

# 1.14a Sweden: history and current practice

## MEDIA SURVEYS 1954–1972

The history of organised media research in Sweden starts in 1954, when VECTU (the Organisation of Weekly Magazines) published its first joint media survey. Unfortunately it has not been possible to obtain any information about sample size and design or the methods used.

Between 1960 and 1970 syndicated media surveys were carried out with some regularity, basically with intervals of two years. A brief, summarised description is presented in **Table 1**. As can be seen, various combinations of methods were applied over these years. In general, they used reading frequency questions as filter questions. Average audiences were estimated from through-the-book questions, where the interviewers carried the last two issues of magazines and the previous day's issue of the relevant daily newspapers.

The surveys in those years covered roughly 28 magazines and 11 major urban daily newspapers, leaving out quite a number of relevant press media advertising vehicles.

The information about readers was demographic, collected by personal interviews, using primary sampling areas and random samples from the population register within the sampling areas.

It should be noted that the methodological decisions and data collection were organised jointly by the two press groups sponsoring the surveys (weeklies and dailies). The results and analysis were, however, presented separately to the market (a limited number of copies to the advertising agencies).

During all that time, the technical committee received complaints about the methodology, but unfortunately never put forward any suggestions for improvement. So, finally, advertisers, agencies and media came together to create a 'joint industry committee' survey, which was being conducted in 1972. Basically, the sponsoring was by the media, but the advertisers and agencies contributed to a certain extent to the budget.

The survey covered more or less the same media as shown in **Table 1**, and had also some questions about outdoor media and cinema. (There are no broadcasting media available for advertising in Sweden.)

There was a substantial increase in the number of questions that could be used for target group selection, such as consumer habits, possession of durables, etc. The sample was, at that time, a single-stage random sample (from the population register), which was quite different from the previous samples and made the fieldwork very expensive, because of the low population density in Sweden.

**TABLE 1**  
**Media surveys in Sweden 1954–1972**

Year	Sponsors	Titles	Sample size	Sample design	Method
1954	VECTU	Magazines	?	?	?
1960	VECTU	Magazines (29)	7,000	2-stage prob.	Through-the-book
1962	— SP	Newspapers	3,500	2-stage prob.	Filter + Recency
1965	VECTU SP	Magazines (27) Newspapers (11)	7,500	2-stage prob.	Filter + Through-the-book
1967	VECTU SP	Magazines Newspapers	9,000	2-stage prob.	Filter + Through-the-book (frq) (2 last issues)
1969	VECTU SP	Magazines (27) Newspapers (11)	10,000	2-stage prob.	Filter + Through-the-book (frq) (2 last issues)
1972	VECTU SP A/A	Magazines Newspapers Outdoor & film	5,000	1-stage random sample	Frequency + Recency (Logos)

VECTU = Organisation of weekly magazines

SP = Major urban daily newspapers

A/A = Advertisers/Agencies

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Much as in other countries, the media part of the survey was done by personal interviews, while the target data were collected by a questionnaire left behind for self-completion. For the media data, they used a 12 point frequency scale showing logos, and also a 'Recency' question.

For several reasons the study was not repeated. One was that the newspapers refused further collaboration.

## JARKO CERHA, THE TEM MODEL AND ORVESTO

In the course of this period, and starting in 1965, a quite interesting thing happened. A private market research organisation, headed by Jarko Cerha, brought together a number of big advertisers who raised quite a lot of money to dig into the problem of advertising effects. This called for extensive surveys, covering media and effect data, and led to the creation of what was later called the TEM model, including target data, effect data and media data in a single source survey.

From 1965 onwards a number of computer programs were developed to try and correlate advertising effects with the exposure impact of the media schedules. One thing that came out of this was that advertisers started to ask for programs to use this information in the reverse direction: to produce suggestions for media schedules for their continued activities rather than looking into the past. The first of these programs started operating at the end of 1965.

Around 1967 some of the publications, not covered previously in the media surveys, wondered whether they could use this TEM-information for their promotion activities. One of them was, for instance, *Reader's Digest*. Others wanted to use it because it covered so much target group data that was not previously on the market. Instead of writing technical reports each time somebody wanted to use this information, we formalised it in 1969 and produced the first 'Orvesto' report – a name made up of the initials of the different media covered by the report. From then up to 1980 there have been produced in all 21 reports with readership figures, and from 1972 two reports have been published each year.

The characteristics of the Orvesto media survey are summarised in **Table 2**. Since it differs in several respects from what is 'common practice' some comments may be made.

### Sampling

The Swedish population register is fully computerised and administered by a special governmental agency (DAFA) for the whole country. It is up-dated once a week. Since it contains several basic data about the individuals it is widely used for direct mail campaigns and by market

researchers, who can get perfect samples for various surveys.

### Readership question

A frequency question is used on 'how often . . .' people do things (that is, visit retail outlets, read different media, etc), the aim being to get the informant to describe his present behaviour in probability terms, using what is the informant's own wording relating to periods of time (per week, etc).

### Postal data collection

This is a unique feature, with a long tradition in Sweden. Interestingly enough the use of self-administered questionnaires is, in general, increasing. Several countries report efforts in this area, resulting partly from the

**TABLE 2**  
**ORVESTO characteristics**

<b>Sample</b>	1-stage systematic random sample (from the official population register) Approximately 14,000 completed interviews/year (continuous fieldwork)
<b>Data collection</b>	Postal (self-administered questionnaire) 80% response rate
<b>Media covered</b>	Magazines Urban newspapers Local newspapers Cons. Org & Union Press Outdoor & film Retail outlets
<b>Readership question</b>	Frequency scale only ('How often do you read . . .' times per year, month, etc) Probabilities → Average issue readership
<b>Target groups</b>	Socio-economic Demographic Buying behaviour (TGI type) Buying intentions Interests Life style
<b>Reports</b>	Twice a year 10,000 copies each time
<b>Sponsors</b>	Individual press media Computer runs
<b>Analysis</b>	Batch computer runs On-line time-sharing runs (including up-to-date rate cards)