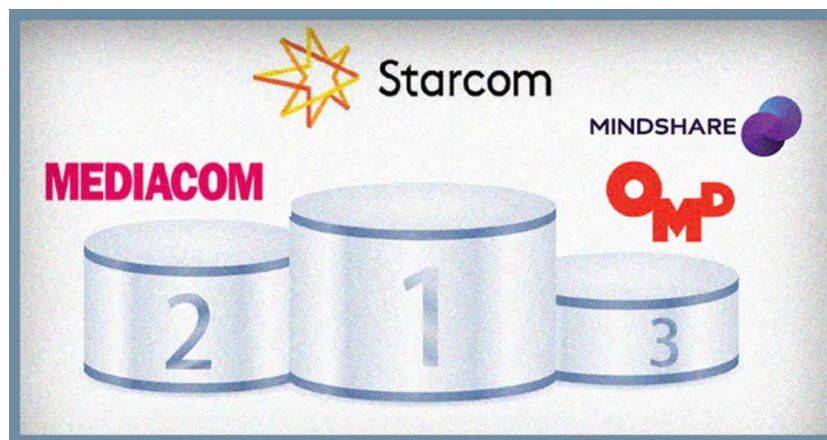


<https://www.adweek.com/agencies/publicis-media-groupm-lead-comvergences-2021-media-agency-global-new-business-ranking/>

Publicis Media, GroupM Lead COMvergence's 2021 Media Agency Global New Business Ranking



Last year, COMvergence was a big theme as brands consolidated their business with single media agency groups. The result? More global business and a need for media agencies to deliver at scale. A handful of massive account moves underscored the trend and ultimately dictated which agencies came out on top of new business.

Today, global research firm COMvergence released its New Business Barometer for the FY 2021. COMvergence reports, which are released on a quarterly basis, highlight which media agencies won and retained the most business.

This report reveals media agency performance last year on the global, multi-country and local levels. It calculates rankings based on an agency's new client wins, plus its retentions and minus its losses.

Agency reviews were far more common last year than in 2020, likely due to the pandemic. COMvergence analyzed 4,410 pitches between January and September 2021, totaling \$40.7 billion—up 80% from 2020.

As in previous years, the U.S. accounted for about a third of the spend, with many reviews over \$500 million including T-Mobile, FCA/Stellantis, Unilever, Walmart, Inspire Brands, McDonald's, Meta, Google's offline media and Eli Lilly.

Top agencies: Starcom, MediaCom, OMD and Mindshare

Starcom performed the best last year, due to its \$2 billion Stellantis win, its \$1.2 billion FCA retention and the McDonald's win. The agency's total new business value came to \$3.7 billion, of which \$1.8 billion came from retentions. "The Stellantis win was definitely a massive windfall for Starcom, and that has helped them to be number one for sure," COMvergence founder Oliver Gauthier told Adweek.

MediaCom came in second with \$2.7 billion in new business, including \$1.1 billion in retentions. The agency's two most notable wins include Coca-Cola's \$1.9 billion global account and Google's offline media business. OMD and Mindshare share the third place spot. OMD's significant retentions included Crown Commercial Services in the U.K. and Daimler globally.

Mindshare's retentions included Unilever in some markets and Yili in China. Mindshare's loss of Meta to Spark Foundry was not included in the COMvergence calculation, because the agency did not defend the business. "That's sort of our rule of inclusion and exclusion, if the agency either resigned the accounts or did not defend the business, we are not penalizing them for the loss," said Gauthier.

Top groups: Publicis Media, GroupM and OMG

At the group level, **Publicis Media raked in new business totaling \$6.95 billion, including \$4.2 billion in net new billings**. WPP's GroupM followed with \$4.2 billion in net new billings. But, when excluding its retentions, GroupM's performance sinks to \$1 billion—\$3 billion below Publicis Media.

Omnicom's OMG came in third with \$2.3 billion in total retained billings. IPG's Mediabrands followed closely behind, but notably, Mediabrands last year had the second-largest net new business billings gain of the six groups, at \$1.5 billion.

Global pitches, higher retention

With COMvergence and consolidation top of mind for marketers, **local pitches were less dominant in 2021. Total local spend amounted to 58% of the total last year compared to 71% in 2020 and 73% in 2019**. "Advertisers are increasingly looking to streamline their mediated partnerships into either one or two agencies," said Gauthier.

Media agencies are more likely to retain their clients, according to the data. The average retention rate last year was 33%, up from 30% in 2020 and 25% in 2019. Starcom by far had the highest retention rate, tying down 75% of business last year. Among groups, GroupM and Publicis Media led the way, retaining 50% of accounts.

Of total media spend reviewed in 2021, just 10% went to independent agencies. COMvergence categorizes an independent agency as any agency that sits outside the big six holding companies. Of those, Horizon Media led, with \$638 million in spend.