

# **INTERMEDIA DIMENSIONS *2008***

**A Media Dynamics, Inc. E-book Publication**

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# About Media Dynamics, Inc.

Media Dynamics, Inc. is the publisher of:

- ❑ *TV Dimensions*, a reference annual on television viewing patterns, audience demos, ad impact, reach and frequency, CPM estimates and more
- ❑ *Magazine Dimensions*, a reference annual on all aspects of the consumer magazine industry
- ❑ *Radio Dimensions*, a reference annual on the radio industry, with a focus on audience listening patterns, demographics, commercial impact and more
- ❑ *Intermedia Dimensions*, a reference annual on the pros and cons of the five major media as advertising vehicles, including our popular intermedia CPMs comparisons, time spent and more
- ❑ *Media Matters*, a free bi-weekly e-newsletter that explores current developments in the advertising and media communities--available on our website.
- ❑ MDI also publishes one-time reports on areas of interest to advertisers, agencies and the media, including *Ad Receptivity: The Final Word*; *Targeting The Hispanic Consumers*; *How TV Commercials Communicate*; and *The Rules Of Engagement*.

Media Dynamics was founded in 1982 by Ed Papazian, the former Media Research Director and Media Director of BBDO (1960-75) and co-creator/publisher of *Ad Forum* and *The Media Cost Guide*. Both publications were sold in the mid-1980s, and continue today as *BrandWeek* and *The Marketer's Guide To Media*, respectively. MDI's first publication, *TV Dimensions*, was launched in 1982 as the reference source for data trending and insights on the medium. In 1986, *Media Matters* (now a free bi-weekly e-newsletter) was created with the goal of delving into territory often slighted by other publications and presenting a voice of reason to a frenetic and often overloaded media industry. *Magazine Dimensions*, an annual that applies the same rigorous explorations and analyses to consumer magazines, began publication in 1994, followed by *Radio Dimensions* in 2005, and *Intermedia Dimensions* this year. MDI is also the publisher of several small reports on specialized topics such as engagement, ad impact and ad receptivity.

In addition, Media Dynamics, Inc. has spent more than 20 years consulting on a variety of media issues, most notably agency/client interactions on the media function, the hiring of independent media buying services and the evaluation of agency/media buying performance. Past clients include a cross section of TV networks, cable services, magazines, TV & radio reps, advertisers, ad agencies, research companies and new media.

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## NEW INTERMEDIA ENGAGEMENT METRICS FROM SIMMONS

To date, much of the agency-driven efforts to define media engagement have been focused on network TV, but this is about to change. Leading the way, Simmons, a part of Experian Research Services, has launched its Multi-media Engagement Study, covering a huge array of nationally aired TV shows and channels, magazines and Internet websites, and six global engagement indicators for all TV, magazine and Internet measured vehicles. Respondents who claimed recent exposure to any of the TV shows, magazines or websites were asked to rate the descriptiveness of approximately 40 statements for each of the media they used. From that battery of statements, Simmons derives the following engagement dimensions reported on a scale from 100 (lowest) to 500 (highest):

1. **Inspirational:** The media inspires consumers and connects with them emotionally.
2. **Trustworthy:** The media is trusted by consumers and it does not sensationalize things.
3. **Life Enhancing:** Consumers are learning about new things from the medium, which ultimately helps them make better decisions.
4. **Social Interaction:** The media is constantly giving consumers fodder for conversation with family and friends.
5. **Personal Timeout:** Consumers say the time they spend with the media is time just for them and generally improves their mood.
6. **Advertising Attention/Receptivity:** The advertisements that run in the media are of interest to the consumer who is ultimately more likely to purchase products advertised in it.

Taking all ad-supported TV shows in aggregate, viewers were most likely to bestow the highest engagement ratings in the “personal timeout” and “social interaction” dimensions, while they gave the lowest scores when rating shows as “life enhancing” or as generating “ad receptivity.” As shown in Table I, these differences were quite substantial; for example, the average viewer rated a typical TV show 43% higher on the personal timeout dimension, relative to the life enhancing one. Such contrasts dovetail nicely with the opinion of long-time observers of the TV scene, who regard most programs as primarily escapist or entertaining in nature, and hence a perfect fit with Simmons’ “personal timeout” definition.

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TABLE I

## Mean Engagement Scores for Individual Metrics for Ad-Supported TV Shows

	MEAN SCORE	RELATIVE INDEX <sup>1</sup>
Inspirational	245	99
Trustworthy	266	108
Life Enhancing	207	84
Social Interaction	268	109
Personal Timeout	296	120
Ad Receptivity	205	83
<i>Average<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>248</i>	<i>100</i>

*Note: Simmons used a 100-500 rating scale, with 500 the highest score.*

<sup>1</sup>*Media Dynamics, Inc. calculation.*

**Source:** *Simmons Multi-media Engagement Study, Wave 3, 2007.*

How did TV compare to magazines and websites in such evaluations? Table II answers this question on an across-the-board, average exposure basis. As indicated, the typical reader of an average magazine outscored its TV show viewing counterpart on each of Simmons' six global engagement metrics, often by a substantial amount. This was particularly significant in the "life enhancing" and "ad receptivity" evaluations, where magazines topped TV shows by 40-50%. Clearly this reflects the innate editorial selectivity of many magazines on the life enhancing front, and the resulting empathy this generates, which manifests in higher ad receptivity levels. On the other hand, the disparity between TV and magazines narrowed considerably when respondents were asked to rate TV shows and/or magazines they saw in terms of "personal timeout," and websites displayed a more subdued contrast with TV. Their weakest area was in "inspirational" evaluations, but they led TV by an impressive 35% when it came to the "life enhancing" metric. As with magazines, the most likely explanation for this is the sharply focused subject matter on many websites.

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TABLE II

## Average Media Engagement Rating for TV Shows, Magazines and Websites

	TV <sup>1</sup>	MAGAZINES	WEBSITES
Inspirational	245	273	224
Trustworthy	266	324	308
Life Enhancing	207	302	280
Social Interaction	268	306	283
Personal Timeout	296	308	255
Ad Receptivity	205	288	232
<i>Average</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>248</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>264</i>

Note: Simmons used a 100-500 rating scale, with 500 the highest score.

<sup>1</sup>Ad-supported programs only.

<sup>2</sup>Media Dynamics, Inc. calculation.

Source: Simmons Multi-media Engagement Study, Wave 3, 2007.

While our analyses thus far have dealt with the three media in terms of overall averages, it is obvious that the profiles of individual TV shows, magazines and websites likely differ from the norms for each medium. This is where a service like Simmons' Multi-media Engagement Study can be very useful. By measuring a large number of TV shows, publications and websites, Simmons allows media planners or buyers to meld various combinations of media vehicles to maximize their collective impact for an advertiser.

Before exploring this aspect, however, let's demonstrate the variability that characterizes the Simmons findings within each medium. Tables III-V show the engagement ratings attained by a selection of TV shows, magazines and website genres. For example, Table III reveals a sharp distinction between the close bonding that TV personalities like Oprah Winfrey have attained with their viewers and the relative lack of empathy that more trivial or escapist fare like *The Simpsons* or *Desperate Housewives* engender. *The Oprah Winfrey Show* topped *Desperate Housewives* by 96% in the "inspirational" metric, and leads of a similar nature were also noted in the "trustworthy" and "life enhancing" categories. While ad receptivity is a chronic low-scorer among TV shows, Oprah's overriding positives created a halo effect, allowing her program to top *Desperate Housewives* by 36% in this important area.

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TABLE III

## Engagement Scores for Selected TV Shows

	INSPIRATIONAL	TRUSTWORTHY	LIFE ENHANCING	SOCIAL INTERACTION	PERSONAL TIMEOUT	AD RECEPTIVITY
<b>DAYTIME</b>						
Today Show (N)	268	311	284	315	262	208
All My Children (A)	253	218	186	262	329	195
Oprah Winfrey (S)	369	349	322	349	369	239
Judge Judy (S)	248	273	175	274	277	171
<b>EARLY EVENING</b>						
Entertainment Tonight (S)	200	215	179	258	266	185
Jeopardy (S)	202	346	193	274	304	164
World News/C. Gibson (A)	294	341	248	333	247	194
<b>PRIMETIME</b>						
American Idol (F)	249	247	170	246	274	202
The Colbert Report (CC)	241	233	189	325	362	206
24 (F)	259	209	161	285	328	190
CSI (C)	250	257	177	263	203	175
Desperate Housewives (A)	188	176	146	250	334	175
Grey's Anatomy (A)	298	249	193	298	360	200
Law & Order (N)	258	241	167	244	281	168
Lost (A)	237	216	157	300	364	175
O'Reilly Factor (FNC)	305	331	229	367	271	197
60 Minutes (C)	290	322	226	321	250	186
The Office (N)	202	203	151	275	350	186
The Simpsons (F)	204	223	166	259	333	193
The Closer (TNT)	253	240	172	240	312	185
<b>LATE EVENING</b>						
Late Show/D. Letterman (C)	190	217	165	258	304	172
Saturday Night Live (N)	206	204	161	281	333	203

A-ABC, C-CBS, CC-Comedy Central, F-Fox, FNC-Fox News Channel, N-NBC, S-Syndication.

Note: Simmons used a 100-500 rating scale, with 500 the highest score.

Source: Simmons Multi-media Engagement Study, Wave 3, 2007.

Table IV reveals similar variations for a selection of magazines. As is common with TV news shows, magazines like **Business Week** and **Time** showed more strength in the “trustworthy” metric than books more focused on entertaining audiences (i.e. **Maxim** and **People**) or those dealing with mechanical or purely functional subjects (i.e. **PC Magazine** and **Road & Track**). On the other hand, style-oriented books like **Vogue** and **GQ** generated their highest engagement scores in the ad receptivity category.

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TABLE IV

## Engagement Scores for Selected Magazines

	INSPIRATIONAL	TRUSTWORTHY	LIFE ENHANCING	SOCIAL INTERACTION	PERSONAL TIMEOUT	AD RECEPTIVITY
Bon Appetit	238	333	331	299	321	303
Brides	279	319	343	315	321	344
Business Week	233	323	263	298	227	231
Cosmopolitan	297	307	327	324	355	313
Field & Stream	266	366	326	308	310	315
GQ	253	299	306	274	308	318
Good Housekeeping	312	360	324	299	323	293
Health	315	359	333	321	293	307
Home	269	318	332	313	311	319
Maxim	229	255	266	284	333	260
Men's Health	283	325	313	293	286	284
National Geographic	337	388	267	336	350	228
PC Magazine	217	355	340	307	273	325
Parents	354	367	348	343	318	329
People	245	249	208	279	304	214
Reader's Digest	348	362	270	313	327	219
Real Simple	268	354	345	308	340	303
Road & Track	234	321	295	293	302	290
Self	321	344	331	315	333	303
Smart Money	279	337	312	321	268	284
Smithsonian	300	392	257	320	334	233
Sports Illustrated	251	312	214	304	297	226
Sunset	259	344	317	287	323	276
Time	288	320	241	316	249	204
Travel + Leisure	251	310	327	305	337	286
Vogue	263	291	310	280	320	323

Note: Simmons used a 100-500 rating scale, with 500 the highest score.

Source: Simmons Multi-media Engagement Study, Wave 3, 2007.

Finally, Table V compares the engagement metrics for website genres, and again, there are major departures from the medium's overall norm. For example—and as one might expect—trustworthiness is a major positive attribute for health-related sites, as well as those focused on child-rearing, job-seeking, food, finance, news, travel and real estate. On the other hand, sites featuring game playing, entertainment, music and sports scored strongly in the personal timeout metric.

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TABLE V

## Engagement Scores for Selected Website Genres

	INSPIRATIONAL	TRUSTWORTHY	LIFE ENHANCING	SOCIAL INTERACTION	PERSONAL TIMEOUT	AD RECEPTIVITY
Automobile	215	314	368	291	245	267
Child Rearing	323	258	360	340	303	299
Connections	222	255	216	248	245	289
Entertainment	235	276	250	307	298	235
Finance	224	322	296	299	223	230
Food	240	365	328	314	294	274
Gaming	195	292	223	241	343	206
Greetings	226	302	218	220	233	198
Groups	247	276	258	279	271	185
Health	284	344	324	322	262	268
Information	200	349	301	271	206	200
Job Search	191	301	255	231	179	182
Lifestyle	278	341	339	326	313	291
Listing	148	303	248	177	153	183
Local	163	302	292	230	185	182
Magazine	275	333	324	329	303	284
Movie	183	307	277	267	231	217
Music	254	305	263	294	307	249
News/Weather	227	313	267	311	214	193
Photo	250	303	251	266	275	229
Real Estate	191	292	278	271	215	224
Search	171	294	312	258	205	201
Shopping	172	304	285	249	225	244
Video	216	263	230	281	269	206
Sports	221	313	243	322	291	233
Travel	165	312	329	248	196	224
TV	257	317	275	311	287	241

Note: Simmons used a 100-500 rating scale, with 500 the highest score.

Source: Simmons Multi-media Engagement Study, Wave 3, 2007.

While advertisers and ad agencies are just beginning to come to grips with the engagement concept, no one doubts the validity of its core premise: media that engage their audiences are more likely to bestow superior ad impact benefits upon their advertisers. The issue, then, is how to use data such as that provided by Simmons to develop the most engagement-enhancing media plans.

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The narrow view seeks a formulaic approach that rigidly ascribes a certain degree of ad exposure and/or ad recall to a given engagement level. Hence, if one TV show tops another by 60% in a favored engagement metric, the question arises of whether it will actually “deliver” 60% more of its viewers to its advertisers or will its edge in ad exposure or recall be only 30% or even 10%? If such relationships could be defined with any degree of reliability—and this is hardly a certainty—the narrow use of engagement would call for what amounts to a CPM adjustment. Instead of evaluating various TV shows or packages of shows, as well as magazines and websites based on their demographic targeting capabilities, the media planner would overlay the engagement metric in making his or her calculations. The resulting engagement-based CPMs would now distinguish between media vehicles based on their costs for reaching engaged viewers within an advertiser’s target group.

There is, of course, a broader view of engagement, which we find at least equally interesting, if not more potentially relevant. We refer to Simmons’ ability to define various gradations of engagement and specific motivations or potential response mechanisms. As we have demonstrated, certain TV programs are seen by their viewers primarily as relaxing ways to pass the time, while the imprint of other shows is more finely articulated, including deeply personal responses to their perceived honesty, social impact or ability to inspire. By examining such slants, the media planner or buyer has a unique opportunity to match the media engagement profile of certain TV shows (or genres) with the corresponding appeals of a given product and advertising message. Suppose an ad campaign relies heavily on consumer trust to make its sell—as in a health-related brand using a well known doctor as its endorser. Wouldn’t these commercials perform better in TV programs with a positive “trustworthy” aura, than in entertaining but light weight sitcoms? On the other hand, wouldn’t a light-hearted fast food commercial fare better in a compatible comedic environment than if it ran during a serious newsmagazine program?

Carry this form of mindset matching one step further—across media—and the possibilities are even more intriguing. Now the media planner could create interacting combinations of media, which may provide synergistic benefits by virtue of the ways they communicate an advertiser’s message. If the ad campaign relies on honesty or the trust of consumers to make a key sales point, it could be exposed in a magazine, on a website or in TV shows that rate highly with audiences on this score. Any way you look at it, such matchups can add a new and welcome dimension to media plans that all too often rely solely on demographic targeting.

## PRODUCTS HAVE THEIR OWN ENGAGEMENT SIGNATURES

One of the obvious extensions of the Simmons Engagement Study described in the previous article is to conduct the same sort of research about products or services. For example, when deciding what movie to see, how important are attributes such as “inspirational” or “social interaction” to moviegoers? What about car buyers or credit card users? Armed with such product class profiles, a media planner can determine whether a given medium or combination of media has a similar engagement profile. When a close match is noted, there is a fairly high likelihood that the media environment is more “compatible” to the product’s aura.

In order to address this possibility, in the fall of 2007 Simmons conducted an online study of 41 product categories with a sample of 2,000 adults, using the same engagement metrics as the larger Simmons Media Engagement Study discussed in the previous article. In each case, recent users/buyers of the product or service were asked to rate the importance they place on each of the six engagement metrics (“trustworthy,” “inspirational,” “life enhancing,” “social interaction,” “personal timeout” and “ad attention/receptivity”) when making a purchase decision in that category. Respondents used the same 100-500 point scale, with 500 the highest score.

The findings on the degree of variation in advertising attentiveness/receptivity by product/service category immediately stood out to us. As shown in Table I, ads for skin care products rated 20% above the 41-product norm in ad receptivity among skincare product users (120 index). In contrast, adults who bought gasoline or motor oil rated ads for this category as 12% below par on the same scale (88 index). In short, targeting a product user does not guarantee that the viewer, reader or listener will be attentive to the advertiser’s ad.

Over and above this, the Simmons Engagement Study paints a fairly clear distinction between products that are personally relevant to the consumer, as opposed to those that are seen as commodities and are of less interest, in terms of engagement. Table II gives an indication of this by taking the three highest and lowest scoring products for each of the six engagement metrics. As can be seen, medicinal products and cars ranked the best when it came to the “life enhancing” evaluation, whereas beer, soft drinks and gasoline scored the lowest. When it came to “social interaction,” cellular services, movie going and toys and games led the pack, and alkaline batteries, household papers products and soft drinks were the hind runners.

Obviously were Simmons to find support for a full-fledged product/media engagement study along these lines, a much larger sample would be utilized. This would allow subscribers to explore demographic variables and detailed media interactions, which could suggest interesting avenues to explore. What is clear—as we ourselves have stressed for years—is the importance of matching a product’s psychographic signature with that inspired by a medium or specific media vehicle. If, for example, the consumer’s trust in a product or service is the key attribute defining a product’s value or appeal, it makes complete sense to choose media that convey a strong sense of trustworthiness because they offer an ideal environment for such an ad campaign.

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Hopefully any new initiative along these lines will be supported by hard evidence that mindset matching of this sort actually works. For example, when a product class's engagement signature dovetails with that of a media vehicle, is there a significant increase in ad awareness, copy point recall and buying intent? Pending such validations, we feel that agency media planners and their clients should explore the new Simmons engagement research and consider their implications for ROI enhancement.

TABLE I

### Relative Indices of Ad Attentiveness/Receptivity for Users of 41 Products/Services

Skincare Products	120	Airline Travel	100
Diapers and Baby Products	110	Toiletry Buying	100
Toys & Games	109	Obtained Loans	99
Home Improvement Store	107	Pet Food	98
Automobiles	107	Credit Cards	98
Rent Videos/DVDs	106	Snack Foods	98
Rent Cars	106	Bank Accounts	97
Hotel Stays	105	H.H. Paper Products	97
Packaged/Canned/Frozen Foods	105	Coffee (For Home Use)	96
Household Appliances & Cleaning Equip.	105	Bottled Water	96
Internet Service Provider	104	Ice Cream/Cookies/Desserts	96
Household Cleaning Products	104	Spirits	95
Cell Phones	104	Alkaline Batteries	95
Fast Food Restaurant	103	Mortgages	94
Wine Usage	102	Rx Drugs	94
Consumer Electronics	102	Stocks/Bonds	93
Movie Attendance	102	Mutual Funds	93
Show Buying	102	Beer	91
Non-prescription Drugs	101	Soft Drinks	90
Clothing	101	Gasoline/Motor Oil	88
Cellular Service	101		

Note: 41 product average score=100.

Source: Simmons Multi-media Engagement Study, 2007.

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TABLE II

## Highest and Lowest Scoring Product Category Scores for Six Engagement Metrics

LIFE ENHANCING			
HIGH			LOW
Skincare Products	432	Beer	297
Rx Drugs	426	Soft Drinks	298
Automobiles	407	Gasoline/Motor Oil	318
SOCIAL INTERACTION			
HIGH			LOW
Cellular Service	362	Alkaline Batteries	255
Moviegoing	361	H.H. Paper Products	259
Toys & Games	355	Soft Drinks	265
TRUSTWORTHY			
HIGH			LOW
Mutual Funds	483	Moviegoing	375
Bank Accounts	482	Soft Drinks	393
Credit Cards	474	Rent/Buy Videos/DVDs	397
INSPIRATIONAL			
HIGH			LOW
Skincare Products	385	Soft Drinks	267
Home Imp. Stores	353	Beer	271
Automobiles	352	Alkaline Batteries	273
PERSONAL TIMEOUT			
HIGH			LOW
Moviegoing	409	Gasoline/Motor Oil	263
Rent/Buy Videos/DVDs	388	Pet Food	277
Skincare Products	386	Alkaline Batteries	294
AD ATTENTION/RECEPTIVITY			
HIGH			LOW
Skincare Products	372	Gasoline/Motor Oil	271
Diapers/Baby Products	341	Soft Drinks	279
Toys & Games	336	Beer	281

Note: Simmons used a 100-500 scale, with 500 the highest score.

Source: Simmons Multi-media Engagement Study, 2007.