



# **The Case For Magazine Advertising: The Research Evidence**

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## **FOREWORD**

The Periodical Publishers Association of Ireland has commissioned this report to underline the role magazines can play within marketing campaigns, as proven by the research evidence. In addition to featuring Irish studies, the report also makes some of the most recent international research more easily accessible to the Irish market.

Magazines are a mass medium, with its 320 titles reaching about two-thirds of the adult Irish population. According to RoI TGI 2008, 64% of Irish adults read at least one magazine every month.

The advertising market is also very substantial, with Irish magazines attracting advertising revenues of 239 million euros in 2007, according to the Institute of Advertising Practitioners in Ireland's BASE study. Magazines are the third largest medium in the advertising market, behind only national newspapers and television, and ahead of regional press, outdoor, radio, internet and cinema.

Even in the current recession magazines are not items on which Irish consumers are likely to be cutting their expenditure in 2009. A survey by TNS imrb in January 2009 revealed that magazines and newspapers were one of the purchases which are least vulnerable to the economic downturn.

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# INTRODUCTION

The objective of this report is to demonstrate the case for magazine advertising by citing research evidence in support of every stage of the argument.

In addition to Irish research, I also draw upon studies from other countries, to reinforce the Irish conclusions or to fill gaps where no Irish research exists in the public domain. The characteristics of magazines are global, and most research from one Western country is relevant to others too.

The early chapters are primarily applicable to consumer magazines, though many of the broad conclusions apply also to business-to-business (b2b) markets. However in view of the very different nature of the markets in which b2b magazines operate, compared with consumer magazines, the final chapter of this report is devoted entirely to b2b publishing.

Although this report cites a large number of research studies, there are others which are also relevant. Further recommended sources are listed at the end of the report.

Many publishers and others have been contacted in the course of collecting research evidence additional to those studies with which I was already familiar, but I would be pleased to hear of any further relevant results – quantitative or qualitative.

I have also written in 2009 a short companion report for PPAI which examines the evidence concerning advertising in a recession. The clear conclusion is that it pays to maintain advertising pressure during an economic downturn.

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **A. Readers develop a personal relationship with their magazines**

Readers' process of selection when they choose a magazine ensures the relevance of the contents to the individual reader, and an empathy with how the magazine sees its world. A personal relationship builds up. When a magazine closely chimes in with a reader's self-image there is a high level of identification with the chosen magazine.

Irish research commissioned by PPAI shows magazines as the strongest major medium in terms of 'best reflects my personal beliefs and attitudes', 'contains information that I am most interested in', and 'most tailored to meet my individual needs'.

The personal relationship between reader and magazine is a characteristic of magazines around the world. Research from many countries confirms and amplifies the Irish findings. For example, a survey conducted in Germany, UK and France identified one of the key roles of magazines as "connecting with the personal self", where magazines are a 'me time' medium. An Australian study found that magazines stand apart as the personalised medium, an indulgence, and the medium which gets closest to consumers.

## **B. Magazines are well read**

By every measure, magazines are well read. The average paid-for magazine is read for 54 minutes, picked up 5.4 times, and the average page is opened 2.5 times.

In a world of growing multi-tasking, where consumers are increasingly consuming more than one medium at a time, magazines stand out as the medium which is most used on its own without the distraction of other media. Moreover when used simultaneously with another medium, magazines usually receive the primary attention.

The typical circumstances in which many magazines are read – the 'magazine moment' – is a treasured time, a break from responsibilities which transports readers from their everyday situation, and an intensely personal, absorbing moment.

This adds up to a deep engagement by readers with their chosen magazines.

## **C. Readers are receptive to the advertising**

Readers are receptive to the advertising in magazines. The personal relationship, and the world into which a magazine takes its readers, ensure that readers are in a receptive frame of mind.

The effect is heightened because the advertising is relevant to the contents and function of the magazine, and thus the advertising is regarded as an integral part of the publication. Indeed, many readers consider that the advertising contributes to the enjoyment of their magazine. Consequently, as research in Ireland and elsewhere showed, deliberate attention to the advertising runs at a far higher rate than in any other major medium.

Compared with other media, advertisements in magazines are the least intrusive. The lowest levels of ad avoidance are in magazines.

#### **D. Magazine advertising influences the decision-making process**

It is in magazines that consumers find the advertising most helpful as a guide before purchasing, and providing useful product information. It is also the medium where users say they are most likely to make a purchase as a direct result of the advertising it carries.

Readers expect to react to all areas of their magazines, including the advertising. There are many ways in which surveys show readers taking action as a result of seeing magazine ads. Actions such as trying out suggestions, talking to others about an advertised product, and buying a product that was advertised in the magazine - these are all associated with high percentages.

The effectiveness of magazine advertising is seen at every stage of the decision-making process – from such measures as brand awareness, ad awareness, association of the message with the correct brand, and developing a favourable impression of the brand, through to an intention to buy.

Within mixed-media campaigns also involving television and the internet, magazines' contribution is particularly strong in terms of 'purchase intent' – which is arguably the most important criterion since it is closest to the act of purchasing and reflects a decision already made in principle.

One of the reasons why television, internet and magazines work well together is the synergy that occurs between these different forms of media. They work in different but complementary ways; each one enhances the performance of the other. The page and the screen nourish each other. A 'media multiplier effect' occurs. Many studies have demonstrated this in the last twenty years.

#### **E. Magazines, online and buzz are natural companions**

Magazines drive consumers to visit websites, including advertisers' own sites. In comparison with other long-established media, television and magazines are the strongest triggers for sending users online.

Studies show that, compared with other media, magazines are particularly effective at influencing consumers to talk to others about products they have seen in the advertising. Magazines form communities of interest within the specific market they serve, and consequently those consumers who are most enthusiastic about the topic form the core readership of magazines serving the community. These enthusiasts are normally the most knowledgeable and vocal members of the community. Thus magazines, sitting at the heart of communities of interest, are a vital medium for establishing a regular dialogue with the key 'influencers' within a market. Magazines can play a central role in igniting the process that leads influencers to seek further information online and share it with others.

Marketing campaigns need to utilise both traditional and online tools in order to connect with consumers.

Magazines are in a particularly strong position to mediate messages between brands and consumers. With the strong personal relationships and trust which they create, magazines can generate the frisson needed to give a brand some prominence in the digital media arena of social networks, blogs, virals and so on.

## **F. Magazine advertising creates sales**

Magazine advertising creates sales, whether magazines are used on their own or in combination with other media.

One analysis of major brands of fast-moving consumer goods found an average uplift in sales of 11.6% from using magazine advertising, and on average market share rose by 7%. Market penetration rose, as did average weekly weight of purchase of these major brands after exposure to magazine advertising. The return on investment was substantial, and comparable to that of television advertising.

Moreover the combination of television and magazine advertising outperformed the use of television advertising on its own. Relating media costs to performance, magazines were much more cost-effective than television – at the relative levels of expenditure used in each medium. This probably means that too high a proportion of the budgets were spent on television (which had passed the point of severe diminishing returns) and too low a proportion in magazines and other media (still on a steep part of the response curve).

Other studies have agreed with these crucial findings.

## **G. B2b publishing: magazines are a vital ingredient**

Many of the characteristics which make consumer magazines a strong medium also apply to business-to-business (b2b) magazines – for example, the personal relationships which readers establish with their regular magazines, the intensity with which they are read, the receptiveness to relevant advertising, the ability to influence the process of purchase decision-making, the proven ability to generate sales leads and sales, and the complementarity of print and online. However the very different nature of the markets in which b2b magazines operate, compared with consumer markets, means that for the most part research on b2b magazines must be considered separately.

Research commissioned by PPAI showed that b2b magazines were very strong (compared with other media) in terms of containing advertising that is useful for readers' work, providing information that can be trusted, helping respondents keep up to date, stimulating new business ideas, and generally helping respondents to do their jobs better. The advertising carried by b2b magazines was considered relevant and useful.

By 2009 b2b publishers have become positioned as publishers of content across multiple platforms, especially online services operating alongside print, with face-to-face media also playing a substantial role. B2b publishers' services are therefore sometimes referred to as 'industry-specific media'. Recent research shows that industry-specific media are very effective at reaching business decision makers, and these media are very heavily used by them.

Within the mix of media, magazines remain highly relevant and valuable to decision makers. B2b websites and b2b magazines are the top two sources for key business activities. Executives identify different strengths for each type of industry-specific b2b medium, and consequently it is highly beneficial to combine media in an integrated manner and take advantage of the media-multiplier synergy which can be achieved. 91% of decision makers agreed with the statement "It is easier for me to recognise or remember a company's brand or products/services when I see messages about it in multiple media such as magazines, online, or at events".

B2b marketers held a similar view. Almost all felt that it was the combination of industry-specific media – rather than using any of them in isolation – that was most valuable in promoting their products and services. Moreover the b2b media extend the reach and effectiveness of the b2b marketer's own sales organisation.

## **A. READERS DEVELOP A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR MAGAZINES**

### **A personal relationship**

When consumers choose a magazine to read it is a conscious decision to opt in to the medium. This is the basis of magazines' ability to communicate and to deliver an audience that is engaged with the contents. Consumers' exercise of choice means that when they pick up a magazine it is one which has appealed to them individually, not only by reason of the topics it covers but also by the way in which the topics are treated.

The way consumers select a magazine to read, and the resultant empathy with how the magazine sees the world, means that a close personal relationship builds up. In focus groups readers sometimes describe their favourite magazines as "a friend". Compared with other media, magazines achieve a closer, more personal, more individual relationship with their audience.

One of many surveys to demonstrate this was a qualitative study for the National Magazine Company [1]. Readers of eight of the National Magazine Company's titles were interviewed in group discussions and individual depth interviews in Britain. Readers' attitudes to their chosen magazine were summed up in this way:

- 1 The reader has his or her own perception of what type of person he or she wishes to be.
- 2 When a magazine closely chimes in with this self-image there is a high level of identification with the chosen magazine. There is a feeling of ownership, that this is 'my magazine', an informed friend.
- 3 There grows a sense that 'My magazine helps me to become the type of person I want to be'. Magazines are thus aspirational, enabling.
- 4 The reader feels 'I therefore have a powerful trusting relationship with my magazine'.

In Ireland the personal finance magazine *You & Your Money*, published by Ashville Media Group, is a case in point. A qualitative study in 2008 using focus groups [2] showed that everyone is looking for some kind of money advice but most advice, especially from financial institutions such as banks and building societies, is perceived to be biased, and much of it is confusing. Readers of *You & Your Money* however feel that the magazine is dealing in an impartial way with everyday money matters, giving unbiased advice which can be trusted. The magazine is for 'people like me'. Readers have an emotional closeness to the magazine which is symbolised in the public figure Eddie Hobbs, a likeable and trusted financial expert who is seen as being on the side of

the ordinary person. He is perceived as editor-in-chief of the magazine, providing honest information and recommendations in down to earth language. Readers view him as being ready to take on the politicians and big institutions on the common man's behalf. Readers even refer to him as "Eddie", using just his first name as one would a personal friend. To the readers, the magazine has become that personal friend whose advice can be counted on.

Another Irish example is Zahra Publishing's monthly cookery magazine Easy Food, written for budget-conscious nutritionally-aware busy home cooks who want quick and easy recipes. Its 2008 reader survey [3] showed that the magazine provided emotional support, creating inspiration and confidence, and solving the problem of what to provide for the family day after day while ensuring it is nutritionally balanced:

99% of readers agreed "Easy Food provides inspiring meal ideas for my family and myself"

94% agreed "Following a recipe's instructions gives me confidence"

62% agreed "I find it difficult to come up with ideas of what to cook for myself/my family every day"

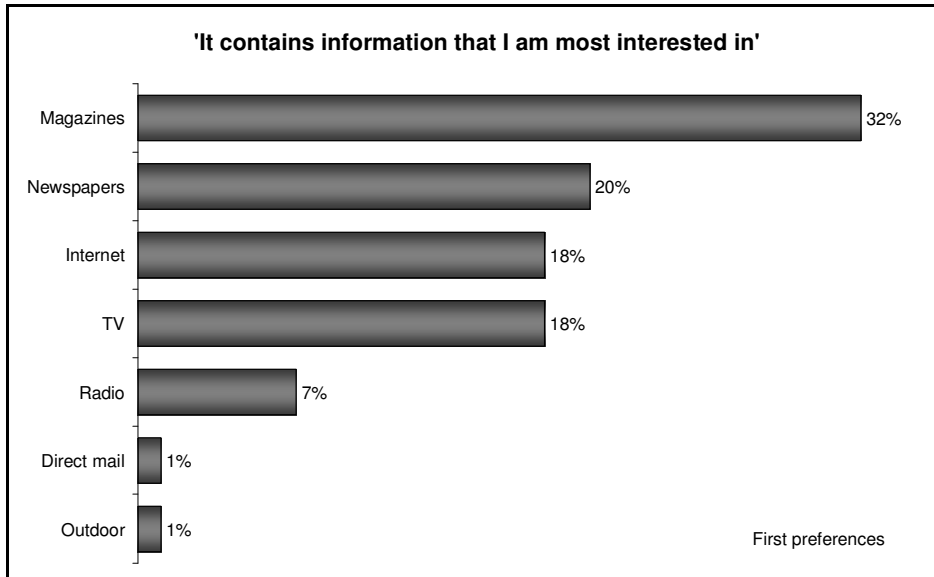
89% agreed "I'm concerned about eating a nutritionally balanced diet"

Consequently, readers are prepared to take action: 99% agreed "I intend to cook something from Easy Food" and 71% agreed "If I see a new kind of food I will try it".

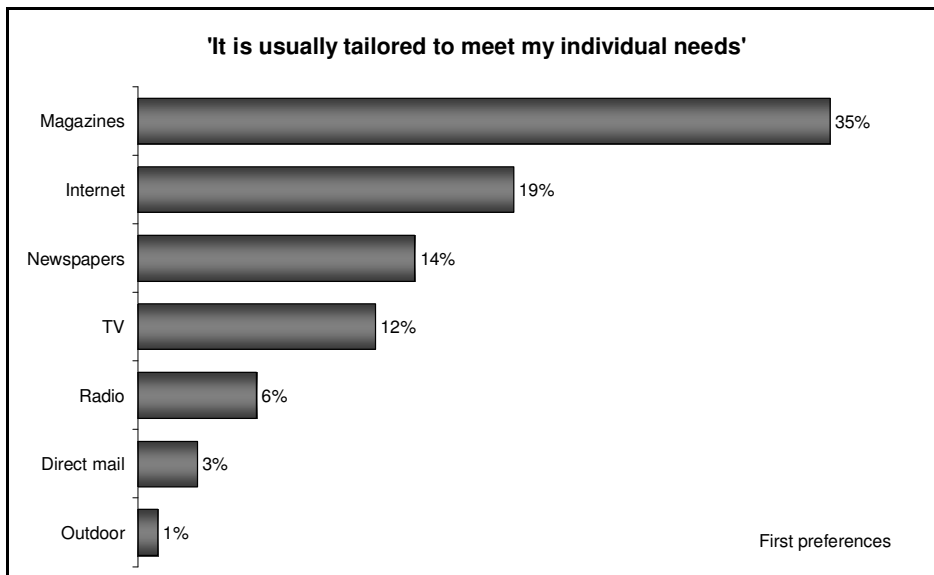
This ability of magazines to provide emotional reassurance and support for readers was expressed by one advertising agency in the following words: "the most impressive lesson emerging from current research is that readers enjoy a very close relationship with magazines that they chose to read. It is a relationship that is impossible for other media to replicate." [4].

The personal relationship was also demonstrated in a quantitative fashion in an Irish study conducted for PPAI by The Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business and University College Dublin (subsequently referred to as the PPAI survey) [5]. Compared with newspapers, television, radio, the internet, direct mail and outdoor, magazines scored far higher in terms of being a medium with content in which the audience is most interested, a medium that is most tailored to the reader's individual needs, and one which best reflects personal beliefs and attitudes. The following charts show the percentages of adults who agree with each statement, in respect of each of the seven media.

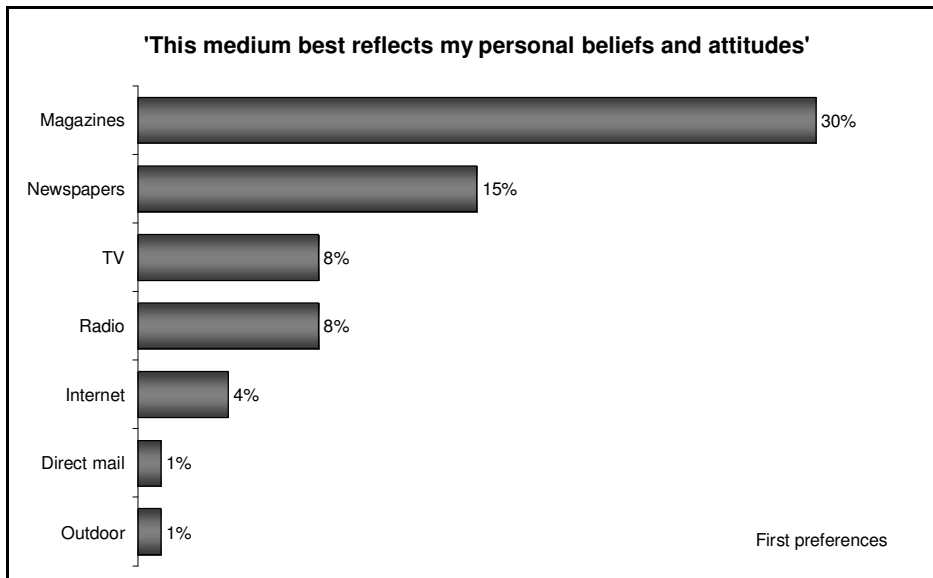
The two print media rank first and second for interesting information, though magazines are well ahead of newspapers.



Magazines are again well ahead of other media for individual tailoring of contents. The internet score is rather higher than that of newspapers.



Magazines are strong leaders for reflecting consumers' personal beliefs and attitudes, scoring twice as high as the second-ranked medium, newspapers, and almost four times higher than television and radio. The internet has a negligible score on this attribute.



## The personal relationship occurs in every country

These characteristics of the medium apply across the globe. They are not a uniquely Irish phenomenon. The Irish evidence is confirmed by results from countries around the world.

For example, the 'Magazine Experiences Europe' study published in 2008 by Time and Fortune magazines [6] identified as one of the key roles of magazines "connecting with the personal self". The survey was conducted among representative samples of adults aged 18-54 in France, UK and Germany. There were a variety of ways in which the connection with the personal self was demonstrated:

- 68% of consumers said they are alone when reading a magazine compared to only 24% for watching TV (a more social/family experience)
- 52% agreed with the statement 'My choice of magazines says something about the kind of person I am'.
- 57% said 'There are always magazines in my house'.
- 34% of consumers set aside a 'special time' for reading magazines. It is a 'me time' medium.
- 22% described their magazine reading experience as being 'Like a gift to myself'.

The Time/Fortune study found that the personal relationship can be deepened through the role of magazines as a source of knowledge and learning. Magazines attracted high scores for agreement with statements like “Magazines help me learn new things” and “Magazines inform me of news and events”.

The role of magazines in inspiring ideas and imagination was underlined by magazines achieving substantially higher agreement scores than television or the internet on the statements “Makes me think”, “Inspires me” and “stimulates my imagination”.

Similarly magazines’ power as a ‘me time’ medium was reflected by attracting substantially higher agreement than for television and the internet with the statements “Gives me time for myself” and “It’s time well spent”.

A companion American study from Time Inc called ‘The Magazine Experience Study’ [7] similarly concluded that magazines meet a range of emotional and rational needs. There is the pleasurable anticipation of a magazine’s availability, either through the post or from a bookstall. There’s “the joy of discovery” of what a new issue contains, and the rewards of picking up the issue a number of times.

The survey emphasised that magazines are described in pleasure terms. Their portability and tactile qualities are key components of that pleasure. Readers feel in control of their reading. Magazines have a high social currency value. They help define “who I am”.

A survey in Australia made comparisons between magazines and other media and showed that magazines stand apart as the personalised medium, the medium people turn to when they are seeking to indulge themselves in their favourite interests, the medium which gets closest to consumers. ‘Media Matchmaker: It’s All About Relationships’, commissioned by Magazine Publishers of Australia [8], examined the roles of six media. The qualitative stage of the study found that key associations for each medium were:

**Magazines:** personal, trends, ideas, inspiration, window shopping, indulgence.

**Newspapers:** information, news, things you can talk about.

**Free commercial TV:** broad, entertainment, things you can talk about, for time out.

**Pay TV:** special interest, sport, entertainment, for time out.

**Radio:** broad, entertainment, new music, for time out.

**Online:** instant, information tool, ideas, social networking, window shopping.

These associations were supported by the quantitative stage of the study. Respondents were shown a list of statements and were asked to say for each statement which of the six media, if any, they thought the statement applied to. Magazines scored highest on the following statements, sometimes equally with online; otherwise the other five media achieved much lower figures.

“Keeps me up to date with latest styles and fashions”: 64% of magazine consumers agreed with this statement. Next highest medium was free TV with 33% of TV viewers.

“Inspires me with ideas”: 54% for magazines. Next highest: online with 37%.

“Good for window shopping”: 52% for magazines and 51% for online. Next highest: newspapers with 30% agreeing.

“Something I reward myself with and enjoy”: 50% of magazine consumers agreed. Next highest: 30% of online users.

“The information is tailored for my interests”: 44% of magazine readers, and 45% of online users, agreed. Next highest: 24% of newspaper consumers.

## **B. MAGAZINES ARE WELL READ**

The personal relationship that builds up between reader and a chosen magazine means that the magazine is well read.

Moreover it is in the nature of magazines, as objects consisting of words and images printed on multiple pages, that readers must scan each page for items they wish to focus on and read. One can't read without paying attention.

### **Time spent reading is extensive**

The intensity with which magazines are read can be illustrated in terms of the time spent reading an average copy, as measured by the British National Readership Survey in 2008 [9]. The average weekly magazine was read for 48-50 minutes, and the average monthly for 58-59 minutes. There was considerable variation from title to title according to each magazine's editorial function, but all these are very substantial lengths of time.

<b>Average time spent reading (minutes)</b>	
General weeklies	48
Women's weeklies	50
General monthlies	59
Women's monthlies	58
Average, all magazines	54

Other ways of assessing the intensity of reading magazines are to examine the number of occasions a copy is picked up, the proportion of pages opened, and the number of times the average page is seen. A survey which measured all three of these aspects was the 'Quality of Reading Survey (QRS)' published in Britain [10].

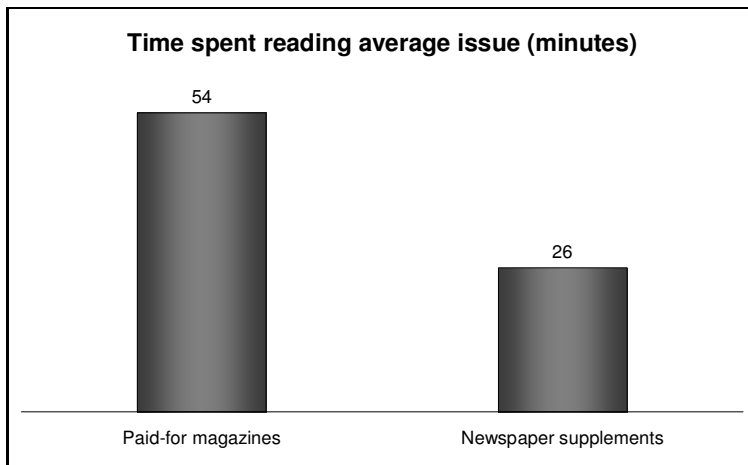
Average number of times picked up	5.4
Proportion of pages opened	78%
Number of times the average page is opened	2.54

Paid-for magazines are typically picked up many times, averaging 5.4 pick-ups, with readers looking at a significant number of pages on each occasion. In this way a high proportion of pages (78% on average) are opened before a reader finishes with the issue. Moreover this repeat reading results in the average page being looked at several times: 2.54 times on average. This includes the advertising pages, so advertisers are receiving multiple exposures of their advertisements.

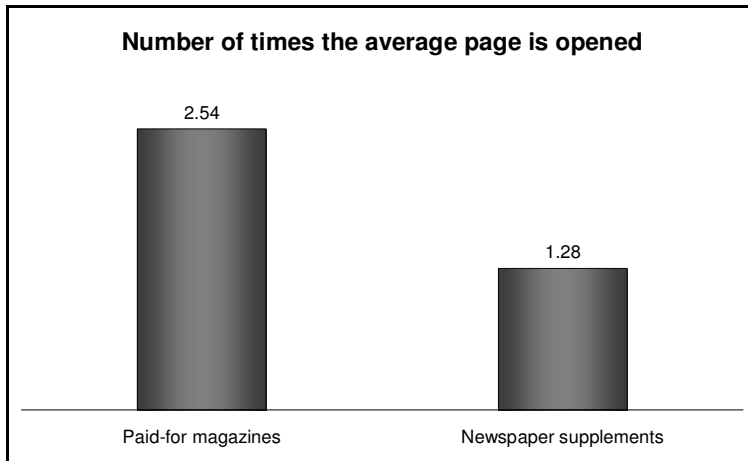
There are variations in the scores according to the types of magazine, their frequency of publication, and the nature of their content. For instance, monthlies tend to be read for longer, with more pick-ups, than weeklies. Yet for all kinds of magazine, the intensity of reading is high.

Those magazines containing substantial timeless contents are liable to be kept by readers for a long time. Taking the Irish cookery magazine Easy Food as an example, its 2008 reader survey [3] showed that 49% of readers keep the issues after reading them, in order to refer back to them later.

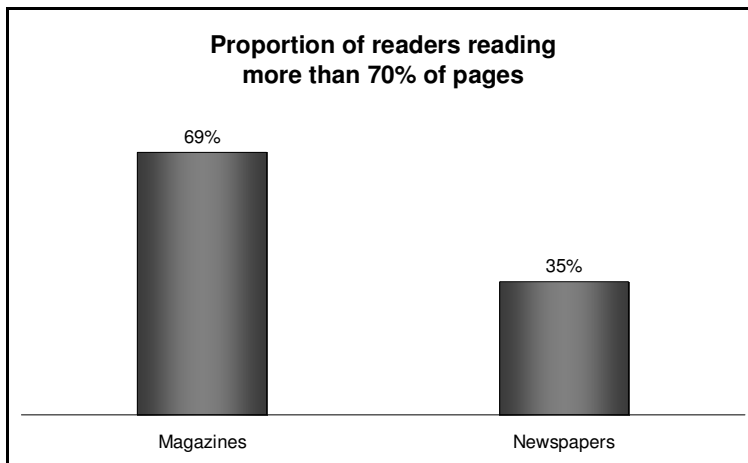
QRS also showed that magazines are read more intensely than newspaper supplements – in terms of time spent reading, and the number of times the average page is opened.



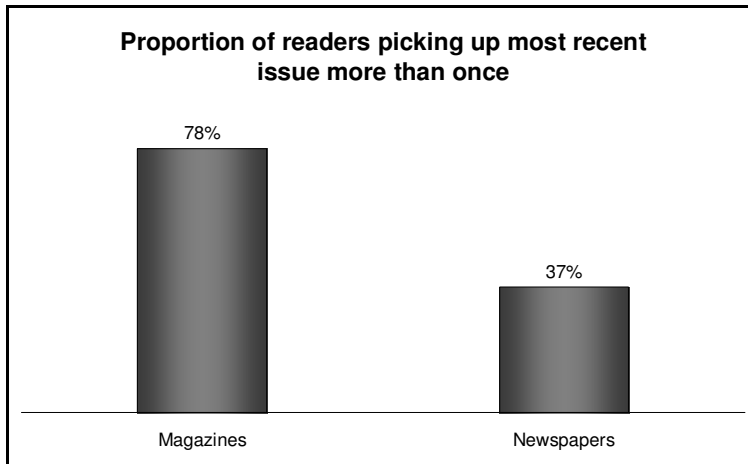
The time spent reading the average paid-for magazine is twice the time spent on the average newspaper supplement. Similarly, the average page in a paid-for magazine is opened twice as many times as in a supplement:



In Ireland the PPAI study [5] reached similar conclusions when comparing magazines and newspapers. Twice as many magazine readers read more than 70% of the pages, compared with newspaper readers.



Newspapers are typically picked up only once, with just 37% of newspaper readers saying they picked up the most recent issue twice or more. In contrast, most magazine readers (78%) pick up their magazine at least twice.



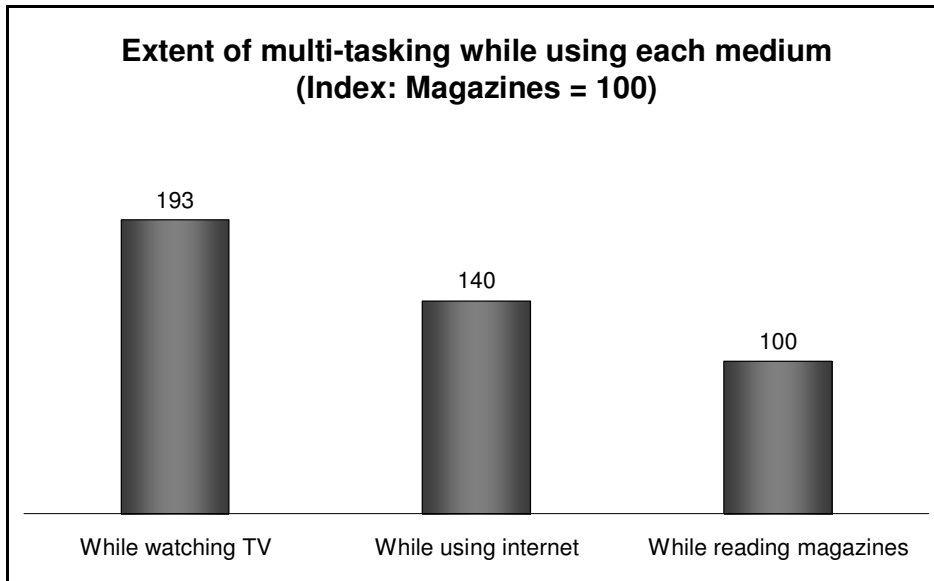
### **Less multi-tasking, more attention to the magazine**

The Time/Fortune study ‘Magazine Experiences Europe’ [6] commented that “we live in a dynamic world of exploding options, and smart multi-tasking consumers who change their behaviour based on relevance, convenience and choice. The increase in media choice and the number of information access points has fuelled a rise in media multi-tasking. We’re all media pluralists now! This is particularly true for television and the internet.” The study found that magazines are read with less distraction from other media than are television and the internet.

Users of each medium were asked which of eight forms of media [11] they might use at the same time as the primary medium:

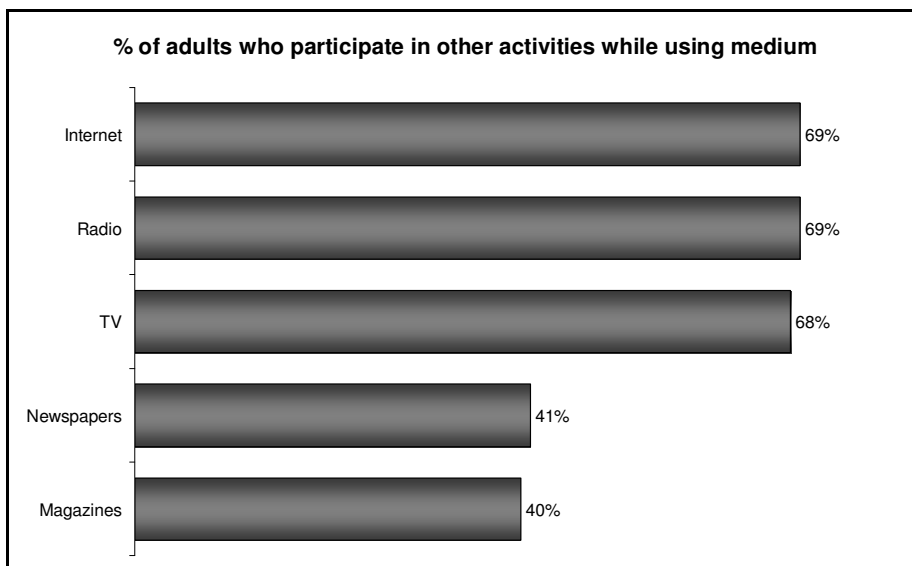
- Among television viewers, 38% use the internet while viewing, and 29% use a cell phone. Adding the percentages for all eight of the media platforms brings a total of 170% of other activities while viewing TV.
- Among internet users, 35% watch TV while surfing, and 31% use a cell phone. Adding the percentages for all eight media gives a total of 123%.
- Among magazine readers, 34% watch TV while reading, but relatively few readers use any of the other media simultaneously. Adding together the percentages for all eight media yields a total of 88%.

Overall, television viewers multi-task twice as much as magazine readers (170% compared with 88%). When on the internet, users multi-task 40% more than magazine readers (123% compared with 88%). The next chart expresses these figures as indices, where magazines = 100.



The survey found that the pattern of multi-tasking was broadly similar in the three countries, Germany, France and UK. It is clearly a characteristic of the medium, not a peculiarity unique to one country. This reinforces the belief that similar results would also be found in Ireland.

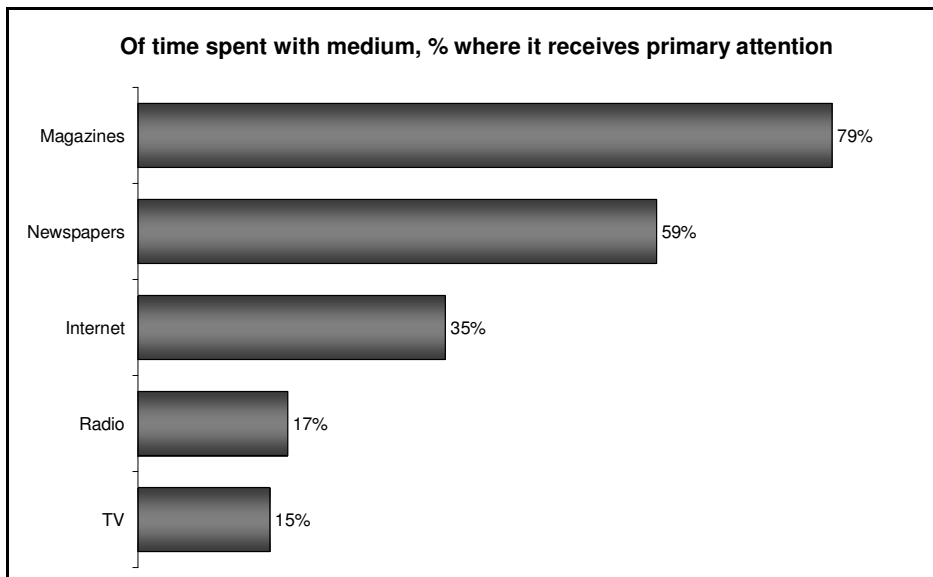
An American survey reached parallel conclusions. The BIGresearch SIMM6 study [12] asked adult users of each medium if they participated in other activities while using the medium.



The five media grouped themselves into two clusters. The internet, radio and television were highly affected by multiple use of other media (68%-69% of users), while the two print media were far less used in conjunction with other media activities.

It was predictable that print media would have an exceptionally high proportion of users who were focusing exclusively on that medium, with fewer competing media or other activities distracting them. It is in the nature of reading print that one has to focus on the words and apply at least a degree of attention. Reading is an active process that has to engage the brain. As the pages are turned they must be mentally scanned and a selection made of where attention will alight. But it is much easier for consumers to be exposed to television, radio, posters and certain other media without focusing attention on them.

Consequently when magazines and other media are used at the same time it is magazines which usually attract the primary attention. Ball State University in America showed in their Middletown Media Studies [40] that 79% of the time when magazines are used simultaneously with other media, magazines received the primary focus. This was considerably ahead of the other print medium, newspapers with 59%, while the non-print media lagged far behind. For television it was the primary focus for only 15% of the time it was used in conjunction with other media.



## **Engagement: a magazine strength**

All the foregoing adds up to deep engagement with magazines by their readers – a deeper engagement than achieved by other media among their audiences. Here are some further research conclusions regarding engagement.

In Britain the PPA's 'Absorbing Media' study [13] described the typical magazine reading experience, which it called 'the magazine moment'. The report stated "The magazine moment was described warmly and positively by all respondents. It was treasured, as a break from work/housework/homework/etc, a totally different activity which transported the readers from their everyday situation... sometimes into other people's lives (as with Hello! magazine) or into a dream life of their own, for example by reading DIY or travel magazines. It was generally an intensely personal moment. The reader was utterly absorbed in the magazine. Demands on one's time could be forgotten for a while.

"The magazine moment often took place in relaxed places. Although the reader was often alone, in a private place, this was not always the case. The magazine itself could be sufficient to create a private 'bubble' that protected the reader from intrusion.

"Women with children in particular appreciated the fact that their relationship with magazines was like an unconditional friendship. The magazine would always be there when they had a moment, to talk to them for as long as they could spare.

"Magazines 'feed' the reader, and respondents 'devour' their favourite magazines. They treasured buying them, taking them home to read as a treat, combined with other relaxing pleasurable activities – some even claimed to read their magazines in the bath. The satisfaction obtained was analogous to eating a favourite food."

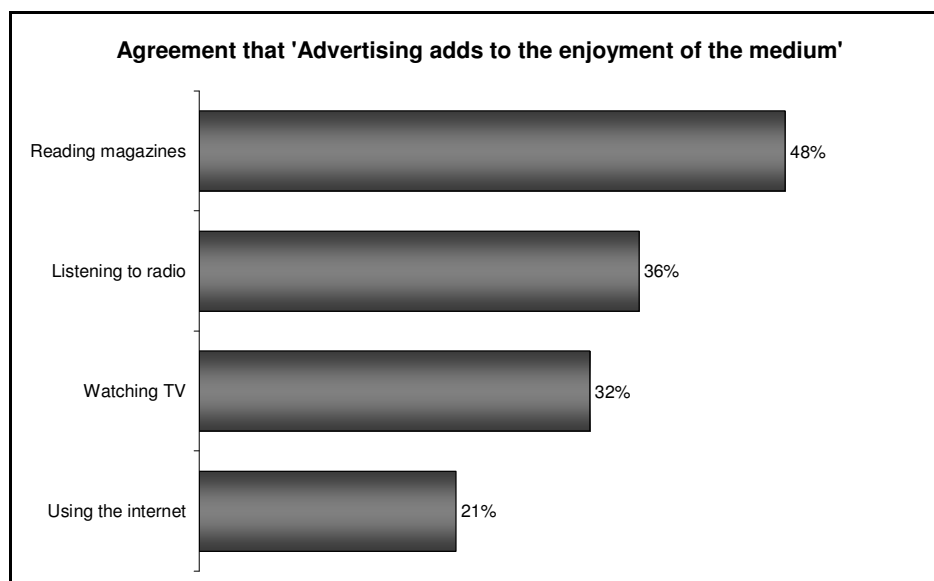
## C. READERS ARE RECEPTIVE TO THE ADVERTISING

The personal relationship between readers and their chosen magazines, and the relevance of the content including the advertising, mean that readers are attentive to the ads and receptive to the advertising messages.

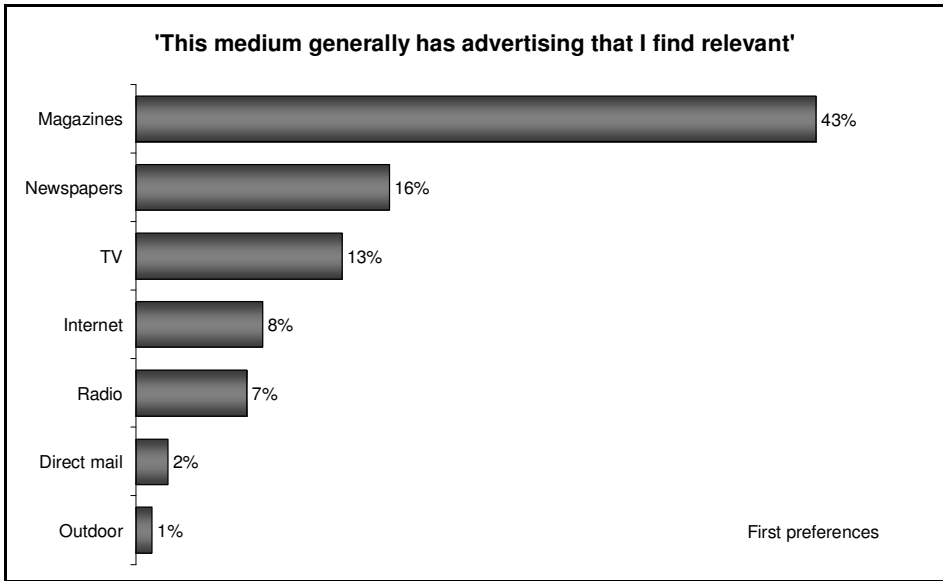
### The ads are relevant, and an integral part of a magazine

A simple demonstration that the ads are integral to magazines was a study by Starcom USA [14] which asked consumers to tear out from their favourite magazines ten pages which between them represented the essence of the magazines. On average three of the ten pages were advertisements.

Because of greater relevance, advertising adds to consumers' enjoyment more in magazines than in any other medium. The Roper Public Affairs survey [12] found that about half of magazine readers in the USA positively agreed that advertising adds to the enjoyment, while other media attracted much less agreement.



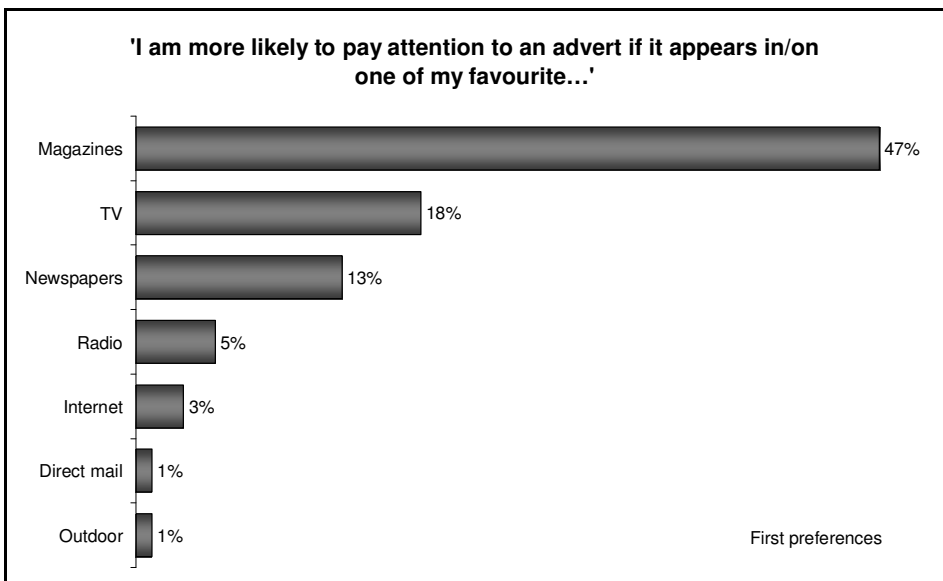
Other sources confirm that consumers feel that advertising in magazines is more relevant than advertising in any other medium. In Ireland the PPAI study asked which was the medium where the respondent finds the advertising is most relevant.



Magazines attracted almost as many claims as the other six media put together!

Similarly in Britain the PPA's 'Absorbing Media' study [13] found that there were clear differences between media in terms of agreement with the statement 'This medium has advertising that I find relevant'. Magazines led the field by a significant margin.

The consequence of having more relevant ads is that consumers were far more likely to pay attention to the ads in magazines than in other media, as the PPAI research showed:



While almost half of adults said it was magazines where they were most likely to pay attention to advertisements, less than a fifth nominated television, and the attention scores for ads on radio and the internet were minimal.

The Australian ‘Media Matchmaker’ study, published by Magazine Publishers of Australia [8], confirmed that magazine advertising is perceived to be relevant, appealing and useful in deciding what to buy. It is the one medium for which ad avoidance is not a problem. One focus group respondent summed it up by saying “The advertising is targeted to you – not an interruption like TV”. The quantitative study captured this by showing a list of statements and asking respondent to say for each statement which of the six media, if any, they thought the statement applied to. Magazines scored highest on the following statements while the other five media achieved much lower figures:

“The advertising is usually appealing and attractive”: 58% of magazine readers agreed. Next highest: 36% of free TV viewers.

“The ads contain useful product information”: 50% of magazine readers agreed. Next highest: 41% of newspaper readers.

“The ads are helpful in deciding what to buy”: 46% of magazine consumers. Next highest: 37% of newspaper consumers.

“The ads here are more relevant to me”: 44% for magazines. Next highest: 30% for newspapers.

“I like this medium to carry advertising”: 41% for magazines. Next highest: 36% for newspapers.

Conversely, magazines scored lowest on statements that were negative about advertising:

“I avoid the ads if I can”: 67% of free TV viewers agreed, but only 19% of magazine readers, the lowest score of any of the six media.

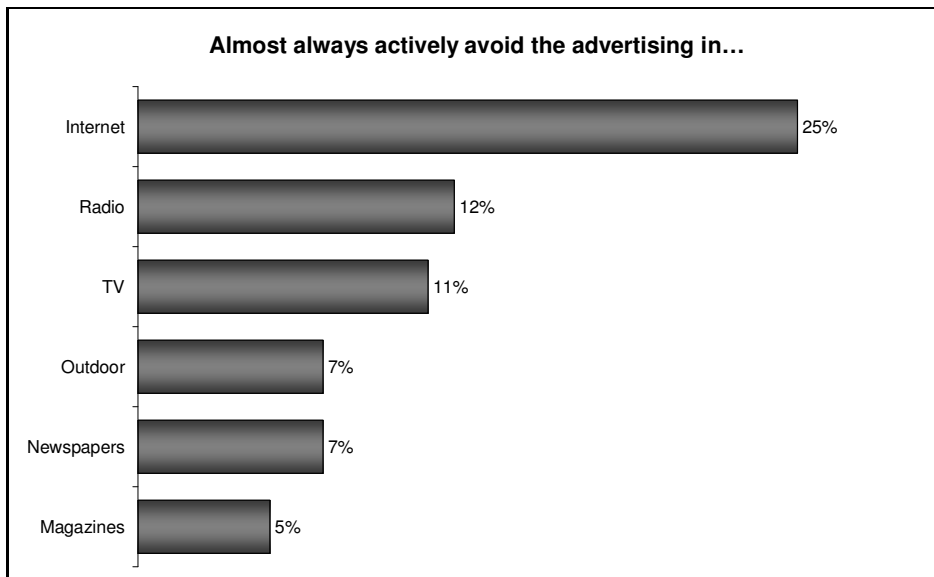
“The ads annoy me”: 76% of free TV viewers agreed, but only 14% of magazine readers – again the lowest score, this time equal with newspapers.

## **Magazine advertising is the least intrusive**

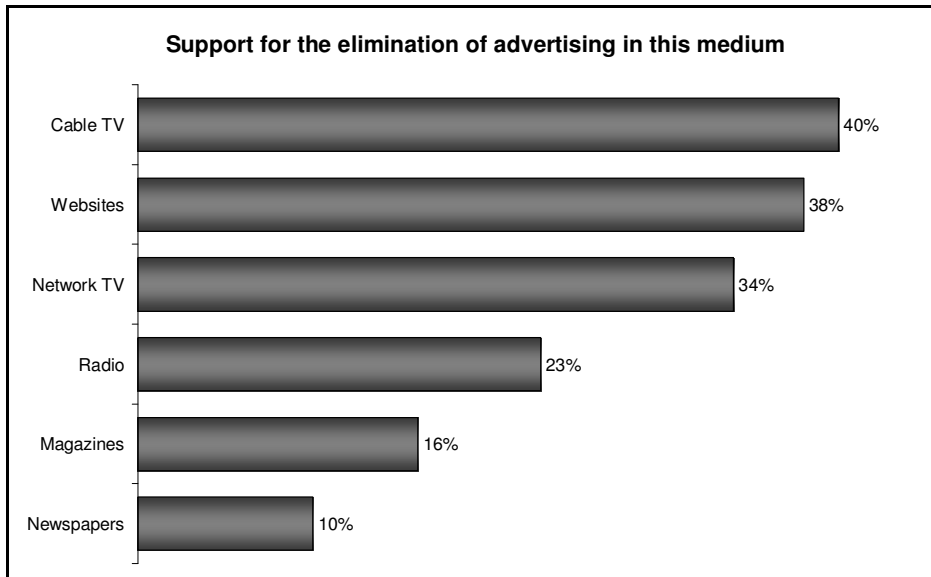
Further distinctions can be found in terms of the perceived intrusiveness of advertising. While it used to be considered that intrusiveness was a characteristic to be longed for, in today’s world in which consumers are far more in control of their own media exposure, media need to be able to invite users in to the advertising. Consumers resent advertising that intrudes too much.

Magazine advertising is considered to be the least intrusive, because of its relevance and the way that consumers are in control of their own exposure. Time Inc's 'Magazine Experience Study' in the USA [7] found that 60% of the audience said the advertising on television interferes with their enjoyment of the medium, and the same figure applied to the internet, whereas only 36% said this of magazine advertising.

In another sign of the consumer acceptance of magazine advertising, the PPAI survey showed that in Ireland advertisement avoidance was lowest among magazines, and indeed was negligible. Only 5% of consumers almost always actively tried to avoid the ads in magazines, but for the internet the figure was 25%. Television and radio lay in between.



Another expression of this came in a Yankelovich Omniplus study in America [15]. Yankelovich asked in which media respondents would support the elimination of advertising. The strongest desire to get rid of advertising was in television and the internet, while the least desire to remove the ads was in print.



## Relevance for readers means targeting for advertisers

Readers' process of selection of their magazines ensures the *relevance* of the magazine's contents to each reader. From an advertiser's point of view, relevance of content equates to a *targeted* audience. Targeting is a basic strength of the magazine medium, and it provides advertisers with an audience tailor-made for information about suitable products.

The targeting goes far beyond standard demographics, and can be defined in many other ways, including attitudes. Magazines segment consumers into like-minded groups.

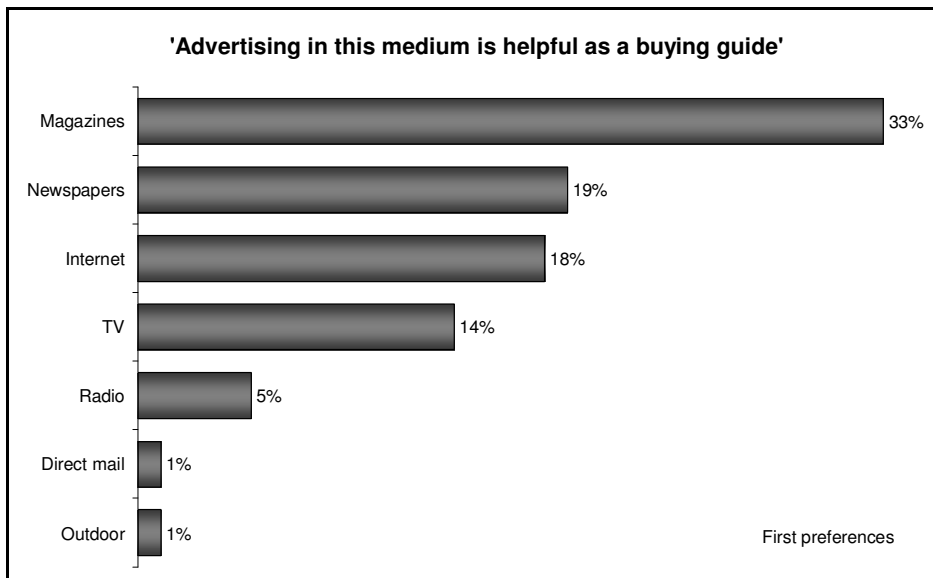
Because their audiences are targeted, magazine readerships contain little or no 'waste' of people who are not within a relevant advertiser's target market. For example, a car advertiser using a motoring magazine can be sure that all readers of the magazine are interested in the sort of cars featured in the magazine.

Moreover magazines tend to target the most valuable customers. Within any market, some consumers are more enthusiastic and passionate about the subject than other customers in the market. It is these enthusiasts who are most likely to be reading magazines about the topic. Consequently magazine readers tend to be more knowledgeable and to spend more. An analysis of British TGI 2006 [16] put some figures to this. In a diverse range of product categories, the expenditure by the average heavy magazine reader was indexed on the expenditure of the average customer in the market. Indexing the purchasing expenditure by the average consumer as 100, heavy magazine readers spent 14% more on footwear, 13% more on cosmetics, 13% more on mobile phone pay-as-you-go bills, and so on.

## D. MAGAZINE ADVERTISING INFLUENCES THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

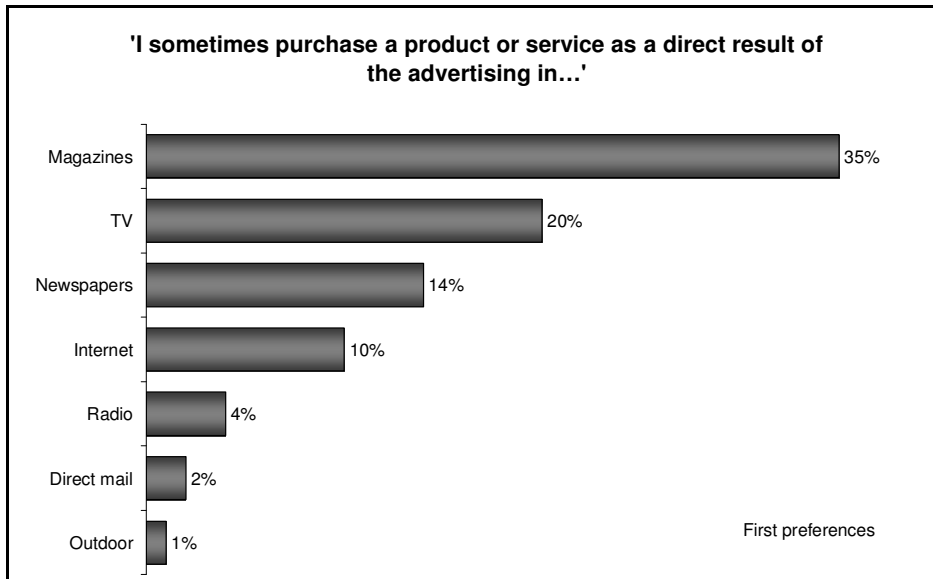
### Helpfulness of the advertising

Magazine advertising has a strong influence in guiding the purchase decision. In Ireland the PPAI study asked consumers which medium they found the most helpful as a buying guide. 33% chose magazines, far more than any other medium. Newspapers ranked second, showing the strength of print media which between them attracted more than half the votes. The internet and television ranked in third and fourth places.



### Advertising which prompts a purchase

Magazines are not only the most helpful medium as a guide; they are also very effective at prompting a purchase. Consumers were asked to say in which medium the advertising was most likely to prompt a purchase of a product or service, as a direct result of that advertising. Magazines were clearly the most effective in this respect, followed at some distance by television.



### **Action as a result of seeing magazine ads**

There are many research studies which have shown that readers are likely to take action after seeing advertisements in their magazines. For instance in Ireland in a 2008 reader survey by Easy Food magazine [3] 73% of readers agreed that “I have bought a particular brand suggested in an Easy Food recipe or EF Recommends box”, and 91% agreed that “The advertising in Easy Food gives me useful product information”.

Similarly glossy women’s monthly magazine Image, from Ireland’s Image Publications Ltd, found in its reader survey [17] that:

- 82% of readers had bought a product that advertised in Image
- 81% had tried new health & Beauty services which have been featured in the magazine
- 88% considered that the advertising in Image was useful

Another recent example is Time Inc’s ‘Magazine Experience Survey’ in the USA [7]. It found that three-quarters of readers acted on the content or the advertising when they had finished reading a favourite magazine:

- 55% talked to someone about something in the magazine.
- 39% passed along an article to others.
- 25% bought or intend to buy a product or service advertised in the magazine.
- 22% recommended to family or friends a product or service they’d seen in the magazine.
- 33% had visited a website mentioned in a magazine ad

In Britain a project titled ‘Perspectives of a Woman’s Monthly Magazine’ [18] provided insights about readers’ reactions to what they see in their magazines. It interviewed

average issue readers of 15 women’s monthly magazines. They were asked “Would you expect to do ...(named activity)... as a result of reading ...(named magazine)..?” 14 possible actions were listed. The active way in which readers expect to use their magazines is well illustrated by the results:

**Women’s domestic monthlies:**

Take any of 14 listed actions	99%
Do cooking	83%
Try health suggestion	76%
Buy food product	73%
Buy home product	68%
Do gardening	68%
Make for home	59%
Restyle home	56%
Do sewing	47%
Do knitting	47%

**Women’s style monthlies:**

Take any of 14 listed actions	90%
Try beauty suggestion	74%
Try health suggestion	73%
Buy beauty product	69%
Buy fashion item	67%
Try diet idea	57%

**Women’s feature monthlies:**

Take any of 14 listed actions	94%
Try health suggestion	77%
Try beauty suggestion	73%
Buy fashion item	67%
Do cooking	67%
Buy beauty product	64%
Financial/legal advice	33%

Between 90% and 99% of readers expected to do at least one of the 14 actions on the list shown to them.

All of the actions on this list mean buying, or imply a likelihood of buying, products, whether it is ingredients for cooking, wool for knitting, or fashion clothes - and regardless of whether the original stimulus was an advertisement or an article.

As the ‘Perspectives’ report says, “readers expect to react to all areas of their magazines as a result of reading. Very few expect to do nothing. Expectation to react reflects to a strong degree levels of interest. This interest converts very powerfully to reaction. Magazines are an enormously responsive medium from which advertisers can benefit. The interactive communication means that magazines inspire women to react in a variety

of ways... Perception of advertising equates to the perception of editorial in a magazine. Readers apply the same brand values to the entire contents of the magazine. Advertisers can clearly identify the benefits of advertising in each magazine and gain from association with that brand.”

Another way of examining action taken after reading a magazine was supplied by Affinity Research in the USA. Affinity calculated norms from their online VISTA Print Effectiveness Rating Service [19], based on fieldwork during 24 months ending December 2008. On average across all the magazine ads measured, among those who could recall a specific ad, 56% had taken some form of action as a result of seeing that ad. The measured actions were: have more favourable opinion about advertiser; recommended product/service to friend, colleague or family member; gathered more information about product/service; visited advertiser’s website; considered purchasing product/service; visited store, dealer or other location; saved ad for future reference.

The norm varied slightly by size of ad, colour, and position within magazine – but not by much: there were only a few percentage points variation from the average of 56% taking action as result of seeing a particular ad.

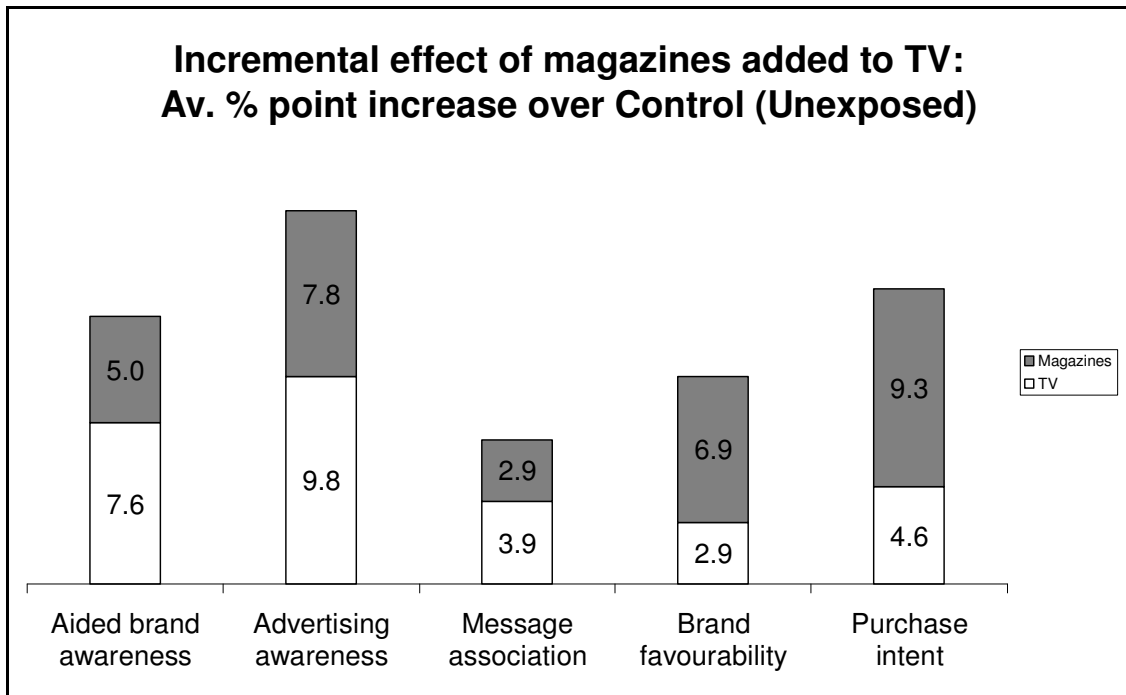
### **Magazines are effective at all stages of the ‘purchase funnel’**

Magazine advertising’s influence is observed at every stage of the purchase decision-making process – from such criteria as brand awareness, ad awareness, association of the message with the correct brand, and developing a favourable opinion of the brand, through to an intention to buy. Such a sequence of criteria is sometimes known as the ‘purchase funnel’, because generally the closer a criterion is to the decision to purchase the product, the fewer the number of consumers reaching that step.

#### Dynamic Logic/Millward Brown

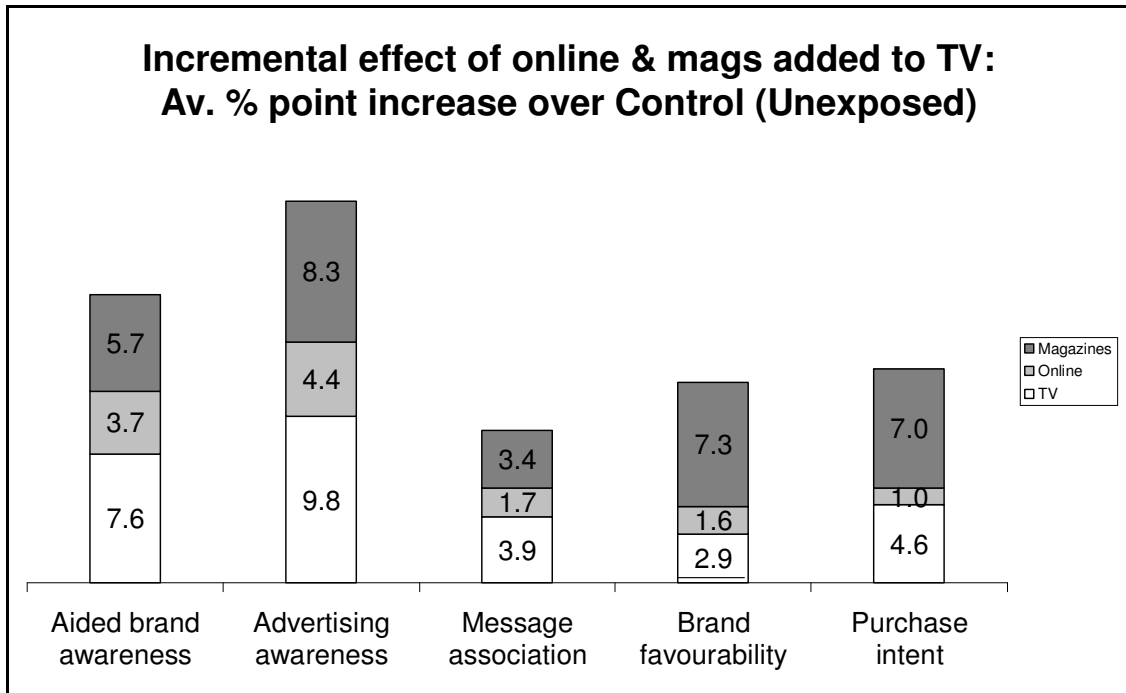
Proof of magazines’ effectiveness emerged in the USA from the research institutes Dynamic Logic and Millward Brown, whose CrossMedia Research [20] has measured 32 advertising campaigns which used multiple media: television, online and magazines. For each campaign they measured the five criteria listed above which represent the purchase funnel. They also assessed, through a modelling process, the effect of each medium in creating the results observed for each of the five criteria.

First, campaigns using TV and magazines were examined in aggregate. The results were presented in incremental form, where the effect of TV is shown first, then the additional effect of magazines. This form of analysis puts magazines at a disadvantage, because in addition to their unique contribution (the consumers which TV hadn’t affected) they would also have had an effect on some of the consumers who were also affected by the TV advertising. In other words magazines’ contribution is underestimated to an unknown degree. Nevertheless the results were very positive indeed for magazines.



Magazines made a large contribution at each of the five stages. They boosted aided awareness by 5.0 percentage points on top of the 7.6 percentage points credited to TV. And similarly for the other four stages. Most impressive of all, however, was magazines' effect on the single most important criterion, purchase intent. TV had increased consumers' intention to buy the products by an average of 4.6 percentage points, but magazines further increased purchase intent by 9.3 percentage points. That is, magazines' effect in persuading people onto that last step of deciding to buy was twice the effect of television.

A broadly similar conclusion was found when online advertising was included. The analysis was again in incremental form, first showing the effect of TV, then the additional effect of adding online, and finally the additional effect of adding magazines on top of TV and online.

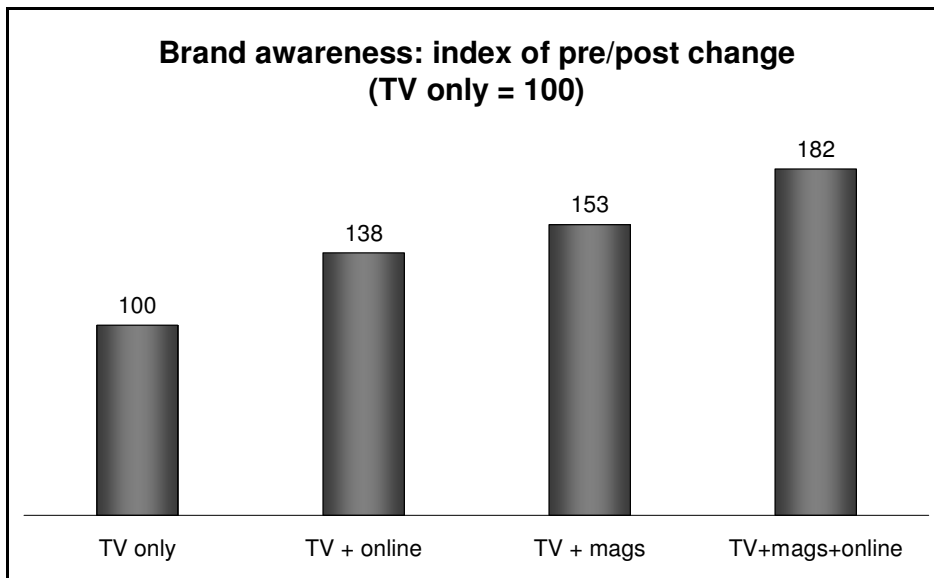


Again magazines made a substantial contribution at all stages. For example, TV increased aided brand awareness by 7.6 percentage points; the internet added a further 3.7 percentage points; and then magazines added a further 5.7 percentage points. Yet once more magazines' contribution was greatest for the two criteria closest to the buying decision: brand favourability and purchase intent. On brand favourability, magazines accounted for 7.3 out of a total of 11.8 percentage points increase for the campaigns. On purchase intent magazines accounted for 7.0 out of 12.6 percentage points increase. For both criteria, magazines achieved more effect than TV and online combined.

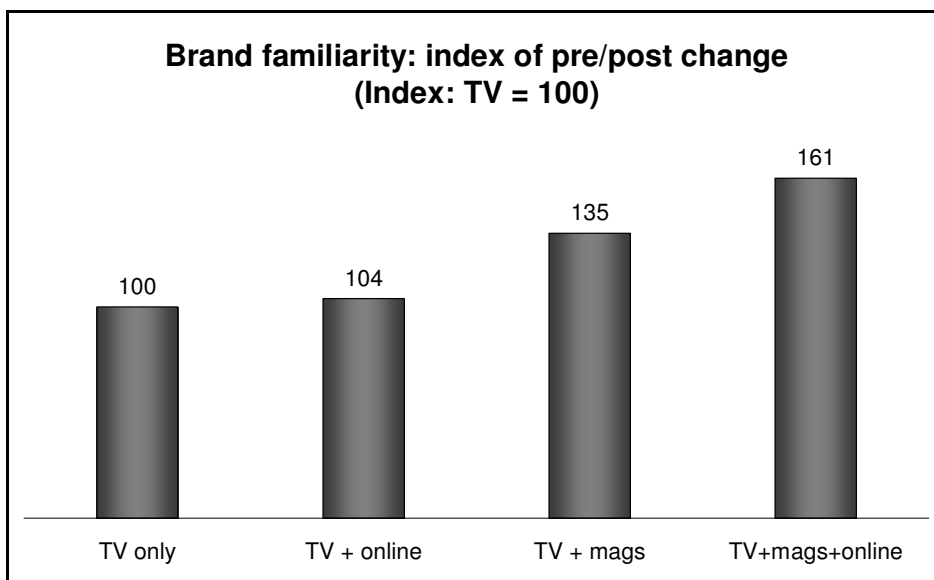
### Marketing Evolution

Another marketing institute which reached similar conclusions was Marketing Evolution, who track consumer attitudes and behaviour shifts in the USA. Magazine Publishers of America commissioned an analysis of Marketing Evolution's database to examine the roles of television, magazines and the internet [21]. 20 brands were identified with the relevant media combinations, and their results across the period 2004-2006 were aggregated. Comparisons were made between pre- and post-campaign scores on brand awareness, brand familiarity, and purchase intent. The performance of television on its own (post- versus pre-campaign results) was indexed as 100.

For brand awareness, performance was considerably increased when online, magazines, or both, were used in conjunction with television, compared with TV on its own. Adding magazine advertising to TV achieved more than adding online advertising, and the best result of all was obtained when all three media were employed.

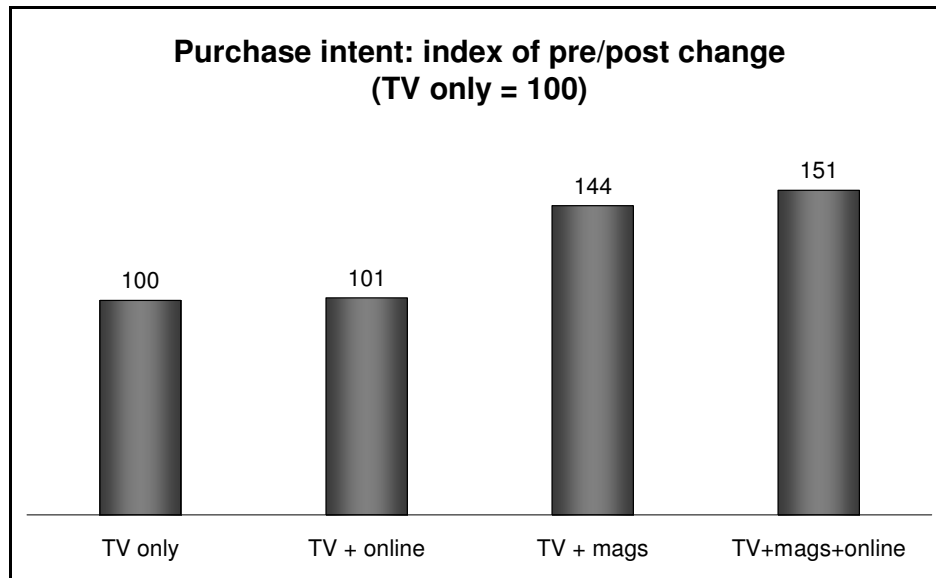


It was a similar story for brand familiarity. Magazines were the more effective medium to add to television, by some distance, but best of all was using the three media.



Purchase intention is regarded by many as the most relevant of these measures, since it is closest to the act of purchasing and reflects a decision already made in principle. Here (as in the Dynamic Logic study) magazines made a particularly significant contribution. TV

and magazines in combination considerably outperformed TV on its own and TV plus online. Nevertheless there were further gains to be obtained by adding online to the TV+magazines mix.



For all of the campaigns examined, television took the lion's share of the budget. The powerful additional effects of magazines and, to a lesser extent, online showed that magazine and online advertising are highly cost-efficient compared with television advertising – at any rate, at the budget splits being used.

## Synergy between media

One of the reasons why television, internet and magazines work well together is the synergy that occurs between these different forms of media. They work in different but complementary ways; each one enhances the performance of the other. It is about twenty years since publication of the two classic British pieces of research which investigated this idea in the late 1980s by studying magazines and television: 'Multiplying The Media Effect' and 'The Media Multiplier' [22]. Their conclusions remain true.

The two main conclusions of 'Multiplying The Media Effect' were that:

- One medium can communicate ideas additional to those derived from seeing another medium
- One medium can 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 between the media

The page and the screen nourish each other.

'The Media Multiplier' showed that advertising in print in addition to TV, rather than advertising only on TV, brought some important communication benefits:

- Seeing a print ad 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

Numerous subsequent studies have demonstrated the enduring truth of these conclusions. A television campaign working in tandem with a print campaign outperforms a TV-only strategy. Similarly, magazines have a valuable role in conjunction with the internet, as the next section will show.

## E. MAGAZINES, ONLINE AND BUZZ ARE NATURAL COMPANIONS

### Magazines drive online search and purchase

One of the significant ways in which magazine advertising influences the decision-making process is by driving consumers to go online and search for further information, and sometimes make online purchases. It is an example of the way that the long-established media work well with the new digital media.

Time/Fortune's 'Media Experiences Europe' survey in Germany, France & UK found that 50% of consumers agreed that 'I have visited a website after seeing an advert in a magazine'.

In Britain this was confirmed by a survey called 'Magazines in the driving seat' commissioned by the PPA [23]. When users of each medium were asked which of a list of media have triggered them to go online when looking for information on products they were considering purchasing, 45% of magazine readers said they had been triggered by magazine ads. For television the percentage was 50% triggered by TV ads, and these two media were well ahead of newspaper and radio advertising. However in Britain magazine advertising is much less expensive per rating point than television, meaning that magazines are the most cost-efficient major driver of online search.

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'Which of the following have triggered you to go online when looking for information on products that you have considered purchasing?'

TV ads	50%
Magazine ads	45%
Newspaper ads	31%
Radio ads	17%

Base: 16-64 online adults who have gone online in last 12 months to look for info on products considering buying

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In addition the research found that 58% of online adults said they had made a purchase online which had been influenced by advertising messages seen offline. Separating the media, 32% of magazine readers said magazine advertising had helped them with ideas or

information on products they had bought online. Similarly 32% of TV viewers had been influenced by TV ads concerning purchases made online. Scores for newspapers and radio were considerably lower.

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‘Did any of the following help you with ideas or information on any of the online purchases you made?’

Magazine ads	32%
TV ads	32%
Newspaper ads	21%
Radio ads	10%

Base: 16-64 online adults who have gone online in last 12 months to look for info on products considering buying + have made an online purchase.

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Thus magazine advertising matches television advertising in influencing online purchases – but at a lower cost.

A striking additional finding was that engagement makes a real difference. Respondents were asked about their favourite magazines, newspapers, TV programmes and radio programmes, and whether advertisements in them had helped them with ideas or information on any of the online purchases they had made. For all four media the scores were considerably higher than in respect of advertising in those media in general.

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‘Did any of the following help you with ideas or information on any of the online purchases you made?’

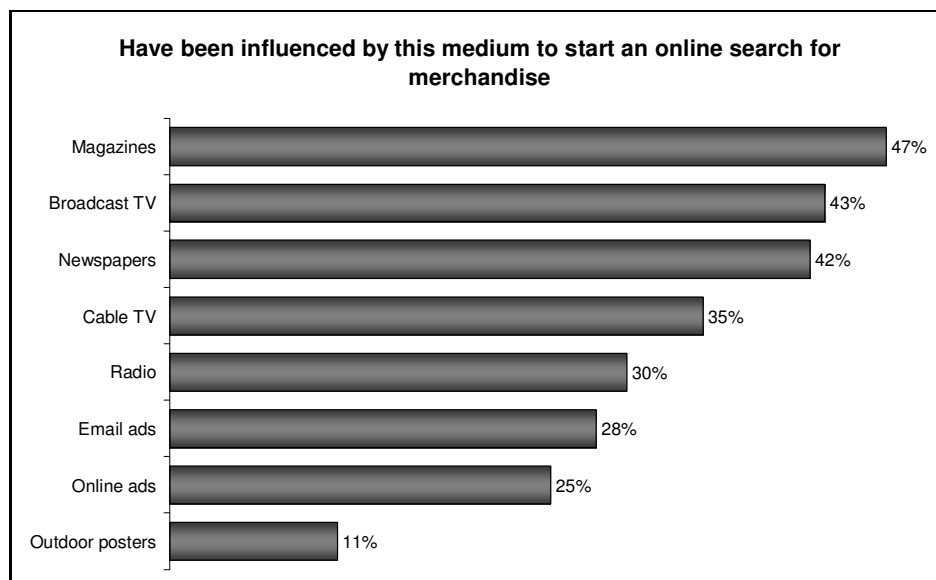
	<u>Overall</u>	<u>Favourites</u>
Magazine ads	32%	55%
TV ads	32%	43%
Newspaper ads	21%	46%
Radio ads	10%	26%

Base: 16-64 online adults who have a favourite ...(Magazine, TV programme, Radio programme, Newspaper) + have gone online in last 12 months to look for info on products considering buying + have made an online purchase

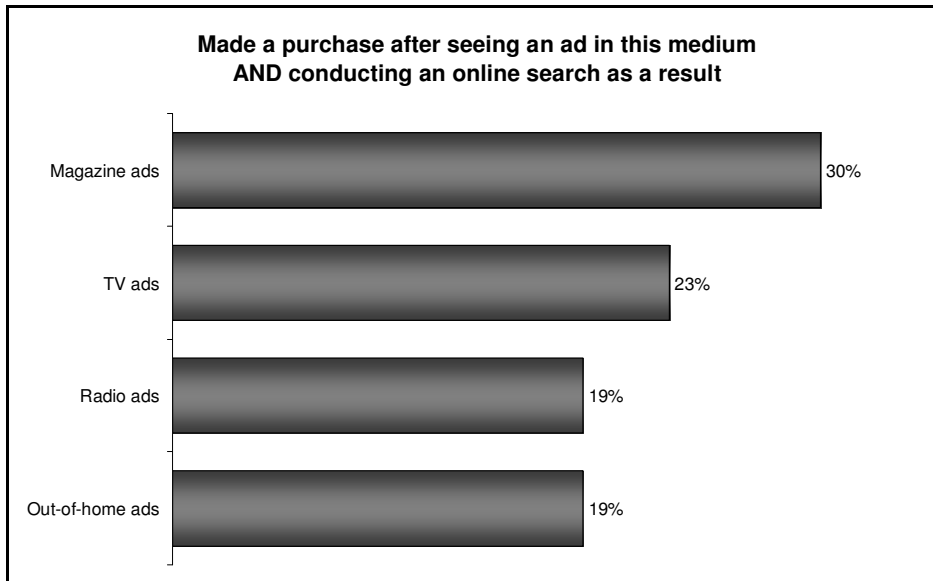
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The overall score of 32% for magazines rose to 55% where readers' favourite magazines were concerned, placing magazines well above the raised score of 43% for television ads. Newspapers ads rose to 43% concerning readers' favourite newspaper, showing that where engagement is concerned its effect is most powerful among print media.

There are several other studies showing that magazines are a particularly strong medium for leading consumers to go online for further product details. An example is the 'BIGresearch Simultaneous Media Usage Survey SIMM 9', conducted by BIGresearch in the USA [12]. It established that magazines were more powerful than any other offline medium in influencing consumers to start an online search for merchandise.



Jupiter Research [24] provided another American example of magazine advertising's strong ability to drive online searches which result in making a purchase:



Compared with ads on TV, radio or out-of-home, ads in magazines were more powerful in generating online searches which led to making a purchase. Online was used in the decision process, but in these instances it was advertising in magazines which created the online searches in the first place. Marketers need to use offline media (especially magazines) as well as online.

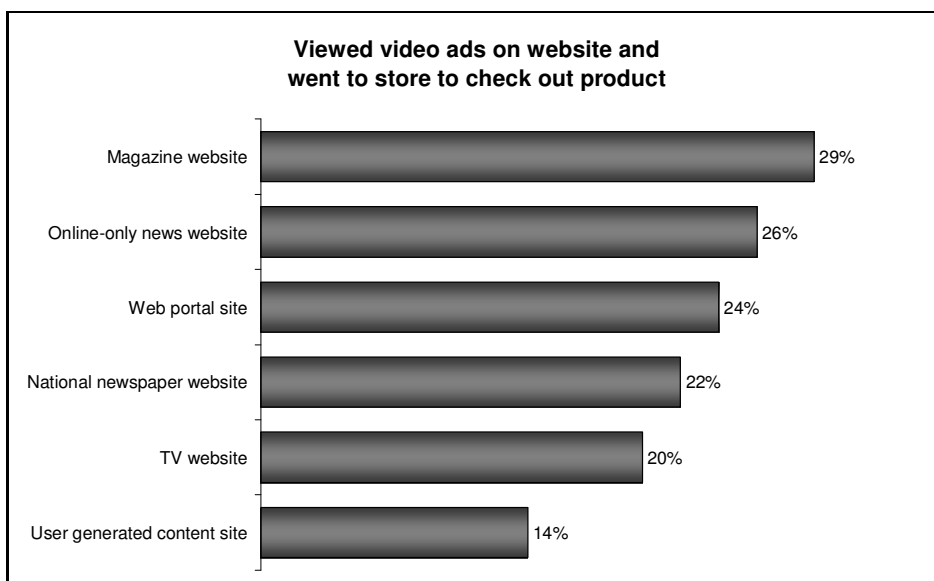
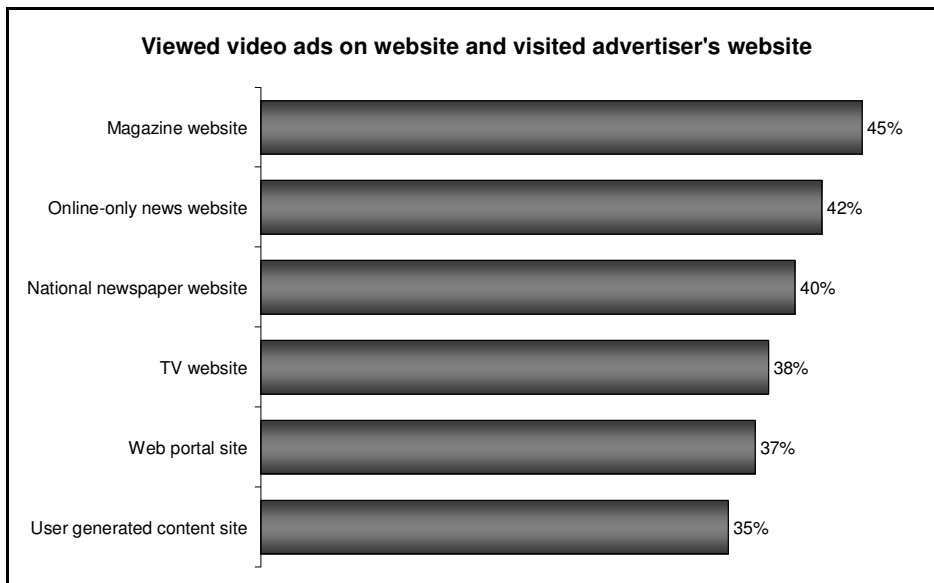
The Australian ‘Media Matchmaker’ study, published by Magazine Publishers of Australia [8], showed that a strong partnership exists between magazines and online. Consumers grouped magazines and online together as the best or second preferred sources of information and ideas in ten of the eleven product categories studied. Further, more people visited a website as a result of advertising in magazines than because of advertising in any other medium.

An American survey published in December 2008 underlined the continuing importance of print and other offline media in stimulating online visits. The communications firm MS&L identified ‘digital influencers’ – people who are opinion leaders within the online arena – and conducted research to establish the information sources they use [25]. MS&L’s conclusion was that “traditional media play a vital role in igniting the process that leads influencers to share information online and via word of mouth. More than eight in ten influencers say they often go online to find out more after reading something in a magazine or newspaper (84%) or hearing something on TV or the radio (84%). These traditional media sources help shape public opinion in the complex world of online influence.” Moreover publishers’ own websites featured strongly in the online sources used by digital influencers.

Renee Wilson of MS&L said “This research supports the need for influencer marketing campaigns to leverage both traditional and online tools to connect with consumers.”

## Video clips within online ads: magazine websites most effective

Another American survey, 'Eyes On The Internet' from the Online Publishers Association [26], examined the effect of video advertisements when seen on different types of website. Effectiveness was judged according to the proportion of viewers of the video ads who went on to visit the advertisers' own websites and/or went out to a retail store to investigate the product. Magazine websites proved to be the most powerful in both these respects. There is an implication is that the high level of engagement with magazine brands may be the explanation.



## **Include URLs in magazine ads**

Obviously enough, including an advertiser's website address in a magazine ad helps to encourage readers to go on online for more information. Statistical proof (if it were needed) arose from Affinity Research's VISTA Print Effectiveness Rating Service [27] in the USA. Based on 833 ads in seven magazines, Affinity compared the percentages of readers who went to the advertisers' websites when the ads did not contain an URL, with the percentage who visited the websites when the ads did contain an URL. Indexing the former as 100, Affinity found that including an URL boosted web traffic substantially – for three magazines, doubling or more than doubling the web traffic generated by the ads.

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### **Visiting advertisers' websites after seeing magazine ad:**

#### **Ads with URLs compared with ads without URLs:**

(Index: ads without URLs=100)

A travel magazine	286
A home interest magazine	203
A women's service magazine	198
Another women's service magazine	163
A Fashion magazine	152
A men's magazine	138
A financial magazine	122

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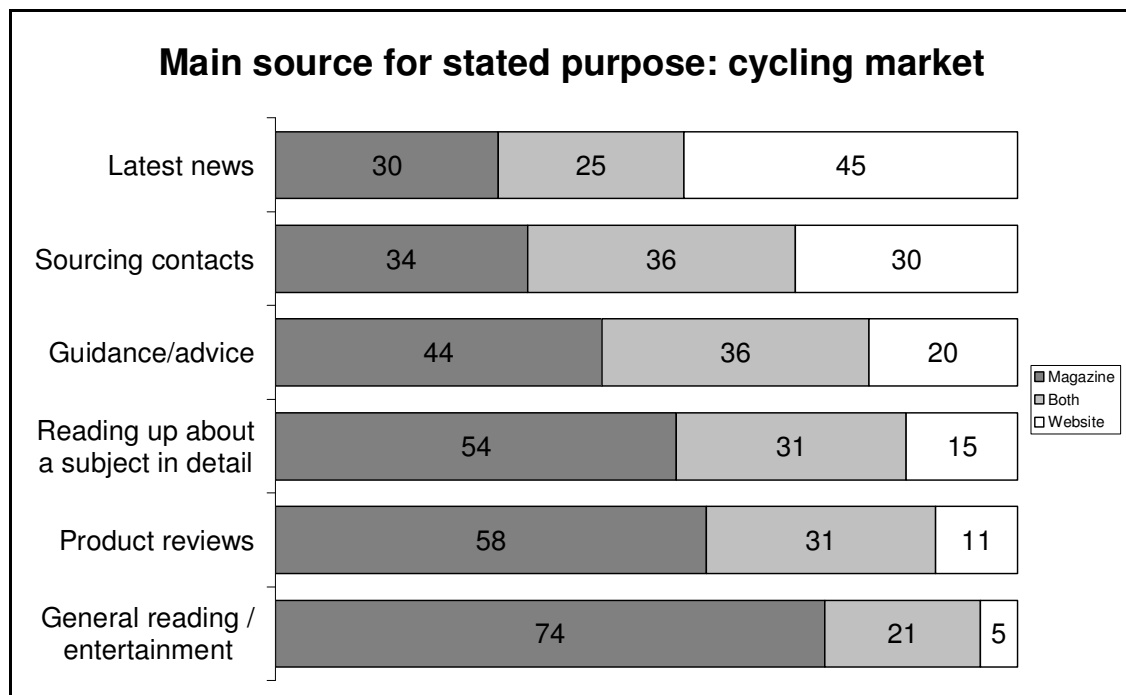
## **Print and online are complementary**

Clearly print and online are complementary, and the combination of the two is powerful. The authors of Time Inc's 'Magazine Experience Study' [7] concluded that "in today's media landscape, 'everyone is doing everything' but consumers are able to identify and articulate the unique strengths of print and digital platforms... Smart consumers are continually changing their behaviour based on relevance and situation. Instead of media loyalists, we have become multi-media pluralists... Within this complexity, magazines have a unique role... For example, magazines are thought of in terms of the 'anticipation' and as 'a gift to myself', while the web is more pragmatic and tactical, 'instant gratification' for what I want immediately. Magazines give the consumer much-needed time away from the computer, while the internet is convenient because so much time is spent at the computer. Favourite magazines are perceived as having highly personal content, while the internet is by and for communities. These are not 'better' or 'worse' experiences, but are different, and in different occasions one may be preferred over the other."

Similarly seeing advertising in the different contexts of a magazine and a website are different experiences, and the most effective communication is achieved when both forms of experience are harnessed to create a multiplier effect.

Another insight into online/offline dynamics has been provided by Future Publishing’s 2008 UK survey of specialist magazines, ‘Engagement Counts’ [28]. Ten specialist-interest markets were examined – photography, motoring, music and so on. Consumers’ use of magazines in these markets, and the magazines’ associated websites, were assessed. Consumers who both read a specialist magazine and visited the publisher’s associated website(s) were asked which were the main sources used for each of six purposes.

Taking the cycling market as an example, magazines were the prime choice for ‘general reading and entertainment’, ‘product reviews’, ‘reading up about a subject in detail’, and ‘guidance/advice’. The publisher’s websites were the prime source for ‘latest news’. Magazines and websites were equally prominent for ‘sourcing contacts for where to buy or where to get further information’. For five of the six purposes consumers opted for ‘both equally’ more than they did for the websites, and for ‘sourcing contacts’ the ‘both equally’ percentage was slightly higher than either magazines or websites.



The complementary use of the two media was emphasised in open-ended comments made by respondents. About magazines, some of the comments were:

“The magazine offers greater depth and is convenient to read in stages”  
“I like the articles and the photography in the magazines – it keeps my interest and inspires”  
“I prefer to sit comfortably to read my magazine, also in break at work and when in the car; the magazine is convenient to read on holiday, travelling”

About the websites, comments included:

“The website is broader than the magazine, you can search back the reviews”  
“The website has links to other sites of interest”  
“The website has forums to talk directly to other people interested in bikes”

One comment comparing the two media was:

“I find reading from a magazine more relaxing. However I find it easier to look stuff up on the website.”

(The complementary use of magazines and digital media within a business-to-business context is discussed in a later chapter.)

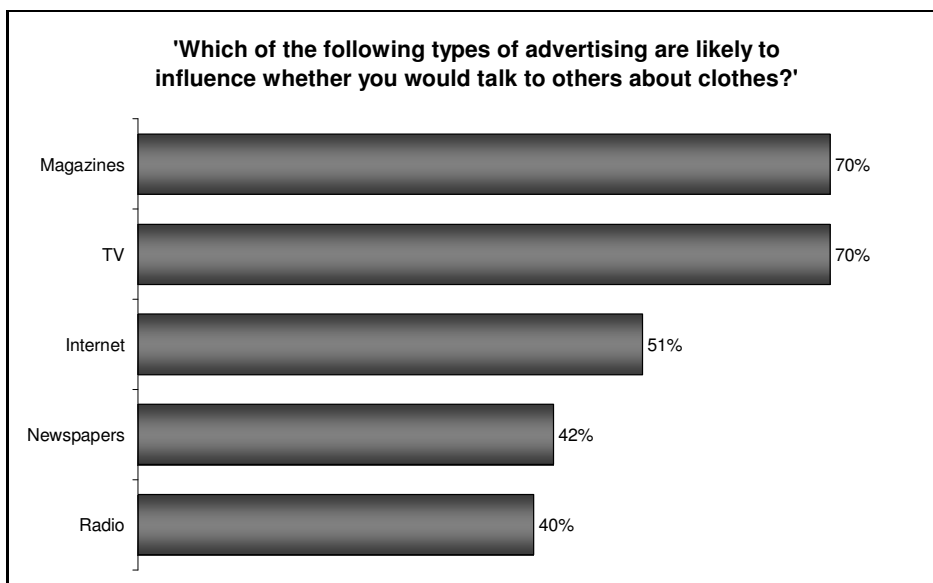
## **Magazine advertising creates buzz**

Another of the significant ways in which magazine advertising influences the decision-making process is by generating extensive word-of-mouth communication, or buzz.

The report ‘Social Media Futures’, published by Britain’s Institute of Practitioners in Advertising in January 2009 [29], said “In the era of social media (social networks, blogs, virals etc) consumers will increasingly mediate messages between brands and other consumers in the social media arena... Permission-based advertising could become the norm and understanding this is vital for success... Brands will have to earn the right to be in this space. Success will be measured by the degree to which a brand is allowed to blend in with the conversations that are going on, with or without it, calling for a more subtle softer drip-feed approach. Furthermore, both clients and agencies need to develop new ways of engaging consumers in the communications process. For example brands must appear more ‘humble’, and creativity and innovation need to be at a premium. A more integrated, holistic approach needs to be developed so that network communications is viewed as an integral part of the mix. Clients and agencies must develop new ways to incorporate and engage consumers in ways that reinforce brand values and build trust.”

The traditional media play a part in this process, and magazines are in a particularly strong position to “mediate messages between brands and consumers”. Magazines, with the strong personal relationships and trust which they create, can generate the buzz needed to give a brand some prominence in the “social media arena”.

Britain's PPA set out to investigate magazines' role in generating word of mouth communication, in a study called 'Targeting Influentials' [30]. The research first identified the most influential consumers by asking respondents a series of questions assessing whether they tend to talk to lots of people about the product category, whether they know a lot about the category, and whether they thought their opinion was likely to convince others. The influentials were asked "How likely are each of the following type of advertising to influence whether you would talk to others about (product category)?" The answers varied according to the product category, but in all categories magazine advertising was always a leading source. Here is an illustration from the clothes market:



Magazines and television were more influential than the other media. What lies behind this strong showing for magazines is that as consumers form 'communities of interest', so magazine publishers create content that serves those communities. Consequently those consumers who are most enthusiastic form the core readership of magazines servicing the community. These enthusiasts are normally the most knowledgeable and vocal members of the community – that is, the key influentials within their social networks. Thus magazines, sitting at the heart of communities of interest, are a vital medium for establishing a regular dialogue with the key influentials within a market.

Polls by the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research provide American reinforcement of this theme [31]. Consumers were asked which sources had contributed to product recommendations of theirs in the last year. More than half claimed magazines, which was the leading medium, just ahead of seeing products in a store and seeing on television. As expected, among 'influentials' the Roper scores for all media were rather higher (61% for magazines), and magazines' lead over other media was increased.

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**% saying medium contributed to personal recommendations**

	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Influentials</u>
Magazines	54%	61%
Saw in a store	53%	58%
TV	53%	55%
Newspaper	47%	53%
Radio	37%	44%
Internet	35%	45%
Email	18%	26%

Source: Roper Reports: What Prompts Consumer Word of Mouth?

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## F. MAGAZINE ADVERTISING CREATES SALES

Magazine advertising creates sales, whether magazines are used on their own or in combination with other media.

### **11.6% sales uplift from using magazines**

‘Sales Uncovered’ [32], published by PPA, found that magazine advertising was performing very impressively. The main conclusions were:

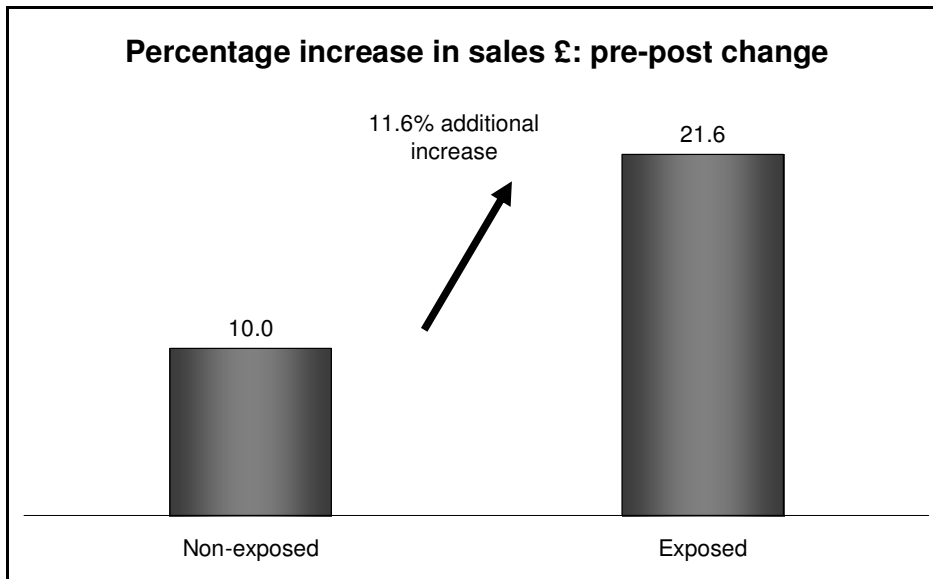
- Magazine advertising was associated with an additional sales uplift of 11.6%, in terms of sales value
- The uplift in terms of sales volume was 18.1%
- There was an uplift in market share (sales value) of 6.7%
- The uplift in market share (sales volume) was 8.6%
- Market penetration increased by an extra 8.5% after exposure to magazine advertising
- Average weekly weight of purchase rose by an additional 1.6%
- The medium term return on investment for magazine advertising was £2.77 – at least comparable with that of television advertising

The study was an analysis of TNS Superpanel sales records and media exposure data, based on 20 fmcg brands for which magazines accounted for at least 10% of the brand’s total advertising expenditure. Taking each of the 20 fmcg brands’ campaigns in turn, Superpanel main shoppers were ranked according to the weight of their exposure to the magazine campaign. The top 40% of main shoppers were defined as the ‘exposed’ group; in general, they accounted for about 90% of total magazine exposures. The bottom 40% of main shoppers in the ranking were defined as the ‘non-exposed’ control group; they only accounted for around 2% of total magazine exposures.

Differences between the two groups in terms of sales lift (in the campaign period, compared with the pre-campaign period) were associated with exposure to magazine advertising.

### 11.6% uplift in sales value

Aggregating the results of all 20 brands, there was an average sales increase of 10.0% among those not exposed to the magazine campaign – the increase being due to other activities than magazine advertising. However among those exposed to the magazine campaign, the sales increase was 21.6%. Thus the magazine advertising was associated with an extra 11.6% increase in sales (in terms of value).



In terms of sales *volume* rather than *value*, the uplift from magazine advertising was 18.1%.

Similarly, there were increases in *market share* when magazine advertising was used. For market share in terms of sales value, magazine advertising was linked to an uplift of 6.7 percentage points. For sales volume market share, the uplift was 8.6 percentage points.

#### Winning new customers: brand penetration and weight of purchase

Magazine advertising can win new customers for a brand, and at the same time increase the average weekly weight of purchase. Across the 20 brands, brand penetration of the market rose by 7.0% in the campaign period among people not exposed to magazine advertising, but rose by 15.5% among those who had seen the magazine ads – an uplift of 8.5 percentage points.

Meanwhile there were increases of 2.1% and 3.7% in average weight of purchase, among the non-exposed and exposed respectively – a magazine uplift of 1.6%. Thus the sales uplift for magazines was achieved mainly by bringing new buyers to the advertised brands (i.e. increase in penetration), and to a lesser extent by increasing the average weight of purchase.

ROI: return on investment of £2.77 for every £1

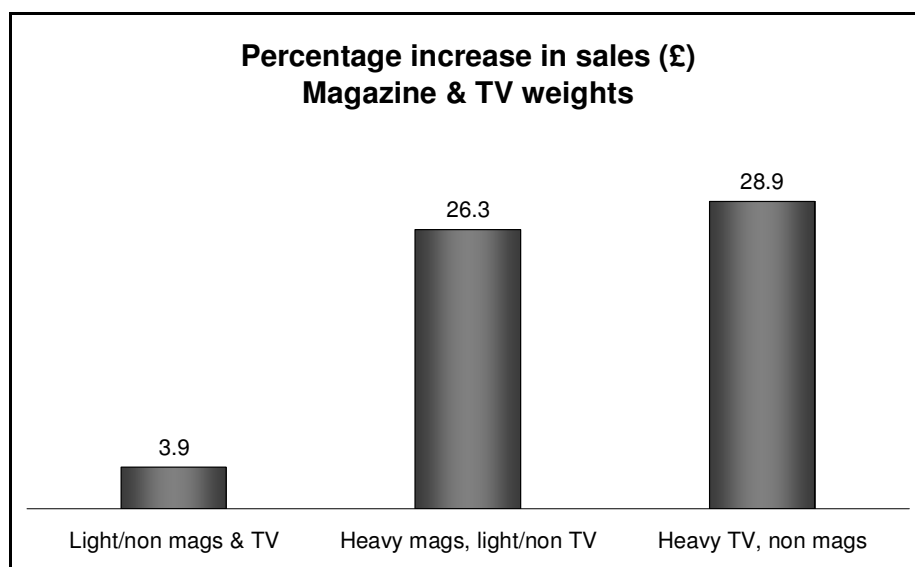
A prime measure of accountability is return on investment (ROI): does the advertising produce more revenue than was spent on it, and if so, how much more? TNS were able to make estimates of the return on investment for each campaign, across 12 months from the start of the campaign, which may be regarded as the medium-term ROI. It takes into account the repeat purchasing of the brand from those buyers who were persuaded by the magazine advertising to buy the product. This calculation resulted in a figure, across the 20 brands, of £2.77. That is, for every £1 spent on magazine advertising, there were additional sales of £2.77. To put it into context, this can be set beside the figure of £2.33 for television advertising, also based on Superpanel data and calculated by TNS [33].

TNS' methods of calculation for the two media were based on the same principles, but as the calculations were not precisely the same, and different sets of brands were used, one should be circumspect in reading much into the magazine figure being rather higher than that of television. However it is reasonable to conclude that the ROI for magazine advertising is at least as good as that of television advertising.

## **Magazines and TV used in combination**

### 'Sales Uncovered'

Among the 20 brands examined by 'Sales Uncovered' seven were TV+magazines campaigns whose impact was assessed by medium. The average budget split across these brands was 70% in television and 22% in magazines. For each of these seven campaigns, Superpanel main shoppers were ranked according to their weight of exposure to the magazine advertising and, separately, to the TV advertising.



Aggregating across the seven campaigns, main shoppers who had seen none or very little of either the television or magazine advertising showed only a small increase in sales during the campaign period: 3.9%.

By contrast, those exposed to the magazine advertising but who were only lightly or not exposed to TV, showed a dramatically higher increase in sales. The same was true of those heavily exposed to TV but not exposed to magazines. For the two groups, the sales increase was 26%-29%.

Yet magazines accounted for a much lower proportion of advertising expenditure than television: 22% of the budget, compared with 70% for television. While magazine advertising achieved something approaching the effect of television advertising, it did so at less than a third of the cost (i.e. 22/70).

This does not mean that magazines are two or three times more cost-effective than television in all circumstances. What it indicates is that, pound for pound, magazines are much more cost-effective *at the relative levels of expenditure in these seven campaigns*. The reason is surely that television has been allocated too much of the budget and magazines too little. We know that diminishing marginal returns sets in for all media, and the expenditure on television in these cases appears to have gone past the point of severe diminishing returns. If, however, a more equally balanced amount had been allocated to magazines and television one could expect the two media to become much closer in cost-efficiency. It points to the conclusion that 22% may be too low a share of budget for magazines.

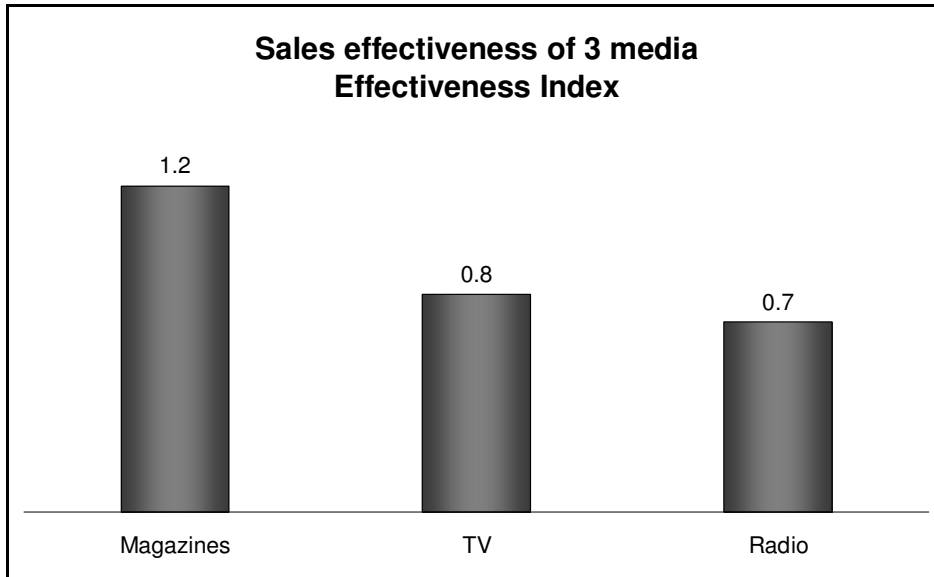
#### 'Measuring Magazine Effectiveness' (USA)

Magazine Publishers of America (MPA) commissioned from Media Marketing Assessment (MMA) an econometric analysis of MMA's extensive seven-year database of marketing and sales information on 186 brands in 13 product categories, covering the period 1994-2000. The results were published in 2001 in the report "Measuring Magazine Effectiveness: Quantifying the Sales Impact of Magazine Advertising" [34, 35].

Central to MMA's analysis was a measure of 'effectiveness', conceived as the sales effect each dollar has. Brand by brand, a 'base' volume of sales was modelled (sales that would have been achieved that year without additional marketing effort). The remaining sales above 'base' level were generated as a result of that year's marketing efforts. Each medium's percentage contribution to these incremental sales was modelled, and divided by the medium's percentage of marketing expenditure. This produced an effectiveness index. For example, if a medium contributed 30% of incremental sales and accounted for 30% of marketing expenditure, it would have an effectiveness of 1.0. The higher the index the better.

MMA found that magazines were substantially more cost-effective than either television or radio. Magazines' effectiveness index of 1.2 contrasts with only 0.8 for television and

0.7 for radio. Expressed another way, a dollar spent in magazines produced on average 50% more sales than a dollar spent on television.



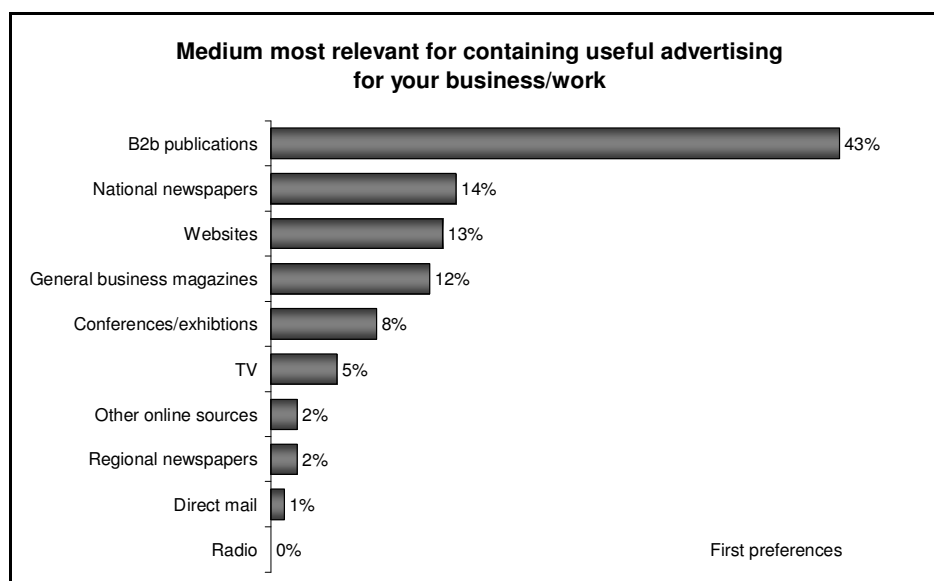
## G. B2B PUBLISHING: MAGAZINES ARE A VITAL INGREDIENT

Many of the characteristics which make consumer magazines a strong medium also apply to business-to-business (b2b) magazines – for example, the personal relationships which readers establish with their regular magazines, the intensity with which they are read, the receptiveness to relevant advertising, the ability to influence the process of purchase decision-making, the proven ability to generate sales leads and sales, and the complementarity of print and online. However the very different nature of the markets in which b2b magazines operate, compared with consumer markets, means that for the most part research on b2b magazines must be considered separately.

### The essential strengths of b2b magazines

PPAI commissioned The Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business and University College Dublin to conduct a study among key decision makers within the Irish business community [5]. It examined their attitudes to a variety of media they used in their working lives. In every respect which was asked about, b2b magazines achieved the most positive scores or, on one or two questions, ranked second only behind the internet.

For example, b2b publications were considered the most relevant medium for carrying advertising that was useful for respondents' work. 43% of decision makers opted for the medium, three times as many as for the second most popular medium.



Results for other aspects are summarised as follows, showing just the first and second ranking media in each case (based on first preferences):

Most trusted for information on respondents' industry or sector:

B2b publications	50%
General business magazines	12%
Websites	12%

Information sources used to gain information on respondents' sector:

B2b publications	37%
Websites	21%

Helping respondents keep up to date with new product launches:

B2b publications	44%
Websites	16%

Providing the best sources of information on new products or services:

Websites	36%
B2b publications	28%

Helping stimulate new business ideas:

Websites	29%
B2b publications	21%

Helping respondents spot new business opportunities:

B2b publications	18%
General business magazines	18%
National newspapers	18%

Providing information not easily accessible elsewhere:

Websites	38%
B2b publications	25%

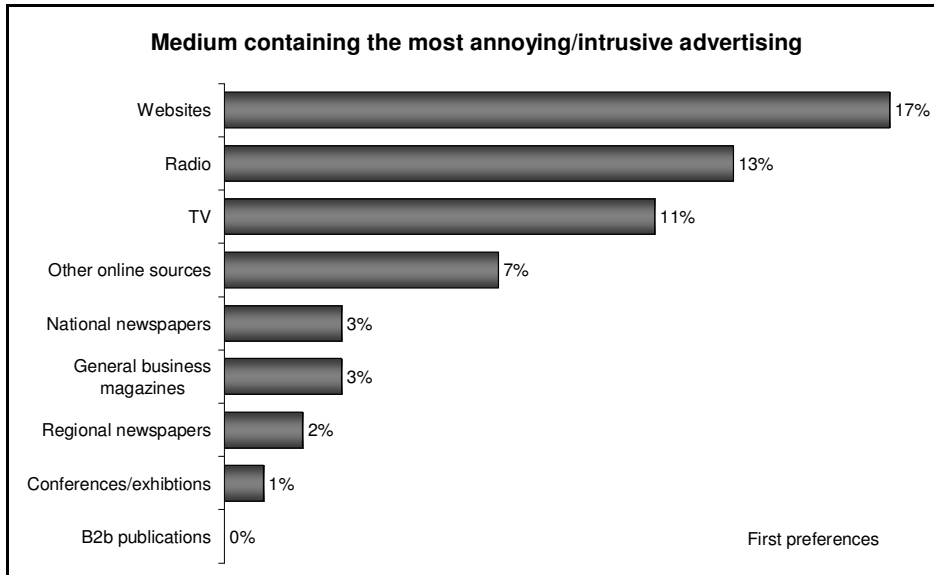
Helping respondents to do their jobs better:

Websites	36%
B2b publications	28%

Thus b2b publications are supremely trusted, and they are leading sources of information on readers' sectors, and on new products and launches. They help stimulate new business ideas and assist in spotting new business opportunities. They are good at providing information not available elsewhere, and in helping respondents to do their jobs better.

The advertising they carry is by far the most relevant and useful of any medium. Further, the advertising is welcomed as a source of information. Put the other way, the advertising

in some media is regarded as annoying and intrusive, but no-one thinks that of b2b publications:



The results of this PPAI survey were reinforced by a study carried out in Britain for the PPA [36], which reached very similar conclusions.

However the PPAI study was published several years ago, in 2003, and since then the services available online have developed enormously, and if the survey was to be repeated in 2009 the internet would undoubtedly appear in a much stronger light. Nevertheless b2b magazines remain very powerful in 2009 and retain the attributes which made them such an effective medium – as the ABM/Forrester study reviewed below establishes. Before examining that, the change in positioning of publishers is noted.

## Publishing across multiple platforms

No longer just publishers of magazines, B2b publishing companies now perceive themselves as publishers of content across multiple platforms, especially online services alongside the print services, with face-to-face media such as exhibitions and seminars also playing a more prominent role than previously. The b2b publishing business has become seen to be standing on three legs; print, online and events.

B2b publishers whose origins are in print are major players within the b2b online community. They are increasing their investment in online and in a variety of delivery methods including mobile, emailed newsletters, podcast, vodcast, IPTV and RSS feeds.

Even more than in consumer markets, the combination of digital and traditional media is vital to business people's use of information sources.

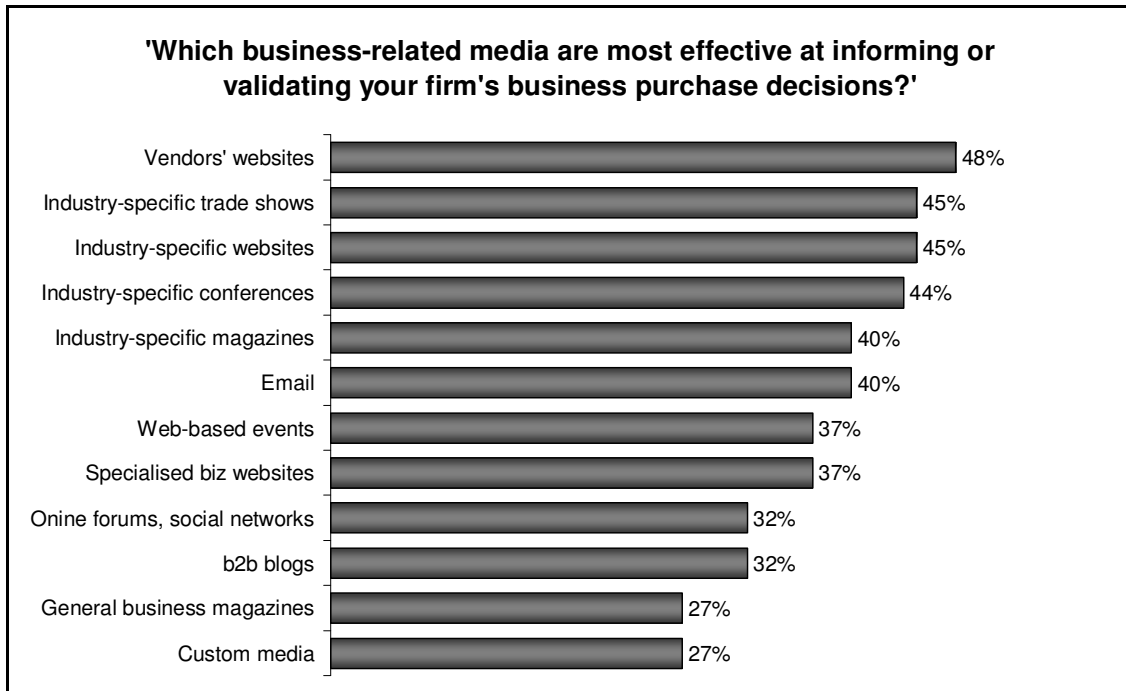
### **ABM: Industry-specific media are best for decision makers**

American Business Media (ABM) commissioned Forrester Research Inc to conduct an independent analysis of the trends and impact of b2b media on business decision makers, in the light of the rapid growth of digital services [37]. 'Decision makers' were upper-level and middle managers significantly involved in approving budgets and evaluating or purchasing products and services. The term 'industry-specific media' was used to describe publications and websites which focus on a particular industry or profession, to distinguish them from general business media that cover broad business and management issues. Key conclusions were that:

- Industry-specific media are very effective at reaching decision makers
- Industry-specific digital media are heavily used
- Yet industry-specific traditional media such as magazines and events remain highly relevant and valuable to decision makers
- Industry-specific websites and magazines are both effective on their own, but they are most effective when used together in an integrated manner
- Industry-specific media extend the reach and effectiveness of the b2b marketer's sales organisation

Decision makers are highly involved with all industry specific media. 64% read at least 3 b2b magazines in the last month, 54% visited at least 5 b2b websites (including publishers' own websites) in the last month, and 51% attended at least 3 conferences or trade shows in the last 12 months.

These media accounted for four of the top five channels regarded as most effective "at informing or validating your firm's business purchase decisions". Top of the ranking was websites of the people the buyer was thinking of buying from.



Industry-specific platforms perform better than other media for a range of purposes. Between them industry-specific magazines and industry-specific websites ranked first and second among 20+ media for each of the following attributes:

- Provides objective information
- Provides information that I can trust
- Keeps me ahead of the competition
- Helps me do my job better
- Helps me advance my career
- Helps me grow my business

For most of these statements, industry-specific trade shows ranked third; otherwise they ranked fourth. For one other statement they ranked first: 'Helps me become aware of new products or services'. Here industry-specific magazines ranked second.

The power of combining the three legs of b2b media – print, online and events – was highlighted by the fact that 91% of decision makers agreed with the statement that "It is easier for me to recognise or remember a company's brand or products/services when I see messages about it in multiple media such as magazines, online, or at events".

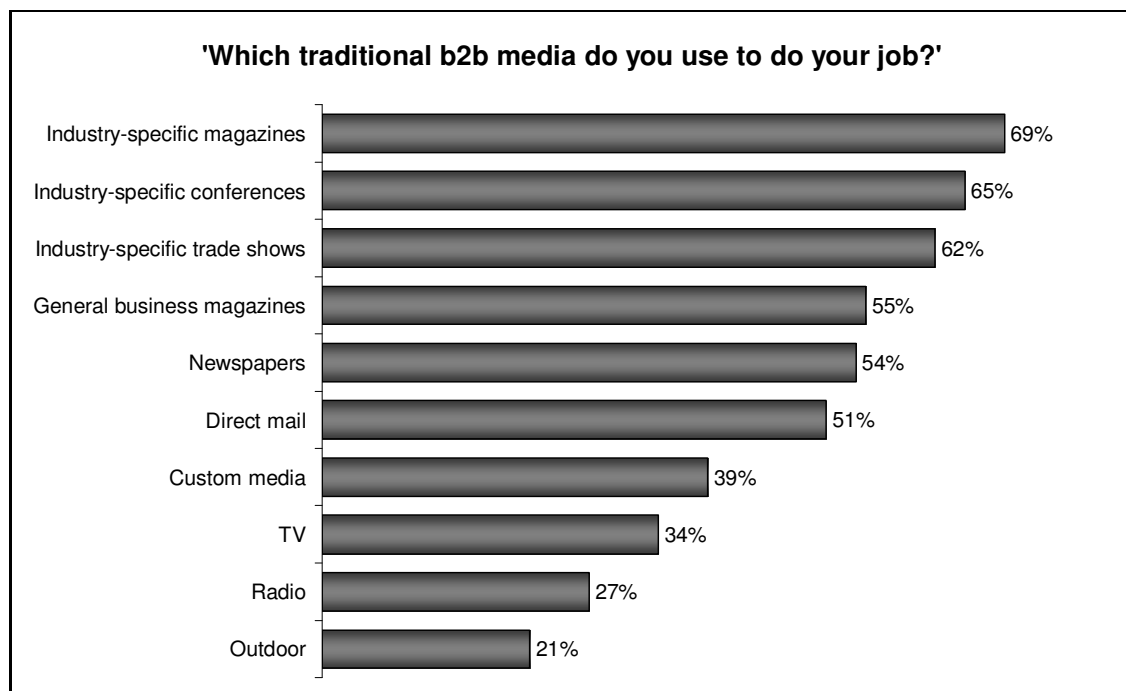
Another aspect of the integrated use of multiple channels was the ability of b2b magazines to drive decision makers to visit the b2b magazine's own website:

- 64% of decision makers were ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ to visit an industry-specific magazine’s website simply after reading the magazine
- 64% were ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ to visit the website of an industry-specific magazine that sponsors an event the decision maker plans to attend
- 61% were ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ to visit the website after attending the event the magazine sponsored

In addition, 41% of decision makers were ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ to participate in a web event sponsored by a b2b magazine that they read, and 39% were ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ to read a blog mentioned in an industry-specific magazine.

On this body of evidence, using a combination of industry-specific media is compelling. It says use the new digital media, but also use the traditional print medium which has its own complementary strengths.

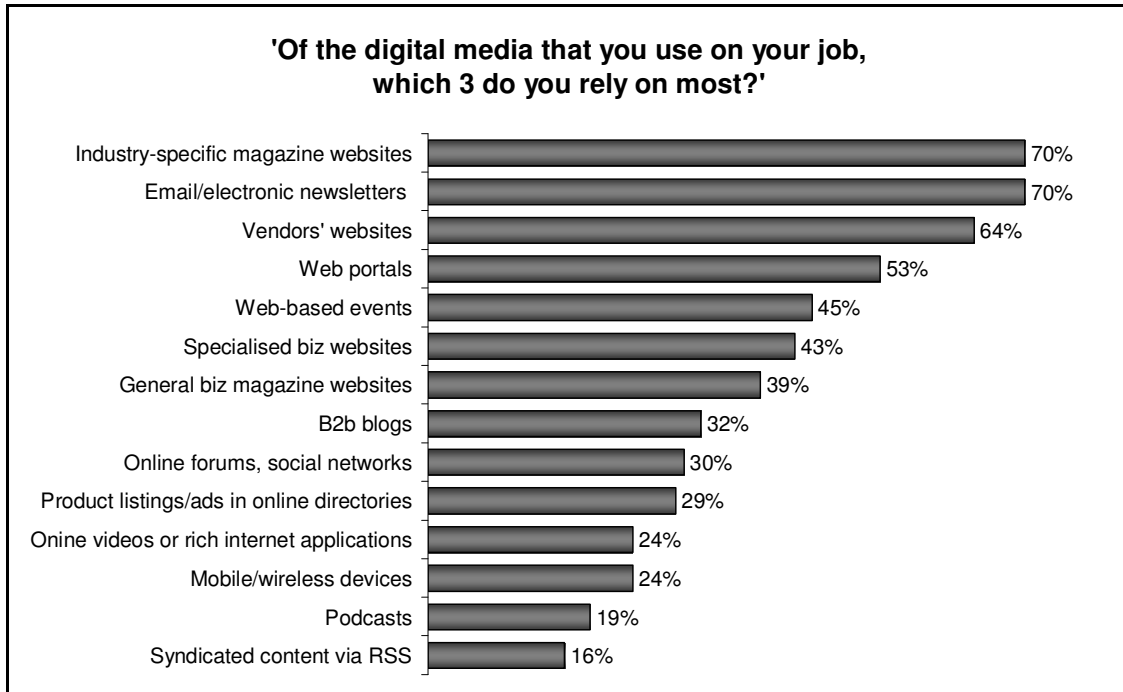
The ABM/Forrester survey yielded further information about what it called ‘*traditional*’ b2b media:



b2b magazines were the most widely used of the ‘traditional’ media, followed by b2b conferences and trade shows.

The survey also asked about usage of *digital* b2b media. When asked which three digital b2b media they relied on the most, decision makers ranked the websites of industry-specific magazines highest, equal with email/electronic newsletters (which includes those

from b2b publishers). Both of these media were nominated by 70% of decision makers as being in their top three digital sources.



Peer advice and word of mouth were noted as important inputs to the decision making process. Clearly, among the ways in which this kind of communication can be stimulated are b2b magazine advertising and promotion on publishers' websites.

### **Harris: synergy between online and print in the b2b market**

American Business Media (ABM) also commissioned Harris Interactive to study the corporate decision maker's view of business media [38]. The findings were broadly similar to those of the Forrester work. Among the key results the study highlighted were:

- Each month the average b2b decision maker reads 4.2 b2b magazines and visits 7.4 b2b websites, showing both of these to be vital resources
- Executives identify different strengths for each type of b2b medium, and consequently it is helpful if a synergy of the difference sources (such as print and online) is used in order to deliver a more complete message to executives
- B2b media are essential tools throughout the purchasing process. During all phases of the purchasing process, a synergy of different b2b platforms offers executives the guidance they want every step of the way

- Decision makers acknowledge the strong tie between seeing a brand advertised in multiple b2b media and having that brand top-of-mind

## **AOP: b2b websites and b2b magazines are the top two sources**

In November 2008 the UK's Association of Online Publishers (AOP) completed its 'B2b Digital Content Research' [39], which interviewed business decision makers.

Use of b2b websites was shown to be ubiquitous, and 60% of decision makers stated that b2b websites are an essential source of information in their work. Nevertheless b2b magazines remain very important.

B2b websites and b2b magazines are the top two sources of information for key business related activities. Asked which of a list of media are used for work, business websites and business magazines ranked first and second for:

- Sector news
- Sector data reports
- Research for informing business decisions
- Research for informing purchase decisions
- Interacting with people in the industry/sector
- Finding business opportunities
- Conducting market analysis
- Practical tips and advice
- As a reference source

Moreover these two media were ranked first and second in terms of being perceived as:

- Trustworthy
- Insightful
- Authoritative
- Useful

Another significant finding was that 74% of decision makers trust a website more if it comes from a source they know already – such as a business publication. Since an established b2b publication is a trusted brand, that trust transfers to the brand's online activities. In addition, 62% of decision makers agreed that a website is an important part of the offering of a publication (or other medium), and 56% agreed that b2b magazines and their website equivalent complement each other. For an advertiser as well as for a business decision maker, this means that the combination of using both the brand's online services and the printed publication is a very effective one.

## **ABM: Industry-specific media are best for b2b marketers**

The ABM/Forrester study [36] also interviewed b2b marketers, in order to assess their perspectives on the media available to them for marketing their products and services.

68% of b2b marketers who agreed that industry-specific websites are effective at reaching decision makers, and 62% agreed that such websites are effective at generating sales leads.

Almost all marketers felt that it was the combination of industry-specific media – rather than using any of them in isolation – that was most valuable:

- 93% of marketers agreed that “Integrating our marketing messages and advertising across multiple industry-specific business-to-business media allows us to reach buyers that we might not have engaged using one medium alone”
- 91% agreed that “Our company or brands become more top-of-mind when buyers see our messages in more than one industry-specific b2b medium”
- 91% agreed that “Buyers and customers are more likely to consider our company’s products or services when they see messages for our company in more than one industry-specific b2b medium”
- 90% agreed that “Prospects get more information about our company or brands when they see messages in more than one industry-specific b2b medium”
- 85% agreed that “Our firms gets more qualified buyers when we integrate industry-specific b2b media like print and events with online media like web ads and sponsored links”

B2b marketers overwhelmingly believe that industry-specific events and media increase the effectiveness of their sales forces. There was very high agreement with the following statements:

- 96% of marketers agreed that “Face-to-face events help our sales people engage buyers more effectively”
- 91% agreed that “Our sales people feel that messages in industry-specific b2b media help to build their credibility”
- 89% agreed that “Buyers who visit our website are more likely to take a call from our sales people”
- 88% agreed that “Messages in industry-specific b2b media make it easier for our sales people to call on prospects”
- 75% agreed that “Web-based seminars help our sales people engage buyers more effectively”

B2b media extend the reach of marketers’ sales people. The sales teams can’t get round to visiting everyone. 69% of decision makers said they see sales reps less than once a month, and 78% said the amount of time they spend with sales reps has decreased or only stayed the same during the past 12 months.

Not only that: b2b media also help marketers' sales people to get a foot in the door and be listened to once inside. 82% of decision makers agreed that seeing a message in industry-specific media makes them more receptive to a salesperson.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Guy Consterdine is the founder of Guy Consterdine Associates, a UK-based consultancy which specialises in media research, with particular emphasis on print media, and with an international perspective.

Among other current assignments, he is research consultant to PPAI, PPA, and FIPP (International Federation of the Periodical Press). Other reports he has published on magazine advertising's effectiveness include 'How Magazine Advertising Work: 5<sup>th</sup> edition', 'The Vital Investment: why it pays to advertise in B2B magazines' and 'Routes To Success for Consumer & B2B Publishers Websites'. For PPAI he has also published in 2009 'Advertising In A Recession: it pays to maintain marketing pressure'. These, and a range of other published work, can be accessed via his website.

Guy has many years' experience of consumer and business magazines, both as a consultant and in various roles within publishing houses and advertising agencies. He has played an active role in designing and managing several of the British research projects summarised in this report. Before founding his consultancy he was Director of Research at International Thomson Publishing Ltd, at that time one of the leading UK magazine publishers, with a large array of consumer and B2B titles. Prior to that he was Marketing Services Manager at Times Newspapers Ltd.

He began his career in major advertising agencies, where his roles included Media Research Manager, International Media Manager, and Media Group Head. In the latter function he was responsible for the media planning on many of the agency's accounts. During this period he served as Chairman of the Media Research Group.

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## **FURTHER SOURCES, AND REFERENCES**

There are many other surveys not quoted in this report which support and amplify the arguments presented here. Many of these surveys may be found among the following extensive sources of additional information.

- ‘How Magazine Advertising Works’ by Guy Consterdine for PPA; fifth edition, 2005. Downloadable free from [www.consterdine.com](http://www.consterdine.com) and from [www.ppamarketing.net](http://www.ppamarketing.net)
- For b2b publications, the report ‘The Vital Investment: why it pays to advertise in b2b magazines’, by Guy Consterdine for PPA, summarises the major research evidence as it stood in 2002. Downloadable free from [www.consterdine.com](http://www.consterdine.com) and from [www.ppamarketing.net](http://www.ppamarketing.net)
- The PPA and PPAI websites at [www.ppamarketing.net](http://www.ppamarketing.net) and [www.ppa.ie](http://www.ppa.ie)
- The FIPP website: [www.fipp.com](http://www.fipp.com) (then click on Research). FIPP is the International Federation of the Periodical Press, and the research section of FIPP’s website is edited by Guy Consterdine.
- The MPA (Magazine Publishers of America) website at [www.magazine.org](http://www.magazine.org)

Websites of national magazine associations in many other countries also offer considerable information.

### **The references given in the text of this report are as follows:**

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- [19] VISTA Print Effectiveness Rating Service, conducted by Affinity Research. VISTA norms were based on fieldwork during January 2007-December 2008 and were published in January 2009.
- [20] 'CrossMedia Research', conducted by Dynamic Logic & Millward Brown, 2007. See also the Havlena, de Montigny, Cardarelli & Eadie paper at the 2007 Worldwide Readership Research Symposium.
- [21] Analysis of Marketing Evolution's database, for Magazine Publishers of America, 2007.
- [22] 'Multiplying The Media Effect' (1987) and 'The Media Multiplier' (1990): both are reviewed in 'How Magazine Advertising Works', 5<sup>th</sup> edition (2005), downloadable free from [www.consterdine.com](http://www.consterdine.com) and from [www.ppamarketing.net](http://www.ppamarketing.net)
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