



WHITE PAPER

Accurate Portrayals of Women and Girls in Media: Proven to be Good for Business

APRIL 2020



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Executive Summary

Women influence more than 85% of consumer goods purchases. With women's consumer power, today's advertising should align with the real world. There is substantial proof that doing so increases a company's bottom line.

In 2016, the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) launched SEEHER, a movement for increasing accurate portrayals of women and girls in marketing, advertising, media and entertainment.

SEEHER developed GEM™ (Gender Equality Measure™) to uncover unconscious gender bias in advertising and programming. This measurement was recognized by the industry, and in 2017, it received ESOMAR's highest honor for effectiveness. GEM is widely considered the "gold standard" for measurement.

SEEHER partnered with IRI to analyze sales data of GEM with layers of shopper, panel and store sales data from IRI Lift, along with viewership data, to learn the sales impact of a GEM-scored ad campaign and which networks/publishers have the highest sales impact. From this body of work, GEM Lift was created.

A preliminary study focused on Kellogg's® Special K® cereal. With strong results, the research was extended to campaigns for brands Bud Light®, Clorox® wipes and Clorox sprays, Ice Breakers, 7Up and L'Oréal Paris to substantiate the link between sales and accurate portrayals of women. The results were conclusive: Ads with the highest GEM scores had the highest sales lift.

Women want to see themselves accurately portrayed in media, and they're directing their spending accordingly. Campaigns that accurately portray women and girls can garner two to five times incremental sales lift.

Doing good is good for business.

**Campaigns that accurately
portray women and girls can
garner 2x to 5x
incremental sales lift.**



Create Unbiased and Effective Advertising with Measureable-Media Best Practices

Unconscious Bias Revealed

More than 70% of women think brands should be responsible for using advertising to promote accurate messages to women and girls. (Source: SheKnows Media.) Yet, gender bias in media and advertising persists.

For decades, Julia T. Wood, a leading gender communications scholar/author, has reported on the skewed portrayal of women in media.¹ In a February 2019 article published by New York University, "The Influence of Media on Views of Gender," Wood identifies predominant gender themes, including "women are underrepresented, which falsely implies that men are the cultural standard and women are unimportant and invisible"; and "men and women are portrayed in stereotypical ways that reflect and sustain socially endorsed views of gender."

In the world portrayed in media, Wood writes, white males make up two-thirds of the population. Women are fewer in number, and the vast majority are under the age of 35, white and heterosexual. The young, attractive, thin women who comprise most of the narrow female population are passive and focused on relationships and domestic tasks. The few women who work present as hardened and difficult. Viewers looking for female role models will need to click through a lot of commercials and programs to find what they're looking for.

Gender equality is much more than a social justice rallying cry. J. Walter Thompson's 2016 Women's Index revealed that "85% of women said that when it comes to representing them, advertisers need to catch up to the real world." Statistically on par, women influence more than 85% of consumer purchases. Increasingly, women's voices are being heard in terms of the messages directed at them; and their purchase choices are showing that accurate representation in marketing messages is good for marketers' brands.

There is a financial incentive for consumer product marketers to portray women accurately in advertising, but brands and products must be inclusive for the right reasons, including equality in marketing messages that also support the brand's mission.

25% of all ads produced
feature men only while just
5% feature women only.

Source: ANA



1. Adapted from Wood's book, "Gendered Lives Communication, Gender, and Culture" (Wadsworth Publishing, 1994).



GEM™ Inspires and Incentivizes Consumer Connections with Brands

With the 2016 launch of the ANA (Association of National Advertisers) SEEHER movement, the SEEHER research team created GEM™ (Gender Equality Measure™), a data-driven, open-source methodology that identifies bias in advertising and programming. Now considered the global gold standard for measurement of unconscious gender bias, GEM is used in 14 global markets that equate to 87% of advertising spend.

Since its inception of GEM, ANA SEEHER has partnered with research provider ABX for GEM scores. GEM evaluates consumer reaction to four key statements regarding the accurate portrayal of women and girls in ads and programming. The statements are:

- Opinion of how the female characters are being presented.
- If characters are shown in a respectful manner.
- If characters are presented in an inappropriate manner.
- If characters are viewed as a positive role model.

The result is a GEM score with an index of 100 representing the average female gender score for all ads. Scores above 100 indicate an increase in the representation, presentation, appropriateness and role model status of women projected in the advertisement or programming. Positive scores **drive higher brand performance metrics** such as better reputation (+11%) and better purchase intent (more than 26% among all consumers and more than 45% among women).

While higher GEM scores in both television ads and programs demonstrate strong brand performance metrics, including reputation and purchase intent, we also wanted to understand the financial incentives associated with supporting accurate portrayals of women and girls in ad campaigns. **In short, do accurate portrayals of women in advertising boost sales?**

IRI, a data analytics and technology company, partnered with SEEHER to help consumer packaged goods brand marketers understand whether their campaigns were performing to expectations. The goal was to determine whether GEM scores drive incremental sales lift or impact consumer behavior, resulting in a sale, or drive a shopping occasion.



Marrying GEM to IRI Lift™ Created a Unique Solution

GEM Lift, powered by IRI Lift™, gauges the equality of ads, provides campaign reads for TV and layers these inputs with shopper and sales data, including more than 500 million frequent shopper loyalty cards from multiple national retailers, as well as IRI's own consumer panel and point-of-sale data for all outlets.

GEM Lift examines the correlation of ad exposure to offline sales. IRI combines frequent shopper, panel and store sales data with macroeconomic factors and TV advertising viewership data, and then tracks exposure to the advertising, and converts those exposures back to a household to tie together exposure and in-store purchase data to measure impact.

71% of women say brands should use their ads to promote positive messages to women and girls.

Source: SHEKNOWS

In addition to the GEM metrics of “presented, respectful, inappropriate and role model,” GEM Lift rates campaigns on overall incremental sales and identifies key performance metrics such as occasions, dollars per occasion and penetration. Additionally, it breaks down key shopper metrics like share of requirements, fair share, buyer flow, and trial and repeat to provide a robust understanding of campaign performance.

With GEM Lift, advertisers can answer and respond to critical questions, including:

- What is the overall incremental sales impact or lift of the GEM-scored ad campaign?
- What publishers/networks provide the highest sales impact?
- Which creative message, publishers and placement strategy should I be adjusting to optimize impact?
- Which target audience best responds to cross tactics like programming and creative?
- What combination of programming and creative worked best?

Phase One: First Breakthrough Study Lifts Sales

Seeing a positive correlation between GEM scores, brand performance metrics and purchase intent, IRI set out to confirm the bottom-line benefit of attributing proper and appropriate messaging and programming to women and girls – actual incremental sales results.

IRI and ANA SEEHER first embarked on the experiment with leading ready-to-eat cereal brand Kellogg’s Special K to understand the correlation between GEM scores and sales lift. IRI Lift was leveraged to critically review the impact of five GEM-scored Special K ads and the tactics that drove an increase in sales, as well as inform future media buys for the brand.

The measured Special K ads varied in creative – including Hispanic – and ad lengths. Based on an index of 100, the two strongest ads received GEM scores of 116 and generated over 2% sales lift. Conversely, the ad that generated the lowest lift had the lowest GEM score of 95.

The programming during which the Kellogg’s ads ran was also evaluated to prove that content and context matter. 70% of the shows with the highest lift had high GEM scores, with an average GEM score per show of 118. A clear example is the “Today” show, which had a GEM rating of 135, coupled with the creative shown

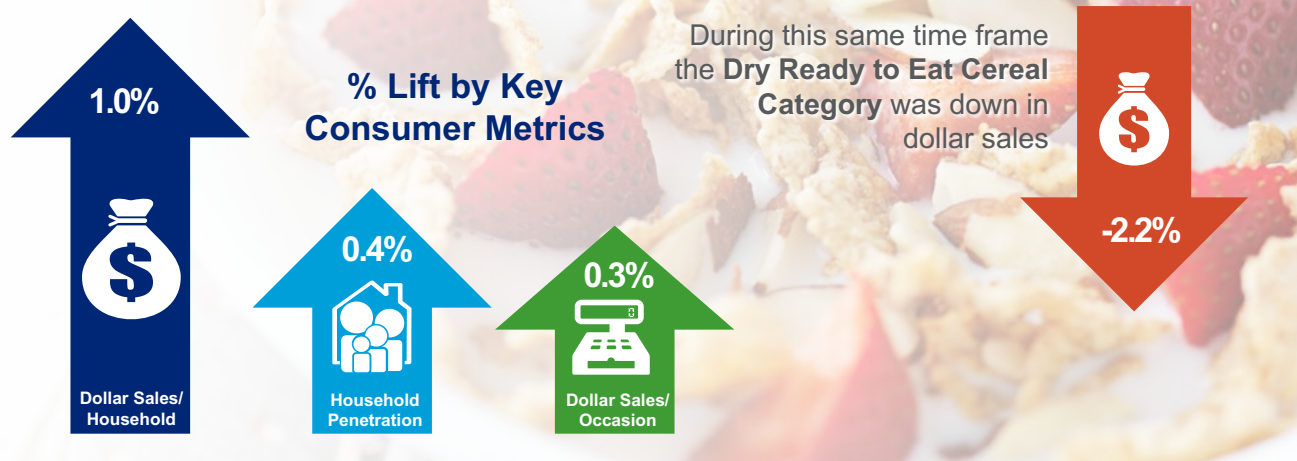
during the program that was GEM-scored at 116. An associated sales lift of the combined program and ad was more than 6%, an increase of more than 200% over the median IRI CPG TV benchmark for the food category.

This media effectiveness insight will now be used by Kellogg to evaluate its media planning earlier in their purchasing cycle, aligning proper allocation efforts for more meaningful upfront media buys.

Consumers responded to Kellogg’s Special K ads they deemed authentic, representative and relevant, and that positive response netted an overall incremental sales lift of 1%, driven by increased household sales penetration. While a sales lift of 1% may appear small, it happened at a time when the ready-to-eat cereal category was down 2.2%, so this is a notable increase and provides significant support to the overall category. Not only did the Special K campaign illustrate the many facets of being a strong woman, but the creative drove strong sales lift in a poorly performing category.

The methodology, testing and results were groundbreaking, but one study was just a road test, so a significant opportunity existed to prove the hypothesis on a broader scale. Time for the rubber to hit the road!

The Special K Campaign Performance was Driven by an Increase in Penetration and Dollars per Occasion



Source: IRI multi-outlet retailer loyalty card panel | 1/2/2017 - 12/25/2017, Lag period 1/22/2018

Phase Two: Road-Tested, Women-Approved

To prove that high GEM scores correlate to sales lift, IRI and SEEHER reached out to several SEEHER members to request their participation in a deeper analytical undertaking that would confirm higher GEM scores for brand campaigns and programs were directly associated with higher sales rates.

The expanded analysis depended on a diverse group of advertisers and programming from companies and brands across multiple categories and with varying levels of gender-centricity. The following SEEHER diverse member organizations and associated brands were chosen to participate in the study: Anheuser-Busch InBev (Bud Light), Clorox (Clorox wipes and Clorox sprays), Hershey's (Ice Breakers), Kellogg's (Special K), Keurig Dr Pepper (7Up) and L'Oréal (L'Oréal Paris).

These brands contributed 20 creatives of various lengths (:60, :30 and :15), which aired across 428 programs of all genres. Both creative and programming had splits of GEM scores above and below the 100 index. Creative GEM scores ranged from 91 to 116, and programming GEM scores ranged from 56 to 141.

The methodology used for these brands was the same rigorous analytics used in the Kellogg's study. To ensure consistency and eliminate degradation of results through increased extended exposure, all campaigns measured were at maximum 20 weeks in length.

The results were conclusive: Ads with the highest sales lift had the highest GEM scores


Ads with the lowest sales lift had the lowest GEM scores. Creatives with GEM scores greater than 100 drove sales lifts of up to five times compared to ads with scores less than 100. Similarly, with television programs, those with GEM scores greater than 100 drove lift of nearly two times compared to programs with GEM scores of less than 100. **Further, there were synergistic effects, as high GEM-scoring creatives aired during programs with scores greater than 100 had up to a 93% greater lift than those placed in programs less than 100 on the GEM score index.**





¹GEM <100 = 0.33% Lift. GEM >100 = 1.59% Lift. ²GEM <100 = 0.97% Lift. GEM >100 = 1.87% Lift


The aggregated results were not only clear, the hypothesis was also proven for each of the individual CPG brands:


 When the personal and beauty brand **L'Oréal Paris** ran ads across TV shows with GEM scores greater than 100, the average **lift in sales was 2.36%** vs. TV shows with GEM scores less than 100, resulting in no measurable lift in sales.

 For **L'Oréal Paris** brand overall, programs with GEM scores greater than 100 **drove an estimated \$4.8 million in incremental sales** across campaigns (six ads).

 For **Anheuser-Busch InBev's** highest GEM-scoring (112) ad, the core driver of the lift in sales is an increase in household penetration, showing the **campaign is driving new buyers** and existing buyers to purchase the product at a higher rate than those who were not exposed to the campaign.

 **Hershey's** placement in shows with GEM scores of 119 experienced a **lift of 4.45%**.

 **Keurig Dr Pepper's** 7UP ads produced a positive **sales lift of 1.7%** from programming that garnered a GEM score of more than 100.

 Household products brand **Clorox** experienced a more than **6% lift** on its Clorox Cleaning products on the strongest-performing network.

The associated sales and financial importance of gender equality in advertising is clear.

IRI has validated incremental sales lifts of up to \$2 million for a single brand campaign.

Messaging matters and women are voting with their dollars.

Unbiased Gains

GEM Lift sales impact studies confirm the importance for brands to drive the accurate portrayal of women and girls and the impact those portrayals have on brand performance. To ignore current sentiment and the increasing pressure for gender parity means marketers risk losing currency with consumers – both in terms of relevance and lost sales.

Participating in SEEHER can uncover not only levels of unconscious bias in existing creative, but when joined with GEM Lift, marketers also benefit from the financial incentives associated with higher GEM scores. As the IRI Lift studies illustrate, positive portrayal of women and girls in advertising and media can have a very strong positive bottom-line result for your campaign. In fact, these results show campaigns can garner an incremental dollar sales lift of up to \$2 million. Such campaigns are more sustainable because they support messages that resonate as equal, accurate and positive.



GEM Lift Methodology

As applied to GEM, IRI Lift is a rigorous media measurement and optimization solution that uses sales outcomes as the core metric for both measurement and optimization at a household level. The IRI Lift methodology produces performance metrics across multiple sub-campaign dimensions and key performance indicators. The solution is powered by a combination of expansive assets, including:

- A loyalty card dataset composed of more than 500 million loyalty cards; 117 million unique households covering 93% of the U.S.; spanning national major retailers from grocery, drug, club and convenience channels.
- Billions of impression-level ad exposures for TV, powered by Alphonso, a TV data and measurement company.
- IRI's national consumer panel, which captures all outlet household-level purchases.
- And 20 different causal variables, including weather; macroeconomic variables such as gas prices; and store variables, such as promoted price, displays and merchandising measures.

IRI Lift connects the people exposed to the media with the products they buy in store. In this GEM Lift study, TV viewership provider Alphonso incorporated a panel of 34 million households, which enabled IRI to connect households and devices. IRI supplied offline transaction data from loyalty cards, and then defined test household paired up against exact look-alike households as the control for the measurement universe. IRI further ingests time-stamped exposure files and overlays them with time-stamped purchase behavior for modeling. Because all channels don't utilize loyalty data to the same degree, IRI enables adjustments for channel over- or under-penetration to factor higher sales rates in a given channel, and incorporates causal variables to ensure balanced national projections. This stringency results in accurate accounting and control against these extraneous factors to truly understand advertising impact.

IRI runs separate models on KPIs to understand how a campaign performed and if it's driving lift, including penetration, occasions or dollars per occasion. Massive scale of data generates granular results at the sub-campaign level, analyzing TV performance at the creative, network, daypart and duration levels with cross-performance metrics, such as by advertising creative and network program.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Jennifer Pelino is a senior vice president, IRI Media Center of Excellence in the Chicago headquarters of IRI. You may contact her by email at Jennifer.Pelino@IRIworldwide.com.

Nadine Karp McHugh is president of SEEHER, a division of the Association of National Advertisers. You may contact her by email at nkarpmchugh@ana.net.

CONTRIBUTORS

Erika Digirolamo is senior manager of Media Solutions, IRI Media Center of Excellence in the Chicago headquarters of IRI. You may contact her by email at Erika.Digirolamo@IRIworldwide.com.

Shelley Zalis is the CEO of The Female Quotient and the co-founder of SEEHER. You may contact her by email at Shelley@TheFQ.com.



About IRI

IRI is a leading provider of big data, predictive analytics and forward-looking insights that help CPG, OTC health care organizations, retailers and media companies to grow their businesses. With the largest repository of purchase, media, social, causal and loyalty data, all integrated on an on-demand, cloud-based technology platform, IRI helps to guide its more than 5,000 clients around the world in their quests to remain relentlessly relevant, capture market share, connect with consumers and deliver market-leading growth. A confluence of major external events—a revolution in consumer buying, big data coming into its own, advanced analytics and automated consumer activation—is leading to a seismic shift in drivers of success in all industries. Ensure your business can leverage data at www.iriworldwide.com.

Corporate Headquarters: 150 North Clinton St., Chicago, IL 60661, USA, (312) 726-1221



About the ANA

The ANA's mission is to drive growth for marketing professionals, for brands and businesses, and for the industry. Growth is foundational for all participants in the ecosystem. The ANA seeks to align those interests by leveraging the 12-point ANA Masters Circle agenda, which has been endorsed and embraced by the ANA Board of Directors and the Global CMO Growth Council. The ANA's membership consists of more than 1,600 domestic and international companies, including over 1,000 client-side marketers and nonprofit organizations and 600 marketing solutions providers (data science and technology companies, ad agencies, publishers, media companies, suppliers, and vendors). Collectively, ANA member companies represent 20,000 brands, engage 50,000 industry professionals, and invest more than \$400 billion in marketing and advertising annually.



About SeeHer

Despite strides made in recent years to truthfully portray women and girls in media, unconscious bias persists throughout advertising and entertainment. The average age, race, and body type of women depicted in media today still represents only a small fraction of the female population. The SeeHer movement is the leading global movement for accurate portrayals of women and girls in media. A division of the Association of National Advertisers (ANA), SeeHer is a collective of marketers committed to creating and supporting content that portrays women and girls as they really are. It launched in June 2016 in partnership with The Female Quotient (The FQ). To help marketers benchmark success, ANA's SeeHer developed the Gender Equality Measure™ (GEM™), the first research methodology that quantifies gender bias in ads and programming. GEM™ shows that content that portrays females accurately dramatically increases purchase intent and brand reputation, increasing return on investment (ROI) by as much as 30 percent. GEM™ won the 2017 ESOMAR Research Effective Award, and the methodology became the industry standard, which led to a global rollout in 2018. In 2019 the movement began expansion into new verticals including sports (#SeeHerInSports) and music (#SeeHerHearHer.) GEM™ is a trademark of the ANA.

GEM™ scores for this study were provided by SeeHer and were generated by SeeHer syndicated research partner ABX. Visit SeeHer.com and follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter @SeeHer2020](#).

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