

# Is data the only thing that will get you the deal?

By  Liz McConnell

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Data is undoubtedly necessary when justifying why any medium should be on a schedule, especially in the case of multinational brands, which have strict tracking criteria, and where bonuses are dependent on KPI delivery. I have almost forgotten what it was like to sell outdoor media in the "bad old days", when a picture, street address and a three-year-old road traffic count was all that was required to get you the deal!



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Data is now a basic passport to the category. With the registration of the South African Outdoor Measurement Council (OMC) founded on international best practice, the industry exponentially expanded its potential. The introduction of the Outdoor Optimizer tool in 2019, which emulates TV, has allowed sales teams to plan by budget or by Gross Rating Points (GRP), making the process truly data-driven, efficient and effective.

## Your relationship with your clients

This, overlaid with mapping technology, digital innovation, and real-time geo-location mobile technology (something critical to consider in our Covid-19 reality for day-by-day traffic flow), means that planners not only know how many people they are reaching, but also how frequently they are seeing the message, how to plan for optimal product resonance by location and daypart, and how to target competitors through messaging and tactical placement.

So yes, data can get you the deal... or, it will certainly help!

*“ While business was hard for many industries during the hard lockdown, it was particularly challenging for the Out of Home (OOH) sector, given that our audiences were at home. During this time, it soon became clear there is something even more important than data - and that is the relationship you have with your clients. ”*

This might seem obvious to those of us hardwired to connect with people, but building genuine, mutually respectful and trusting relationships with clients is not something that is always considered critical in today's fast-paced environment. Yet this is what good salespeople did before they gained another weapon in their arsenal, in the form of data. When all else is equal, you choose to work with people who you trust and enjoy. Even when things are not equal, but the stakes are high, you turn to people who are top of mind, and who you know will deliver.

## The long game

As with any relationship, to build this level of trust and reliance takes time. It is established when you offer valuable, honest guidance - even if this advice won't sell your medium today.

It is about the long game: strong relationships are built through effort and consistency. To win a seat at the table, you need to truly add value. Your recommendations should be fluid and able to adapt to the real-life needs of your clients. This is only made possible by keeping your ear to the ground and keeping abreast of industry trends and developments, while simultaneously immersing yourself in your client's business so that you understand their challenges. This will allow you to offer relevant, valuable guidance; which generally results in larger and more long-term business opportunities.

The best advice I can give to someone working in this industry - no matter what medium you represent - is to dedicate your time to establishing strong relationships with your clients. The sale will come, but it is the relationship that will see you through tough times.

This - coupled with smart, strategic data - is what will get you the deal.

## ABOUT LIZ MCCONNELL

Liz McConnell is Head of Sales at Tractor Outdoor - a national OOH media owner that specialises in connecting brands to consumers through its network of traditional and digital inventory, as well as its transit networks and ambient platforms.

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