

# HOW PRINT ADVERTISING WORKS (WITH AN EMPHASIS ON MAGAZINES) - A Review of the Evidence

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## Summary

A review of more than 200 research studies from the last two decades demonstrates how readers use print media (particularly magazines), how the advertising within them works, and that the advertising sells products. My interpretation of this body of research is summarised in the following 37 points, which are grouped under four headings:

- The reader relationship
- The advertiser relationship
- Evidence that print sells products
- Print combined with TV advertising

Some of these points apply to magazines only, while others reflect the attributes of the print medium as a whole and embrace newspapers too.

## The reader relationship

1. The print medium's essential strength lies in the active way in which readers choose and use their publications. Print is an active medium, with the reader in control.
2. People vary enormously in their interests and in their information needs. The great variety of publications available means that everyone can find a title that serves almost any interest that they have.
3. Since different categories of publication fulfil different needs they work in different ways, which are well adapted to their readers' requirements. Similarly, within categories there are vital distinctions of character between individual titles, giving each title its own unique positioning.
4. A strong relationship, a bond of trust, grows up between a magazine and its readers. Reading a favourite magazine is like talking to a friend.
5. A reader's identification with an engaging magazine can go well beyond the simple provision of information and ideas. When a magazine strikes a chord it can reinforce the reader's own self-image. This creates a particularly powerful and trusting relationship.
6. This relationship is close and mutually demanding. The reader expects and receives stimulation, information, and an appropriate kind of journalism. The magazine for its part asks for time and commitment from the reader.
7. Readers are seen to give this commitment. The time spent reading is substantial, and the copies are read thoroughly. They also tend to be read repeatedly, often picked up more than once during a day and on more than one day. The average magazine page is looked at twice (almost) by each reader.
8. Readers can have their own repertoire of magazines to meet different needs and moods. Matching the mood and the magazine reinforces the values of the personal relationship and ensures that reading takes place in a highly receptive frame of mind.

## The advertiser relationship

9. The intimacy between reader and magazine benefits advertisers. The magazine environment delivers a reader in the right frame of mind to be receptive to the advertising. In the sympathetic context of the right magazine, the strong positive brand values of the magazine can transfer onto the advertisements.
10. The stronger the reader's affiliation with the magazine as a brand, the higher the level of endorsement that the advertising receives from the magazine's personality.
11. Advertising is seen as an integral part of magazines. Relevant advertising is valued by readers, and is consumed with interest.

12. Readers take action as a result of seeing advertising in magazines.
13. Targeting with precision and without wastage is a key strength of magazines.
14. The communication can be enhanced by using different creative executions in different types of magazine - targeting through the creative work as well as through selecting the appropriate audience.
15. The 'presenter effect' means that the interpretation of a given advertisement can be influenced by the specific publication in which it appears.
16. Readers screen advertisements in much the same way as they screen the editorial - looking for items that interest, intrigue, catch the eye, entertain, inform.
17. It is wise to pre-test the creative executions in order to ensure that they take maximum advantage of this active involvement in advertisements, and that they communicate the intended messages.
18. Advertisement features ('advertorials'), in being a halfway house between editorial pages and advertisements, present special opportunities. They are understood by readers as being under the joint control of the editor and the advertiser, and consequently there is a strong implied endorsement by the magazine.

### **Evidence that print sells products**

19. The Ad Track 94 survey proved that magazine advertising can not only generate marked increases in advertising awareness, but also that magazine campaigns create awareness at a very similar level to television. Across a range of campaigns, the average awareness achieved by 100 gross rating points in TV was 13%, and in magazines the average was exactly the same, 13%. But the magazine exposures are generated at roughly half the cost of TV.
20. Ad Track also demonstrated that magazines can generate movement in willingness to consider buying the advertised brands. Millward Brown, Ad Track's research contractor, concluded "The movements in purchase consideration (two thirds of brands showing an increase) and the relative magnitude of the awareness response (on average on a par with TV but at a lower cost) should provide confidence to clients and planners that magazines are a genuinely powerful medium."
21. A PPA analysis of consumer panel data shows that across a range of brands magazine advertising has a significant effect on short term sales. Among the heavier-reading half of magazine readers, magazine advertising increased average brand share by more than 10%, a considerable achievement.
22. There are many case histories in which newspaper and/or magazine campaigns are shown to sell products effectively and sometimes dramatically. PPA has a collection of over one hundred examples, and many individual newspaper and magazine publishers have their own collections.
23. The IPA's Advertising Effectiveness Awards databank contains almost 700 case histories with singularly thorough evidence that the advertising itself made a major contribution to the sales success. Many of these cases feature newspaper and/or magazine advertising, either on its own or in combination with other media, and they are further proof that print can sell.

### **Print combined with TV advertising**

24. Print and television are complementary to one another. TV advertising is intrusive, powerful but fleeting. Print advertising is under the control of the readers, carries reader-relationship values, and can reach light viewers. There is growing evidence that a TV-only campaign is likely to be less effective than a TV-plus-print strategy.
25. Most TV-only campaigns give seemingly inadequate weight to important sectors of the market - lighter viewers of commercial television, who tend to be younger, upmarket and better educated.
26. A combination of television and print can achieve a very considerable improvement in the way exposures are distributed across the audience. In other words, better targeting.
27. Magazines tend to be read with less distractions from other activities compared with television viewing.
28. Consumers say they are more likely to take action as a result of reading magazines than as a result of watching television. Magazines also compare well with television in terms of being a source of information and ideas, including information needed to decide what to buy, and for first finding out about new products.
29. Because of the different ways in which the two media work, the communication from a TV campaign can be enhanced by adding print. Print can both convey new information that is not in the TV commercial, and lead people to perceive the TV commercial in new ways. The result is a richer, more complete communication. Print makes television work harder. The page and the screen nourish each other.

30. The Ad Track survey showed that at its first exposure, a magazine ad typically performs about 40% better than a TV commercial in terms of creating awareness of the advertising.
31. A major print campaign should be conceived in the form of several complementary creative executions.
- More and more market tests and case histories are proving that mixed-media TV-plus-magazines campaigns can sell products. In some cases these are controlled experiments which show the mixed-media strategy out-performing the TV-only strategy.
33. PPA's analysis of consumer panel data (paragraph 21 above) found that magazines produce significant gains in market share when used in combination with television advertising. Among the heavier-reading half of magazine readers, magazine advertising increased average brand share by more than 10%, over and above the effect of the television advertising.
34. The improved performance from a mixed-media campaign is due to a combination of better targeting (especially among the lighter/younger/upmarket segments) and more powerful communication than television alone can deliver.
35. Television advertisers sometimes run bursts that are unnecessarily heavy. Lower exposure levels may be sufficient, before severe diminishing returns sets in. One or two TV exposures per week may often be enough. The 'over-spend' could be more effective if re-allocated - and print advertising is one of the strongest options for this investment.
- Print could be added to a TV-only campaign either by re-allocating a minority of the TV budget to print, or by leaving the TV budget untouched and making print a straight addition at the expense of the promotions or other budget. A mixed-media campaign improves the efficiency of media advertising and justifies larger budgets spent on above-the-line media - if necessary at the expense of below-the-line.
37. Promotions can boost sales in the very short term but usually they are not profitable. Promotions do not benefit sales over the long term (as above-the-line advertising does), but instead they weaken the product's branding.

## Objectives

Print media (by which I mean magazines and newspapers) have a great contribution to make to the advertising communication chain, but it is not easy to keep up with the latest research which proves it, and there is a tendency for earlier landmarks to fade from folk memory. The Periodical Publishers Association (PPA) in the UK felt that a synthesis of previous and current work on magazines was needed, and as Research Consultant to PPA I was commissioned to write it.

The intention was to set out a cogent account of how magazine advertising works - as demonstrated by the supporting research.

The objective of this Symposium paper is to present the conclusions of the synthesis. Some of these conclusions apply to magazines only, while others reflect the attributes of the print medium as a whole and therefore embrace newspapers too. A 37-point summary has already been given in the previous section. The rest of this paper selects a few of the key areas for closer inspection; inevitably only a proportion of the topics can be covered within the confines of a conference paper. However the 36,000 word full report can be obtained from the PPA [1].

My choice of the key areas to include in this paper is governed by the increasing calls from advertisers and agencies for accountability from the media, and the growing response from magazines by way of fresh proof that magazine advertising sells. I also look at the 'media multiplier' argument that has become more prominent recently, which stresses the value of combining print and television rather than using television advertising on its own. These topics best reflect the title of this session, 'Performance of Media'.

This means that I have had to exclude from the main body of this paper some very important areas: the evidence that a relationship develops between a reader and his or her chosen publication; the effects of this relationship on the way the title is read and used; and the mechanisms through which all this benefits advertisers.

## Evidence that print sells products

There can be no doubt that print advertising is capable of selling products. Many hundreds of case histories exist which show positive sales effects of campaigns centred on print advertising. There are also many examples where market research identifies improvements in intermediate measures ranging from awareness to intention to buy - measures which it is reasonable to assume are closely connected with subsequent sales. Ad Track is a good starting point.

## IPC's Ad Track 94

Ad Track 94 [2] demonstrated that magazine advertising can generate:

- (a) marked increases in advertising awareness, and
- (b) movements in brand purchase consideration.

### Method

Ad Track 94 was a continuous tracking survey lasting 48 weeks from January to December 1994. 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.

Two main questions were asked throughout the year:

- 1 Awareness of advertising in magazines (and television where used), for each brand.
- 2 Purchase consideration. The wording was "Which of these would you ever consider buying either for yourself or for others?"

Two of the key innovations of this survey were the introduction of techniques for handling (a) the time-lag in magazine exposures and (b) the over-exposure of some of the magazine advertisement executions.

Magazine exposures do not all occur instantly the issue is published (unlike viewing of TV commercials). Magazine exposures are spread over days, weeks or even months, and this must be taken into account in order to relate ad exposure and advertising effect. In 1990 Millward Brown had conducted a readership survey which established which issue of each magazine had been read, and this allowed an understanding of the way actual exposure to a magazine builds up through time. Telmar developed a computer system called Timeplan which merged this data with National Readership Survey average issue readership data, and modelled the week by week pattern of actual exposures generated by a given magazine campaign.

In previous work Millward Brown had found that repeated exposures to the same print advertisement could gradually diminish in their effect, because with print ads - which can be held and studied for as long as the reader wishes - readers can take out the key messages during the early exposures. The solution is to introduce a new creative execution, thus refreshing the stimulation given to readers. Millward Brown's modelling of the Ad Track 94 data took account of the extent to which each magazine campaign introduced new creative treatments.

Alan Smith has more to say on these topics in his separate paper at this Symposium.

### Results

The Awareness Index 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 magazine ads are as powerful as TV commercials for getting consumers to give attention and thought to brands. On top of this, the magazine exposures are generated at roughly half the cost of the TV exposures.

Secondly, there is the measurement of consumers who would consider buying the advertised products - 'purchase consideration' as this was called. 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. Six TV-only campaigns had been tracked, and of these only two showed an increase in purchase consideration - though the four others were already running at quite high levels.

### Conclusion

The Ad Track 94 research demonstrated the power of the magazine medium, both in delivering a message about the brand and in influencing purchase decisions. Magazine campaigns can be as successful as TV campaigns - and indeed in some cases can be more effective.

Millward Brown's conclusion was "The movements in purchase consideration (two thirds of brands showing an increase) and the relative magnitude of the awareness response (on average on a par with TV but at a lower cost) should provide confidence to clients and planners that magazines are a genuinely powerful medium."

### Rolling Ad Track

In April 1996 IPC Magazines introduced 'Rolling Ad Track', a continuous 'omnibus' form of Millward Brown's 1994 methodology, offering economies of scale and incorporating a number of further developments. IPC's aim is "to make Rolling Ad Track a standard industry tool for evaluating the effectiveness of magazine advertising¼ Advertisers can join the study at any

time, to suit their campaign dates, and [on] its first birthday well over 20 major brands have participated and have benefited from the learnings". Advertisers pay for their own research and the results remain confidential, but in due course this may be a source of further published evidence about the ability of magazines to deliver ad messages and stimulate propensity to buy. Lisa Pollard of IPC will be referring to Rolling Ad Track in her own paper at the Symposium.

## PPA analysis of Taylor Nelson AGB Superpanel

The UK's Periodical Publishers Association (PPA) commissioned an analysis by Taylor Nelson AGB of their Superpanel data to look at the link between magazine advertising and short term gains in brand share. PPA has published the results in a report called "Proof of Performance", dated May 1997 [3]. The idea was to group a number of campaigns together to see if any 'general laws' can be discerned.

The Superpanel provides single-source information on three key aspects:  
 fmcg sales (panel members use hand-held bar code readers to record their purchases, daily)  
 magazine exposure (through a self-completion questionnaire)  
 television viewing (self-completion questionnaire, followed by fusion using BARB panel data).  
 It is therefore possible to study the relationship between advertising campaigns and sales.

PPA's study 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 have been 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 later; for the moment I deal with the magazine-only brands. The following table shows the results for the 10 brands combined.

### 10 magazine-only brands Brand shares (indexed)

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

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.

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 fmcg product fields.

## IPC analyses of Taylor Nelson AGB Superpanel

IPC Magazines have also utilised the Taylor Nelson AGB Superpanel, taking an individual case history approach as distinct from the PPA study's method of looking at data aggregated across brands. The first case history to emerge from IPC's work dealt with Anchor Foods, with further case histories now being added to the evidence. Lisa Pollard's paper deals with this in detail.

### Case histories

While most success stories remain unpublished, a number have seen the light of day. PPA has compiled information on more than one hundred case histories and is continually adding to the collection. A cross-section of 52 examples has been published [4],

covering a very wide range of product fields. Many individual publishers of newspapers and magazines also have their own collections of success stories.

### **The IPA's Advertising Effectiveness Awards**

The Advertising Effectiveness Awards were introduced by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) in 1980, as a competition for case histories to demonstrate that advertising can be proved to work, and that it is a serious business investment which increases the profitability of products and services. Since 1980 the Awards have been held every two years and the prize-winning entries published in book form under the title "Advertising Works". The most recent Award is the ninth, held in 1996 with results published in 1997 [5]. In addition all the case histories entered for the Awards from 1980 to 1996 - nearly 700 of them - are held available in a databank.

A hallmark of the winning case histories is the quality and thoroughness of the demonstration that the advertising itself made a major contribution to the success of the product as measured in terms of sales (or other more appropriate criterion). Those campaigns which chose print as the main medium, or one of the main media, are further proof that print advertising can sell. All nine years of the Awards furnished examples. The K Shoes campaign is cited here as a recent example.

#### **K Shoes Washable Leather Trainers**

To enter the training shoe market, K Shoes developed a new kind of women's trainer - one made of a leather that could be washed in a washing machine. To carry the full-page advertisements, women's magazines were selected by virtue of their ability to talk in a personal way to their readers, especially existing K Shoes customers. The publications chosen were women's weeklies, domestic monthlies, home interest monthlies and feature monthlies. There was also one insertion in the Daily Mail and some four-sheet poster sites. The campaign ran in Spring and autumn 1991.

Tracking among readers of the women's magazines showed significant gains in ad awareness both during and after the campaign.

There was a healthy level of sales. Moreover econometric analysis of sales through K Shoe shops indicated that the campaign led to a 61% increase in sales beyond what would be expected without the advertising. Assuming that the same pattern occurred in independent retailers, a total of more than 56,000 additional pairs of trainers were sold as a direct result of the advertising. The marginal profit on these extra sales far outweighed the cost of the campaign. And this is without taking account of the long-term residual benefit of the advertising.

As a result of the success of the campaign, K Shoes expanded its product range from one style of women's trainers to six women's styles, two men's styles, and three children's styles.

### **Print combined with TV advertising**

Print is an effective and versatile advertising medium not only when employed on its own but also when used in conjunction with television. Television is of course a very powerful medium, and obviously it works in a very different way from print. Its strengths cannot be matched by print, but television has limitations too, and these are precisely where print has its strengths.

Thus television is intrusive, has movement and sound and can create emotion, and while the commercial is being broadcast there is no competing editorial content; but a commercial runs a fixed length of time and is beyond the control of the viewer. Magazine and newspaper advertisements are permanent and portable; the reader can hold and study an ad for as long as desired. The reader is in control of his or her own exposure. Consequently the combination of television and print is even more effective than television on its own.

The following sections look at several aspects of this topic, and draw the conclusion that the effectiveness of a television-only campaign will be enhanced if it is combined with print advertising.

There are two ways of paying for the print advertising. One is to re-allocate a minority of the TV budget (perhaps about 25% or 30%) to print. The other is to leave the television budget untouched and make print a straight addition, drawing the money from elsewhere and in particular from promotions. Promotions can boost sales in the very short term but in the long run they weaken the product's branding. In addition they can often be shown to be unprofitable even in the short term. A mixed-media campaign improves the efficiency of media advertising and justifies larger budgets spent on above-the-line media - if necessary at the expense of below-the-line.

### **Improved distribution of advertising exposures**

No television advertising campaign provides evenly balanced coverage across all sectors of the population. Many people are simply light viewers of commercial television and cannot be reached to anything like the same extent or frequency as the heavy viewers who watch a lot of commercial TV. The light viewers do however read magazines and newspapers, and an appropriate selection of titles in an advertising schedule can fill the coverage and frequency gaps left by television. In other words, improved targeting.

This can be demonstrated by analysing the coverage and exposure frequency of the two media strategies. A published example is the set of five campaigns I analysed for the Press Research Council under the title "Press For A Better Balance" [6]. Five real-life television campaigns were evaluated using the mixed-media analysis programs of Holborn Research Services Ltd. The Target Group Index was used in order to define target audiences in product-usage terms. TV-plus-print versions of these campaigns were devised by re-allocating approximately 25% of the TV expenditure to a print schedule, thus keeping each campaign's total expenditure the same as before. Comparisons were made of the performance of the two versions of each campaign.

The analyses were broken down (among other ways) in terms of weight-of-viewing groups, which divided the adult population into roughly equal thirds in terms of the overall amount of viewing of commercial television. For all five campaigns the results were the same, in spite of there being a varied range of target audiences, expenditure levels, and products (engine oil, cough remedy, financial product, hair conditioner, and draught lager). The conclusions were that by re-allocating about 25% of a television-only budget to print, an advertiser can achieve a number of vital benefits:

1. A very considerable improvement in the way advertising exposures are distributed across the target audience.
2. A solution to the problem of adequately reaching light viewers.
3. Similarly a solution to the difficulty of reaching ABC1s, the more affluent, the better educated (groups who are often a key part of an advertiser's target audience).
4. Increased net coverage.
5. Increased numbers who receive higher levels of opportunities to see - such as those receiving at least 4 opportunities to see (4+ coverage).
6. A lower cost per thousand.
7. And as a later section of this report shows, the opportunity of communicating the advertising messages through two different but complementary media forms, with the enhanced richness and effectiveness of communication that this makes possible.

Of course, television and print exposures are not directly comparable. In combining the opportunities to see delivered by each medium it is not implied that a TV exposure is the same thing as a magazine exposure. Rather, there is a choice between reaching a particular member of the target audience in different ways: say 6 times through a television-only campaign, or say 9 times through a TV-plus-print campaign which delivers 5 exposures through television and 4 through the print advertisements.

### **TV+Print communicates better than TV-only**

Because television and print work in such different but complementary ways, the communication delivered by a TV-only campaign can be substantially enhanced by adding print.

The two classic pieces of research which demonstrated the improved communications delivered by TV-plus-print were 'Multiplying the Media Effect' [7] and 'The Media Multiplier' [8]. Between them, they provide 19 detailed case histories showing how print advertisements can add to and enrich what is perceived in television commercials, especially if the creative treatments in the two media are designed to be complementary.

#### **'Multiplying the Media Effect'**

This survey, carried out in 1985 and published during 1986 and 1987, studied seven mixed-media campaigns. It was commissioned by a group of consumer magazine publishers working together under the name of The Magazine Marketplace Group, under the auspices of PPA, and the fieldwork was conducted by Communication Research Ltd.

The approach was to show informants magazine advertisements and television commercials from the same campaigns and examine what was communicated. This was done through hall tests, in which each person saw two or three campaigns. All informants were users of the product types in question, as well as falling within demographic quotas. The order of showing TV and magazine advertisements was carefully rotated, with advertisements being shown a second time under a controlled sequence. After each ad was seen, a standard set of open-ended questions was asked, the key question being "Please tell me everything that passed through your mind while you were looking at the advertisement, whether or not it was actually connected with it".

The overall conclusions of 'Multiplying the Media Effect' were that:

- one medium can communicate ideas additional to those derived from seeing another
- one medium can also affect and enrich what is understood from a subsequent exposure to another medium
- greater strength can be added to a mixed-media campaign by encouraging this process through creative links

The page and the screen nourish each other.

#### **'The Media Multiplier'**

'Multiplying the Media Effect' aroused such interest around the world that the Press Research Council, representing magazines and newspapers, extended the investigation by commissioning twelve more case studies. They were published in 1990 in a report titled 'The Media Multiplier'.

Two research companies conducted the survey in 1988 and 1989: Communication Research Ltd and The Research Business. There was a robust sample of 1,400. Consumers were asked to describe their response to the TV commercial both before and after being shown a print advertisement for the same product. Their separate responses to each medium were recorded, and control groups were shown only the TV commercial or only the print ad. This meant it was possible to identify the effects of TV alone, of print alone, and of both media together.

The results demonstrated that advertising in magazines or newspapers in addition to television, rather than using television on its own, bring a number of very important communication benefits. In summary:

- Print can lead people to perceive the TV commercial in new ways.
- Print can also convey new information that is not in the TV commercial.
- The result of adding print to a TV campaign is a richer, more complete communication.

Print not only makes its own unique contribution, it also makes the television commercials work harder. The effect of adding print to television is not merely additive, it is multiplicative. Using the two media produces an invaluable interaction. Such effects can be heightened by deliberately building creative links between the TV and print advertisements.

With as many as twelve campaigns to analyse, the survey was able to document some of the ways in which print can help television to work better. Every item on the following list emerged from at least two case histories.

Print can:

1. Lead people to see the TV commercial in new ways, and look for details
2. Encourage more response to the commercial
3. Add extra information or messages
4. Re-inforce the TV message
5. Expand the TV message
6. Help understanding of the TV message
7. Strengthen brand identification
8. Make the product more accessible
9. Focus more on product-oriented messages
10. Create a more positive feeling towards the product

There are two other important considerations:

11. The beneficial effects can be heightened by building creative links
12. The benefit is a two-way affair

While no mixed-media campaign will work in all of these ways simultaneously, all TV-plus-print campaigns will benefit from some of the factors on this list.

Since the publication in 1986 of 'Multiplying the Media Effect' many other surveys along similar lines have been conducted in countries around the world. All have found the same results: the combination of print and television has a multiplying effect on communication effectiveness, compared with television on its own. Without doubt this is not a phenomenon peculiar to the UK but is a result of the contrasting but complementary characteristics of the two media.

### **Magazines can beat TV for registering something new**

As already discussed, IPC's Ad Track 94 survey showed that on average magazine advertising generates the same level of awareness as television advertising - at the rate of 13% awareness per 100 gross rating points. However for magazines the figure of 13% was an average across all exposures in the campaign. A higher awareness level was generated by the first exposure to magazines - whereas Millward Brown found that for the television campaigns the first exposure produced the same awareness level as the TV campaign average.

In fact the awareness score of magazine ads at their first exposure was 18% awareness per 100 rating points, averaged across all campaigns. This can be compared with an average awareness score for TV commercials at their first exposure of 13% awareness per 100 rating points. As Millward Brown wrote, "this suggests that when they first appear, the print executions are often better at registering something in connection with the brand than TV".

This is a most impressive result for magazine advertising - creating more awareness on first exposure than television usually accomplishes.

The reason that the average awareness index for magazine ads across complete campaigns fell to 13% is, in Millward Brown's view, that a given creative execution in print eventually loses some of its impact because readers have either absorbed the message from the ad or else mentally edit it out of their subsequent reading. This potential for over-exposure of a given execution arises from one of the great benefits of print advertising - that readers are in full control of what they look at and can study an advertisement for as long as they choose, and as often as they choose.



The solution to over-exposure of a given creative treatment is to use more executions: instead of running just one advertisement, create two or three. The new ads will stimulate fresh involvement and push the average awareness index above the 13% mark - that is, above TV's average level.

There is much more to be discovered about the ability of magazines to refresh a campaign by introducing new creative executions. This is one of the priority areas for further research. Meanwhile Millward Brown are surely correct in saying "a major magazine campaign needs to be conceived in the form of several complementary executions".

### Market tests: sales effectiveness of TV + magazines

A growing number of market tests are proving that mixed-media campaigns involving magazines can sell products, as these examples demonstrate.

### PPA analysis of Taylor Nelson AGB Superpanel

PPA's analysis of the Taylor Nelson AGB Superpanel, cited earlier [3], 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.

#### 10 magazine+TV brands

##### Brand shares (indexed)

Magazine category	All Months	Months* with magazine ad spend of:			
		None	£1-50k	£50-125k	£125+k
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*

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).

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.

#### 10 magazine+TV brands

##### Brand shares (indexed)

##### Months when TV advertising was taking places

Magazine category	TV ad Months	Months* with magazine ad spend of:			
		None	£1-50k	£50-125k	£125+k
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*

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).

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.

### **Nielsen's 'Strategies of Successful Brands'**

IPC Magazines co-sponsored one of the largest-ever UK studies into the long-term effectiveness of marketing activity. It was conducted in 1995-96 by Nielsen [9] and examined 300 products from 50 product fields, using the Nielsen Homescan consumer panel, Nielsen tracking data, and Register-MEAL advertising expenditure figures. For each product the market share, consumer penetration and loyalty were recorded for the six months ending April 1992 and the six months ending April 1995. Changes in these key brand measures were assessed against their advertising policy, pricing, promotions and innovation. Nielsen concluded that innovation is the best single means of developing the strength of a brand, and that sales promotion activity does not achieve brand building at all in the long term.

The lesson for media strategy was that, although many of these brands used only television for their advertising, on average advertisers obtained a higher brand share, and were more successful in maintaining or increasing share over the three-year period, if they used two forms of media such as television combined with magazines. Moreover brands using magazine advertising were on average both bigger and more likely to be growing. Nielsen concluded that "since magazine advertising is less expensive than TV advertising, this implies that magazines can be a highly cost-effective way of communicating with the end buyer". In addition, the fastest-growing brands tended to be those with a higher proportion of their total adspend in magazines.

### **Other examples**

Other examples of studies which prove that mixed-media magazine plus TV campaigns can sell products include Kenco Freeze Dried Instant Coffee, a JWT campaign for an anonymous packaged goods product, data from the Hassloch BehaviourScan panel in Germany, and the 30/30 Synergy Study in South Africa - all of which are summarised in the full report "How Magazine Advertising Works" [1].

### **Priorities for further research**

The most significant gap in the research evidence is proof of sales. There are too few studies of a rigorous nature which give an unambiguous demonstration that print media sell products - and particularly that print plus TV sells better than TV on its own. Future evidence can take several routes. One is to publish more case histories of effective print advertising campaigns, written to the demanding standards of the IPA's Advertising Effectiveness Awards. A second route is through analysis of existing databases, along the lines of the PPA's 'Proof of Performance' study; the techniques used in that study could be further refined to forge an even better-tuned instrument. Thirdly and more ambitiously, tailor-made market tests can be set up; these will require a long time-scale and high investment but the results would be invaluable. Alan Smith's ideas in his separate paper are a good example.

Another important gap in the evidence concerns over-exposure of print creative treatments. How often should the creative execution be changed? Millward Brown's work suggests that this is a fundamental part of knowing how advertisers can get the best from the print medium.

Many other gaps in our knowledge can be summed up by saying that we need a deeper understanding of the whole area of how readers use print advertising. This covers a wide field of specific topics worth investigating further, ranging from repeat exposure (e.g. MPX) to readers' attitudes to their chosen titles.

## References

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