Pams: Fusing the future

By Danette Breitenbach

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While the first Publisher Audience Measure Survey (Pams) has been released by the Publisher Research Council, the data is still being validated and will not be available until it is checked. However, the PRC is happy with the overall picture gleaned from the research and presented this in Johannesburg and Cape Town.

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"The key demographics are a fairly good match with the Establishment Survey (July 2016 to June 2017) and Pams. Pams is slightly higher at the top end while ES is slightly higher at the bottom end," says Terry Murphy, managing director, Nielsen Watch Services, South Africa.

"Looking at LSMs, what is interesting is the Amps and Pams are tracking almost on top of one another on the top end, so from about LSM 7 and up, they are mirroring each other. And we are pleased to see that, however, we also really interested in why there are differences between the Amps profile and the ES profile. We have agreed with the PRC to have an audit to understand exactly what that is about from the bottom to the top," she adds.

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She pointed out that while it is tempting having lived with Amps for the last 20 years to compare Amps and Pams, because Amps is all we have ever known, but we must know that these are not the same surveys. Pams is designed for reading and readership, while Amps was built for all media and products.

Fusion is the future

Murphy confirmed that the next step is fusion, calling it the obvious route to go with the rest of the world already running towards it. "In South Africa, we have been indoctrinated to believe that single source is the best and that we are so lucky to have it, but the reality is that the world is not as simple as it was, and medias and products are fragmented. There are also fewer respondents per question and so we need more questions, but that only leads to longer questionnaires and that is

also not working anymore."

And, she adds, the reality is that it does not have to. "It is rubbish with poor response rates. Single source no longer does the trick. In the next 100 days, we will have fusion in South Africa. It is not the future, it is the current. Nielsen does it all over the world and it is not new for us. It is no longer the vision; it is the preferred solution."

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She explains that fusion allows for proper analysis of detailed behavioural analytics and trustable data. "It brings together separate media assets for the most granular view of customers, and cross-platform behaviours which support analytics, flexible media and targeted and unduplicated reach and frequency planning."

In short, data fusion requires two data sources, for example, Pams dataset and Homescan or FMCG panel data that are fused into a third data set.

Pams

The survey comprises fieldwork undertaken from July to November 2017, with a total sample of +17,000, weighted to the HIS. It includes 53 newspapers, 92 magazines and 10 sites, total 155. The survey was conducted by Nielsen.

Ninety-nine percent of municipalities were sampled. This equals 232 out of 233 municipalities. Sample points were stretched to maximise diversity. They were limited to points of two over SAL to maximise national coverage.

Flooding increased the sample by 70%, with 7,000 of the 17,0000 sample flooded people. The flooded sample was only asked reading and demographics questions, while the primary sample was asked about products and services. "These answers were matched to the flooded sample," says Peter Langschmidt, consultant to the PRC, "and is a world first.". A significant cost efficiency was generated through the use of the flooding methodology. Pams interviews he adds cost 34% of what companies paid for per Amps interview in 2015.

This was not the only world first; there were a few more. Another one was self-selection. The tablet was handed to the respondent who could then choose titles without anyone looking over their shoulder. "This worked to a certain extent - certainly it did in newspapers, resulting in niche and weekend papers now coming through."

Two placebo titles were also placed to measure overclaim. One had six respondents and the other 56. "This is one in 300. This has added credibility to our entire process and model," he says.

There were also several new questions added to the Survey. The first is multiple pickups, which examined how many times a title is picked up before a reader is finished with it. Another new question is the time spent reading. The topics of interest for newspapers was also examined and this gave clients the opportunity to look at lifestyle, and the ability to plan around interests rather than conventional definitions.

"The PRC will always tell you the good and the bad," says Langschmidt. He says they think they have made progress on readers per copy on newspapers, but not magazines. "We are there, and we are telling you we are not."

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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