



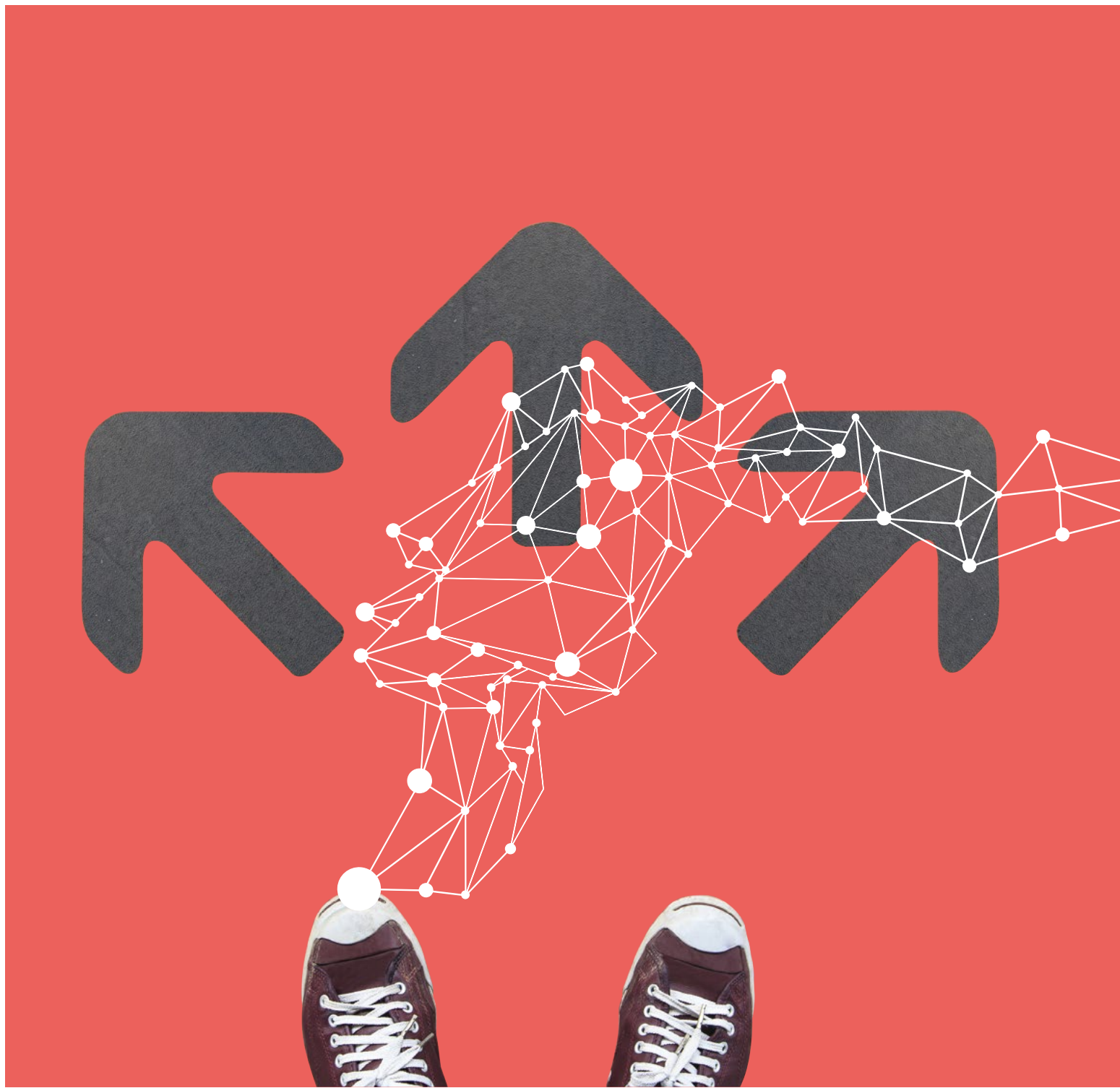
Ipsos Connect

THE ATTENTION DEFICIT:


**HOW BRANDS CAN BE HEARD
IN A WORLD OF MEDIA OVERLOAD**



Thought Piece
2015



THE COMPETITION TO BE HEARD HAS NEVER BEEN GREATER. PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO MORE CONTENT, AT MORE SPEED AND ACROSS MORE DEVICES THAN EVER BEFORE. HOW CAN BRANDS CUT THROUGH AND BUILD CONNECTIONS WITH PEOPLE WHEN THE CHOICE OF WHAT TO ENGAGE WITH IS SO VAST?



IN THIS PAPER WE'LL INVESTIGATE:

HOW TECHNOLOGY AND MEDIA ARE IMPACTING ATTENTION.

WHAT BRANDS CAN DO TO GAIN ATTENTION AND BE HEARD THROUGH THE NOISE.

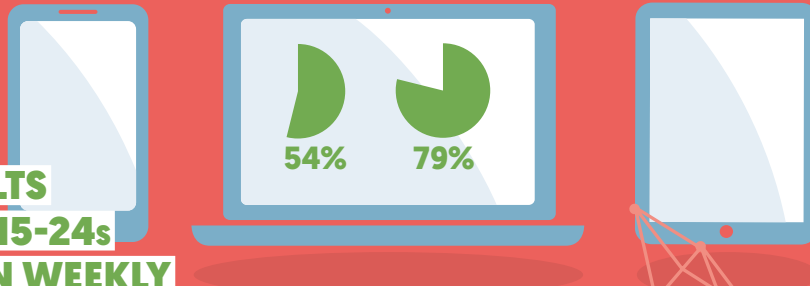
HOW WE CAN USE RESEARCH TO MEASURE AND INCREASE ATTENTION.

A (SHORT) HISTORY OF ATTENTION

According to a recent study¹, the average human attention span has fallen from 12 seconds in 2000 to 8 seconds today. This unfortunately puts us on a par with the goldfish, whose attention span is estimated at 9 seconds.

While that statistic may be tongue-in-cheek, we can all recognise the behaviours that contribute to fragmented attention. Staying on top of your inbox and Twitter feed have become two of life's constant challenges – we're trying to consume more information at more speed across more devices than ever before:

Speed of information: In 1805, news of Nelson's victory at the Battle of Trafalgar took 17 days to reach London, a speed of 3 mph over a distance of 1,110 miles. By 1865, news of



54% OF ADULTS AND 79% OF 15-24s MULTISCREEN WEEKLY

[IPA TOUCHPOINTS5]

the assassination of Abraham Lincoln travelled at 13 mph to reach London in 13 days². How long does it take today? When the 2011 tsunami hit the coast of Japan, people in London knew about it in little more than a minute: a speed of over 350,000 mph. Information today is effectively instantaneous, and there's more of it...

Volume of information: When we consider all the devices people have in their homes and on their person, we find that we're attempting to consume 15 hours of media per day³ and each of us is exposed to a volume of information equivalent to almost 200 newspapers daily⁴ – a more than fivefold increase since before the internet.

More devices: Of course, it's impossible to process all this information and part of the reason is multi-screening. This is the attempt to engage with two or more devices at the same time, such as checking your phone while watching TV. The IPA TouchPoints5 study found that 54% of adults and 79% of 15-24s multiscreen weekly, which is enabled by the average GB household now having 4 internet enabled devices and 5% owning 8 or more.

WHAT DO SHORTER ATTENTION SPANS MEAN FOR BRANDS?

The brain is highly efficient at filtering information and focusing on what's important. The limbic system helps us to decide our initial response to stimuli and to assess what's deserving of our attention. This ensures that we focus only on what matters.

In this context, it's worth considering the importance to people of brands. Most people don't spend a lot of time thinking about brands. Those of us whose professional life is all about brands may do, but for most people there are many other priorities: family, friends, work, sports, TV, music, hobbies (life!).

This is borne out in the way people choose to engage with most brand communications. We all know that click-through rates are miniscule but, when given the choice, the vast majority of people also choose to avoid ads: over 80% of skippable Trueview video ads on YouTube are not watched to completion⁵.

Ipsos has found a gradual erosion in levels of TV ad recognition over time. This softening is coming from campaigns with high frequency, which suggests that viewers still pay attention to new ads, but then actively skip, or passively tune out ads they've seen before. This has important implications for media planning because it suggests that, while reach is still important, high frequency should be a lower priority.

HOW CAN BRANDS GET ATTENTION?

There are many ways to get attention and success can be had by ensuring communications reflect what we know about consumer psychology and changing behaviours:

1. **Emotions drive behaviours:** Much evidence has been accumulated in recent years that demonstrates how

most of our decisions are driven by emotion rather than rational cognitive thought. The work of Les Binet and Peter Field with the IPA database has proven that emotional campaigns are more successful at building long-term brand equity than campaigns based around rational messages, offers or promotions. Of course that throws up another issue with attention, that businesses report financial results quarterly and increasingly expect marketing teams to provide results almost instantly. Brands need to be careful to focus on both short and long-term goals and ensure a healthy balance that delivers results today and in the future.

2. **Make it simple:** At this year's Cannes Festival, Keith Weed, Global CMO at Unilever, said "It's no longer what's the greatest idea you've got, but what's the greatest idea you've got in 5 seconds?". That doesn't mean all content must be reduced to short-form Vines and Snapchats, but it does mean that it should be understood quickly and easily. Our experience tells us that people won't work hard to understand your ads, so the most successful rarely try to communicate multiple messages or benefits.
3. **Do something people care about!** Big ideas that resonate with people are more important than ever.

If we accept the brain is highly efficient at focusing on what's important and deserving of our attention, then it follows that brand communications will be more successful if they tap into and resonate with deep-seated needs and higher order goals. Think the 'Campaign for Real Beauty' from Dove or #likeagirl from Always. These big ideas provide the glue behind constituent parts of the brands' communications and ensure each element builds and deepens consistent brand associations in the consumers' minds. Indeed, Ipsos research shows that when we help clients develop the big ideas behind their campaigns, those ideas that resonate with people in personally meaningful and relevant ways achieve double the amount of sales as those that don't connect in this way.

4. **Right time, place, context and device:** Data allows us to deliver the right content, in the right moment, to gain attention by maximising the relevancy of communications. For example, it's much more useful to serve an ad for burgers to a hungry person at meal time, than deliver an ad for cars to someone who has just bought a new car. Programmatic ad buying can help achieve this by delivering ads to specific audiences and devices by deducing their interests and behaviours. Using location data, in-store beacons can trigger alerts



to phones while people are in, or near, particular shops, and while this technology has potential pitfalls (such as annoying people with endless alerts), more sophisticated use can help gain attention at the right moment. For example, Facebook is offering free beacons to retailers to enable them to display posts and photos in users' newsfeeds when they open the app within the store. This is potentially a far less intrusive way of gaining attention and nudging people towards purchase.

- 5. Do something amazing!** Great creativity will always help you cut through the clutter. Increasingly, some of the best campaigns are making use of behavioural insights and using data to fuel ideas. For example, BA used real time data to create a digital billboard that showed a boy pointing out which plane was currently flying above it: "Look it's flight BA475 from Barcelona". In New Zealand, VW partnered with the government road safety body and used behavioural psychology to encourage people to drive more safely by getting their kids to draw a new speedometer for them. Those who took part said the "reduce speed dial" revolutionised their habits, made them much safer drivers and generated great PR for VW.

HOW CAN YOU MEASURE ATTENTION?

At Ipsos we combine approaches across three areas:

- 1. Research in the real world:** Our pre-testing approach uses a multimedia environment that re-creates how ads are experienced in the cluttered real world. And we're delivering deeper insight by combining this with facial coding to understand the emotional response people have to ads as they experience them. We also have the ability to use programmatic ad buying techniques to serve our clients' ads to panellists live on the web – whether that be YouTube, Facebook or other display sites – and then survey test and control groups to measure impact. We can do this before campaigns launch to gauge true cut through and brand impact to enable optimisation.
- 2. Research in the moment:** Mobile has enabled us to understand how people respond to ads and brands at

the very moment they happen, which gets us closer to the true nature of the attention. For example, we're using mobile to test ads among people when they're in the right needs state. We did this recently for Birds Eye who planned to deliver their campaign digitally at meal times and we used mobile to interview people in the moment when they were hungry. Using mobile apps, we also ask people to tell us when they experience advertising and capture their in-the-moment response, or to evaluate events and brand sponsorships (which we've done at places like Wimbledon and Formula One Grand Prix).

- 3. Research by passive capture and observation:** Lastly, we're increasingly measuring attention through passive and observational techniques. By tracking respondents' online journeys and ad exposure, we can build up a detailed picture of the path-to-purchase and the influences along the way. We've also developed a technique to passively capture exposure to TV, online video and radio ads using a mobile app that detects soundwaves. So we no longer have to rely on approximations of potential media exposure, we know for sure what someone was exposed to and then use questions to understand what they paid attention to and how it impacted them. And finally, we can understand how people consume media – just by observing them... we've recently run projects where we've installed fixed cameras in people's homes and put meters on their devices to understand how much attention they pay to ads and the impact of multi-screening and social interaction on attention.

HOW CAN YOU INCREASE ATTENTION?

Getting attention is getting harder but it can be done. The key is to focus on people. Use research to understand what they're interested in, what matters and motivates them. Use these insights as fuel to create great communications that demand attention and use data and technology to deploy them in the right moment and context.

**IF YOU'D LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW IPSOS
CAN HELP YOU ACHIEVE THIS, PLEASE GET IN TOUCH.
AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!**

SOURCES:

1. Statistic Brain – www.statisticbrain.com
2. 'A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the World' – Gregory Clark
3. 'How Much Media?', Institute for Communications Technology Management (CTM) at the University of Southern California (2013)
4. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/science-news/8316534/Welcome-to-the-information-age-174-newspapers-a-day.html>
5. <http://www.tubefilter.com/2013/06/10/skipable-online-video-ads-percentage-completion-rate/>



**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
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Ipsos Connect

ABOUT IPSOS CONNECT

Ipsos Connect are experts in brand, media, content and communications research. We help brands and media owners to reach and engage audiences in today's hyper-competitive media environment.

Our services include:

- **Brand & Campaign Performance:** Evaluation and optimisation of in-market activities to drive communications effectiveness and brand growth.
- **Content and Communications Development:** Communications, content and creative development from early stage idea development through to quantitative pre-testing alongside media & touchpoint planning.
- **Media Measurement:** Audience measurement and understanding.

Ipsos Connect are specialists in people-based insight, employing qualitative and quantitative techniques including surveys, neuro, observation, social media and other data sources. Our philosophy and framework centre on building successful businesses through understanding brands, media, content and communications at the point of impact with people.

