

FIPP responds to World Federation of Advertisers 'Blueprint'



FIPP, through its Research Committee, has responded to the World Federation of Advertisers 'proposal' *Blueprint for consumer-centric holistic measurement*. The Blueprint aims to guide the development of audience research for all advertising media, to accommodate the increasingly complex media consumption of consumers. It wants to upgrade and standardise the basic metrics so that media options can be compared more effectively. The Blueprint may be downloaded from www.wfanet.org/blueprint

FIPP's response is supportive of the Blueprint's principles, but rejects the recommended passive measurement for print. It argues for better and more extensive qualitative measures, proposes that readership accumulation data be used when planning print campaigns, and wants more focus on the repeat exposure to the ads which magazines deliver.

In more detail:

Supportive of main principles

FIPP is fully supportive of many of the main principles of the Blueprint, such as creating databases which provide audience information on all principal media channels, with better target group descriptions, and delivering faster information based on adequate sample sizes. This will improve the planning of multi-channel marketing campaigns. The UK's *TouchPoints 2* is a good example (though it has limitations).

Universal passive measurement rejected; 'hub survey' approach preferred

FIPP does not however support the call for passive measurement of all media. Passive measurement may work well for certain media such as television, radio and the internet provided the compliance rate, that is people wearing the device all the time, can be controlled, but it does not work well for print media, neither magazines nor newspapers. Whereas transmitting an audio signal for television and radio, or adding a tag for internet do not have a heavy financial impact, adding RFID chips to each copy of a magazine or newspaper would have a serious financial consequence and is impractical. Moreover recent tests, presented at the Worldwide Readership Research Symposium, have shown that the technology for a full passive measurement of print has not yet reached a sufficient level of accuracy.

Moreover technology-based systems for *active* measurement of print, used within a largely *passive* measurement environment, are likely to underestimate print audiences.

We think the Blueprint should drop the requirement for universal passive measurement, and encourage the 'hub survey' approach, used by *TouchPoints* amongst others, namely incorporating into the database the audience figures produced by the single-medium joint industry surveys such as the national readership surveys. The very different characteristics of the different media mean that different approaches are necessary in order to measure audiences. There is no single approach (such as passive measurement) which is equally suitable for all media.

Insist on better qualitative measures

Based on our experience of the way data from holistic databases are typically presented, we are concerned about the simplistic approaches often used, such as summarising media audiences in terms of time spent on them. Ratings showing time spent are not a suitable primary measure for print. This results in (for example) graphs of audiences through the day in which TV and radio have soaring high-rating curves whereas magazines' curves creep along the baseline, making magazines look a very insignificant medium. It is a dangerous travesty of how magazine advertising works.

Magazines work through creating engagement and all that follows from that. We recommend that the Blueprint should strengthen its requirement for qualitative data about media audiences. Beyond the basic measures of audience exposure (opportunities to see), there are substantial differences between the media in the qualitative experiences they provide to consumers.

All media - magazines among them - should be assessed on reach, engagement, and the impact achieved. There are countless research studies around the world which prove that magazines are very effective in these respects. It is important that suitable measures of engagement and impact should be included in the mega-databases, or closely allied to them in supplementary databases. Examples of

'impact' might be norms for brand message take-out, brand favourability, intention to purchase, and so on, collected in separate surveys and built into the holistic databases.

Accumulation of audiences through time

Time - in the sense of daily build-up of coverage through a campaign period - is however a crucial element in cross media planning. We acknowledge that it is only in a minority of countries that it is possible to demonstrate how the contacts of a print plan build day by day. Therefore in some countries it is difficult to build cross media planning tools that can combine media which have timed reach figures (TV, radio, internet) and print. However the patterns of readership accumulation seem to be fairly consistent between those countries which have such measures, and generalised accumulation curves could be utilised for those countries without local data.

Exposure to the ad rather than the vehicle

The 'average issue readership' model does not incorporate the accumulation of an issue's audience over time. It also severely underestimates the number of pick-ups or contact-opportunities a reader has during the lifespan of an issue. On the other hand, by measuring the reach of an issue, the reach figures may overestimate the reach of an advertisement as not all readers read all pages. Balancing these factors out, the evidence we have suggests that the average advertisement in a magazine is looked at on around 2.5 different occasions by the average reader.

The Blueprint should encourage all media to provide audience measures that approach as closely as possible the real contacts with advertisements, and reflect how consumers process the ads.

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