

Don't Take Your Sp. I. Too Seriously

SAMUEL E. GILL, writing as Research Director of Biow Co., New York, made the following statement in the Oct. 9 BROADCASTING: "... it probably is valid to assume that without a good sponsor identification a program cannot be said to be successful.

Of all the claims made for or against sponsor identification, (the per cent of listeners who can identify correctly sponsor of product) this is one of the most misleading I've ever seen. Gill might just as well have said, "Only blondes are attractive."

Now this is a very nice idea, but strictly a non sequitur. It does not follow.

Preferred by Some

Some blondes are attractive. In fact, many blondes are attractive. However, this does not mean all blondes are attractive, or that you even have to be blonde to be attractive.

Yet, that's the thought behind Mr. Gill's article. He says—in order to be successful a program must have high sponsor identification. In reverse, this implies that low sponsor identification programs are unsuccessful.

I'm not trying to defend low sponsor identification. Like high ratings and the sanctity of the American home, high Sp. I. is most desirable. However, to be successful, a program does not have to have a high sponsor identification.

This is based on two considerations. First, because the reliability of all present day sponsor identification methods and figures is open to question. Second, there are many known and demonstratively successful programs with average and low sponsor identification.

Reliability of Data

Let's look into the reliability of present day data.

(1) Sponsor identification is the least reliable by-product of telephone interviewing. The data are gathered from supplementary questions at the end of the interview, and there is no way of cross-checking the completeness of the answer, nor the thoroughness with which the interviewer has handled the question.

(2) Sponsor identification, at best, is a percent of a percent. And the base, itself, is subject to quite a wide statistical variation. Nor does the accumulation of figures over a long span of time compensate for the unreliability of the original data.

(3) C. E. Hooper says of his own findings, "Even we, who have been reporting sponsor identification for ten years, are at a loss to define its nature specifically." Hooper goes on to say that knowledge of the sponsor is "significant", but he won't commit himself as to the precise value of this knowledge. As recently as a year ago, Hooper seriously considered dropping this part of his regular service.

(4) The use of sponsor identifica-

Programs, Like Blondes, Have Many Fine Traits, Says Expert

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ation figures is considered so risky that agency men have been advised repeatedly that they cannot safely use sponsor identification in the one way they would most like to: Compare the sponsor identification ratings of their programs with those of competing programs.

Hooper, who has been at this work the longest, and has the long-term continuity of when, where, and how all his questions are asked, says, "It is unsound practice to attempt any comparisons of Hooper sponsor identification figures with any other figure except sponsor identification on that same program in preceding and succeeding reports."

In other words, it's OK with the measurement boys to compare the sponsor identification of *The Hour of Charm* in 1939 with its sponsor identification in 1944. But you cannot compare *Hour of Charm's* sponsor identification with say, *Album of Familiar Music* or *John Charles Thomas*. It's the old apples and oranges story of comparing different things.

Sponsor identification figures must be used exclusively to show a trend on the one program to which the figures apply.

In further digging around among the methods, I find that CAB, in gathering data for its "Brand Identification," says that identifying the sponsor of *Duffy's* as Bristol-Myers, instead of Sal-Hepatica, or Minit-Rub is "inadequate." How about that?

So much for a few of the statistical hi-jinks of this mysterious sponsor identification that Sam Gill says you must have for a program to be successful.

Daytime Radio

Have you ever considered radio's daytime shows—the five-a-week workhorses that move goods off the shelves, or else get moved off the air themselves?

SOME research specialists like Sp. I. (sponsor identification), and lots of it. Others prefer sales. But like blondes, it's pretty much a matter of choice, says Harry Woodworth. Aroused by an article in the Oct. 9 'Broadcasting' by Samuel E. Gill, Biow's research director, Mr. Woodworth offers his ideas of just how much stock should be placed in the controversial Sp. I. data served up by the research firms. You've got to have Sp. I., and plenty of it, Mr. Gill claimed. Now Mr. Woodworth arises to take a few pot shots at a fellow practitioner of the subtle art of measuring programs and their impact on audiences.

According to the latest sponsor identification figures available (Sept. 8-14 Hooper) the average Sp. I. of the top ten daytime programs is 46.1. According to this average, less than half the big daytime audience to the top ten programs can identify the sponsor.

Compare this with the 80 ratings which Gill implies are corollary to sales-success.

Program	Sponsor Identification	Years on the Air
Right to Happiness	52.1	5
Ma Perkins	66.9	10
Our Gal, Sunday	25.3	7
When a Girl Marries	47.1	5
Backstage Wife	25.6	9
Stella Dallas	28.8	6
Breakfast at Sardi's (Kellogg)	70.1	1
Kate Smith Speaks	58.7	6
Big Sister	67.5	3
Young Widder Brown	19.3	6

Of the 67 daytime programs whose sponsor identifications are listed in this September Daytime Hooper report, the average Sp. I. is 41.7%.

From all the statistical gymnastics and double-talk Mr. Gill set forth—saying that of X number of programs starting with a Sp. I. of Y or less, only Z number ever reached such-and-such a rating, I gather he feels that a program has to have the sponsor identification of a *Take It or Leave It* or a *Lux Radio Theatre* before being "successful."

Not Even LSMFT

What would he say about the daytime serial, *David Harum*? This program has been on the air nine years for Bab-O, which isn't bad. *David Harum* is the major advertising expenditure of the Bab-O company and has long been. According to the Duane Jones agency, in nine years with little or no additional help, Bab-O has risen to be first in dollar volume in the cleanser market. Yet *David Harum's* sponsor identification is 38.2. Its Hooper rating of September is 2.3.

Slightly more than one-third of

2.3 audience (according to what the telephone interviewers get over the wire) connects *David Harum*, the kindly old country philosopher, with Bab-O. Yet, why do people ask for Bab-O at the stores in sufficient quantity to make Bab-O the number one cleanser? Harum doesn't ask \$64 questions. He doesn't even say LSMFT.

What would he say about *Our Gal, Sunday*—third ranking daytime show with a published sponsor knowledge of 25.3? By the books, only one-quarter of the audience even suspects that *Our Gal* is being kept by American Home Products for Anacin. Yet, she's been on the air for seven years, apparently selling enough Anacin to make a good investment of an \$18,500 weekly time and talent cost.

Upwards of one million dollars is spent each week for time and talent on daytime radio. Is all this "wasted" on a public only 41.7% aware of who sponsors what?

What about the half-hour evening dramatic program* with a rating of 6.1 and a sponsor identification of 4.7 that pulled 117,000 requests for a cookbook? These requests were sent by listeners directly to the sponsor. If you care to sit down with pencil and paper, you'll find that statistically this is a larger audience than knew who sponsored the program. And this happened in the summer when women usually aren't thinking about spending the afternoon over a hot stove. Apparently some hinges are loose somewhere if you take sponsor identification figures as a literal index of how many listeners know the program's sponsor.

Take a look at the average identification ratings for the biggest advertisers in daytime radio. Figures shown below are the per cent of those interviewed who could correctly identify sponsor or product.

Sponsor	No. Daytime Series per Week	Average Index*
Procter & Gamble	14	50.7
General Mills	8	56.9
General Foods	6	41.3
Sterling Drug	6	22.1
American Home Products	4	22.1
Lever Brothers	3	64.4
Standard Brands	2	21.3

*C. E. Hooper, Sept. 8-14, 1944

They Mean Business

Big spenders in daytime radio are what you might call radio's "sophisticates." They aren't on the air to please themselves, their friends or their dealers. They are on the air for one purpose—to sell merchandise. Probably most daytime advertisers don't listen to their own programs, and if they did it's doubtful if they'd like them. Drug-gists and grocers are not daytime serial fans.

It is apparent that the length of time these companies have kept their shows on the air and the per cent of their total budget devoted to daytime radio indicates the programs must be successful, must have sold the goods. They have ac-

*Name supplied upon request

(Continued on page 30)