

Print and Internet Yellow Pages: a Driver of Website and In-Person Visits



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Yellow Pages' traditional metered ad studies only track those customers that make contact with a business using the phone number listed in the ad. This represents only one way, however, that customers can contact a business, and while the call tracking is a good indicator of the effectiveness of the ad, the call counts by no means measure the full response to the ad by users or the full value of the ad to the business.

Some people choose to visit a business in person rather than making a call. Based on print usage data from Burke and KN/SRI¹, the average across the headings is that for every 100 calls, there are 32 people that visit a business in-person. For Internet Yellow Pages, the percentage is even higher - for every 100 calls there are 60 in-person visits¹.

Increasingly, people that use Print or Internet Yellow Pages check out the business's web site that is listed in the ad prior to contacting the business. If the consumer calls the phone number listed in the Web site, that contact will not be credited to the Yellow Pages ad, even though the ad was the original shopping source. Thus, call counts will undercount the response to ads as consumers check out a business's web site as part of their shopping process.

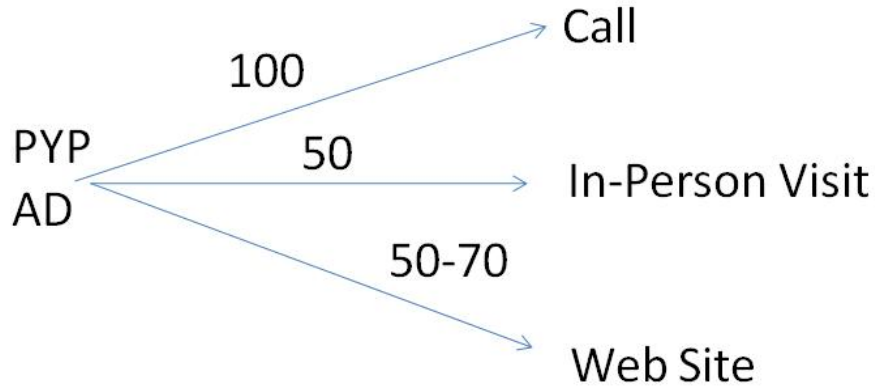
The 2010 Metered Ad Study has data for 822 ads where publishers placed a unique URL (website address) in the Yellow Pages ad and then tracked the response to that URL. All traffic that comes to that URL originates with use of the Print or IYP ad. The data show that for every 100 calls from print, there are over 50 visits to the website. Indications are that for every 100 calls from an IYP ad, there are over 60 visits to websites.

There are not enough data yet to measure the website activity by heading. And, there can be some overlaps - some of those that visit a website, for example, may still call the number in the Yellow Pages ad. But the message is clear: measurement of calls to the numbers listed in the Yellow Pages ads only captures a percentage of the total response.

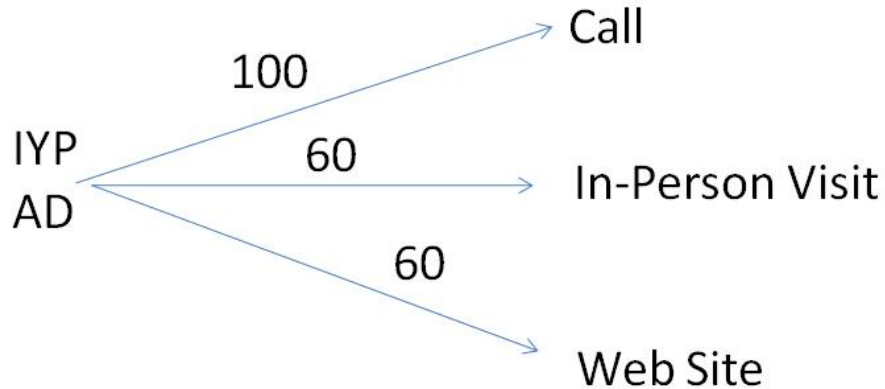
The diagrams below illustrate this:

¹ 2010 YPA Usage Study, Burke and KN/SRI; based on 26,187 responses from YP users.

Response to Print Ads:



Response to IYP ads:



As a rule-of-thumb, measuring calls to the numbers listed in Print and IYP ads currently captures about half to two-thirds of the response to those ads. Results can vary significantly by heading. In future years, updates to this paper should be able to provide heading-specific as well as general results.