

# PERSUASIVE POWER OF OUTDOOR MEDIA

Dr K B Sridevi <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor – School of Management, Sri Krishna College of Engineering and Technology, Coimbatore-641008, Tamilnadu, India

## ABSTRACT

*Today's outdoor media of advertising is a fine refinement of the traditional way of conveying a message to a mass of target audience. Outdoor Advertising Association of America (OAAA) has consolidated the different outdoor media into four main categories as Billboard, Street furniture, Transit advertising and Alternative advertising. The researcher has taken an attempt to measure the effectiveness of outdoor media in Coimbatore city in the sense of its media vehicle attractiveness to the people, location attractiveness, and attractiveness of the ad elements and the influence of the outdoor media in the buying behavior of the target audience. The study has proved that the outdoor media is so powerful in attracting the target audience by its media vehicles, location, ad elements and influencing the buying behavior of the respondents. The findings expose the persuasive power of outdoor media towards all the respondents irrespective of the demographic factors such as their age, gender and area of residence. The attractiveness of the Outdoor Media may persuade the advertisers to be the champion of outdoor media irrespective of the product or service they deal with. Thus, Outdoor Media is so powerful in persuading both, the advertisers as well as their target audience.*

**Keywords:** *Outdoor Media, Billboard, Transit Advertising, Alternative Advertising, Buying Behavior*

## INTRODUCTION

Outdoor advertisement is the traditional type of advertising, the usage of signs in advertising began with the days of ancient Rome and Greece. They used the signs to spot the location of commercial establishments. Traders in those days used sign outside their trade places and along the way to their establishments as mean of mass communication. Today's outdoor media of advertising is a fine refinement of the traditional way of conveying a message to a mass of target audience. The modern outdoor include outdoor advertising in several forms such as posters, billboards, hoardings, non standardized signs, such as road side signs highway advertising, and transit advertising placed on public, and private transit vehicles, and at rail, bus and air terminals.

Outdoor Advertising Association of America (OAAA) has consolidated the different outdoor media into four main categories and those are:

1. Billboard – traditional out of home advertising format, which we normally see along the roadsides
2. Street furniture – formats such as bus shelters, mall kiosks and telephone booth advertising
3. Transit advertising – advertisements placed on anything which moves such as taxis, autos and buses
4. Alternative advertising – advertisements in stadiums, rest areas, petrol filling stations and other non-traditional formats in such a way to address the target audience in the unexpected places

Outdoor media offers flexible geographic selectivity, durable ad life, reaching a large group of people and facilitates psychodelic displays of the product, trademark and slogans. However, outdoor media also has its own limitations such as brevity, non-selectivity of audience, blind spot and the challenge of measuring the effectiveness of such ads.

Effective advertising always begins by engaging in competent advertising research. Hence, the researcher has taken an attempt to measure the effectiveness of outdoor media in the sense of its media vehicle attractiveness to the people, location attractiveness, and impact of the ad elements and the influence of the outdoor media in the buying behavior of the target audience.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Tripti Dhote<sup>1</sup> (2006)** analyzed the impact of outdoor advertising in reaching the audience out-of-home. The research identified that expensiveness of television and print media, heterogeneity of the market and changing customer lifestyles are the major reasons for the success of the outdoor advertising.

**Vineet Tandon and Vikas Khandelwal<sup>2</sup> (2006)** studied about the drastic changes happening in the field of outdoor advertising. They identified that the various factors driving the growth of OOH media are increasing ad-spends, clutter of tradition media, increasing working population, aptness in rural marketing and local advertising. They concluded that outdoor advertising needs sustainable growth to be recognized as an industry.

**Saravanan I B<sup>3</sup> (2007)** emphasized that Indian consumers are spending more time by staying out of home for commercial purposes and recreation. Hence, the press and electronic media are less penetrating and this is paving a way for the outdoor media to capture the attention of the large group of people. The advertisers are turning towards Out-of-Home advertising. Matrix video walls, building wraps and vehicular graphics are acting as options to the advertisers for inviting consumers with brief notice launch and positioning campaigns.

**Ullas P Ramakrishnan<sup>4</sup> (2009)** stated that outdoor advertising has grown over the last two decades to be a main medium for launch, positioning and repositioning of products and services. The study has also quoted that the technological developments has turned outdoor advertising into Out-of-Home advertising (OOH).

**Rashmi C P<sup>5</sup> (2011)** analyzed the pattern and trends of OOH in India and revealed that first world countries dominate the minds of the advertisers. The article cited various national and international case studies and presented how western ideas influence the minds and strategies of Indian market.

**Rick T Wilson and Brian D. Till<sup>6</sup> (2011)** found the growth and success of outdoor advertising is in large part due to the medium's ability to reach an increasingly indistinct and mobile consumer. This study investigated the effect of the environment in which outdoor advertising has on the attitudes, beliefs and purchased intent of the advertised brand. The results suggested that the background environment does not impact advertising effectiveness.

## METHODOLOGY

The researcher has designed a descriptive study with a sample size of hundred and forty. The samples were chosen on a convenience sampling method and the responses have been collected by survey method with a structured questionnaire. The area selected for the study is Coimbatore city. The study is based on both, primary data and secondary data. Percentage analysis, Weighted Average, Chi-square test and Pearson Correlation are used for analysis and interpretation of the data collected through questionnaire.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To measure the outdoor media vehicle attractiveness to the respondents
- To analyze the attractiveness of ad elements to the respondents
- To study the attractiveness of locations of the outdoor advertisements
- To examine the influencing level of the outdoor media in the respondents' buying behavior

## HYPOTHESES TO BE TESTED

- There is no significant association between gender of the respondents & the influence level of outdoor media in their buying behavior.
- There is no significant association between the residence location of the respondents & the influence level of outdoor media in their buying behavior.
- There is no significant relationship between the age of the respondents & the influence level of outdoor media in their buying behavior.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table 1:** Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic factors	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	92	66
Female	48	34
Total	140	100

Age ( in years)		
20-30	96	69
30-40	4	2
Above 40	40	29
Total	140	100
Area of Residence		
North	32	23
South	60	43
East	24	17
West	24	17
Total	140	100

**Inference** The Table 1 explains the demographic profile wise distribution of the respondents. Gender, Age and Area of residence are taken as the three main demographic factors for the study. Majority of the respondents, that is 66 per cent are male respondents and 34 per cent are female respondents. 69 per cent of them belong to the age group of 20 to 30 years, 29 per cent of them are above the age group of 40 and 2 per cent of them are between 30 and 40 years. 43 per cent of respondents belong to north side of Coimbatore city, followed by 23 per cent of respondents belong to south, 17 per cent of them belong to east and 17 per cent of them belong to west.

**Table 2:** Attractiveness of the Media Vehicles to the Respondents

Media Vehicles	MA ( W=5)		A ( W=4)		N ( W=3)		LA ( W=2)		NA ( W=1)		$\sum WX$ $\sum W$	Rank
	X1	WX1	X2	WX2	X3	WX3	X4	WX4	X5	WX5		
Wall Painting	28	140	28	112	28	84	24	48	32	32	27.73	V
Glow Sign boards	64	320	28	112	16	48	20	40	20	20	36	I
Bill board	32	160	44	176	28	84	8	16	28	28	30.93	II
Panel Ad	12	60	12	48	28	84	56	112	32	32	22.4	VI
Hoardings	36	180	28	112	12	36	32	64	32	32	28.26	III
Bus Stop Shelter Ad	24	120	28	112	36	108	28	56	24	24	28	IV

MA–Most Attractive, A –Attractive, N-Neutral, LA- Least Attractive and NA-Not Attractive

**Inference** From the above table, it is clear that majority of respondents are attracted by Glow Sign Boards and it is followed by Bill boards, Hoardings, Bus stop shelter Ad, Wall painting and Panel ad respectively. Hence, the advertisers may focus more on Glow Sign Boards, which will attract majority of the target audience particularly during the evening times.

**Table 3:** Attractiveness of Ad Elements to the Respondents

Ad elements	MA ( W=5)		A ( W=4)		N( W=3)		LA( W=2)		NA ( W=1)		$\sum WX$ $\sum W$	Rank
	X1	WX1	X2	WX2	X3	WX3	X4	WX4	X5	WX5		
Font color	64	320	32	128	28	84	8	16	8	8	37.07	V
Font size	40	200	68	272	16	48	12	24	4	4	36.53	VI
Font style	68	340	56	224	8	24	4	8	4	4	40	III
Icons	36	180	68	272	28	84	4	8	4	4	36.53	VI
Photographs	100	500	24	96	12	36	4	8	0	0	42.67	I
Slogans	76	380	36	144	20	60	8	16	0	0	40	III

Brand ambassador	88	440	32	128	20	60	0	0	0	0	41.87	II
Neon light	44	220	64	256	32	96	0	0	0	0	38.13	IV
Electronic data	32	160	68	272	36	108	4	8	0	0	36.53	VI

MA–Most Attractive, A –Attractive, N-Neutral, LA- Least Attractive and NA-Not Attractive

**Inference** The table 3 vividly presents that the ad element, Photographs is the top most attracting ad element to the respondents and it is followed by the ad elements Brand ambassador, Font Style, Neon light and font color respectively. Whereas the ad elements, Font size, Icons and Electronic data are attracting the respondents at the same level and the respondents have ranked these elements as same. Hence, the advertisers may emphasis on the photographs and brand ambassador in the outdoor advertising to get the attention of the target audience.

**Table 4:** Attractiveness of the Outdoor Advertisements Locations

Locations	MA ( W=5)		A( W=4)		N( W=3)		LA( W=2)		NA ( W=1)		$\frac{\sum WX}{\sum W}$	Rank
	X1	WX1	X2	WX2	X3	WX3	X4	WX4	X5	WX5		
Roadside	56	280	20	80	36	108	24	48	4	4	34.67	I
Shopping areas	8	40	60	240	28	84	32	64	12	12	29.33	III
Bus stops	48	240	28	112	28	84	28	56	8	8	33.33	II
Behind Vehicles	16	80	24	96	32	96	28	56	40	40	24.53	IV

MA–Most Attractive, A –Attractive, N-Neutral, LA- Least Attractive and NA-Not Attractive

**Inference** Table 4 depicts that the Roadside is the most attracting location to majority of the respondents and it is followed by Bus stops, Shopping areas and Behind vehicles respectively. As the Bus stops and Shopping areas are usually crowded locations, the marketers may prefer to have the Roadside locations for installing their outdoor advertisements.

**Table 5:** Influencing Level of the Outdoor Media in the Respondents’ Buying Behavior

Level of Influence	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly influencing	24	17.14
Influencing	60	42.85
Neutral	48	34.28
Not influencing	8	5.71
Highly not influencing	0	0
Total	140	100

**Inference** Majority of the respondents, 42.85 per cent have accepted that outdoor media influences their buying behavior. 34.28 per cent of them have marked their opinion as neutral, as this segment is not ignoring the influence of the outdoor media, they can also be targeted by the advertisers. 17.14 per cent of the respondents buying behavior are highly influenced by the outdoor advertisements. Only 5.71 per cent of the respondents’ buying behavior is not influenced by the outdoor ads. None of the respondents have marked the influencing level as highly not influencing; hence there is greater scope for the advertisers to concentrate on outdoor media to influence the buying behavior of the target audience.

**Table 6:** Cross Table Considering Association between the Respondents’ Gender and Influence Level of Outdoor Media in Their Buying Behavior

Influence Level \ Gender	HI	I	N	NI	HNI	Total
Male	12	40	32	8	0	92
Female	12	20	14	0	0	48
Total	24	60	48	8	0	140

HI-Highly Influencing; I-Influencing; N-Neutral; NI-Not Influencing; HNI-Highly Not Influencing

**Inference** From the Table 6, it is very clear that majority of the respondents irrespective of the gender discrimination are influenced by the Outdoor Media, while making their buying decision. This result gives the need for checking the statistical significance of the association between the respondents' gender and influencing level of the outdoor media in their buying behavior. Thus, Chi-Square has been computed to statistically check the significance of the association between these two variables and the hypotheses are formulated as follows.

**Null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** There is no significant association between gender of the respondents and the influencing level of the Outdoor Media in their buying behavior.

**Alternate hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** There is significant association between gender of the respondents and the influencing level of the Outdoor Media in their buying behavior.

**Table 7:** Chi - Square Test for Association between Gender and Influencing Level of the Outdoor Media

Calculated value of $\chi^2$	Table value of $\chi^2$	Inference
1.75 *	9.488	H <sub>0</sub> is accepted

d.f. = 4                      p > 0.05, Not significant

d.f.: Degrees of freedom, \* indicates that the  $\chi^2$  value is not significant at 5 per cent level with 4 degrees of freedom.

The results of Table 7 reveal that the null hypothesis is accepted, since the calculated value is less than Table value. Therefore, there is no statistically significant association between the respondents' gender and the influencing level of the outdoor media in their buying behavior. Thus, the outdoor media is influencing all the respondents irrespective of their gender.

**Table 8:** Cross Table Considering Association between the Area of Residence of the Respondents and Influence Level of Outdoor Media in Their Buying Behavior

Influence Level Residence	Influence Level					Total
	HI	I	N	NI	HNI	
North	8	8	16	0	0	32
South	8	28	16	8	0	60
West	4	8	12	0	0	24
East	4	16	4	0	0	24
Total	24	60	48	8	0	140

**HI**-Highly Influencing; **I**-Influencing; **N**-Neutral; **NI**-Not Influencing; **HNI**-Highly Not Influencing

**Inference** Among the respondents belonging to Northern and Western parts, majority of them have neutral opinion about the influencing role of the Outdoor media in their buying behavior. Whereas, buying behavior of majority of the respondents reside in Southern and Western parts are influenced by the Outdoor media. This result gives the need for checking the statistical significance of the association between the respondents' area of residence and influencing level of the outdoor media in their buying behavior. Thus, Chi-Square has been computed to statistically check the significance of the association between these two variables and the hypotheses are formulated as follows.

**Null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** There is no significant association between the area of residence of the respondents and the influence level of outdoor media in their buying behavior.

**Alternate hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** There is significant association between the area of residence of the respondents and the influence level of outdoor media in their buying behavior.

**Table 9:** Chi - Square Test for Association between Area of Residence and Influencing Level of the Outdoor Media

Calculated value of $\chi^2$	Table value of $\chi^2$	Inference
5.38 *	21.026	H <sub>0</sub> is accepted

d.f. = 12                      p > 0.05, Not significant

d.f.: Degrees of freedom, \* indicates that the  $\chi^2$  value is not significant at 5 per cent level with 12 degrees of freedom.

The results of Table 9 reveal that the null hypothesis is accepted, since the calculated value is less than Table value. Therefore, there is no statistically significant association between the respondents' area of residence and the influencing level of the outdoor media in their buying behavior. Thus, the outdoor media is influencing all the respondents irrespective of their residence location.

**Table 10:** Cross Table Considering Association between the Age of the Respondents and Influence Level of Outdoor Media in Their Buying Behavior

Influence level Age in Years	HI	I	N	NI	HNI	Total
20-30	16	40	32	8	0	96
30-40	0	0	4	0	0	4
Above 40	8	20	12	0	0	40
Total	24	60	48	8	0	140

**HI**-Highly Influencing; **I**-Influencing; **N**-Neutral; **NI**-Not Influencing; **HNI**-Highly Not Influencing

**Inference** Table 10 shows that majority of the respondents belong to the age group of 20-30 years and above 40 years are influenced by the outdoor media. Whereas, the respondents belong to the age group of 30 -40 years are having neutral opinion about the influencing level of the outdoor media in their buying behavior. This result presents the need for checking the significant relationship between age of the respondents and the influencing level of the outdoor media in their buying behavior. For testing the same, Correlation analysis has been computed and for which the hypotheses are formulated as follows.

**Null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ):** There is no significant relationship between the age of the respondents and the influence level of outdoor media in their buying behavior.

**Alternate hypothesis ( $H_1$ ):** There is significant relationship between the age of the respondents and the influence level of outdoor media in their buying behavior.

**Table 11:** Pearson's Correlation Co-efficient for the Relationship between Age and Influencing Level of the Outdoor Media

S.No	Factors	Age	Stat result
1.	Influencing level of the Outdoor Media	0.427	N.S

P >0.05; N.S: Not Significant.

Table 11 confirms a positive correlation between age and influencing level of the outdoor advertising media in the buying decision of the respondents, ( $r = 0.427$ ) that is as age of the respondents increases their buying behavior is more influenced by the outdoor media. However, the mentioned relationship is not statistically significant since the 'r' value is not significant at 0.05 levels. Hence, the outdoor media is influencing all the respondents irrespective of their age.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL USAGE OF OUTDOOR MEDIA

- The advertisers may focus more on Glow Sign Boards, which will attract majority of the target audience particularly during the evening times. Such media vehicle will act like an effective stimulus in getting the attention of the target audience.
- The illustrations and images are rated as the most attracting ad elements; hence advertisers may be more creative in the application of these ad elements to hook up the attention of the target audience.
- The advertisers may avoid the most populated locations such as bus stops and shopping areas to locate their outdoor advertisements. Rather, they can prefer roadsides, which will have moving population and hence clogging can be avoided.
- As there is greater scope for the advertisers in applying the outdoor media as a strong influencer for the respondents' buying behavior irrespective of their demographic differences, outdoor media may be given due importance. Outdoor media may help the advertiser to overcome the challenge of clutter in other Medias.
- The advertisers may bring in more creative ad elements into the Panel ads, in order to increase its attractiveness to the target audience.

## CONCLUSION

Outdoor Media is one of the most prominent media to move the target audience across the AIDA levels. In the present perspective, the customers' changing lifestyle, expensiveness of print and electronic media, clutter in other media, distinctiveness and effectiveness of outdoor media induces the advertisers to be the champion of outdoor media irrespective of the product or service they deal with. Thus, Outdoor Media is so powerful in persuading both, the advertisers as well as the target audience.

## REFERENCES

- Tripti Dhote (2006), 'Captiv(e)ating the Audience Out of Home', Advertising Express, August 2006.
- Vineet Tandon and Vikas Khandelwal (2006), 'Outdoor Advertising', Advertising Express, September 2006.
- Saravanan I B (2007), 'Out-of-Home Advertising in India: Trends and Experiences', Amicus-ICGAI, ISBN -13: 9788178815794.
- Rick T Wilson and Brian D. Till (2011), 'Effects of outdoor advertising: Does location matter?' Psychology & Marketing, Vol.28, No.9, P.909-933
- Ullas P Ramakrishnan (2009), 'Out-of-Home Advertising: A New Dawn', Advertising Express, July 2009.
- Rashmi C P (2011), 'Present Scenario of Outdoor Advertising in India: New Emerging Trends', Advertising Express, March 2011
- <http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-outdoor-advertising.html>
- Wells, Moriarty & Burnett (2007), 'Advertising, Principles & Practice', Pearson Education, 7th Edition, 2007.

