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"INVESTIGATING READERSHIP LAG"

SYNOPSIS.

We interviewed 1,883 women aged 15+ in Great Britain in June/July 1990, collecting detailed information on the age of issues of different magazines being read over an average 7 day period. We have used the pattern of responses across a month to predict for any issue, how it will age on a week by week basis. We collected our information on issues in the most thorough way that we could conceive.

We have then created readership accumulation curves for different types of women's magazines, and also for some of the larger individual titles. These reveal substantial lag times - some women's monthly publications only reach 25% of their readership in the first month after the issue date.

The figures have significant implications for the way in which the medium is bought and sold.

Having generated the curves we have then worked with the computer bureau, Telmar to build these into the NRS media scheduling software so that for any women's magazine media schedule we can look at the development of coverage and frequency across time.

This paper also includes information on the amount of pages read and the time spent on different publication types.

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INTRODUCTION

Millward Brown have been the leaders and innovators in advertising research in the UK during the last 10 years. Our understanding of television advertising has become comprehensive and we have achieved this by monitoring movements in our research measures directly alongside television ratings (TVR's). These ratings are available on a spot by spot basis and give us a definite picture of week by week coverage and frequency build up. By relating our measures to TVR's for any particular brand we can accurately assess the efficiency of different executions.

We have been studying press ad awareness and image data for the last 10 years and have not managed to explain our data in the way that we have for T.V. There are a number of reasons for this, but undoubtedly the most significant is that we have not been using realistic measures of exposure to plot our measures against.

We use expenditure information produced by Media Register. This estimates the cost of the insertions that appear in any particular month, totals this up and allocates it to the month which the publication covers. We have tried hard to look at movements in measures of ad awareness and image modelled against these blocks of expenditure and have consistently failed.

Work done by Millward Brown Inc in Chicago alerted us to the phenomenon of "Readership Lag". Simply by examining some of their data by eye they had worked out that lagging expenditure by 5 or 6 weeks made more sense of the data. In addition we really needed to look at weekly data to be sensitive enough to model our ad tracking output.

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WEAR-OUT IN PRESS

One further factor launched us into the area of readership research. Tracking studies (the continuous monitoring of advertising and brand health) came into being with the expectation of being able to monitor wear-out in television advertising - to help in deciding when to move on to new creative work.

The surprising conclusion was and still is that whilst TV ads could wear-out in their persuasive abilities they did not wear-out in terms of their ability to generate advertising awareness - at least not within the exposure levels that clients put behind individual executions.

There is already some strong evidence for the existence of wear-out in press. We have struggled long and hard with data we have on different studies to make sense of the press ad awareness graphs that we have been producing. The few cases where we do have press advertising without TV getting in the way, and where there was good advertising so that one ought to be able to model it - the only conceivable model that could work was one which assumed that the ad had worn out before the campaign finished.

From a common-sense standpoint there would seem to be some key differences between magazine and television advertising. TV viewing is an essentially passive experience. If you are in the room when an ad comes on, you have probably decided to sit through the break rather than leave the room to make coffee or go to the loo. And you will probably watch the ads through. The creative vehicle does not have to grab your attention, what it does have to do is involve you and involve you very specifically in the brand and the message.

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A lot of ads fail to do this and we have consistently seen the need for creativity, as long as it relates to the brand and the message.

A magazine does not automatically turn its pages at 30" or 60" intervals. It allows you to choose your exposure time to each page. In qualitative work we have done as a precursor to this project, women often referred to "flicking through" a publication. You will stop and look at the things that interest you, and flick through those things which do not. Ads are particularly vulnerable to this process since, after all, they are not generally the reason a publication is bought in the first place.

In press, it would seem that creativity does have a role of stopping people in their tracks. And maybe it matters less, how much it relates to the brand, as long as people are interested enough in the brand and its message to carry on reading after they have been hooked in. By the same token, some brands or messages may be so interesting that they need very little 'creativity' to involve readers, they just need to be well presented. It is a fact that ads for luxury cars will tend to be read because of the intrinsic interest in the product.

The same idea of flicking through, of continuous editing, provides more support for the idea of wear-out in press.

However interesting and involving a press execution might be, if you register and read it on the first or second occasion that you see it, it seems likely that you will edit it out on subsequent occasions. After all, if you read an article in a magazine, how often would you return to the same article and read it again?

And by the same token, if you have not bothered to look at an ad on the first or second times of seeing it, it is unlikely that you will do so on the third or fourth occasion unless an unexpected event in your life (such as a washing machine or fridge breaking down) suddenly prompts your interest in a particular product.

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If this hypothesis is verified there are profound implications. Let us suppose that we find a wear-out curve where the effectiveness of an ad has virtually dissipated once someone has had the opportunity of seeing it 3 times. This means that any money spent on executions which are helping to generate a higher frequency than 3 is being thrown away. On the other hand the wear-out curve may be greater or steeper (or indeed it may be a step function rather than a curve) and before this becomes a usable finding we need to know the shape of this curve or the size of the step.

So, the end objective of our research was to ascertain the wear-out rate of press executions, with all the implications that has for media planning and campaign development.

EXPOSURE DATA

These issues meant that we required data on readership that was able to do a number of things

- i) Move us from expenditure information to exposure information. Readership rather than £'s spent.
- ii) We needed exposure information that could be broken down into coverage and frequency at different levels - an essential pre-requisite for examining wear-out.
- iii) This information plotted out on a week by week basis to take readership lag into account.

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NRS - USES AND DRAWBACKS

The source of exposure data in the UK is the National Readership Survey. The 28,000 interviews that they conduct every year are the main data source that media-buyers use to look at levels of readership for individual publications. Software packages take this data and use it to predict levels of overlap between the readership of one publication and another, which can ultimately, for any press schedule, provide coverage (how many people see the ad once) and frequency or how many people see the ad twice, three times and so on.

This is exactly the kind of information we need except that it has two significant drawbacks for our purposes. Firstly it has no time frame and we need to be able to see the build up of coverage and frequency over time. We need to look at movements.

And secondly the NRS definition of an average issue reader is anyone who has spent at least two minutes reading or looking at any copy within the publication interval. So if you read any copy of Woman's Realm last week for 2 minutes and you were interviewed on the NRS you would become an average issue reader. This is the 'hurdle' that the NRS has set to qualify someone as a reader of a magazine. Once they are over it they are assumed to have read the entire publication.

But we feel that if we are to provide an exposure figure which will tie in with ad awareness then we will have to arrive at a more reasonable 'Average Page Exposure' figure by which to adjust the average issue readership.

This in practice meant finding out what proportion of pages of a magazine the average reader is exposed to, once they have leapt the 'hurdle'.

So in a nutshell we wanted to take the NRS exposure data, convert the average issue readership to an average page exposure, and distribute it across time.

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THE MILLWARD BROWN STUDY - METHOD

In order to provide appropriate calibrations we conducted our own one-off study to examine readership lag, and to examine the amount of any particular magazine that women read and the time they spent reading it. We specifically looked at magazines, having excluded newspapers of all kinds, though we have obviously included colour supplements. Newspapers have been excluded for 2 reasons - firstly to make our task more manageable, but secondly because we do not believe that they are going to be subject to the same complicated readership lag as magazines.

We have chosen to concentrate specifically on magazines with a high number of female readers - covering titles that would generally appear on a women's magazine schedule including the full range of women's weekly and monthly titles.

The study was conducted over a period of a month which makes it liable to some seasonal and short term influences and our sample of just under 2,000 women means that we can't look at some of the smaller titles on an individual basis, but overall we are more than satisfied with the quality of the data and some of the fascinating findings it has produced.

In designing the study we tried to match the NRS sampling procedure as closely as possible, to make sure that the calibrations we wanted to apply would actually be matching like with like.

The NRS is a random sample with names taken from the electoral register. There is a specified procedure for identifying non-electors and a minimum of 5-call backs are made.

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THE MILLWARD BROWN STUDY - QUESTIONNAIRE

The core of the survey was to find out, for an average week, the ages of the issues being read of different publications and to use this to predict how any individual issue will age. Getting respondents to accurately recall which issues they have read is a notoriously difficult area in readership research. If you interview on a Thursday and someone says they have read the current issue of Radio Times do they mean the one that covers Thursday's programmes or the one that has just appeared on the newstands. If you interview at the end of June and you are told that someone read last month's issue of a magazine do they mean the June issue or the May issue.

Once you get beyond the current issue and the previous issue it gets fairly impossible for people to accurately recall what they have read.

And then there is title confusion - was it Woman or Woman's Weekly or Woman's Realm that she read?

We decided that the only way to get this right was for respondents to positively identify the issue they read and to give them as much help as possible to do this. The main questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section was intended to provide us with foolproof data. It was essentially a pantry-check. Respondents were asked to collect from around the house any magazines that they had read in the last 2 weeks - they were encouraged to go into different rooms around the house and to think of any that may be in some cupboard waiting to be thrown out. When these were brought the interviewer then asked which had been read in the last week and she recorded the title and the 2 digit issue number from the bar code onto the questionnaire - so there could be absolutely no confusion about the issue.

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For Sunday supplements the date was recorded and for Readers Digest, the three digit volume number, as these titles do not have bar codes.

Respondents were then asked how long they had spent reading or looking at it so far, and how much longer they expected to read it before they finished with it. The interviewer was encouraged to get respondents to answer as accurately as possible and the respondent's precise answer was recorded in hours and minutes for both these questions.

And finally, in this section, the women were asked to select from five pictures to indicate how much of the magazine they would have seen before it was thrown out, passed on or put away for reference.

The second section of the questionnaire covered magazines that had been read in the last week but for one reason or another were not available for the respondent to collect. Here we had to rely on the respondent's memory, bearing in mind that she had seen the issue within the last 7 days. But we gave them every help by showing them photo-prompts as issue identifiers. Colour photographs of the last 7 issues of 47 of the biggest female circulation magazines with a clearly written issue number attached to each one.

This works out to 46,000 reproductions of front covers, but this was the only way of getting really accurate data. In fact it was more than 46,000 because we updated each photo-prompt as soon as a new issue came out to make them as relevant as possible to each interview.

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THE MILLWARD BROWN STUDY-ANALYSIS AND VALIDATION

The final step in the study was to analyse all this data and then work with the computer bureau, Telmar to write some software that could build our findings into the existing NRS database and existing software in such a way that all those numbers become instantly accessible and usable.

The information on which we have carried out our analysis is "read or looked at in the last week" regardless of the publication interval of the magazine. This created a week by week picture of how exposure develops over time, to run alongside the other week by week data that we collect.

The analysis was conducted by identifying the issue date of each title and using this as a starting point. Let us suppose that title A comes out on a Wednesday every week. We then combined all the interviews conducted between the Wednesday and the following Tuesday, calling the most recent issue for that period 'Current'. Within this same period the previous issue was called 'Current 1', the one before that 'Current 2' and so on.

Our interviewing period covered a number of weeks which we were then able to overlay on top of one another, so we could look at an average across the 5 weeks of interviewing of how many people were reading the current issue in an average week, how many 'Current 1' back over as many issues as we wanted to analyse.

Using this same convention we were able to overlay one weekly publication on top of another.

The monthly publications were analysed in the same way except that we also looked at readership on a week by week basis so that 'Current' referred to the first week of issue, 'Current-1' the second week and so on.

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Because we used the NRS definition of "read or looked at for at least 2 minutes" we should arrive at a similar percentage of people to the NRS for claimed readership of titles within the last 7 days.

The data is encouraging from this respect since the pattern of data is very close indeed to the NRS although there are some differences in the absolute levels.

For some of the older established women's titles our figures are very close

	% Women Reading	
	MB	NRS
	June/July <u>1990</u>	12 Months to June <u>1990</u>
Women's Own	14.9	15.6
Woman	11.5	10.9
Woman's Weekly	10.7	11.8
Woman's Realm	7.5	6.4
My Weekly	7.3	6.3
Peoples Friend	6.5	5.7
Just Seventeen	3.3	3.2
Jackie	1.1	1.3

For some of the newer titles our figures were higher than the NRS

	% Women Reading	
	MB	NRS
	June/July <u>1990</u>	12 Months to June <u>1990</u>
Bella	20.6	15.3
Best	16.8	10.2
Me	11.8	7.6
Chat	8.8	4.4

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And for the Sunday Supplements and Radio Times/TV Times our figures were approximately a third lower than the NRS. However, in all cases, the pattern of the data remains very consistent.

What is important is that we have confidence in the data, and the fact that it is largely in-line with the NRS puts us in a position where we can legitimately look at some of our data that lies within overall readership figures.

CREATING CLUSTERS

Clearly the sample sizes for individual publications were not always large enough to look at them separately. So for analysis purposes we have combined publications into 12 clusters. We have done this subjectively although checking some of the data to make sure that they have made sense. The criteria we have used include publication interval, cover price, number of pages, amount of time dependent material such as topical news items and the amount of practical reference material. We believe these could all be factors which influence how people read. So editorial style has not been a significant factor and we would not suggest for a moment that magazines which appear in the same cluster do not have unique positioning, style and target audience.

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Here are the clusters:

1. Sundays and Saturdays

Sunday People	Sunday Mail
Independent Magazine	Sunday Mirror
Observer Magazine	Sunday Times
Sunday (N.O.W)	Telegraph Weekend Magazine
Sunday Correspondent	You
Sunday Express	Sunday Post
	7 Days (Sunday Telegraph)

2. Fat Quality Monthlies

She	Marie Claire
Elle	Harpers & Queen
Cosmopolitan	Tatler
Vogue	Company
Options	

3. Practical In-Store Monthlies

Family Circle	
Living	

4. Practical Monthlies

Essentials	
Prima	
Annabel	
Woman & Home	
Looks	

5. Quality Home Monthlies

Home & Gardens	Country Living
Ideal Home	
Good Housekeeping	

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6. Semi fat Semi-quality Monthlies
 New Woman
 Woman's World
 19.

7. Prose Magazines
 Readers Digest
 True Romance
 True Story
 Loving

8. General Weeklies
 Bella
 Best
 My Weekly
 Chat
 Woman's Own
 Woman
 Me
 Woman's Realm
 Woman's Weekly
 Take-a-break
 Hello

9. Special Interest Monthlies
 Mother & Baby
 Mother
 Parents
 Good Food
 Home & Freezer Digest
 Here's Health

10. Story Papers
 People's Friend
 The Lady

11. Listings Magazines
 TV Times
 Radio Times
 TV Guide

12. Pop Magazines
 Just Seventeen
 Jackie
 My Guy
 Blue Jeans

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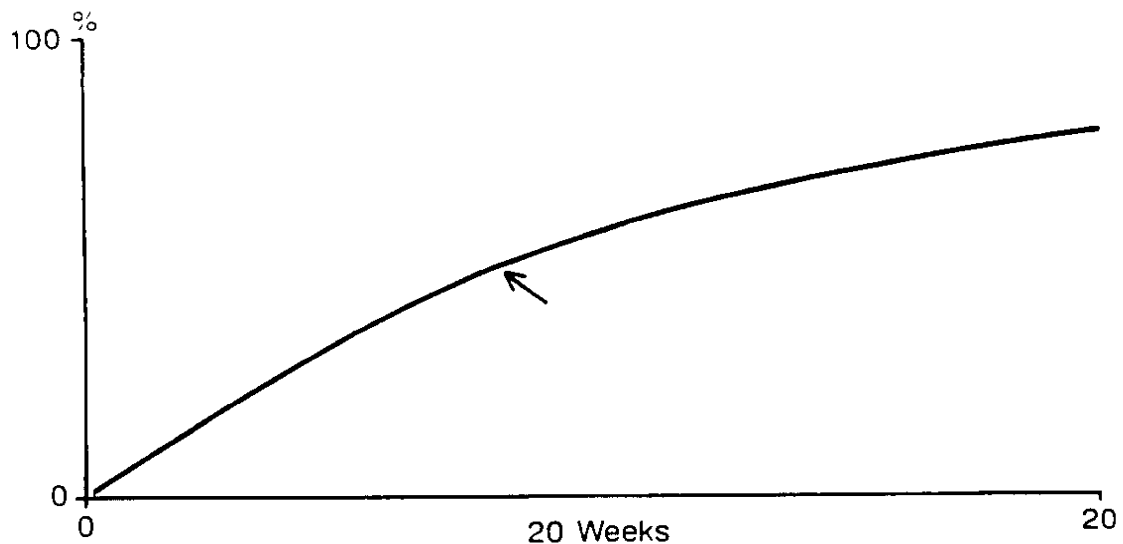
FINDINGS - LAG

For each of our clusters we have generated a curve that shows the build up of reading.

Think of the curve in terms of the growth of reading occasions from the day the magazine appears on the shelf in the newsagents to the time when the last copy goes into the bin.

For the fat quality monthlies that build up is very slow. They do not reach 50% of their exposure until 9 weeks after the issue date. The 50% is indicated by the small arrow - and so there is still half the exposure to come after that. The chart leaves 20% of reading to occur even after the 5 months covered here.

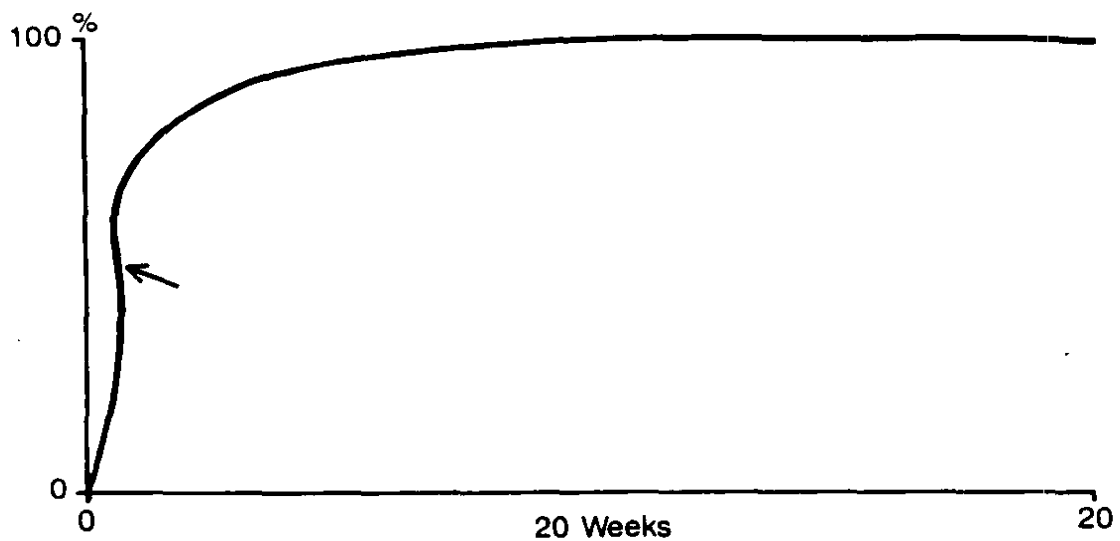
Fat Quality Monthlies - Readership Accumulation



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At the other extreme, build up of Sunday supplement readership is extremely rapid. 60% of reading is reached within the first week, and the majority of that probably happens within a day or two of issue.

Sundays - Readership Accumulation



After Sundays, it is the listings titles which build exposure most rapidly, though even here it is worth noting that the exposure is not as quickly over and done with as you might expect. A quarter is happening after the period which the titles cover in terms of programming.

Women's Weekly publications - the likes of Bella, Woman's Realm and Woman lie between the extremes of monthlies and the Sundays. Initial exposure rises are indeed fairly rapid but the tail of exposure is quite substantial.

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So this is the data that we have used to build a time-scale into the NRS. The levels of readership are spread across time in an attempt to reflect real exposure.

Each title on a schedule will be allocated to one of the identified clusters and we will fit the appropriate lag curve to that publication.

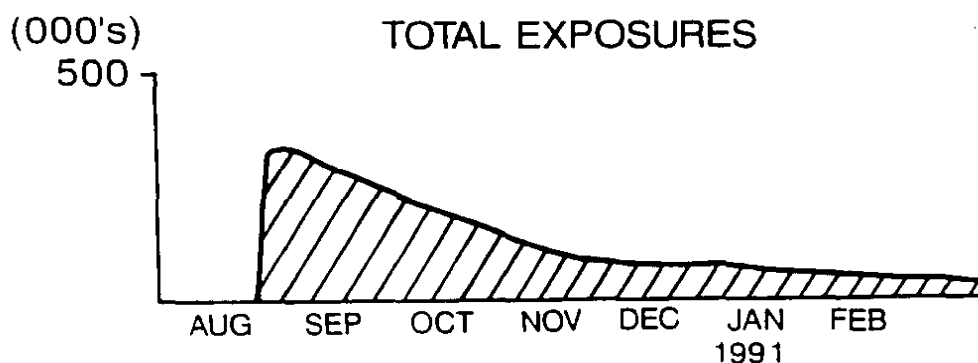
We are using the standard software that most ad agencies use to plan their press schedules, with a special additional piece of programming building time into the mix.

The individual curves are quite fascinating in themselves, but the interaction of the different curves produces more exciting findings.

Here is a simple one month burst in women's monthlies, as it would look to you on a media schedule.

	SEPT
She	X
Cosmopolitan	X
Options	X
Company	X
Good Housekeeping	X
Homes & Gardens	X

But translate that into real exposures and it looks something like this



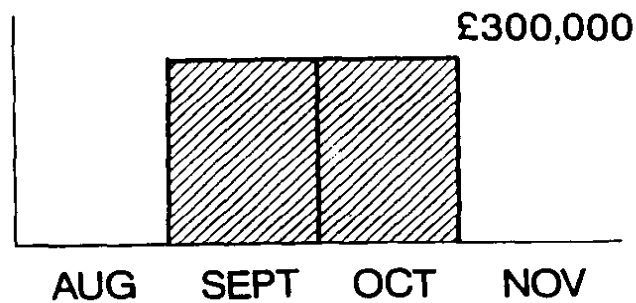
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Or put into numbers, only 25% of exposure to your ad happens in the first month after the title comes out. 75% is going to happen in Oct, Nov, Dec, Jan and on into the following year.

Here is an unlikely looking media schedule, but one not beyond the bounds of possibility.

	SEPT				OCT			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
She	X				X			
Vogue	X				X			
Company	X				X			
Harpers & Queen	X				X			
Good Housekeeping	X				X			
Prima	X				X			
Radio Times	X				X			
TV Times	X				X			

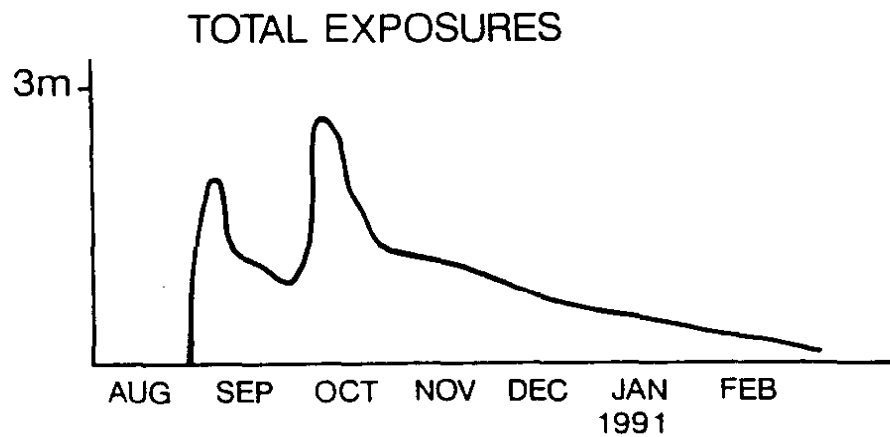
From our point of view when we come to relate magazine ad awareness to this schedule, we would currently treat it as a lump of £300,000 which was spent and exhausted in September and October.



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Traditionally we might have expected to see some kind of rise in awareness (perhaps lagged by a week or two) and then some kind of decay.

However, when we convert that schedule into exposure over time it looks like this.

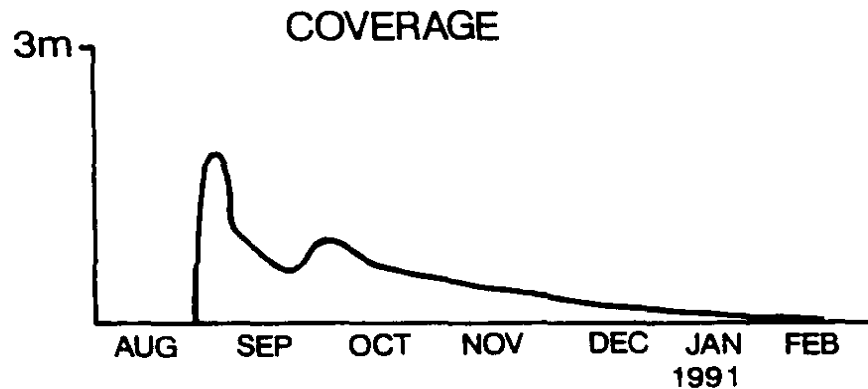


It is a dramatically different picture which would lead us in turn to look for dramatically different movements in our research measures.

Each combination of publications will produce different exposure effects.

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And now, we can divide that exposure into coverage and frequency as well. For this schedule, the coverage from it looks like this:



Which is different again.

And if it is a huge stride forward from our tracking point of view it obviously has media planning implications. This is particularly the case if magazine activity needs to happen before a particular date, or if it need to coincide with a particular event.

This would cover ads geared towards Christmas and Easter, Valentine's Day, New Year or any other precise occasion. To a lesser extent it is relevant for highly seasonal products. It would affect ads which have offers to be participated in by a certain date; launch advertising; ads featuring prices that may change and so on.

Just to cite one instance. A clothing retailer placed an ad in one monthly publication last year in October. It advertised a joint promotion between the retailer and an airline. But the offer expired on 30th November, by which time less than half the reading of that publication will have occurred.

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Suppose you are selling perfume, aimed at gift purchase for Christmas. You may well buy a schedule that looks like this:

	OCT	NOV	DEC
Prima	X	X	X
Essentials	X	X	X
She	X	X	
Cosmopolitan	X	X	
Vogue	X	X	
Elle	X	X	X
Company	X	X	
Good Housekeeping	X	X	

At a cost of £175,000. A lot of your exposure will indeed happen before Christmas but 49% will not - £86,000 of sub-optimised expenditure.

At the other end of the scale you may not want to build very rapid exposure - you may want to achieve a very smooth level of exposure. This data can help to work out the balance of publication types that will best achieve this.

So, at last at the touch of a button we can look at exposure over time. It begins to create a crisper more realistic view of how women read magazines. And more than that, it allows us to break out coverage opportunities to see (OTS) that is exposure to people who have not seen the ad before, and frequency OTS.

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FINDINGS - AVERAGE PAGE EXPOSURE

We set out to do 2 things with this study. Firstly to define readership lag, but secondly to provide a more realistic average page exposure figure.

The reason for trying to provide a more realistic figure is to give us the best chance of establishing how magazine advertising awareness moves and thereby help our clients to use their media resources as efficiently as possible.

It seems unlikely that every reader will see every ad in every issue they read - indeed common sense would tell you that this is not so. So we need to arrive at a best estimate of the proportion of readers of a publication type that will be exposed to an average ad. We use the word average here - meaning averagely positioned in the publication. Some pages may well be more likely to be seen than others.

The adjustment we use can be tested empirically when we come to look at tracking data. If the data makes sense, the principle will be validated.

So, do readers look at every single page of a magazine?

Well - no they don't. At one end there are the Sunday Supplements, where 60% of the publication is looked at on average and at the other, the Prose magazines where nearly 80% is looked at. So, not all the pages are looked at, on average, in any publication, and whilst there are some differences you might expect to see, there is a surprisingly small amount of variation. In all cases the majority of the publication is looked at.

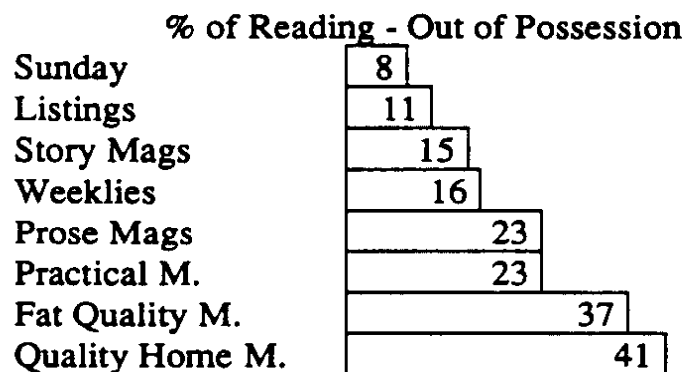
We have got ahead of ourselves a little. This does not cover all the reading occasions that we picked up. It covers the occasions where we have defined the reader as being 'In possession' of the title. Where the respondent or a member of their household has bought the magazine or where they had been given it to keep or where they had been lent it to read at home we defined as 'In possession'. In other words where they generally had free access to the magazine to read it for as long as they liked.

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On the other hand, reading occasions where it wasn't their copy, where they read it in waiting rooms, newsagents, libraries, at work or other people's houses -these occasions we call 'Out of possession'. Not surprisingly the amount of the publication read is much lower in these circumstances. Here the variation is from 28% to 43% - in other words less than half the publication being read in all cases. So for Story magazines, 28% of the pages were read out of possession, whereas 75% of pages were read by people who had free access to them.

Why did we come up with this in-possession/out-possession split? We felt that we would see this kind of difference in the amount of the publication that people read and we thought this would be highly significant if the proportion of out of possession reading was higher for some publications than others. In other words - if a higher number of reading occasions for a publication are out of possession then the average page exposure will be lower.

The out of possession figures do indeed vary dramatically between types of publication.



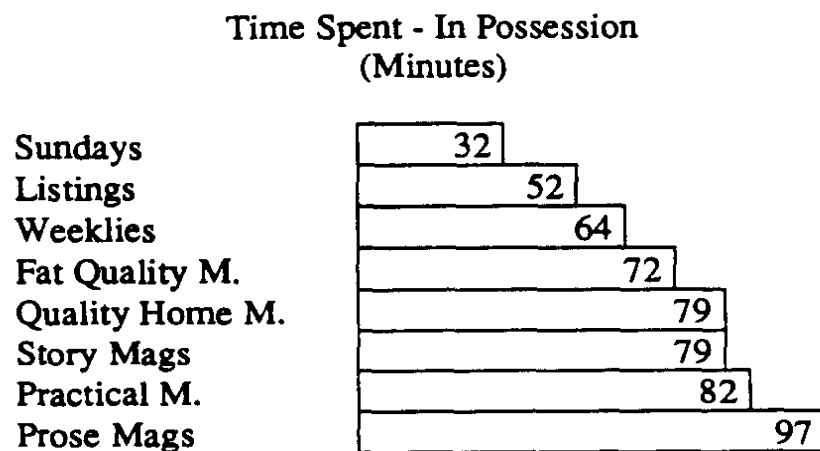
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So for each cluster we have a factor. This reflects what percentage of pages the reader would see on average and we have a pattern that extends from 55% of the Quality Home Monthlies up to several clusters at the 70% mark. We turn this into a fraction - simply .55 up to .7 to downweight the Average Issue Readership, before spreading it across time.

The lag curves and the APX factors are the two key pieces of information that we are looking for, but we collected other information too. This relates principally to the time people spent reading different publications.

FINDINGS - TIME SPENT

For the major clusters here is the total time spent in minutes on each of the different publication types when readers had free access.

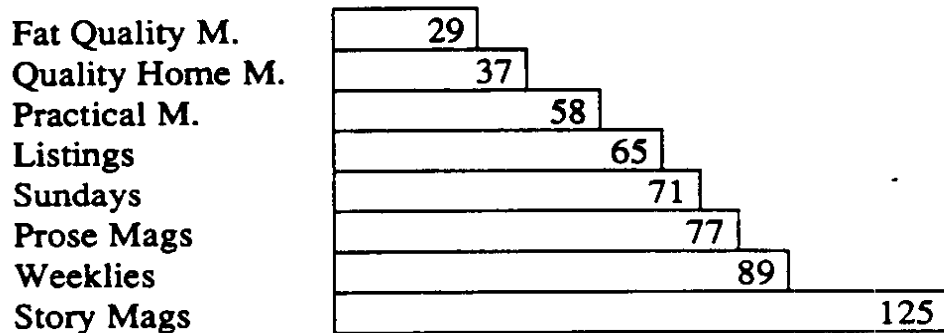


Here the discrimination is considerable with over 1 and a half hours being spent on the likes of Readers Digest and only one third of that time being spent on the supplements. But doesn't that simply relate to the number of pages?

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When the number of pages is taken into account, and we look at the number of seconds devoted to each page, it changes the pattern entirely but there are still considerable differences. The large monthly publications seem to be nearer the 'browsing' end of the scale. Prose magazines do not seem to fit happily into this, but if one looks at the time spent, taking into account the actual number of pages that they read, it does not alter the overall pattern with the exception of moving Prose magazines towards the more intensely read end of the ranking.

Time Spent per page read - In possession
(Seconds)



Here we seem to have a "browsed" through to "read" spectrum. As an aside, this does not seem to us to indicate that advertisers should be concentrating on the more intensely read publications as environments for their ads. It may well be that a "browsed" publication is just as, if not more suitable for ads - a reader may pay more attention to ads in browsing mode than they do in reading mode.

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We have been looking at the time spent in possession so far. As you would expect, the time spent out of possession is very much lower. Instead of an hour being spent on a weekly with free access, only 20 minutes is spent with limited access.

And as you would expect there are not huge differences between the publications because the time spent is dictated by the reading situation more than by the title.

What is interesting here is that the difference in the time spent between in and out of possession is much greater than the difference between the amount of the publication read, in and out of possession. Or more simply - not only do you look at fewer pages, but the time spent per page is also much lower in out of possession situations - you are more in browsing mode, filling in time in a casual way before the dentist calls you in.

This suggests that we could qualify the amount that people read out of possession because they are not reading with the same intensity as an in-possession occasion. So we could construct our Average Page Exposure figure in a different way.

In simple terms we would weight the readership by the time spent rather than the amount read.

This would decrease the contribution of Out of possession reading to the final figure. But we have the opportunity of experimenting to find out which route works best.

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A RECAP

Let me recap on some of our findings:

1. Lag in exposure varies considerably between types of publications and can be very long indeed.
2. Readers tend to read or look at between 2/3 and 3/4 of the title in their possession.
3. But, in limited access situations, only between 1/3 and 1/2 of the title is read or looked at.
4. The time spent on the title can vary from 1/2 hour to 1 and a half hours.
5. This data indicates that some of the larger quality monthlies are more browsing publications.

Time spent out of possession is generally less than 20 minutes suggesting that these situations are more browsing situations.

MEDIA PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

The implications for media planning are two fold at this stage:

1. The lag data has obvious implications for magazine schedules where any of the material is time specific.
2. The fact that for some publication types we are suggesting that just over half the publication is looked at on average, indicates a need for careful thought as to the positioning of the ad. We think that there are not general conclusions about this - other data we have suggests that the front half/back half or left hand/right hand debates are largely over exaggerated. We are considering doing some work to investigate positioning within magazines.

"INVESTIGATING READERSHIP LAG"

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

The data we have collected so far allows us to:-

1. Take the NRS data and build a timescale into it.
2. Experiment with adjusting the average issue readership by an average page exposure factor. We want to stress that our adjustments are only hypotheses at this point. The test is whether we are able to explain magazine advertising awareness graphs better by making these adjustments than without them.

The combination of these two things gives us the ability to look at real exposure at different coverage levels across time.

By running this alongside tracking data we are at last in a position to verify our hypotheses about magazine advertising. And the key hypothesis we want to test is that:-

"Magazine ads wear-out very rapidly as they are seen repeatedly"

or put another way after a certain number of opportunities to see,

"Frequency OTS are wasted OTS"

And obviously we would want to ascertain what that certain number is.

If this hypotheses is correct - and on the strength of evidence to date, we are pretty convinced that it is - then magazine advertising awareness graphs, far from being a puzzling problem, would become a valuable source of clear information about when to change executions across the media insertions that are bought.

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CONCLUSIONS

We feel we have made major advances which can help us with the interpretation of our tracking study data, and have moved some way towards a position where we can verify our hypotheses about magazine advertising wear-out.

In the press we have collected readership lag data which may be of considerable benefit to the industry as an aid to the buying and selling of the medium.