GroupM Integrates DeepSeek to Simplify Media Buying in China

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GroupM has made an unusual bet in the generative AI space.

The holding company's data and insights arm, Choreograph, is tapping DeepSeek—China's answer to OpenAI—to sharpen its Audience Translator tool, which matches brands with target audiences across ad platforms.

The goal is to help brands target Chinese consumers "faster and smarter than ever," according to a LinkedIn post by the ad giant.

Choreograph is specifically integrating DeepSeek's open-source R1 model into its Audience Translator tool, where media planners can submit queries describing their campaign's target audience, as well as demographics and topics of interest. Audience Translator then maps and standardizes audience data across platforms, allowing for consistent and accurate audience profiles.

"By integrating DeepSeek's R1 model into Audience Translator, we're able to use its Chinese Natural Language Processing (NLP) capabilities to enhance our insights into audiences in China, optimize audience descriptions, and help create the right mix of audience tags to assist with campaign planning,"

a GroupM spokesperson told ADWEEK. “We’re continually testing new models and applying them where we’re confident they can accelerate our capabilities.”

GroupM is not formally partnering with DeepSeek, but rather integrating the AI company’s open-source model into a specific tool within Choreograph, the spokesperson said. “We use this tool to help reach audiences in China, for global brands advertising in the market, and for Chinese brands,” the spokesperson added.

DeepSeek’s rise has made waves in Silicon Valley, as many in the tech industry scrambles to make sense of its rapid ascent. The Chinese AI company has generated both awe and skepticism, with headlines questioning the accuracy of its gen AI model.

Concurrently, China has been racing to show how it is using DeepSeek, from courtrooms leveraging the technology to draft legal documents to doctors using it to propose treatment plans.

On the advertising front, the future of media is increasingly intertwined with gen AI. GroupM’s CEO Brian Lesser previously told ADWEEK that within the next five years, “there is no human that touches a media plan.”

Reflecting this shift, GroupM plans to invest $30 million to educate and train its workforce on how to work with AI, noting that 70% of its new hires already have experience with the technology.

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