

## Issue #8: A Report from the 2003 TAB Leaders' Summit

Over the past few months, TAB Briefs was on a hiatus. We hope you had a productive summer.

The biggest blackout in American history didn't dim the energy or output of nearly forty advertiser, agency and outdoor industry executives as they gathered together to get some serious work done at the 2003 TAB Leaders' Summit, held on August 13-15 in Rye Brook, New York.

The event started with a keynote speech from Jon Mandel, CEO of MediaCom. Jon said outdoor companies are missing opportunities and need to do a better job in consistently showcasing the value of outdoor to agencies and advertisers.

When buyers and sellers get together their focus is on negotiation. The Summit was designed to provide an environment for constructive dialogue. Through a series of small group sessions and presentations, participants began to build a blueprint for the industry by identifying: (1) business objectives, (2) critical needs, and (3) major information and technology initiatives required to address these needs.

Over the years, I have participated in similar events for both the electronic and print media, so I knew we would gain valuable information. What was produced, however, far exceeded any expectation I might have had. John G. Miller, Managing Partner Director of O-O-H & Newspaper Communication, The MediaEdge: CIA observed, "the summit was the single most passionate and forthright discussion the industry has ever put together. The participants were painfully honest and put everything out on the table. This allowed us to attack the problems." Kevin Gleason, OAAA Chairman and President of Adams Outdoor Advertising stated, "regardless of their position in the industry, participants shared common beliefs about what is required to bring our industry a quantum leap forward".

Of the major initiatives defined by the participants, three were the consensus leaders. They are *measurement*, *standardization*, and *accountability*. While better *measurement* begins with TAB's new audit methodology, the participants are looking forward to the demographic measurement systems being developed by Arbitron and Nielsen. They recognize that



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these systems will put this medium on the same playing field as the other consumer media. But improved measurement alone is not the answer. Both buyers and sellers agree that *standardization* of industry data and mapping systems will make it easier to assess the value of the medium. Standardization is also a necessary prerequisite for efficient audience measurement. Finally, *accountability* and *proof-of-performance* are critical. Frankly, all participants felt that the outdoor industry needs to catch up with other media in providing timely and exhaustive proof-of-performance information to advertisers.

Rocky Sisson, EVP Sales and Marketing, Clear Channel Outdoor stressed, "we will look back at the Summit as a great success only if we implement the great ideas brought forth at the meeting".

Please keep in mind that these are only the very top-line highlights from the 2003 TAB Leaders' Summit. If you would like more information about the results, please feel free to contact me at [joephilport@tabonline.com](mailto:joephilport@tabonline.com). In the meantime, we are preparing a more detailed report of the Summit recommendations. This report will be made available on TABonline. We will also be using the information we have gathered to build a new TAB business plan. Our goal will be to expand TAB's mission to help the industry accomplish these very significant *quantum-leap* initiatives.

Keep a look out for our next TAB Brief which will give an update of the status of the new audit methodology.

Joe Philport