

## **CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN ADVERTISING**

### **Description of the Field**

Advertising can be divided into planning, production, creative concepts, media, market research, account services and financial management. The creative department conceives a campaign, develops graphics, writes copy and works with production to produce an ad or commercial. The media department develops a marketing strategy for the targeted audience, negotiates and buys airtime, print space and outdoor (billboard) space. The market research department studies consumer perceptions and preferences, and account executives communicate with the client and make client presentations (sales pitches). The financial management team handles billing (the agency collects 15% of billings), payroll, information systems and general office management.

Deadlines, emergencies and overtime characterize advertising. There is little job security. If the agency loses an account, the account staff and some of the media buyers and creative staff could receive termination notices. Advertising is regarded as a glamour business characterized by expense accounts, celebrity endorsements and high fashion spreads. International opportunities abound as marketing goes global. Skills acquired in this industry are applicable anywhere in the world.

### **Career Paths and Entry Salaries**

Starting salaries tend to be higher at larger agencies. Smaller agencies provide, however, the best opportunities for exposure to all aspects of advertisement. Bachelor's degrees are required while a statistics background and PhDs are helpful in marketing research. (Salary statistics obtained can be from [www.careerjournal.com](http://www.careerjournal.com) and [www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com))

Students can gain valuable credentials working for a campus newspaper, television or radio station or through an internship with a market research firm, telemarketer or ad agency. Some Advertising Clubs promote internships with ad agency members in their city. In addition, the American Association of Advertising Agencies or Association of National Advertisers may have information on internships.

Advancement in an agency is typically characterized by getting assigned to a more prestigious or national account. You may need to relocate to a larger city since the largest clients and largest agencies are in either Chicago or New York.

\*For current salary information, visit:

[www.sipa.columbia.edu/resources\\_services/career\\_services/](http://www.sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/career_services/). Other salary links include: [www.industryclick.com/index.asp](http://www.industryclick.com/index.asp) and [www.adage.com](http://www.adage.com).

### **Demand**

The advertising industry is greatly affected by overall business conditions. One of the fastest growing segments is cable television and international advertising where commercials are produced for foreign broadcast or for segmented audiences within a city. Some advertisers use one agency for national identity commercials and one or more specialty agencies to reach ethnic audiences within a large metropolitan area.

Once workers have some experience in a product or an industry, they may be in demand because of their expertise; however in an economic downturn for that product they may find themselves stuck. One solution would be to balance two or more areas of interest.

## **Qualifications Necessary to Enter the Field**

More important than the qualifications to enter the field are the qualities needed to be successful. The ability to stay calm, to weather panic and creative outbursts, and to meet deadlines are definite assets. Presentation, writing and editing skills, data analysis and spreadsheet experience is valued. Communications skills are vital.

## **Sample Group of Employers**

New York, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Dallas and Houston are cities with the largest advertising agencies. A look at their yellow pages will identify hundreds. In addition, a look at headings such as media buying services, radio and television stations, casting agencies, commercial production houses, market research firms and pollsters will provide additional leads.

## **Future Challenges to the Profession**

Viewer watching patterns have brought about changes in media schedules, costs and agency commissions. Additional changes will call for new ways to sell the client's message.

## **To Obtain More Information:**

- Associations:
  - The Advertising Council, New York, NY: [www.adcouncil.org](http://www.adcouncil.org) – 212-922-1500
  - American Advertising Federation, Washington, DC: [www.aaf.org](http://www.aaf.org) – 202-898-0089
  - American Association Of Advertising Agencies, New York, NY: [www.aaaa.org](http://www.aaaa.org) – 212-682-2500
  - Association of National Advertisers, New York, NY: [www.ana.net](http://www.ana.net) – 212-697-5950
- Trade Magazines:
  - Advertising Age,
  - Adweek (regional editions)
  - Billboard, Variety
- Directories:
  - Advertising Red Book and Reverse Red Book, [www.Ad2Go.com](http://www.Ad2Go.com)