

TIMING: ITS SCHEDULING SIGNIFICANCE

Most marketers are concerned about the timing of their audience delivery, keying their media weight to peak sales periods or preferring some sort of controlled exposure pattern either to tie in with other promotional activities, to help launch new campaigns and/or to sustain the impact of existing ones. Because of the major differences between magazine types—chiefly, though not exclusively, concerning weeklies versus monthlies—media planners can adjust their publication mix and insertion dates to control the timing of their magazine exposures. As shown in the table below, in addition to the distinctions between weeklies and monthlies in general, the latter category can be subdivided into high and low pass-along books, while on the other side of the equation, Sunday magazines and **TV Guide** deliver their audiences much faster than other weeklies.

HOW AVERAGE ISSUE TOTAL AUDIENCE IS ATTAINED BY TIME AFTER PUBLICATION FOR VARIOUS TYPES OF MAGAZINES¹

% OF FIRST-TIME ISSUE READERS

	1 ST DAY	DAYS 2-7	WEEK 2	WEEKS 3-4	WEEKS 5-12	BEYOND WEEK 12
SUNDAY MAGAZINES	93	5	2	—	—	—
TV GUIDE	35	50	10	5	—	—
WEEKLY MAGAZINES	15	35	18	16	16	—
BI-WEEKLY MAGAZINES	11	28	15	15	23	8
MONTHLY MAGAZINES						
All Magazines	6	14	10	14	34	22
High Pass-along	4	10	8	13	35	30
Low Pass-along	8	18	14	16	28	16
BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINES	3	9	10	14	37	27

¹Assumes “recent reading” measurement.

Source: Media Dynamics, Inc.

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Timing: Its Scheduling Significance Continued

To demonstrate the impact of timing adjustments in magazine scheduling, we have created a hypothetical set of monthly and weekly publications from which an advertiser might select. Schedule I in the next table offers one alternative, using five monthly publications, each with two insertions over an eight-week interval. Based on “recent reading” audience estimates, the “continuity” schedule will attain 76 target GRPs, providing a 36% reach and a 2.1 average frequency. However, as the table indicates, if the advertiser is primarily concerned with this eight-week interval, s/he will find that his/her all-monthly schedule provides extremely variable week to week weight (see bottom rows of Schedule I data in table), and still worse, 35 of its 76 GRPs or 46% of the audience delivery will occur after the ninth week.

One “cure” for this dilemma is depicted in the bottom half of the same table. Here, in Schedule II, we have held the GRPs constant (at 76) but shifted all the monthly insertions to a single placement at the beginning of the flight, and added a new publication (F). This ensures that the bulk of their audience is attained during the key eight-week period. The remainder of the schedule is allocated to two weeklies (G and H), with two insertions apiece, staggered in the 2nd-6th weeks. This ploy exploits the fact that the weekly readers will be reached in more concentrated and controllable patterns and, as is indicated in the weekly GRP reach and frequency tallies, Schedule II’s combined weight of monthlies and weeklies provides far greater week to week consistency than Schedule I. Moreover, 57 of its 76 total GRPs, or 76% of the weight, occurs when the advertiser wants it—during his/her key eight week sales/promotional cycle.

Obviously, there are many ways that magazine type mixes can be manipulated in attempts to control the timing and flow of a schedule. The main point to remember is that such adjustments are indeed feasible, thereby bringing the magazine component of a media plan more in line with an advertiser’s timing needs, rather than diluting its impact in an uncontrolled or out-of-sync manner. ■

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HOW TWO HYPOTHETICAL MAGAZINE SCHEDULES WITH EQUAL GRP WEIGHT DELIVER THEIR AUDIENCE OVER AN EIGHT-WEEK PERIOD

Schedule I

	GRPs BY WEEK								TOTAL GRPs		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1-8 WKS.	9+ WKS.	1+ WKS.
Monthly Mag. A	2.0	1.0	.8	.6	2.5	1.5	1.3	1.0	10.7	9.3	20.0
Monthly Mag. B	1.6	.8	.6	.5	2.0	1.2	1.0	.7	8.4	7.6	16.0
Monthly Mag. C	1.6	.8	.6	.5	2.0	1.2	1.0	.7	8.4	7.6	16.0
Monthly Mag. D	1.4	.7	.6	.4	1.8	1.1	1.0	.7	7.7	6.3	14.0
Monthly Mag. E	1.0	.5	.4	.3	1.3	.8	.7	.5	5.5	4.5	10.0
TOTAL GRPs	7.6	3.8	3.0	2.3	9.6	5.8	5.0	3.7	40.7	35.3	76.0
TOT. REACH	6.0	3.2	2.7	2.0	7.5	4.4	4.0	3.1	26.0	21.0	36.0
TOT. AVG. FREQ.	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.6	1.7	2.1

Schedule II

	GRPs BY WEEK								TOTAL GRPs		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1-8 WKS.	9+ WKS.	1+ WKS.
Monthly Mag. A	2.0	1.0	.8	.6	.5	.5	.5	.4	6.3	3.7	10.0
Monthly Mag. B	1.6	.8	.6	.5	.4	.4	.4	.3	5.0	3.0	8.0
Monthly Mag. C	1.6	.8	.6	.5	.4	.4	.4	.3	5.0	3.0	8.0
Monthly Mag. D	1.4	.7	.6	.4	.4	.4	.4	.3	4.6	2.4	7.0
Monthly Mag. E	1.0	.5	.4	.3	.3	.3	.3	.2	3.3	1.7	5.0
Monthly Mag. F	.7	.4	.3	.3	.3	.2	.2	.2	2.6	.9	3.5
Weekly Mag. G	—	5.0	1.8	5.8	2.6	1.3	1.2	.8	18.5	1.5	20.0
Weekly Mag. H	—	—	3.5	1.3	.6	4.1	1.7	.9	12.1	1.9	14.0
TOTAL GRPs	8.3	9.2	8.6	9.7	5.5	7.6	5.1	3.4	57.4	18.1	75.5
TOT. REACH	6.3	6.9	6.5	7.1	4.2	6.1	4.0	2.9	37.0	14.0	46.0
TOT. AVG. FREQ.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.5	1.3	1.6

□ – Indicates publication of ad insertion in the magazine.

Source: Media Dynamics, Inc.