

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ADVERTISING MEDIA TO EVALUATE THEIR  
RELATIVE EFFECTIVENESS IN SECURING POSITIVE REACTIONS  
FROM THE HOUSEWIVES OF THE BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA, COMMUNITY

BY

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Approved:

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**Attention Patron:**

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available via ILL request**

If in sending out questionnaires to a representative sample of people, the percentage of those who return them will be the same each time they are sent out. In surveys for testing purposes, this principle can be utilized to a great advantage.

Another fundamental principle for which testing has found many uses is the law of averages. This is the basis of all advertising testing study. The law of averages, or law of probability is well established and is universally accepted. All gambling games are operated on this principle and all insurance is based upon it. A simple illustration of the law's operation is that if you toss a penny into the air 1,000 times, it will be heads for about 500 times and tails for about 500 times. In its application to advertising testing, it means that if a sample is taken that is adequate and representative, the information obtained will apply to the entire group from which the sample was selected.

In spite of the fact that scientific and well established principles have been used as the fundamental basis of advertising testing programs, 100% efficiency has not been achieved. Nevertheless, testing work has increased the probability of obtaining more effective advertising than would be obtained otherwise if it ~~were~~ not used. By this achievement, it justifies its existence in that it gives advertisers a secure basis upon which to plan their advertising campaigns which, if not 100% efficient, is certainly more stable than their personal opinions.

Mr. William Ricketts, manager of the Market Surveys Department of the Booz-Fry-Allen & Hamilton Company had the following words to say in answer to critics of advertising testing:

"Testing has been sometimes criticized because the individual tests have failed to work out as completely or as accurately as desired. It is inevitable that this will be the case sometimes -- particularly when new methods are being tried. However, the point to keep in mind is that if by testing, you can increase, from say 60% to 80% to 90% the probability of reaching correct rather than incorrect decisions, the results will justify the expenditure of considerable time and money..... Most of the black eyes that .....testing has received has, in my opinion, been due primarily to the failure of the people making the tests to carry them out properly or due to failure to interpret the results properly."

Having considered the fundamental aspects of advertising, and analysis of the individual methods that have been developed to test the comparative effectiveness of the various types of advertisements and media will be made.

A large number of different methods have been tried from time to time. They have been given technical and confusing names. To simplify the discussion, the following classifications will be used which cover in general all of the various types in use:

1. Sales Results
2. Using Inquiries as an Index
3. Testing Before Publication (pre-testing)
4. Consumer Survey

#### Sales Tests

In making sales tests, the principle involved is that advertising is designed to stimulate sales. Hence in using this method the solving of the problem of measuring the comparative effectiveness of advertisements is attempted by obtaining records of sales after two or more advertising campaigns have been conducted and comparing their relative sales effectiveness. Generally, two trade areas are selected that are nearly alike.

The chief disadvantages are the great length of time that must elapse for the advertising campaign to react on the consumer before the sales can be completely recorded and the difficulty of controlling the numerous variable factors other than advertising that affect sales. Sales tests can only be applied to local advertising campaigns and can not measure the effectiveness of media very well as the records of retail sale would not indicate the effectiveness of particular media. Also, it is very difficult to get accurate sales records.

#### Using Inquiries as an Index

The customary procedure in this method of testing is to put in the advertisements that are to be tested some inducement for consumers to submit inquiries such as an offer of a sample or booklet. Then, after the advertisements have been issued, the number of responses to the offer received determine <sup>how</sup> the relative effectiveness of the different advertisements can be judged. The effectiveness of different media can also be tested by the relative number of responses received from offers included in advertisements sent through different channels.

The chief disadvantage in using this method is the difficulty in maintaining adequate control of the factors which affect results. Thus the offer must be fully relevant to the type of advertisement, else it will be impossible to measure the effectiveness of the advertising by this method.

#### Testing Before Publication (pre-testing)

This method is employed before the advertisements to be tested are issued. These advertisements are shown to representative consumers of the products and are rated on the basis of information obtained from these

individuals indicating their personal reactions as prospective purchasers of the goods. In this manner the relative effectiveness of advertisements can be measured with respect to each other before being presented to the general public. This method can not be used to great advantage in measuring media effectiveness.

The most important consideration in using this method is to ascertain that the consumers who judge the advertisements are representative of the entire group of consumers.

### Consumer Survey

In utilizing the consumer survey method samples are selected from the total group of consumers to be tested. By means of interviews information is secured from the samples concerning the relative effectiveness of alternate advertisements and media in gaining the attention and interest of the consumer group as a whole. To secure efficiency and accuracy from this method it is necessary to ascertain whether or not the samples selected are representative of the entire group. Also careful interviewing must be done in order to get unbiased answers from the cases studied.

This method is used by many market investigators. It differs from the testing before publication method in that it is employed to test advertisements and media after publication in order to plan for future advertising.

It is important to remember in testing that all surveys and studies must be completely objective to be of value. Opinions are of little value in the field. In all questioning, the answers should be "yes" or "no" if

possible and should not trust too much to the memory of the consumer.

Another important factor to remember is that only one thing at a time should be tested. The inclusion of too many objectives into one testing campaign will result in the confusion that comes from the lack of concentration on one definite objective. Thus a given campaign should be centered upon testing for the relative effectiveness of alternate media or kinds of advertising appeals or other phases of the subject.

### Analysis of the Blacksburg Community

The Blacksburg community, the area in which the study was made, is a district consisting of some one thousand families. It is located in the northwestern section of Montgomery County, Virginia. Besides the town itself, the community embraces the campus of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and a number of outlying rural districts in which farming predominated.

The families of the community buy practically all of their staple commodities from local merchants. While a large portion of their clothing needs are secured locally, a certain percentage of these goods are purchased from sources outside the town. This also true in the buying of household and personal goods. Many Blacksburg buyers trade in Roanoke, a city of eighty thousand population located forty-two miles east of Blacksburg; in Christiansburg, the county seat of Montgomery County located nine miles to the south; and in Radford, a city of some six thousand population located fifteen miles west of Blacksburg. In addition many commodities are purchased from mail order concerns whose advertising reaches the community and from salesmen who solicit sales in this area.

Local retail concerns have developed advertising programs designed to stimulate trade, while concerns located outside the community direct a volume of advertising to this community to attract local consumers. The principle media that are utilized at the present time are newspapers, magazines, handbills, radio, store window, and counter displays. The minor media include mail circulars and sales talks.

#### Newspapers

There are several newspapers with wide circulations in the community.

The daily paper that serves the community is the Roanoke Times which reaches approximately two thirds of the families of the area. The Roanoke World News, an afternoon daily except Sunday paper, has a more limited number of readers. The principal weekly read is the Montgomery News Messenger, which reaches about one third of the community families. A weekly which circulates to some extent among the professional and business families of the community is the Virginia Tech, the student paper of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute. In addition to these journals, some few families subscribe to other Virginia papers and obtain the Sunday edition of such nationally circulated papers as the Hearst papers and the New York Times.

While the Roanoke papers do not carry Blacksburg advertisers' copy to any marked extent, they contain many advertisements of nationally advertised products and of Roanoke concerns which are designed to get sales from housewives of the community. The Montgomery News Messenger and the Virginia Tech carry practically all local advertising and standard national advertisements. The other newspapers which have a limited number of subscribers locally contain advertisements of the localities in which they are published and national advertising.

#### Magazines

The housewives of the community are the principal readers of periodicals which carry advertising copy for nationally advertised commodities of which women are the largest purchasers. Such goods include clothing, furniture and other household equipment, personal needs including cosmetics and toilet articles, food brands, and other similar commodities.

The principal monthly periodicals which are read by women in the area

are the Ladies Home Journal, the Womens Home Companion, Good Housekeeping, Hollands Magazine of the South, Household Magazine, the American Magazine, True Story Magazine, and Cosmopolitan.

The weekly periodicals which have been found to have wide circulation among local housewives are Colliers Weekly, Liberty Magazine, The Saturday Evening Post, Life, and Click.

The survey has revealed that the business and professional families subscribe to more magazines than do the laboring and rural classes of families.

#### Handbills

This medium is used extensively in the community by local advertisers and by retail concerns of Radford and Christiansburg. Several grocery stores in Blacksburg distribute handbills once each week announcing weekly specials. Other merchants announce sales and special offerings from time to time.

This type of advertising reaches a large percentage of the housewives of the town and country as the handbills are taken around from house to house.

#### Radio

Approximately nine out of ten families in the community own radio receiving sets. The housewives, being at home more than other members of the family, are the chief group that listen to radio advertising. Most radio advertising is standard advertising of nationally distributed products which can be obtained from local merchants or by mail order.

#### Store Window and Counter Displays

This media is used extensively by all of the retail concerns in the community. There are about thirty such concerns operating in Blacksburg which use this medium for advertising thus capitalizing on the psychological desire of women to "window shop" and to look at displays of commodities.

#### Mail Circulars

Mail circular advertising is used to a limited extent by several local business firms. It is utilized extensively by sellers located outside the community. Quite a large volume of circular mail is received by housewives each week. Also mail order houses, such as Sears Roebuck and Company send out a great deal of it in the form of catalogues. Mail circulars are being used more and more by advertisers throughout the nation. The commodities advertised in this manner are household goods, reading matter, and clothing.

#### Sales Talks

Sales talks are attempts made by travelling salesmen and by clerks in stores to sell particular products. Sales talks may be definitely classified as a form of advertising.

The chief economic interest of the town centers around the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, retail merchandising, and farming. Estimates based on an occupational survey made by the Rural Sociology Department of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and on information obtained from the Bell Telephone Company which serves the Blacksburg area, reveal the following types of occupations in the community:

The professional class, comprises 20 per cent of the employed residents of the area. The relatively high proportion of this type of occupations is

due to the presence of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute which employs a staff of nearly three hundred teachers. Also included in this classification are local doctors, lawyers, and public school teachers.

Fifteen per cent of the employed residents of the community may be designated as being in the business and non-professional salaried class. This class includes merchants, garage owners, extension staff workers, specialists, administrative officials of the college, and other business concern managers and operators.

Rural occupations, including farming and mining, make up twenty five per cent of the employed residents of the community. There are several soft coal mines located near the town which employ a number of people. The farming is for the most part done on a small scale for subsistence purposes. Many of the farms of the community are farmed by tenants.

Skilled and unskilled labor living in the community comprise the largest occupational class. Despite the fact that there are no industrial plants located in the area and that no single concern employs any large number of workers, the group contains forty per cent of the employed residents of the community. Most of this class find work with the maintenance departments of the college, with local concerns as clerks, with the Works Progress Administration or other agencies of the government, and with private families as servants and handymen.

It is evident that the higher standards of living exist among the better paid of the professional, business, and non professional salaried groups and among the more prosperous of the farming class. The average community

family undoubtedly has a higher wealth per family than exists in an average community of its size due to the large monthly payrolls of the college. But the income is distributed unevenly , placing more buying power in the hands of the upper economic groups.

### The Investigation And Results

A large part of the advertising designed to interest family buyers is not getting the desired results because the wrong media are being used. Families of the various occupational groups of the community have diverse needs and interests and housewives as the chief buyers for the families react to advertising sent through media in differing ways. Some, to illustrate the point, will notice and become interested in advertisements of particular goods in magazines, but will ignore the same advertising in newspapers. Others listen to radio advertising and read newspapers and magazines to the exclusion of other media. This study was made to determine which media are the best to use for advertising certain types of products to the various classes of families.

A study of this type, designed to improve the effectiveness of advertising in a given area might include an evaluation of various copy appeals as well as comparing media effectiveness. But to insure the best results from a single testing study, it is necessary to limit the field of study to one objective. This limiting will avoid possible confusion and misinterpretation of results. Concentration on the effectiveness of media alone will thus enable more accurate conclusions. Due to the fact advertising reaches the housewives of the community through many channels, it would be advantageous to evaluate the relative effectiveness of media rather than of copy appeals.

In selecting a technique to utilize for the conducting of this study, all of the principal testing methods in general use were examined in the

light of their applicability to the circumstances. The sales return method requires that accurate and complete records of sales be obtained from the retail sources from which the products whose advertising media are being tested can be obtained. There are outlets both in and out of town for every type of product. No products are handled exclusively by any one or restricted number of concerns. Hence it would be very difficult to get complete and accurate sales results. In addition to this primary objection to the use of the sales results method, is the fact that the technique is a better tester of advertising appeals than media.

The technique whereby inquires are used as an index of advertising and media effectiveness was discarded because of the impossibility of getting advertisers to make offers and run contests in their advertising programs. The consumer jury or pre-testing technique does not lend itself to the study at hand very readily because the chief value of this technique lies in predicting the effectiveness of advertising copy before it is circulated to consumers. It can not be used for testing media with very much success.

The consumer survey technique involves the use of sampling to determine consumer reactions in order to measure the relative effectiveness of advertising presented in different ways. Consumers are divided into homogeneous groups, and samples are selected from each group to be interviewed in proportion to their relative sizes. This technique was judged to be the most appropriate to use for the conducting of the study at hand.

The number of samples selected equaled approximately ten per cent of the total number of the housewives of the community whose responses were desired. The samples selected from each homogeneous class appear to

have been adequate and representative and the information secured should be representative of the composite reactions of each group. The results that have been obtained from the study appear to be consistent enough to warrant reliability.

The manner of classifying the family buyers or housewives of the community into occupational classes for the study and number of interviews made in each class are as follows:

Class A. consists of families whose supporters are engaged as teachers, lawyers, doctors, merchants, bankers, extension specialists, and other related occupations. This class represents 35 per cent of the families of the community, hence 35 interviews were made out of the 100 made among all the occupational groups.

Class B. is composed of families whose supporters are engaged in subsistence farming, part time subsistence farming, mining, and other rural activities. This group makes up one quarter of the families of the community, hence 25 interviews were taken, for this class.

Class C. embraces forty per cent of the families. It is made up of families whose supporters are engaged as manual laborers, truckdrivers, mechanics, postal employees, clerks, stenographers, skilled laborers, and related occupations. Forty interviews were made in this class.

Having divided the housewives as family buyers into groups as nearly homogeneous as possible and determined upon the number of interviews that should be made in each group, attention was next centered upon developing a schedule for using in the interviews.

The schedule was designed to get the desired information in the

form of as practical questioning as possible. Care had to be taken not to include too many questions and to make them concise and easily answerable. They had to be so constructed as not to require the opinion of the interviewed in answering them. Objectivity is preferable in testing as it removes the subjective element which makes possible so many errors of cause and effect. Such a question as: "Did the newspaper advertising of product "X" influence you to buy it?" should not be asked as it requires an opinionated and subjective answer. The interviewed person may have been influenced subconsciously by a number of other factors besides the advertising in buying product "X". The better method of questioning would be: "Did you notice the newspaper advertisement of product "X"? "Did the advertising make you want to use product "X" ? and "Do you now use or plan to buy product "X"? From these questions it may be estimated as to the extent the particular advertising influenced the consumer without asking for a subjective answer.

Another danger that has to be guarded against in the framing of the questions was that of asking leading questions. Such a question would be: "Magazine advertising appeals to you more than newspaper advertising, doesn't it?" The correct framing of this question would be "Which media of advertising appeals to you most: magazine or newspaper?"

By questioning housewives as to the extent they noticed advertising through specific media, and were impressed favorably by it, and as to the extent they use or plan to use the products they saw or heard advertised, the relative effectiveness of media in securing positive reactions to advertising of various types of goods was determined with reasonable accuracy.

Too many questions tend to irritate the persons interviewed. In order to avoid this, the questions were limited in number so that the average interview could be done in fifteen minutes. Most of the questions were worded so as to require only "yes" or "no" answers in order that they might be answered in a short time with a minimum of subjectivity.

In making the interviews, any indication that the person being interviewed was giving incorrect information, nullified the entire interview which was not included in the total results, another interview being substituted. The samples selected from each economic and occupational class were selected entirely at random. Families were picked from all sections of the community. No attempt was made to compare brand advertising. General types of goods used by families were considered of more interest to advertisers as a whole.

In the upper right hand corner of each schedule room was made for the classification of the persons interviewed. The schedule was divided into six sections, each containing questions about a specific kind of medium. The schedule used is as follows:

MEDIA TESTING SCHEDULE

A B C

1. Have you noticed any RADIO advertising that you can recall of the following types of goods?
  - a. foods? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. clothing? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. household equipment? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. personal needs? \_\_\_\_\_

Did any of the advertising make you want to use any of the products it advertised? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, which of above types were advertised? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you use or plan to use any of the products that the advertising caused you to desire to use? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, which of above types of goods are it or they? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you noticed any NEWSPAPER advertising that you can recall within the past week or so of the following types of goods?
- a. foods? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. clothing? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. household equipment? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. personal needs? \_\_\_\_\_

Did any of the advertising make you want to use any of the products it advertised? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, which of above types were advertised? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you use or plan to use any of the products that the advertising caused you to desire to use? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, which of above types of goods are it or they? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you noticed any MAGAZINE advertising that you can recall of the following types of goods?
- a. foods? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. clothing? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. household equipment \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. personal needs? \_\_\_\_\_

Did any of the advertising make you want to use any of the products it advertised? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, which of above types were advertised? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you use or plan to use any of the products that the advertising caused you to desire to use? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, which, of above types of goods are it or they? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you noticed any WINDOW or COUNTER DISPLAY advertising that you can recall of the following types of goods?
- a. foods? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. clothing? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. household equipment? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. personal needs? \_\_\_\_\_

Did any of the advertising make you want to use any of the products it advertised? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, which of above types were advertised? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you use or plan to use any of the products that the advertising caused you to desire to use? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, which of above types of goods are it or they? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Have you noticed any HANDBILL advertising that you can recall of the following types of goods?
- a. foods? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. clothing? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. household equipment? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. personal needs? \_\_\_\_\_

Did any of the advertising make you want to use any of the products it advertised? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, which of above types were advertised? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you use or plan to use any of the products that the advertising caused you to desire to use? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, which of above types of goods are it or they? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Have you noticed any MAIL CIRCULAR advertising that you can recall of the following types of goods?
- a. foods? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. clothing? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. household equipment? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. personal needs? \_\_\_\_\_

Did any of the advertising make you want to use any of the products it advertised? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, which of above types were advertised? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you use or plan to use any of the products that the advertising caused you to desire to use? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, which of above types of goods are it or they? \_\_\_\_\_

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Table 1

PERCENTAGES OF HOUSEWIVES THAT COULD RECALL ADVERTISING  
SEEN OR HEARD THROUGH SPECIFIC MEDIA

Medium	Foods	Clothing	Household Equipment	Personal Needs
Class A:				
Radio	26.9	10.8	30.6	14.3
Newspapers	10.3	38.6	25.3	5.6
Magazines	24.4	14.1	28.4	18.6
Window and Counter Displays	24.3	34.9	10.9	7.3
Handbills	36.4	12.1	0.0	0.0
Mail Circulars	0.0	6.2	6.3	0.0
Sales Talks	0.0	9.2	7.5	3.4
Class B:				
Radio	19.1	6.5	23.4	6.6
Newspaper	12.9	28.7	15.8	9.3
Magazines	16.2	7.3	5.1	12.7
Window and Counter Displays	18.1	24.0	12.8	0.0
Handbills	10.8	8.4	0.0	0.0
Mail Circulars	0.0	9.3	4.3	2.9
Sales Talks	0.0	4.1	1.6	0.0
Class C:				
Radio	18.3	7.9	25.2	4.7
Newspaper	13.9	16.8	8.9	10.5
Window and Counter Displays	12.9	27.1	6.3	2.8
Handbills	27.3	8.6	0.0	0.0
Mail Circulars	0.0	8.4	6.5	0.0
Sales Talks	0.0	4.3	3.4	0.0

Table 11

PERCENTAGES OF HOUSEWIVES THAT REACTED FAVORABLY TO ADVERTISING  
NOTICED THROUGH SPECIFIC MEDIA

Medium	Foods	Clothing	Household Equipment	Personal Needs
<b>Class A:</b>				
Radio	14.4	4.2	11.1	8.5
Newspaper	4.3	24.6	10.7	2.6
Magazines	16.7	9.5	20.1	12.6
Window and Counter Displays	18.3	26.5	4.2	3.8
Handbills	21.4	7.3	0.0	0.0
Mail Circulars	0.0	2.3	3.0	0.0
Sales Talks	0.0	6.2	4.7	1.0
<b>Class B:</b>				
Radio	13.4	2.6	10.6	6.3
Newspapers	10.3	12.4	15.2	2.4
Magazines	9.2	3.8	3.8	4.5
Window and Counter Displays	14.2	14.7	10.9	0.0
Handbills	5.6	3.4	0.0	0.0
Mail Circulars	0.0	4.2	1.4	0.0
Sales Talks	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0
<b>Class C:</b>				
Radio	10.3	3.5	14.7	1.9
Newspapers	8.5	7.4	6.6	0.0
Magazines	6.7	7.2	3.5	5.4
Window and Counter Displays	8.9	15.7	13.6	0.0
Handbills	18.4	5.3	0.0	0.0
Mail Circulars	0.0	4.6	2.4	0.0
Sales Talks	0.0	2.3	1.9	0.0

Table 111

PERCENTAGES OF HOUSEWIVES THAT USED OR PLANNED USING ONE OR MORE PRODUCTS WHOSE ADVERTISING WAS NOTICED THROUGH SPECIFIC MEDIA

Medium	Foods	Clothing	Household Equipment	Personal Needs
<b>Class A:</b>				
Radio	6.1	2.7	10.3	3.2
Newspapers	1.7	14.8	4.1	1.2
Magazines	15.0	4.3	10.8	8.9
Window and Counter Displays	12.8	8.1	3.6	4.0
Handbills	14.7	5.5	0.0	0.0
Mail Circulars	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.8
Sales Talks	0.0	2.1	3.5	1.0
<b>Class B:</b>				
Radio	9.8	0.6	7.3	3.5
Newspapers	4.8	6.7	5.4	1.5
Magazines	1.6	0.0	2.8	5.7
Window and Counter Displays	14.8	11.5	8.3	0.0
Handbills	3.7	0.7	0.0	0.0
Mail Circulars	0.0	0.0	0.7	1.2
Sales Talks	0.0	0.5	2.0	0.0
<b>Class C:</b>				
Radio	7.4	2.5	8.6	0.6
Newspapers	3.4	1.5	4.8	0.0
Magazines	2.7	2.1	0.6	1.2
Window and Counter Displays	3.2	8.4	0.4	0.0
Handbills	9.1	3.2	0.0	0.0
Mail Circulars	0.0	1.8	0.8	0.0
Sales Talks	0.0	1.4	0.5	0.0

### Discussion of Results and Conclusions

The results of this survey indicate very clearly a wide divergence in reactions among classes of housewives to various media. The results tabulated, it should be pointed out cannot claim 100 per cent efficiency as this is impossible to achieve with the use of testing techniques. There are too many uncontrollable factors which are so variable and intangible in character as to avoid being brought under control. Since they cannot be controlled efficiently, complete accuracy cannot be secured. In this survey the uncontrollable factors appeared to be bad memory, sub-conscious effects of advertising, and coincidence rather than effectiveness of advertising that caused the use of particular products whose advertising was noticed.

However, the results of the survey should prove of value to advertisers as indications as to how their advertising can be improved so that it will be more effective than before. The data shows trends in various directions, affording advertisers better light where before there was very little. They indicate to advertisers of particular goods where there are possibilities for increasing effectiveness through changing their media or intensifying their advertising through a medium already being utilized.

The study proves that research to determine media effectiveness is of definite positive value. It should be emphasized at this point that the results of this survey do not establish general principles. As pointed out in a preceding section, the purpose of testing is to compare relative effectiveness of alternate kinds of advertising and media. Thus the study findings do not prove that one medium or group of media are the most practical

to use in general advertising of specific types of goods. They rather show the relative effectiveness of one type of medium in advertising certain goods to classes of consumers as compared with the other media included in the survey.

The data collected in this survey can not be applied to any other community as conditions vary too greatly in all communities and different procedures have to be developed. The results will remain representative of this community only as long as the occupational grouping remains approximately the same and the population does not increase or decrease too much.

For verification of the data collected in the study as to its representativeness of the housewives of the community, the data was tabulated as soon as half the cases were interviewed and the results compared with the last half of the study. The comparison revealed a reasonable consistency which may be considered as sufficient evidence of its authenticity in view of the fact that the data show trends only.

For the purpose of analyzing the results of the investigation more in detail, each medium included in the study will be considered individually in its comparative relationships with the other media.

### Radio

Radio appears to be the better of the media to advertise foods and household equipment among the housewives of all three classes of the community. Housewives, being at home most of the day, depend upon radio to a large extent for companionship. Daytime radio advertising consists mainly of food and household goods announcements that are principally directed to housewives. Radio advertising has the largest number of listeners among

Class A housewives, though Class B and C housewives react to it to nearly the same degree. This medium does not lend itself very readily to advertising clothing or personal goods among housewives to any great extent.

Radio advertising in many cases defeats its own purpose by too much advertising. Many housewives are antagonized by the frequency and length of advertising which tends to interfere with the continuity of the programs.

Most of the food advertising over radio are of nationally advertised canned foods or meats. These are of interest to local housewives as these products are obtainable at local grocery stores. The household goods advertised are of rugs, furniture, cooking utensils, waxes, and other household goods which are also obtainable locally.

#### Newspapers

Newspaper advertising of clothing seem to get favorable reactions from all the classes, but a very small percentage of the products advertised are used by the housewives. The media shows average success in advertising household equipment in Classes A and B and is only moderately effective in Class C for this type of goods.

Newspapers are read widely among all classes of housewives. Most of the advertising done through it is by Roanoke concerns with whom local buyers do business. However, newspaper advertising does not get more than a favorable response. A very small percentage of housewives use products whose advertising they noticed. Probably the highest percentage for using the products advertised in newspapers is among Class A housewives which is the group that trades most in Roanoke. Clothing advertising seems to be the most active in selling to them. The Christiansburg and college news-

paper advertising does not effect housewives to any marked extent.

### Magazines

Magazine advertising of foods, household equipment, and personal needs are very favorably reacted to by Class A housewives and to a lesser extent by the Class B group. However, among Class C housewives, very little reaction is noticeable. This is probably due to the economic differences between the three groups. Class C families are poorer and do not subscribe to many magazines. The rural group, Class B, subscribe mainly to rural life periodicals which do not carry the same type of advertising that the magazines read by Class A families.

Magazine food, household goods, and personal needs advertising can be made more attractive through the use of color. This fact undoubtedly is one of the underlying reasons why these types of advertisements appeal to housewives.

### Window and Counter Displays

This is an excellent media for advertising foods, clothing, and household goods as it appeals strongly to the female instinct to react favorably to displays of merchandise. All women to a certain extent enjoy "window shopping" and a great deal of selling is done in the community. The percentage of housewives who could recall advertising noticed through displays and reacted favorably to is high among all classes. Also, a good percentage of housewives use commodities that they noticed through display advertising. This is especially true among Class A housewives who buy more clothing seen on display than other goods. There is also a relatively high percentage of users of food products seen in display advertising among

Class B housewives. Rural buyers come into town periodically for the purpose of stocking up on groceries. Hence they buy a great quantity of food products seen through display advertising.

### Handbills

This medium is most effective in getting reactions for food and clothing advertising, however, its greatest strength lies in advertising groceries alone. Handbills are not used to any noticeable extent for advertising household equipment and personal needs in the community. Class C housewives respond best to handbill advertising as they generally announce bargain specials which appeal to this class due to their strained economic condition. To a lesser extent handbills are effective among Class A housewives, though they have very little appeal to the rural families of Class B, because of the difficulty of distributing handbills in the country, very few housewives of Class B group see the.

Handbills, the survey revealed, are resented by numbers of housewives because they are often blown about the lawns or make the porches untidy.

### Mail Circulars

Mail circulars influence mainly Class B housewives. They buy goods through mail order houses more than do the housewives of the town. This medium is unsuited for food and personal needs advertising, hence they confine their advertising to clothing and household goods. It should be noted that this type of medium is not nearly as effective in advertising as compared with the above listed media. Mail circulars do not come in a very steady volume to all classes of families. Sometimes there is an interval of several months between the receiving of circulars.

### Sales Talks

Sales talks are also relatively ineffective as compared with radio newspaper, and displays. Sales talks are not used to any great extent for advertising foods and personal needs. They are best utilized for advertising household goods and clothing. This media is about equally effective among all three classes of housewives.

### Conclusions

The purpose of the study is to provide information about relative media values for advertisers interested in selling commodities to the families of the Blacksburg community.

The survey was conducted to determine the relative effectiveness of media on general types of goods rather than specific brands, so as to be useful to many advertisers rather than to just a few advertisers of particular brands.

The results show that while there are many cases of similar reactions among the different occupational groups of the community, there are in general wide divergences of reactions to different media.

An attempt has been made throughout the study to measure these differences in as accurately and careful a manner in order to discover which of the media will bring the better results in each case.

Even though 100 per cent accuracy can not be claimed for the results of the survey, it is believed that they are of definite value and can be used to great practical advantages by advertisers interested in the local market.

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