

# Navigating media conversations - the value of OOH

 By [Hamish Pringle](#)

15 Jul 2013

Continental Outdoor Media invited me to South Africa, earlier this year, to speak at their Continental Conversations event. I spoke about TouchPoints media research conducted by the UK-based Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) and about the F.A.I.P.A. model that was developed from analyses of the IPA Effectiveness Awards and other key sources.

Following on this, AdVantage Magazine asked me to elaborate on this and to share insights from my latest book, *Spending Advertising Money in the Digital Age - Navigating the Media Flow*, which I co-authored with Jim Marshall (available on [kalahari.com](#)).

IPA TouchPoints was first launched in 2006 and it shows how our lives and the media flow intertwine. Indeed the survey showed that adults spend 45% of their waking time-consuming media. The beauty of IPA TouchPoints is the juxtaposition of life and the media flows which can be seen in a multiplicity of situations, and which media are consumed at which times of day by which demographic group. Seeing the relative importance of these habitual media consumption behaviours is extremely useful in plotting a brand's media strategy. The ideal media mix needs to be constructed to make sure that the brand is present and saying the right thing to the right person at the right time within the media flow as it intermingles with their life flow.

## Designed to deliver new and fresh insights

The IPA TouchPoints initiative was designed to deliver new and fresh insights in its own right and to act as a gateway across data sources and to provide a mechanism whereby different data sources can be integrated, rather than to act as an alternative to current media research. Indeed, it was conceived as a multi-media hub sitting in the middle of the industry media research 'currencies' to bring them together through a process of data fusion and thus to provide a fully integrated multi-media planning tool. It produced an integrated data-base which can be used to compare one medium properly with another and thus make sophisticated multi-media planning an operational reality.

It's wonderful for media planners and buyers to have a granular analytical tool such as TouchPoints and even if in South Africa, strategists don't yet have the benefit of this kind of research, there are many case histories on the IPA website which can be used to glean relevant insights (<http://www.ipa.co.uk/touchpoints>). By understanding TouchPoints and going through a similar process in developing the brand campaign, communications planners will optimise the media mix and their client's adspend.

## OOH is a fast-growing medium

To prepare for my visit I used IPA TouchPoints to look at weekly reach versus time spent with different media. Clearly this is UK data, but I suspect it may not be that different from the situation in South Africa. Out-of-Home (OOH) had 100% reach and an average of 2 hours spent consuming it, which amounts to the largest reach of all media and the second longest duration. Television was viewed for a longer duration but had a slightly smaller reach. TouchPoints survey confirms that OOH commands 24% of the total media day, the highest share of any channel. This could well increase as OOH is a fast-growing medium as more and more roadside, transit areas, malls and lifestyle environments are becoming areas where marketers are able to begin, or continue, their conversations with their consumers.

Given that media planners need to place their brand in the media flow, ensuring that relevant messages are placed in the customer path to purchase, OOH is clearly a strong contender as it enables location-based impacts throughout the consumer's day, and can create a seamless conversation that can be sewn together into a coherent brand story.

## Five key roles

In writing our book, Jim Marshall and I looked long and hard at the analyses of the IPA Effectiveness Awards, especially those by Les Binet and Peter Field, which have shown that three or four bought media is the optimum number of media channels for maximum efficiency. Together with our joint experience on dozens of campaigns over decades, our conclusion is that there are five key roles for using media and content to promote a brand, and that these should be delivered by three or four individual mediums. These five roles make up the acronym F.A.I.P.A.

1. 'Fame', or the ability of a medium with the right creative content to generate "buzz" and "talk ability" for a brand;
2. 'Advocacy', or the ability of a medium to enable consumers and citizens to pass on both positive and negative criticism to other people, increasingly via "word-of-mouth";
3. 'Information', or the ability of a medium to provide customers with detailed information about the product or service, or indeed company, they're interested in;
4. 'Price', or the ability of a medium to deliver a price point or special offers and;
5. 'Availability' or the ability of a medium to point consumers towards where they can buy the product or service they desire.

## Ooh... strengths, weaknesses

Let's assess OOH using the F.A.I.P.A. model. Like TV, OOH has great strengths in building 'fame' and clearly this is the most powerful reason for selecting OOH to deliver this most essential component of a brand communications campaign. Currently OOH has a weakness in delivering 'advocacy', however, technological advances should lead to integration with mobile in the not too distant future, thus improving OOH's performance in this key role. In terms of conveying 'information' OOH can be very effective if the sites are located where there's plenty of dwell time. Similarly with 'price', OOH can do a good job in communicating a simple number, but is less effective when detail is required. 'Availability' is another great strength of OOH, because sites can be chosen as signposts to a destination, and this is a key asset given the high proportion of decisions which are made close to the point of purchase.

So overall OOH scores very well on the F.A.I.P.A. model, and can deliver up to four of the five key roles. However it's essential that the content is matched to each role that OOH is chosen to fulfil in the brand's media mix. Clearly different sorts of creative work will be required to generate fame, as opposed to providing information, making price offers, or signalling a location where the brand is stocked. Too often we see an ad designed for the intimate one-to-one editorial context of a magazine blown up to roadside poster size and thus missing the opportunity to create maximum impact for the brand. So choose OOH, but make sure the creative work makes the most of this great medium in its various roles.

For more information go to [www.continentaloutdoor.com](http://www.continentaloutdoor.com).

## ABOUT HAMISH PRINGLE

Harish Pringle is an expert in the development and stewardship of corporate, product, and service brands.  
▀ Navigating media conversations - the value of OOH - 15 Jul 2013

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>