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## Synchronization In Search

by Chris Copeland, Friday, Oct 31, 2008 3:18 PM ET

Last month I wrote a column about [integration in media](#). Everyone loves the concept of integration. Advertisers love to tout an integrated effort, agencies love to sell the integrated model to those same advertisers, and consumers theoretically love the cohesive nature of which their day is infused with oh-so-pertinent marketing. Then, being the contrarian that I can be, I suggested that in fact integration was more hype than substance. I would suggest that integration today is more about making sure that when a TV spot runs, that the banners or search listings you have show the same creative. Almost two years ago, I wrote a column for Search Insider about search relevancy when viewed through the eyes of the television viewer who happens to be online while watching a [sporting event](#). The results were not good, to say the least. And yet, two years later, we are still touting that type of integration as a success.

A few weeks ago, one of our business units, Outrider, received an award from the DMA for Best Use of Digital Media. The campaign, for Showtime's "The Tudors," did a few unique things including offbeat keyword buys and drive to social experiences.

However, it got me wondering about this notion of "synchronicity." One of the hallmark elements of the campaign was the real-time management of the program during two key periods. One was naturally while the show was airing in real time. Keyword buys and creative were focused on those watching TV and surfing the Web at the same time. This segment of audience has a very different level of interest and intent because they are being primed by the most expensive selling tool an advertiser has -- its brand-owned content. Supplementing that experience and continuing it with more brand-owned content is a fulfillment that extends beyond integration.

The second, more opportunistic area of success for the Showtime campaign was in the conquest nature around other shows and events which might be seen as both relevant and competitive. By targeting viewers who might be engaging in similar intent-induced searches created while watching a different TV show, Showtime's search campaign produced a perceptual complement. Clearly someone watching "The Sopranos," a competitive show with a similar demographic audience, isn't going to be confused when



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shown an ad for "The Tudors," but will rather experience an Amazon.com correlation experience. In this case, the suggestion that "The Tudors" might fit their viewing interests is another means to synchronize beyond search -- and even ignore other ad media to get deeper into content as a connective force.

Synchronization can come in many forms. In the not-too-distant future of addressable TV, synchronization will reach new heights. The promise of a properly done single digital ad platform becomes the ability to target your TV, print, radio and digital buys so all align. For everyone's sake, I hope that all parties involved don't confuse integration of a buy within synchronization of message.

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