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7.2   MAGAZINE PAGE EXPOSURE IN ITALY

At the 1983 Montreal Symposium quite a lot of interest was generated by the presentation of the MPX study sponsored in 1981 in the USA by the Magazine Publishers' Association and conducted by Audits & Surveys.

Subsequently MPA sponsored another study in late 1983 measuring yesterday exposure both for magazines (MPX) and television (TCX). A measure of exposure to the average page has also been incorporated in the syndicated audience survey by MRI since 1983 (20,000 interviews per annum) and Average Exposure figures are currently published alongside the audience figures.

In Italy, the Management of *Selezione dal Reader's Digest*, the Italian subsidiary of *Reader's Digest*, aware of the potential value of the concept of page exposure, in order to offer to the Italian advertising community both a useful tool for media planning and a better insight into reading behaviour, early in 1984 decided to sponsor a study using the same method adopted for the MPX study in the USA. A pilot study with 500 interviews was carried out in May 1984 and the main study, conducted by Analisi & Ricerche, went ahead in late January 1985.

Also the Technical Committee of ISPI - the Italian Magazine Readership Survey - had in the meantime decided to adopt the 'page exposure' concept, the approach used being a modified MRI one. Supplementary questions were added to the 8,300 interviews of the Autumn 1984 wave of the readership survey and page exposure indexes were published in June 1985 individually for each of 107 titles.

Table 1 briefly summarises the differences between the MPX method (used by MPA in the USA and by Reader's Digest Italy), the MRI method and the ISPI method.

As the table shows, the MPX technique is based on yesterday reading events and the number of reading days is computed from the ratio of first-time readings to total reading yesterday.

The Italian page exposure study sponsored by Reader's Digest Italy was based on a national sample of telephone households, with interviews equally distributed over 30 days; 2,767 respondents were eligible for the full interview having seen on the previous day at least one of 42 titles (24 weeklies and 18 monthlies) representing about 70% of the AIR of the weeklies covered by the Italian Readership Survey and 60% of the monthlies.

Among the weeklies not considered in this study were six TV weeklies. Whilst in most magazines advertisements are distributed fairly equally throughout the issue, in Italy the layout of TV weeklies is such that they carry little or sometimes no advertising in the sections devoted to each day's programming, so that results might not be said to reflect the 'average page'. It was felt a different technique (either supplementary questions or actual Through-the-Book interviews) would be required for this type of magazine.

Among monthlies, the titles selected for inclusion covered six motor magazines, nine home and women monthlies plus three other magazines including *Selezione Reader's Digest*. Special-interest monthlies (often with limited audience such as photo, sport, travel, the economy, etc.) were not included, in order to keep down to a manageable size the list to be administered over the phone.

TABLE 1

	MPX (US)	MPX (Italy)	MRI (USA)	ISPI (Italy)
Method of interview	Telephone	Telephone	Face-to-face	Face-to-face
Period and contact sample	1,510 interviews over 30 days	7,980 interviews over 30 days	20,000 interviews per annum	8,300 interviews Autumn wave
Number of titles covered	31	24 weeklies 18 monthlies	150	107
Eligible respondents	Readers yesterday		Readers in last publication interval	Readers in last publication interval
Reading events covered by page exposure	Reading events yesterday		Last time reading in last publication interval (ie within 7/15/30 days)	Last time reading in last publication interval (ie within 7/30 days)
Form and order of questioning	For each magazine seen yesterday - how many different copies yesterday? For each copy - how many reading occasions yesterday? For each occasion - proportion of pages opened Copy already seen in previous days? (no time limit)		For each magazine seen in last publication interval - how many different *days* in last period? - how many pages on last reading *day*? - how many different copies on last *day*?	For each magazine seen in last publication interval - how many pages opened last reading *time*? - was it the first time or already seen previously? (If not): - how many other *times* seen, same copy or different copy, in last issue period?
Publication or results	aggregate of 31 magazines	by categories of magazines	by individual titles	individual titles

Interestingly, page exposure values found in the study were on a level very *similar* to the ones obtained in the USA by the MPA study using the MPX technique and by the MRI survey : 1.6 for weeklies and 1.7 for monthlies. But, even more interestingly, the structural components of exposure values show a pattern somewhat *dissimilar* from those found in the USA.

In fact, the number of reading days is lower in Italy but the proportion of pages opened is higher:

	Number of reading days	Number of pages opened	Page exposure value
USA - MPX Study 1981	3.2	52.4	1.7
Italy - *Average of:*			
24 weeklies	2.5	65.8	1.6
18 monthlies	2.8	60.9	1.7

Even accounting for the fact that the 31 titles covered by the MPX study in the USA included a larger share of monthly magazines compared with weeklies, obviously there are other underlying factors that influence this difference, having to do either with the editorial contents and mix of the magazines or with readers' actual behaviour.

Because the purpose of this study was to provide advertisers and agencies with a better understanding of reading behaviour, more detailed analyses of page exposure values were conducted by groups of magazines; we also looked at their structure, by splitting exposure values into their two components: number of days, and proportion of pages opened in the average day.

HOW ARE PAGE EXPOSURES GENERATED?

This exercise was attempted in order to gain some insight into how page exposure is generated, and whether conventional wisdom held true or had to

be placed in a different perspective. In any case, to be on the safe side, the bases of the analyses for individual magazine categories consisted of at least 500 respondents.

It was fully realised, in fact, that exposure values, calculated as they are from two different components, each with its own standard error, need a fairly sizeable base to be statistically acceptable.

MAGAZINE CATEGORIES

We see from Table 2 that a pattern emerges: *Monthlies*, not surprisingly, are read on the average on a greater number of days than weeklies; weeklies, on the other hand, tend to have a slightly higher value of page traffic.

Among *weeklies*, news and opinion magazines have a page exposure value in line with the average, but appear to be opened on a higher-than-average number of days, with a slightly lower-than-average page traffic. Here the interpretation could be that there is a lot to *read* in these magazines and therefore more reading days are required to read the full book; but on the other hand, just because these magazine require actual reading (rather than leafing through) fewer pages are seen on each day.

The situation for women's weeklies and popular and gossip weeklies is different: again the page exposure values are in line with the average, but they are seen on a lower-than-average number of days (partly a function of the proportion of readers that get hold of a copy at the hairdresser or other public places) whilst on each day more pages are leafed through.

Motor monthlies (with predominantly male readers) differ from home and women monthlies, which not only get consulted over more days but each time have a higher intensity of page openings. The interpretation could be

TABLE 2
Page exposure values

Analysis by title categories
Base : number of copies seen yesterday by 2,767 readers

	Actual data			Indexed		
	Average number of reading days	*% of pages opened yesterday %*	*Number of exposures per average page*	*Average number of reading days*	*% of pages opened yesterday %*	*Number of exposures per average page*
Average 24 weeklies	2.5	65.8	1.6	2.5	65.8	1.6
				Index	*Index*	*Index*
Women	2.4	70	1.7	96	107	102
Popular/gossip	2.5	68	1.7	99	103	102
Family	2.5	66	1.6	100	100	100
News	2.6	61	1.6	106	93	99

Including 'Teenager' titles

					%	
Average 18 monthlies	2.8	60.9	1.7	2.8	60.9	1.7
				Index	*Index*	*Index*
Motor	2.6	61	1.6	93	100	93
Women/home/other	2.8	67	1.9	100	110	110
Selezione Reader's Digest	3.7	44	1.6	135	73	98

linked with the respective role these magazines fulfill: information and 'entertainment' for motor monthlies; service and practical usefulness for home and women's monthlies,

Reader's Digest had to be kept in a separate 'group' by itself. A very high number of days and lower-than-average page traffic parallel - but in a more extreme way - the pattern seen for the news weeklies, and the interpretation can be the same: the editorial content requires actual reading from the reader and not just leafing through.

A further analysis was conducted (separately for weekies and monthlies) to investigate whether any differences

emerged by socio-demographics. Do different readers read in different ways?

The first pattern **Table 3** shows is that men have a lower page exposure than women (the same pattern was found also in the USA).

We naturally wondered whether this was due to the influence of male readers of mainly female-interest magazines. We tabulated results separately, and got the picture shown in **Table 4**.

Whilst the estimates of page exposure for male readers of female magazines and for female readers of male magazines are more fragile (being sometimes based on fewer cases - less

than 100 for some categories), it is instructive to see that there is actually a common underlying pattern: men have a consistently lower level of *page openings* both for male interest magazines and, as it would be expected, for women magazines; whilst women have higher levels than men not only for their 'own' magazines but even for news magazines.

AGE

Going back to **Table 3**, the analysis by age shows that an element common to weeklies and magazines is that young people (under 35) read overall on fewer days, but see more pages.

More mature people (over 54) appear to behave differently for weeklies as

TABLE 3
Analysis by sex and age

	24 Weeklies			18 Monthlies		
	Average number of reading days	*% of pages opened yesterday*	*Number of exposures per average page*	*Average number of reading days*	*% of pages opened yesterday*	*Number of exposures per average page*
Average	2.5	65.8%	1.6	2.8	60.9%	1.7
	Index	Index	Index	Index	Index	Index
Sex: Male	100	94	94	101	89	91
Female	100	104	103	99	111	111
Age: 15 - 34	96	105	101	96	110	107
35 - 54	103	93	96	108	91	98
55+	102	102	104	101	81	83

TABLE 4
Analysis of exposure values by sex within magazine categories

	Number of days	*Women % pages*	*Page exposure*	*Number of days*	*Men % pages*	*Page exposure*
Women's weeklies	2.4	71.7	1.7	1.8	59.9	1.1
Popular/ gossip weeklies	2.6	69.3	1.8	1.8	62.2	1.2
Home and women monthlies	2.8	72.3	2.0		*	
News weeklies	2.5	65.2	1.6	2.7	60.3	1.6
Motor monthlies		*		2.6	61.4	1.6
Family weeklies	2.4	68.8	1.6	2.6	61.2	1.6

compared with monthlies. While slightly over average for weeklies, both in terms of number of days and in terms of page openings, for monthlies they seem to open fewer pages although the number of days is in line with the average.

EDUCATION

The analysis by education and professional status shown in **Table 5**, shows practically no difference for weeklies, but the results might seem surprising in respect of monthlies. However, the bases of the indexes are rather limited and therefore no significant conclusion can be drawn.

GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

From **Table 6**, we see that, by geographical area, the North West (Piedmont, Lombardy and Liguria) shows higher than average indexes, while Southern readers seem less involved in the magazines they read.

Major towns, again, have a different pattern for weeklies than for monthlies.

SOURCE OF COPY

The analysis by source of copy is very enlightening.

A debate has been going on for years among advertisers and media planners on the value of readers of copies purchased (personally or by a household member) as opposed to readers of pass-on copies or readers of copies found in public places. Some tended to discount the exposure value of reading events occurring at hairdressers, in doctors' waiting-rooms or even of pass-on copies read at home, as being more 'casual' and involving fewer pages.

Others felt an exposure, wherever it occurred, is still an exposure.

A discussion on the effectiveness of exposures would require investigating other factors and is outside the scope

of this paper, but this study offers the opportunity to understand more about such exposures. In fact **Table 7** shows that pass-on or out-of-home copies enjoy quite a sizeable level of exposures: 75-80% compared with primary readers.

True, household copies obtain more reading days (the value is higher than average both for weeklies and monthlies) but the proportion of pages opened does not drop dramatically - as some were prone to think - for non-purchased copies. It is only because they are consulted on fewer days that the overall exposure value is lower. Still, 75-80% exposure level is not bad for copies that some media planners in the past had suggested should be given zero value!

The scenario for non-purchased copies might be given an interpretation of this kind:

- copies found in *public places*, for various reasons (among which the limited contact time envisaged), are leafed through more or less in their entirety, while editorial reading is concentrated only on articles that catch the interest. Naturally the number of reading days, almost by definition, is one.

- *pass-on copies* on the contrary, have more days and more time at their disposal and are read rather similarly to household purchased copies (the only limit being, for some magazines, the topicality of the editorial contents that might shorten the reference period).

In fact the number of reading days for the aggregate of non-purchased copies (found in public places + pass-on) is equal to 75% of the value of household-purchased copies; obviously this is an average resulting from the number of days of public place reading (= 1) and of a number of days not very dissimilar from that of household-purchased copies (2.7 for weeklies and 3 for monthlies).

TABLE 5
Analysis by education and occupation status

	24 Weeklies			18 Monthlies		
	Average number of reading days	% of pages opened yesterday	Number of exposures per average page	Average number of reading days	% of pages opened yesterday	Number of exposures per average page
Average	2.5	65.8%	1.6	2.8	60.9%	1.7
Last school attended	*Index*	*Index*	*Index*	*Index*	*Index*	*Index*
University or high school	101	100	101	97	98	95
Secondary or primary school	99	100	99	106	104	110
Occupational status						
Upper middle	105	91	95	97	75	74
Middle	102	98	100	101	99	100
Lower middle	103	100	103	113	110	124
Not occupied, (housewife, student, etc)	98	102	100	97	104	101

TABLE 6
Analysis by geographical area and town size

	24 Weeklies			18 Monthlies		
	Average number of reading days	% of pages opened yesterday	Number of exposures per average page	Average number of reading days	% of pages opened yesterday	Number of exposures per average page
Average	2.5	65.8%	1.6	2.8	60.9%	1.7
	Index	*Index*	*Index*	*Index*	*Index*	*Index*
Geographic area						
North West	110	116	128	103	109	113
North East	103	97	100	103	104	108
Centre	100	94	95	117	96	113
South and Islands	90	91	82	83	89	73
Town size						
Under 30,000	100	100	100	100	98	99
30-100,000	98	96	94	113	99	113
Over 100,000	102	104	105	95	104	99

TABLE 7
Analysis by source of copy

	24 Weeklies			18 Monthlies		
	Average number of reading days	% of pages opened yesterday	Number of exposures per average page	Average number of reading days	% of pages opened yesterday	Number of exposures per average page
Average	2.5	65.8%	1.6	2.8	60.9%	1.7
Source of copy	Index	Index	Index	Index	Index	Index
Purchase/ subscription (personal or household member)	108	101	109	106	99	104
Borrowed, given as gift, found in public places (eg office, waiting-room, hairdresser)	81	96	78	83	106	88

The level of page openings for non-purchased copies of monthlies is different from the weeklies. An explanation could lie in the fact that it is easier to find a weekly in public places (or at least, the type of weeklies considered in this study) whereas monthlies (of the type included in the study) are more likely to be pass-on copies. But specific analyses would be needed on a larger sample to test this hypothesis.

**FIRST TIME READING
VERSUS SUBSEQUENT TIMES**

It is also interesting to see how the proportion of pages opened varies according to first-time reading versus subsequent reading days.

How do readers behave when confronted with a `new' copy? (`New' in the sense that they have not seen it before: in fact it is not necessarily a current copy, just purchased `fresh' at the news-agent or delivered by the postman as a subscription copy in the morning mail: it could also be a current or

recent copy borrowed or passed-on, or a current/recent/ancient copy seen at the hairdresser or in a waiting-room.)

Anyway, it is the first time: how do readers deal with this copy? In general, as seen in **Table 8**, for a `new' weekly more pages are opened than for copies previously seen on one or more days. Looking at results by categories of weeklies (though the bases are less reliable) it seems that a `new' copy of a news weekly or gossip weekly tends to be read more intensely, while subsequent readings appear more selective.

For monthlies, on the other hand, first time reading is similar to subsequent reading, however many times the copy is picked up: considering the types of titles studied, one can envisage the reader paging through the copy again and again to look at pictures, searching for recipes, rediscovering interesting articles previously overlooked, etc.

TABLE 8
Proportion of pages opened

Analysis by repeated reading

*% of pages opened
of copy looked at:*

	For the first time	Already seen on previous days
Average 24 weeklies *65.8	69.5	60.0
Women	71.6	67.8
Popular/gossip	72.1	58.2
Family	68.4	61.5
News	67.4	53.7

*Including
'Teenager' titles*

	For the first time	Already seen on previous days
Average 18 monthlies 60.9	61.1	60.2
Motor	60.4	61.9
Women/home/other	61.8	61.7

CONCLUSION

The page exposure concept being a valuable one for magazines, the study sponsored by Reader's Digest Italy has attempted to throw some light on the component factors of the index, thus offering advertisers and media planners a better understanding of the meaning of reading and of exposure.

APPENDIX

Note on the tables reporting average number of exposures to the average page
(Translated from the introduction to the volume of results - ISPI 1985)

In the second wave (autumn 1984) of the ISPI survey (about 8,000 interviews) respondents were asked additional questions for each magazine read in the last issue period, to estimate:

V = number of times the magazine (any issue or issues) has been picked up to read or page through, in the last week/month

P = percentage of pages read or paged through on the last occasion (last contact).

From these two data the *'number of reading contacts* (ie exposures) *per average page'* (C) has been calculated according to the following formula:
$C = P \times V$

Such a formula is statistically valid since the interviews were fairly well distributed over the course of the days of the week (or of the month), ie over the interval between two issues of a magazine. Therefore the 'last contact' described by each respondent for each magazine read in the last issue period, appropriately represents the 'average contact'.

However a more complex and more reliable calculation of the same 'contact value' (number of reading contacts per average page) has also been carried out by using the following formula:

$C = P_1 + (V - 1) \times P_2$

where:

P_1 = percentage of pages read or glanced at on the last contact, if on such occasion the magazine issue had been picked up *for the first time*

P_2 = percentage of pages read or glanced at on the last contact, if in such contact the magazine issue had been picked up *not* for the first time.

Values obtained by such control formula have shown to coincide with those obtained by the simpler formula $(C = P \times V)$, or to differ to a marginal extent (within $\pm$ 0.1 for any magazine, at the level of the total sample of adults).

Therefore it was decided to adopt the simpler formula to calculate the values presented in the 1985 report, because additionally it is the only formula which can be easily and more simply used in media planning calculations, where it might be important to use the information at the individual respondent level in lieu of the values calculated at an aggregate level.

EXAMPLE

The following is an example of the calculation of value C (Contact) for a magazine with 901,000 readers in the Average Issue Period.

In the report, the average number of contacts per page per reader is calculated to one decimal place (ie 1.5 may vary between 1.449 and 1.549).

Because of the rounding off, the estimate of the total number of contacts by adult readers does not correspond exactly to the sum of the separate estimates shown for contacts by men and women.

Multiplying C (average number of contacts per page) by the number of average issue readers of a magazine, the estimated number of total contacts is obtained. Table 79 of the report shows the number of contacts separately by adults, men, women, and housewives.

Results of question on percentage of pages read or paged-through on the last time

	Weight	Total (901) %	First time pick-up (580) %	Not first time (321) %
All the pages	(100)	48.5	53.8	37.8
Nearly all	(090)	13.5	13.4	10.9
About three quarters	(075)	6.2	6.9	6.7
About half	(050)	14.1	9.8	21.5
About one-fourth	(025)	4.5	5.4	4.4
Less than one-fourth	(015)	3.1	3.8	2.8
Just a few pages	(005)	8.1	6.9	10.2
Cannot say	(0)	2.0	N	5.7
Total		100	100	100
Average %		75.8	78.2	69.4
		(P)	(P₁)	(P₂)

Results of question on number of pick-ups of *any issue* of the magazine in last issue period (excluding last time)

	Basis of %	(901) %
No other time	(1)	53.5
One other time	(2)	12.4
Two other times	(3)	19.1
Three other times	(4)	7.4
Four other times	(5)	1.9
Five other times	(6)	N
Six other times	(7)	0.2
Seven other times	(8)	0.7
Eight other times	(10)	0.5
Cannot say		4.2
Total		100
Average number of times	(V)	1.96

Simple formula   Control formula

$$C = P \times V \qquad\qquad C = P_1 + (V - 1) \times P_2$$

$$= 75.8 \times 1.96 \qquad = 78.2 + (0.96 \times 69.4)$$

$$= 1.48 \qquad\qquad\qquad = 1.45$$