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Ameritest

WHITE PAPER

## Recognition-Based Ad Tracking

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Suppose you're at a party. You see someone smiling and coming toward you, and you know that you've met this person before. You clearly *recognize* the person's face but you just can't *recall* their name! This situation reminds us that the human mind stores memories in more than one way. For advertising researchers, it triggers the debate about the relative merits of *recognition* vs. *recall* as a measure of advertising awareness.

The logic of much of the research that has been conducted on advertising says that for advertising to be effective, it must leave a trace in the memory of the consumer. The question is, "What kind of trace?" Should consumers be asked whether they *recognize* having seen the advertising before or should they be asked to *recall* or play back specific elements in the ad? To complicate matters, awareness based on *recognition* measurements can differ substantially from awareness based on *recall*. Ad *recognition* is sometimes higher than *recall* by as much as a factor of two! Which measure is right?

Think about the hypothetical party for a moment. Which is proof that you have or have not met the person before? Does the fact that you *recognize* the face mean you have met before? Or does the fact that you can't *recall* their name mean that you have not met before? With advertising, which one is proof that consumers have or have not seen the advertising before: the fact that they *recognize* the ad when shown images from the ad or the fact that they can't *recall* the details?

This helps explain why, in response to recall questions; consumers often fail to mention campaigns that clients have just spent twenty million dollars airing. At the same time, they may play back images from ads that haven't aired in years. Or sometimes, in trying to recall

the details, they describe a competitor's ad that has been "misfiled" in their semantic memory system.

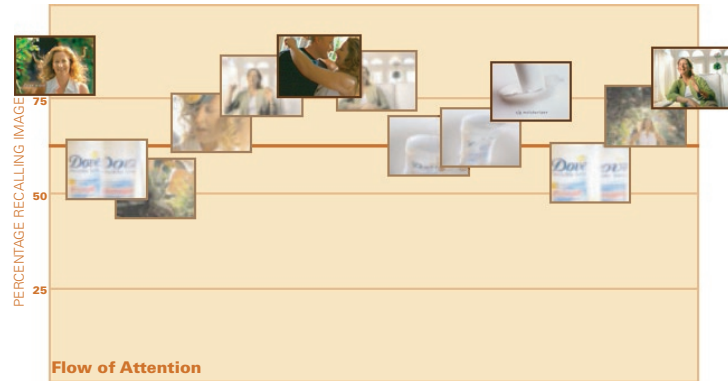
Further complications arise when a large pool of commercials airs. It is difficult if not impossible using recall to tell how much or how little of a campaign the consumers have already seen and how that depth of exposure impacts sales. Recall is an all or nothing kind of measure.

One of the main advantages of using the Internet for studying advertising is that it allows you to put a stimulus in front of consumers' eyes to test whether or not they *recognize* the "face" of the advertising. Although telephone trackers attempt to produce a "recognition" measure by reading a verbal description of advertising over the phone, this substitute approach is not reliable. It's like trying to find a specific face in a crowd with a written description of what the face looks like rather than a picture. Getting to visual recognition through a verbal cue is not as reliable as using a visual cue.

But if indeed you are to track ad awareness using visuals to cue commercial recognition, how should you choose the visuals? If you arbitrarily choose six pictures from an ad to use in a *photoboard* stimulus for an on-line test, you will most likely introduce a substantial amount of error or *noise* into your measurement process. The images you choose or may not be the ones that remain in the long-term memory of consumers.

The Ameritest Flow of Attention® which we use in pre-testing commercials, measures how the consumer's eye *filters* visual information. It tells us which images will remain in long-term memory and, therefore, which are the best ones to include in the photoboard to be used in an ad-awareness recognition test.

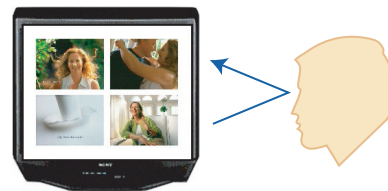
## Reducing Variance



**Step 1:** Filter images in commercial pre-test



RECOGNITION—TEST STORYBOARD



**Step 3:** In-market recognition tracking

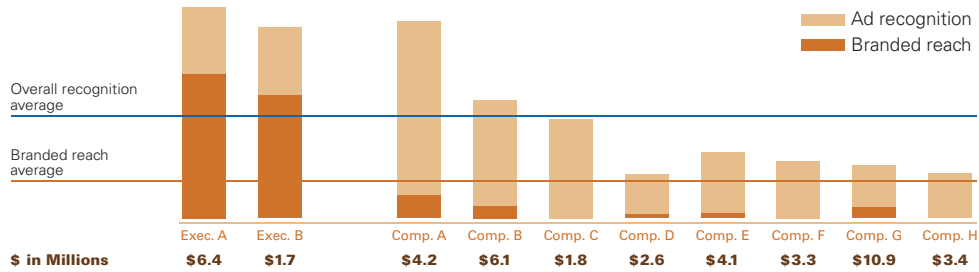
**Step 2:** Construct storyboards or abbreviated video stimulus (reduced set of aesthetic information)

The pictures on the peaks of our curve—typically four to six pictures in a 30-second ad—are the ones the gatekeeper eye of the consumer has decided are important to store in long-term memory. These are the appropriate images to choose for a reliable, well-defined measurement of ad awareness. In contrast, if you arbitrarily picked six pictures that fell in the valleys or low spots of the Flow of Attention to use in your photoboard, you might severely underestimate your in-market awareness.

As a result of this deconstruction, there are also numerous analytic benefits to an on-line, recognition-based approach to measuring ad awareness. For instance, with reliable measurement of the awareness of individual ads in a campaign, it is possible to identify the stronger and weaker members of a pool. This can be invaluable for optimizing the media plan. This system can also include competitive ads which can then provide highly relevant benchmarks for your creative.

## TV Commercial Recognition

- Overall recognition of commercial A is higher than commercial B
- Recognition of the test ads is 2-3 times higher than most competitive spots
- However, if you factor in the lower spend that supported B it is actually more efficient than A



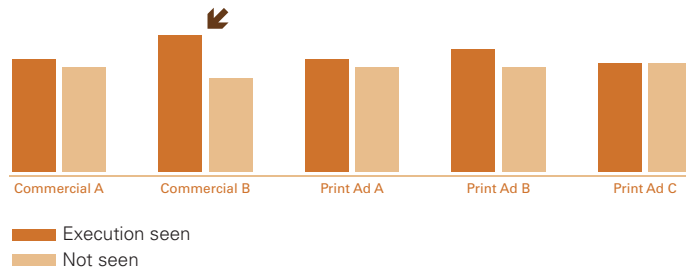
Some people ask, “But why test in-market when you’ve already pre-tested?” For the same reason you would analyze sales data even after running a simulation. Not only is it far more realistic (actual media, natural exposure, real competitive activity), but our

experience has shown that “good” advertising can behave in very different ways in the marketplace.

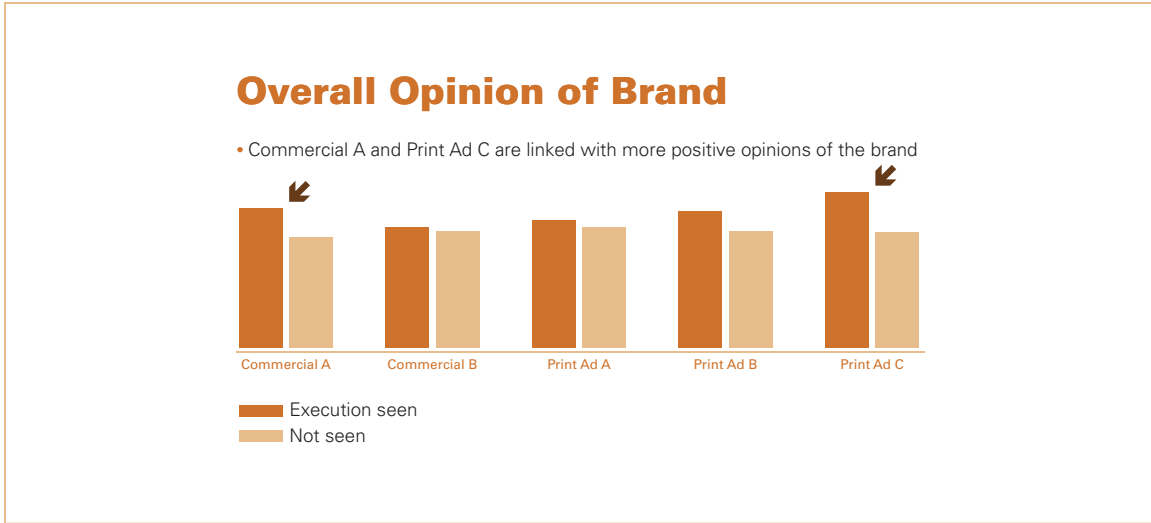
For example, even among executions that passed through pre-screening, some may drive brand awareness:

## Unaided Brand Awareness

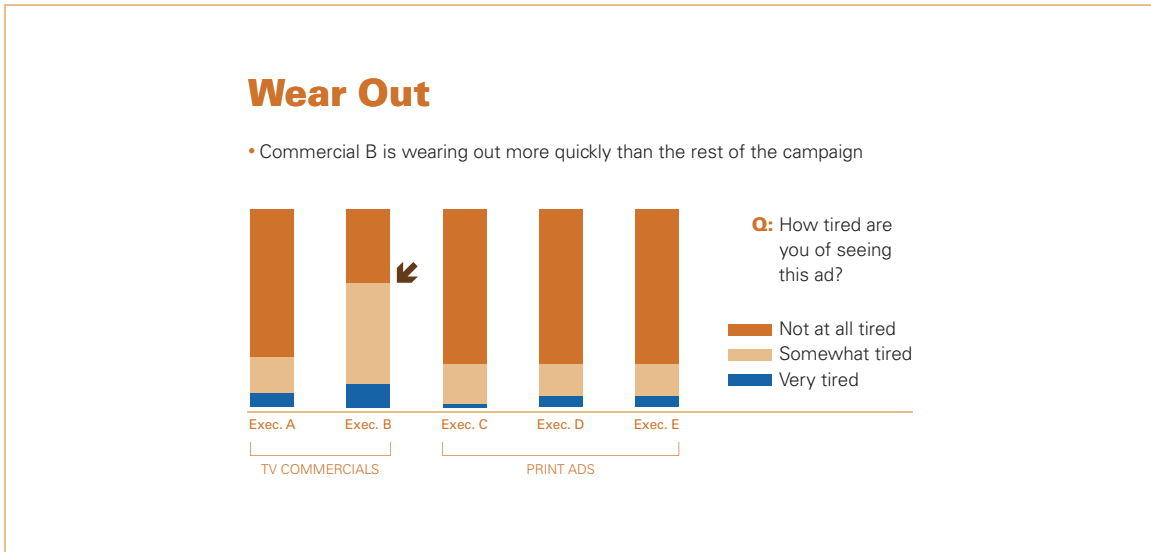
- Exposure to Commercial B is associated with higher awareness of the brand



While others may drive brand imagery:



And even the strongest ads may prove to wear out sooner than expected, and will need to be replaced in the rotation:



Ameritest® Ad Effectiveness Tracking needs no pre-wave—it can be fielded at the end of a media flight. It will tell you far more about how your advertising is working than either commercial pre-testing or conventional tracking can. For example,

- How **impactful** is each execution—at breaking through real-world clutter?
- How **efficient** is each execution—at achieving recognition vs. dollars spent?
- How **well-branded** is each execution—or is it remembered as a generic or competitor's ad?
- How **effective** are your ads compared to your competitors?
- Do your ads drive **brand awareness**?
- Or **brand imagery**?
- Are your ads **wearing out**?

By evaluating whole campaigns simultaneously in one study, Effectiveness Tracking is both comprehensive and cost-effective. Effectiveness Tracking has the flexibility to be done online or offline.



Ameritest® is a six-time winner of the ARF David Ogilvy Research Award including the Grand Ogilvy.