

# Keeping an eye on competitors

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Continuous competitor tracking has become vital in an environment where marketers have little time to check the advertisements of competitors says Angela Adamson, sales director at Adcheck. "Therefore the analysis of competitor advertising also needs to be user friendly and allow the client to assess and review what competitors are doing. This is precisely what Adcheck provides: an overview that is structured to avoid information overload."



According to Adamson, competitor analysis should definitely form part of every company's marketing strategy. "By analysing advertising, one can establish where a brand is being positioned, what benefits the brand offers and generally who the brand is targeting. On the short term, tracking competitor advertising can help brand owners tactically when a competitor has launched a new product or when a product is on promotion."

Any marketing strategy needs to include a full competitor analysis that identifies where and how the competitors are advertising as well as how and where they are positioning their brands, making advertising an essential source of establishing communication messages and strategy of competitors.

Consumers make purchasing decisions based on a variety of reasons. They can decide to buy a product or service based on their motivation, personality, perceptions, learning, attitudes, views of reference groups such as friends or family, social class and culture. Adamson says consumer researchers have spent a lot of time and money to map exactly how all these decisions are made in practice to give marketers direction about market segmentation, targeting and positioning in advertising.

Adamson warns that companies have to be very careful about positioning products or services because if it is not done properly, it will end up looking like a copy of competitors' products and fail. A major part of any business is therefore watching your competitors in order to ensure that you hold on to your market share and grow it even further.

A business plan must always include a competitor analysis and a comparison of the advertising of brands is a simple and effective way to do it, she says, by looking at how competitors advertise their brands to see who they are targeting, which benefits of the brand they are pushing and how the brand is positioned.

"Companies are unable to exist in isolation and stay in the dark about what their competitors are doing," she says. "To stay ahead of the game, every company needs to know what its competitors are doing."

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