

Magazine Advertising Effectiveness

Pre-testing and monitoring the effectiveness of magazine advertising

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Contents

1. Why read this report?	2
2. Summary	3
3. How can advertising effectiveness be assessed?	5
4. Magazines and TV work in different ways	13
5. Mixed-media advertising	20
6. Pre-testing	23
7. Magazine effectiveness in action	28
References	41
About the author	42

1. Why read this report?

Companies are increasingly calling for accountability in all areas of their spending, and that includes their advertising. Since advertising represents a substantial cost, evidence is required that the expenditure is justified, otherwise it might be reduced or just disappear. Although it is a hard task to prove the return on investment, it is becoming more and more necessary to make the attempt.

The majority of the published evidence of effective advertising relates to television advertising, or campaigns where television is the lead medium. This is understandable to some degree because in so many big-spending product fields television is dominant (though whether it really should be so dominant is another matter). Accordingly the techniques devised for assessing effectiveness tend to be oriented to the way television advertising is thought to work.

But there is proof of effective advertising in magazines too, and this report summarises a little of it.

There is a need to apply more widely to magazine advertising campaigns the disciplines of monitoring against pre-determined objectives. This applies both to magazine-only campaigns and also mixed-media campaigns which feature magazines as a substantial part of the mix. Successful examples of both types of campaign are cited in these pages. Moreover in certain respects the techniques of monitoring - and of pre-testing - need to be adapted to the distinctive way magazines work, rather than simply adopting the assumptions applied to television.

The intention in this report is to review for advertisers, their advertising agencies, and for magazine publishers the principal issues surrounding ad effectiveness monitoring and pre-testing, as it applies to magazines. The hope is to make the subject more approachable and to encourage more monitoring and pre-testing of magazine advertising to be carried out. The report is not a detailed 'how to' guide but a resume of broad approaches, seen in the context of the underlying ideas about how advertising can achieve its effects and what it is realistic to attempt to measure.

These are my own personal views, and not necessarily those of the PPA.

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2. Summary

A consumer-centred view of advertising

In order to monitor advertising effectiveness it is necessary to form an opinion about how advertising works - unless sales or equivalent are to be the only criterion.

A consumer-centred view is more realistic than a brand-centred view. Consumers face a vast number of advertising messages each day, from many different media. Some advertisements are able to attract full attention because of their relevance or interest. Others are processed with varying degrees of incomplete attention, whatever the medium. These can still be very worthwhile to the advertiser, in adding to the complex of images, emotions and knowledge in a consumer's mind, which influences purchasing decisions.

Since some of these valuable exposures to advertising messages are absorbed subconsciously, it is not always necessary that a consumer should remember having seen a given advertisement for it to have an effect on purchasing.

The way advertising operates varies by product and market situation. Measuring advertising effectiveness should reflect this, and it requires interpretation and judgement.

A wide range of criteria can be used for monitoring effectiveness, ranging from awareness of advertising, through absorption of product messages, and other intermediate factors, to sales. This report comments on each. In general, the closer one can get to sales the better.

Magazines and television work in different ways

Magazine and television advertising work in different ways, and in assessing advertising effectiveness these differences should be taken into account. The measures developed for television are not necessarily appropriate for magazines.

Viewing of television commercials tends to be relatively passive, whereas exposure to magazines is more active. The process of scanning the pages means constantly taking decisions, with relatively high attention, and this active selection is maintained throughout the reading of the issue. Typically, all or almost all of the pages of a magazine are opened. Reading a magazine requires more mental engagement than viewing television.

Moreover, exposure to a magazine ad is under the reader's control, whereas exposure to a TV commercial is not in the viewer's control.

Television and magazine advertisements are stored in memory in different ways. A TV commercial tends to be held in the mind as a 'story'. With magazine

advertisements a higher proportion of memories are stored as information about the product rather than about the ad itself.

Consequently, as a criterion of the advertising efficiency of magazines, measuring the absorption of product messages is more relevant than ad awareness.

Unlike television, magazines offer repeat exposures to the advertising. The typical reader looks at an average page on more than two occasions.

Mixed-media campaigns

The differences in the way television and magazines work mean that they complement one another. In a mixed-media campaign each enriches what the other conveys. Magazine ads can communicate additional ideas, and also make the television advertising work harder.

When assessing the effectiveness of mixed-media campaigns special care is necessary if attempting to isolate the contributions of each medium.

Pre-testing

Since the creative execution is a key factor, pre-testing is advisable - as an aid to skilled judgement.

Magazine ads are pre-tested to a lesser extent than television commercials. It is desirable that the proportion of magazine ads that are pre-tested should increase.

The methods used for pre-testing TV commercials are not necessarily appropriate for magazine advertisements.

Face to face interviews are generally the most fruitful means of contact with respondents, since the essence of pre-testing is to show consumers the test material. These can follow qualitative or quantitative approaches, or both. Otherwise the main factors to be agreed in choosing a pre-testing method for magazines are:

- The type of stimuli to use
- How the stimuli are exposed
- The criteria of effectiveness which are adopted

Case studies

Case studies of effective magazine advertising are presented in summarised form as a learning resource, within headings for:

- different criteria of effectiveness
- magazine-only and mixed-media strategies.

They represent a variety of data collection methods, and single- and multiple-brand examples.

3. How can advertising effectiveness be assessed?

For advertising to be accountable - whether advertising in magazines or any other medium - it is necessary to set objectives in advance against which achievements can be compared. Methods of monitoring and evaluating progress towards the objectives can then be established. Unless sales (or equivalent) are to be the only measure, one needs a view about the way in which advertising works, and what it can realistically achieve for a given product. This hits an immediate difficulty: there is no universally accepted understanding about exactly how advertising operates to create its effects. There is instead wide agreement on many of the major aspects, but dissenting minority views on all of them.

This report does not attempt a full description of this controversial and shifting field, but offers a resume of the principal themes. Readers will need to choose for themselves which view to take of the advertising process, in the course of setting measurable objectives for their own products' advertising.

A consumer centred view of advertising

A good starting point in looking at how advertising works is to take a consumer centred view, not a brand-centred view. This was vividly expressed in Alan Hedges' potent dictum "one should think less about what advertising does to people and more about what people do with advertising" [reference 1].

Consumers typically find themselves having to make a very large number of buying decisions every week, and sometimes tens of decisions within half an hour such as during a supermarket visit. There are far too many decisions for them all to be made on the basis of objective rational analysis. Moreover some decisions are perceived as trivial, either in the sense that the decision-maker may regard it as intrinsically unimportant which brand is selected, or that they are choices between more or less equal alternatives where the penalty of making a 'wrong' decision is negligible. Consequently some buying decisions are made on the basis of habit, which removes the need to think about it. Some other decisions are founded on an unstructured complex of images and emotions, many of them subconscious. Advertising, which of course doesn't work only through conveying rational arguments, is capable of influencing these impressions, often through being assimilated without the recipient being aware of it.

Consumers are assailed by countless advertising messages every day. Some of the ads - surely a minority whatever the medium - will attract full attention because of the relevance or interest of either the product or some other element of the creative execution. Other ads will be experienced in various degrees of incomplete attention, right down to cases where the person would declare, if asked, that he or she had not seen the ad. Even experiencing an advertisement at this low level of consciousness is

not necessarily a waste, because impressions processed subliminally can add to the complex of images and emotions mentioned in the previous paragraph, and thus potentially have an influence on future decisions. This may possibly be through a cumulative effect operating over the medium or long term, rather than instantly after one exposure.

Hedges [1] spelt this out in more detail by identifying five different levels at which advertising can operate (but I have condensed his list into four levels):

- “Advertising may try to put across rational arguments - statements of premises and conclusions which follow from them. It is at this level of operation that the customer’s conscious attention is most likely to be needed.
- “On a different level the advertising may convey pieces of information about the brand. These may range from the mere fact of its existence, through to its price, its functions and so forth. Sometimes it is important that these pieces of information are registered precisely and in their own right. On other occasions they will merely need to contribute towards a general impression or atmosphere.
- “On another level advertising may surround the brand with particular associations, with moods, feelings, emotional colours and so on... It is a question of emotional shadings which can nevertheless be very important to the way in which we perceive the brand, and the way we respond to it in particular situations.
- “At the lowest level advertising can simply create a sense of familiarity, a feeling that the brand is ‘around’. This engages neither our intellect nor our emotions, and almost certainly happens below the threshold of conscious perception. If I have seen a lot of advertising for a brand during the previous year I am likely to recognise [the brand] and to feel that it is generally current and popular. This does not necessarily presuppose that I shall actually remember seeing a lot of advertising.

“Noticing and remembering advertising is not by any means a necessary pre-requisite of advertising effectiveness. Advertising may, and probably generally does, ‘work’ without ever having been processed by our higher-level rational faculties.”

This is in stark contrast to the old assumptions that advertising always or usually works by moving consumers through a fixed sequence of stages from seeing the advertising to buying the brand. One descriptive scheme (AIDA) said the stages were:

Attention >> Interest >> Desire >> Action.

Another scheme (DAGMAR) defined the stages as:

Awareness >> Comprehension >> Conviction >> Action.

The idea was that consumers had to graduate from one step to the next; ‘Action’ could not be reached without passing through all the earlier stages. This notion has largely been discredited as a general description of how most advertising works (though it may apply in certain cases), as have some of the underlying assumptions such as (a)

an advertisement must have deliberate attention directed onto it, (b) it must be mentally processed in a conscious way, (c) persuasion must be based on rational arguments, and (d) once persuasion has been achieved the consumer immediately switches to the brand in question.

There is now wide agreement that advertising works in different ways for different products in different situations. For instance targets that can reasonably be set for the launch of a new product will be different from those appropriate for a long-established brand. Objectives for a market leader will not be those for a minnow in the same market. Targets for a brand with no strong competitor will not be suitable for a product in an intensely competitive market. Some brands are differentiated by more or less rational factors but many, maybe most, are primarily differentiated by emotional/attitudinal factors.

The things consumers take out from advertising may not be what the advertiser thought was being put in.

Since people are not always aware of their own mental processes concerning advertising, the answers they give to researchers' questions are not necessarily objective truth.

In this diverse environment, monitoring the effectiveness of advertising in magazines or other media requires interpretation and judgement: translating one's general beliefs about how advertising works, and how it varies according to circumstances, into something applicable to the specific advertiser's own situation. It is no use having a universal model of how advertising functions which ignores differences between campaigns in their advertising objectives.

Measures used for assessing effectiveness

Views about how advertising does its job are reflected in the research measures that are often used to assess the effectiveness of either individual advertisements or whole campaigns. Examples of some of the typical measures on offer are listed below. This list is arranged in a sequence which, very roughly speaking, moves progressively closer towards sales - but as indicated earlier I am not remotely suggesting that consumers do in fact always proceed through such an orderly sequence!

Examples of potential measures are:

- Ad awareness, impact
- Recall of elements in the ad
- Feelings about the ad: liked, amused, believed, etc
- Awareness of brand name
- Recall and comprehension of brand messages
- Brand images, perceptions
- Emotional involvement
- Purchase intention
- Attitude/persuasion preference/shift

- Claimed buying behaviour
- Short-term sales
- Long-term sales
- Other ultimate objective, such as profit, or social or political change of some kind

The list could readily be extended.

No single campaign is likely to be assessed on all of these measures, each of which has its critics as well as its supporters. With no one measure being established as ‘the’ key criterion (except for sales, usually), it is wise to be open to several different kinds of measurement, examining a number of criteria rather than rely on any individual one, for a particular campaign.

Looking briefly at each item on the list reveals something of the underlying ideas about how consumers may respond to advertising.

Ad awareness, impact

It seems superficially obvious that it is good if consumers remember that they have seen our ad, hence the popularity of ‘ad awareness’ or ‘impact’ scores - which may measure spontaneous awareness and/or prompted awareness (prompted by product type or brand name). At the very least, a claim to have seen the advertising shows that some sort of communication has taken place.

Yet, as argued earlier, it is possible for the advertiser’s intended communication to be achieved in a more subtle way without the consumer necessarily remaining conscious of having seen the ad - especially if the ad was reinforcing an already established message. Robert Heath observed [2] that most advertising is absorbed using ‘low involvement processing’ which stores associations or ‘markers’ that encapsulate a brand benefit, and that “advertising which creates or reinforces such associations will influence brand purchase whether or not it is recalled. In other words advertising does not need to be recalled in order to be effective”. On this view, awareness scores are of limited use.

The pertinence of awareness scores also depends to some degree on the medium that is being used. Viewers process television commercials in a manner which tends to create conscious awareness; readers of magazines process advertisements in a different way which can more easily bypass conscious awareness and go directly to absorbing product messages (more on this in the next chapter).

Recall of elements in the ad

Going one stage further is recall of the specific elements featured in the advertisement.

Judgement and interpretation of the data are essential. If what is recalled is details of the execution which are not directly related to the brand, such as a mountain range shown in the background, the question arises of what value is to be placed on

recalling such elements. It depends on how the advertisement was written, what its intentions were, and how it is expected to work.

Feelings about the ad: liked, amused, believed, etc

Attitudes to the advertising can be measured - such as liking it, being amused by it, believing it, and so forth. The relevance of each attitude must be assessed in the light of the campaign's intentions. If the communications objective is, say, to entertain the target audience and link the sales message to the fun, then a measure of liking the ad and being amused by it has some relevance. There is a theory that the more an ad is liked, the more receptive the audience is to the sales messages it contains. When used in the context of pre-testing, there may be dilemmas of judgement if one execution is well liked but barely believed while another is believed but causes little amusement - which execution is preferable, or can a new version be produced which achieves both objectives?

Recall of brand name, comprehension of brand messages

These measures mark a shift in primary focus from the advertising to the brand itself.

Knowledge and attitudes concerning the *brand* which are derived from the advertising can usually be considered a more relevant criterion of effectiveness than knowledge about the *advertisements* themselves. When advertisers and their agencies are developing a strategy for their advertising campaign, they start with the relationship between the customer and the brand. They don't start with the relationship between the customer and the advertising. How people are responding to the brand, and what is creating this response, is more vital than the response to the advertising per se.

Naturally, the particular questions used in measuring brand response should reflect the specific advertising objectives of the campaign under review.

Identifying whether the brand knowledge or attitudes derive from the advertising or not can be tricky; they might derive from experience of using the product, reading an article about it in a magazine or newspaper, or a host of other possible sources. If the advertising messages are not new ones, comparing pre-exposure and post-exposure data, or using matched samples of exposed and unexposed people, are two of the ways of getting round the problem.

Purchasing intention and other intermediate measures

There are a host of other possible intermediate measures lying between brand awareness and purchase of the product. These include brand images, degree of emotional involvement with the brand, preferences, and claimed likelihood of purchasing the brand. For example, questions may be asked along the lines of "Which of these brands would you consider buying?" - many variations of this question can be envisaged, including assessing the strength of the willingness to consider buying.

The implication behind this type of question is that a consciously expressed intention to buy, preparedness to consider buying, or preference, are directly predictive of what the consumer will actually do when making real purchasing decisions. There are opposing views on this. On balance it seems fair to say that the probability of someone buying a particular brand is greater if they say they will do so than if they don't list it as a likely purchase. Nevertheless much purchase decision-making is made through habit or routine, while some decisions are based on impulses of which the buyer is not fully aware, so consciously-expressed answers to an interviewer will not always be a reliable guide.

Like all the intermediate measures, it is better if purchase intention is not used in isolation but is interpreted along with a number of other measures.

Attitude or persuasion shift

There are several proprietary research systems built around precise measurement of shifts in attitudes or projected behaviour as a result of exposure to advertising.

One approach is where a sample of consumers are asked to express brand preferences under a disguised pretext: for example, being called in to a hall or meeting to discuss the editorial concept for a new magazine, or to view a television programme, and first being asked which brands they would choose if they win a prize. Next, in the course of being presented with the new magazine or TV programme, they are exposed to some advertisements including the test ad(s). Finally they are asked to choose brands again. The difference between the percentage choosing the test brand(s) on the second occasion compared with the first occasion represents the attitude/persuasion shift. A large increase in the percentage choosing the brand is taken as indicating a strong advertisement or campaign whereas a small or negative shift indicates a weak ad or campaign.

The underlying assumption is that attitudes are changed instantly by the advertising, such that the effect can be seen within a few minutes of being exposed to the advertisement in the test conditions. Not everyone accepts this. An opposing view is that behaviour sometimes precedes attitude change, rather than the other way round. Once a given brand has been bought, some consumers may re-arrange their attitudes in the light of their experience of using the product, and also to convince themselves that they bought the right thing.

This technique is employed as a method of pre-testing advertisement creative executions as well as for assessing campaigns that have been running 'live'.

Claimed buying behaviour

Almost reaching sales, but not quite, are respondents' claimed purchases, as recorded via survey research. Memory can be defective or there may occasionally be reasons to deliberately misrepresent what has been bought, but in most situations if a respondent says he or she bought a certain brand there's a very high probability that it's true.

Short-term sales

The ideal assessment of advertising effectiveness is of course to show a clear link between the advertising and sales (or other appropriate ultimate goal such as political change or modification of social attitudes). ‘Short-term’ has no universal meaning in this context, but is usually taken to be one week or a few weeks after exposure to the advertising, according to circumstances.

Sales may be measured in various ways, but consumer panels, retail audits, and ex-factory data are among the most common sources.

There is proof that magazine advertising can create short-term sales. Particularly authoritative evidence comes from household panels whose purchases are recorded daily, and which can be examined against the timing and weight of exposure to magazine advertising. The published evidence includes case histories of individual products that have used magazines where the advertising created sales in the short term (for example Anchor Spreadable Butter - described later on page 28), and also multi-brand studies (such as the STAS and ASTAS analyses on pages 34-36).

Long-term sales

It could happen that the gain in *short-term* sales is too small to justify the cost of the advertising. This may occasionally become apparent when econometric modelling is used. It must be added however that the published evidence is largely based on television-dominated campaigns, where the costs of advertising are typically much higher than the costs of a magazine campaign, and therefore the gain in sales has to be that much greater to produce short-term return on investment.

This throws the focus onto *long-term* sales (or other appropriate goal). ‘Long-term’ is typically taken to mean a year or longer.

Many people take the view that long-term sales are a more important criterion than short-term sales anyway. It is in the long term that the added brand values created by advertising have their main payoff.

Colin McDonald argued [3] that one should try to proceed on all fronts, looking at signs of whether the advertising is working on the intermediate measures, and also examining short-term and long-term sales, but he placed an emphasis on long-term sales as the ultimate criterion of ad effectiveness. He detected a convergence of view among practitioners “that advertising seldom produces violent change in the short term but rather proceeds by small gradual steps, in an erosive and evolutionary way, to build up the long-term positioning of brands in a market; that advertising is at least as much about consolidation as change. Advertising is ‘weak’, yet powerful over a long time, rather as wind and sand can be powerful in shaping the contours of rocks. Advertising is justified not by anything that happens quickly (because this is seldom enough) but by the long-term reinforcement it gives to consumers’ propensity to buy the brand.”

The problem is how to measure long-term effects. The impact of the advertising must be isolated from all the other things that have been going on in the market and around the brand. There are two main solutions. One is detailed and well documented case histories, of which the richest source is the IPA Advertising Effectiveness Awards, comprising almost 700 case histories including some featuring magazine advertising [4]. The other is econometric modelling - though this approach is more often applied to short-term rather than long-term advertising effects.

Econometric analysis

Econometrics can be a powerful tool for analysing complex information about advertising effectiveness. Granted the necessary raw data, it can identify the key drivers of sales: advertising, promotions, pricing policy, direct marketing, seasonality, distribution, competitive activity, and so on. At best, the importance of each of these factors for a specific advertiser can be isolated, and the contribution of advertising identified. The link between advertising spend, sales, and return on investment can potentially be established.

The essence of econometrics is to examine a run of past data about a product's sales performance and the various contributory factors, and apply mathematical modelling techniques such as regression analysis to find the formula which best explains past experience. It can be used to retrospectively justify (or not) past advertising expenditure.

The formula derived from analysis of past data can also be applied to the future to predict the likely outcomes of various decisions about budget levels, different media mixes that might be used, and the strategy to adopt regarding frequency and weight of exposure to the advertising (dilemmas such as heavy bursts versus constant drip).

The formula (i.e. the relationship between all the variables, in explaining sales of the product) will of course be different for different products.

Analysis requires an adequate base of historical data. Modelling could be based on evidence from many different campaigns which used a variety of budget levels and strategies. Or for future analyses market tests of alternative decisions could be set up, with the effects of each competing strategy assessed through econometric modelling.

This work requires a sophisticated analyst to conduct it. It is a complex specialised field, but Simon Broadbent has written an excellent handbook which describes how to set about it [5] - or, more likely, which convinces the reader that the first step is to find an experienced analyst with whom to work!

A published example of econometric analysis is shown in the final chapter, on page 33. The WerbeWert 97 study was able to demonstrate the improved effectiveness achieved by changing a TV-dominated advertising strategy into a mixed media strategy where print takes a leading role alongside television.

4. Magazines and television work in different ways

Much of the published discussion about advertising effectiveness deals with television campaigns only, and some of the methods for measuring this effectiveness have been devised to suit the way television is believed to work. Yet in vital respects magazines work in a different way, and the assessment of effectiveness needs to take this into account.

This chapter therefore sets out key differences between the two media in the ways advertisements are used and absorbed.

Passive versus active exposure

Compared with magazines, television viewing is a relatively passive activity. There is often a low level of attention, especially to the commercials, with the viewer monitoring the screen while also attending to something else, though ready to switch to full attention when something interesting appears. Viewing tends to be ‘low involvement’, to use the term coined for television by Herbert Krugman, an American psychologist who conducted pioneering research on how television advertising is watched [6]. Jackie Parkinson of Millward Brown has said [7] “an evaluation of a TV execution needs to start from a base of relatively passive involvement”. Viewers are typically expecting to be entertained rather than made to work.

By contrast, magazine reading centres around focused reading and screening of the material on the page. It’s an active choice, a process of constantly taking decisions, and one requiring a higher level of attention. As readers turn the pages they scan each spread rapidly and make a decision regarding each and every separate item on the spread about whether or not to look at it more closely. It may sometimes require only a few seconds to screen a particular page, but a reader does have to look at a page in order to decide not to read it any further. Every time something appeals, the reader can take as long over it as he or she wishes, whether it is editorial or advertising.

This process of constant selection is actively maintained throughout the reading of the issue.

All or almost all of the pages of a magazine are typically opened and scanned. This has been amply proved by research. For example, the National Readership Survey’s Reader Categorisation Study [8] showed that readers of general and women’s weekly magazines looked at 93% of pages on average, and for general and women’s monthlies it was 92% of pages.

Ad noting and the real exposure

Traditional page traffic and advertisement noting scores tend to show lower scores than this, because their method under-values the medium. When asked what they have looked at, readers intuitively assume the interviewer is not interested in the brief scanning of pages that do not result in lengthy reading of something on the page. So they often say ‘No’ when they should say ‘Yes’. This point is important in understanding how magazine advertising works, and the techniques suited to assessing it, so I will elaborate a little further.

The only advertisement noting study of which I’m aware as having measured this aspect is one for the publication Big Farm Weekly [9], where I added follow-up questions for people who had not claimed to have seen certain advertisements. They were asked what they thought the reason was why they had not looked at the ad. The answers established that the great majority had in fact looked at the ad but had decided they were not interested in it, and accordingly didn’t read any further than the original glance. This was usually because the product was not relevant; for instance, an arable farmer who kept no animals would probably not see relevance in an ad for a feed for dairy cows.

The breakdown of the scores for one of the advertisements, for a herbicide for barley fields, was:

Originally claimed to have look at ad	34%
Not originally claimed, but during follow-up question admitted had seen it	46%
Total claimed as seen	80%
Unsure whether seen or not	3%
Not claimed as seen, after follow-up question	17%
Total interviewed	100%

Although the original ad noting score was only 34%, 80% of informants remembered seeing it. The 46% who accounted for the difference had noticed the ad and *most had registered what it was advertising* before deciding not to read any further. The additional questioning established that the main reason given for not reading the ad enough to claim it at the earlier ad noting question was that they don’t use herbicides. A further cluster of reasons for not reading it (given by 12% of all readers) was that they’d seen the ad before and/or already knew all about the product. All these reasons indicate that the brand name and/or product type had been understood.

So the reality behind the traditional noting score of 34% was that as many as 80% of all readers had looked at the ad (i.e. at a conscious enough level to remember doing so) and almost all of these had at the very least comprehended that it was an ad for a herbicide. Many had grasped the brand name, and some went further and took more out of the advertisement.

The value of brief glances

The glances which fall onto the pages in the course of scanning a magazine enable the publication to deliver what it should: an exposure to any ad on the page.

From this point onwards it is up to the creative work of the ad and the inherent interest of the product to attract the reader to study it further, and to determine whether the reader would claim to have seen the ad if asked about it later.

Yet even a brief glance at an advertisement can be valuable and worthwhile to the advertiser, in reinforcing and reminding about product messages received from previous exposures. A print exposure even of only one or two seconds while scanning a page can trigger and deepen ‘markers’ or brand associations derived from earlier experience. “Advertising which creates or reinforces such associations will influence brand purchase whether or not it is recalled”, to quote Robert Heath again.

Alan Hedges [1] argued that “there is no reason to suppose that in the general case advertising which is consciously noticed and thought about is any more effective than advertising which is not. The most we can say is that the advertising which succeeds best at seeding relevant and useful impressions is likely to be the most effective. But we cannot assume that these impressions will necessarily be either received or stored at a high level of consciousness.”

Simon Broadbent [5] has pinpointed further benefits from exposure to a familiar advertisement, however fleeting: “the recipient may take out something which is not just factual information, such as: ‘They are still there, talking to me. I’m glad they are taking the trouble’; or ‘I had forgotten how good that looks’.” These are “values being added to the brand, which may pay off later in all sorts of ways (more attention to later ads, more forgiving attitudes to the product).”

For the herbicide advertisement mentioned earlier, readers who registered the brand name but at the ad noting question did not claim to have looked at the ad were all being reminded that the brand is still around. This in turn must have made, either at some low level of consciousness or else subconsciously, some connections with existing associations or images associated with the brand, and thus helped keep these fresh.

Daniel Schacter, Professor of Psychology at Harvard University, has said [10] “A recent experiment showed that people tend to prefer products featured in ads they barely glanced at several minutes earlier - even when they have no explicit memory of having seen the ad.”

Exposure under reader’s control, but not under viewer’s control

Television imposes little or no barrier to paying attention, because it doesn’t require much work. The entertainment of the commercial often enables it to avoid the potential hurdle of mentally switching off if the product is of no relevance. The viewer is accepting that ‘This is fun to watch’ rather than ‘This means something to

me'. Thus viewers may happily attend to an advertisement in an irrelevant product category if the commercial is entertaining enough.

But the television viewer can't extend exposure to a commercial beyond the number of seconds allotted to it. The timing of exposure is chosen not by the viewer (where different viewers would prefer to choose different lengths of exposure according to their respective needs and interests, just as with print ads) but by the advertiser and agency. The viewer cannot instantly replay the commercial to understand it better by resolving some unclear aspect of it, or to use it as an aid to working out its implications. Viewers can't say "Hold on! I want to look at that bit again!"

With magazines, by contrast, the reader is in full control of his or her exposure. Exposure can be extended as long as the reader wishes. An ad can be studied in as much depth as desired, the diagrams examined, the room layout pored over, the small print read, and so on. It's a positive aspect of the fact that magazines are on paper and therefore can be held in the hand.

Magazines allow readers to extend the mental work they choose to do when looking at an ad. It can be re-read to resolve any unclear aspects, or to work out the implications to one's own circumstances of what the advertiser is saying.

The consequence of putting in this extra (compared with a typical TV commercial) work is that the messages are likely to be more deeply ingrained into the reader's mind. Thorough connections can be made with the reader's existing experience, attitudes and plans. The knowledge and impressions derived from the ad can be interpreted and translated through the filter of the reader's own requirements, and this anchors them in the mind.

The will to read an ad is easiest to secure if the product is already of inherent interest, but all ads can draw attention through the strength of the creative work, even if the product is initially low-interest.

Furthermore, many magazines have highly targeted readerships, which ensures that a high proportion of ads are indeed relevant to those readers. This underlines the importance of assessing ad effectiveness *within the relevant target audience*.

Storing the memory

A television commercial tends to be stored in the mind as a 'story' in which a sequence of events unfolds. Consequently it can be played back in some detail when an interviewer asks about advertising awareness or specific details of the execution. Qualitative research can yield verbatims which tell the narrative of the action, such as [11]:

"A man in a carpenter's shop who goes out into the daylight and says something about sunshine on furniture."

"A man wears a woolly hat to bed and disappears in two minutes to exercise on a machine."

Gordon Brown of Millward Brown, reflecting on many years of tracking and pre-testing studies, wrote that the ‘memories’ of television advertisements tend to be in audio-visual form. In television “creativity isn’t just needed to get the ad noticed - it is only the creative elements within the ad that register. The vision I am left with is that creativity in TV ads is about communicating ‘messages’ via audio-visual images.” [12]

Yet the very process which enables a commercial to bypass the mind’s censorship-by-relevance, and thus induce the viewer to watch, also means that there may be a low level of mental engagement in what the product message is (compared with magazines). The viewers who would have screened out the commercial if there had been an effective filter by relevance are watching because of the fun it conveys but the product is still of little or no interest to them. Consequently they are likely to retain the ‘story’ of the commercial in their minds, and if interviewed may be able to recall and play back a TV commercial as an ad so that it generates high awareness scores, but they may not necessarily attach much of the product message as part of the memory. It is a significant challenge for the advertising agency team to make sure that the entertaining creativity in the commercial is actually harnessed to the brand message that is to be communicated.

Turning to magazines, many magazine ads are memorable in their own right - witness the results of Millward Brown’s “Ad Track 94” study of 24 brands, reviewed on pages 37 & 40, where magazine advertising achieved average Awareness Index scores which were identical to those of television advertising; or the Health Education Authority campaign reviewed on page 38. Yet the strength of magazines lies even more in the way the *product messages* can be absorbed as a result of handling a printed ad.

With magazines, the readers’ scanning and screening has the implication that (compared with television) a higher proportion of the memories are stored as information about the product, as distinct from information about the advertisement. Therefore readers may be better able to describe what the product messages were than to play back the advertisement itself.

This comes about because the filtering inherent in the page scanning is conducted more on the basis of assessing the relevance and interest of the product than on the entertainment of the ad itself. Then the subsequent mental work done when an ad passes the scanning filter and is read and used in more detail is also primarily concerned with the product and how it relates to the reader’s life.

A study reported by Barbara Zack of G+J USA and Doug Scott of Millward Brown [13] yielded research evidence supporting the thesis that magazine and TV ads tend to be stored in different ways. They concluded that “TV advertising is *entertaining* and is learned *episodically*, over time, with repeated viewings. By contrast, magazine advertising is typically more *informative* than it is entertaining, and it is learned *semantically*. The magazine reader actively chooses to read the ad, and deliberately evaluates the relevance of the message to his/her needs; the information immediately becomes something that the consumer ‘knows’ about the brand”, and (compared with television) it is less likely to exist as a memory of an ‘advertisement’.

The consequence is that, for print advertisements, understanding of product messages is a more appropriate criterion of advertising effectiveness than is ad awareness.

This view was succinctly endorsed in one of the published entries for the IPA Advertising Effectiveness Awards [14]. TCP liquid anti-septic had been using a TV-only advertising strategy, and for reasons of cost TV had been used in short bursts and featured a limited number of uses of the product. Moving to a print-only campaign permitted continuous year-round advertising, and it featured all five major uses of TCP, with each use receiving a fairly heavy weight of spend. The effect of the campaign was measured in terms of sales, not memorability of the advertising, and TCP concluded that “all previous research had shown that it was TCP’s TV advertisements that were remembered, but our new analysis suggested that it was the print advertisements that worked”.

Modest ad noting but high campaign awareness

In spite of generally modest noting scores for individual magazine advertisements (compared with higher typical recall scores for TV commercials), magazine campaigns do match television campaigns in terms of advertising awareness, as we have already seen from Millward Brown’s Awareness Index a few paragraphs earlier. This apparent inconsistency can be explained.

For a given brand, people may not necessarily remember seeing a specific advertisement in a particular issue of a defined magazine (hence a modest noting score), but because even a brief exposure to the ad may be long enough for the brand name and perhaps other brand messages to register at a low level of consciousness, consumers can be aware that they’ve seen some magazine advertising around for that brand in the last few days (which is what Millward Brown are measuring).

Repeat exposure within the same advertisement

Another important distinction in the way the two media communicate concerns repeat exposures of a single advertisement.

With television each exposure is a one-off and it is not repeated unless the advertiser pays for another transmission. But with magazines many pages of the same issue are exposed more than once. The “Quality of Reading Survey” [15] has shown that a single copy of a magazine is picked up by a typical reader an average of five or six times, spread across three different days. As a result the average page is looked at 2.4 times. What this means to the advertiser is that the reader has more opportunities with the one advertisement to get the reader to understand and accept the product messages.

The value has been proven of these repeat exposures within the life of a single issue. Studies by the Politz Research Company in the US are the classic benchmark on this point [16]. Magazine readers were exposed to test advertisement pages in the same issue of a magazine; some informants saw the test ads once, some saw them twice, and a control sample did not see them at all. Four measures of advertising

effectiveness were used, all connected with the brand and not the advertising as such: brand familiarity; acceptance of/familiarity with the claim; belief in the claim/rating of brand quality; and willingness to try/interest in buying the brand. On all four measures a single exposure worked well but two exposures in the same issue worked approximately twice as well. For example, in terms of ‘willingness to try/interest in buying the brand’, the score among respondents not exposed to the test ads was indexed as 100. Among those exposed once to the test ads, buying interest increased by an average of 22%, while among those exposed to the test ads twice in the same issue the buying increased by an average of 41% - approximately twice the increase after one exposure.

None of the discussion in this chapter is intended to imply that television is not an effective advertising medium. We all know that it can be very effective. Rather, this chapter aims to draw out the distinctions between the ways in which television and magazine advertisements are used by their audiences.

5. Mixed-media advertising

Taking the arguments of the previous chapter one step further, the differences in the ways television and magazine advertisements work mean that the two media complement one another. The communication achieved by the two acting together can be greater than is delivered by television on its own, or magazines on their own. This has implications for the methods of assessing advertising effectiveness for mixed-media campaigns.

Mixed-media synergies

A great deal has been learned during the last fifteen years about the communication benefits of advertising in television and print simultaneously. Two classic pioneering studies in the UK were “Multiplying The Media Effect” [17] and “The Media Multiplier” [18]. These projects showed informants the TV commercials and print advertisements from a range of mixed-media TV-plus-print campaigns, in a variety of rotations, and several important conclusions were reached, the principal ones being:

- Print advertising can communicate ideas that were not in the TV commercial.
- Print can affect and enrich what is understood from television advertising when it is seen after exposure to the print advertising. Print can lead people to perceive the TV commercial in new ways.
- Thus print makes television work harder.
- In the opposite direction, television also enhances the communication from print advertising.
- This synergy is at its best when the creative executions in both media are designed to work together.

Later studies in a number of other countries have reached similar conclusions.

These benefits arise from the different characteristics of the two media, as discussed in the previous chapter. The effect can be illustrated by quoting the summary descriptions of two of the twelve campaigns studied in “The Media Multiplier” research:

Cheeses of England and Wales

The television and magazine advertisements were very different in style but contained several cross-references and complemented each other well.

Responses to the magazine ad were particularly product-oriented, and there was much evidence of interaction between the two media. The magazine treatment tended to direct attention to details within the TV commercial, focussing on the product rather than the execution. It led respondents to look harder at the recipe information featured very briefly in the commercial and encouraged thoughts concerning the variety and versatility of the cheeses. The magazine ad also helped informants to appreciate the health and fitness story within the commercial - including comments about cheese being full of protein, vitamins

and calcium, copy points made explicit in the magazine treatment. In addition print strengthened the branding of the product - cheeses from England and Wales rather than just 'cheese'. Exposure to the magazine advertisement modified informants' reaction to the TV commercial when seen subsequently, and in directions which could be attributed to the magazine ad.

Access credit card

The television commercial conveyed the idea of flexibility very successfully. The print advertisement added considerably to this. It led informants to become more involved in details of the television commercial which they had missed previously. They also took the messages they had absorbed from the print advertisement and applied these to the TV, thinking through the implications of flexibility instead of simply replaying flexibility as the sole message. Print had made people dwell on the varied practical attributes of an Access card as well as the general quality of flexibility. Print had added flesh to the TV bones.

A more extensive summary of the two projects, "Multiplying The Media Effect" and "The Media Multiplier", can be found in my PPA Research Report 58, "How Magazine Advertising Works III", pages 77-81.

Another study reaching the same broad conclusion about the beneficial effects on communication of using both magazines and television, rather than only one medium, is "Analyzing Media Interactions"; it is summarised in the final chapter (page 37).

Measuring effectiveness

In attempting to measure the effectiveness of a mixed-media campaign, disentangling the separate contributions of each medium is difficult, because each medium enhances the other. The take-out from the television advertising will have been enriched by the cross-effects of the print advertising, and vice versa. A score of X for one medium and 2X for the other would not be easy to interpret because we would not normally know what the scores for each medium would have been if the other had not been running.

Although difficult, it is not impossible to gain an insight into what each medium contributed, and how the creative executions in each medium worked together, but it requires a carefully considered technique. The sensitive semi-structured qualitative questioning used in the "Multiplying The Media Effect" and "The Media Multiplier" studies is one approach.

Quantitative measures are an alternative. There is a view that it is important to compare the quantitatively-measured performance of each medium with media-specific norms (if available). However the interpretation needs to be made with delicacy if the scores for magazines in a mixed-media campaign are being compared with norms derived from magazine-only campaigns.

Some research agencies offer branded products which combine qualitative and quantitative stages within a single research programme for measuring the performance of each medium in mixed-media campaigns.

A simpler but less fruitful alternative is to skip measuring the contributions of each medium and just concentrate on measuring the overall effectiveness of the entire campaign.

Econometric analysis, discussed earlier, has a potential contribution to make in this field - both in looking at the overall outcome of mixed-media campaigns, and in assessing the optimum balance of expenditure between media in a mixed-media campaign, as the WerbeWert case study on page 33 shows. However being a ‘black box’ approach it would not explain *how* the effects come about.

6. Pre-testing

The creative work is key. Successful advertising depends upon executions which are effective for the campaign's objectives. Advertisers have every reason for wanting to ensure that their ads communicate what is intended. Magazine publishers too must be concerned with the quality of the ads they carry. If a magazine advertisement is not very effective because of the creative work, it reduces the chance of that magazine and indeed any magazine winning advertising from that client in the future.

Assuming that the marketing objectives, and the communications strategy for achieving these objectives, have been determined, some form of pre-testing of the creative content is desirable - even if only through small-scale qualitative research which checks whether the ad does in fact convey what it is intended to communicate. Any execution which does not perform sufficiently well can be revised, and the pre-test can suggest how it might be improved.

How much pre-testing is done?

In practice television commercials are pre-tested to a much greater extent than magazine advertisements, in both the UK and the USA.

In 1996 PPA commissioned a study of UK practice, which was conducted by HPI Research Group and published as "Pre-Testing Magazine Ads" [19]. It found that about 60% of television commercials were tested qualitatively and about 30% were tested quantitatively. For magazine campaigns however only half that proportion were pre-tested: about 30% were tested qualitatively and 15% quantitatively.

The differences in the USA were even more marked. A study for G+J USA conducted by Ephron, Papazian & Ephron and McPheters & Company in 1998/99 [20] revealed that 68% of television campaigns were pre-tested ('copy-tested' as the Americans call it) whereas only 16% of magazine campaigns were tested. Among a sample of large advertisers the figures were higher: 90% of TV campaigns were tested and 31% of magazine campaigns. The smaller the advertiser, the less likely that a campaign would be copy-tested.

The main reason given to explain why most magazine campaigns are not pre-tested was the same in the two countries. It was that magazine budgets tend to be lower than TV budgets, so less research money is allocated to magazines. Less advertising expenditure is at stake. Pre-testing tends to follow the money.

A second reason given in the UK is that the techniques for testing print advertising are less developed than those for testing television advertising. This is debatable.

A third factor mentioned is that in mixed-media TV + magazine campaigns, magazines usually account for a minority proportion of the budget. This makes it

harder to establish print's impact on the results because the higher expenditure on television may swamp it.

Methods of pre-testing

The differences in the way television and magazine advertising works means that pre-testing should not necessarily use the same techniques in both media. Gordon and Swan underlined this when they wrote [21] "Unlike TV ads which have a set sequence of exposure - a beginning, middle and end - which is always constant in order, creators of press ads cannot control the sequence of reading the ad, nor how long the reader will devote to it. Years of experience in researching press ads point to the fact that creatives nearly always assume that the ad will (a) be noticeable (impactful) because of the creative treatment, and (b) will be comprehensible because of the juxtaposition of headline, visual, copy and so on. Very often this is simply not true." Hence the value of pre-testing, which offers a chance of maximising the effectiveness of the campaign. The potential payback in terms of communication gain can far outstrip the cost of the pre-test.

There is no wide agreement about how pre-testing of magazine advertisements should be carried out, and to some extent different methods might reasonably be used for different purposes.

Face to face interviews are generally the most fruitful means of contact with respondents, since the essence of pre-testing is to show consumers the test material. These can follow qualitative or quantitative approaches, or both. Otherwise the main variations concern the way magazine ads are prepared as stimuli, how informants are exposed to them, and the measures used to assess their effect.

Preparing the stimuli

In what ways can the test advertisements be prepared for exposing to the sample of respondents? These are the main classes of option:

1. Real issues of magazines can be used, containing the test ads printed in the normal way as part of the full print run. This is the ideal stimulus but obviously can only be used for existing ads, not new ones that have not yet run 'live'.
2. 'Tipping in' specially printed ads, pasting them into real issues of magazines. Informants are not likely to notice that this is an extra page inserted into the copy. This is the best quality stimulus for new executions that have not yet run in a live campaign.
3. Mocked-up folders representing a magazine, containing editorial pages as well as the test ads. Each page can be held within a transparent plastic pocket. While this no longer looks like a real magazine, it offers a means of exposing the test ads in the context of editorial and other ads, thus disguising to some extent the interest in the test ads. This is much less expensive than the 'tipping in' option. It also means that roughs of the test ads can be used if a finished printed version is not available.

4. A dummy magazine created on a PC by a professional designer using an appropriate off-the-shelf publishing software package. The test ads can be inserted and the whole magazine printed out and bound. The result can look more realistic than the folders described above, while keeping the cost low.
5. Advertisements shown on their own - either just the test ads, or including some other ads to create a mild disguise. These could be finished printed ads or roughs. This is the most artificial of the methods which use ads printed on paper.
6. Projecting advertisements onto a screen or wall, or within a closed box of some kind, for a fixed time (usually a few seconds only). This is not only the most artificial form of exposure, but it also runs counter to a prime characteristic of magazine advertisements - the reader's ability to hold the ad and examine it for as long as desired. On the other hand, it is method of ascertaining what information can be derived from the ad on an occasion when a reader only scans it quickly and does not read it in detail before turning the page.

Exposing the stimuli

Having prepared the test advertisements, there are a number of options for exposing them to respondents. In practice these two elements must be considered together from the start of course.

1. Finding people who have read the relevant issue of the magazine in the normal way - an issue which they obtained themselves without knowing they would be interviewed. They can then be shown the interviewer's copy of the issue as a prompt while being asked questions. This means that exposure to the advertising and editorial has been completely natural. Timing can be tricky: too soon after the issue is published may mean an informant has not finished reading the issue, but too long after publication may mean that an early reader has partly forgotten what he or she looked at.
2. Giving the magazines to informants to take away and look at in a normal reading situation, with an interview later - say the next day. This assumes that the research is using real live magazines or live magazines with the test ads tipped in. This gives a reasonable approximation to normal magazine exposure, but it is not totally realistic - in particular, the informants know they have to read the issue within a defined short time-period, and they do their reading in the knowledge that they will be asked questions about it.
3. In a waiting room of some kind, giving informants the magazine to read while waiting for the interview. This is a simulation of normal reading, but the unnatural and very short time limit for reading, the strange location, and the possible tension while waiting to be called into an event that is not fully understood all introduce artificiality. Real magazines with real test ads or tipped in ads can be used.
4. Forced exposure: showing the informants real or dummy magazines, folders representing magazines, folders containing advertisements only, or advertisements

shown loose. This abandons any attempt to create normal reading. While this artificial situation can say nothing about whether the informant would have noticed the test ads in normal reading conditions, it still enables the interviewer to ask about how and what the ads communicate, and the path that the respondent took across the individual components in an ad when first shown it.

Measures of an ad's effect

It is prudent to examine not just a single measure but several in order to test the advertising in all its aspects. An advertising campaign is likely to have several objectives and sub-objectives, and the pre-testing criteria should be chosen to cover these, and to reflect each aspect of how the test ads may be expected to work. It should also be explicit whether what is to be tested is the execution of a creative idea or the idea itself.

This list shows some of the most important of the many possible criteria of a magazine advertisement's effectiveness:

- Ad awareness, memorability.
- Recall of details of ad execution.
- Amount of ad read.
- Eye movement over the advertisement.
- 'Diagnostic' questions which rate attitudes to the advertisement, such as amusing, realistic, liked/disliked, credible, etc.
- Brand recall.
- Communication/comprehension of brand messages.
- Brand images, attitudes, attributes.
- Commitment.
- Purchase intention, willingness to try.
- Pre- and post- measures, asked before exposure to the test ad and again after exposure, looking for shifts in attitudes or persuasion.

Clearly, the manner in which respondents are exposed to the advertisements will affect which measures on this list are capable of being employed. For example, if forced exposure has been used, ad awareness is irrelevant; and accurately measuring eye movement requires some way of capturing it, such as a hidden camera focussed on readers' eyes while they read at a fixed spot such as a lectern.

Some of these measures are quantitative in nature, some qualitative, and some could be either.

Designing the questions by which to ask respondents about their experience of an advertisement is difficult and demands thought. The danger is that the form of the questions may govern unnecessarily strongly the terms in which respondents answer, and thus distort the very thing that is to be measured - such as people's feelings and beliefs as a result of exposure to the ads.

Four considerations may be underlined for pre-testing advertisements in magazines.

First, there should be a ‘hook’ which draws readers into looking at the advertisement rather than screening it out after a brief glance. Although a mere glance can still have value to the advertiser, as argued earlier, it is obviously preferable to entice the reader to give prolonged attention to the ad. This hook may be to do with the product category, the brand itself, or some other arresting element within the creative execution. If this hook is not the brand itself, it must be linked to the brand in some way. Pre-testing has a role in ensuring that it is there.

Second, since some of the exposures generated by print are rapid ones, occurring while the reader is scanning the pages to select what to read in full, there is virtue in testing to see, not only what is conveyed during a prolonged exposure of focused attention (which it is certainly advisable to measure), but also what is communicated on those occasions when the ad is only seen briefly by the reader. A great deal may be understood from a quick glance, because visual elements can yield their meaning in an instant. Alan Hedges [1] commented “the sort of things which may enable an ad to communicate rapidly are:

- Communication through pictures rather than words
- Brevity in verbal messages
- Attention to the total gestalt and not merely the detailed parts
- Clear use of logos, symbols and other coded signals
- Continuity of theme”

Third, with print advertising more than with TV advertising, communication of the product messages can occur without the consumer necessarily remembering the ad itself (as discussed previously), and thus the pre-test questions could profitably focus on absorption of the messages rather than on simple recall of the ad and of elements of the ad.

Fourth, it is desirable to develop several creative executions for a print campaign, to keep the campaign fresh for readers and provide additional reasons to continue looking at the advertisements. Pre-testing of all the executions can help ensure not only that each one communicates well but also that they all work together effectively and in harmony.

As always, it is vital that the research is carried out only among people in the campaign’s target audience.

Used flexibly and sensitively, pre-testing can be very rich, informative and constructive.

It is in the hands of advertisers and agencies to pre-test their own magazine advertisements if they choose, but it is in the interest of publishers to encourage them, for better creative work means a better chance of sales success, and thus a better chance of continued advertising in magazines.

7. Magazine effectiveness in action

In this chapter real examples of measuring magazine advertising effectiveness are summarised, classified by the criteria of effectiveness and by the media strategy. Between them the case studies cover:

- a range of criteria of effectiveness, from sales to ad awareness
- campaigns using magazines only; magazines combined with television or radio; and single-medium magazine campaigns and television campaigns assessed in the same way and the assessments then compared
- a variety of data collection methods
- case histories of single brands, and multi-brand studies

The key findings for each case study are summarised in brief narrative form; references to more detailed descriptions are given for those wishing to inspect selected case studies more thoroughly.

Sales

The ideal is to measure the ultimate objective of the campaign - usually sales. The examples here include campaigns for individual products and also multi-brand studies, and for sales data they use household panels in which purchasing is recorded daily.

Magazine-only campaigns

Anchor Spreadable Butter

In the summer of 1995 Anchor Foods ran a campaign for its relatively new spreadable butter variant [22]. The magazine schedule consisted of women's weeklies and television weeklies. Sales and media exposure were tracked by the Taylor Nelson AGB Superpanel. In the analysis the Superpanel sample was divided into those exposed to the campaign and those who were not.

There was a clear difference between the two groups. Six weeks after the last advertisement was published the exposed group had increased its volume share by 31% relative to the unexposed group. This uplift was sustained, and by 24 weeks the value of the extra sales was quantified as £735,000 – an extra 200 metric tonnes of butter. Those responding to the advertising tended to be young and more upmarket, historically light buyers in the butter market, and brand-switchers. James Galpin of Taylor Nelson AGB wrote “There is a clear short term response to the print advertising, plus evidence of strong long term impact, up to a year after the campaign. The advertising seems to have introduced the brand to a significant number of new users, many of whom have stayed with the brand.”

Proof of Performance

PPA commissioned analyses by Taylor Nelson AGB of their Superpanel household panel database to look at the link between magazine advertising and short term gains in brand share [23]. The analysis examined 20 brands which spent significant sums in advertising in magazines across the two-year period June 1994 - May 1996. The analysis used a large sample of 4,522 housewives with continuous records during the period. Panel members were divided into three equal-sized groups in terms of their reading of the magazines covered by the self-completion questionnaire. The bottom third of the panel did not read these magazines at all, so were labelled 'non-readers'.

Of the 20 brands investigated, 10 brands advertised in magazines only, and the other ten used magazines and television. The mixed-media brands are discussed separately below; for the moment I deal with the magazine-only brands. The table below shows the results for the 10 brands combined.

The top row shows the brand shares of the 10 brands combined, among the third of the panel who were heaviest readers of magazines. Brand shares across all months in the two-year period are indexed as 100. In those months in which brands did not advertise in magazines, the brands' shares showed an index of 98. In months when individual brands spent £25,000-£75,000 in magazines, those brands' share rose to an index of 106. Months which enjoyed the highest expenditure of £75,000 or more showed an index of 109. For these months, magazine advertising increased short-term sales by about 11% (109/98) compared with the months with no advertising.

As a control at the other end of the scale, among the non-reading third of the panel who were not exposed to the advertising, the brand shares were no better – indeed they were worse - in the months when there was heavy magazine advertising.

Brand shares (indexed)

10 magazine-only brands

Magazine category	All Months	Months* with magazine ad spend of:			
		None	£1-25k	£25-75k	£75+k
Heavy readers	100	98	96	106	109
Light readers	100	101	91	102	102
Non-readers	100	103	91	102	91
Total panel	100	100	93	104	102

*Time-lagged by one month, to allow approximately for build-up of magazine reading events

These data are comparing the purchase behaviour of the same people under different levels of magazine advertising activity, and the conclusion must be that magazine advertising has a significant effect on short-term sales. An increase in brand share of

11% is a very considerable achievement, often representing a high volume of sales in these fmccg product fields.

MPA: Nielsen SalesScan

Magazine Publishers of America (MPA) commissioned A C Nielsen to use their 50,000 Household Scanner Panel to examine the impact of ten magazine campaigns running in the second quarter of 1998 in the USA [24]. The purchases made by households exposed to magazines carrying the ads were compared with purchases by demographically matched households not exposed to those magazines.

Of the households that were exposed to magazines:

- A higher percentage bought the advertised product (for 9 of the 10 products)
- The volume of purchases per household was greater (for 8 of the 10 products)
- The absolute sums of money spent were greater (for 8 of the 10 products)

The MPA concluded that the "findings clearly demonstrate that increased magazine weight results in increased sales for advertisers".

Magazine & TV mixed-media campaigns

Kenco Freeze Dried Instant Coffee

Kraft Jacobs Suchard, with a tradition of using television as a branding medium, ran a test of a television and magazines mixed-media campaign for their Kenco Freeze Dried Instant Coffee [25]. IPC Magazines was able to offer regional facilities in its publications on a sufficient scale, and the TV and magazines campaign ran from April to November 1995 in the London/South/Anglia regions which accounted for 35% of the market. In the rest of the country a TV-only campaign was run, on an equal expenditure basis. The budget for the magazine expenditure in the test area was found by switching a share of television money into magazines.

Among the target audience of ABC1 housewives, the net coverage achieved in the TV-only regions was near saturation but nevertheless it was improved slightly in the mixed-media regions. The mixed-media campaign also increased gross opportunities to see by 39%, improved the average frequency of exposure by 35%, and greatly reduced the cost per thousand exposures.

Even more significantly, sales were improved by the mixed-media strategy. This was measured by two panels, Nielsen and Taylor Nelson AGB Superpanel.

With sales historically stronger in the south, it was important to allow for this in the analysis. Nielsen's figures showed that prior to the test period Kenco's share of instant coffee sales in the test region was 19.8% ahead of its brand share in the rest of the country. As a result of the test, this differential grew to 25.4%, a very significant gain of 5.6 share points.

The Superpanel was able to compare panel members exposed to the TV-only campaign with those exposed to the TV + magazines campaign. Results showed that the mixed-media campaign improved Kenco volume share by 7%.

Kraft Jacobs Suchard's Director of Coffee Marketing, Nick Shepherd, stated "After careful analysis, we declared ourselves reassured about the potential for mixed-media advertising. Following the regional test results, we are using magazines nationally for Kenco this year – the surest sign that we believe it worked."

Cussons Carex Hand Wash

Before autumn 1996 Cussons Carex liquid soap had confined its advertising to television, with some support on radio and posters. But in autumn 1996 Cussons decided to test the use of magazines as part of a mixed-media campaign [26]. 81% of the budget remained on TV while magazines accounted for 19%, using TV weeklies, women's weeklies and women's monthlies.

Sales were tracked week by week using the Taylor Nelson AGB Superpanel of 10,000 households. In the 12 weeks before the magazine campaign began, the Carex market share of sales was similar among households heavily exposed to the selected magazines and those lightly or not exposed. However as soon as the magazine advertising commenced Carex's brand share leapt among the heavily exposed households while being little affected among the light or non exposed households. This was maintained throughout the campaign period.

Additional research established that:

- Sales attributable to magazines were achieved at one-third of the cost of sales attributed to TV.
- Although magazines were only 19% of the budget, they added 50% volume sales above the uplift generated by television.
- The combination of magazines and television was found to produce the optimum return on investment.

Packaged goods product, JWT USA

A study in the USA demonstrated the high potential of an integrated magazines and TV campaign, compared with TV-only. In 1992 J Walter Thompson ran a year-long controlled experiment for a packaged goods product, a brand in the expensive top end of a very cluttered category [27]. The single-source Nielsen Household Panel was used to measure TV exposure, magazine reading and product purchase. Most regions of the USA ran only the television advertising, while other matched regions ran television and magazine advertising, using regional editions of national magazines. The result was that in terms of total volume of sales the mixed-media campaign outperformed the TV-only areas by 14% across the whole market. Not only that, among the key target audience of young affluent adults the mixed-media campaign outperformed TV-only by a factor of nine. The improved targeting offered by magazines

is one crucial reason for this success, allied to the enhanced power of mixed-media communication.

Proof of Performance

PPA's "Proof of Performance" analysis of the Taylor Nelson AGB Superpanel [23], cited above, also covered 10 brands which advertised in both magazines and television. The aim here was to look at the link between mixed-media advertising and short term gains in brand share and, by grouping a number of campaigns together, to see if any 'general laws' can be discerned.

For all brands the ad expenditure in television outweighed the magazine expenditure, and on average the TV spend was about twice the magazine spend. Nevertheless magazines averaged a larger monthly budget than for the 10 magazine-only campaigns examined earlier. The results are summarised in the next table.

The influence of the television advertising was felt by all the magazine exposure groups, for the brand share indices for all groups were higher in the months when magazine advertising was heaviest, which tended to be months when television advertising was also running. Nevertheless the effect of the magazine advertising can be seen in the gain of 11% among heavy readers (109/98) compared with 4% among non-readers (104/100).

Brand shares (indexed)					
10 magazine+TV brands					
<u>Magazine category</u>	<u>All Months</u>	<u>Months* with magazine ad spend of:</u>			
		<u>None</u>	<u>£1-50k</u>	<u>£50-125k</u>	<u>£125+k</u>
Heavy readers	100	98	99	101	109
Light readers	100	102	94	95	106
Non-readers	100	100	96	97	104
Total panel	100	100	97	98	107

*Magazines time-lagged by one month, to allow approximately for build-up of magazine reading

This interaction effect can also be seen when the analysis is confined to those months in which television advertising was taking place. In the following table the 'All months' column is replaced by a 'TV ad months' column, and the indices in this column are slightly above 100, balanced by indices (not shown) of slightly below 100 for the months when no TV advertising occurred.

The much greater weight of television advertising during these months had the effect of reducing the variation between most of the cells in the table, but the main exception was the index for the heavy reader group in the months when magazine advertising was at its strongest. Here the brand share index rose to 114, a gain of 11% compared with the months with no magazine advertising (114/103).

Brand shares (indexed)

10 magazine+TV brands

Months when TV advertising was taking places

<u>Magazine category</u>	<u>TV ad Months</u>	<u>Months* with magazine ad spend of:</u>			
		<u>None</u>	<u>£1-50k</u>	<u>£50-125k</u>	<u>£125+k</u>
Heavy readers	104	103	103	100	114
Light readers	104	106	101	98	107
Non-readers	102	104	100	96	100
Total panel	103	104	102	98	108

*Magazines time-lagged by one month, to allow approximately for build-up of magazine reading

PPA's analysis neatly supports the Media Multiplier proposition that television plus magazines makes an advertising budget work harder than does television on its own.

Econometric analysis: WerbeWert 97

A study in Germany known as WerbeWert 97 ('Advertising Value 97') was published by VDZ, the German magazine publishers association [28]. It was based on Nielsen shop audit data and examined the contributions made by four variables in determining brand shares: the media mix, the market share in the previous period, changes in distribution, and share of advertising. The data covered 147 packaged goods brands for the five year period to 1996. After testing a variety of statistical modelling approaches, a non-linear regression analysis was found to fit the data very well, with a very high correlation of 0.99 between the actual market shares and the shares predicted by the model.

The model can be employed to examine alternative strategies of various kinds. One such investigation concerned a major brand with a 40% share of market sales and a 43% share of voice (i.e. share of the total advertising support behind all brands in the market). The model showed that if 90% of the brand's budget were spent on television advertising and 10% on print advertising (a common pattern of media support in many markets), the brand would only hold its share of sales at 40%. But if the same budget was instead split into a more substantially mixed-media strategy,

with 40% of the budget in television, 45% in print, 10% on radio and 5% on outdoor, the brand's share would increase from 40% to 44.3% over a period of one year.

Comparing magazine-only campaigns and TV-only campaigns

STAS (Short Term Advertising Strength), USA

John Philip Jones, a professor at Syracuse University in the USA, has demonstrated that magazine advertising and television advertising can both generate sales in the short term.

His technique is to produce a summary measure called STAS (Short Term Advertising Strength) which represents gain in market share of sales. A brand's market share of sales among households *not exposed* to its advertising during the seven days before a purchase is called the Baseline market share (for example, 10.0% share). Its share in households *exposed* to the advertising is the Stimulated market share (for example, 11.5%). The Stimulated share is indexed on the Baseline share, and this index is the STAS figure (for example, 115). For a campaign, the STAS figures for each week are averaged to create a campaign STAS. It is a good measure of the short-term effectiveness of the advertising.

Jones first measured the STAS of television, using a year's data from A C Nielsen's single-source Household Panel [29]. He examined 78 fast-moving consumer goods brands across 12 product fields. The result, averaged across all 78 brands, was a television STAS of 118.

To measure the STAS of magazines Jones turned in 1998 to the most extensive body of single-source data available on brand sales and magazine readership: 110,000 interviews by the Starch research company in the US during the years 1959-1964. [30]. They collected information on purchases of 73 packaged goods brands and exposure to 707 advertisements for these brands in the magazines Life and Saturday Evening Post. The outcome, averaged across all 73 brands, was a magazine STAS of 119.

The similarity of the television STAS of 118 and the magazine STAS of 119 is striking. The conclusion is that magazine advertising is equally as effective (per exposure) as television advertising in generating sales, when each medium is used on its own.

ASTAS, Denmark

Building on Jones' STAS work, Flemming Hansen of TNS Gallup in Denmark has collected a similar type of data through one-off personal interviewing, in contrast to Jone's use of continuous single-source consumer panel data. Hansen called it 'Attitudinal STAS' or ASTAS [31]. In a single interview, people were asked which of a list of 23 brands they had bought in the last three days, and whether for those same brands they had seen any advertising on television or in print within the last week. All

23 brands had used both television and print advertising. A random sample of Danish adults was interviewed face-to-face each week, over a period of six months (like a tracking study). From these data, Attitudinal STAS figures could be worked out as follows. For each brand, the percentage of people who had bought the brand in the last three days was calculated among (a) those who had seen any advertising for the brand in the last seven days (the ‘exposed’ sample), and (b) those who had not seen advertising (the ‘baseline’ sample). Indexing the former on the latter, and multiplying by 100, gives the Attitudinal STAS score.

Hansen reached broadly the same conclusions as Jones - that advertising can have short-term sales effects, these sales effects vary in magnitude from one advertiser to another, this applies both to print and to television advertising, and on average print advertising performs at least as well as television advertising. Indeed, for 20 of the 23 brands that Hansen covered, print advertising performed better than television in creating short-term sales. The table below summarises the brand-by-brand results.

ASTAS scores for 23 brands, by medium

Brand	TV	Print	Print index (TV=100)
Aquafresh	271	378	139
BT	168	320	190
Colgate Toothpaste	155	275	177
Ekstra Bladet	175	224	128
Estralla Chips	377	421	112
Femina	322	526	163
Gevalia Coffee	188	227	121
Hong Cheesse	200	240	120
Jolly Cola	221	250	113
Kellogg's Corn Flakes	141	207	147
Kohbergs Bread	158	197	125
Merrild Coffee	212	210	99
Omo	204	260	127
Pickwick Tea	323	380	118
Respons Shampoo	247	361	146
Riberhus Cheese	184	214	116
Schulstad Bread	154	156	101
Se & Hor	320	244	76
Stimorol Chewing Gum	247	275	111
Tuborg Squash	220	233	106
Twist Chocolate	173	442	255
Vel Dishwasher	234	341	146
Whiskas Catfood	211	186	88
Average	222	286	129

The first column of figures shows the brand by brand ASTAS scores for television advertising; the second column gives the scores for print advertising. The final column shows the scores for print indexed on television's scores as 100. The index is above 100 for all but three campaigns, and on average, across all the campaigns, print advertising achieved scores that were 29% higher than for television.

The figures are not directly comparable with Jones' STAS data because they were derived in a different way, but it is fair to say that these results show print advertising to be at least as effective as television advertising in generating short-term sales.

Intermediate measures:

(1) Concerned with the brand

When advertising effectiveness is evaluated through intermediate measures of communication it provides pointers towards the likelihood of a positive effect on sales, yet they are only pointers because the connection between the intermediate communication and the end result of sales is indirect and not guaranteed. Measures concerned with the brand are to be preferred to measures concerned with advertising - though in practice many surveys collect both. The examples summarised here use qualitative and/or quantitative research, and tracking studies.

Tracking studies measure one or more aspects of the performance of the advertising, through time, and relate this performance to the amount and timing of exposure to the advertising. Performance may be assessed in terms of awareness of the advertising, attitudes to the product, likelihood of buying the product, and/or a range of other factors. Normally, separate representative samples of informants are interviewed at regular intervals, such as weekly. Undoubtedly this can be an excellent way of monitoring the ongoing progress of a campaign, and a source for deriving guidelines about the volume and timing of advertising effort, media choice, and other aspects. The main debating point concerns what the performance measures can tell us: how good are ad awareness, purchasing intention, and so on as indicators of ultimate sales?

Magazine & TV mixed-media campaigns

Multiplying the Media Effect, and The Media Multiplier

These two studies have been summarised already on pages 20-21. They used semi-structured qualitative interviewing techniques to elicit what went through respondents' minds when they saw advertisements for test brands in print, television or both media. From this, respondents' take-out about the brands themselves could be evaluated, and the contributions of the two media assessed, leading to a fresh understanding of how print and television complement each other in communicating brand messages.

'Analyzing Media Interactions', USA

The conclusions from *Multiplying The Media Effect* and *The Media Multiplier* were supported by the results of a controlled experiment carried out by Julie Edell and Kevin Keller at Marketing Science Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts [32]. In 'laboratory' conditions, respondents were exposed to combinations of television and magazine advertisements for three test products, under the guise of being asked for their opinions about television news programmes and weekly news magazines. Some respondents saw the magazine ads first, followed by the television commercials for the same three products; others saw the commercials first, then the magazine ads. As a control, other respondents saw either the magazine ads twice each and no TV, or the TV commercials twice each with no magazine ads. When all exposures were completed, respondents were asked a series of questions about their *second* exposure for each product: for some people this was a magazine ad, for others it was a TV commercial. The questions were designed to establish how they processed the ads and the judgements they formed about the ads and the brands.

The result was that, regardless of the order in which the TV and magazine ads were seen, exposure to one medium helped respondents to get more out of the other medium, compared with seeing the first medium a second time.

TV+TV versus Mag+TV. Taking as a base for comparison the people who saw the TV commercial twice, the people who saw the magazine ad followed by the TV commercial got more out of the commercial. They paid greater attention to the sound track, the visual elements and the brand name. They also had more thoughts evaluating the brand, and more thoughts evaluating other aspects of the commercial. In addition there was greater brand name recall, and greater recall and recognition of brand claims. Evidently print had made television work harder.

Mag+Mag versus TV+Mag. A similar picture emerged when television preceded magazines. Taking as a base for comparison the people who saw the magazine advertisement twice, the people who saw the TV commercial followed by the magazine ad got more out of the magazine ad. They had more thoughts evaluating the advertising and more evaluative thoughts of other kinds. They also had greater recall of the brand name and of the brand's claims.

Advertising delivered in two different forms, with their different ways of communicating, is evidently more stimulating than receiving advertising in one medium only.

Ad Track 94

Ad Track 94 was a UK continuous tracking survey lasting 48 weeks from January to December 1994 [33]. IPC Magazines commissioned Millward Brown to conduct 200 interviews per week, or nearly 10,000 interviews in total, among women who had read a magazine in the past year (about 90% of all women). 24 brands advertising in magazines were tracked, and half of these were using television as well. A wide cross-section of product fields were covered.

One of the key questions asked throughout the year was about purchasing intention: “Which of these would you ever consider buying either for yourself or for others?”

There were 22 brands where it was possible to isolate the effect of magazines. For 15 of these, there was a measurable increase in purchase consideration. 11 of these were magazine-only campaigns and four were mixed-media campaigns using magazines and TV. Of the seven magazine campaigns showing no movement in purchase consideration, five were already running at quite high levels and were therefore very hard to shift upwards.

These results demonstrated that magazine campaigns can increase people’s willingness to consider buying products.

Six TV-only campaigns had been tracked, and of these two showed an increase in purchase consideration - though the four others were already running at quite high levels.

Intermediate measures:

(2) Concerned with the advertisement - ad awareness

Ad awareness is the intermediate measure which, among all the popular measures, is furthest from the end result of sales or equivalent. Awareness can still be worth measuring because it is evidence that some level of communication is getting through, but awareness is not sufficient in itself. It does not necessarily follow from high awareness and memorability of the advertising that sales will be excellent. The comment about the TCP liquid anti-septic campaign referred to on page 18 is pertinent: “All previous research had shown that it was TCP’s TV advertisements that were remembered, but our new analysis suggested that it was the print advertisements that worked”.

The examples given in this section have collected ad awareness information from tracking studies and from face to face interviews in a one-off study, and cover both individual products and multi-brand studies.

Magazine & radio mixed-media campaign

Health Education Authority

The Health Education Authority initiated an advertising campaign to attempt to reverse the growth in drug usage in the UK among 11-25 year olds. The media chosen were teen magazines to reach 11-15 year olds and dance radio stations to reach 16-25 year olds, because “these media are integral to youth culture - private, trusted sources of information, and environments where talk of drugs is appropriate” [34]. The magazine campaign featured separate creative treatments for different drugs.

A survey by HPI Research for Emap found high advertisement recognition scores for this campaign, among 11-15 year olds [35]. 76% recognised an ad from the campaign, and as regards the individual drugs 67% recognised the Ecstasy ad, 46% recognised

the LSD ad and 44% the Speed ad. HPI concluded that these scores were high because “(a) teenagers have an exceptionally close bond with their own personal magazine titles - most read them alone in their bedrooms; (b) the arresting creative style and having a message that is of deep personal interest to its target group. It was reinforced by the tone of the copy which presents facts in a way that is conducive to the medium, i.e. very straight, almost non-emotional, as if from a friend rather than from an authority figure”, and (c) the research was conducted among the relevant target audience and not a wider, more diffuse group. HPI commented that these recognition scores match what could typically be achieved on TV.

This HEA case study won the Grand Prix in the 1998 IPA Advertising Effectiveness Awards. It could also have been listed earlier in this chapter under the ‘Sales’ heading. In this instance the ultimate measure of effectiveness was not sales (quite the opposite!) but a reversal in the growing tide of drug usage. Remarkably, drug usage among young people did fall in 1996 and again in 1997 from its high point in 1995. It could be shown that the advertising campaign in magazines and radio was the prime reason for this achievement, by creating attitudinal changes that resulted in changes in behaviour.

Magazine & TV mixed-media campaigns

Kenco Freeze Dried Instant Coffee

The Kenco campaign described earlier on page 30 not only measured sales but also advertising awareness. Millward Brown tracking research showed gains in advertising awareness in the test area compared with the TV-only regions as soon as the magazine advertising began and it continued throughout the campaign period. Ad recognition levels were highest among magazine readers. Overall the reduction in TV spend in the test areas did not prove at all detrimental to brand image.

‘Advertising Effect’: MPA 113-brand study

This analysis used a continuous tracking study as a means of establishing the comparative strengths of television and magazines in generating ad awareness.

The conclusions were published in 1998 by Magazine Publishers of America [36], in which Millward Brown examined 113 campaigns in the USA which used both television and magazine advertising. Awareness of the campaigns had been measured by Millward Brown as part of their normal continuous telephone tracking studies, during the two-year period January 1996-December 1997. For every campaign, Millward Brown compared the awareness generated by each medium with the expenditure in the medium, and to the number of gross rating points bought in the medium.

Combining all 113 campaigns, 36% of total advertising awareness was created by television, 29% by magazines, and 35% jointly by television and magazines together.

Television therefore had a 71% share of awareness (36%+35%) and magazines had a 64% share (29%+35%).

77% of the advertising expenditure had been on television and only 23% in magazines. Relating this to awareness, television had an index of 92 (71% share of awareness divided by 77% share of expenditure) whereas magazines had an index of 278 (64% share of awareness divided by 23% share of cost). Magazines' index of 278 is 3.0 times greater than television's 92. In other words for every dollar spent, magazines delivered three times as much ad awareness as television.

It was a similar conclusion when looking at gross ratings rather than expenditure. Television generated 76% of the gross ratings while magazines generated 24%. Thus the index for television was 93 (71% share of awareness divided by 76% share of ratings) and for magazines it was 267. So for every 100 rating points bought, magazines delivered almost three times as much ad awareness as television.

These general conclusions were found to be true:

- across product categories
- for different budget levels
- whether there were few or many competitors
- for new and established brands

Another finding was that for most brands (61% of them) a change in advertising awareness was associated with a corresponding change in purchase intent ("Definitely or probably will buy") - supporting awareness as a worthwhile measure. Moreover, for brands where this association occurred, most of the ad awareness was attributed jointly to television and magazines working together. This reinforces the view that the two media in combination are more effective than either on its own.

Ad Track 94

The Ad Track 94 study mentioned above [33] also asked about awareness of the advertising in magazines (and television where used), for each brand. The question for magazines was "Thinking about magazines, have you seen any advertising for recently?" If the answer was Yes a follow-up question was "And have you seen advertised in magazines during the last few days?"

Results were shown as an Awareness Index, which measures the percentage increase in awareness per 100 gross rating points. Averaging across all the campaigns, magazine advertising was creating an awareness score of 13% - exactly the same as the television advertising. So Ad Track showed that magazine ads are as powerful as TV commercials for getting consumers to give attention to advertising. Millward Brown added that the magazine exposures are generated at roughly half the cost of the TV exposures.

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About the author

Guy Consterdine began his career in major advertising agencies, S.H.Benson and Ogilvy & Mather, where he was Media Research Manager, International Media Manager, and Media Group Head. In the latter role he was responsible for the media planning on many of the agency's accounts. He was also heavily involved in advertising research. During this period he served as Chairman of the Media Research Group.

He transferred to the media owner side of the business, where his roles included Marketing Services Manager at Times Newspapers and Director of Research at the leading magazine company International Thomson Publishing Ltd. One of his chief interests was developing new research into how readers use magazines and newspapers, and the communication effects of combining television and print advertising.

He then founded Guy Consterdine Associates, a consultancy which specialises in media research, with special emphasis on print media.

Among other current assignments, he is research consultant to PPA.