

# round8 rough guide to media sales

If you are new to the job market or considering a career change you need to get an understanding of what your options are. We hope the following helps you to determine if media sales is for you.

## What does it involve?

You will be selling advertising space in magazines, newspapers, on the radio, online, mobile, cinema or outdoor to companies who want to promote their products, services or image.

People who are new to the industry with little or no sales experience typically start their career selling over the phone. A lot of people imagine that this involves working like a battery hen in a huge call centre, saying exactly the same thing to every customer – a dead end job you do until you find something more interesting. There are 8000 magazines published in the UK and environments like this do exist. round 8 do not recruit for companies that work this way.

Our clients are mostly prominent, mainstream publishing companies that have established portfolios that target a broad cross-section of markets. They are looking for bright, articulate, motivated candidates who truly have the potential to move up the corporate ladder.

Their clients demand a high level of service and they do not want to deal with characterless robots. To sell media space successfully you must find out what each of your customer's requirements are and match the benefits of advertising with your magazine/product to these needs. You need to know your product and understand the market you are selling to. You are talking to people about their marketing strategies and trying to link what you have with a benefit the customer will enjoy by advertising with you. This takes skill and excellent communicative abilities.

## What is the environment really like?

If you want the quiet life, this is not the best career option. All sales environments can be fast and pressured. There are deadlines to meet and sales targets to achieve. You will be surrounded by competitive colleagues, (most of whom will be going for the same promotions that you are), but you have to work as a team.

The average age in most telesales departments is 23. It will be one of the most meritocratic environments you are likely to encounter. If you excel, you will earn excellent money and be highly marketable within the industry, but it's not for everyone.

## What are the career prospects?

Media is an enormous market that covers Trade, Consumer and National Press, TV, Radio, online, mobile and outdoor or ambient. The skills you will gain as a telesales person are transferable to all these sectors, so the opportunities are fairly limitless. One word of warning - if your interest really lies in journalism, media sales is not the way to get your foot in the door.

The standard career route in magazine publishing is to spend 6-18 months in telesales, then become an account manager selling face-to-face to larger clients, and then move into a management role. If you work your way up to be a publisher you are charged with overseeing all aspects of a magazine. You are accountable for everything from its design and editorial content to the way the sales operation works.

Salespeople rarely work long-term on the same magazine (i.e. more than 1-3 years.) This means that the environment in which you work is in a constant state of change. Magazines launch, re-launch and merge all the time. Sales propositions, environments and career opportunities also frequently alter. This makes it a dynamic and progressive environment to work in. Because the top companies each publish anything from 12 to 100 titles, there is a lot of scope for you to progress your career whilst working on a variety of magazines within the same firm.

## What sort of training will I get?

You do not need any sales experience to join at graduate entry level. All our clients offer structured, comprehensive development programs for their staff. These usually include on the job training by your manager, specialist in-house courses and training ran by external companies. Typical courses include basic and advanced sales techniques; negotiation; presentation; creative problem-solving; objection handling. Management training is included when you reach that level.

## Who will I be selling to?

You will not be 'cold-calling' all day every day. All the media companies we recruit for have existing client bases that will already be aware of your business. You will typically be asked to manage existing accounts and also develop new business (i.e.cold call.) As well as inheriting a client base, you may be asked to use your own creativity to source sales leads and approach companies who have never advertised with you.

Client bases naturally vary a lot from product to product. For example we deal with magazines as diverse as 'Cosmopolitan' and 'Horticulture Week'. The basic sales processes used on all of them is very similar. If you work for 'The Engineer' you will not be talking about machines all day. You will spend most of your time talking to clients about marketing strategies and advertising options. Similarly you won't spend a lot of time discussing last Saturday's football match if you sell on 4-4-2 Magazine. During your career there will be a lot of scope to work on a publication which particularly interests you, but don't make subject matter a prerequisite to you taking a particular job.

3-4 Great Marlborough St, London W1F 7HH  
T: 020 7734 4970 F: 020 7434 0585  
info@round8.com  
www.round8.com



## How much will I earn?

Media can be a highly paid profession. Starting salaries for graduates vary, but typically you can expect to earn around £18,000 in your first year. There is substantial scope to earn a lot more the further up the ladder you go. Commission is normally paid on achievement of monthly and quarterly targets. Our clients invest a lot of money finding you and training you up. They want the best people to stay with them and climb the promotional ladder, so it is in their interests to incentivise you. This means that those salespeople who work to their potential normally earn their commission.

As a face-to-face salesperson you can earn between £18000 and £25000 basic, OTE £25- 30000. Many companies provide company cars at this level. Junior managers can earn £20- 30000 basic, OTE £25-35000. There is of course a lot of scope to earn much more at senior levels.

## What skills do I need to get the job?

Many recruitment consultancies publish lists of qualities that their candidates can mention in interviews – like determination, communicative skills, ability to work in a team, etc. Our clients get bored with hearing standard answers that candidates have picked up through visiting recruitment consultancies.

Of course, these skills (and many others) are essential, but at round 8 we believe you should be able to think of most of them yourself. You don't have to make every answer entirely original, but it is important that you come across as being credible to the interviewer – and that means putting some thought into your application and believing it yourself. Our priority is for you to get the job you deserve and our methods work.

For your own benefit we suggest that you ask yourself a few things before any sales interview. The questions below might help you decide if this is something you want to pursue. Some of them sound obvious, but very few people consider them thoroughly before an interview.

- : When I have been the customer, what kind of sales approach have I responded to best? What did I like about the salespersons' technique? What didn't I like? How would I have done things differently?
- : What basic personal qualities do I have that would make me a good candidate for a sales position? When in my life have I demonstrated these? What experiences have I had that have helped develop these qualities?
- : How do other people perceive me – i.e. Friends? Family? Work colleagues? Bosses? Other students? Why would they think I would be good at sales?
- : On the basis of what I now know about media sales, what has made me want to apply for a job in it?
- : What else do I need to know about media before I know it's for me?
- : What kind of company do I want to work for? What kind of environment would get the best out of me?

There are no right or wrong answers and you don't have to be unique in the ones you give. Just remember that your answers should be your own. After all, you're the one who will be doing the job every day if you get it, so you might as well be yourself in the interview.

