

Thought Leaders

A Woolley January: The 5 Biggest Stories

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The 2025 news cycle didn't take long to crank into overdrive. Here, TrinityP3 global CEO Darren Woolley reflects on the five biggest stories of January in his view



How is it only February? It feels like so much has already happened this year. We might only be one month in, but here are the top things that happened while you were ski-ing in Japan (that means you, Mike Wilson...) or exploring the Greek Islands (so 2024).

It is enough to make you realise that 2025 is not going to be just an extension of 2024.

1. The Rule of the Tech Bros is Cemented

We knew that Google and Meta had already defined a lot of the digital ecosystem, but January saw this confirmed at the inauguration of President Trump. The tech bros, hot off attending the inauguration in Washington, had their pants pulled down by a Chinese tech company DeepSeek that proved you did not need the \$500 billion announced to be invested in Stargate to get the lead in the AI arms race.

Why does this matter? Because if AI platforms can be created and deployed more cost-effectively than previously considered feasible, it means that more can be invested into integrating those platforms into everyday life. Democratising technology should be the champion for the home of the free and the land of the brave, but will it be?

2. 2025 Will be the Year of the MMM

While on the topic of technology, 2025 is looking like the year of MMM (market mix modelling) with the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) in the US and Incorporated Society of British Advertisers (ISBA) in the UK both supporting the development of cross-media measurement.

Locally, the Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA) says it will sit this out and be a "fast follower". Plus, Google released its open-source MMM called Meridian.

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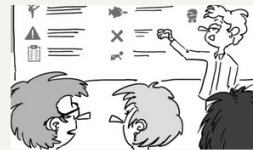


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3. Adland Holding Cos on the Hunt

The bosses of Omnicom and IPG started 2025 with a trip to the UK to sell staff and pitch doctors on how they will make their proposed merger work. The whole thing is likely to take at least a year.

Meanwhile, Publicis is making hay of the fact that it is (for the moment) the largest holding group, and in Australia, it just got bigger, gobbling up the market's biggest independent media agency, Atomic 212, as an appetiser.

4. Elon Musk Isn't Done With the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA)

What do you say about Elon Musk? Fresh off killing GARM, the X owner is now adding more major advertisers to his Texas lawsuit for withholding their advertising dollars in what he accuses of being an antitrust cartel.

Meanwhile, Meta announced it needs more male energy and, at the same time, more margin, by getting rid of untrustworthy fact-checkers. And TikTok is going through an on-again, off-again existence. Currently, it is back from the dead and on life support.

5. WPP's Mark Read is Lonely in the Office

Global WPP boss Mark Read has announced he wants all staff back to the office four days a week and at least two Fridays each month. The move wasn't popular at WPP but is significant because it sets a precedent that others in adland are likely to follow.

Could we see a battle for talent between indies offering more flexibility and holdcos that mandate four days a week?

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
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