



UNDERSTANDING AUDIENCES

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THE BIG PICTURE

- Mass media have typically used several approaches to defining their target audience.
- Researchers use ...
 - Demographic categories
 - Psychographic categories
 - Survey research
 - Focus groups
 - In-depth surveys
 - Personal interviews
 - Other tools

DEMOGRAPHICS

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- Tell you about audience members for a medium using characteristics that can be aggregated across those individuals in a numerical fashion using categories.
- Used in public opinion polling and marketing.
- Why are they important?
 - Knowing about and finding the right demographic for a program/product equals \$\$\$

DEMOGRAPHIC CRITERIA

- Sex/gender
- Age
- Race
- Education
- Religion
- Political affiliation
- Media use habits
- Economic status and/or income
- Size of family
- Marital status
- Geographic location

DEMOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

- U.S. Census data
- Google! (And other search engines)
- Database systems (online and in libraries)
- StarchResearch.com
 - For firms doing proprietary research on audiences for clients (expensive!)

DEMOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

➤ Comscore

- Sophisticated tools for analysis of audiences online
- Available for businesses at professional-level charges

➤ Nielsen

- Primarily television, but now other media as well
- “Ratings” and “shares” using in-home systems and viewing diaries
- Indicates when TV is turned on and to which program

WHY USE DEMOGRAPHICS?

- A company that sells high-end recreational vehicles (RVs) would want to know roughly how many people are at or nearing retirement age ... and also what percentage of them will be able to afford the product.
- This information will help the company decide how much capital to allocate to production and advertising.

The down side:

**Demographics reduce people
to a cultural stereotype.**

PSYCHOGRAPHICS



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- Researchers analyze the psychological make-up or “what goes on inside people’s heads” to gain more insight into value systems.
- This study — often a specialty of polling and attitudinal research firms — is called psychographics.

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

- Psychographic studies gather information about lifestyles, activities, attitudes, motivation.
- Harder to gather and analyze this kind of information than demographic info.
- Most psychographic studies are developed by private companies for paying clients.
- The categories developed in the most famous of these studies — the VALs system— provide you with a useful tool and a different framework for thinking about audience members.

VALS

- Consumer psychographic system developed by SRI International.
- Classifies consumers into eight categories based on extensive testing.
- Segments the groups based on their self-orientation (to principles, status or action) and their resources (from least to most).
- VALS Types: Innovators, Thinkers, Believers, Achievers, Strivers, Experiencers, Makers, Survivors

OTHER PSYCHOGRAPHIC SYSTEMS

- Tapestry segmentation
 - Uses both demographic and psychographic information
 - Structures reports on audiences on a geographic basis.

HOW TO GET PSYCHOGRAPHICS

- Pay for them:
 - Prism, VALS, Tapestry, etc.
- Use your social media accounts to see preferences
- Interview people!
- Observe your customers and listen

COMPARISON



WEIGHT LOSS: DEMOGRAPHICS

- Male
- Age: 45-65
- Married, with children
- Dealing with issues of weight gain, diabetes, lack of energy
- Household income \$100K+

WEIGHT LOSS: PSYCHOGRAPHICS

- Concerned with health and appearance
- Wants a healthy lifestyle, but has little time
- Enjoys going online in the evenings
- Tends to favor quality over economy
- Values time with a small group of friends