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# Myth Busters

Measuring the effect of TV and radio commercials

## Introduction

Many advertisers struggle to gain valuable insights into the effectiveness of their TV and radio commercials. Screenforce and RAB, two Dutch TV and radio marketing organizations, provide advertisers and media agencies with insights that help drive maximised results and enable them to continuously improve their media plan.

Objective Partners collaborated with Screenforce and RAB to conduct research into the effectiveness of TV and radio commercials of 13 large advertisers. Five common myths regarding offline marketing were assessed, the findings of which can be found in this article. We provide several insights into the most effective ways to optimise your media spend for TV and radio campaigns.

**Participating advertisers in our research with Screenforce en RAB:**



## Myth #1: I cannot measure effectiveness of my TV and radio commercials

A common myth in the Marketing industry is that effectiveness of TV and radio commercials cannot be measured. You can, however, measure the number of visits to your website and compare how your site traffic changes after airing your TV or radio commercial.

We investigated whether changes in site traffic after the TV and radio commercials could be used to determine the performance of a commercial and found that TV and radio commercials have a positive impact on site traffic. A significant increase in site traffic was observed after a commercial was broadcasted. Almost 1 out of 20 website visits could be traced back to be a direct result of the TV or radio spot.

**BUSTED!**

### Myth #1: Busted

You can determine the impact of your TV and Radio commercials by measuring the number of visits to your site after your commercial has been broadcasted compared to a similar period in which no commercials were aired.

## Myth #2: Radio works better than TV for boosting site traffic

It is often stated that radio has a greater effect on website visits than TV. This statement is based on the perceived core strengths of each the different channels. A commercial on TV is more appropriate for branding messages, as it can be used to tell a story using visuals and to create an emotional connection with the viewer. Radio commercials are often used for direct response messages and benefit from the stronger focus on the call to action. It seems logical to expect the stronger focus on selling a product or service would result in a more significant increase in site visits.

Our results contradict the assumption above. TV commercials show both a higher number of site visits and a lower average cost per visitor (CPV). By combining Marketing activities across TV and radio channels, both the strongest uplift in site visits and lowest CPV occurs. The effect of this combined effort improves even further when TV and radio commercials are aired successively rather than simultaneously.

**BUSTED!**

### **Myth #2: Busted**

Based on our research, it is recommended to combine TV and radio commercials to drive both the highest increase in site traffic and lowest cost per visitor.

## Myth #3: It is not possible to measure the effect of branding commercials

It is difficult to measure the effect of branding commercials. The key focus of a branding commercial is to transfer a brand's identity or brand values. Commercials with a branding message are not necessarily meant to drive KPIs, like site traffic or conversions. When measuring the impact of a branding campaign or evaluating its performance, metrics other than traffic, clicks or conversions, should be included. This is where brand awareness and brand consideration rates come in.

Our research suggests, however, that the number of site visits could be an indicator of the overall branding effect. We observed a small uplift in website traffic after broadcasting the commercial.

**BUSTED!**

**Myth #3: Busted**

Site visits can be an indicator of the impact of a branding commercial.

## Myth #4: Advertising during primetime is more effective

You might think that airing your commercial during primetime would be the best spend of your media budget, as it has the potential to reach a lot of people. When measuring the success of a campaign, however, we should also take the costs at various times of the day into consideration and report on the costs per site visit or conversion.

We included both performance metrics in our analysis: number of visits and costs per visit. We concluded that broadcasting a commercial during non-prime time drives the highest increase in site traffic, while requiring a lower budget. Especially for TV commercials, a steep increase in site traffic was noticed during non-prime time slots. The difference in direct effect on site visits between TV and radio can be clarified by the circumstances in which people listen to either radio or TV. Radio listeners could be driving, working or shopping, for example, whilst TV viewers often see commercials from their couch and can go online more easily.

**BUSTED!**

### Myth #4: Busted

Commercials were most effective during non-prime time in terms of site visits and cost per site visit.

## Myth #5: The more people you potentially reach with your TV commercials, the better your results

When planning your TV commercials, you may simply focus on the number of viewers. More viewers could lead to more traffic, after all. However, this may not be the case. Potentially reaching more viewers does not necessarily mean that you reach the right audience.

We conclude that targeted commercials are more cost effective than non-targeted commercials, as a relatively high number of site visits was observed with lower costs. When planning your TV campaign, we recommend you investigate the opportunity to target your commercials, as this can drive more value from your media budget.

**BUSTED!**

### Myth #5: Busted

Targeting your commercials will minimise your cost and maximise results in comparison to simply reaching a large audience.

## Conclusion based on our research

You *can* measure the effectiveness of your radio and TV campaigns. Based on the research we conducted with Screenforce and RAB, we can state that the measurement of radio and TV campaigns is possible and that it can provide you with insights that can help you optimise your offline media budget. Our research showed that radio and TV commercials have a positive impact on online traffic and it provided us with interesting insights into factors to consider when executing your offline media campaign.

We conclude:

1. You *can* measure the effect of TV and radio commercials on your site visits
2. Combine TV and radio commercials to achieve the lowest CPV
3. You *can* measure the effect of branding commercials by using site visits as an indicator
4. Investigate the opportunity to broadcast your commercial during non-prime time to be cost-effective
5. Target your commercials to effectively save on your media budget

So what are you waiting for? Get started now and collect further insights into the results of your media spend.

Find out more about the Marketing Optimization Offline module of our Marketing Optimization Solution [here](#).

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