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7.4 Focusing on the consumer

This paper was presented by Peter Masson on behalf of Ingemar Lindberg.

What follows concerns the approach that Testalogen take to their media and market research work in Sweden. Sweden is the only country in Europe where there is not a joint industry committee for media research controlled by advertisers, agencies and publishers and Testalogen is an independent research company which has managed to fend off every industry committee that has tried to set itself up in Sweden over the last 15 years.

I want to ask a question which I believe has in fact come up only once at this symposium. I think it was John Bermingham who said "what do we want media research for, what is it really all about?"

If we looked at this symposium and we looked at the time devoted to each of the various subjects (**Table 1**), we would find the following. 20% went on reviewing each country's activities and 54% of our time was spent discussing readership measures, validation, scales, and models – which are all inter-related. We have spent 10% of our time talking about filters and rotation procedures. We are spending 8% of our time on classification data, and 8% is reserved for 'where do we go from here?'

If we look at the kind of people who are here (**Table 2**), we find that 36% are researchers; 34% are publishers; 15% are agencies; 9% are from industry committees; 4% are from data processing houses; and 2% are from the people that spend the money – advertisers.

Since it is the advertisers' money we spend, the position of Orvesto and Testologen (Orvesto being the name of their media/product survey) is that the advertiser is the prime concern, and that his first priority is defining/identifying to whom he is selling – his target market. And his second priority is how to reach it. So, Testologen argue, we should put many more resources into getting data enabling us to define the target audience more precisely.

They think this way firstly because the client thinks this way (and it is his money) and secondly because publishers can engage the client, if they think this way, at a higher management level. Further, if publishers looked at better classification data they would find better discrimination between media, and therefore be able to

make a better sales case.

it might be relevant for today but is certainly not going to be relevant for the tomorrow when in fact the campaigns that we plan today will appear. Predictive measures are required.

Orvesto is a survey which contains some rather interesting features, many of them duplicated in other surveys like TGI and other all-media and product surveys, but some not. It has brand and product usage data, and an interesting item called IOL (Interests, Opinions, and Lifestyle). It also records expenditure levels on a wide

Their third point is that although we have been

TABLE 1
Time devoted to various subjects at New Orleans symposium

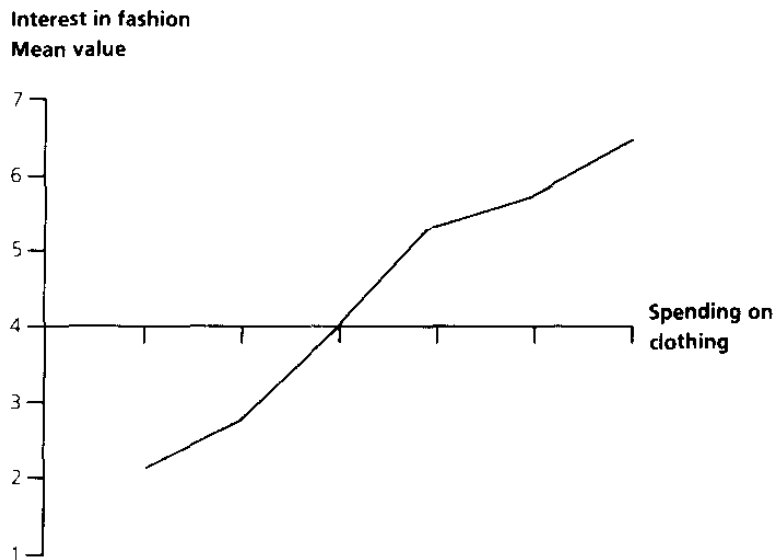
	Time %
Current practices in each country	20
Readership measures/scales/models	54
Filters and rotation procedures	10
Classification data	8
The way ahead	8
	100

TABLE 2
Classification of participants at New Orleans Symposium

	Attendents %
Media researchers	36
Publishers	34
Advertising agencies	15
Committees	9
Data processing houses	4
Advertisers	2
	100

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FIGURE 1
Interest in fashion vs spending on clothing
(Women in Sweden 15–70 years)



grappling with 'the truth', even if we do establish a 'truth' variety of items, and shopping habits - actual behaviour in the market place. It collects, of course, information on basic demographics and on media consumption, but the theory is that media are looked at as a product, and treated in exactly the same way as any other product. And, in fact, the frequency scales used for media are the same as those used for frequency of product purchase.

It is a better sales tool if you use this kind of classification data as a publisher. It engages the advertiser in his problem. It discriminates better between media, and the publisher can have a dialogue at the marketing level, and that is a higher level of decision making - which is always better.

Let us take as an example a fashion product for young women. The normal definition that one would go out with would be perhaps young women aged 15–34. I mentioned that Orvesto collects both interest data and expenditure data on certain items, and **Figure 1** shows the kind of data available. The vertical axis is the mean score from an interest scale (interest in fashion), and the horizontal axis is a spend criterion, expenditure. And as you can see, the level of interest and spending go hand in hand: the higher the interest the more the spending. So interest is a discriminate of behaviour, and a useful way of defining a target market.

Thus we can develop our normal 'definition' based on demographics alone, and supplement it with interest

and expenditure data - eg women aged 15–34 who are fairly or highly interested in fashion, and who had an annual spend on clothes of \$350 plus.

To show how it discriminates, here are two simple coverage examples, involving five women's magazines. In the first instance, using a straightforward definition of women 15–34 (see **Table 3**), publication A achieved 17.5% coverage, but among the target market this fell to 6.2%, which would not please that publisher. On the other hand publication B fell only to 9.7% and then became the coverage leader. So there are some very interesting media discriminations that can be exposed by use of this kind of data, and, of course, we can relate such data to some kind of cost measure and then subsequently into some kind of a schedule evaluation measure, as shown in **Table 4**. But as you can see the rank order of cost per thousand changes quite dramatically between the five media when you use the more developed target market description.

The other point that if we are to try to measure some kind of reaction to advertising (and after the ESOMAR Budapest seminar on 'Beyond Vehicle Audience', never let it be said that recall is a satisfactory measure of advertising response) it must be pointed out that if you do use noting scores they should be target-audience related. As **Figure 2** indicates, if measurements are related, the growth curve for recall is rather slower and at a lower level, but if you base it on an interest related target, and an expenditure

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TABLE 3
Media assessment (5 women's weeklies):
number of readers

	Women 15-34 %	Women 15-34 with interest in fashion & high spending on clothing %
Publication A	17.5	6.2
Publication B	11.3	9.7
Publication C	9.7	8.7
Publication D	9.2	7.4
Publication E	8.6	4.7

TABLE 4
Media assessment (5 women's weeklies):
cost per thousand

	Women 15-34	Women 15-34 with interest in fashion & high spending on clothing
Publication A	61 (1)	639 (4)
Publication B	111 (4)	462 (2)
Publication C	94 (2)	353 (1)
Publication D	104 (3)	493 (3)
Publication E	116 (5)	812 (5)

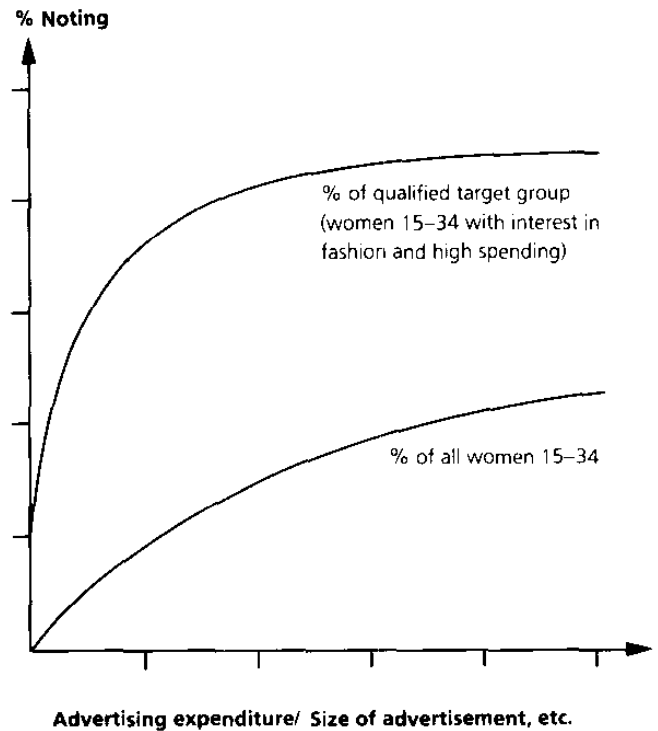
interest related target, the learning curve is flatter and indeed much higher. So again for demonstration to an advertiser of the effect of advertising, this is useful data.

The main issue as far as we are concerned is to focus on the consumer and not the media, (the consumer being the advertiser's priority) and then to build a data base for total communication planning for the advertiser with media treated as a product within that communication process as a means of communication.

This raises certain research issues which we may want to look at during future seminars. We need to find consumer behaviour discriminants. What are the areas that really discriminate, and preferably, *predict* consumer behaviour, because today's behaviour is not tomorrow's behaviour? This also applies to media, so that predictive models of media are much better than the absolutes of today or yesterday.

It also raises a second research issue, the problem of collecting large volumes of data from large samples. Now I deliberately underline large samples because panels

FIGURE 2
Advertising response



traditionally (unless there is an enormous budget) do not normally provide a large enough total sample. You can get a large amount of data, but you cannot use it for fine tuning of the target market definitions because of the limited sample size.

One research approach by Testolgen which is different from what we are used to is the use of self-completion questionnaires. These are found to be respondent convenient because they complete them over a period of time – on average, on four different occasions, and there is no interviewer influence. They can also achieve completely true random sampling because they send the questionnaire by post, and there is no economy requirement for clustering. They have some fairly sophisticated data handling routines for the attitudinal and lifestyle data, and they do a lot of work in terms of client and sales staff education, which is clearly a problem when you are using more complex definitions.

The plea being made here is for some wider perspective on what media research is all about, and that we should remember there are people called advertisers whose money it is we actually spend.