

iab.^{UK}

Future scape

Media Owner Planning Wheel



Introduction & context

Why this matters

The digital media landscape is evolving fast.

Consumers expect seamless, relevant and measurable experiences across multiple platforms. To keep up, media owners must rethink how they position their value to advertisers and brands.

That's where the Media Owner Planning Wheel comes in.

Informed by insights from IAB UK's [Futurescape](#) study, this framework is designed to help you:

- Respond to briefs more effectively by aligning with advertisers' evolving needs
- Showcase your platform's unique strengths in a structured, compelling way
- Stay ahead of the competition by demonstrating future-ready thinking

How media owners need to evolve

Traditional media planning no longer fits today's consumer behaviour. The way brands engage their audiences has fundamentally changed:

- Consumers have changed: Expecting seamless, cross-platform experiences tailored to their needs
- The journey is no longer linear: Consumers move fluidly across channels, platforms and devices
- Automation vs. brand moments: Brands want both efficiency and creativity in their media strategies
- Media = Content + Platforms + Devices: Media owners must sell solutions, not just ad space

To stay relevant, media owners must adapt. The Planning Wheel provides a clear roadmap for future-proofing your offering.

The changing media landscape

The Media Owner Planning Wheel:

A simple, strategic approach

The Media Owner Planning Wheel is built around four key pillars that help media owners stand out and secure advertising investment:

Prove effectiveness with measurable results

Reach the right people in the right way

Accountable

Target Audience

Good Media

Formats

Lead with responsible and sustainable practices

Deliver engaging, high-impact experiences

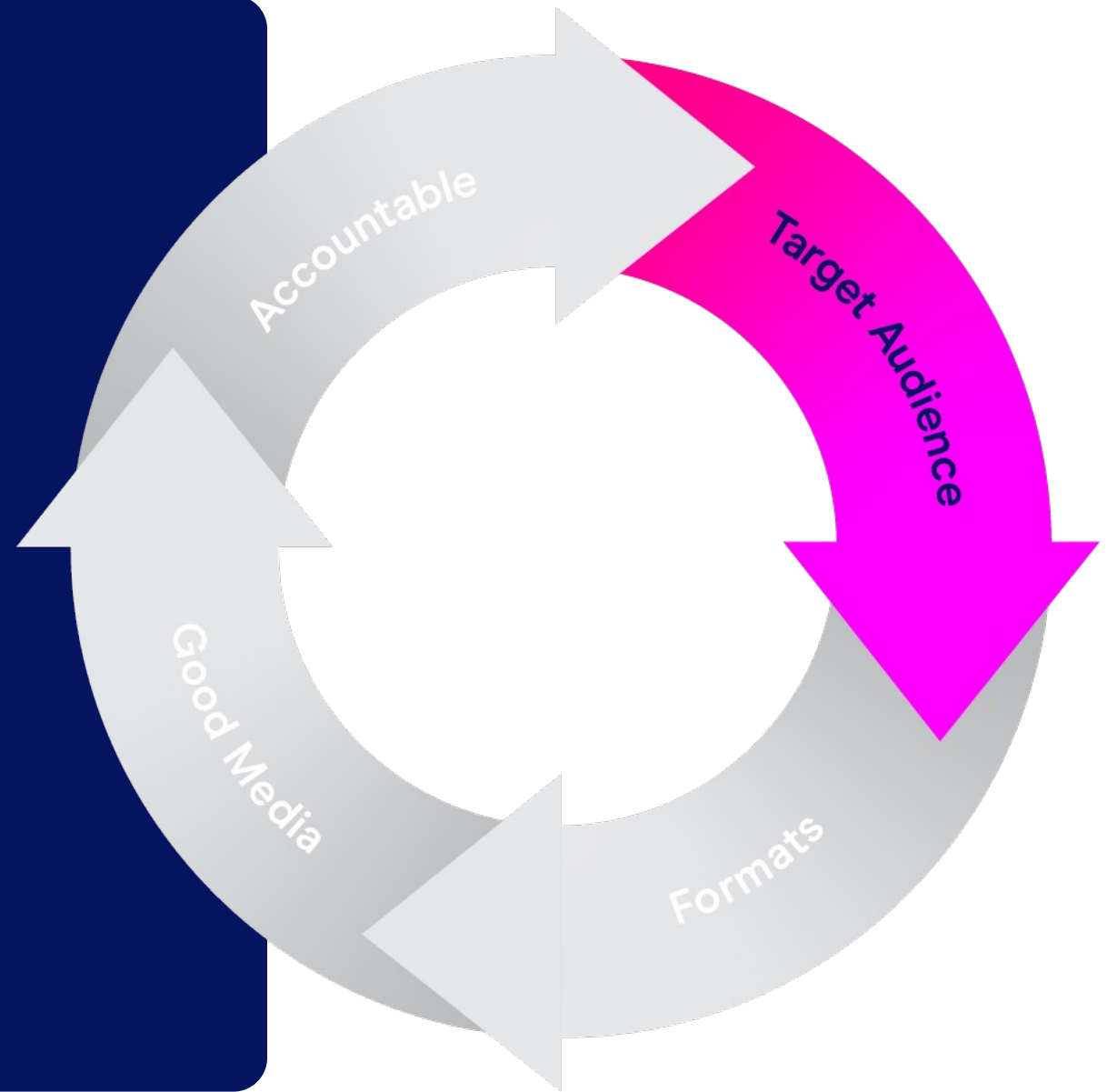
Target audience: Understanding & engaging the right consumers

To deliver results, media owners need to move beyond traditional demographics and build richer, more accurate audience profiles.

How to do this:

- Use first-party data to build sophisticated audience insights, understanding behaviour, attitudes and intent
- Activate and engage niche communities by leveraging platform-specific trends, creator partnerships and contextual signals
- Extend engagement across multiple platforms to scale audiences efficiently and maintain a consistent brand presence
- Enhance targeting strategies using AI and predictive modelling to serve the most relevant content at the right time

Example: If you have a strong music audience, amplify this across social platforms such as TikTok and YouTube to scale engagement and create a cross-platform solution for advertisers.



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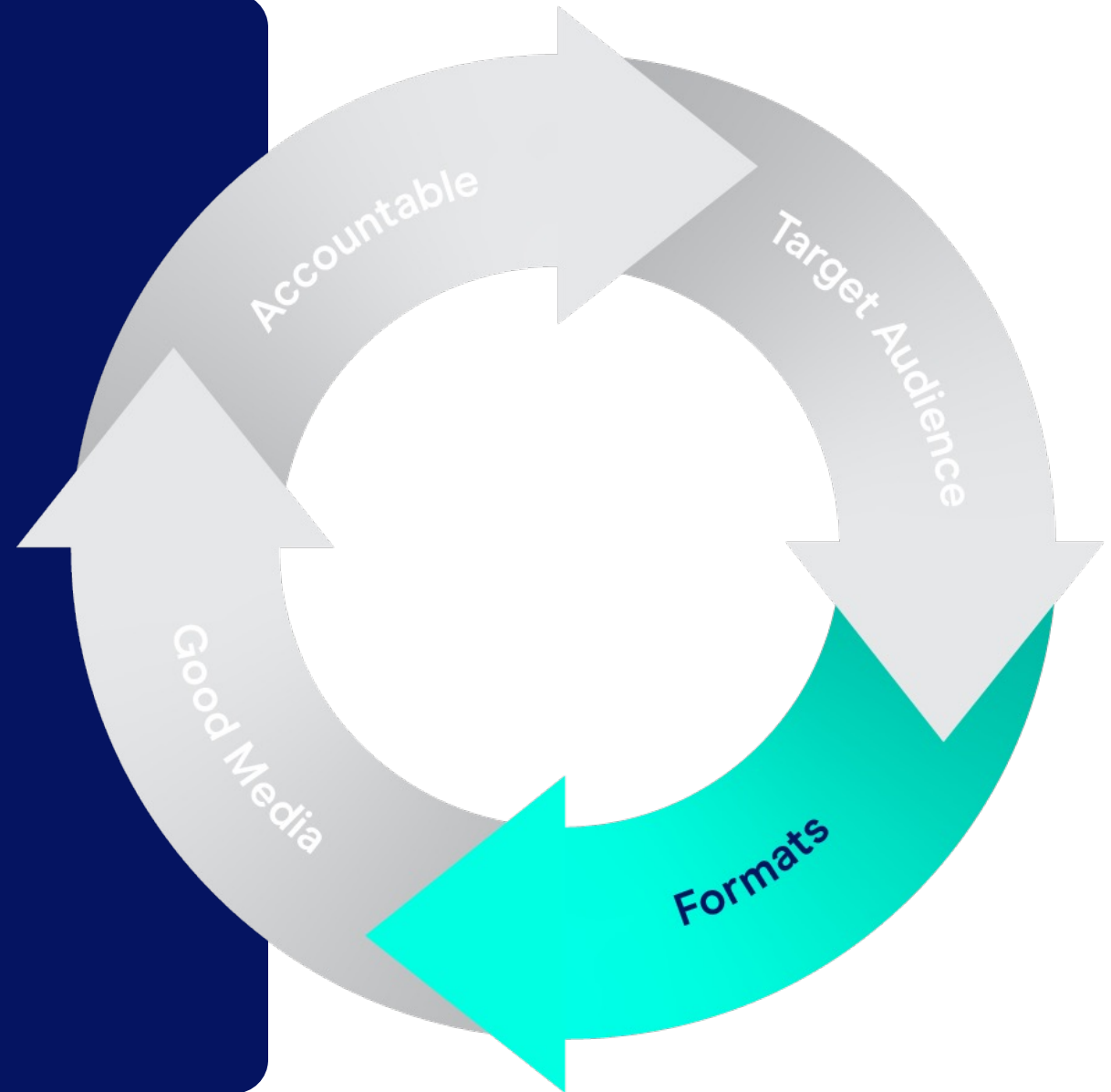
Delivering high-impact, cross-platform experiences

Creative execution is key to driving engagement, enhancing user experience and ultimately delivering better results for brands.

How to make formats work harder:

- Use audience insights to tailor creative assets to different segments and personalise ad experiences dynamically
- Offer premium and exclusive placements that drive impact, such as high-visibility takeovers and interactive experiences
- Optimise for a multi-device world by ensuring content is platform-native and seamlessly integrated across different screens
- Leverage immersive experiences through AR/VR, interactive storytelling and live shoppable moments
- Encourage action through innovative ad formats – such as swipeable carousels, interactive polls and gamified experiences

Example: A fashion retailer could use interactive 3D virtual try-ons combined with live commerce to create an engaging, frictionless shopping experience.



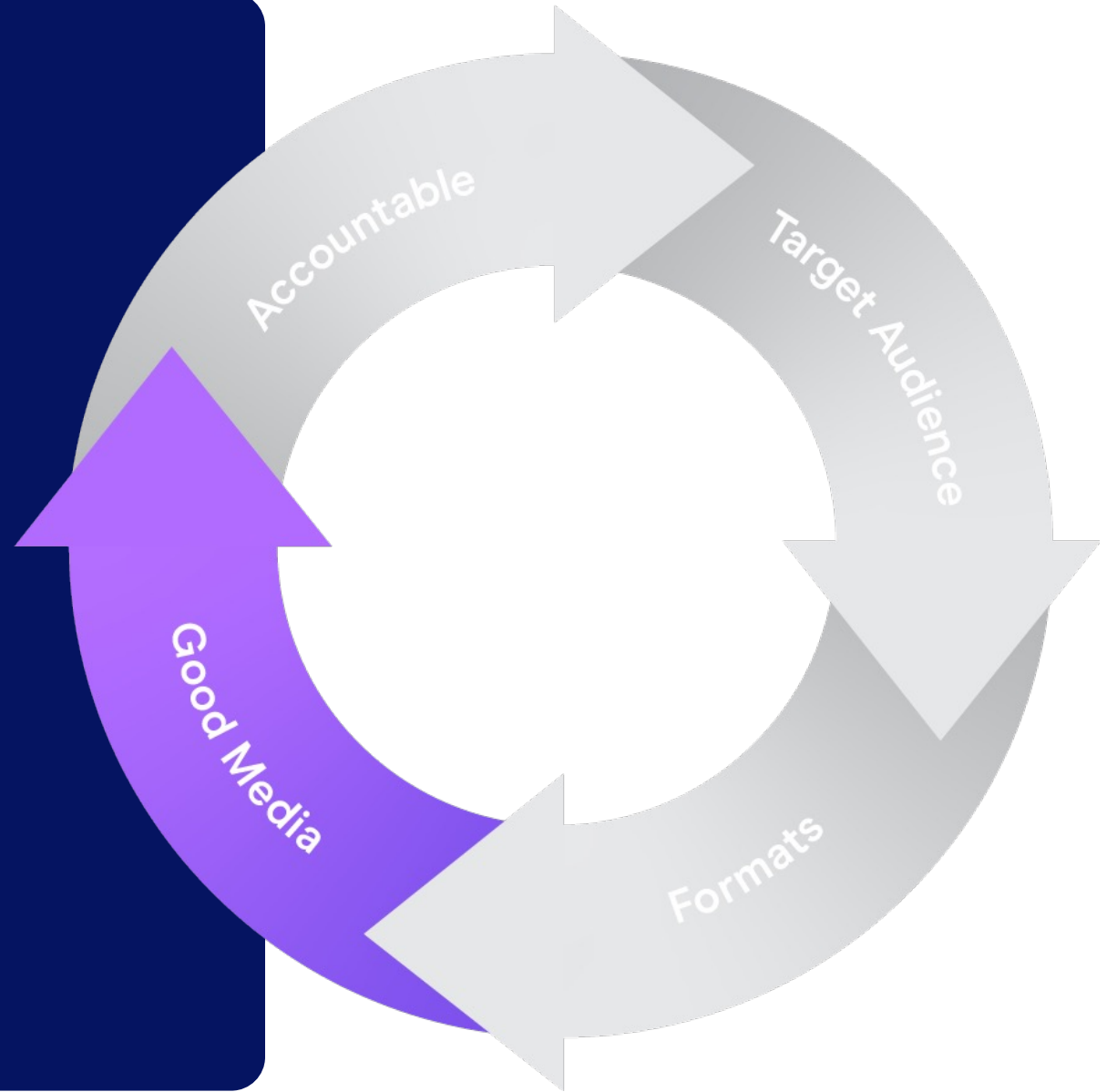
Good Media: Sustainability & ethical media practices

Brands and agencies are prioritising media sustainability. Media owners who take a proactive approach will be better positioned to win business and build long-term partnerships.

How to lead by example:

- Commit to recognised sustainability frameworks such as SBTi or B Corp certification
- Optimise digital ad delivery – reducing unnecessary ad loads to cut emissions without compromising performance
- Champion responsible media investment by aligning with partners who prioritise ethical content and inclusion
- Ensure data privacy and transparency – building consumer trust and safeguarding compliance with evolving regulations
- Support carbon-neutral advertising by adopting green media strategies, from programmatic efficiencies to supply chain transparency

Example: Working with ad tech partners like Scope3 allows you to measure and reduce carbon emissions in programmatic campaigns, offering lower-impact alternatives to clients.



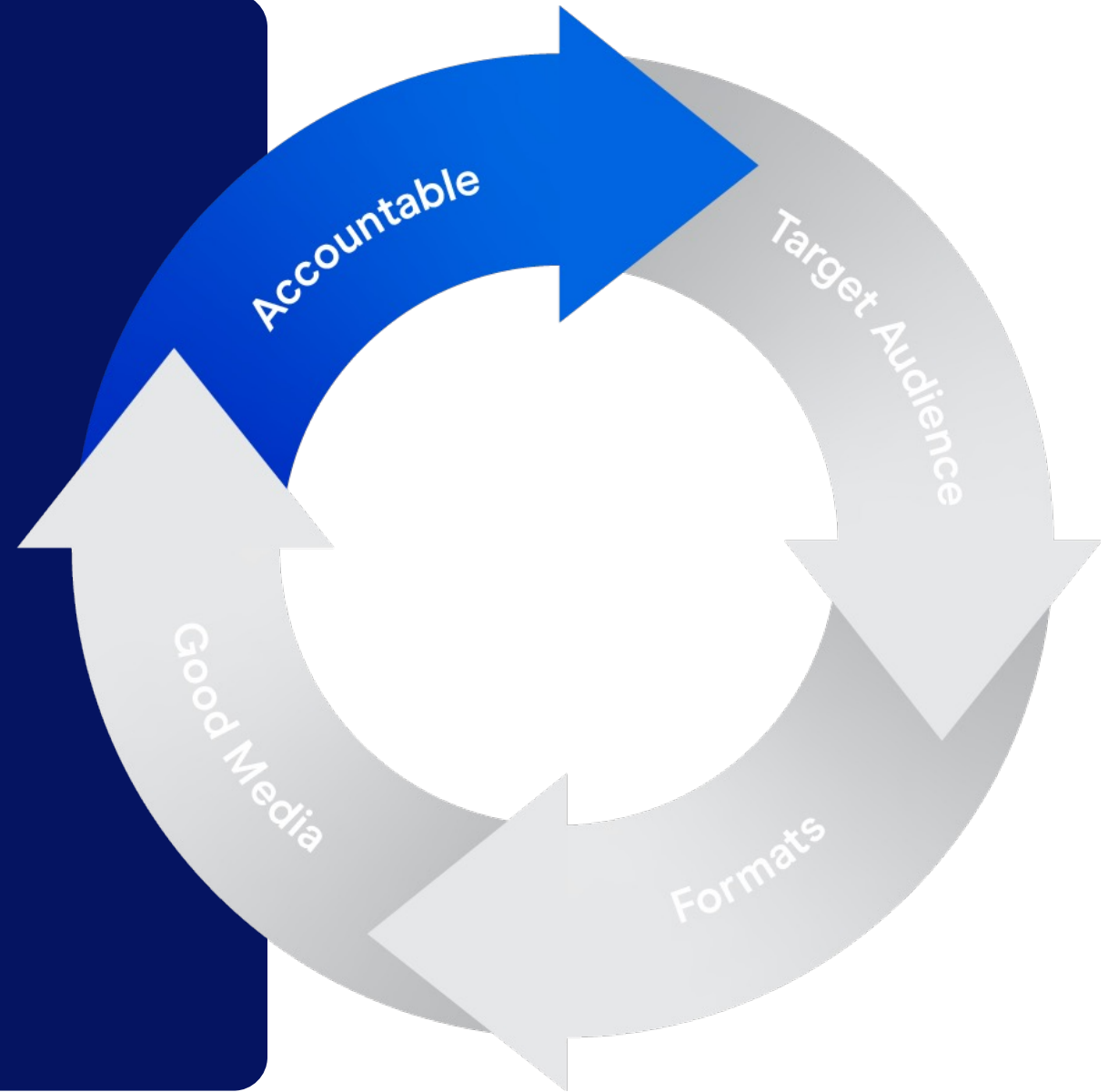
Accountable: Proving performance & driving ROI

Advertisers demand accountability so media owners must demonstrate both short and long-term effectiveness to secure ongoing investment.

How to enhance accountability:

- Measure beyond clicks and impressions – focus on deeper engagement, brand recall and business outcomes
- Work with retail media networks to directly link media exposure to purchase behaviour
- Use AI-driven analytics to track engagement, attribution, and real-time campaign optimisation
- Integrate shoppable experiences via social commerce, embedded checkout and dynamic product ads
- Showcase proof of performance with case studies, brand lift studies and attribution models that demonstrate tangible ROI

Example: If you're a media owner working with a major FMCG brand, use AI-powered measurement tools to demonstrate increased in-store footfall driven by digital exposure.

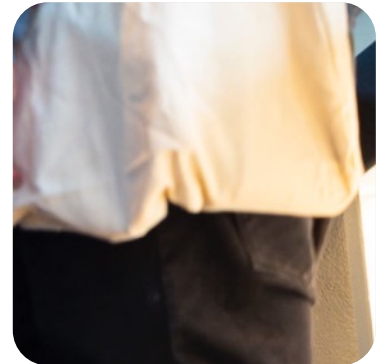
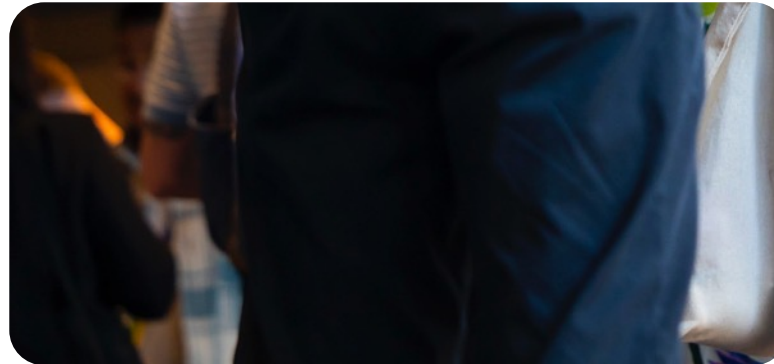
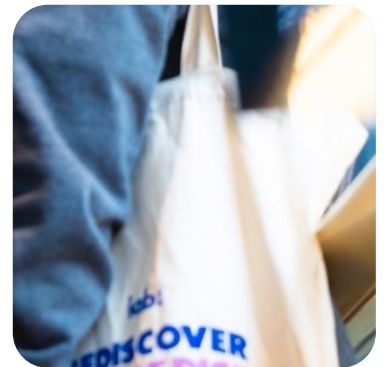
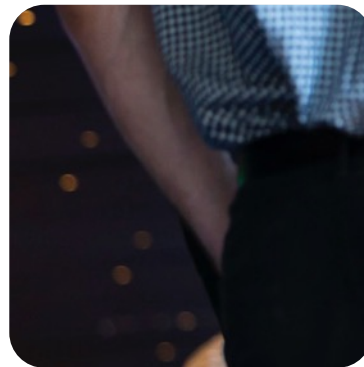
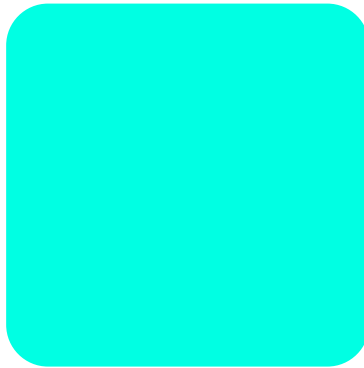


Bringing it all together

How to use this framework

- When responding to a brief, use the Media Owner Planning Wheel to ensure your proposal is clear, compelling and future-ready
- Show advertisers how your platform delivers value across audience, format, accountability and sustainability
- Differentiate yourself from competitors by demonstrating a deep understanding of consumer behaviour and media effectiveness

By applying these principles, you'll not only future-proof your media business but also build stronger relationships with advertisers.



A blue-tinted photograph of a group of people sitting around a table at what appears to be a conference or meeting. Several individuals are wearing lanyards with the 'iab.' logo. In the foreground, a man is looking towards the right, while others are partially visible in the background.

Call to action

Start future-proofing today

The Media Owner Planning Wheel is your blueprint for success. Use it to craft compelling, data-driven responses to briefs and stay ahead of the competition.

Want to learn more?

For guidance on putting this into practice, get in touch with IAB UK today via insight@iabuk.com