



Posterscope is the UK's leading Out-of-Home communications specialist. This is the latest in a series of guides to the medium published by Posterscope's research division, Out-of-Home Horizons. As the series progresses all the guides will be available on [www.posterscope.com](http://www.posterscope.com)

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## How to use Outdoor...



... and measure it

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Historically, Outdoor was always the most difficult medium to measure as methodologies used in the other media could not be applied.

The launch of Postar in 1996 changed all that. It created a measurement of the outdoor audience that went one better than other media, in that it provided a net audience figure, recording how many people passed a poster site but only publishing a figure of those who actually looked at it. Postar did more than create a robust measurement system for outdoor; it also delivered accountability. Poster Rating Points (PRPs) were created and media planners could plan campaigns on the same criteria as other media e.g. coverage levels or ratings weight.

Now a new series of research initiatives – including a significant upgrade of Postar – means that Out-of-Home offers more accurate measurement and even greater accountability.

Fig 1

	Old Coverage %	New Coverage %
2000 x 48s	44	57
5000 x 6s	47	72
500 x 96s	25	34

Fig 2

	Old Frequency	New Frequency
2000 x 48s	15	9
5000 x 6s	25	17
500 x 96s	11	7

**More Accurate Measurement**  
Having a gold standard measurement system has been part of the momentum that has seen Outdoor's share of display advertising rise from 5% in 1996 to 9.5% by 2004. Now that measurement system is even better. The upgrade of Postar finalised this year includes:

**Site Classification** – 120,000 panels have been classified with their exact location pinpointed by GPS. There are new government traffic counts and new independent pedestrian counts, both of which improve the accuracy of the neural network which sits at the heart of Postar. There has been a change in the calculation of distance a panel is visible from; the old rule was from where two thirds of the panel is visible, but now it is from the point at which both uprights are visible.

**Visibility Study** – the Eye Camera Study work, which was ground breaking when Postar launched in that it measured how and when people looked at panels, has been improved through new techniques which allow on-the-street studies rather than laboratory tests. There is also greater clarity in understanding how people view poster sites on the street; while they look straight ahead people also look at the ground to avoid tripping, refining visibility scores.

**New Travel Survey** – Technology has also improved collection of journey information. London, Midlands and Lancashire have all had new travel surveys with the data collected electronically. The original travel survey data have all been re-mapped to give far greater correlation to the current site universe.

### Increased Coverage

Electronic data collection ensures few, if any, journeys are missed and that capture of short and infrequent journeys is being recorded. The results boost the number of people passing a panel, therefore delivering higher cover than previously reported. (Fig 1) The increase in cover is a result of improved quality of data capture rather than any change in respondent behaviour, and as it is additional different journeys that are being added, the average frequency falls. (Fig 2) So, the Postar numbers have changed. Better research techniques and technology increase understanding of how people view sites and log the journeys they make. A step change in the measurement of media is inevitable as it develops and research methodology improves - BARB, NRS and RAJAR have all faced this situation. The effect on media planning is a short period of adjustment as planners become familiar with the new numbers; as consumers haven't altered their behaviour, only our ability to measure it has improved.

**"INCREASE IN COVER IS A RESULT OF IMPROVED QUALITY OF DATA CAPTURE RATHER THAN ANY CHANGE IN RESPONDENT BEHAVIOUR."**

### Further Improvements

2005 promises further improvements in Postar, and a new chapter in measuring the efficiency of using the OOH medium as a whole new range of formats will be included within Postar for the first time: combined Roadside, Rail Network and Underground will be available from January 2005, with Bus and Taxi coverage and frequency released for the first time in 2005. This will allow planners to look at roadside and transport formats within the same measurement system, and have a better understanding of which formats combine best to maximise cover.

### Better Awareness Tracking

Technology has also improved data collection in areas like advertising tracking studies, where we are now seeing higher attribution to non-TV media. We know that consumers automatically default to TV when asked about advertising and the traditional pen and paper interviewing, which is more reliant on the interviewer prompting, favours this response. In 2004 Millward Brown have moved to Computer Assisted Self Interviewing (CASI) and one of the benefits in this approach is that respondents are given the opportunity to consider each medium individually. This is possible due to the technology but also by the fact that the interview is taking place in hall which creates a safer and more relaxed environment, which has resulted in respondents doubling the time they will spend answering the questions.

At the recent Outdoor Conference in Barcelona, Millward Brown presented their findings which showed a higher recall of Outdoor and all non-TV advertising than had previously been measured which is solely attributable to changes in data capture. [across the basket of brands measured attribution rose from an average of 4% on the pen and paper interviewing for outdoor to an average of 29% for the CASI approach].

Advertisers often claim that tracking studies don't measure the effect of their outdoor activity but the move to CASI changes this (although the timing of the research is also key to demonstrate an outdoor effect).

### Maximising Media Value

Pre-Creative Testing of posters is still only carried out by a fraction of advertisers, but as a tool it can add to media impact. There is no "editorial" to lure consumers into a poster, so the creative execution has to work even harder, and getting the creative execution right takes on even more importance. Therefore, any opportunity to understand what the audience sees and takes out from the creative before the final print button is pressed is valuable. The feedback from the target audience will provide



Prism Creative

data on interpretation of message, impact of creative, strength of branding and connection of group with advertisement.

Posterscope's Prism Creative tool allows clients to visualise their creative work on different formats from varying distances and angles. The software is easy to use and can sit equally on the client or creative's pc. All these techniques can improve media value through the creative execution delivering higher awareness and shouting louder.

### Measuring return on investment

It is now possible to measure consumer response to outdoor advertising by measuring the sales effect on advertised brands. Taking the media habits and product purchase records from their single source database, Superpanel, TNS segmented panellists by weight of exposure to outdoor based on their travel behaviour. It was then possible to measure changes in purchasing behaviour when outdoor advertising was solus activity, or a part of a multi media campaign.

The findings from TNS showed not only that they could measure a sales effect but across the brands they studied, the panellists in the heavy outdoor exposure group produced a greater uplift in sales compared with the low outdoor exposure group - for Diet Coke Lemon this meant a 24% increase in sales for the Heavy Outdoor group compared to +4% for the Low exposure group. Accountability of the OOH medium is growing.

### Demonstrating the added value of Special Production Techniques

Technology plays an important role in expanding the production effects available to advertisers as the need to cut through becomes ever challenging. Unsurprisingly cost is a determinant in selecting non-standard production facilities, but increasingly research is being used to measure the benefit derived from lenticular or illuminated sites versus standard poster sites. Do different finishes deliver the message differently or portray a different brand image? The launch of the Renault Modus used a mix of production techniques and Posterscope's research division, OOH Horizon, created a research model to measure the production investment against consumer take out and awareness to provide Renault with cost efficiency learning. OOH is becoming increasingly accountable and measurable for a medium that in the past was often dismissed as unmeasurable. It provides robust industry research, innovative qualitative and quantitative research on consumers use and attitudes to the different formats, demonstrating its value as part of the overall communication or as a stand-alone medium.

CASI Chart

