

SHIFTING THE FRAME OF REFERENCE IN PRINT MEDIA RESEARCH: QUALITY vs QUANTITY vs RELATIONSHIP

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Introduction

The debate for many in the print industry today is no longer about mass readership politics. It's about rather what their readers and advertisers are getting out of their particular publications.

Today individuals are faced with an ever increasing range of local and imported publications catering for increasingly defined niche markets. In addition magazines as a medium are facing new competition for reading time. From cable television and cyber-based media options which have the potential to reduce the time (and money) individuals (and advertisers) are prepared to invest in magazines.

Developing the relationship between reader and magazine is now the primary goal of many publishers, a goal which could have significant advertising ramifications.

There have been several attempts to define and develop the concept of reader involvement. Some evidence suggests involved readers are more likely to recall advertising in publications and as a consequence, it is assumed, more likely to respond to those adverts.

The concept of involvement is difficult to define. It also sidesteps the issue Wilson MLI hypothesise to be central to the relationship between reader and advertising response, namely trust. If a reader "trusts" a magazine, it can be argued he/she may be more likely to believe the magazine would not include "questionable advertising" and therefore, more likely to believe the advertising he reads in that "high-trust" publication and, even buy certain reader relevant product advertised.

Background

Although many studies exist on involvement indicators or quality of reading, few have directly related high involvement with an above average opportunity for advertising contact, let alone explored the concept of trust or demonstrated the link between involvement and increased response to advertising.

In 1968 an attempt at defining a Reader-Magazine-Relationship (RMR) measurement was made by the US Home Testing Institute. The MAG Q tests identified 14 questions as the most valuable indicators of RMR.

- 1) This magazine is one of my favourite magazines out of all I read*
- 2) Reading frequency*
- 3) Place of reading*
- 4) How last issue obtained*
- 5) Times picked up*
- 6) Time spent reading*
- 7) Concentration whilst reading*
- 8) Evaluation of topical articles*
- 9) Evaluation of fictional stories*
- 10) Evaluation of pictorial articles and illustrations*
- 11) Evaluation as a source of entertainment*
- 12) Evaluation as a source of information and education*

13) Agreement with personal views

14) Evaluation of credibility of ads

No syndicated readership study we would argue could measure all 14 attributes for all titles measured.

In 1972 Dieter Mueller completed a project for the German Readers Digest aimed at reducing the number of indicators required to achieve a RMR score. Summary results were presented in a brochure called "Love Story".

That study concluded regular **frequency alone is not** a good indicator of RMR (Reader - Magazines Relationship). Magazines which achieved a high RMR in fact tended to have a relatively low proportion of regular (3 [or more] out of 4 issues) readers.

It was argued that 8 elements should be included (grouped under 3 factors) to measure RMR.

However, this eight item model still proved too long to be included in syndicated research studies and was subsequently reduced to five elements; known as the "Love Story Model" as follows;

Factor 1 - Qualitative Evaluation

Agreement with personal views

Evaluation as a source of information and education

Factor 2 - Handling/Utilisation

How last issue obtained

Reading frequency

Factor 3 - Sympathy

This magazine is one of my favourite magazines out of all I read

The study then went on to examine the influence of RMR on advertising effectiveness.

In his paper delivered to the ESOMAR conference in Budapest (1976) D. Mueller concluded, RMR readers utilise information in their preferred magazines more intensively, and made 30% above more advertising contacts than all readers in general.

To qualify as a RMR reader a respondent had to give a very positive answer to at least one of the questions in Factor 1 or 2 above.

The majority of work completed since this time has focused on identifying involvement indicators suitable for addition to syndicated readership studies.

Trust, as alluded to in Factor 1 above, was given little consideration.

In Barcelona (1988) Scott McDonald presented a paper on "Quality of Reader Involvement: Report on Research in Progress". Referring to the findings of Ursula Wangard and Rolf Speetzen (Salzburg 1986) concluded that of all the attitudinal statements tested by their work only two were worthy of further consideration:

"I usually read all the articles in this periodical" - a measure of thoroughness of reading and,

"If necessary, I would go to great trouble to obtain every issue of this magazine" - a measure of enthusiasm, habit, or loyalty!

George Gramse and Peter Beike presented work financed by Die Zeit (Barcelona 1988) discrediting Wangard and Speetzen's findings demonstrating a demographic classification to have the same predictive value for advertising recognition as the former classification of contact quality.

Work completed for Time Magazine (McDonald, Barcelona) and Cade's work for the RSL (presented in San Francisco, 1993) found estimates based on units of time to be unreliable - failing to correlate with estimates of the amount of an issue read. Similarly thoroughness of reading claims did not correlate well with article-based estimates.

Baxter (Barcelona 1988) reported on a thorough experiment which proved a solid case for the value of reading occasions as a measure of involvement. Increase in reading days correlated to a higher recall of advertised brands.

Jochen Hansen (Barcelona 1988) spoke on the use of new qualitative criteria in media planning. In addition to emphasising the importance of amount read, Hansen went on to produce a measure of involvement by asking readers how closely they identified with each publication.

However, the influence of reader involvement on purchasing was not considered. Hansen instead used the Allensbach Single Source Survey to correlate interest in a given type of media and involvement in the respective market. He showed that if a respondent read more than one title from a magazine genre he was more likely to agree with attitudinal statements relevant to products associated with that genre.

For example, people who read more than one car magazine were found to be more likely to agree with statements such as, "decide alone on car purchase".

Common to all of this work, though useful, was lack of follow through to any purchasing outcomes.

San Francisco (1993) produced three papers on qualitative reading measures. Hilary Cade from RSL described qualitative research which had led to a quantitative test covering the following involvement indicators:

Frequency of reading

Source of copy

Place of reading

Proportion of copy read - which respondents had difficulty with

Time spent reading - which respondents had difficulty with

Way in which publication read - which respondents had difficulty with

"Favourite" publication

Reaction if publication were no longer available - which was found to be better than the favourite question as it was less emotive

Mood- which the researchers had difficulty with due to the wide variety of answers

This study proved particularly useful in assisting with questionnaire design; eliminating questions which this research demonstrated respondents had trouble answering.

Philport and Perry (San Francisco 1993) reported on work done in the US for Simmons and MRI. A battery of qualitative variables have been included in both studies and the aim of that project was to use factor analysis to reduce the number of variables to a core list.

The original 13 Simmons variables was reduced to 8 factors and the original MRI list of 14 variables was reduced to 9 factors. Cluster analysis was used to allocated publications covered by the survey into 10 or 15 groups respectively. Individual results were not presented but the value of this research in promoting magazine genres was demonstrated.

Importantly, different measures of involvement were found to be relevant for different categories of magazines.

But, this was as far as the research went. No attempt to relate the findings to advertising effectiveness was made.

Chris Minter from the Readers Digest alluded to the "trust" relationship in his paper (San Francisco 1993). However, many of the variables measured were specifically relevant to the Readers Digest and, in any event, the relevance of involved readers to advertisers was not elucidated.

Although several researchers have been playing in the reader involvement sand pit, no one has yet built the castle.

The Wilson Project

Current involvement indicators

Wilson Single Source Survey is conducted over 11 months, with over 3,700 interviews per month, or over 40,000 per annum. Involvement indicators (frequency of reading, primary purchase frequency and number of times picked up) are included in the Wilson MLI self-completion based syndicated readership study.

Average issue readership is calculated from the frequency question, asked after the recency question. The recency question is only used to focus the respondents attention on publications which have been read or looked into within the time scale covered by the frequency question.

Which of the following magazines have you read or looked into in the past 4 months (for monthlies)/weeks (for weeklies)?

Now thinking about the past four months/weeks, how many different issues of each of these magazines have you read or looked into?

A numeric response is requested (the respondent indicates the number of issues read/looked into out of the last four). This methodology is consistent with the findings of the British RSL study presented in San Francisco; a numeric scale produces more accurate data compared with a verbal scale.

In a separate question, in a different section of the survey booklet, respondents are asked to indicate the magazines they purchase:

Which of the following weekly magazines have you personally purchased in the last 4 weeks/months?

Now thinking over the last 4 weeks/months, how many different issues of each of these magazines have you personally bought?

An estimate of primary readership is calculated from these results (again a numeric scale is used).

In a separate question (to avoid the possibility of affecting readership claims due to respondent fatigue) respondents are asked to indicate the number of reading occasions for the most recent issue of each publication read.

Have you read or looked into any of the magazines below in the last month/6 months?

When did you last read or look into any copy of the following magazines?

Past 7 days/4 weeks

Longer ago

Mark the oval which best describes the number of different occasions you looked into the most recent issue you read

1
2-3
4-6
6-10
11+

In addition several relevant attitudinal statements are asked:

I use the coupons I find in magazines or on packets

I often enter competitions run by newspapers or magazines

I don't read the ads in newspapers and magazines

I enjoy buying magazines

These statements record general attitudes to magazines - not to specific titles.

The experiment

In having the largest Single Source Survey database in the world Wilson MLI was ideally placed to test involvement as an indicator of higher advertising exposure. Is involvement a better predictor of advertising effectiveness (as measured by recall)?

We hypothesised that highly involved readers should demonstrate higher levels of advertising recall compared with readers attributed with lower levels of involvement. In addition, it was decided to take the research a step further and attempt to identify the relationship of involvement with increased purchase of brands advertised. Thus the effectiveness of measuring recall as a surrogate for involvement could also be tested.

Question Content

There is no universally accepted definition of involvement or quality of reading. From the review of international work Wilson MLI have identified those variable most commonly identified as good indicators of involvement.

To qualify for inclusion we sought variables which had been tested successfully. Notably, we eliminated attributes which respondents found difficult to answer. The work done by RSL (as reported by Hilary Cade in San Francisco) was particularly useful here. Most notably the RSL study (among others) demonstrated readers have great difficulty in estimating the time spent reading a publication (failing to correlate with observation or proportion of copy read). We, therefore, excluded this measure from our experiment.

In general any measurement requiring a calculation by the respondents would be likely to encounter a high degree of error, thus the scale used to estimate the proportion of copy read was, minimised to reduce errors.

No attempt was been made to measure mood. The RSL study also demonstrated that meaningful results are difficult to obtain due to the diversity of response which must be incorporated into a coding frame. More work is needed on this and the entire mood issue respondent and interviewer is the subject of other work currently being done by Wilson MLI.

Rationale

In formulating our approach we attempted to include only measures which could be applied meaningfully to all publications. Attributes likely to illustrate the relative strengths of specific groups of titles have been therefore eliminated. For example, statements such as "This publication is useful for my work" relevant for only business and special interest publications were not included.

The existing Wilson MLI database (of respondents who previously participated in the syndicated study) was used to identify readers of publications included in our experiment. Sampling stratification took into account both primary and pass-along readers at different levels of frequency of reading claims. Respondents who qualified for selection were selected at random from the pool of all qualifying respondents.

Three significant "Women's" titles were included in the experiment. Each was represented by 200 readers as follows:

| Frequency of reading | Family Circle (Monthly) | House and Garden (Monthly) | Who Weekly (Monthly) |
|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 3 or 4 /4 issues | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 1 or 2 /4 issues | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Total | 200 | 200 | 200 |

Although frequency of reading alone has been widely discredited as an indicator of involvement, it still proved a useful basis on which to construct a reader stratification.

Respondents were screened to include only those who had read the most recent edition of the given publication and had access to a copy of the publication to refer to during interview. In order to maintain representation from less frequent readers (and those who had read someone else's copy) it was found necessary to mail copies of the publication to some respondents in order to complete the through the book the experiment.

In the case of the two monthly titles interviewing commenced in the third week of the month when readership had reached a sufficient level for targets to be met.

Interviewing was completed over the telephone using a CATI based system to reduce the margin for interviewer error.

Major demographics were checked for changes since the major interview was conducted and current reading habits obtained.

Only experienced interviewers selected from those who have achieved "Gold Standard" within the organisation (from working on our syndicated study) were used for this experiment.

All interviewers were fully briefed by Wilson MLI's National Field Manager who has been running the main syndicated project, together with all ad hoc projects conducted by the company, since 1989.

Interviewers introduced themselves from Wilson MLI and explained they were not representing a publisher but conducting some general research on magazines.

Ad recall - unprompted

Recall was conducted in the first instance as George Gramse and Peter Beike found (in their work for Die Zeit in West Germany) that "when the contact-qualifying questions are posed after the copy test, the variables change to a certain extent".

A general question on whether the respondent remembered any advertising in the most recent issue was followed by a prompt for product categories and brands. A measure of claimed and validated unaided recall was therefore available.

Purchase involvement

A list of product categories relevant to advertisements included in the pages of the magazine being tested was then read. The respondent was instructed to stop the interviewer if they had been involved with purchase activity within that product category within the past month (week, in the case of Who Weekly).

For all categories selected respondents were asked to nominate the brand purchased. Results were recorded as either the advertised brand or another brand from within the same product category.

Ad recall - prompted

Respondents were asked to find the magazine. If the respondent no longer had possession of the magazine arrangements were made to forward a copy by mail and an appointment made to call back.

Respondents were asked to review the first 15 pages of the magazine and mention any articles or advertisements they remembered seeing, however briefly. They were encouraged to mention all pages looked at, even if only for a second, leaving out only those they only turned the corner on in search of a page number.

Respondents then skipped to the back of the magazine and work backwards answering the same questions (for 15 pages).

Identifying copy

Respondents were then asked to take a further look at the articles and advertisements they mentioned and identify those they considered interesting for whatever reason. Answers were recorded using a five point scale:

Very interesting
Quite interesting
Neither interesting or uninteresting
Not very interesting
Totally uninteresting

Level of appeal was then measured using the same technique.

Respondents were then asked to respond to a number of attitudinal statements concerning the magazine.

Number of times picked up

Number of times a specific issue is read or looked into was expected to correlate with Opportunities To See and therefore with recall of advertising. Respondents were, therefore, asked:

*How many times have you read or looked into the copy of ** you are currently holding?*

1
2-3
4-6
6-10
11+

Respondents were informed that the rest of the questionnaire did not refer to a specific issue of the magazine but to their general attitudes toward the publication.

Favourite Magazines

Although others have discredited (e.g Reference RSL) was not impressed with this measure (males in particular appeared reluctant to use this emotive expression) the preference given to it by other researchers (most notably the early work done by Mueller 1976) warrants its inclusion in the Australian study, i.e.

*Would you say that ** is one of your favourite magazines?*

Yes
No
Don't know

Thoroughness of reading

To eliminate the need for respondents to quantify their reading time or make an estimate of the proportion of magazine read, the following attitudinal statement was used:

*1) I usually read all the articles in ***

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Loyalty

2) If necessary, I would go to great trouble to obtain every issue of this magazine

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Identity

The Hansen (Barcelona 1988) question (with a reduced scale) was used here:

3) You sometimes say of a person that you are very close to him or not so close. This can also be applied to magazines. Would you please tell me for whether in general you identify very closely with this magazine or not so closely?

Very closely
Quite closely
Don't feel either way
Not very closely
Not at all

Advertising Relevance

The following statements were used by the researchers:

4) *I like looking at the adverts*

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

5) *I find the advertising helpful*

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

6) *I find the advertising a useful source of product information*

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Editorial

Attitudes to editorial were measured using the following statements:

7) *I have complete confidence in the editorial*

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

8) *I believe what I read in it*

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

9) *I learn a lot from it*

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Source of copy

Bought it personally from shop or newsagent
Someone else in household bought it
Home-delivered by newsagent
Paid subscription delivered to home
Free copy delivered to home
Office/work copy
Friend's/Relative's copy
Seen at a library, waiting room or other public place
None of these

Reaction if no longer available

The work presented by Cade in San Francisco in particular prompted us to include this measure in our experiment.

How would you feel if _____ were no longer available?

Very sorry/disappointed

Quite sorry/disappointed

Not very sorry/disappointed

Analysis

Due to the limited time available for completion of this project preliminary results reported are restricted to the two monthly titles included in our survey.

Stage 1

Crosstabulations were produced to examine recall and purchase behaviour across all the involvement indicators used in the study.

Virtually all the variables measured in our survey could (and often have) been argued to be indicators of involvement. From an advertisers perspective the most important outcome of involvement must be a greater response to advertising. For involvement to be a useful selling tool advertisers must satisfy themselves that involved readers are more likely to respond to advertising within a selected publication.

Four measures of advertising effectiveness were recorded by the survey:

Unaided recall summary (where respondents were simply asked to state whether or not they remembered any advertising in the issue)

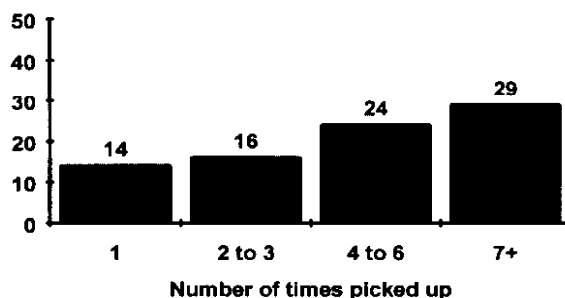
Unaided recall (where respondents were asked to nominate specific adverts they remembered seeing in the issue)

Prompted recall (where respondents were asked to look through selected portions of the magazine and nominate pages they remembered seeing before)

Purchase behaviour (where respondents were asked about their recent purchase activity within selected product categories)

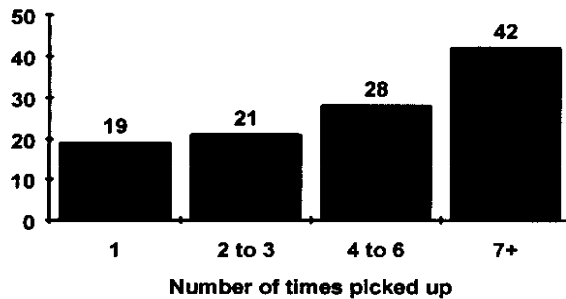
Early analysis (based on the simple unaided recall summary) suggested the most obvious correlation with an increase in the number of respondents who recall an ad was with the number of times respondents opened the magazine.

FAMILY CIRCLE
Percent of respondent who claimed to recall any advertising
Graph 1



Sample = 234

HOME BEAUTIFUL
Percent of respondent who claimed to recall any advertising
Graph 2

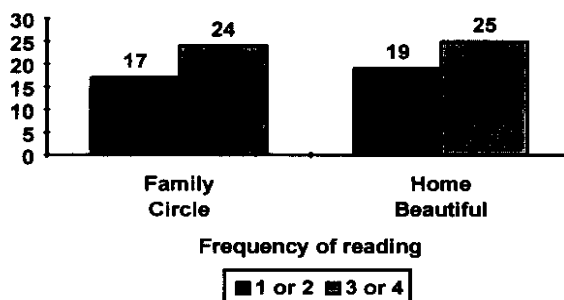


Sample = 227

The most significant difference appears to be between those respondents who had only read or looked into the magazine three times or less and those who had looked into the magazine at least four times.

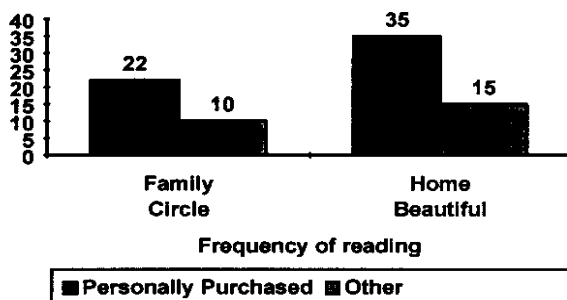
Also of significance was frequency of reading and source of copy.

FREQUENCY OF READING
Percent of respondent who claimed to recall any advertising
Graph 3



Sample = Family Circle = 234, Home Beautiful = 227

SOURCE OF COPY
Percent of respondent who claimed to recall any advertising
Graph 4



Sample = Family Circle = 234, Home Beautiful = 227

Higher recall scores were associated with respondents who said: they identify closely with the publication, like looking at the adverts, find the adverts helpful, find the adverts a useful source of product information, have 100% confidence in the editorial, believe what they read and would be disappointed if the publication was no longer available. The replies to all three of the advertising related questions (4 to 6 above) appeared to hold significant relationships with purchase behaviour while only two of the three editorial variables (7 to 9 above) showed signs of a relationship. (Whether a respondent agreed they learnt from the publication or not appeared to have no effect on advertising recall).

The above analyses were based on the results to the question, "Can you recall any advertising in the issue?" For the purposes of more detailed analysis recall scores were calculated as a percentage of the total number of advertisements in the tested sections of the magazine. In the case of unaided recall respondents were encouraged to nominate advertisements they remembered seeing. Whereas aided recall was measured by respondents looking through the selected sections of the magazine being tested and nominating adverts they remembered seeing before.

Multivariate analysis

Multivariate factor analysis was used in an attempt to examine the nine general attitudinal variables (labelled 1 - 9 above) from this survey (following the work presented in San Francisco by Cade from RSL and Philport & Perry for Y&R).

A varimax rotation resulted in three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 and factor loadings greater than 0.3 with no cross loadings greater than 0.3.

Based on the meanings of the individual questions these factors have been labelled:

Ad relevance

- 5) *I find the advertising helpful*
- 6) *I find the advertising a useful source of product information*
- 4) *I like looking at the adverts*

Trust

- 8) *I believe what I read in it*
- 9) *I learn a lot from it*
- 7) *I have complete confidence in the editorial*

Commitment

- 2) *If necessary, I would go to great trouble to obtain every issue of this magazine*
- 1) *I usually read all the articles in it*
- 3) *You sometimes say of a person that you are very close to him or not so close. This can also be applied to magazines. Would you please tell me for whether in general you identify very closely with this magazine or not so closely?*

| Rotated Factor Matrix | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 |
|----------------------------|--------------|----------|------------|
| Variable | Ad relevance | Trust | Commitment |
| 5) ads help | .84793 | .21993 | .14990 |
| 6) ads useful | .80967 | .23427 | .08474 |
| 4) like ads | .79622 | .03854 | .20259 |
| 8) believe | .13938 | .80580 | .03158 |
| 9) learn lots | .18141 | .73938 | .15957 |
| 7) editorial confidence | .12404 | .68474 | .28805 |
| 2) go to trouble to obtain | .08378 | .24236 | .79847 |
| 1) read all articles | .20301 | -.02957 | .77537 |
| 3) identify closely | .13159 | .27956 | .66002 |

Responses for all nine attitudinal questions were measured using ratings on five point Likert scales. Eight of the variables were anchored by 1 = Strongly Agree to 5 = Strongly Disagree. Question 3 was scaled using 1 = very close and 5 = not at all.

Factor scores were computed as averaged linear composites, so as to preserve the original scaling information. For the structural equation analysis, factor scores were reverse scored, i.e. Strongly Agree =5.

When these factors were correlated with outcomes, such as purchase behaviour and ad recall, the following results were achieved.

The factor "Ad Relevance" was found to have the strongest relationship with purchase behaviour (with a correlation coefficient of .2416).

The three variables which explain the factor "Trust" were also found to have a significant relationship with purchase behaviour (.1699). The factor "Reader Commitment" appeared to have a weaker direct relationship with actual purchase behaviour (.1198) although still significant.

"Reader commitment" however, had a strong relationship with Aided recall (.2719) but a significantly weaker relationship with unaided recall (.1345). Similarly, "Ad Relevance" though having a strong relationship with Aided recall (-.2251), had no significant relationship with Unaided Recall.

Path analysis

In order to examine the complex inter-relationships between the variables of interest, and to develop an exploratory causal model of these relationships, the structural equation modelling technique, LISREL 7, was used (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1988). As the researchers were primarily interested in overall effects, data from the two monthly titles were combined.

The nine variables included in this analysis were:

- 1) Brand purchased
- 2) Unaided ad recall
- 3) Aided ad recall
- 4) Ad relevance *
- 5) Trust *
- 6) Disappointment if magazine no longer available
- 7) Times an issue read
- 8) Number of issues bought
- 9) Reader commitment *

* = Factors summarising three core variables each as described above

The input for the LISREL analysis was the correlation coefficient matrix:

| Variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| 1 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | 0.16* | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| 3 | 0.14* | 0.13* | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| 4 | 0.24* | 0.11 | 0.23* | 1.00 | | | | | |
| 5 | 0.17* | 0.07 | 0.02 | 0.39* | 1.00 | | | | |
| 6 | 0.06 | 0.05 | 0.16* | 0.24* | 0.39* | 1.00 | | | |
| 7 | 0.10 | 0.12* | 0.06 | 0.06 | 0.09 | 0.11 | 1.00 | | |
| 8 | 0.00 | 0.02 | 0.09 | 0.02 | 0.11 | 0.11 | 0.03 | 1.00 | |
| 9 | 0.12* | 0.14* | 0.27* | 0.37* | 0.41* | 0.49* | 0.16* | 0.20* | 1.00 |

* = significant relationship

It was hypothesised that Trust would be the central exogenous variable and that through various causal paths, would influence the other variables. The aim was to explore this theoretical hypothesis using the empirical data relationships found in the survey.

LISREL is usually used for confirmatory model testing, however it is also used for exploratory model development (Hayduk, 1987). Recent editions of journals such as *The Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Advertising Research*, *Journal of Consumer Research* testify to the popularity of LISREL analysis for exploratory analysis (see Crosby, Evans and Cowles, 1990; and Morgan and Hunt, 1994 for examples).

Caution should be observed when generalising models that result from data-driven modifications of models (MacCullum, Roznowski & Necowitz, 1992). None the less use of this exploratory technique is useful for theory building followed with subsequent confirmatory testing.

In using the exploratory procedure to develop the structural equation model, successive paths were specified, building each time on the assessment of individual estimated parameter fit for each previously specified model (Byrne, 1989). A series of models were subsequently specified and estimated until one was obtained which exhibited not only an acceptable statistical fit but also indicated a substantively meaningful representation of the observed data.

The number of times an issue is read is related to unaided advertising recall which is related to advertising response. However, this same variable did not hold a significant relationship with aided advertising recall.

No significant direct relationship was found between the number of issues read (as measured through a standard frequency question) and advertising response. The number of issues read was, however, related to aided advertising response. Further work will attempt to analyse this relationship with reference to the historical schedules of the advertisers included in the experiment. Higher aided recall scores would be expected to be associated with advertisers who have supported their campaigns with significant schedules.

Many variables previously agreed by media researchers to be determinants of advertising responsiveness may in fact be no more than outcomes of two key psychological drivers, i.e. Reader Trust and Reader Commitment.

Notably you do not need to be a 3 or 4 out of 4 reader to be committed to a magazine, find the ads relevant or buy the brands advertised.

Implications for syndicated readership studies

All readership research providers are struggling to balance the demands from publishers and advertisers to provide the depth of data against respondent fatigue. Most notably early MPX work clearly demonstrated additional questions, asked with the main readership question, decrease overall levels of readership claims.

Publishers want a measure of involvement which can be used to increase advertising revenue.

Media planners want access to an indicator which shows what proportion of a readership is highly involved AND therefore more likely to respond to the advertising appearing in that publication.

Everyone, and especially researchers, want the solution to be easily measurable. To be included in syndicated projects the selected indicator(s) of involvement must not over burden the respondent. Much work (referred to above) has shown that readership claims will decrease if the readership question is extended significantly and no one wants that.

To become a valuable selling tool any measure of involvement must accurately reflect higher advertising recall among involved readers and, preferably, a higher propensity to purchase advertised brands.

This experimental research suggests the most useful, easily measurable, direct indicators of quality of reading may lie in reader attitudes toward advertising. Asking readers their assessment of the relevance of advertising in a publication certainly gives a good indication of likely response to advertising and could predict purchase behaviour. From an advertisers perspective this may be the only measures of quality of reading required! Measures of trust, e.g. "believe what I read" should also become integral to future measures as it appears to be a key psychological driver to reading and advertising effectiveness.

Results from the disappointment question were also encouraging (following Cade's qualitative work for RSL). Measuring this outcome would appear to give a good indication of the respondents trust and commitment level toward the publication, although more as an outcome of trust and commitment than a component. This measure then does not solely focus on the advertising departments requirements but may tell more about the reader's relationship with any given publication.

Further work

The sample for this pilot survey was relatively small (414 respondents for the two monthly titles combined). Analysis of the effects of certain variables was, therefore, not possible to complete with satisfactory reliability. For example, identifying the importance of copy factors (as measured by interest and appeal of advertisements) was not possible with any degree of statistical validity. In addition the importance of source of copy could not be isolated in our analysis.

However, from this initial analysis there is some evidence to support the claim that advertisements at the back of the magazine attract lower validated recall scores and the effects of this needs to be examined in the light of purchase behaviour. This suggests our research may again challenge the traditional findings associated with projects such as STARCH.

Some of the relationships referred to in our model are not strong, although they are statistically significant. Further work with a larger sample size needs to be completed to validate the results of this survey.

In addition, only two monthly titles have been included in our analysis, any claims as to the relevance of the model as a global definition of involvement needs to be tested against a wider selection of titles.

Wilson MLI financed this pilot survey and it is hoped the findings will generate sufficient interest from the industry to finance a larger study.

Conclusion

Given that this is only our first experiment, the researchers advocate some caution in interpreting the findings. Notwithstanding this, clearly the relationship between reader and magazine is more important than ever. That relationship can not be understood by knowing the number of issues read, whether the reader bought the copy or from many other behavioural measures. In fact, there appears to be two fundamental psychological drivers which produce advertising response in terms of perceived reader relevance of advertising and ultimately purchasing of advertised brands. Reader trust epitomised by the statement "I believe what they write" along with commitment appear to predetermine a positive disposition to advertising i.e. anticipation of reader relevance in that the ads meet certain needs from the readers lifestyle portfolio. As a consequence, advertising response in the form of purchasing can be expected to result more often than chance.

Notably this new model shows behavioural measures such as frequency of reading more likely to be an outcome of reader involvement. The researchers advocate a paradigm shift to psychological measures for measuring reader involvement with measures of behaviour as a second choice option only.

Partners

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MEDIAGRAPHS - A GUIDEBOOK THROUGH THE MEDIA GALAXY

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Summary

Today media planners are often faced with a wealth of information about consumers' media habits, use of products and services, demographics, and lifestyles. However, in marketing any particular product or service, it is often difficult to determine the most effective media mix to reach the consumer. In the past, the media planner has used demographics, geodemographics, psychographics, and other similar "...ics" to try and determine the particular characteristics of their target consumer. Once a marketer determines the characteristics of their target consumer, it is often a lengthy process to then determine which are the most likely media through which to address these people.

For the past two years, we have been investigating whether or not it is possible to segment people by their media habits. If we can assign people to groups for whom we know their particular media habits, then cross-referencing these groups with users of any product or service will provide us with sufficient information to make an informed judgement about the most likely media source through which to market the product or service. Using a comprehensive media data base, we were able to identify 16 segments, each with different media habits.

The 16 segments in *MediaGraphics* were determined through an analysis of more than 90 different variables each describing a particular form of media such as radio listening, television viewing, and reading of newspapers and magazines. In addition many other media sources were covered such as exposure to outdoor advertising (transit and billboards), attendance at movies, theatres, and concerts (programs), and direct mail. A media planner investigating a campaign for a new product can now look at the particular media segment, or segments, most likely to use the product or service and then know immediately which media is likely to be most effective (and also which forms of media are *least* likely to reach the target audience).

1.0 Introduction

Advertisers and marketers have always sought to understand why a consumer buys a particular product or service. Of equal importance is an understanding of what makes the consumer of a product or service different from those who do not buy. Traditionally, marketers have used analyses such as *demographics* and *psychographics* to try and understand the characteristics of their particular target audience.

Knowing the target audience, and being able to describe the consumers who comprise that audience is only a first step. The next major hurdle is how to reach them. How do marketers deliver their message to these consumers? The application of intuition, past experience, and sometimes guesswork, are not unknown tools. However, if you are dealing with a new product or developing a campaign for a revised product, the task is not as easy. Furthermore, media data bases tend to be exceedingly large. Travelling through these data bases can be time consuming and it is easy to miss a potential solution.

Against this background, an investigation was started three years ago to determine whether or not it was possible to segment consumers by their media habits. If this could be accomplished, the task of the media planner could be made much easier. Rather than trying to determine which media might be most effective, they could turn more of their attention to determining what the best media mix should be and what weight should be given to each element.