

## Quantitative vs. Qualitative Data

A Comparative Study on How Differently Metrics can be Viewed



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## **Quantitative vs. Qualitative.**

### **Article 1**

eMarketer. 2013. "Worldwide Ad Growth Buoyed by Digital Mobile Adoption."  
September 25. Accessed October 3, 2013

<http://www.emarketer.com/Article/Worldwide-Ad-Growth-Buoyed-by-Digital-Mobile-Adoption/1010244>

In the article "Worldwide Ad Growth Buoyed by Digital Mobile Adoption," data is compiled and provided by eMarketer on overall advertising budget expenditures in regions across the globe and specifically in digital and mobile marketing. They provide us with dollar amounts and percentages to illustrate growth over the last few years. "In total, eMarketer estimates ad expenditures around the world will reach \$517.10 billion this year" (eMarketer, 2013).

More specifically identifying Digital and mobile growth, eMarketer reports that digital ad spending will account for more than 22% of total ad spending in 2013, compared to 12% in 2008. Further, mobile ad spending will only account for 2.6% of total ad spending, and 11.9% of digital ad spending, compared to 2.1% in 2008 (eMarketer, 2013). The advertising spend dollar amounts are also broken down globally by region.

This data is empirical, it is quantitative and we can draw conclusions based on the numbers provided. Clearly, digital and mobile advertising are on the rise globally, with exponential growth expected in the next ten years. As expected, the regions of the globe that are more technologically advanced, spend more money advertising and in particular on digital and mobile channels.

### **Article 2**

Gupta, Sunil et al. 2013. "Digital Marketing." Economic Times. India Times, July 17. Accessed October 3, 2013  
[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-07-17/news/40635886\\_1\\_online-advertising-digital-marketing-online-ad-spending](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-07-17/news/40635886_1_online-advertising-digital-marketing-online-ad-spending)

The article "Digital Marketing" is an excellent example of qualitative research methods. With the rise of digital marketing, one of the most beneficial facets of this advertising medium is that of measurement. Web site and Internet data can be collected and measured for many factors. The ability to make sense and produce a marketing strategy out of this data is where the genius lies.

Sunil Gupta questions gathering web site and Internet data and drawing conclusions based on its quantitative form.

“The introduction of online metrics, such as click through rate (CTR) and cost per acquisition (CPA), by online advertisers has made it easy for marketing managers to justify online ad spending. But these metrics suffer from two key problems: (a) they do not account for attribution, since they give credit to the last click and ignore the impact of other ad formats, and (b) they ignore the dynamics, since they only account for the immediate impact of ads” (Gupta, 2013). You must in fact look deeper to discover what the data is really telling you.

This article can also be found on the Harvard Business School website.

Pavel Kireyev, Koen Pauwels, and Sunil Gupta. 2013. “Do Display Ads Influence Search? Attribution and Dynamics in Online Advertising.” Harvard Business School, February 28. Accessed October 3, 2013. <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/7216.html> Harvard Business School working papers <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/7216.html>

Sunil Gupta and his colleagues Pavel Kireyev and Koen Pauwels describe their method of capturing the true attribution for conversion rates.

“We developed a multivariate time series model to investigate the interaction between paid search and display ads and calibrated the model...” (Kireyev, Pauwels, and Gupta, 2013). Providing as accurate a picture as possible and giving credit, where credit is due, helps marketers understand what is working and working well. They can then adjust marketing

campaigns accordingly in order to yield the best return on investment, which equals greater revenue.

### **Compare and Contrast**

The first article “Worldwide Ad Growth Buoyed by Digital Mobile Adoption” by eMarketer, is a prime example of quantitative methods. They provided us with the raw numbers on increase in advertising spend in 2013 compared to 2012, specifically digital and mobile advertising spend increases. “Digital, however, is a bright spot—particularly mobile. eMarketer estimates spending on digital advertising will reach \$117.60 billion this year, up 13.0% compared to 2012 levels, while mobile spending will hit nearly \$15.82 billion, representing a whopping 79.7% year-over-year increase” (eMarketer 2013).

While these numbers are significant and noteworthy, I want to dig a little deeper and know why and where this sum comes from. Qualitative measures might tell us more specifically who has opted to put more money in digital advertising this year. Perhaps quantifying the research into the type of business, large or small; the industry, medical, automotive, beauty; or the region, Asia or the United States, Central, East or West Coast, might be helpful to paint a picture of who is spending in digital advertising and why.

In Article 2 “Do Display Ads Influence Search? Attribution and Dynamics in Online Advertising” Kireyev, Pauwels, and Gupta specifically look past the typical quantitative web site metrics to draw their conclusions, as the raw

data can be misleading. "These metrics suffer from two fundamental problems: (a) they do not account for attribution, since they give credit to the last click and ignore the impact of other ad formats that may have helped a consumer move down the conversion funnel, and (b) they ignore the dynamics, since they only account for the immediate impact of ads" (Kireyev, Pauwels, and Gupta 2013). Ultimately, I would be much more comfortable trusting these qualitative methods. Had the authors not dug deeper to uncover other factors accounting for attribution, their conclusions would have been very different, and possible ineffective marketing methods would have been credited for revenue growth and continued to be utilized, ultimately wasting advertising dollars.



## References

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Pavel Kireyev, Koen Pauwels, and Sunil Gupta. 2013. "Do Display Ads Influence Search? Attribution and Dynamics in Online Advertising." *Harvard Business School*, February 28. Accessed October 3, 2013.

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