

Accountability: in search of the holistic grail

Marketers still need to develop better ways to measure multi-discipline campaigns, **Claire Spencer**, i to i research, gives a progress report

IN THE FILM *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, the English 'k-nnnniggets' – as they are dubbed by the French – are tasked by God to go on a 'quest to seek the holy grail'. Led by King Arthur, they attack the French castle holding the holy grail, but are rebuffed.

The quest for the 'Holistic Grail' may prove no less elusive.

If holistic means 'characterised by the view that a whole system of beliefs must be analysed rather than simply its individual components' (1), then a different approach is needed to measure the effectiveness of multi-channel and multi-discipline campaigns. If the underlying motivation for deploying a multiplicity of channels is additive effect, where the sum is greater than the parts, then the focus for evaluation should be on the 'sum' and not the 'parts'. This is the 'holistic' grail.

The central premise of this article is that while the practice of multi-channel and multi-discipline campaigns is on the increase, techniques to evaluate their effectiveness are not keeping pace.

The more the merrier?

While there has always been an interest among clients and agencies to experiment



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with the use of multi-channels, it is only in the last ten or so years that the budgets have followed. The most dramatic shift of expenditure has been into digital: an estimated \$24.5 billion was spent on internet advertising in 2006, a 31% increase on the previous year, giving digital a 6% share of major media advertising (2).

The latest IPA dataMINE report (3) documents the proliferation of media and communication channels, showing that the average number of media used per campaign entered for IPA Awards has increased from two in the 1980s to five in the 2000s. The report shows that with an increased number of channels come bigger effects: multi-channel campaigns are shown to be on average 12% more effective than single-channel campaigns (4).

One of the examples in the report is Cravendale, where the multiplier effects of combining media in a holistic fashion have been quantified (see Figure 1).

The dataBANK shows that these multiplier effects are not isolated examples, something that i to i research can attest to. We have been evaluating multi-media

and multi-discipline campaigns for over six years and have many insights to share about additive, or holistic, effects.

First, effects increase the further you go up the holistic scale, but the higher end of the scale tends to be less populated – in other words, it is rare to see consumers who can recognise all elements of a holistic campaign. This speaks to the need to support secondary channels and disciplines with sufficient budget to ensure that consumers have the opportunity to see the communication. This point is echoed by the cautionary note in the IPA dataMINE report not to spread budget too thinly; 'the data show there are diminishing returns as the number of advertising media increases' and that 'around three advertising media is optimal for a typical campaign'. However, the authors are quick to point out that the same is not true of below-the-line channels, for which it appears to be a case of the more the merrier, provided the budget is big enough (see Figure 2).

Second, one of the most powerful combinations of media is TV and editorial ►

FIGURE 1

Cravendale case study



Cravendale: Multiplier Effects

Channels used	Sales uplift
TV only	4.9%
DM (door-drop) only	8.6%
Point-of-sale (POS) only	0.5%
TV + DM	31.7%
TV + POS	22.5%

Source: 'Marketing in the Era of Accountability', IPA dataMINE, co-authored by Les Binet DDB Metrix and Peter Field Marketing Consultant. Published by WARC

FIGURE 2

Effectiveness rises with the number of BTL channels

	1	2	3	4+
Effectiveness success rate	55% (-)	65%	59%	80% (++)

Source: 'Marketing in the Era of Accountability', IPA dataMINE, co-authored by Les Binet DDB Metrix and Peter Field Marketing Consultant. Published by WARC.

Making the case for holistic measurement

By providing an overall framework for measuring each and every part of the marketing communications mix it is possible to gain a sense of which element, or elements, are doing the hard work when it comes to shifting key brand measures.

The i to i framework does just this. It looks at 'impact', 'ingagement' and 'influence' for each of the channels, answering key questions at each stage (see Figure 3). The final stage – 'influence' – is best handled by using a combination of intermediate measures (awareness, familiarity and brand equity); behavioural measures (e.g. purchase intent) gathered from the primary research and hard business measures gathered from sales data.

By way of example, we have taken a healthy food brand for which we conducted a recent evaluation. For this campaign a combination of TV and print advertising, point-of-sale (PoS) activity (sampling, promotional packs, BOGOF, floor stickers and shelf barkers) and online was used. The pre/post online survey was conducted using a robust sample size.

'Impact'

All the channels had decent reach, with the exception of the digital component, which had low reach.

'Ingagement'

The TV and PoS performed well in terms of recognition and above the level that i to i research would expect given the reach. However, the digital and print underperformed, the former due to low reach and the latter due to weak message take-out.

The TV and PoS again performed well at delivering key messages around health, with high percentages playing back these messages at the un-aided level.

'Influence'

This is where the heart of the holistic effect was measured and it was done at three levels:

1. brand equity shifts (primary research)
2. purchase intent shifts (primary research)
3. actual purchases (DunnHumby loyalty card data).

Brand equity shifts – at the overall level, the biggest percentage shifts pre/post were

seen when consumers had seen the TV, print and PoS. However, due to the small number of consumers recognising TV and PoS activity, a greater number of consumers were moved by this combination.

These effects were even more marked within the key segment: new users. And, as can be seen from Figure 4, the biggest gains for the key equity measure that the campaign was tasked with shifting were among new users; here strong movement can be seen pre-to-post and particularly among consumers who recognised both TV and PoS.

Purchase intent – the picture is consistent when it comes to gains in the purchase intent scores, with the greatest effect achieved with new users, and within these those who had seen a combination of TV and PoS.

Conversion into actual sales (5) – partnering with DunnHumby, we were able to match the primary survey data with loyalty card records at the individual respondent level, using postcode data.

The objectives were three-fold:

1. To establish if consumers do what they say they are going to do, i.e. if they really do go on to buy.
2. To establish the value of their transactions and whether this is different for those that have seen the campaign, i.e. the 'campaign aware' group.

3. To establish if there were additive effects from combining TV and PoS.

The benefit of this approach is that it is possible to establish whether a multi-discipline campaign has a greater sales effect than a single-discipline campaign. In the case of the healthy food brand, the results were as follows:

- ▶ Did people do what they said they were going to do?

Only a third of respondents who said in the primary survey that they were very likely or somewhat likely to buy the brand did actually buy. As can be seen in Figure 5, there is a wide disparity between the client's brand and competitor brands when it comes to actual purchase rather than purchase intent.

- ▶ What did they actually buy and is there a campaign effect?

There was an overall increase in sales of the brand as measured by DunnHumby, with those who were 'campaign aware' buying more during the campaign than those that were not campaign aware. And the effect continued beyond the campaign period, as can be seen in Figure 6.

- ▶ Was there an uplift for those that had seen both TV and PoS?

From the DunnHumby loyalty card data it was possible to match those that had seen TV only, and those that had seen TV and PoS. Respondents who had seen both channels spent 55% more than those that saw only TV.



While the practice of multi-channel and multi-discipline campaigns is on the increase, techniques to evaluate their effectiveness are not keeping pace

FIGURE 3

Fundamentals of i to i research[®]

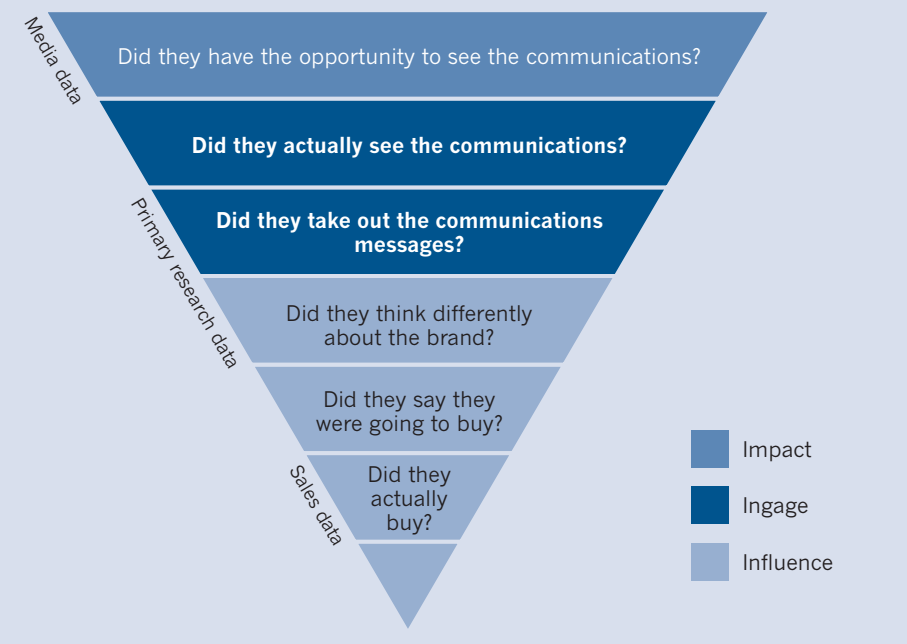


FIGURE 4

Brand equity scores within segments

Top three box % stating that client brand 'helps relieve symptoms'

	Pre total	Post total	Nothing	PoS only	TV only	TV and POS
Sample size	1,023	3,024	339	252	1,062	1,133
New users	10%	17%	9%	13%	16%	20%
Frequent users	29%	31%	21%	25%	27%	36%
Often users	52%	58%	-	33%	43%	65%
Total	23%	27%	12%	20%	21%	36%

Shaded cells denote significant increases relative to the pre score

Q: Please indicate whether each statement applies to client brand, using a 10-point scale where 10 means 'definitely applies' and 1 means 'does not apply at all'
Pre/post survey, conducted online with a sample of 1,023 (pre) and 3,024 (post)

coverage (PR). Providing editorial coverage delivers sufficiently high reach and frequency levels, it acts as a foil to the TV, providing 'reasons to believe' the ad messages. This is well demonstrated in the Marmite 2002 IPA Effectiveness Paper (6) where the advertising message around the 'Hate/Mate' campaign was amplified through 'fame-generating' PR. The paper

notes that 'publicity significantly increased the effectiveness of advertising; in fact, by amplifying the effect of advertising, publicity increased effectiveness by 14%'.

A joined-up approach to effectiveness

While the industry is well served with tools to measure the effectiveness of

different advertising media, approaches to evaluate other communication activities or disciplines are much more *ad hoc*. Each discipline area tends to be evaluated in the way that it is practised, i.e. in silos, with metrics that are specific to that discipline. Digital, for example, tends to be measured by the number of clicks or hits; PR, by media gross impressions and message penetration; events, by number of visitors; and so forth. This is a reflection of how the marketing communications function is split in many organisations, with different departments managing different disciplines. In this environment it is all too typical for the evaluation to be centred on proving the value of these activities individually, rather than understanding the impact on the brand as a whole.

There are three reasons why a more 'joined-up' approach is going to be needed for the future:

1. Increased opportunities for media to 'interact and interrelate': as Phil Gullen formerly of Carat points out, 'there are endless opportunities for media interaction with the advent of internet, mobile phone services and digital TV, and it is very easy for a poster or sponsorship banner to direct consumers to a website where they can find more about a brand and even play its TV ad' (7).

2. Simultaneous Media Exposure: as Don E Schultz and Joseph J Pilotta (8) observed, 'a large portion of today's media consumers do not access nor use the advertising media singly and independently; instead they multi-task or surf various forms of media in combination with each other. This means they could be reading a piece of editorial online whilst watching a TV ad, or updating an entry on Facebook'.

3. 'The Lost Chord': Forrester Research contends in its latest report (9) that 'consumers are increasingly turning blind eyes and deaf ears to the traditional promotional messages which advertisers and agencies continue to churn out'. And that they 'rely less on marketing messages when in buying mode. Instead they seek guidance from family, friends and others in their respective



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communities to guide them towards purchasing decisions.'

This speaks to the need to evaluate brand communication in the round. There are two facets to evaluating in the round; the first involves capturing controlled and uncontrolled messages, from word of mouth, web-based chat and media; the second looking at the additive effects of combining different channels and disciplines.

And, as part of this joined-up approach to evaluation, it is important to prioritise

metrics. The 'golden rules for measurement' set out in the IPA dataMINE report prescribe a three-tier system whereby 'hard business measures come first, behavioural measures come second, intermediate measures come third'.

In search of the holistic grail

The health food brand (see box, page 39) is a good case study in effectiveness; first, because the evaluation deploys both of what Les Binet and Peter Field refer to as intermediate and hard business metrics; second, because it provides an evidence base for the holistic benefits of a multi-discipline campaign.

However, the evidence base is still thin and as the practice of multi-channel and multi-discipline campaigns increases, so will the need for best practice in evaluating such campaigns. ■

'The most dramatic shift of expenditure has been into digital: an estimated \$24.5 billion was spent on internet advertising in 2006, a 31% increase on the previous year, giving digital a 6% share of major media advertising'

FIGURE 5

Purchase intent versus actual purchase

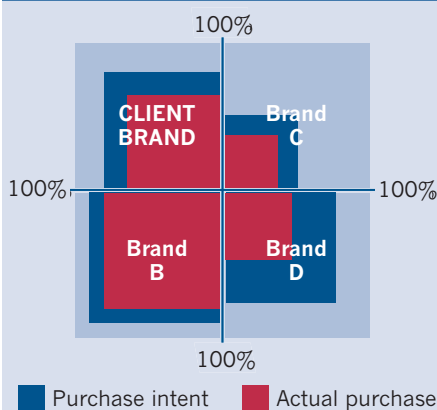
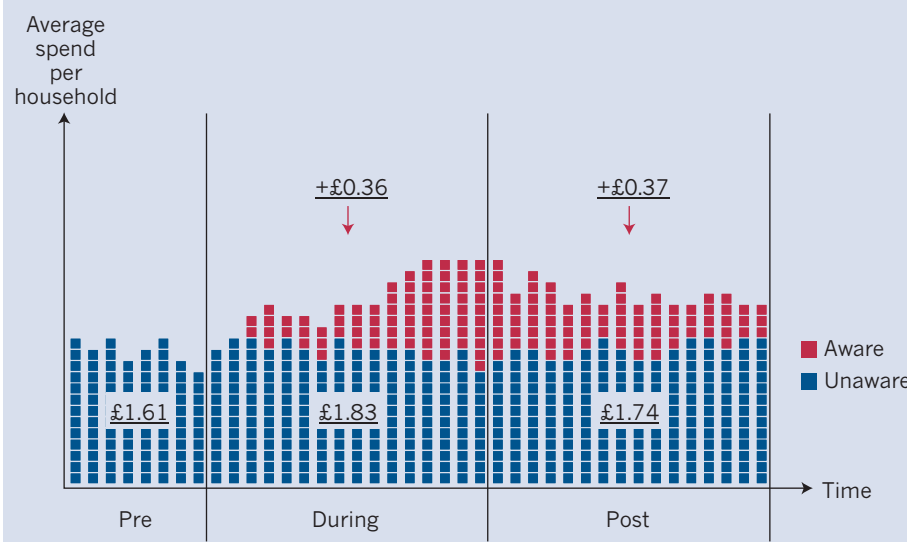


FIGURE 6

Incremental spend



1. Encarta Dictionary UK.
2. Zenith Optimedia (December 2006) Advertising Expenditure Forecasts. Published in WARC Media FAQ, March 2007.
3. 'Marketing in the Era of Accountability', IPA dataMINE, co-authored by Les Binet, DDB Metrix, and Peter Field, Marketing Consultant. WARC, 2007.
4. The key measure of effectiveness used was called the 'Effectiveness Success Rate'. This is

the percentage of cases that report 'very large' effects in any of a number of key business metrics, such as profit, market share, price elasticity, and so on. This measure turns out to be closely related to marketing payback: the higher the 'Effectiveness Success Rate', the higher the ROI. Les Binet and Peter Field, 'The pursuit of effectiveness', Market Leader, Winter 2007.

5. Correlations between campaign awareness and actual purchases are not necessarily causal. Purchases may cause campaign awareness (the 'Rosser Reeves Effect') or both may be caused by some third factor.
6. IPA Advertising Effectiveness Awards, 2002; 'Please Don't Spread it Thinly, Marmite - Hate/Mate.'
7. P Gullen: Understanding Integrated Media. Admap, October 2004.
8. D E Schultz and J J Pilotta: Developing the Foundation for a New Approach to Understanding how Media Advertising Works. ESOMAR, Cross Media Conference, Geneva, June 2004.
9. Forrester Research. WARC News, 12 February 2008.



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