

## “THEY LOVE OUR TITLE, BUT DO THEY LOVE YOUR AD?”

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The relationship between consumers and media brands is a mysterious one. Most media experts are convinced that this relationship has a deeper emotional basis. Indeed, most media products are part of the daily lives of customers who are attached to the context, content and values those media create as a mirror and as a world of aspiration, inspiration, knowledge and relaxation. Because of this complexity, it is difficult to measure this relationship and most studies so far have focused on specific aspects of this relationship or on one specific medium.

Furthermore, it is generally assumed that this relationship between consumer and medium also has a positive effect on the impact of advertisements published or broadcast in these media brands and thus that the love that exists between a reader, viewer or user and a medium influences the impact of advertiser's communications.

This paper focuses on those 2 dimensions and shows on the one hand that the engagement or 'love' between consumers and media brands can actually be measured using the same method for all media, and on the other hand proves that this love has a positive impact on the effectiveness of advertisements printed or broadcast in these media.

### I. Introduction

In an era in which more and more advertising campaigns are being conceived across different media types and touch-points, media planners are still forced - by the lack of credible benchmarks - to add the OTSs of all the various media together as if they were one currency. Therefore, it is time to reflect critically on what a contact in each medium is worth (see Callius & Masson, 2009).

This comment of Callius & Masson inspires two fundamental questions about the quality of contact:

- Is it possible to weigh the reach of a particular media touchpoint by the quality of contact with this particular media touchpoint? In other words: has a contact delivered by (for example) Libelle TV the same value as a contact delivered by Libelle Magazine?
- Is it possible that the sum of contacts delivered to 1 person by a single media brand across multiple platforms has more 'value' than the sum of contacts delivered to 1 person by different media brands across multiple platforms? In other words: is the media brand in itself of more value than the medium?

The quality of a contact is not only important from an advertiser's point of view. Also from the media perspective, the homogeneity of the different brand expressions is at stake. Media brands are being organized and developed in a transversal way, across different platforms and physical products. Print, TV, radio, web and mobile platforms can be combined in a way that allows the consumer to be in touch with his/her favorite media brand anytime, anywhere, anyhow. But does the 'identity' of a media brand – its image, its values, its personality – remain 'identical' across all these different manifestations?

These issues, from the point of view of both advertisers and media, are about 'engagement', about the relationship between a media brand and its consumers, about the 'intensity', the 'experience' or the 'quality' of this interaction.

This paper reports on Sanoma's wide-ranging study on the engagement of media users to media touchpoints and brands and the effect of engagement on advertising impact.

### II. Research objectives

The main objective of the study is to develop a common and uniform measuring tool for all media based on a clear concept of engagement which can be easily reproduced.

In practice this study has to find out whether it is possible to measure the 'love' (engagement) between a media brand and its consumers on the one hand, and the effect this love has on the impact of ads published/broadcast in media on the other hand.

All too often, previous studies define 'engagement' in a limited or one-dimensional way. Rarely are engagement surveys conceived across different media channels and hardly ever is the critical question raised of whether the advertiser also benefits from the 'love' between a media brand and its users.

Engagement surveys therefore attract fierce criticism, as in a special issue of Admap focusing on the subject: “The engagement components of these [media performance] metrics have not been empirically validated, not least because engagement has no agreed working definition and therefore no agreed operational parameters. What appear to be robust equations are little more than ‘rule-based intuition masquerading as science’. Conceptual clarification and empirical validation is therefore long overdue.” (Rangeley & Mollen, 2012).

The overall objective can be unraveled into 3 areas:

### **1. Define engagement as a function of advertising impact**

Engagement in itself is a ‘nice to know’ element but not ‘a must have’. Unless it can be proven that media engagement influences the quality of media consumption, and moreover has a positive impact on advertising resulting in higher advertising awareness, willingness to purchase, etc.

The goal of the survey was to conceptualize the notion of media engagement in a way that could guarantee to advertisers that the parameters used to measure media engagement are also indicators of advertising impact, regardless of the medium (one could argue that it has already been demonstrated that print – at least magazine- engagement results in higher ad effectiveness, e.g. Eadie, 2007).

In measuring the effect on advertising impact, it is relevant to distinguish between media engagement and advertising engagement. It is common sense to assume that advertising engagement influences the impact level of communication, but does media engagement do this as well and do both types of engagement reinforce each other? If so, this would mean that the medium creates the context and attachment which ‘radiates’ positively on the communications that are inserted in this medium, as often assumed or wished (“Engagement may be more about the fit among the advertising message, consumers and the media environment than one single comprehensive ranking of engagement”: MPA, 2006). Therefore, both types of engagement are included in the study.

### **2. Develop a single engagement measurement tool that can be used for all media**

In media planning, the concept of quality of contact is not industrialized yet. One of the main reasons is that engagement is not defined for all media in the same way. Developing an identical tool for all media that can be used as a measure of engagement allowing comparison between media and media titles would be an important step towards integrating or weighting reach data with quality of contact data.

The ambition is thus to measure engagement across different types of media with a single approach to allow comparisons of engagement:

- Between different titles within the same media type, for instance between two magazines
- Between two manifestations of a multi-media brand, for instance a daily and its website
- Or – strategically speaking – between media types: is radio more engaging than TV?

### **3. Make this measurement/tool accepted by the media industry**

The ultimate goal of this study is that it will be used by media planners as a qualitative addendum to the quantitative reach figures, and ultimately, that the results will be incorporated in the planning tools. This goal is not a direct research objective, but shows that the practical usefulness of the study has been an important criterion in the study design.

Therefore, a road show has been organized to present the results of the study to advertisers and media agencies. This paper doesn’t report this road show, but media agencies and advertisers have been unanimously enthusiastic.

## **III. Study design**

In line with the pragmatic approach to defining engagement (in relation to advertising impact), it was decided not to work with a global, abstract measurement of engagement at medium level, but with the down-to-earth level of media products on the one hand and real advertising campaigns on the other hand. The media level as such has been constructed afterwards as the ‘average’ of all individual titles in that medium. E.g. respondents were not asked whether they felt engaged towards ‘magazines’ but towards the magazine they had read in the last 7 days. And they were not asked whether ‘advertisements in magazines prompt to purchase’, but whether a specific advertisement that he/she could have seen (as published in the edition that person indicated having read), had prompted to purchase. Television, radio, newspapers, magazines and media websites were included in the study. Given the potentially infinite number of websites and the complexity of our methodology to test ad impact, only media sites were measured.

### III.1 Measurement of engagement

Advertisers are mostly interested in parameters which can guarantee them a positive effect on their campaigns. So, engagement can only be relevant to them if it can guarantee a positive return in terms of advertising impact. In other words, one has to look for a way to measure engagement so that it correlates positively with advertising impact for each of the media researched. In other words: a broad list of possible measurements of engagement had to be selected, and, the measurements that show a positive correlation with advertising impact for all media researched are then considered as being good measurements for engagement. The 'possible measurements of engagement' are indicated below as 'thermometers'.

#### III.1.1. Media engagement

The potential thermometers can be grouped into three dimensions: a *behavioral* dimension, a dimension expressing the *relationship* between consumer and medium and a dimension expressing the *experience* of media use.

##### Behavioral dimension

The first dimension is about concrete *quality of contact*. Are frequency, duration, appropriate moment and intensity of this contact or other parameters an indication of the quality of the relationship? Instead of measuring the audience, is it possible to qualify the 'weight of a contact' or the intensity of the OTS or OTH?

**Frequency:** "How often do you read / listen to / watch / consult this title?"

**Time spent:** "How much time did you spend over the last 7 days reading / listening to / watching / consulting this title?"

**Attention:** "The last time you read / listened to / watched / consulted this title, how much attention did you give to it?"

**Multitasking** "Which of the following activities did you do the last time you read / listened to / watched / consulted this title?" (Watching TV, Listening to the radio, Reading a newspaper, Reading a magazine, Surfing on a website, Chatting on the internet, Participating in online social networking (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), Eating, Phoning or texting, Working on your work or doing housework, Doing sport, Playing games, Talking to other people, Transport, Another activity, Nothing else)

##### Relationship dimension

The second dimension investigates the relationship between consumer and media brand. How do consumers perceive and judge this relationship? How different or similar are relationships with media brands as a function of their reading, viewing or listening experiences?

**Source of copy** (print only): "How did you acquire the copy or copies that you've read of this title over the last seven days?"

**Attachment:** "To what extent does each of the following statements apply to medium X?: (5-point scale)

- I often recommend this title/channel/site to friends
- I would miss this title/channel/site should it disappear
- This title/channel/site is unique and hard to substitute
- This title/channel/site is a source I often cite or refer to
- I rely heavily on what this title/channel/site tells me
- This title/channel/site is the best of its kind, it's my favorite

**Attention:** "The last time you read / listened to / watched / consulted this title, how much attention did you give to it?"

##### Experience dimension

The relationship dimension is often the result of experiences people have with a medium. Actually there are rational and emotional experiences that nurture this relationship: shared moments of joy, wonder, inspiration, security, excitement or even - at the opposite end of the scale - moments of rage, sadness or irritation. The 'Media Experience Monitor' published by TNS in the Netherlands (Bronner & Al, 2005) has helped to list the possible experiences with media. Rational or emotional experiences contributing to media engagement are the third and final dimension of media engagement.

**Rational experience:** "To what extent does each of the following statements apply to medium X?: (5-point scale)

- It often teaches me new things or facts
- It broadens my spheres of interest
- It brings me up-to-date on things or people I find relevant
- It helps me to improve my understanding
- It helps me to form my opinion on someone/something
- It informs me about the opinions of others

- *It often delivers useful ideas, tips or advice*
- *It often teaches me how to solve a problem*
- *It often encourages me to search for additional information*
- *It often encourages me to do things, to take action*
- *It often encourages me to give or share my point of view*
- *It inspires me*

**Emotional experience:** *“To what extent does each of the following statements apply to medium X?: (5-point scale)*

- *It stimulates me; it gives me energy*
- *It enables me to stand out; to develop my personality*
- *It excites and inspires me; it provokes interest*
- *It relaxes me; makes me calm*
- *It makes me feel compassionate; it increases my empathy*
- *It makes me feel good; it provides pleasure*

### III.1.2. Advertising engagement

As well as media engagement, ‘Advertising engagement’ was also tested for each of the media involved, in order to confirm the general idea that advertising engagement has a positive effect on advertising impact. A classic set of aspects was considered:

**Advertising engagement:** *“To what extent does each of the following statements apply to the advertising you’ve been exposed to in medium X over the last 7 days? “: (5–point scale)*

- *The ads often deal with products, brands or services that are of interest to me*
- *The ads often teach me new things*
- *The ads often provide useful ideas, tips or advice*
- *The ads often encourage me to search for further information*
- *The ads often encourage me to buy things*
- *The ads seldom disturb me*
- *The ads often fit with the content*
- *The ads are often original and creative*
- *The ads are generally credible*
- *I sometimes discuss the ads with friends, family or acquaintances*

### **III.2 Dependent variable: advertising impact**

The last metrics to be defined are those of advertising impact. As mentioned, metrics will be used in order to validate whether the dimensions of engagement tested are sufficient to ensure a positive impact. It was decided to use direct and concrete measures of advertising impact here in order to avoid potential confusion between advertising engagement measures and advertising impact measures.

For each of the tested ads, we measured the advertising impact, using five different KPIs:

**Awareness:** *“Do you remember having seen, read or heard this ad recently? “ (Yes/no)*

**Likeability:** *“How much do you like this ad? “ (Scale from 1 to 10)*

**Search:** *“Does this ad encourage you to search for further information about the product, service or brand? “ (Strongly/somewhat/-not at all)*

**Word of Mouth:** *“Does this ad encourage you to share information about this ad with friends, family or acquaintances? (Strongly/-/somewhat/-/not at all)*

**Purchase Intention:** *“Does this ad encourage you to buy this brand or product? (Strongly/somewhat/not at all)*

### **III.3 Set-up, process and fieldwork**

An online survey (CAWI) was conducted via the TNS Online Access Panel among 3,032 respondents representative of the Belgian population aged 15 years and older (9,012 million individuals) with quotas based on Nielsen region, age and gender. Data was reweighted according to the gold standard of CIM, the local NRS, with criteria based on gender, age, education, profession, region, social class and family size.

The fieldwork for the basic study took place in February and March 2012 over 6 consecutive weeks. Each week a comparable sample of 500 persons was interviewed. In order to measure the relationship between engagement and advertising impact, a range of recent advertisements which were published/broadcast in the media titles selected, were post-tested in each weekly sub-sample. The aim was to measure each week ads from different campaigns, different product categories and different media brands in order not to concentrate ad impact testing on only a few observations by media brands. For a maximum of 5 media titles consumed over the last 7 days (randomly chosen between the titles mentioned in the screening question, but with priority rules to ensure a minimum of observations for smaller titles and a balanced number of observations between media types) one

printed ad/radio spot/TV commercial were shown - at the end of the questionnaire and without referring to any context.

To guarantee a representative, fair selection of ads, the selection of the ads to be tested was made by media agency Space. The selection principles were to use new executions whenever possible, and to use executions exclusive to the title whenever possible. For each medium, the most common formats were selected ( $\geq 1/4$ p newspapers,  $1/1$ p magazine,  $\geq 15$ " radio and TV). Each week new executions were tested (except for monthlies). In total, advertisements from 84 different categories were used, across a wide range of brands (404 brands). Advertising budget by brand or product varied from low to high budget in order to avoid bias.

Advertising impact was not measured for websites because of the logistical complexity. It was technically impossible to gather the advertising materials 'on air' at the moment of the test. Moreover with the way we collected data it was impossible to know who was able to look at the online campaign as advertising material was presented in rotation to visitors. Finally the number of different formats used on the Internet added further complexity to the measurement.

At the end of these 6 weeks, more than 3,000 respondents described 13,228 recent media experiences on 142 different media titles across 5 media. As well as over 11,000 ad post-tests for 519 different ads appearing in the same media (excluding the Internet).

#### **IV. Validation of the model**

##### ***STEP 1: Selection of engagement parameters***

As stated above, effective media engagement parameters are those that correlate positively with each of the five KPIs defined for measuring advertising. Thermometers that are unable to predict advertising impact, or don't do so consistently for all media will be rejected and will not be adopted in the final media engagement tool. The relationship between engagement and advertising impact was tested for each of the 4 media (TV, radio, newspapers and magazines).

##### Media Engagement

For each of the 3 dimensions of media engagement (behaviour, relationship and experience) the differences between high or low score for the dimension and the advertising impact scores were compared.

E.g. for the parameter 'frequency' (dimension 1 'quality of contact'), it was tested whether respondents who had frequent contact with this medium had higher impact scores than respondents who had infrequent contact with that medium.

Thus, for each parameter, a positive (high engagement), a negative (low engagement) or a neutral (also considered as low engagement) could be calculated.

The scores for each of the 3 dimensions are discussed.

##### **Dimension 1: Quality of the contact.**

Four potential thermometers were tested: frequency, time spent, attention and multitasking.

Frequency is a good measure of engagement for TV, but not so good for other media. Loyalty correlates with awareness of the ad for newspapers, but not for magazines. For all media, there is a negative correlation between loyalty of media consumption and purchase intention.

There is a positive correlation between time spent consuming a medium and awareness of the ad. This applies across all media and less explicitly as far as likeability is concerned. On the other hand, the results for engaged consumers do not differ from those for non-engaged consumers as far as the other parameters are concerned. It even appears that those who spend more time watching a TV channel undertake fewer actions. Newspapers and magazines show a different correlation between time spent and likeability. The longer someone reads a magazine, the more they like the ad. But those who spend more time reading a newspaper, seem to dislike ads more. These findings are in line with the article by Rangeley & Mollen: 'Time spent is not a particularly valuable discriminator of engagement'.

The level of attention has a positive impact on all of our parameters for ad effectiveness. This observation is true for all media and for most individual titles or channels. There is no strong correlation between attention and ad impact for newspapers, but there's no negative correlation either.

Multitasking can be considered to be a 'behavioral' proxy for attention. When performing no other activity, attention is higher than when media consumption has to be shared with other activities. There is however a difference between other media and non-media activities. For other media activities the degree of attention depends on which medium is considered to be primary or secondary. Because multitasking measures the same aspect of 'engagement' already measured through attention, it doesn't need to be taken into consideration separately.

## **Dimension 2: Relationship with the medium**

### ***Source of copy***

People who buy print media (for) themselves do not score higher on advertising impact than co-readers in the family or those who got the title for free. In fact, newspaper buyers seem to have a tendency to be more reluctant to react (search, WOM, purchase) upon ads in the newspaper than those who do not buy newspapers for themselves. Because source of copy is a metric solely applicable to print media (Pay TV or radio channels or paid websites were not measured), it cannot be used as a cross-media engagement metric.

### ***Attachment***

Media consumers who claim to be attached to the title they read are more aware of the ads incorporated in them, like them more, and are more inclined to take further action (search, WOM, purchase). For magazines however (both weeklies and monthlies) there was no positive correlation between attachment and awareness, but there were higher scores on all other ad impact parameters. Across all media, all six separate items (recommendation, missing, uniqueness, reference, trust, preference) correlate positively with all 5 ad impact KPIs. This correlation is equally strong for all items although 'recommendation', 'source of reference' and 'trust' perform slightly better.

## **Dimension 3: Media experience**

### ***Rational Experience***

Media consumers who claim to be 'rationally aroused' by the media title they use, score higher on all ad impact KPIs than those who experience less 'brain' impact. The correlation between rational experience and ad awareness for print media is slightly positive but not to a significant degree. Apparently 'rational' experiences arouse more ad awareness in 'emotional' media channels such as TV and radio.

All 12 separate items correlate positively with ad likeability, search, word-of-mouth and purchase intention at the combined media level. Half of the items however score neutral on ad awareness ('teaches new things', 'brings up-to-date', 'informs on others' opinions', 'encourages to search', 'encourages to take action', 'encourages to share my opinion'). Although the scores are very comparable between the different items, 'problem solving' and 'encouragement to action' are the best predictors.

### ***Emotional Experience***

Media consumers who claim to be 'emotionally affected' by the media title they use, score higher on all ad impact KPIs than those who experience less 'emotional' impact. The correlation between emotional experience and ad awareness for print media is slightly positive but not to a significant degree.

All 6 separate items correlate positively with all 5 ad impact KPIs on an overall media level. In print media, 'relaxation' seems to be the most effective lubricant for ad awareness. Across all media, both 'empathy and affiliation' and 'personal development/distinction' have slightly better scores on the three action-oriented KPIs: search for info, word-of-mouth and purchase intention.

### **Advertising Engagement**

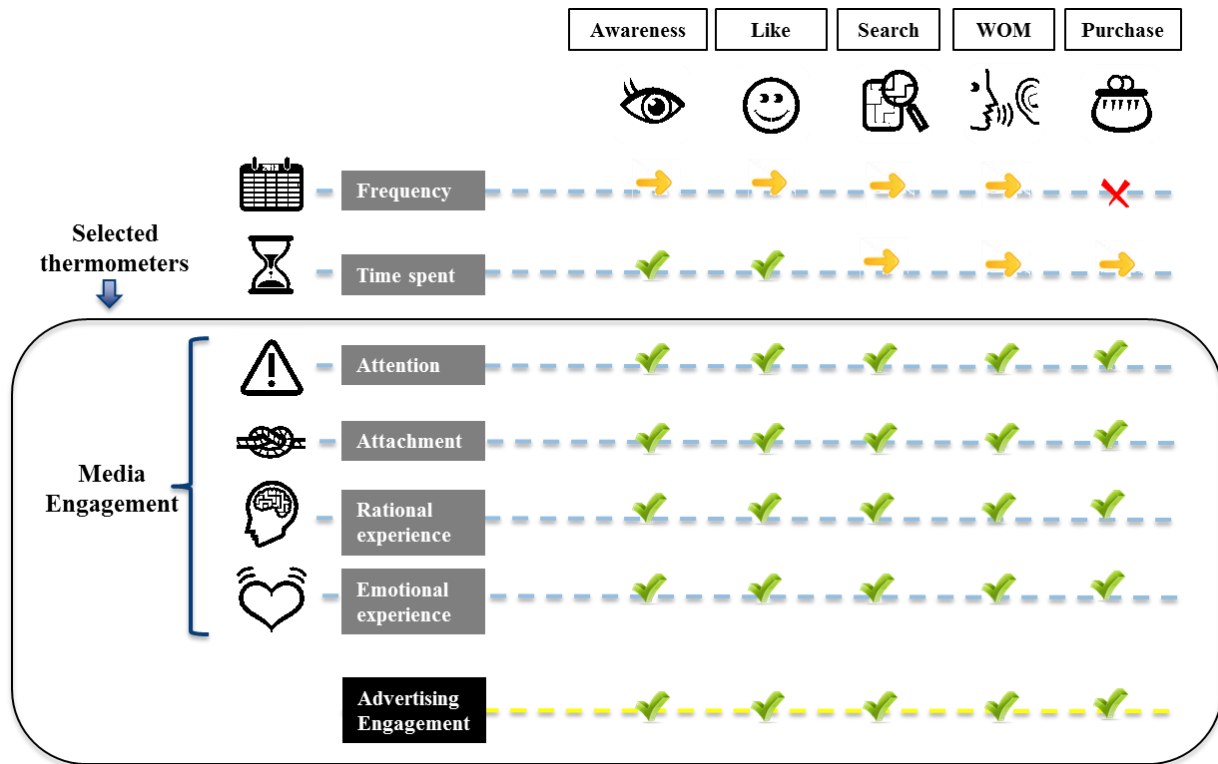
The fact that all items expressing a positive attitude towards advertising in a media title correlate with a positive impact on specific ads tested for this media title, is at the same time reassuring proof of the validity of the observations and of the coherence of the respondents but this should come as no surprise.

On a global media level, all items measured contribute to the positive correlation between advertising engagement as a general attitude and positive ad impact as the result of our post-test.

The statement 'ads in this media title often encourage to buy things' is the strongest predictor for the test results (actually advertising impact), not only for purchase intention (self-evidently), but also for search, WOM and likeability.

As mentioned earlier, effective thermometers are those which correlate positively with advertising impact. At the end of the analysis, there are 4 thermometers to measure media engagement and a series of validated criteria to measure advertising engagement.

The scheme below illustrates the conclusions for each of the thermometers vs. the advertising impact parameters.



**STEP 2: Calculation of media engagement score**

Although within the thermometers some items perform slightly better than others on some of the KPIs of the post-test, all of them show positive correlations to virtually the same degree. Picking out one (or a limited selection) of them or calculating the average scores for all of them are both equally valid options.

A factor analysis confirmed that there is a high correspondence between the answers given on items from the same questions/ batteries. Items regroup into the same batteries in which they were presented. So each of the thermometers is internally coherent and deserves to be taken into consideration separately.

There is a high correlation between the results for the four thermometers. A correlation analysis reveals the link is particularly strong (0.7) between attachment, rational experience and emotional experience. The correlation between attention and the other three thermometers is lower (0.3)

The separate ad engagement score correlates to a certain extent (0.5) with attachment, rational and emotional experience, but has a weak (0.1) link with 'attention'.

When crossing the average performances on the four media engagement thermometers with the five advertising impact KPIs in a dichotomous way (engagement 'yes/no' vs. impact 'yes/no') both an analysis of the margins and a calculation of the selectivity indexes show that attention, attachment, rational experience and emotional experience all have comparable 'weight' when it comes to predicting ad impact (with attention only slightly lower). As weights are quite equivalent to each other and for practical reasons, thermometers were not weighted.

Selectivity Index	Attention	Attachment	Rational Experience	Emotional Experience
Awareness	107	108	108	110
Likeability	116	128	136	135
Information	106	121	126	124
Word of Mouth	106	129	137	130
Purchase	106	124	132	126
<b>Average Selectivity Index</b>	108	122	128	125
<b>Weight</b>	22%	25%	26%	26%

Based on the outcome of these analyses, an average score on each of the four thermometers was calculated:

- an average attention score (scale 1 to 5)
- an average attachment score (6 items)
- an average rational experience score (12 items)
- an average emotional experience score (6 items)

Each of these scores was recalculated into a 5-point scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high). An average overall media engagement score was achieved by calculating the unweighted average score on each of the four thermometers.

### ***STEP 3: Calculation of advertising engagement score***

As explained earlier, all items measured for advertising engagement correlate positively with all KPIs used to measure ad impact via post-tests. Therefore the advertising engagement score is based on the average score of each of the 10 measured items.

### ***STEP 4: Application to media and media brands***

Media and advertising engagement scores were not weighted according to the size (weekly reach) of the different titles/stations. Small titles have the same 'weight' as titles with a bigger audience. This allows the construction of engagement indexes which could later be multiplied with reach figures in order to modify rankings on 'engaged audience'. So both metrics should be separated in the construction stage.

This bottom-up procedure, starting from individual scores for each media title, allows the regrouping of media titles according to other classifications when relevant (weeklies vs. monthlies, niche vs. popular, etc.)

In the final stage, average scores for all media combined were calculated out of the different average engagement scores for each media type. For this metric only TV stations, radio stations, newspapers and magazines were taken into account (not media sites as mentioned earlier).

By calculating the average cross-media engagement scores from the scores for the media channels and not from the specific media titles, a possible bias was avoided which can be caused by the fact that not all media channels have an equal number of tested titles/brands.

The calculation of average engagement scores for each media channel and across all media types allows to calculate two 'engagement indexes' for each individual title and for each metric:

- One allowing the performance of a media title to be compared with other titles for the same media by comparing the scores with the average scores for the media type.
- Another one allowing the performance of a media title to be compared with all other titles across media borders.

In both cases media titles can ultimately be ranked on both engagement indexes:

- Media Engagement Index (average of the following 4 thermometers):
  - o Attention
  - o Attachment
  - o Emotional Experience
  - o Rational Experience
- Advertising Engagement Index

## **V. Engagement scores**

**Media engagement indexes** do not vary much when media channels are compared to each other. Newspapers have a lower overall media engagement index (104), but magazines top the ranking on advertising engagement. They have a lower overall media engagement because of a deficit in 'attachment'. Newspapers score highest on attention and rational experience. Radio tops the ranking on attachment and emotional experience but lags behind on attention.

As a common denominator for a great variety of different weeklies and monthlies, the broad magazine category in itself scores rather poorly on our media engagement metrics.

Magazines are clearly too broad and diverse as a category to be analyzed through a single lens and capture all of the nuances. For this reason, we made a distinction between three groups of magazines:

- Women's general interest titles, those focusing on 'lifestyle' themes (fashion & beauty, cooking, home and deco, health, travel, etc.)
- Infotainment magazines (TV-related, 'people' magazines, news and current affairs)



- Free supplements. This last category covers all weekly supplements offered for free (and not for sale separately) with a newspaper or another magazine.

Once the magazines which focus on women as a target group or deal with more ‘feminine’ topics of interest are isolated, their engagement scores outperform these of other magazines and take them to the top of the rankings cross-media: women’s inspiration magazines (regardless of whether they are weekly or monthly) approach the overall media engagement score of newspapers, combining both rational and emotional experience. They are also solely responsible for the top-index of magazines on advertising engagement (20% above average). Supplements score lowest on media engagement, facing a high deficit on attachment and emotional experience. Infotainment magazines combine high scores on attention with lower emotional experience.

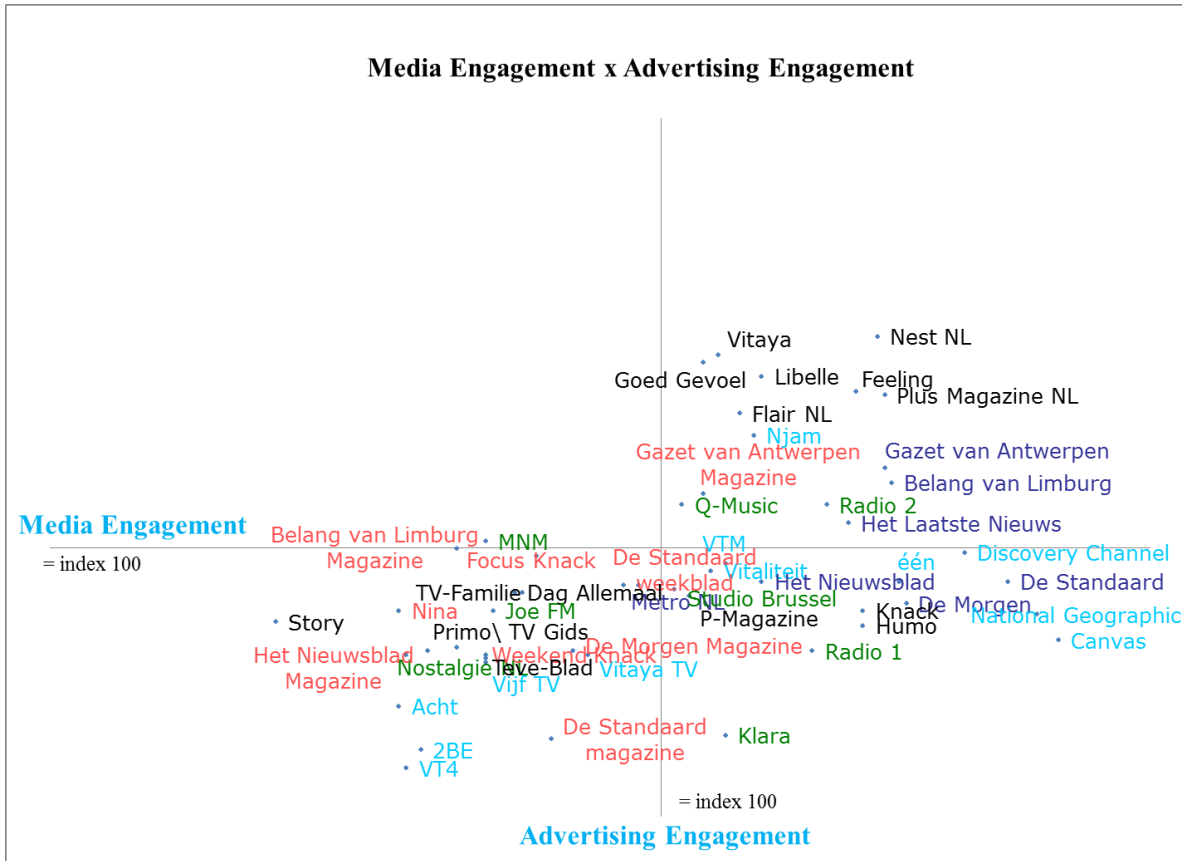
More variation could be found in **advertising engagement indexes**. The 3<sup>rd</sup> highest index is for radio, whose listeners are aware of the fact that advertising on this channel is not considered to be very irritating (compared to other media such as TV) and also that its commercials are often original and creative. Newspapers follow because advertising in this medium is appreciated for its credibility and informative nature. The best advertising engagement index goes to magazines. Both newspapers and radio receive very average scores for advertising engagement, while magazines are way ahead of the other media. Why is this? Because advertising in magazines is perceived as not very irritating, but inspiring, offering a relevant context, presenting products or services that are of interest to readers. The background to this impressive performance varies greatly depending on the type of magazine. Women’s interest magazines achieve the best results of all types of magazine. TV achieves fairly mediocre results for most of the criteria of advertising engagement.

INDEXES CROSS-MEDIA	Media Engagement	Attention	Attachment	Rational Experience	Emotional Experience	Advertising Engagement
ALL MEDIA	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
TV	98.6	104.5	96.7	94.8	97.8	94.5
RADIO	99.3	88.1	106.1	97.9	105.8	99.5
NEWSPAPERS	103.8	106.2	103.2	105.5	100.1	99.9
MAGAZINES	97.7	99.7	94.4	99.4	97.5	105.2
MEDIA WEBSITES	100.6	101.5	99.6	102.4	98.8	101.0
MAGAZINES - SUPPLEMENTS	92.0	93.0	87.0	95.0	93.0	95.0
MAGAZINES - INFOTAINMENT	97.0	102.0	96.0	97.0	94.0	99.0
MAGAZINES WOMEN'S INSPIRATION	103.0	102.0	99.0	106.0	105.0	119.0

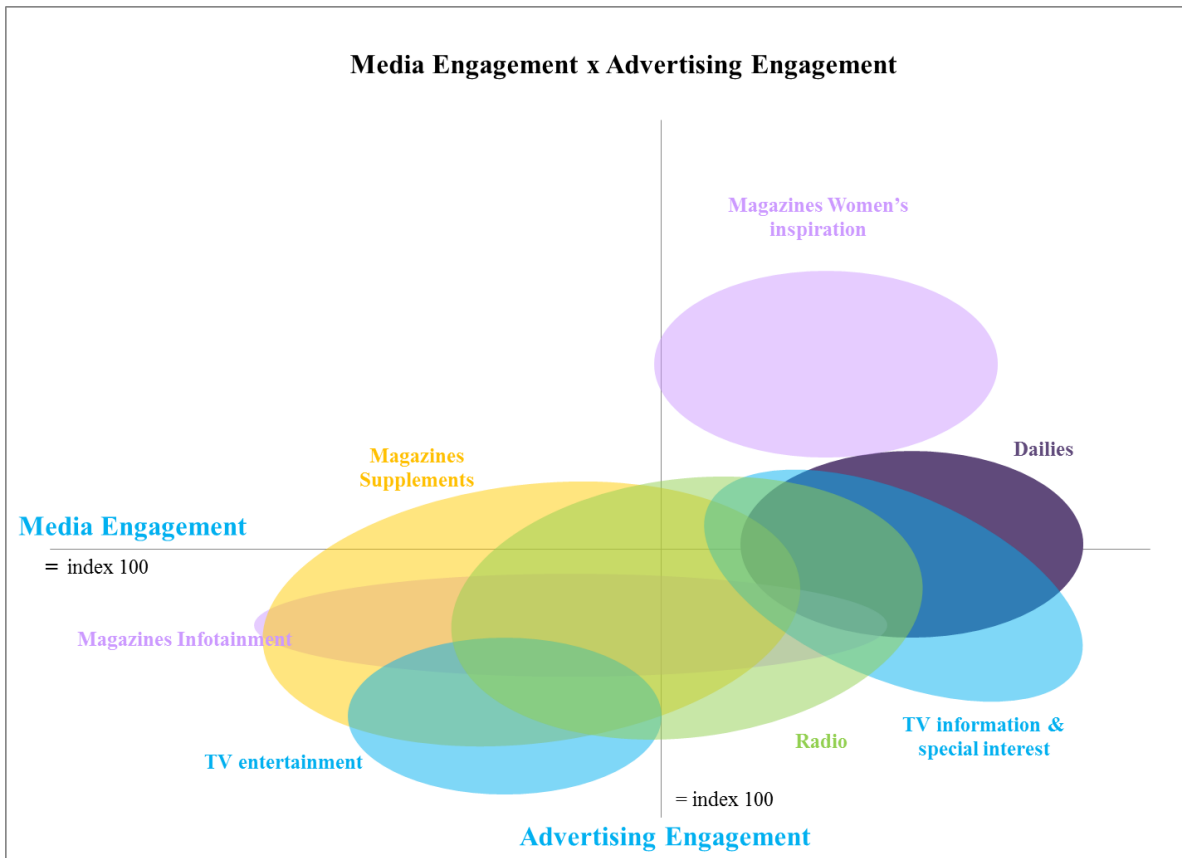
### Relationship between media engagement & advertising engagement

A clearer way of looking at the results is to map indexes of media and advertising engagement. As an example, the results for the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium are presented in the graph below. It compares indexed results for media engagement on the horizontal axis and advertising engagement on the vertical access. The colours indicate whether the title is a magazine, newspaper, etc.

The media titles that perform best on the media engagement scores all have clear identities or personalities, specialize in a certain theme/topic or trigger interest from specific target audiences. Mass or popular titles tend to get ‘average’ scores. This is also clearly illustrated by the engagement scores for magazines.



Regrouping the titles as shown in the graph below indicates more clearly the media positioning in our model.



Newspapers perform particularly well for media engagement. However, newspapers do not perform nearly so well for advertising engagement. Newspapers are considered to be the point of reference, a reliable source. Newspapers allow their readers to obtain information and form an opinion.

Radio stations are unique, difficult to replace. Depending on the station listened to, radio is the most stimulating or most relaxing medium (emotional experience). Radio inspires and allows listeners to stand out.

TV channels stand out in terms of media engagement, which varies depending on the type of content available on the channel. The most high-brow, serious channels are on a par with newspapers, and present a fairly high level of media engagement.

Free supplements achieve poor results in terms of media engagement, particularly for attachment and emotional experience.

Readers have a fairly intense relationship with their magazine but magazines are considered to be less reliable than newspapers (at the top of the rankings). However, the indexes vary widely between magazine segments.

Infotainment titles combine high scores for attention with fairly low scores for emotional experience. Further distinctions can be made depending on whether the magazine is considered more as a news magazine or a TV magazine.

Women's magazines achieve results close to the top position occupied by newspapers in terms of media engagement. Women's magazines stand out in particular in terms of emotional and rational experience. Women's magazines are at the top of the rankings for rational experience, mainly thanks to their practical advice, but also because they surprise their readers, teaching them new things and inspiring and encouraging them more than the others. Magazines from the women's magazine segment create the greatest empathy and pleasure. They inspire their readers and allow them to stand out more than the others. Monthlies score relatively higher for attachment than weeklies.

When magazines outperform the other media types on 'advertising engagement' (measured separately), this is also almost exclusively due to the top scores for Women's inspiration magazines. This is not a hypothesis but can clearly be read in the data when the separate items within the ad engagement battery are analysed. The titles that top the ranking on advertising engagement leave the others behind on the following statements:

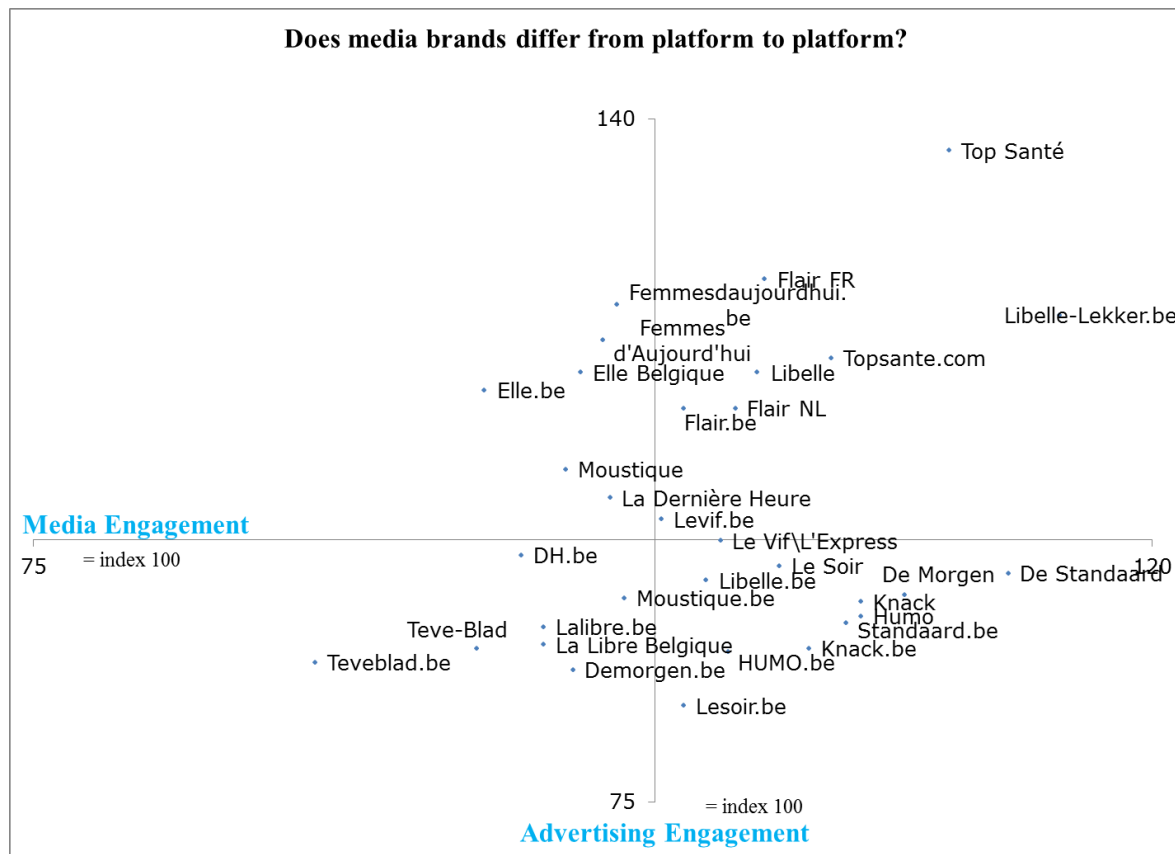
- The ads often deal with products, brands or services that are of interest to me ('relevance')
- The ads often provide useful ideas, tips or advice ('inspiration')
- The ads often fit with the content ('context').

### **Cross-media or multi-media**

The graph below illustrates the position of media brands and their sites. At the time of the study, there were no examples of media brands with real multiple touchpoints as we know them today (e.g. Libelle in Belgium today is a print magazine, a TV channel, a website and mobile/tablet app).

First of all it is worth noticing that most media websites occupy virtually the same position as the media brand to which they relate (although some counter-examples are observed as well). This is a very interesting point. For these titles (e.g. Flair and flair.be) it can be stated that media websites engage in the same way as their primary title which can be a TV station, newspaper, radio station or magazine. At the beginning of this paper, the question about the quality of contact was asked. Does the quality of contact vary as a function of the medium used or does it depend more on the media brand? Media brand is definitely more important when talking about engagement, even if the different platforms fulfill different motives (Kline & Al, 2011).

Although more research has to be done on this topic, the tentative conclusion is obvious: engagement seems to be more about brands than about media platforms.



**VI. Learnings**

Media engagement can be constructed in such a way that it delivers a viable metric and a valuable diagnostic of commercial return. Media engagement in itself will not reveal or even cause most of the advertising effectiveness, but is strongly correlated with it and can be used as a powerful discriminator or predictor.

Attention, attachment and media experience (rational and emotional) are powerful thermometers for measuring media engagement. They each measure a separate dimension of engagement (quality of contact/relationship with the user/experience) and each of them has a strong positive relationship with key commercial drivers. Brought together, they complement and reinforce each other. Averaging the scores of each of the four metrics is a valuable, straightforward and simple procedure for calculating overall media engagement scores and indexes which can express this force. Given the high correlation between items in our attribute sets, further analysis of our data and/or further research can help to develop a lighter tool to measure engagement.

Although some media types might be somewhat stronger than others on a particular aspect of engagement (newspapers = attention and rational experience, radio = attachment and emotional experience), on the overall score they pretty much engage in the same way. Since media titles show a greater variance in engagement than media types and given the fact that titles from different media channels come together at the top of the rankings, it seems reasonable to state that engagement is not part of the recipe of the 'product' (radio vs. TV vs. newspaper vs. magazines), but is triggered by the characteristics of specific media titles or media brands. Media consumers fall in love with the brand, not with the medium. This hypothesis needs to be confirmed by further research.

For media planners, the strategy of attracting engaged media consumers open to commercial messages is 'targeting'. Not so much on predefined socio-demographic categories populated by people who might share one superficial characteristic (gender, age, education – although 'region' might still be powerful), but on communities of interest gathered around common interests, needs, habits and preferences. Media that focus on their specific needs can deliver content in which products and brands can find their natural habitat and advertising for them is not perceived as disruptive for the media consumption they engage in: they don't divert the attention, they don't damage the relationship with the medium and will not ruin the rational or emotional experience. Women's inspiration magazines are a powerful category to lead the way in this, but this is not just true of paper titles (Discovery Channel, Njam, Yunomi.be, etc.).

The results of this study have been presented to the industry in a manner that enables them to be used on a day-to-day basis as a first step towards their integration in media software and the modification of our "NRS" rankings, by turning audience figures into 'engaged audiences'.

There is still a great deal of analysis to be done on the material collected, e.g. when analyzing each metric down to specific items, is it possible to get a clearer view of the strengths and weaknesses of each media title? Or, does the relationship between media engagement and advertising impact hold across all different sorts of advertising? When the test-ad database is categorized (e.g. product category, informational vs. emotional, etc.), would the results be the same (existing literature suggests they would vary by category: MPA, 2006)? Is there an explanation for why advertising awareness in newspapers does not seem to be strongly affected by most of the engagement metrics?

## VII. Engagement to be continued...

As the study met a big success in Belgium, a second phase was carried out in 2013 focusing on online media. The market wanted to have a measurement of engagement for all types of websites and not only media websites. The specific advertising impact questions were not repeated, as the results of the first study were convincing. The media and advertising engagement of the other media were also re-measured in this study. As almost all relevant websites were measured, the sample had to be expanded to 8,000 respondents in order to have enough observations for each website measured. The results of this second wave will be published in September 2013. The second wave validated the results of the first wave on a bigger sample and gave insights for other types of websites (like portal sites, social networks sites, etc).

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