

Video Consumer Mapping Study

Frequently Asked Questions



1. When will study results be made available to the public?

On March 26, 2009, the Council hosted an event for Nielsen clients, in which the major key findings of the study were presented. Presentation highlights will be posted on March 27 on the website of the Council for Research Excellence at www.researchexcellence.com. The full presentation is scheduled to be posted in the second week of April.

2. What will be provided?

Detailed deliverables are not yet established, but they will map consumers' use of media by time of day including:

- a. Media used
- b. Simultaneous media usage
- c. Multi-tasking with non-media activities
- d. By demographic, socioeconomic class, etc.
- e. By high-speed broadband access
- f. By ownership of/access to newer technologies

3. Won't respondents who are being observed behave differently from what they normally do?

Usage levels by time of day have been benchmarked against other accepted sources and found to compare favorably. This study is measuring overall usage and platform choices, and not specific content. If there is a bias introduced by observation it is most likely to concern content choices. But even in that case, participants' notice of the observers tends to fade quickly.

4. How can we be confident that the observers are accurate, reliable and consistent?

Observer quality stands on three legs: observer selection, technology and training. College degrees in the social sciences are preferred. This work is often useful to observers in their planned careers, providing good motivation, and their academic training makes them ideal observers.

Use of a small "smart keyboard" device with touch screen input, the Alphasmart DANA™, with Ball State's proprietary Media Collector software ensures the consistent coding of observed events. Its internal clock logs observer coding of ongoing events in 10 second intervals. This technology has been evolved over the past two years benefiting from in-field learning to support the accuracy, consistency and granularity of the observations.

The training process requires three days, and addresses affective, cognitive and behavioral learning. Observers are evaluated in terms of their in-session feedback, post-session anonymous feedback, interviews and coding reliability tests. In the field, observers have access to online resources, processes for sharing and reinforcement among themselves and refresher training materials.

A post-observer follow-up report has also been produced with regard to the VCM.

5. Is the study considered Qualitative or Quantitative?

This study should clearly be considered as quantitative. It fits all the classic definitions of quantitative research: That's because measurements were taken of real consumer behavior with respect to how they use specific media one at a time and in conjunction with other media through multi-tasking. Sample sizes were large and the sample frame was across a number of cities.

Finally, sample sizes are large enough for many comparison cells to permit us to assess whether or not there are significant differences across those cells. This also is a characteristic of a quantitative design.

In contrast, qualitative data is typically based on smaller sample sizes, lack of significance testing, and is more "thematic" with respect to findings. That is, qualitative research looks for patterns and broad themes, not for actual measurement of the variables that are being tested.

6. Couldn't this study be conducted with a less costly method?

No. To provide the insights needed to gauge multi-media and simultaneous media usage by a single sample, in and out of the home, with sufficient accuracy and granularity, observation of an entire waking day, holds the most promise.

7. Is the 350 sample size adequate?

Yes.

A power analysis was conducted to determine the adequacy of the 350 participant core sample. Through this analysis it was determined that there was little to no gain in significantly detectable differences if the sample size was increased to 500, while a decrease to 250 resulted in a large drop-off in the sample's ability to significantly detect meaningful differences. (Technical note: for this analysis, α was set=.1 and β =.2.)

Also, the 100 person Media Acceleration Panel's first observation took place prior to acceleration, enabling observations of this group of participants to be combined with the 350 core participants.

Due to over-recruiting and excellent retention between rounds, we were able to obtain 376 participants from the core sample. Between the two rounds of observations with the core sample and the addition of the observations from the 100-person acceleration sample, the VCM study is based on a total of 952 observations.

8. Are the data statistically projectable?

The data are statistically projectable to the geographically dispersed DMAs used in the study, which are fairly representative of the Total US. Currency status requires a higher standard of selection as well as larger sample size.

9. Why is Nielsen funding this research?

The Council for Research Excellence is intended to give Nielsen's client base greater voice in the design and execution of methodological research. This study is intended to provide actionable and potentially game-changing insights in a few key areas:

- A better understanding of how people actually watch TV now and as they acquire new devices
- Measuring the amount of video usage that is taking place singularly and simultaneously on other devices than the TV and in other locations outside of the home.

10. How will Nielsen act on the findings?

The Council is forming a special committee to work closely with Nielsen to determine how best to incorporate these and future findings into Nielsen's measurement.

11. Will there be additional MCE Studies?

Discussions are in progress.

12. Can I join the Council for Research Excellence (CRE)?

Nielsen clients may request a position on the Council for Research Excellence. Membership is determined by the Council and new members are voted upon once a year.

13. How do I go about joining the Media Consumption and Engagement (MCE) Committee?

The Video Consumer Mapping Study was guided by the MCE Committee of the CRE. Nielsen clients may request joining the committee throughout the year. Membership by non-Council members on the MCE Committee as well as on other CRE working committees is at the discretion of the committee Chair.

14. Who do I contact for more information?

Please direct inquiries about the VCM study or the CRE to Richard Zackon, the Facilitator for the Council for Research Excellence (rzackon@researchexcellence.com).