to problems faced in publishing today.”

Here are a few sound-bites from the interview:

**On the results of the second study:** We found many of the same conclusions as last time had been proven again; they are still very busy with an unchanged average of 4.3 clients, but the number of brands has increased to almost 6. The average media planner who had \$19 million in media to be responsible for in 2013 is now up to about \$25 million.

**On any silver lining in the fact that media planners have at least \$6 million more dollars to spend in today’s market:** I wouldn’t take the additional responsibilities that the planners have as a sign that there’s more media budget.

**On the roadmap Steve Davis would use to get a client more ad pages:** Part of that is making sure your story is tight, focused, and integrated. I don’t think just a magazine alone is going to do it. But a focused story that planners can quickly understand and access (and that’s my plug for SRDS); you better tell it in the tools that they are using.

**On how media companies today can use the study to reimagine print in this**

**digital age:** I think the industry is doing that, whether they’re doing it fast enough or not, I don’t know. This study isn’t going to give you that roadmap, but I think this study is designed specifically for when you are thinking about bets you have to make from a resourcing perspective.

**On the second study’s addition of programmatic buying:** Just to show you how quickly this has moved; 92% of the media planning and buying community are familiar at some level with programmatic; and two-thirds are involved now in buying programmatically. We’re already starting to see that programmatic is starting to move and this is good news for print’s new publishers.

**On what keeps Steve Davis up at night:** It’s what I said earlier about are we reminding ourselves the basics as an industry and I’ll say that for the buyer and seller. Time is shorter to plan and buy and I wonder if our media planners and buyers are thinking about the basics. What are the client’s objectives as opposed to how could I buy this specific target audience most efficiently?

**On what keeps Jim Elliott up at night:** What keeps me up at night is how much longer are we going to let other industries define this industry, because it’s pretty ridiculous if you think about it. We should be proud of the industry and we should embrace it and work in it, not try to get out of the industry and be something we’re not.

**Steve Davis had a lot to say about the time crunch agency people find themselves in.** “It’s as compressed as ever and in some cases it’s more compressed. And their approach to spending that money; the window has shortened a little bit. They allow for less time to actually do measured planning, or planning that had the luxury of time.

And then when it comes to reaching out to speak to business teams at the magazine media companies and to all the media owners’ representatives, the time planners

and buyers expect for turnaround is as quick as ever. Almost half (42%) expect for the sales team to respond to an RFP in less than 5 days.

What we’re also seeing is the continuation of this running theme, where most of the business is conducted at the planner’s request and timetable, not on the media owner’s request to come in for a consultative discussion. Well over 75% of our subscribers, the media planning users, are saying that RFPs are the primary way to initiate a buying decision. So, if I’m a magazine media company, how much is my sales team really working when they’re invited to present or how much of it is them chasing opportunities that they may see in the marketplace that may not be in time for?

On the other side of that, if you probe deeply enough, as a revenue executive, there should be an RFP on the other side of that. If there’s not, it may be a bit of fantasyland. That’s a little bit of what we’re seeing. It’s really becoming an RFP-type of driven business and the time given to respond has become very compressed.”

**Jim Elliott had this to say:** “...your sellers need to have air support, a lot of air support, meaning that you can’t expect them to do the whole job; they can’t. So you have to have collateral support, advertising support and you need to have point-of-purchase support like SRDS. Without those you’re in deep trouble...you need ... marketing people to do custom work for you. I think it’s becoming increasingly evident that you have to break through the noise in ad sales and show up with something that will get their attention.

The 2015 Study was done with double the sample size; this is really important. And we asked all the same questions plus some programmatic ones in addition. So, this now is by far, a projectable study. It is absolutely solid. What we said 18 months ago, I think, has been validated by the new study.

...the amount of discounting expected has stabilized near 29%. What that might tell you is that people are kind of at the end here; there isn’t a whole lot more to go. In print, there is a finite number; you can’t go forever and continue to discount. You just can’t; it’s not possible.

... this information, all taken together, confirms that the sales process has changed and it shows publishers who want more business some essential steps they must take to get it.

These are just a few tidbits from the wide-ranging interview. The entire blog, “Bringing to Light the Needs of Media Planners & Buyers,” is available on our website, <http://www.jamesgelliott.com/news>. ■

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