

Action

Message Impact[®]

User Guide

Get the most out of presenting
your Ad Effectiveness study
results to advertisers



ReadexResearch

Experienced. Trusted. Insightful.

Experienced. Trusted. Insightful.

Introduction

This User's Guide suggests an effective way to present the results of your Message Impact® study. Although every situation is different, the process described in this guide has proven to be successful. Keep these basic points in mind as you read this booklet:

- Use your reports. They represent an opportunity for you.
- Don't limit the presentation to your customer's results. Include many ads in the discussion.
- Always be prepared to offer your opinion as to why an ad was rated the way it was. (For ideas, refer to the Thought Starters section on the inside back cover.)
- Don't shy away from calling on advertisers whose ads were rated low—they stand to benefit the most from your presentation.

A little preparation will go a long way.

Overview

Ad Effectiveness Study Overview

Ad Effectiveness studies have been around for over 60 years and are used to add value to the advertiser's buy. Studies help advertisers better understand what happens when they run space in your publication, and presenting the results helps forge a partnership with your advertiser.

Message Impact® Overview

The Message Impact® Ad Effectiveness study is conducted either by mail or online via emailed invitations. Its goal is to get feedback on the creative—specifically, whether the ad has Attention-Getting Ability, is Believable, and has Information Value. In addition, readers note what actions the ad led them to take or plan to take, and they provide responses about the message or feeling they got from the ad.

How You Benefit

When you conduct an Message Impact® study, you'll be able to...

- Lure in advertisers who may not otherwise be in the issue.
- Motivate fractional advertisers to upgrade to a larger ad space (by setting minimum size/color criteria).
- Get in front of your customers—first to introduce the concept, then to deliver the results.
- Strengthen the relationship with your advertisers when you explain and add context to their results.

How Advertisers Benefit—Sales Model

Ads are run to help sell a service or product. Selling is a process—a series of steps, and advertising can impact the **initial** steps:

Attention ⇨ Interest ⇨ Desire ⇨ Action

Contact ⇨ Awareness ⇨ Interest ⇨ Proposal ⇨ Close

This Message Impact® study gives advertisers feedback on how well their ad gets the sales process started...how well their ad gets a foot in the door.

Preparation

Preparing to Present Results

Before calling on your advertiser, follow these steps to familiarize yourself with the issue and the study results:

- Use the report and the issue (look at the ads).
- Look at all the ratings to get the big picture:
 - Who did well
 - Variance of scores
- Look at the ratings for the advertiser you are calling on and note the areas where they were rated above or below average.
- Look at the actual ad in the issue and determine its objective.

Preparing to Present Results (continued)

- Using the Thought Starters section, develop hypotheses regarding factors contributing to the ads' ratings.
- Provide additional context to your advertiser's ratings by looking at the results of competitive advertisers. Try to find one ad that scored higher and one that scored lower than the advertiser you're calling on. Use Post-it notes to mark these ads for easy navigation during your presentation.

Resell your Publication

Once your preparation is complete, you're ready to meet with your advertiser. Always reinforce the merits of your publication before diving into the study results. Remind your advertiser why your publication is the right fit for their marketing program. Use results from other research studies that document the value of the market your publication reaches (job titles, purchasing authority, etc.), and document that your publication is being read.

Reselling your publication before presenting results will prevent advertisers from blaming your publication if they're unhappy with the results. By agreeing in advance that your readers are the ones your advertiser wants to reach, you can focus on the true reasons behind the ad's scores.

Presenting Results

Don't present your advertiser's results until you've looked at other ads' ratings and creative techniques, developing context of the creative techniques that work and don't work with these readers.

Explain to Your Customers How They Benefit

Explain the sales model mentioned on page two, and that the study measures how well the ad is doing at getting the sales process started.

Tell Your Customers What Data is Collected

1. How do you rate this ad's ... <i>(please circle one number on each line)</i>					2. What action(s) did/will you take after seeing this ad? <i>(please ✓ all that apply)</i>				
	<u>high</u>	<u>medium</u>	<u>low</u>			<input type="checkbox"/>	visit advertiser's website		
attention-getting ability?	5	4	3	2	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	file for reference		
believability?	5	4	3	2	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	discuss ad with others		
information value?	5	4	3	2	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	return Reader Service Card for more information		
						<input type="checkbox"/>	contact advertiser, dealer or representative		
						<input type="checkbox"/>	recommend product/service		
						<input type="checkbox"/>	purchase or consider purchasing product/service		
						<input type="checkbox"/>	no action taken/planned, but currently own or use		
						<input type="checkbox"/>	no action taken/planned		
3. What message or feeling do you get from this ad?									

Link the questions asked to the sales model.

Explain How Ratings are Calculated

Responses in the reader ratings section are collected on a 1-5 scale, then converted to an index to allow for easier comparisons. The average rating is calculated for each question and set to 100. Scores for all ads will float above or below 100, depending on whether they scored above or below the issue average.

	Raw Score	Reported Score
Advertiser 1	2.6	76
Advertiser 2	3.0	88
Advertiser 3	3.4	100
Advertiser 4	3.8	112
Advertiser 5	4.2	124
Average	3.4	100

For these 5 ads, the average rating is 3.4, which is set to 100.

Advertiser 2: 3.0 is 12% lower than 3.4 so that rating is reported as 88.

Advertiser 4: 3.8 is 12% higher than 3.4, so that rating is reported as 112.

Data in the actions taken section are reported as straight percentages based on all those who responded, and the verbatim comments are presented as they were written (although we do clean up the spelling and grammar somewhat.)

Put the Results in Perspective

Ad Effectiveness studies (and companion questionnaire results) are “ballparks,” “snapshots,” or “indicators” with an expected response rate of 10–25 percent rather than the 50–60 percent desired in a projectable subscriber study. In addition, results are based on approximately 100 responses (rather than 400–600). That means the sampling error is ± 10 percent. There is “sponginess” in the data.

The best way to view an ad’s results is in comparison with the results of other ads. Keep in mind the magnitude of differences and note relative ranking. Is an ad one of the highest rated, average, or lowest? Finally, be sure to use the results along with other information you have.

Summarize the Method

Don’t bore advertisers with too many details. It’s sufficient to say that:

1. The study is either conducted via mail or online and involves multiple contacts with respondents.
2. Participants are typically sent a letter (or email) asking that they hold on to their original copy of the study issue prior to when they receive the survey kits (or link to the survey via email).
3. We contact 600–900 randomly selected people (more for online) from your circulation to get back approximately 100 responses.
4. All aspects of the study are conducted by Readex.

Remember, you decide which issues and ads are studied.

Establish Context to Make Your Job Easier

The key to making an Ad Effectiveness study successful for your advertiser is to establish context. Present competitive ads and discuss the creative techniques that work and don’t work with your readers. During this process, advertisers will begin to form ideas of how their ads were rated— good or bad. When you do present their results, there will be no surprises.

Look at Other Ads: Establish Context

To make it easier to establish context, results for all ads in your advertiser’s product/service category—except your advertiser’s—are shown first. This makes it easier to resist the temptation to immediately peek at the advertiser’s scores. **If the advertiser is the sole ad in a category, all ads will be listed, including your advertiser’s.**

Start by looking at competitive ads to develop context. Try to find one ad that was rated higher and one that was rated lower than your advertiser to get your advertiser thinking about which approaches work...and don’t work. Pull out the issue, flip to the ads, and discuss why they received the ratings they did.

Attention-Getting	Believability	Information Value	Advertiser	Page	Size/Color
100	100	100	Issue Average (61 ads)		
104	104	104	Product/Service Category Average		
103	108	102	Collen Berwin	83	1 page, 4 color
107	110	106	Xeted	61	1 page, 4 color
124	108	120	Daily Grind	Cover 3	1 page, 4 color
95	115	127	Special Services	66	1/2 page, 4 color

Look at the high scoring ads, such as Daily Grind, to determine what creative approaches worked with readers.

Look at Their Ad: Review their Results

Now that you’ve established some context of successful techniques, you’re ready to present your advertiser’s results. In the next section, your advertiser is highlighted for easy identification, and an image of the ad follows for quick reference.

Attention-Getting	Believability	Information Value	Advertiser	Page	Size/Color
100	100	100	Issue Average (61 ads)		
104	104	104	Product/Service Category Average		
103	108	102	Collen Berwin	83	1 page, 4 color
107	110	106	Xeted	61	1 page, 4 color
124	108	120	Daily Grind	Cover 3	1 page, 4 color
95	115	127	Special Services	66	1/2 page, 4 color
96	101	96	Inertia Technics	15	1 page, 4 color

Since you’ve already discussed the merits of other ads in the product/service category, your advertisers will have an idea of why their ads received the ratings they did.

Present Actions Taken Section

The actions taken scores are grouped by product/service category to enable the comparison of competitive ads. Your advertiser will get the most out of the study if you establish context by reviewing the techniques used by the ads that generated a lot of action, as well as those that didn't.

Took/Plan Action	Advertiser	Page	Action Percentages (see legend below)
36%	Issue Average (61 ads)		13 21 9 3 3 4
38%	Product/Service Category Average (8 ads)		13 23 9 3 3 5
<hr/>			
42%	Collen Berwin	83	10 27 9 4 6 3
39%	Xeted	61	11 26 7 3 5 3 6
47%	Daily Grind	Cover 3	21 31 11 3 5
49%	Special Services	66	18 27 13 3 6 3 6
32%	Inertia Technics	15	8 16 7 7 8

■ Visit Website
 ■ File
 ■ Discuss
 ■ Return RSC
 ■ Contact
 ■ Recommend
 ■ Purchase
 ■ No Action-Currently Own

The bar on the left shows the percentage of readers that took or plan to take one or more actions. The multi-colored bar that follows indicates the percentage of readers that reported taking or planning to take the specific action mentioned. The stacked format and color coding enables easier comparison among advertisements.

Present the Verbatim Comments

The verbatim responses add life to the results presented earlier. You will see a wide range of comments, but try to call out the comments that shed light on what readers think worked well and not so well with the ad.

“Almost too much to read.”

“Appears to be a very consistent and high-quality group of products.”

“Consistency and quality.”

“Doesn't give information about what they're selling.”

“Need more concrete data, not just fancy rhetoric.”

Offer Ideas

A Message Impact® study will help you differentiate your publication from your competitors by giving you the opportunity to provide ideas regarding the creative techniques that are successful with these readers.

In instances where your clients didn't score well, turn a potentially stressful call into a positive experience by going the extra mile. Show that you've looked at their results and have thought about reasons behind them, rather than simply dropping off the results without an explanation.

Don't Fear Low Scores

Keep in mind that many customers won't have other sources for this type of information—they are desperate for feedback. Use the following steps as guidelines:

- Make sure to set the stage.
- Explain the benefit and the purpose of the study.
- Position the results.
- Reiterate that you aren't there to tell anyone how to do their job—be empathetic.

Don't assume the worst. Most people are open-minded and won't shoot the messenger. Don't bury the results and miss an opportunity to provide information and context to an advertiser.

Remember

A little preparation will go a long way. **Use your reports!** And remember, don't limit the presentation to your customer's results—include many ads in the discussion.

By referencing the Thought Starters portion of this handbook, you will be better prepared to offer your opinion regarding why an ad received particular ratings. Don't shy away from calling on advertisers whose ads scored low—they stand to benefit the most from your presentation!

Thought Starters

Often the reason an ad scored the way it did is readily apparent. The list below will help you get started:

Is the ad 4-color, 2-color, or black and white?

Is there a clear objective?

Is the ad clean and easy to read?

Do the headline and illustration support one another?

Does the ad emphasize benefits rather than facts?

Is there an illustration showing the product in use?

Is there an attempt to be funny?

Is this a new or an old product?

Price—is it an expensive or cheap product?

Is the ad appropriate for the entire market or just a segment?

Is this a new or an old campaign?

Is the ad right to the point?

A Quick Guide to Presenting Study Results...

1. Prepare by looking at your advertiser's ad, as well as competitive ads. What techniques work well with your readers? What techniques don't?
2. Meet with your advertiser and resell the value of your publication.
3. Explain the benefits of participating in the study.
4. Describe data collection, indexing, and the "ballpark" nature of results.
5. Summarize the method.
6. Reinforce that the results are from their potential customers and that you're not trying to tell them how to do their job.
7. Present the issue's highly rated ads to illustrate successful techniques.
8. Look at other ads to establish context.
9. Now, present the advertiser's results and look at their ad.
10. Review the verbatim comments that shed light on what worked well and not so well with the ad.
11. Using the Thought Starters section of this guide, offer ideas as to why the ad scored the way it did.

