

# Targeted Byron Sharp, anyone?

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Now data can make TV more effective, even Byron Sharp, the guru of reaching out to all category users, should welcome more accurate targeting says MediaCom's Global Chief Data Officer David Beale.

Brands and their agencies face a dilemma. On the one hand, evidence from Byron Sharp shows that brands should drive reach of all purchasers in the category as often as possible. What's more, according to effectiveness gurus Field and Binet, TV remains a critical part of the mix for delivering this reach and cost-effective growth.

But at the same time, the ability of TV to deliver the requisite levels of reach has deteriorated rapidly. Over the last five years, the number of Gross Rating Points required to reach 50% of an all adult target audience has risen by 50% in the US, 40% in France and

22% in the UK. Other markets show similar trends, which makes Byron Sharp's vision harder to deliver. There's a reach gap, and it's getting bigger – especially among younger audiences. It's also becoming significantly more expensive to generate that reach.

To fill the gap, some brands have boarded the personalisation-at-scale bandwagon, targeting high-value individuals with personalised messages. But this is an extreme reaction. Huge amounts of money have been invested in the technology and data to deliver such personalisation – but it's questionable whether the investment can be recouped.

Moreover, not all reach is equal. So, while it is possible to fill the reach shortfall with digital activity, it might not be possible to match the impact that TV-driven reach generates – especially at scale.

The dilemma is that TV remains critical, but there's a reach gap and efficiency is diminishing. So, to compensate, we are facing a huge investment in a data-driven solution. Ultimately, this compromises the Byron Sharp/Field and Binet dream and makes it harder to deliver effective reach of category users.

But there is a solution. One that retains the ambition of delivering Byron Sharp's reach strategy addresses the shortfall in TV delivery against the *real* category users and frees up budget to fill any reach gap.

That solution is the intelligent application of data.

By applying the same data we use to activate personalised digital activity at scale to TV we can plan airtime to actual category users instead of demographic proxies for category users. That may sound like a semantic change but it's actually hugely significant.

Fusing our behavioural data with TV viewing data enables us to plan a campaign against specific interests – dog owners, say – instead of BC1 25-45-year-olds. Planning in this way frequently generates in excess of 10% improvements in the cost of reaching the people that Byron Sharp demands we contact: category users.

Data allows us to deliver actual category users, rather than people who look like category users.

Right now, we're testing a new solution in the US called mVideo. It's a GroupM response to this challenge and we hope to start rolling it out globally soon to deliver reach that matters.

Delivering reach more efficiently in this way releases investment for more in targeted video activity – filling the reach gap against a consistently defined target audience. And more than this, by using a single data source to plan activity across digital and TV, we can measure cross-media reach and identify those that have not been exposed to the TV.

Incremental video support can then be directed at these individuals, maximising reach against category users. Thus, Byron Sharp is satisfied, personalisation at scale is delivered, relevance is maximised, and ROI is stabilised.

The same data sets can also be applied to other channels such as radio and outdoor too. This lets us quantify and identify an audience in more detail than traditional media metrics allow and invest more accurately.

These principles can be applied to every sector, ultimately, making TV more powerful and more effective while, for the first-time, reassuring marketers they are actually reaching all (or many more) of their category buyers.

If it's true that TV will become more programmatic in the future, then some of the more technical lessons learned online will be applicable to our most important medium, but that will take time.

For now, it's important to remember that data isn't simply the preserve of digital, it can be applied to every channel and every strategy. The impact is massive, and with smarter targeting strategies, it can help any brand.

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