

Understanding Attention in Digital Advertising

What is attention?

We all know what attention means, but how is it used in the context of advertising?

Attention is a consumer looking at or listening to an ad at the time they were exposed to it. A typical base measure for attention is time, and attention measures can be used in different media contexts such as video or audio.

Why is attention worth measuring?



Consumers are exposed to 4,000 messages a day and spend 3 hours 32 minutes online¹. But how do we really know what's had an impact?



Measuring attention helps you to understand what your customers are making a conscious choice to look at and gives you certainty around whether or not an ad has been seen. This is also known as selective attention and is directly linked to top-of-mind awareness.



Capturing attention metrics provides valuable insight, beyond measuring just whether an ad is in view or not. In fact, attention is 7x more effective than viewability at predicting awareness and 6x more effective at predicting recall².



Attention focuses on the quality of your customers' ad experience and is as important as understanding quantity measures like reach.



Ad attention isn't a new concept – advertisers have been aware of it for decades – however the technology we use to measure attention has become far more advanced in recent years.



Attention is a versatile metric that can be used across different formats, such as video and audio. It also has the potential to play an important role in really understanding consumer engagement with newer digital formats in the future, such as gaming, CTV and AR/VR.

¹ UKOM endorsed data from Ipsos iris Online Measurement Service, July 2022.

² [Attention Time: Redefining how marketers measure and optimize ads in real time.](#)

Attention drives results at different stages of the purchase funnel and delivers real-world outcomes

Below is a summary of studies showing the impact of attention across the purchase funnel. Whilst these use varying methodologies to measure attention, which you can find out more about [here](#), they are all showing that the more consumer attention your communication yields, the more likely you'll achieve shifts along the purchase funnel.

Across the funnel

- Dentsu's Attention Economy³ work, which included eye tracking, reveals that when a consumer chooses to view an ad, it results in a positive significant impact on brand lift metrics.
- A DoubleVerify study which uses engagement metrics such as mouse motion, shows that optimising to ads with a higher attention score increased campaign performance across both the upper and lower funnel, e.g. creating a 5% increase in purchase intent.

Lower funnel

- Research by Mail Metro Media⁴ using eye tracking, showed that the more attention an ad receives, the higher the level of brand consideration and purchase intent.
- Ebuiqity's research shows that the cost of buying 1,000 seconds of attention (aCPM) strongly correlates with greater ROI.
- Nielsen showed that Attention Impressions have been over 180x more correlated with Nielsen ROI than versus Viewability alone.

Make advertising more sustainable by reducing digital advertising wastage

There is a strong link between higher quality adverts that drive greater attention and sustainability. An advertising ecosystem that works towards attention, as opposed to viewability, will in theory be less cluttered and generate fewer emissions per page. Higher attention creatives will also allow advertisers to achieve more with less, resulting in less wastage whilst maintaining/maximising return on ad spend⁵.

What to do next?

Find out more about the different ways of measuring attention [here](#).

³ [Dentsu – The Attention Economy](#)

⁴ [Mail Metro Media – Centre for Attention](#)

⁵ [Teads Target Higher Attention and Fewer Impressions For More Sustainable Media](#)