SPECIFIC ISSUE READERSHIP MEASUREMENT, PART II

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1. Introduction

Two years ago, John Faasse and I presented the first results of the Specific Issue Readership Measurement. In the fall of 2003, we had ten weeks of data concerning fourteen weekly magazines. Since then, we have continued our weekly measurement and now, in 2005, we have more than a hundred weeks of information at our disposal¹.

It is time to look at the results, make comparisons, discuss experiments and examine the outlook for what was the first Specific Issue Readership Measurement since the old days of 'through the book'.

Specific Issue Readership Measurement: what is it and why did we begin it more than two years ago?

To understand our move into Specific Issue Readership Measurement you have to look at the development of the research market in the Netherlands over the last four years.

The penetration of online Internet access among consumers in the Netherlands has grown rapidly; by 2003, more than 70% of the Dutch households had Internet access. Currently the level of broadband access is fast increasing and is expected to reach 65% by the end of 2005.

The research market has reacted to this phenomenon; all the leading agencies now have an Internet access pool of 40.000 or more individuals (Intomart GfK's panel has 70.000). In 2005, the market share for Internet research (using the Internet as a research tool) has grown to 20% of the total registered budget for marketing research.

Initially, one saw a logical move to transfer classical telephone and/or face-to-face surveys to the online platform. A good example of this is the transfer of the Dutch Readership Survey to the Internet, which involved transforming the CATI questionnaire into an Internet survey while retaining the recency question structure.

However, one of the most interesting aspects of Internet research is the possibility of combining the CAPI / CASI technique with the speed of the Internet. Modern ADSL and broadband transmission technology makes it possible to display pictures, pages, covers, advertising pages etc. etc., and to refresh these stimuli daily.

With this technology at hand, why stick to recency methodology with its proven shortcomings? Why accept the bad memory of our respondents if we can help them by providing additional information such as covers and other aspects of a magazine issue?

It was in response to this challenge that we set up the Specific Issue Readership Measurement in 2003

The initial phase of such an operation involves problem solving. The logistics of displaying the correct covers for a number of print titles at the right moment in the right order are not simple. How often do you want them displayed and for how long? When and where is the respondent asked to respond? Do we want to measure dailies, monthlies or less frequent published titles as well as weeklies?

We decided to start in 2003 with a selection of fourteen titles of weekly publications. The selection was limited to weeklies because the procedure for refreshing the cover display each week was relatively simple, which did not seem to be the case for dailies.

We made a number of decisions up front that were untested, but based on 'gut feeling'. These include:

a. using a filter question based on reading in the last twelve months, with the logos displayed in a single screen.

b. displaying the colour covers of the last six issues of a weekly magazine in a single screen starting with the oldest cover on the left and ending with the most recent cover on the right.

¹ Worldwide Readership Symposium 2003 'What the world needs now' John Faasse, Kobalt BV Media Services, Netherlands Leendert van Meerem, Intomart GfK, Netherlands

c. for each issue, the respondent had to check one of four choices:

- have read this issue the last seven days
- have read this issue more than a week ago
- have not read this issue
- don't know

d. for the most recently read issue of those read in the last seven days, asking:

- the source of copy read
- the place of first reading

In June 2004, the survey was expanded to include a 'content appreciation monitor' for measuring the editorial content and an advertising response monitor. Publishers have been able to use this data on a regular or ad hoc basis since mid 2004.

The Intomart GfK Specific Issue Readership Measurement has become an accepted tool for publishers and advertisers for monitoring two items:

a. The weekly dynamics of readership of their titles throughout the year.

b. The feedback of readers on editorial and advertising content.

The instrument was not meant as a replacement for the National Readership Survey (NOM) and is not seen or used as a competing instrument. Nevertheless, comparisons are made in the market.

The Specific Issue Readership Measurement has triggered discussions about the weekly (and daily) dynamics in readership figures. As a result, the J.I.C. for the National Readership Survey has planned to set up a comparable instrument as a follow-up to the Intomart GfK Specific Issue Readership Measurement.

In the first six months of 2005 we have experimented with the filter question, a revised order of the six covers and, very recently, with a 'FRIPI' type of measurement.

In this paper, we also report on analyses designed to transform the specific issue data to 'recency type' data.

2. Research design

The Intomart GfK Specific Issue Readership Measurement was set up June of 2003 to provide a weekly audience measurement of specific magazine issues. The initial selection of fourteen titles has been expanded over time and currently contains some thirty titles, including weekly, biweekly, monthly and bi-monthly issues of magazines of varying genres. A general distinction is made between men's, women's, opinion, gossip and 'glossy' magazines.

Each week, the online questionnaire is updated by adding the covers of the latest issues of the titles in the selection. New issues are purchased on the first Thursday after publication, their covers scanned, and the images entered in the questionnaire. New covers are added on the right-hand side of the screen and previous covers move to the left, so that the cover of the oldest issue on the far left of the screen disappears from the questionnaire. The new questionnaire is available the following Monday and remains open for seven days, until the next Monday.

A hyperlink to the online questionnaire is sent out every week on Monday mornings by e-mail to 1600 respondents of the Intomart GfK online access pool. The mailing stops when 1000 completed questionnaires have been obtained. Sampling is done according to age and sex and the net sample is weighted afterwards by education level, region, urbanisation degree, sex and age, thus ensuring a representative sample of the Dutch population 13 years old and over with internet access.

Questionnaire

1. Screening question

Respondents receive an invitation to participate in the survey in an e-mail containing a unique hyperlink that starts the online questionnaire in a new window. After reading the introduction, the respondents can proceed to the first question screen by clicking the 'next' button. This takes them to the screening question where they are asked which titles they have read or looked at in the past twelve months. Respondents can indicate which titles they have read by checking the boxes next to the mastheads shown. The mastheads are reproductions of the actual logos of the titles, presented in full colour and scaled down so that all mastheads occupy an equal portion of the screen.



Special attention has been given to the size of the mastheads, to insure that no bias occurs because a masthead stands out more than the others do. We have also opted to present the mastheads to the respondents spread over several screens instead of displaying them all in a single screen. There were several reasons for this decision. For one, no scrolling is needed in order to see all the mastheads on each screen. Secondly, we believe that, when confronted with a large number of images on screen, respondents will not examine each single masthead but will simply scan the mastheads for familiar logos and will thereby overlook a number of titles they might have read. By showing a maximum of six mastheads per screen respondents are more likely to notice and consider every masthead. Once the respondent has indicated the mastheads of titles read or looked over, they can click on the 'next' button to proceed to the next screen of mastheads. If they have not read any of the titles displayed, respondents can click on 'none of these'. This automatically takes them to the next selection of mastheads. Mastheads are grouped roughly according to corresponding genres. We believe this to be the most user-friendly approach as it may aid in recognizing individual titles. The position of the mastheads on each screen is randomised, as is the order in which the screens are presented, to eliminate bias due to position or order.

2. Source of the copy

After completion of the screening question, for each title they indicate having read, respondents are asked how or where they generally obtain a copy of this title. Answer categories include:

- by subscription
- buying single issues
- via a reading circle
- obtained by friends or family
- read in a waiting room, restaurant, public transport etc.
- otherwise obtained, namely (open answer)
- don't know

The first three answer categories provide the valuable data that can be used for validating the circulation figures published by the HOI (Het Oplage Instituut) which has the task of collecting and registering these figures.

We have also opted to formulate the question in such a way that we ask about the general or most frequent way of obtaining an issue of the title instead of asking respondents how they obtained every specific issue they have read. The latter would mean a heavier burden for the respondent and would prolong the questionnaire significantly. At the start of the research in 2003, respondents were asked to indicate the source of specific issues. However, at the time, the most recently read issue read in the previous seven days was selected per title. This meant however that not all respondents would automatically get this question for every title selected in the screening question. Members of reading circles, for instance, were grossly underrepresented in the responses.

3. Specific issue readership

The third question in the Intomart GfK Specific Issue Readership Measurement deals with specific issue readership. Images of the covers of the last six published issues are displayed on a single screen per title for the titles that have been selected by the respondent during the screening question. They are arranged starting with the oldest cover on the left and ending with the most recent cover on the right. The images of the covers are scans of actual issues and are accompanied by labels providing information on the week or month the issue was published. Respondents are asked to indicate whether they have read or looked over an issue. The response options are:

- yes
- no
- don't know



One disadvantage of displaying six covers on one screen is that the size of the covers is limited. Large font headlines are readable and most images can be made out, but smaller texts are usually difficult or impossible to decipher. As an aid to recognition, respondents have the option to click a cover to open a pop-up window with a larger version of the image, with a higher level of detail. The option of adding additional visual aids is limited, however, as this means sending more bytes to respondents, which in turn means more server capacity is required. Users with slower connections will probably make less use of these options because of the longer loading times.

Showing respondents the last six published issues means that reach for each issue is measured for up to six publication intervals, providing us with weekly reach figures for these issues as they age. Thus, in addition to reach for a single issue, we also obtain information on the accumulation of the audience over time for specific and/or average issues.

4. Place of first reading

The question where at what location readers actually do the reading is a more qualitative question added to the Intomart GfK SIR Survey due to interest shown by several publishers. Respondents are asked where they have read a specific issue for the first time. The selection for which issue this question is presented is based on the most recently read issue of each title. Answer categories here are:

- At home
- At the workplace
- In school/educative institution
- In the train/bus/metro/tram
- By family/friends/acquaintances
- At the hairdresser, doctor, café, restaurant, shop
- Somewhere else, namely;
- Don't know

This questioned is posed right after the specific issue readership question. So respondents answer per title firstly the readership questioned followed by the place of first reading.

5. Article and advertisement monitoring

The place of reading question concludes the questionnaire for most respondents. However the publishers of certain magazines measured also wanted to know more about *how* the specific issues have been read. Therefore respondents that have indicated that they have read the issues of which we want to know more about, usually the most recent one, will receive an additional request to fill out some extra questions. Respondents are rewarded extra if they agree which is also made known to them before they see the extra questions.

The extra questions comprise of two questions about five articles and two more questions about the advertisements that were placed in that issue. Regarding the articles respondents are asked how thoroughly they have read these articles. They can answer with:

- read the whole article
- read most of it
- read about half
- read a small part
- didn't read it, but did read the header
- didn't read it, but did have the page open
- didn't have the page open
- don't know

Next respondents can rate the article by awarding it with a grade between 1 and 10. The two questions are repeated for a maximum of five articles before moving on to the advertisements.

Once again images are shown of the advertisements. Per advertisement the question is asked whether or not this advertisement has been seen. An answer can be chosen out of the following list:

- saw this advertisement for sure
- might of seen this advertisement
- definitely didn't see it, but did have the page open
- definitely didn't see it and didn't have the page open
- don't know

All ads for which the respondent indicated that he or she might have seen it, or definitely saw it, the following question is posed:

Do you consider this advertisement to be:

- useful
- relevant
- appealing
- informative

The addition of the editorial and advertising monitor is one example of how an instrument like Specific Issue Readership can be used in a commercial environment. In this paper we will concentrate only on the topics around the Specific Issue Measurement, the results and the experiments we carried out. The editorial and advertising monitor is only mentioned to give a complete picture of the different modules of the survey.

3. Results

In this chapter we will show results of all the twenty two titles based on the weekly measurement starting week 4-2005 and ending week 28-2005.

We will make the following comparisons:

- 1. Differences and similarities with the Dutch 'National Readership Survey' figures. (NOM, Nationaal Onderzoek Multimedia².)
- 2. Are the results in line with the circulation figures of the national official 'HOI'³ data?

We want to make comparisons with the existing readership instrument that is available in the market. The problem is that when we find differences, we do not know which source is better than the other. So we tried to use the circulation figures to get a feeling of face value for the differences. That was the reason we added the question about source of copy in our survey. The Dutch circulation data gives a breakdown in subscriptions, newsstand sales and reading circles, so we can compare these with our source of copy question.

 $^{^{2}}$ We thank Kobalt and John Faasse for making the NOM data available for analyses

³ We thank George Bohlander from HOI for making the HOI data available for analyses.

3.1 Average Issue Readership and 'screening'

Before comparing both instruments, we should first look at the differences in definition.

Recency methodology does not measure per issue and is therefore not even measuring the average issue. It is a construct that assumes that readership in the last publication interval is equal to reading an average issue. We all know what problems that has caused the last fifty years. Telescoping, duplicated reading, etc. On the other hand, it is currently in use in most countries in the world.

Our Specific Issue Readership measures readership build up per individual issue with a maximum of six weeks for weeklies, so we ignore the readership build up of an issue in the seventh week and further in the lifetime of a (weekly) magazine. These differences in definition should already explain some of the differences in the results, but in what direction?

Another major difference is the fact that we measure a little more than twenty magazines while in the 'NOM' more than a hundred and fifty daily newspapers and weekly and monthly magazines are measured, and we know that the more titles you measure the longer the questionnaire is and therefore the reading levels have the tendency to drop. And, at last we must realise that we measure the Specific Issue Readership Measurement exclusively in an online access pool, while NOM corrects their figures with additional face-to-face data to national representative data.

Keeping that in mind we show the comparisons with NOM, total population and for the sub population of NOM that has access to the internet.

Looking at the results per magazine in Appendix 1 we see in the first place that almost all twenty two titles have a higher Average Issue Readership in Specific Issue Readership Measurement than in NOM.

In Appendix 3 we see the graphs that show the pattern of the differences between the titles which gives a reassuring picture, because the differences between the titles in both instruments show a similar pattern. Looking at the absolute difference in Average Issue Readership we recognize in especially the opinion magazines some large differences. In general the magazines with the smaller readership levels show a relative higher percentage of differences. Looking for explanations, we have to look at the screening in percentages caused by the filter questions of both methodologies and in Appendix 1 it shows that these differences are much smaller than for Average Issue Readership (in table 2).

Screening

Table 1

Relative differences in screening levels: Intomart GfK SIR data in relation to 'NOM-all' and 'NOM-web access'.

	All g	enres
	NOM all	NOM web
Total	16,0%	15,6%
Men 13-44	25,1%	24,3%
Men 45+	27,3%	22,9%
Women 13-44	14,3%	14,2%
Women 45+	20,3%	17,2%

	Opinion	weeklies	Men's v	weeklies	Women's weeklies			
	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web		
Total	37,9%	18,8%	7,4%	18,0%	5,4%	11,0%		
Men 13-44	36,9%	32,0%	9,5%	10,6%	9,1%	7,6%		
Men 45+	54,9%	21,0%	8,1%	19,0%	12,1%	26,0%		
Women 13-44	15,1%	8,2%	15,7%	17,3%	8,2%	9,4%		
Women 45+	44,2% 3,4%		6,8% 24,2%		6,1%	19,5%		

	Gossip	weeklies	Women's	monthlies	Rest		
	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web	
Total	18,6%	22,3%	12,9%	12,7%	20,0%	18,7%	
Men 13-44	19,1%	19,0%	53,0%	55,2%	25,2%	22,9%	
Men 45+	19,5%	30,7%	35,3%	14,3%	55,5%	28,0%	
Women 13-44	23,3%	23,5%	17,0%	18,0%	9,9%	11,4%	
Women 45+	12,5% 21,0%		16,8% 20,5%		30,2%	4,4%	

	Group	o size 1	Group	o size 2	Grou	o size 3	Group size 4		
	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web	
Total	21,9%	11,9%	17,0%	20,6%	6,9%	16,0%	14,9%	17,2%	
Men 13-44	43,2%	42,4%	20,2%	16,6%	8,5%	9,5%	16,6%	16,5%	
Men 45+	42,7%	18,0%	28,0%	31,1%	14,2%	20,4%	15,3%	26,9%	
Women 13-44	11,4%	10,5%	15,3%	14,5%	13,1%	14,3%	19,6%	20,0%	
Women 45+	37,7%	15,2%	18,7%	23,5%	5,5%	16,4%	8,5%	16,1%	

Groupsize 1: 8 magazines with an average issue reach between (NOM 1,1% -1,9%)

Groupsize 2: 4 magazines with an average issue reach between (NOM 3,5% -4,9%)

Groupsize 3: 5 magazines with an average issue reach between (NOM 6,0% -9,5%)

Groupsize 4: 8 magazines with an average issue reach between (NOM 12,7% -21,3%)

In table 1 we see that the screening figures from our Specific Issue Readership Measurement database are in general close to those in NOM, while the questioning is different: 'in NOM an EML page is used with several grouped titles of which at least one needs to be read or looked into in the last twelve months. For all the titles in that list the frequency question decides that all titles that score anything better than 'never read' are screened in'. (The twelve months barrier is than left out!) As a group the Relative differences in Screen-in levels; Intomart GfK SIR data in relation to 'NOM-all' and 'NOM-web access' opinion magazines show the biggest differences of 40% (higher) than in NOM.

Average Issue Readership

Table 2

Relative differences in Average issue readership levels: Intomart GfK SIR data in relation to 'NOM-all' and 'NOM-web access'.

	All genres	
	NOM all	NOM web
Total	50,8%	47,0%
Men 13-44	89,7%	91,9%
Men 45+	75,5%	51,1%
Women 13-44	33,9%	33,7%
Women 45+	46,3%	28,0%

	Opinion w	eeklies	Men's wee	klies	Women's	Women's weeklies			
	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web			
Total	142,6%	124,2%	15,4%	10,8%	27,4%	25,6%			
Men 13-44	164,5%	168,0%	24,8%	27,3%	67,9%	67,9%			
Men 45+	175,3%	133,1%	24,9%	12,3%	35,3%	23,7%			
Women 13-44	107,4%	99,7%	2,9%	3,0%	20,5%	22,9%			
Women 45+	110,3%	71,1%	3,9%	5,6%	17,9%	12,2%			

	Gossip we	eklies	Women's n	nonthlies	Rest	Rest			
	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web			
Total	13,7%	21,9%	80,6%	76,2%	38,3%	40,9%			
Men 13-44	27,4%	32,2%	188,0%	188,0%	69,1%	74,7%			
Men 45+	19,3%	14,7%	136,4%	91,3%	100,6%	64,1%			
Women 13-44	10,4%	14,3%	61,2%	61,2%	11,4%	7,4%			
Women 45+	12,0%	20,4%	69,4%	42,3%	61,7%	28,3%			

	Group siz	e 1	Group size	e 2	Group siz	xe 3	Group size 4		
	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web	NOM all	NOM web	
Total	95,8%	83,9%	53,6%	41,2%	14,7%	17,8%	12,5%	21,6%	
Men 13-44	163,0%	165,7%	77,1%	71,4%	35,9%	41,8%	36,4%	40,5%	
Men 45+	146,1%	98,8%	64,3%	40,9%	26,2%	17,9%	20,9%	16,1%	
Women 13-44	59,9%	57,4%	45,7%	45,4%	8,4%	9,8%	8,3%	10,5%	
Women 45+	99,0%	51,7%	33,3%	16,7%	7.8%	10,7%	10,8%	16.6%	

Groupsize 1: 8 magazines with an average issue reach between (NOM 1,1% -1,9%)

Groupsize 2: 4 magazines with an average issue reach between (NOM 3,5% -4,9%)

Groupsize 3: 5 magazines with an average issue reach between (NOM 6,0% -9,5%)

Groupsize 4: 5 magazines with an average issue reach between (NOM 12,7% -21,3%)

In table 2 the differences are shown of the Average Issue Readership figures for the totals 13 years and over and for four sex/age groups. In a first glance there is no indication that specific target groups are responsible for smaller or larger differences between the two surveys.

An obvious result is that the differences are smaller as the Average Issue Readership is higher. So it looks as if readership measurement for larger titles is less affected by the type of questioning. It also means that the absolute difference is smaller because of the fact that for magazines with a Average Issue Readership of less than 2% the biggest relative differences are reported. This is a general tendency that we do not understand so far. Further we can conclude that men in both age groups are causing most differences.

Looking for explanations we have put the readers per copy according to the official HOI figures in the graph 1.

If we look at the number of readers per copy and compare our figures with NOM, we see that the pattern is similar. Exceptions are the opinion magazines Elsevier, Vrij Nederland and HP de Tijd with considerable higher readers per copy in our Specific Issue Readership Measurement. For the title Aktueel our readers per copy look as questionable as is for NOM. In graph 2 we have made a split up for the different source of copy.



Here we see (graph 2), that it looks as if for each title the reason for differences or for are also different. News stand sales cause high readers per copy for Elsevier and Vrij Nederland, while for HP de Tijd the reading circle causes extreme high reader per copy figures. (This sub-sample is very small.) Of course, reading circles are natural causes for high readers per copy, because one issue passes twelve households (of which we only measure the first six).



Graph 2: Readers per copy split by source of the copy

Looking at the results we can conclude some remarkable things. The differences between NOM and Specific Issue Readership Measurement, we experienced two years ago in the first ten weeks of 2003, especially for the opinion magazines, have been continued in the last two years. We still have no explanation for that phenomenon. For other titles we experienced a slightly higher level of Average Issue Readership which can be accounted for by the number of titles measured (22 vs 150+).

The levels are reasonably stable over time and reflect the expected build up after six weeks for an individual issue.

In the next chapter we report about some experiments we did in the last six months.

4. Experiments

In the last two years we have used our Specific Issue Readership Measurement to do some experiments with certain questions, changes of filters and different ways of calculating the results.

We report three of these experiments in this chapter:

FRIPI, or to be precise: First Reading of an Issue in the Publication Interval.

Filter question and order of the issues on the screen

Are we measuring readership through the recency methodology per issue?

Experiment 1

During seven weeks between week 24 and week 30 in 2005 we did an experiment with FRIPI. Our Specific Issue Readership Measurement measures each issue in a independent sample six weeks long. That means that after six weeks, the Average Issue Readership is measured in a one- week sample. Graph 3 shows how consistent this six weeks measurement is, averaged over twenty weeks. The disadvantage is, of course, that the other five weeks measurements of such an issue is only interesting for the publisher who wants to see the build up of each issue over time. The confidence intervals are based on one week sample. We enlarged the sample using a FRIPI based question asking new first time readers in every week, so that the results after six weeks are based on the six weekly samples.

The disadvantage of FRIPI is the question itself. Is FRY (First read yesterday) already a questionable methodology, because respondents have to remember their reading habit of yesterday and also whether they read that magazine for the first time or not, in FRIPI they have to answer the same question about the last week, or month. It is questionable if normal people can remember whether they have read this magazine the last seven days 'for the first time'.

Nonetheless, despite being declared opponents of FRY and FRIPI, we wanted to see the effects on our issue-by-issue measurement. To that end, we added one question to the survey. If respondents acknowledged having read an issue, they where next asked: "When did you read this issue for the first time"

- Less than 7 days ago.
- Longer than 7 days ago.
- don't know.



It is clear that the build up of the reach in six weeks changes with FRIPI, as does the end result after six weeks.

Generally, FRIPI based measurement starts lower in the first week after publication and (with some exceptions) results in a higher Average Issue Readership after six weeks. Looking back to the comparisons with the NOM results, the FRIPI makes the gap with NOM greater, especially for those magazines for which the differences in terms of readers per copy are already problematic. (See Appendix 4) Another conclusion is that the build up of reach appears much more stable in the results of seven weeks using FRIPI than in the results from the twenty weeks using the original question structure.

We are still studying the results, but we have changed the question structure back to its original form.

Experiment 2

In 2003 we have decided upfront to put the six issues of the magazines on the screen from left to right, first the oldest one ending on the right side with the latest one. Respondents have to go through the oldest to the latest, answering the question 'read or not'.

In the weeks 4 to 24 we have changed the order in the whole of the sample. Of course we preferred a split run, but with the software of those days that was to complicated.

In the same time period we changed the filter question from two screens with all the mastheads in a sort of random order, into a grouping of six families of magazines on six screens.

Because both experiments were expected to react independently on the build up of Average Issue Readership and on the screening in figures we decided to combine the two experiments in one. Time was an argument and the fact that we wanted the effect of experiments to be as unobtrusive for the results as possible.

In the following graph, it can be seen that the new screening question resulted in a 10 % higher level of acceptance.



We see almost no differences between the titles. The change was not only triggered because of experimental desire, but also because of the growing number of titles and the wish to make the filter question as transparent as possible for the respondent. The new method serves these other demands so we kept this change in place.

To examine the effect of the issue order we show in graph 5 the build up from the first week of publication to the last week that we have measured. In graph 5 shows effect of both orders.



This graph is an average of all the titles involved (the graphs of the individual weeklies are in Appendix 4.

The effect of the revised order is clear. When the most recent issue is left in the first position on the screen, this leads to a higher start of the build up of the issue. In general it leads also to a lower end result. We stopped the experiment, and are studying the effects, may be to change the order definitely next year.

Experiment 3

Until the fall of 2004, questioning for the Specific Issue Readership Measurement was based on a question with the following response alternatives:

- Read in the last 7 days
- Read longer ago
- Did not read
- Don't know

Although we knew that it was not necessary to distinguish between reading in the publication interval, as all the titles were weeklies, we included the "last seven days", as a more or less automatic action. We also found that a small percentage of respondents sometimes claimed to have read the most recent issue of a magazine more than seven days ago. This is partly attributable to mistakes in recall by respondents and partly to the fact that publishers sometimes release an issue in a specific distribution platform prior to the official publication date. We decided that it was unnecessary to ask this 'last seven days' question and changed it to a simple yes/no question. We have reported on this change in an earlier publication.

However, as long as the question included the alternative 'read in the last seven days', it was possible to calculate a 'recency measure' based on the information on the issues read in a certain week. It meant a recalculation of the data of week one to week forty-four in 2004.

The normal calculation of the Average Issue Readership in the Specific Issue Readership Measurement involves taking the result for an issue after six weeks. The alternative is to calculate each week the number of respondents who claimed to have read at least one out of the six shown issues the last seven days. This is a form of recency measurement based on the recognition of, in this case, six covers. Instead asking whether a respondent has read a specific magazine in the last seven days, they are asked whether they have read one out of these six issues in the last seven days.

Theoretically, this should yield the same results as the Average Issue Readership based on the Specific Issue Readership Measurement. In fact, we could even argue that it should underreport this figure, because the parallel reading effect causes the normal under-reporting fault in this calculation, while in our weekly calculation of Average Issue Readership we take each issue as a separate measure after six weeks.



Graph 6 shows the two calculations for each title.

Graph 6 shows in the first place how close the two measures are for all publications. In general they are slightly lower especially for the big magazines. In general they also seem to prove the theory that this way of recency calculation should underscore the Specific Issue Readership Measurement normal calculation with exception of again the opinion magazines. The exercise proves at least that our way of straightforward calculation of Average Issue Readership is right.

We left this possibility behind us when we replaced the question by one that does not include the last seven days.

5. Conclusions

For two years we have been conducting Specific Issue Readership Measurement in the Netherlands. We have analysed a lot, we have experimented a lot, we have learned a lot and still we are testing certain elements of it.

In the first place we have proved that it works, and that we can deliver very reliable and useful data to the publishers and media agencies. The differences we find with the existing NOM currency based on the recency methodology are in most cases explainable by the small number of titles we measure in comparison with the NOM data. We are convinced that our A.I.R levels will go down when we increase our number of titles to 100 or more.

Further analyses are needed in the case of the opinion magazines. From the beginning and consistently throughout the last 120 weeks of measurement, we find higher A.I.R figures for this genre than in NOM. The fact that we find as many readers per copy for the small weekly Aktueel (almost 20) as NOM strengthen our conviction that we measure the right things, and that our access pool is not strangely skewed towards any typical magazine readers. So maybe it is NOM that has a problem regarding opinion magazines.

What we would like, of course, is to show the results of our S.I.R.M. in a face-to-face environment. We realise that any access pool is not big enough to refresh a 25,000 sample each year consistently for a longer period of time. It looks strange to combine this typical internet development in the precious, classical but still well proven methodology for readership measurement that has to catch up with the high quality of research that a national currency of a country needs. Face-to-face fieldwork!

In the meantime, however the communication between laptops in the field and the central database with covers of many magazines and dailies means that we can update these stimuli every week or even daily if we wish. If we could use this methodology in a substantial face-to-face sample of let's say 10,000 or even 20,000, combined with extra interviews for smaller titles in one or two separate access pools, than we could build an instrument with two enormous advantages.

On the one hand you would have an average issue readership based on a measurement of each individual issue; on the other hand you would have reliable data for individual issues that can be used in a mature market to plan and evaluate print as it is done for television. No duplicated reading problems, no parallel reading underestimation, no telescoping, but instead campaign evaluation of any print advertising plan you wish, real forward planning on certain kind of content in coming issues, etc.

It is not a problem anymore to publish reliable seasonal effects, because every issue could be measured and publishers and advertisers would have continuous insight in the success of certain covers. All these instruments that are now sometimes measured in separate surveys would then be available in a single database.

Yes, we sound enthusiastic about it, and it is a miracle that nobody ever thought of it before.

Appendix 1

Genre	Title	Totals*			Male 13-44				Male 45+			Female 13-44			Female 45+		
		INTO	NOM all	NOM web	INTO	NOM all	NOM web	INTO	NOM all	NOM web	INTO	NOM all	NOM web	INTO	NOM all	NOM web	
Opinion	Elsevier	23,6%	16,4%	18,8%	27,9%	19,3%	20,1%	30,7%	18,8%	23,9%	18,7%	14,5%	15,3%	18,1%	13,2%	17,9%	
	HPDeTijd	13,3%	10,5%	12,3%	14,6%	11,2%	11,8%	16,1%	12,0%	16,4%	10,4%	9,6%	10,3%	12,7%	9,5%	12,6%	
	VrijNederland	13,9%	9,7%	11,3%	14,4%	10,6%	10,8%	18,6%	11,1%	14,0%	9,9%	9,2%	9,8%	13,4%	8,3%	12,4%	
Women's	Flair	22,5%	22,7%	26,3%	13,2%	12,2%	12,7%	8,5%	8,4%	10,6%	44,6%	47,3%	48,3%	19,2%	20,3%	26,8%	
weeklies	Viva	21,6%	22,0%	25,2%	14,0%	12,6%	13,1%	7,3%	9,0%	11,3%	43,5%	43,5%	44,2%	17,1%	20,6%	26,7%	
	Vriendin	19,4%	18,9%	19,8%	8,4%	8,2%	8,1%	6,1%	7,0%	7,8%	37,0%	35,5%	35,1%	23,0%	22,9%	25,1%	
	Libelle	47,5%	50,8%	51,9%	24,1%	25,3%	25,4%	34,3%	37,6%	44,6%	59,0%	67,3%	67,8%	71,6%	71,5%	77,8%	
	Margriet	38,6%	45,2%	45,9%	15,9%	19,6%	19,4%	27,1%	33,0%	38,6%	48,9%	60,3%	60,6%	61,7%	66,4%	74,3%	
Gossip	Story	39,6%	52,0%	53,7%	28,3%	38,7%	38,6%	31,3%	42,6%	48,3%	46,7%	64,5%	64,9%	51,2%	60,9%	65,8%	
	Prive	48,9%	53,4%	55,2%	37,9%	40,5%	40,5%	41,8%	43,2%	49,3%	55,2%	66,1%	66,2%	59,8%	62,3%	67,8%	
	Party	15,5%	19,7%	21,5%	11,3%	13,6%	13,6%	7,2%	10,0%	12,2%	24,0%	32,6%	32,6%	17,9%	21,1%	25,0%	
	Weekend	38,8%	49,0%	50,9%	26,9%	36,6%	36,6%	31,1%	38,9%	45,1%	48,1%	62,3%	62,5%	48,1%	56,6%	61,3%	
Men's	Aktueel	25,0%	28,3%	32,4%	38,3%	44,2%	44,6%	27,3%	29,9%	37,8%	20,5%	24,3%	24,7%	14,1%	14,6%	18,8%	
weeklies	Panorama	38,2%	38,2%	42,7%	49,3%	51,1%	51,8%	47,7%	42,4%	51,9%	28,2%	32,3%	33,0%	29,3%	27,6%	34,9%	
	NieuweRevu	29,4%	32,9%	37,2%	38,8%	43,8%	44,5%	36,2%	37,3%	45,9%	23,7%	29,0%	29,6%	19,6%	22,0%	28,6%	
Women's	Elle	12,3%	8,5%	9,9%	5,7%	2,9%	2,8%	5,6%	3,3%	4,6%	21,6%	16,6%	17,3%	14,7%	10,2%	14,5%	
Monthlies	MarieClaire	7,3%	7,2%	8,3%	3,3%	2,5%	2,4%	3,0%	2,5%	3,3%	12,6%	13,3%	13,8%	9,5%	9,9%	13,8%	
	Nouveau	9,5%	9,3%	9,5%	3,7%	2,7%	2,7%	7,9%	5,5%	6,8%	8,6%	10,9%	11,2%	18,4%	17,6%	21,1%	
	Avantgarde	8,3%	8,6%	9,8%	4,9%	3,4%	3,5%	5,0%	4,6%	5,6%	13,2%	14,9%	15,5%	9,5%	11,0%	14,9%	
Rest	Opzij	8,6%	6,6%	7,6%	4,0%	2,9%	3,0%	6,9%	3,9%	5,2%	9,1%	9,7%	10,0%	14,6%	9,5%	13,6%	
	FHM	7,4%	6,0%	7,4%	18,8%	14,6%	14,8%	4,4%	3,6%	5,4%	4,7%	4,7%	4,8%	1,5%	0,8%	1,2%	
	Plus	18,6%	17.0%	15,0%	4,3%	3.9%	3.9%	29,3%	22,0%	23,9%	7,0%	8,1%	8,1%	37,9%	35.6%	38,4%	

INTO: Sreen-in percentages of Intomart GfK's SIR data week 4 - 28

NOM-all: NOM 2005i EML screen-in data for all respondents

NOM-web: NOM 2005i EML screen-in data for respondents with internet access

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Appendix 2

Genre	Title		Totals	*		Male 13-	-44		Male 45	5+	1	Female 1	3-44	Female 45+		
									NOM	NOM	1	NOM	NOM	1	NOM	
		INTO	NOM all	NOM web	INTO	NOM all	NOM web	INTO	all	web	INTO	all	web	INTO	all	NOM web
								10,6								
Opinion	Elsevier	7,4%	3,5%	3,9%	8,7%	3,9%	4,1%	%	4,4%	5,3%	5,0%	2,5%	2,6%	5,9%	3,5%	4,4%
	HP	3,7%	1,4%	1,5%	3,8%	1,3%	1,3%	5,6%	1,7%	2,1%	2,4%	1,1%	1,1%	3,4%	1,5%	1,7%
	Vrij	2.00/	1 50/	1 (0/	2.00/	1 40/	1.20/	5 20/	2.00/	2.20/	2 40/	1 20/	1.20/	2.00/	1 (0/	2 10/
	Nederland	3,8%	1,5%	1,6%	3,9%	1,4%	1,3%	5,2%	2,0%	2,2%	2,4%	1,2%	1,3%	3,8%	1,6%	2,1%
Women's	Flair	7.0%	4 4%	4 9%	3.9%	2.0%	2 1%	2.6%	1 4%	1 7%	14,2	9.6%	9.6%	6.0%	4 1%	4 7%
women s	1 Iuli	1,070	1,170	1,970	0,970	2,070	2,170	2,070	1,170	1,770	12.6	,070	,070	0,070	1,170	1,770
weeklies	Viva	6,3%	4,6%	5,2%	3,9%	2,3%	2,4%	2,1%	1,8%	2,3%	%	9,6%	9,7%	5,2%	4,4%	5,1%
											13,8					
	Vriendin	7,6%	6,0%	5,7%	3,3%	1,8%	1,7%	3,1%	2,3%	2,3%	%	11,5%	10,6%	9,2%	7,8%	7,3%
	T :111 -	22 40/	21 20/	10.00/	0.00/	(10/	(00/	17,4	14 50/	15 00/	25,3	25 20/	25.00/	38,6	20 70/	20.50/
	Libelle	22,4%	21,3%	19,8%	9,0%	0,1%	0,0%	[%] 0	14,5%	15,8%	20.8	25,5%	25,0%	31 2	38,1%	39,3%
	Margriet	17.6%	16.2%	15.0%	6.1%	4.2%	4.1%	12, 4 %	10.3%	10.7%	20,0	20.2%	19.8%	%	29.4%	30.5%
		,	- ,	- ,		,	,		-)	.,	15,5	-, -	- ,	22,0	- ,	
Gossip	Story	14,2%	13,7%	12,7%	8,4%	7,5%	7,3%	11,1%	10,7%	10,9%	%	16,2%	15,8%	%	20,1%	18,8%
								14,7			20,0			24,8		
	Prive	17,8%	14,7%	13,6%	11,8%	8,1%	7,8%	%	11,8%	12,0%	%	17,2%	16,5%	%	21,5%	20,0%
	Party	5,2%	4,9%	4,7%	3,4%	2,8%	2,7%	2,6%	2,3%	2,5%	7,5%	7,3%	6,8%	6,8%	6,8%	6,6%
	Waalcond	15 70/	12 70/	11 70/	0.20/	7.00/	6 70/	12,6	0.20/	0.70/		15 00/	15 10/	22,4	10 20/	16 20/
Maria	Alstraal	15,770	12,770	(00/	9,2%	7,070	0,770	-70 0 50/	9,5%	9,7%	70	5 40/	5 20/	70	10,270	2.00/
wien's	Aktueel	1,3%	0,3%	0,9%	11,8%	9,8%	9,0%	ð,5% 13 1	6,9%	8,0%	5,2%	5,4%	5,5%	4,0%	4,0%	3,9%
weeklies	Panorama	10.8%	91%	9 3%	15.7%	11.6%	11 4%	13,1 %	10.3%	11.3%	7.0%	7.2%	71%	8.1%	7 5%	7 3%
			.,	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,		,-,-	,	10,3		,-,-	.,.,.	.,	.,		.,	.,
	Nieuwe	8,1%	7,1%	7,4%	11,0%	9,3%	9,1%	%	8,3%	9,0%	6,0%	5,9%	5,7%	5,4%	5,2%	5,6%
Women's	Elle	3,1%	1,7%	1,9%	1,3%	0,5%	0,5%	1,5%	0,6%	0,8%	5,4%	3,4%	3,4%	4,0%	2,3%	2,9%
Monthlies	Marie	2,2%	1,1%	1,2%	1,0%	0,3%	0,3%	1,0%	0,4%	0,5%	3,8%	2,2%	2,2%	2,8%	1,6%	2,0%
	Nouveau	2,6%	1,8%	1,6%	0,9%	0,4%	0,4%	1,9%	1,0%	1,2%	1,8%	1,6%	1,6%	6,0%	4,0%	4,1%
	Avantgarde	2,4%	1,2%	1,2%	1,4%	0,4%	0,4%	1,5%	0,6%	0,7%	3.8%	1,9%	1.9%	3.0%	1,7%	2,1%
Rest	Opzii	3.2%	1.8%	2.0%	1.3%	0.6%	0.6%	2.5%	0.9%	1.2%	2.7%	2.5%	2.6%	6.4%	3.0%	4.4%
	FHM	2.9%	1.9%	2.3%	8.1%	4 9%	4 9%	1.8%	1.1%	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	0.5%	0.2%	0.4%
		_,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	1,270	2,370	0,170	1,270	1,270	17.1	1,170	1,070	1,0 /0	1,570	1,070	19.6	0,270	0,170
	Plus	9.4%	9 5%	7.6%	1.5%	1 2%	1.1%	%	13.9%	14 3%	2.1%	2.4%	2.3%	%	21.7%	22.0%

Appendix 3

INTO: Average issue readership levels from Intomart GfK's SIR data week 4 - 28 NOM-all: NOM 2005i average issue readership data for all respondents

NOM-web: NOM 2005i EML average issue readership data for respondents with internet access



issues ordered recent to old



- issues ordered old to recent

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