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ADNEWS LIVE SYDNEY: What to expect next week

11 June 2026

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AdNews LIVE Sydney is on track to sell-out on June 18, as a heavyweight lineup of industry leaders gather to discuss the new agency playbook.

The half-day conference will confront a model under pressure worldwide — not as an ending, but as a powerful reset. The afternoon will open with a hard look at the economics of media buying before moving into sessions on fee models, changing talent structures, the client-agency relationship and the future of holdcos.



Publisher Assia Benmedjdoub said the event comes at a pivotal moment for the sector.

"The model that built this industry won't be the one that carries it forward. This is the room where the people doing the rebuilding map out what comes next — a smarter, faster, more sustainable future for agencies and a real chance to lead the industry into its next chapter."

Sponsors for the event include Supporting Partners Audience360, Bliss, Perion and Ryvalmedia; Associate Partner Teads; and Friends of AdNews the IMAA (Independent Media Agencies of Australia) and the MFA (Media Federation of Australia).

The full schedule is detailed below.

1:00pm - Registration and Networking

1:30pm - AdNews Welcome

1:35pm - The Media Buying Model: Where To Next?

Accenture Song Managing Director Media A/NZ Sam Geer and Managing Director Media Strategy A/NZ Chris Colter

The economics of media buying have fundamentally shifted, reshaping how agencies generate revenue and how value is created within the advertising ecosystem. This session explores the commercial realities behind modern agency models, the structural pressures facing holding companies and the growing tension between effectiveness, efficiency and profitability. Grounded in market realities, it examines how these changes are reshaping incentives, relationships and long-term sustainability across the industry.

2:00pm - The Fee Model Reset

TrinityP3 Founder & Global CEO Darren Woolley

The traditional agency fee model is under sustained pressure. Time-based pricing is increasingly misaligned with how value is created, while procurement-led structures continue to reinforce outdated commercial frameworks. At the same time, output-based models are gaining traction, challenging how agencies price, measure and justify their work. This session unpacks the economics behind agency remuneration, why the industry remains locked into legacy models and what a more sustainable, commercially viable approach looks like in practice.

2:25pm - The Changing Agency Structure

Howatson+Company Founder & Chief Executive Officer Chris Howatson

Agency staffing models are being redefined by AI, automation and access to external talent. Traditional team structures are struggling to maintain efficiency and profitability as delivery models shift. This session provides a data-driven view of how talent utilisation, cost structures and margins are being impacted, alongside an insight into the changing way agencies of the future are staffed.

2:50pm - Afternoon Tea Break



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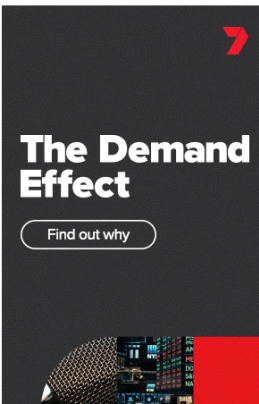
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3:20pm - PANEL: The Partner Rethink

Squad M&A CEO & Commercial Partner Virginia Hyland, Bliss Media Group Head QLD & WA Scott Mathison, Audience360 Managing Director Jenny Parkes and Perion Senior Sales Director Henry Hellegas

With a view across multiple agencies and clients, partners and suppliers often see industry shifts before anyone else does. This panel explores the biggest threats and opportunities they see emerging across the market, from changing agency models and margin pressure to AI, consolidation and evolving client expectations. The discussion will unpack where agencies are adapting well, where they risk falling behind and what the future agency-partner ecosystem could look like over the next few years.

3:50pm - The Client-Agency Evolution

Optus Executive General Manager of Marketing Lauren Dawber

The agency of record model is evolving, not disappearing. While some brands retain consolidated structures, others are moving towards modular, multi-partner ecosystems. This session explores how marketers and procurement teams are navigating that shift, the trade-offs between control and flexibility and how success is being measured across different operating models. A clear view of how agency structures are being reshaped from the client side.

4:15pm - The Group Agencies of the Future

Omnicom Media Group CEO Kristiaan Kroon, WPP Media Australia & New Zealand CEO Aimee Buchanan, RyanCap Founder & CEO Simon Ryan and Publicis Groupe ANZ Chief Media Officer Imogen Hewitt

Scale is no longer a guaranteed advantage. Large group agency structures are under pressure from duplication, siloed teams and slow decision-making. This session examines how leading networks are rethinking structure, moving towards integrated models, centres of excellence and unified workflows. With global and local context, it outlines how complexity can be reduced while retaining the benefits of scale and what a modern group agency model needs to deliver.

4:45pm - AdNews Close

4:50pm - Drinks Commence

6:00pm - Event Concludes

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