

Media Division Gains Competitors as Clients

In 1998, Razor & Tie (R&T) launched a media buying division. At that time, R&T brought all of the media buying for its internal, proprietary products in house — and quite seamlessly. Soon after, co-founder Cliff Chenfeld says the company started receiving interest from others in the music business that wanted to utilize their media buying expertise.

“We’re good at this because we’ve experienced being the client for so long. We understand the level of responsiveness needed, the communication and how to save money and be smart,” says Chenfeld.

R&T’s turnkey operation runs from the simple, such as just buying time for spots, to performing back-end customer service duties and even creating spots in its third-floor studio (equipped with video and editing equipment).

“We do the media buying for newly created products and offers, and to introduce existing products. After all these years, we’re still the only people that do that in the entertainment business, especially in short form,” says Chenfeld.

Chenfeld and the team, now led by recent hire Robin Rifkin, vice president, media buying & sales, was behind Michael Jackson’s “This

is It” campaign for Epic Records. Another client R&T has a significant relationship with is ENGAUGE, a national full-service marketing and advertising agency with offices in five states. Yet another relationship, cultivated strongly through R&T’s children’s products, is with Viacom’s MTV Networks (MTVN).

R&T buys a lot of media for itself and other clients with Viacom’s MTVN

— focusing on entertainment and kids outlets. Chenfeld credits MTVN Executive Vice President of Advertising and Sales Brian Fays (a member of the *Response* Editorial Advisory Board) as a key factor in the strong relationship. “He has taken DR and advanced it to the 21st century,” says Chenfeld.

“When we were first buying media, we were getting rem-

nant inventory, but now, Viacom’s and other DR departments are very strategic and have a place at the table.”

Co-founder and partner Craig Balsam is confident that R&T’s DR business, including its media buying division, will continue to grow as ad companies continue their migration to DR. “Media buys can no longer be done in the dark, and we feel we are well placed to take advantage of the changing expectations of companies and consumers,” says Balsam.



Robin Rifkin is Razor & Tie’s vice president, media buying & sales.