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**Q:** As an in-store digital media expert, what do you feel is the most exciting potential for POP in the coming year?

**A:** The evolution of in-store measurement technologies excites our firm the most. Let me explain.

When we first started working with online media and Web development, our challenges were very similar to those we face in-store regarding results tracking. We had rudimentary techniques to measure audience traffic but sales and behavioral results were rough at best and often implied and based on samples. There were simply too many factors muddying the waters and no way to track the specific “causal triggers” for each campaign effectively.

As the technology evolved, we were able to start monitoring who came to a site or clicked on a banner ad, where they traveled within it, how long they stayed in each area, what they did there, if they did or didn't buy and, eventually, if they were repeat visitors and other purchases they made. This made for a very sophisticated—and accountable—marketing tool. It also allowed us to start monitoring what campaigns, creative executions and messages did or did not create results and proactively make tweaks to keep response rates as optimal as possible. This process is what we call “optimization” of messaging.

Now, thanks to exciting new technologies, “optimizing” in-store messages is becoming very real. Gaze tracking systems such as Studio IMC's facePLATE and TruMedia's tools are now able to track who walked by, who looked, at what and for how long in relation to digital and static print messages in-store.

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DS-IQ has also emerged for in-store digital media and is already enabling optimization of digital messages. They combine a shopper response measurement and analytics engine with test/optimization capabilities and intelligent scheduling, allowing systematically targeted messages to shoppers in-store based on active results. They're already garnering insights on the “causal triggers” for store messages that have never been seen real-time and across every store. This is very extraordinarily powerful information.

In our minds, these store measurement tools and their ability to enable retailers and advertisers to optimize messages based on what is and is not pulling is just thrilling. For the first time, we'll be able to truly validate the store not as a strange translation of an existing media, but as the media that it is—one who's sole purpose is to attract and retain loyal shoppers and stimulate purchase. And, like with virtual efforts online, we'll be able to play with messages and creative to determine what's connecting with the shoppers as they walk our aisles.

The other important thing to note is that these tools will aid us in properly valuing store media vehicles based not on just CPM's (a standard media valuation metric based on viewership) but on results. This is a more sensible valuation approach, as we feel strongly that the value of the “eyeballs” of shoppers walking the store are minimal compared to the value of powerful tools and messages that convert buyers. And when messages can be tied to results, they can pull a premium for sponsorship costs.

Finally, as we have seen with the Web, CRM systems will eventually knit into these systems to enable personalized, one-to-one store offers based on past purchase history. When this happens, one of the top customer “wish list” items will become real, which is to build better bridges between the online and in-store channel and offer evolved and more relevant customer service in-store.

Laura Davis Talyor is the co-author of the first cohesive guidebook on the topic, available at <http://www.lightinguptheaisle.com>



If you would like to contribute to our ongoing dialog about important POP Topics please email Matt Baker: [bakerm@amdpop.com](mailto:bakerm@amdpop.com)

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