ADVERTISING:
AGENCIES AND POSITIONS

How are agencies structured?

Full Service Agency
As the name implies full-service agencies provide clients with a wide range of services from ad creation and production to media planning, and buying to strategic development. In the past 10 years, advertising has witnessed considerable consolidation. Most major agencies are now owned by one of six holding companies.

Creative Boutique
Creative boutique firms provide a more limited range of services typically focused on ad creation and production. Often these firms are founded by established art directors or copywriters who have chosen to leave the “big” agency world. Clients may seek out these for more cutting-edge design, or to try to save money.

Media Agencies
Media agencies focus on media planning and buying, which is the management and purchasing of media time and space.

What types of positions are there within an agency?*
The majority of advertising firms are located in major cities. Careers in advertising agencies can cover a wide array of areas including:

- **Account Services Department**
  - Positions in account services include: assistant account executive, account executive, senior account executive, accounts supervisor/accounts manager.
  - Advocates for client with agency and for agency with client.
  - Manages relationship with client, acting as a liaison between art department, production department and client.
  - Responsible for keeping team motivated and on schedule.
  - Must communicate well with different types of people, be detail-oriented and be knowledgeable about client/brand.

- **Media Services Department**
  - Positions in media include: assistant media buyer/planner, media buyer/planner, associate media director, media director, and media manager.
  - Planners strategize where and when to buy media space, buyers negotiate the purchase of that space.
  - Applies statistical models to audience, circulation, and cost figures to minimize media cost and maximize media effectiveness.
  - Manages the purchase and control of large blocks of media time/space, recommends and allocates this space among clients according to campaign requirements.
  - Must be analytical, detail oriented, able to draw conclusions from research and data, able to negotiate and sell ideas.

*NOTE: these positions may be found in all agencies but this handout focuses mainly on full-service agencies
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- **Account Planning/Research Department:**
  - *Positions* in research include: research project director, research account executive, associate research director, advertising research director, and research department manager.
  - Research focuses on quantitative analysis; researchers serve as experts in statistical applications, mathematical modeling, project design, and methodology.
  - Account planning involves qualitative evaluation of consumers including focus groups, telephone interviews, surveys, etc.
  - These areas may be separate or combined areas depending on the needs of the agency.

- **Creative Department – Art Direction:**
  - *Positions* in art direction include: assistant art director, junior art director, art director, and senior art director.
  - Requires knowledge of advertising trends and strong visual communication skills.
  - Develops and recommends visual strategy and oversees creation of final campaign.
  - Oversees progression of campaign from rough sketches through final production.

- **Creative Department – Copywriting:**
  - *Positions* in copywriting include: junior copywriter, copywriter, senior copywriter, copy chief.
  - Responsible for writing ad and promotional copy and developing concepts for campaigns.
  - Requires knowledge of advertising trends and a strong writing ability, works closely with art director.

- **Creative Department – Production:**
  - *Positions* in production include: layout worker, graphic artist, production manager.
  - Artists and layout workers create the visual impact of the ad by selecting photographs, drawing illustrations, choosing print size and type, and sketching scenes for commercials to accompany the copy.
  - Designs packages and creates logos, trademarks and symbols.
  - Production managers oversee the actual printing of ads, filming of commercials, and/or recording of radio spots.

- **Business Development**
  - Focus on acquiring new accounts, usually a small department.

- **Traffic**
  - Responsible for guaranteeing that departments meet deadlines.
  - Responsible for making sure that the ad meets all deadlines and receives all necessary approvals from all departments.
  - Must be organized, detail-oriented and able to work under pressure.

*NOTE: Most entry-level positions are found in Account Services*