M.R.S Media Research Conference 2011 – May 12 2011

If I had 300 friends on Facebook – I could ask them if they watched something last night. It would hopefully produce a response and a therefore a number. And that number would mean something.

But depending upon who my friends were, depending upon who responded and when, depending of what they self-defined as watching, depending upon what I did with their answers – all these would affect the figure that I ended up with, what it meant, and whether it was any reflection of what was going on in the wider world – or just a snapshot of something from my friends.

In the modern world – it's possible for anyone to do very quick and dirty surveys. Some may even be helpful for particular purposes - but only so long as they don't become misunderstood for what they are, or have credibility attributed above what is deserved.

It is possible for anyone to create a measure of viewing – one question would be is it any good or not? And another would be – do I know what it means, including what it represents?

Understanding these matters are fairly basic principles of Market Research – but some of the misuse of data, surveys, creation of sound bites and PR spin – it's sometimes questionable whether this is now hidden meaning in some organisations.

And exactly the same kinds of issues, as well as perhaps some new ones, can confront supposedly 'perfect' data measures from internet supplied content.

It's possible to produce a whole lot of numbers, but the meaning of them is often diluted, mis-interpreted, not known, or overlooked.

When numbers are so easy to produce on one level – it's perhaps important to be increasingly questioning of what they actually mean.

At BARB we remain cautious of jumping onto bandwagons. Or to say it in a more measured way - of 'introducing things without a reasonable degree of questioning or testing.'

Tracking viewing via PCs is a complicated and under-developed field – a developing field but certainly under-developed.

There's a huge danger, an increasing danger, an active danger that output from a system is taken to mean what people would like it to mean – rather than what it actually does mean.

BARB is aware of, has evaluated, or is still considering, the features of several techniques. They all have many 'promises' but the 'provens' have been far more difficult to establish.

One current main hope – and this time we believe that it could be a good hope – is with Kantar Media's Virtual Meter which we have been field testing since last summer.
We know it won't be a perfect measurement technique – I'm quite sure that there is nothing that is in this field – but we do believe that we've seen positive signs of its potential.

We've built a small test panel – specifically with the purpose of understanding the issues for adopting this technique onto the main BARB panel.

BARB

BARB is a not-for-profit industry body
- **Underwritten by major broadcasters and the IPA**
- **With Board representation from ISBA**

I'll go into that in a little more detail shortly – but let's reflect for a moment what BARB is and what we're about, and where it may make sense for us to go.

Well, one of the most important things about BARB is that we're not an overtly commercial organisation.
We're not-for-profit, we're an organisation owned and governed by a substantial proportion of the industry we serve – we're there to deliver consensus needs.

We are unashamedly a survey organisation with our main reporting to the industry currently based around a viewing panel that was newly established across 2008 and 2009 and which has been maintained with some rigour since then.

Our main purpose as simply as I can put it, is In-home viewing measurement, via TV Sets, to Live TV Broadcasts, and associated time-shift or catch-up viewing, which precisely matches an originating broadcast in the previous 7 days.

BARB

BARB Core Service:

In-home viewing

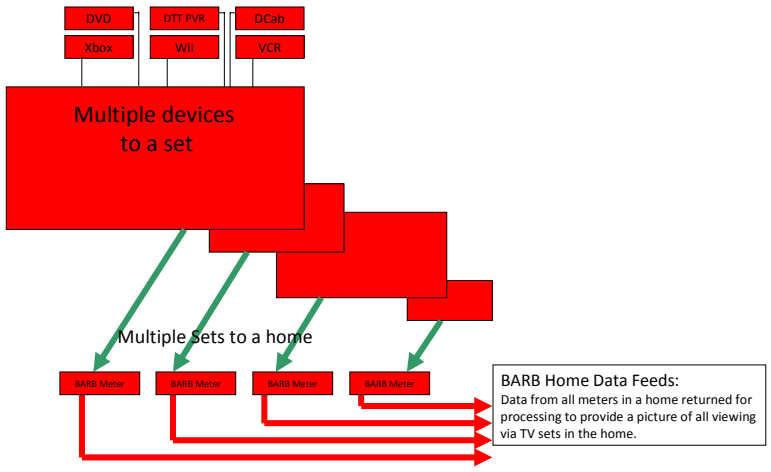
via TV Sets

Live Broadcasts

Associated Catch-up

7-Days

BARB



The measurement includes viewing via all sorts of devices attached to the TV set, and incorporates viewing from all TV sets in the home where they are used for viewing broadcast television output.

It's a huge system that reports daily to the industry.

A great strength of the system is the required standard of its operation, and scrutiny that it comes under.

We are pleased with the quality of the BARB panel that was built over the last few years, its characteristics, and the way that it has been able to be maintained so far – with better participation rates, lower churn, and substantially more functional system dynamics for maintaining the panel. This gives us a better balanced and more representative panel.

It's a panel that delivers our core service every day – but we have also been investigating the possibilities of enabling the BARB panel to provide more to the industry.

To extend reporting – to cover some viewing beyond our '7-day' core service definition, and beyond that 'TV set' definition.

A number of initiatives have been active for some time to explore the feasibility of travelling in these 2 directions – with decisions to be taken soon about whether we will expand our remit for reporting purposes.

Extending BARB Reporting - is substantially dependent upon whether the initiatives that we have been pursuing deliver success, and would provide something of value. Regardless - the core BARB service will still be important to the industry whether or not these additional reporting options are pursued. But I hope that they are – because I believe that the industry will benefit, and potentially avoid some major pitfalls in relation to making sense of other types of data.

So briefly: about viewing beyond 7 days –
Lots of content is made available for extended periods of time via VOD services, and people can hang on to their PVR recordings in a more active way for longer. Where these services are viewed via a TV set – BARB is capturing peoplemeter statements that relate to this content, but it is not part of our reporting definition to the industry.

By adding an additional process, stand-alone VOD material could be identified and reported in a different way and in a different set of output – based on viewing to minutes within a content asset, rather than viewing to a date and time of broadcast.

This is capability that now exists in pilot form – so we are able to track viewing across a period of time to content assets that are specifically lodged in a reference database.

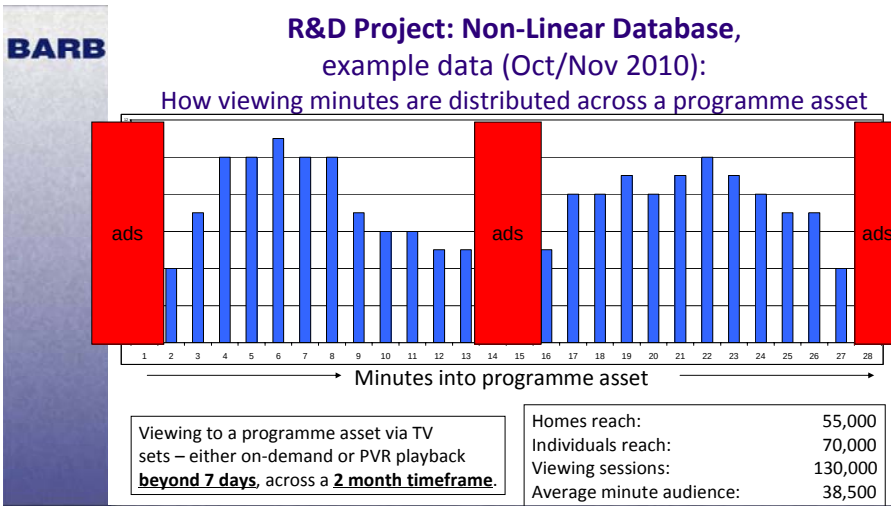
Our expectation is that content providers may wish to place either

- what they perceive as their best content offerings to be tracked individually,
- a whole collection of programming that is being made available in series stacks,
- or a selection of their offerings which make up a genre proposition.

Then through additional BARB reporting we would be expecting to report who was watching, for how long, and be able to relate this to other viewing either occurring on the same TV sets or other TV sets in the home.

We're experimenting with what it's going to be sensible to report, and whether or not this reporting can also identify which commercials have been viewed – mindful of the potential of individually targeted commercials.

This chart is an example from one of those bits of content – which has been tracked from day 8 after broadcast, onwards over a two month period and related to the number of minutes into the content asset.

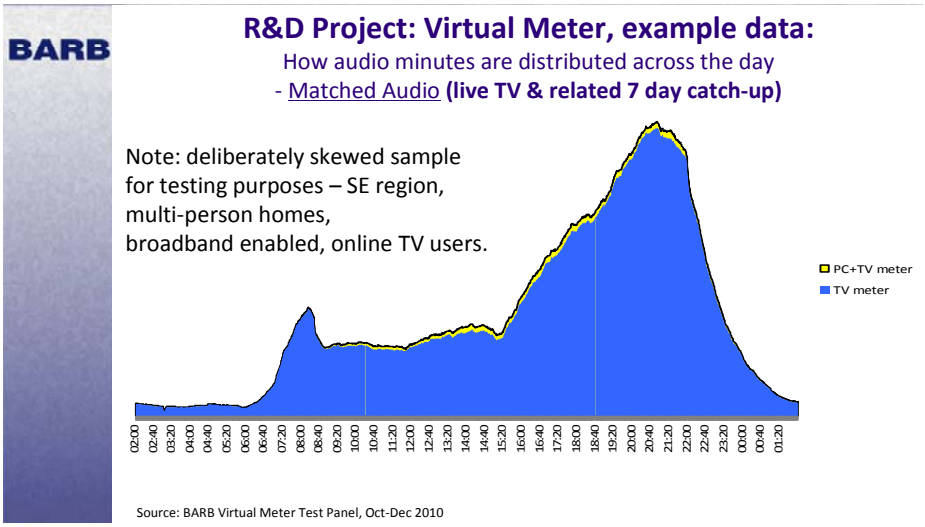


This particular example, which is actually one of the most viewed pieces of content that we have tracked, is nevertheless fairly small. An approximation to homes reach would suggest 55,000; to individuals reach 70,000; to viewing sessions (perhaps the nearest to 'streams started' or 'requests') of 130,000 – and a programme content average audience of 38,500 in this particular case.

The range of these numbers also highlight the importance of definition and knowing what the numbers mean.

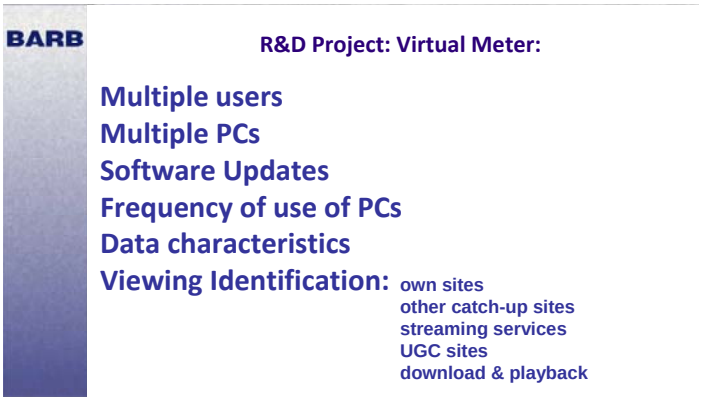
In terms of viewing beyond the TV Set – our focus has been on the Virtual Meter Test – I must very strongly caveat what we're doing - it is a project to understand if it is possible to incorporate the PC & Laptop Meter Technique into the main BARB panel.

The Test is not an attempt to provide a specific quantification of the amount of viewing – more so because it is being conducted on a deliberately skewed sample.



But this chart indicates that the project has been able to return and make sense of data – that we've been able to align some viewing data from TV meters in blue, with PC meters in the same households -the yellow.

The test panel has been a hugely important process, both bringing answers and raising new questions. It's given us a good amount of insight into the issues involved with monitoring use of computers and the identification of viewing.



We have gathered understanding about:
- the same PC being used by multiple users in the home, and that the metering technology has been able to identify viewing sessions relating to different people on the same PC.
(that might sound straightforward, but is missing from many techniques).
- there can be a number of PCs in a home and there is a challenge to ensure that each of these is able to be monitored and reported. (in the homes

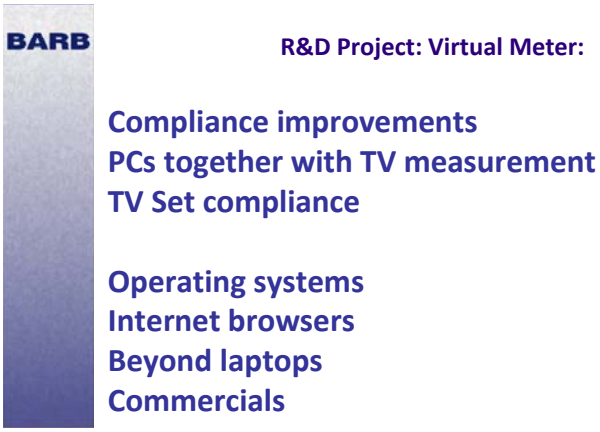
we've been monitoring on our test panel, we managed around 140 PCs in around 80 homes)
- the logistics and feasibility of delivering software updates to the PC meters and how this can be successfully achieved.
- the frequency of use of PCs and how the number of days between data return can vary based on usage patterns.
- the kind of data that can be returned, and how to utilise this to determine definitions of viewing, identifying the numerous types of use of the PC, and how to attribute viewing to TV content and its source of origination from the internet
…….whether that be from content providers own sites, different catch-up services, streaming services – legal or not, and recycled content posted onto e.g. user generated content sites, or download and playback.

- we have also seen how a software update - which changed some parts of the configuration of the meter could dramatically increase compliance, and therefore substantially improve the performance of the system.
- we have also seen how monitoring PCs together with TVs in the same home adds meaning to the task – and therefore gives a positive effect on respondent participation than just PC measurement alone.
- we have also, on the homes in the test seen no discernable impact on their compliance for TV measurement – which is extremely encouraging.

The panel management and configuration issues involved in these matters have been able to be considered – if not yet all fully resolved.

We also still have a number of questions to answer about the most feasible basis for reporting, and whether the individual identification of viewed commercials can be achieved or not.

The technique is not yet available for all operating systems, or internet browsers – but these are being actively addressed. And we are hopeful that potential will also exist, at some point, to take this technique beyond laptops and PCs.

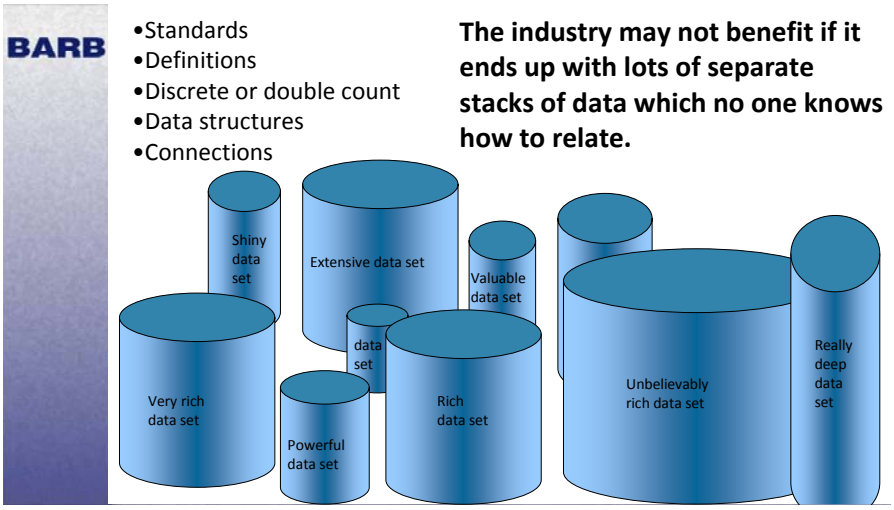


We believe that it may make sense for BARB to take this technique onto the next step which would involve an initial cautious rollout into a number of homes on the main BARB panel itself.

We would be careful to ensure we don't disrupt the performance of the panel for its current purposes of TV set measurement – but we have learned a lot from the test over recent months to expect that a pilot rollout could be feasible which in turn could lead to a fuller rollout of this technique to the BARB panel for some industry reporting purposes.

Those questions will be considered in more detail in the coming weeks – but it does look like a more realistic expectation than ever before that with the non-linear database and the potential of the Virtual Meter the BARB System may be able to offer the industry the potential to extend reporting in these 2 directions of travel – beyond TV sets and beyond 7 days.

What of course is also true is that the industry is gathering increasingly disparate datasets of served content via various distribution routes – and these offer both great potential and great dangers.

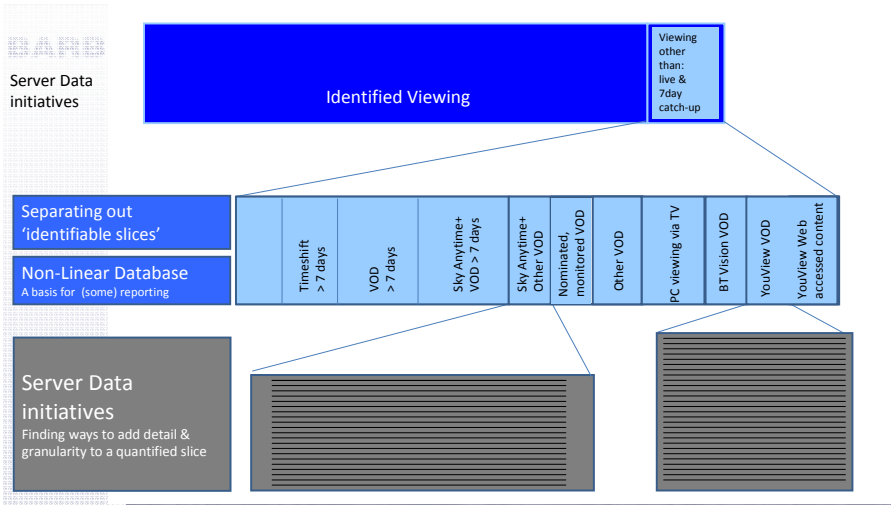


What's required in relation to these is some sense of Definition, of standards, of understanding whether things are a double count or are discrete, and of the connections between.

Shiny, rich, deep data sets could be very powerful and valuable but perhaps only if the industry gets its act together and thinks about the big picture.

I'm not sure that BARB would really want to gather and sort all of this – but we believe that there could be very helpful ways in which server data and panel data can be related to each other.

We see that BARB's role could be to provide the way of being able to relate server data to the bigger picture of viewing.



Current BARB reported viewing is clear what it relates to: source of origin and recent broadcasts – but there in increasing complexity in content distribution. This is perhaps best illustrated by viewing beyond 7 days from transmission (which we currently don't specifically report).

This will be from an ever increasing range of distribution routes. For example - Sky Anytime+, VOD from YouView, from BT Vision, from Virgin Media, viewing via PC's connected to TVs etc.

BARB would not expect to be tracking a library of hundreds of thousands of pieces of content. But if we are able to clearly identify use of content via these more fragmented routes of distribution, and if the equivalent data from Return path or servers is equivalently identified, then the bigger picture can be kept intact while liberating the use of server data into a role which has more meaning both within the organization that holds it, and across the industry.

The opportunities are there for the industry to think ahead.

Otherwise we will see this increasing proliferation of separate stacks of data which purport to take things forward – but where the danger is that they bring confusion, or potentially worse, misinformation - being a measure of something, but no one knows quite what.

What is important for BARB to bring to the table that genuinely benefits the industry in taking things forward?

BARB

BARB

Keeping the measurement of TV together
Independence
High research standards
Well-built representative panel
Overview of how 'served delivery' connects
Core service

I think it's these things:

- the idea of keeping the measurement of television together
- the independence of measurement
- the high research standards that are pursued
- a well build representative UK panel
- providing a more full 'viewing' overview
- in addition to the core service which will remain important for the foreseeable future.

At BARB we believe that from a sound start point we can usefully offer the industry more, and genuinely take audience measurement forward.

BARB

Summary

- Core Service receives constant attention.
- **Extend Reporting**
  - **Beyond 7 days** : Pilot Non-Linear Database
  - **Beyond the TV Set** : Virtual Meter Test
- Connected TVs
- Vision for use of Server Data in the industry.

- BARB cannot & will not be able to do everything.
  - But there's a lot we're breaking new ground on in very real ways.