

## August 25, 2004

### **The Road to Marketing Accountability Bob Liodice, President and CEO, ANA**

Marketing accountability is one of the most important subjects we have in front of us at the ANA – and for very good reasons. Too often, the marketing industry had been blistered by criticism of our inability to connect "the cause" with "the effect." Often, marketers had to struggle and guess at the results of well thought out marketing and advertising campaigns. Trying to understand the impact on brands was even harder to assess.

I am very pleased that the industry has taken the message to heart. Perhaps reacting to impatient CEO's, the industry has been hard at work to bring more measurements and common sense to this arena. Efforts have sprung up in most companies to enhance the level of marketing quantification and valuation. Some companies are well ahead of others – but, importantly, we feel that the movement is gaining important traction – traction that we will continue to fuel at our upcoming "Masters of Marketing" conference – ANA's [Annual Conference](#) – on October 7-10.

We believe so much in this subject that we, at the ANA, will be raising the marketing accountability "bar" at every opportunity. We applaud the work of our comrades at the Radio Advertising Bureau, the Advertising Research Foundation, the Interactive Advertising Bureau and others for their efforts to help the industry raise that bar. For ANA's part, marketing accountability is one of the leading subjects at our marketing and media committee meetings, it is reflected in our increased survey work with members, and it is the subject of a dedicated conference that the ANA kicked off this year – [The Marketing Accountability Forum](#). At that meeting, [Peter Sealey](#) – the CEO of the Los Altos Group and the host for the meeting – brought increased attention to one of the most important innovations to enhance marketing accountability – Ad-ID.

For those unfamiliar with [Ad-ID](#), the quick answer is that it represents the industry's "UPC Code" for digitally tagging and tracking every advertising and marketing asset a company may have – be it television, radio, internet, packaging or print. Created jointly by the 4A's and the ANA, the rollout of Ad-ID is well underway – currently being used by more than 100 companies – a list that is growing very quickly. By providing a central coding system that is embraced and recognized by all in the media, agency and marketing communities, the opportunities for substantially enhancing productivity are endless. One such opportunity we are very excited about is the integration of Ad-ID with the upcoming rollout of electronic data interchange (EDI). Just think of the enormous productivity that will be generated by the media ordering and invoicing system. Just think about the end of incorrect advertising placements and screw-ups in the billing process. Just think of having the ability to verify what commercial truly ran. Just think about the opportunity to take your media asset and target it more directly to a particular audience segment or geography – and being able to measure its impact. Those dreams are becoming reality. Just recently, [the major TV networks \(ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX\) have become Ad-ID compliant](#) – enhancing the industry's ability to realize increasing productivity over time.

We really are making strides to guessing less and measuring more. We, as an industry, have a long way to go. But we are on the right track – and we are beginning to make considerable

progress. The fun aspect is that we are not far off from making a real dent into understanding the answer to the age old [John Wannamaker question](#) "Which half of my advertising is wasted?"