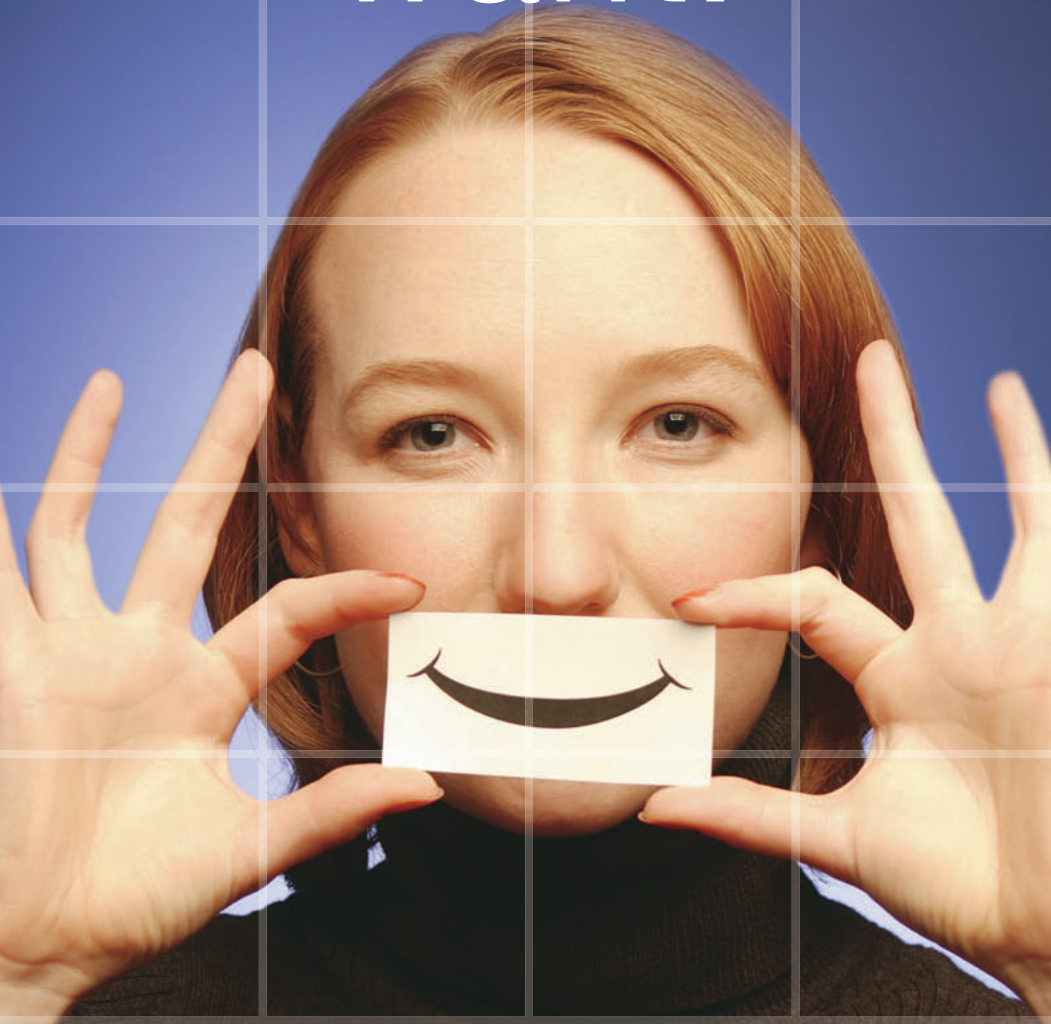


What customers want!



A Directional Insights survey of more than 10,000 customers in shopping centres nationally, has put together a snapshot of what customers are aware of and what they prefer as the main media used in informing them about events and specials at shopping centres.

by Helen Bakewell

Marketers in shopping centres spend a lot of time and money on media placement, so this may make the decision-making process a little easier.

The most important rule to know about customers and media awareness for shopping centres is that when it comes to awareness of advertising communication, customers often associate retailer advertising with centre advertising. For this reason, due to the centre retailer activity in a media, customers will mention the media in which a centre has not itself been active.

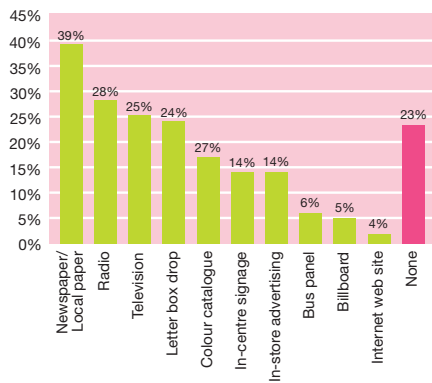
Customers are aware and prefer a variety of marketing communication tools for shopping centre advertising. The results show that, on average, daily and local newspaper advertising receive the highest awareness by customers at 39 per cent for sub-regional and regional centres combined, as illustrated in Chart 1. (In this analysis we examined customer media awareness and preferences for regional and sub-regional centres only.)

Radio receives the second highest awareness at an average of 28 per cent of customers, closely followed by television and letterbox drops at 25 per cent and 24 per cent respectively.



It is important to note that there is higher television awareness over other marketing communication channels in non-metro locations in contrast to metropolitan locations influenced by the cost of media in these areas.

Chart 1: Awareness of marketing communications



Source: Directional Insights Australian Shopping Centre Consumer Behaviour Benchmarks

On average, 77 per cent of customers are aware of marketing communication channels by shopping centres. Twenty-three per cent of customers — or around one in four — remains unaware, and, in

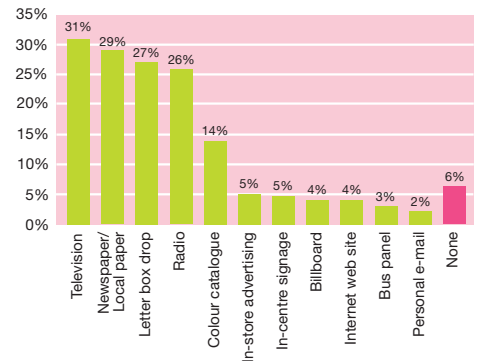
general, females have a higher awareness of marketing than males.

Customer preference in marketing communication and advertising differ slightly from their marketing awareness. Chart 2 illustrates that (on average) the top four most effective and preferred channels of marketing communication are television, followed by daily and local newspaper, letterbox drop, and radio.

On average, 31 per cent of customers prefer television for shopping centre marketing. Daily or local newspaper, letterbox drop, and then radio closely follow at 29 per cent, 27 per cent, and 26 per cent respectively.

The order of preference has changed over time. In the 1990s, television ranked fourth with around one in five customers preferring this media form behind newspapers, letterbox drop, and radio. Today, television has grown in popularity with around one in three customers rating television as their preferred advertising media.

Chart 2: Preferences of marketing communications



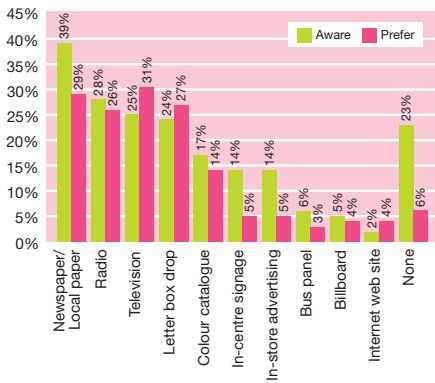
Source: Directional Insights Australian Shopping Centre Consumer Behaviour Benchmarks

The gap between awareness and preference shown in Chart 3 illustrates that customers want shopping centres to use more television and letterbox drop advertising.

But the ultimate aim for marketers is to narrow the gap between no awareness at 23 per cent and the 6 per cent of customers who do not want to be informed about events and specials at shopping centres. This demonstrates a gap of 17 per cent of customers who want to be informed but currently feel that they are unaware of centre marketing communications.



Chart 3: Media awareness and reference gap



Source: Directional Insights Australian Shopping Centre Consumer Behaviour Benchmarks

Before embarking on an expensive advertising campaign, it is important to firstly define your target audience. Your target audience may have strong preferences for and attraction to certain communication mediums so it is wise to identify these preferences for cost-efficiency. As a general guide, the following demographic preferences occur in different media use.

On average, television awareness and preference in shopping centres decline with

age. Awareness and preference for television advertising is highest for age groups under 29 years. About 14 per cent of customers do not watch commercial television.

Age groups over 30 years rate letterbox drops as their main preference for marketing communication, and television advertising ranks third in preference after daily and local newspaper.

For newspapers the general trend is that awareness and preference usually increases with age. Twenty-six per cent of customers under the age of 29 are aware of daily newspapers or local paper advertising in comparison to customers aged over 30 years, with an average of 36 per cent customer awareness.

Newspaper preference for under-29-year-olds on average is 17 per cent, compared to an average of 28 per cent for customers over 30 years old. On average, 23 per cent of customers do not read the local newspaper.

Like television, the general trend towards radio is that awareness and preference decline with age.

Radio awareness for customers under the age of 29 years on average is 27 per cent compared to customers over 30 years with an average of 16 per cent.

Similarly, radio preference for customers under the age of 29 years on average is 30 per cent compared to customers over 30 years with an average of 15 per cent. On average, 24 per cent of customers do not listen to commercial radio.

With any luck, the above information on shopping centre consumer media preferences will help you get the recipe of media placement at your centre right. ■

Helen Bakewell is Managing Director of Directional Insights and has more than 12 years' experience in shopping centre research and marketing, including seven years as National Research Manager for Lend Lease Retail. Helen now offers her extensive experience to the Australian and international shopping centre and retailing industry.

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