

NEW

The Value of Magazine Readership

Reader Dynamics and Ad Impact on Readers of Pass-Along Copies

A new study from Affinity Research's syndicated VISTA Print Effectiveness Rating Service shows that **readers value pass-along copies and take action at a similar rate as readers overall.** Their findings add to the growing body of research about the value of nonpaid readership for advertisers.

Overall Conclusions

Affinity found that readers have positive feelings about pass-along copies. When pass-along reader response to specific ad campaigns was compared to total reader response, Affinity learned that there was:

- **No measurable difference in the level of reader response generated on measures such as recall or brand association**
- **No measurable difference in the actions readers take or plan to take**

Scope and Methodology

During the second quarter 2006, as part of its online syndicated VISTA Print Effectiveness Rating Service research, Affinity included a series of custom questions to find out how respondents obtained their magazine copy—from newsstand, subscription, public place or pass-along. This report, based on 70 different magazine titles, reflects results that were tabulated from more than 3,200 respondents who were pass-along readers.

Readers Value Pass-Along Magazine Copies

When asked about their perceptions, respondents felt positive about pass-along magazines.

Attitudes and Opinions

Receiving a magazine from someone is a great way to try it before I subscribe myself	61 %
I read magazines that are passed along to me the same way I read magazines I buy myself	48
When I finish reading a magazine, I usually think of someone that I can pass it along to	36

Source: VISTA Print Effectiveness Rating Service, 2006



Ad Recall, Brand Association and Actions Taken Are High for Pass-Along Readers

When it came to looking at response to specific magazine ads overall, Affinity found, on average:

- About half of pass-along readers, or 48%, recalled seeing a specific print ad in one of the magazines. Advertising recall scores skewed only slightly higher among total readers at 52%, which is statistically insignificant
- Brand association scores were comparable for pass-along and total readers: 83% for total readers versus 81% for pass-along readers
- Slightly more than half of pass-along readers at 53% and total readers at 51% took or plan to take action as a direct result of exposure to specific print ads

53%

of pass-along readers take action or plan to take action in response to a specific magazine ad



Overall Ad Recall, Brand Association and Actions Taken: Pass-Along vs. Total Readers

	Pass-Along Readers	Total Readers
Total Recall	48 %	52 %
Brand Association	81	83
Actions Taken	53	51

Source: VISTA Print Effectiveness Rating Service, 2006

Readers of Pass-Along Copies Take Action or Plan to Take Action at Similar Rates as Total Readers

Affinity found that pass-along readers and total readers take action or plan to take action at similar rates as readers overall. For example, approximately one in five pass-along readers say that they will consider purchasing the product or service in the ad being measured (18% for pass-along readers and 19% for total readers), and one in ten from either segment say they have visited or plan to visit the advertiser's website.

Actions Taken or Planned to Take: Pass-Along vs. Total Readers

	Pass-Along Readers	Total Readers
Consider purchasing product/service	18 %	19 %
Have a more favorable opinion	10	12
Gather more information	10	11
Visit advertiser's website	10	10
Visit store, dealer, other location	7	7
Saved ad for future reference	6	6
Recommend product/service	5	5
Purchase product/service	6	7

Source: VISTA Print Effectiveness Rating Service, 2006

Pass-Along Readership Is a Regular, Ongoing Experience

Nearly nine out of ten respondents, or 89%, indicated the magazine that they read was passed along to them on a regular or occasional basis. Nearly as many, or 86%, said they had previous experience reading the pass-along magazine.

Personal Experience with the Pass-Along Copy

It was the first time that this magazine was passed along to me	11 %
This magazine is passed along to me on an occasional basis	54
This magazine is passed along to me on a regular basis	35

Previous Experience Reading a Pass-Along Magazine

Yes, I have read this magazine before	86 %
No, I have never read this magazine before	14

Source: VISTA Print Effectiveness Rating Service, 2006

Pass-Along Reading Prompts Magazine Subscription and Retail Purchases

As further proof of reader action-taking, the Affinity study pointed to a strong correlation between the pass-along readership experience and the likelihood of subscribing to a magazine or buying it at retail. Affinity found that:

- More than two out of three respondents, or 70%, indicated that they were “very” or “somewhat” likely to subscribe to a magazine based on their pass-along experience
- Approximately two out of three respondents said that they were “very” or “somewhat” likely to buy the title at retail

70%
of readers
are “very” or
“somewhat” likely
to subscribe
based on their
pass-along
experience



Likelihood of Subscribing to Magazine Based on Pass-Along Experience

Very likely	12 %
Somewhat likely	58
Not at all likely	29
I already subscribe	1

Likelihood of Buying Magazine at Retail Based on Pass-Along Experience

Very likely	13 %
Somewhat likely	54
Not at all likely	32
I already subscribe	1

Source: VISTA Print Effectiveness Rating Service, 2006

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Pass-Along Reading Prompts Magazine Subscription and Retail Purchases

When it came to making actual purchases, three out of four respondents indicated that they have subscribed to a magazine or bought a magazine at retail that was initially passed along to them.

73%

of readers
subscribed to a
magazine that
was initially
passed along



Subscriptions as a Result of Pass-Along

Yes, I've subscribed to a magazine that was initially passed along to me	73 %
No, I've never subscribed to a magazine that was initially passed along to me	27

Retail Purchases as a Result of Pass-Along

Yes, I've bought a magazine at retail that was initially passed along to me	79 %
No, I've never bought a magazine at retail that was initially passed along to me	21

Source: VISTA Print Effectiveness Rating Service, 2006

Related Resources

The Value of Magazine Readership: Reader Dynamics and Ad Impact on Readers of Paid and Nonpaid Copies shows that how much a consumer pays for a magazine or how the magazine was acquired does not affect the level of magazine engagement or likelihood to act on advertising.

Understanding Magazine Circulation: A Guide for Advertising Buyers and Sellers offers insights on key strategic concepts in circulation to help facilitate communication between advertisers and publishers.

The Magazine Handbook provides facts and figures about how magazines—alone or with other media—can help advertisers achieve marketing goals. The Magazine Handbook includes information such as magazine effectiveness studies, circulation trends and magazines' editorial strengths.

For copies of MPA resources, please contact MPA at promotion@magazine.org or visit our website: www.magazine.org.

For more information about Affinity and the VISTA Print Effectiveness Rating Service, please contact Tom Robinson at 212.922.9582 or visit AffinityResearch.net. For more information about the value of magazine readership, please contact Wayne Eadie, Senior Vice President, Research, Magazine Publishers of America, at weadie@magazine.org or 212-872-3722.

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