

ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING*

You need to know to make
great digital signage content



* (almost)

What makes content great?

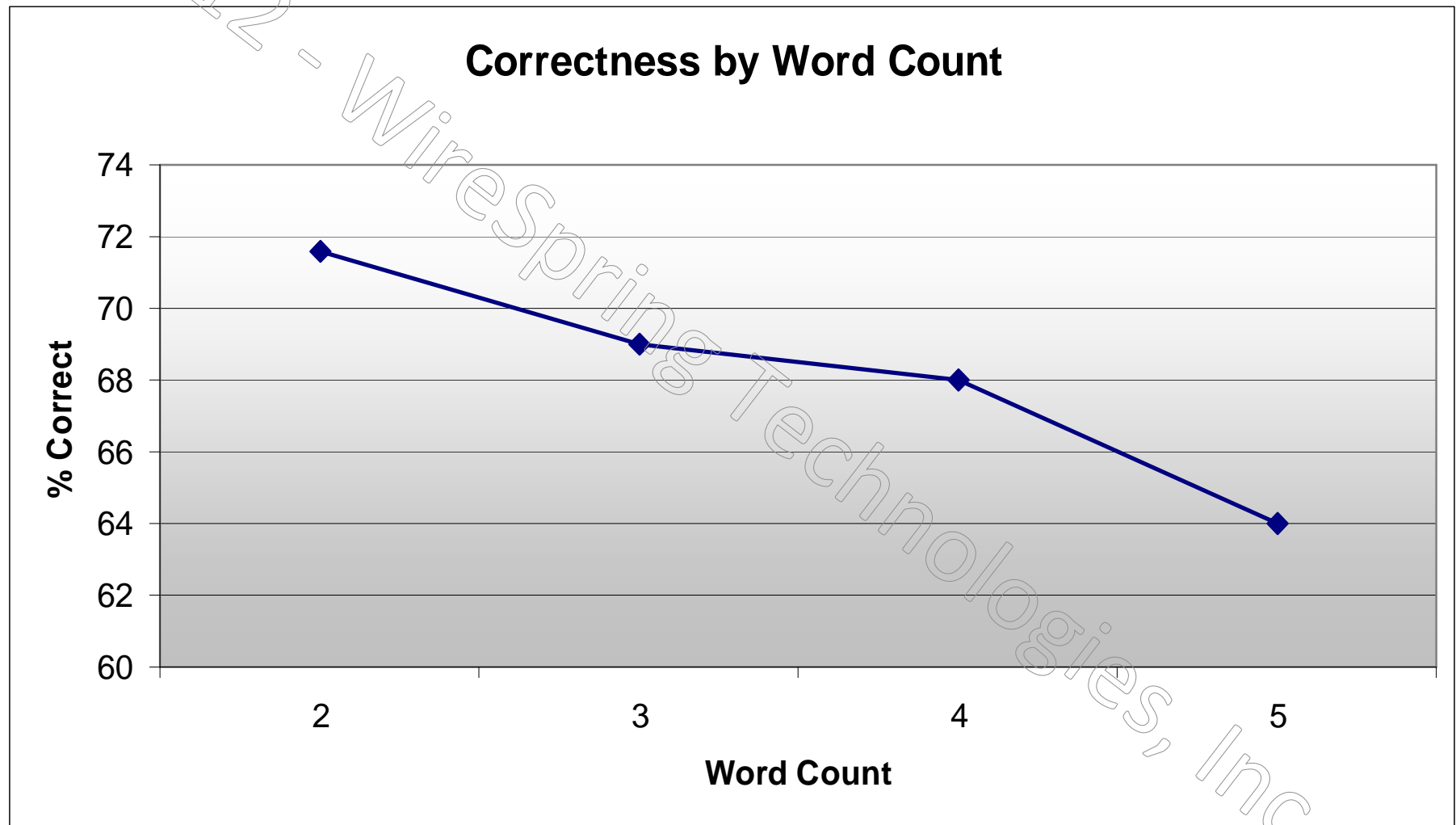
- Copy writing
- Visual components
- Motion & animation
- Sound
- Placement & environment

5 Secrets to Crafting Great Copy



#1: Keep it short!

- No more than 5-6 words per message, 3-4 is better.
- Optimal message length is about 22 characters.



#2: Make it easy to read

- Be declarative – it's ok to lead with a question as long as you also supply an authoritative answer.
- Be grammatically complete and use “standard” language.

#3: Pace Yourself

- Put only one idea (two **at most**) on the screen at a time.
- Make sure text is on-screen for long enough to actually read it.

#4: Pre-Chunk Your Messages

- Things are easier to remember when pre-arranged into groups of like items (like phone numbers).
- Use things like **Repetition, Alliteration** and the **“Rule of 3”** to encourage viewers to ingest the message as efficiently as possible.

#5: Craft your Call-to-Action

- Should be on the screen at all times.
- Actions that can be taken immediately work best.
 - **Get** 15% FREE
 - **Ask** a salesperson for details
- Think Google “AdWords” –style.
 - A search for “advertising” yields:

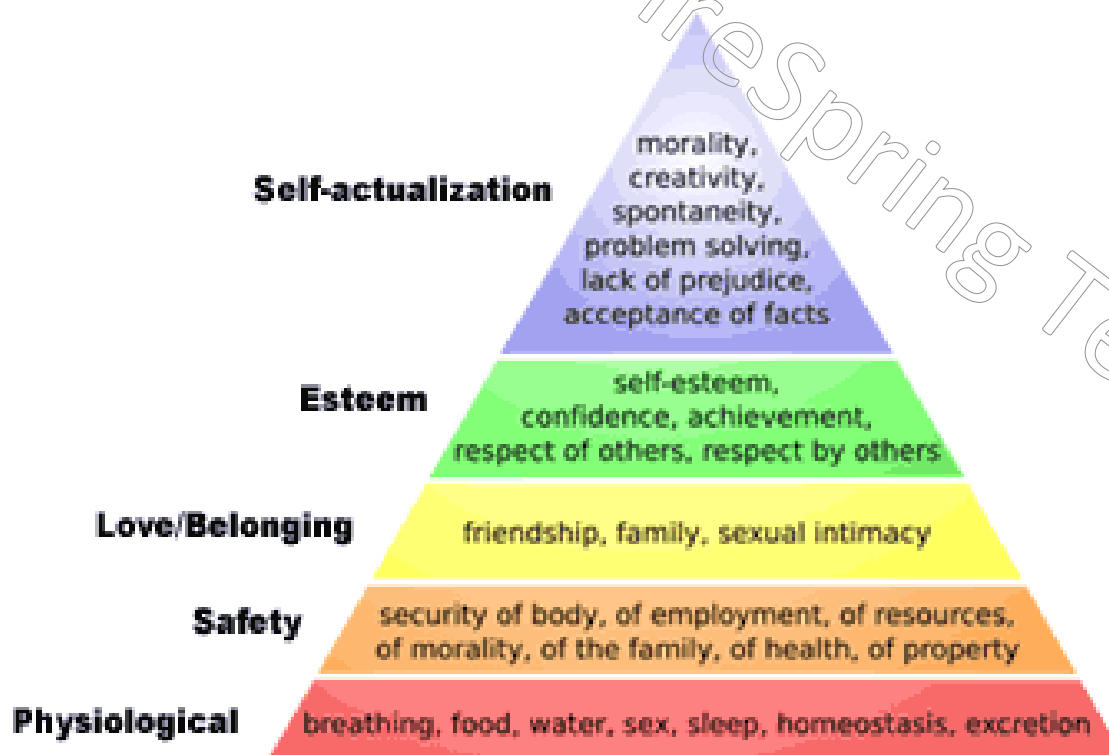
Facebook Advertising

Reach the exact audience you want with relevant targeted ads.

Sell Smarter

Increase your ad sales with the AdMall

More Tips for your Call To Action



- Target common needs
- Use trigger words to grab attention
- Test the "reading level" of the text
- Use action words and be vivid
- Use commands

Video Sample #1: Great Copy



Supplied by: Amscreen

Client: Coca Cola

Video Sample #2: Great Copy



Supplied by: Amscreen

Client: Volkswagen

Visuals



Fontography 101

- **Don't use multiple font types**
 - Mixing sans and serif fonts is very hard to read! Stick with serif for readability.
- **DON'T USE ALL CAPS**
 - The letters block together and take longer to read and decipher
- **Don't stack lines**
 - Try to keep each message to one line to reduce comprehension time

The Myth of “Power” Colors

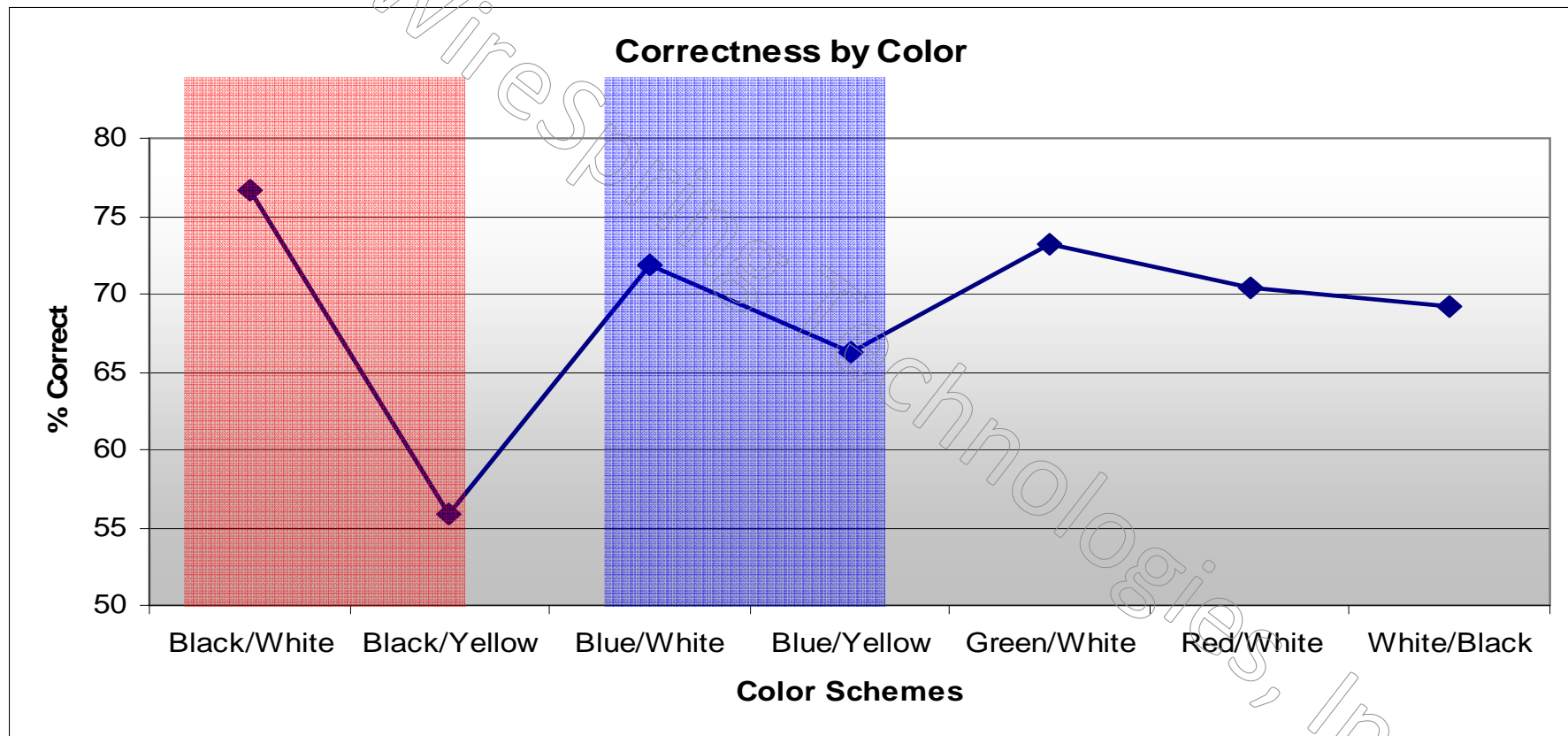
- In practice, when focusing on glance media we've seen **no over-arching relationship between color and content performance**
- There were specific cases where changing a clip's color *may have* altered performance, but not enough data to be conclusive
- Most of the time, when people think they are altering colors, they are really altering contrast schemes

Contrast



- Avoid overlapping areas of complementary colors (e.g. red and green)
- Any combination of similar color value (brightness) will produce low visibility

Results: Color/Contrast



Video Sample #3: Color/Contrast

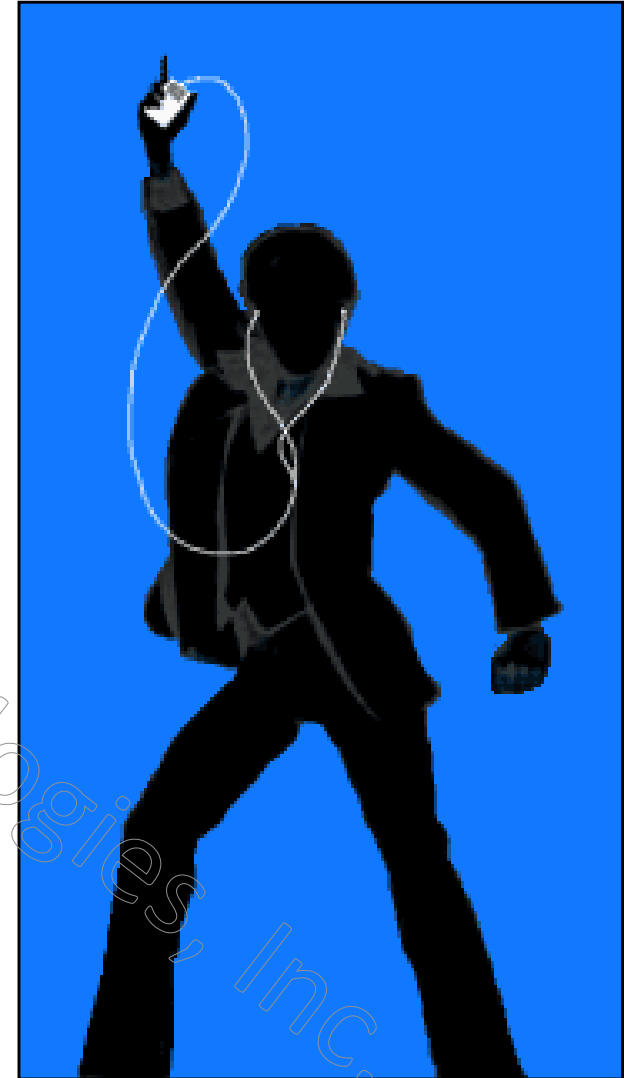


Supplied by: DDN

Client: 7-Eleven (House spot)

Silhouette

- Extremely important for discerning between moving elements
- It's the **only** thing noticeable about elements in a viewer's periphery



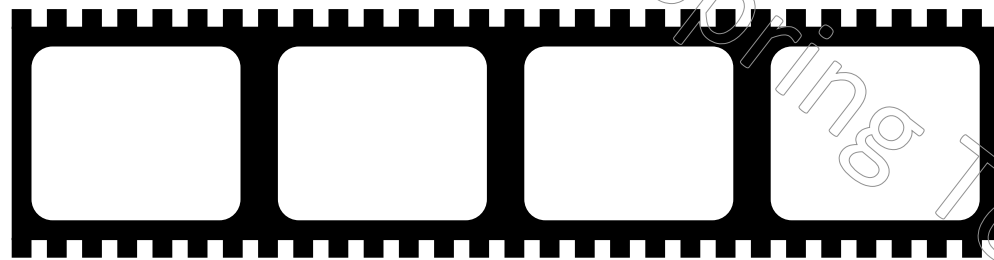
Layout – Composing a Shot

- Visually separate distinct elements of a shot to speed up comprehension

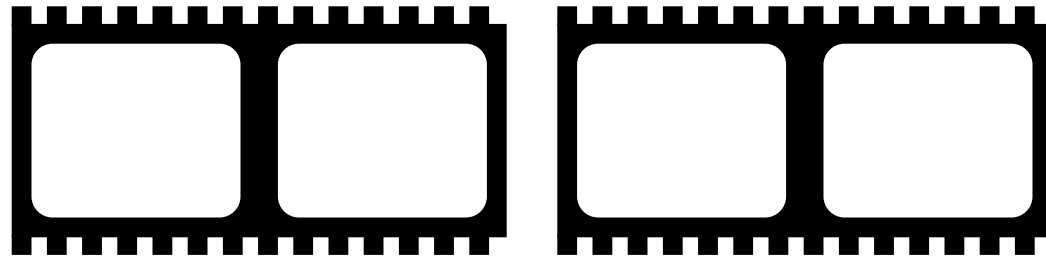


Scenes & Shots

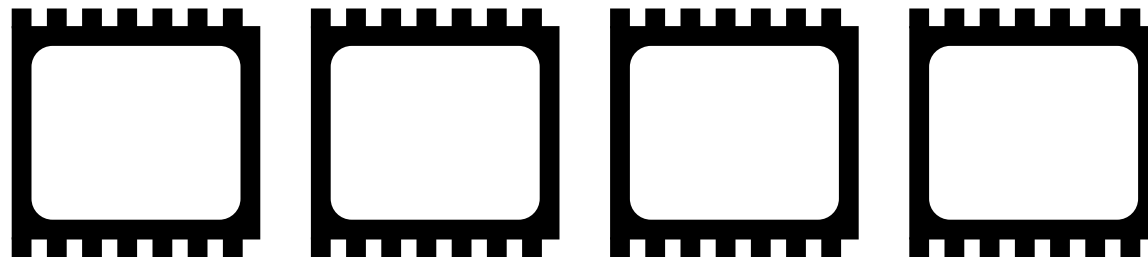
- Short- and long-format clips alike can be split into scenes and shots:



One 15-sec clip

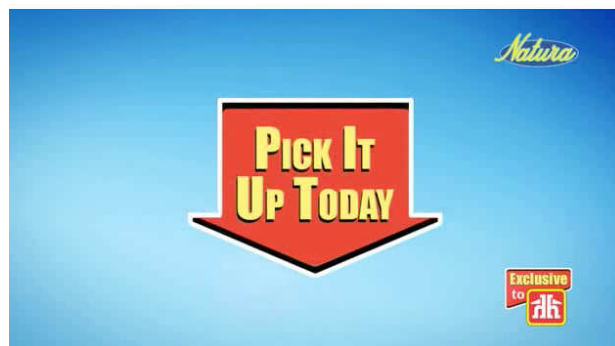


Two 7-sec scenes



Four 3.5-sec shots

Scenes & Shots



Every frame or shot should function as a stand-alone “poster”

Video Sample #4: Composition



Supplied by: Artisan
Complete

Client: Home Hardware

Video Sample #5: Composition



Supplied by: DDN

Client: 7-Eleven (house spot)

Motion



Silhouette & Motion

- Silhouette should be used to check perception and recognition of any complex or moving images.



Good



Bad

Getting the hang of Timing

- Don't let motion interfere with readability or comprehension
- 1 ½ - 3 seconds of full attention max for glance media, (may be a bit longer for “captive audience” networks)
- Leave enough time to read text!

Common Pitfalls with Timing

- Motion makes recognition times skyrocket and comprehension rates plummet.
- Every second that text is moving on the screen is basically a second that it can't be read.
- Nowhere does that become more obvious than with...

Tickers

- Moving text takes anywhere from 2-10x or more time to recognize/comprehend
- Scrolling text has 10-22% lower recall rate versus “fade in/fade out” delivery
- In-place displays such as fade and blast are better than motion-based displays like ticker for rapid identification of items



Testing Your Spot's Timing

- If you're the DESIGNER: make sure you can read the copy 5x in the allotted time
- If you're a REVIEWER: make sure you can read the copy 3x in the allotted time
- Ensure that the text can be read from a non-ideal angle of incidence

Quick Tips on Motion

- Motion on the periphery is more subtle than motion in the middle of the field of view
- The static elements should be the most important features of the ad
- Subtle motion can visually enhance without reducing recognition or comprehension

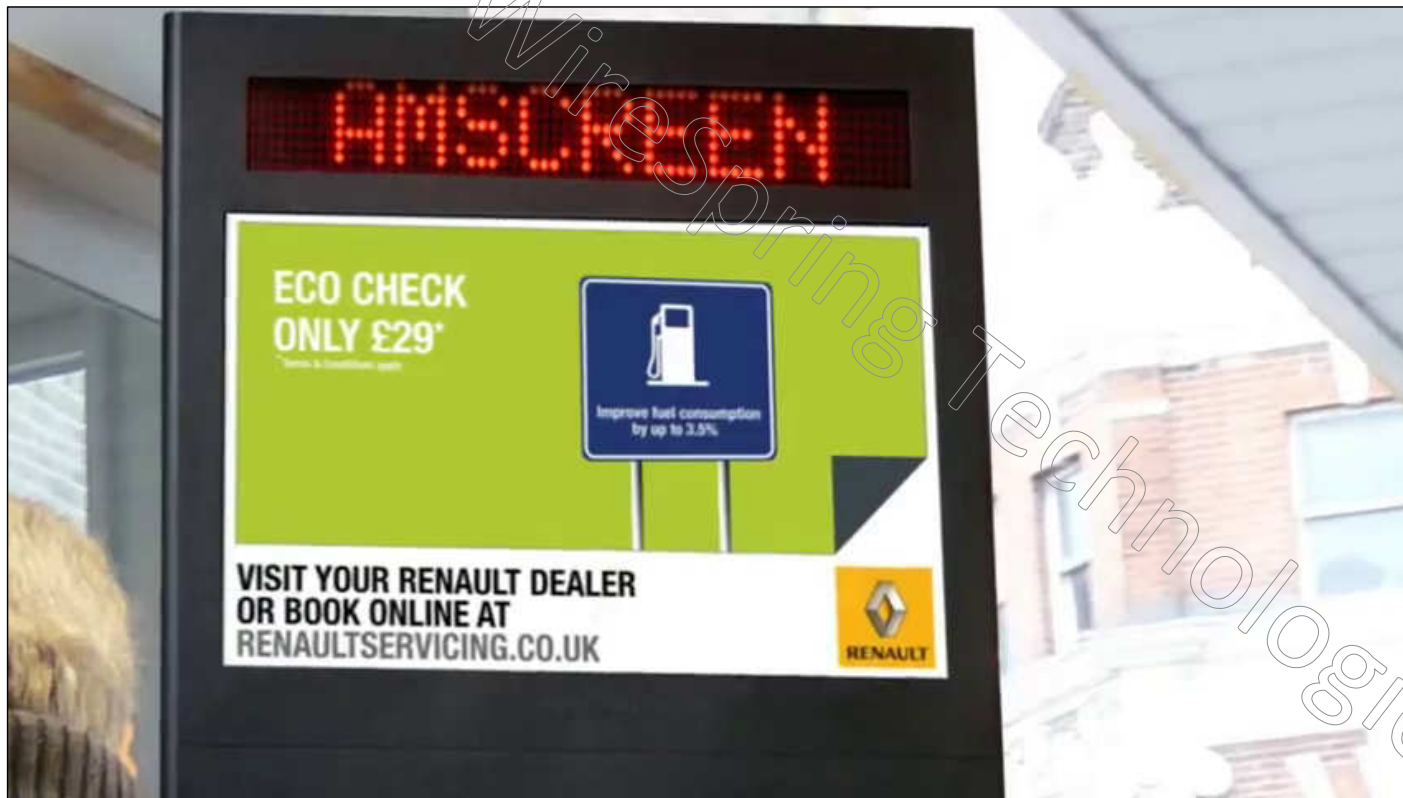
Video Sample #6: Motion



Supplied by: Amscreen

Client: Mentos

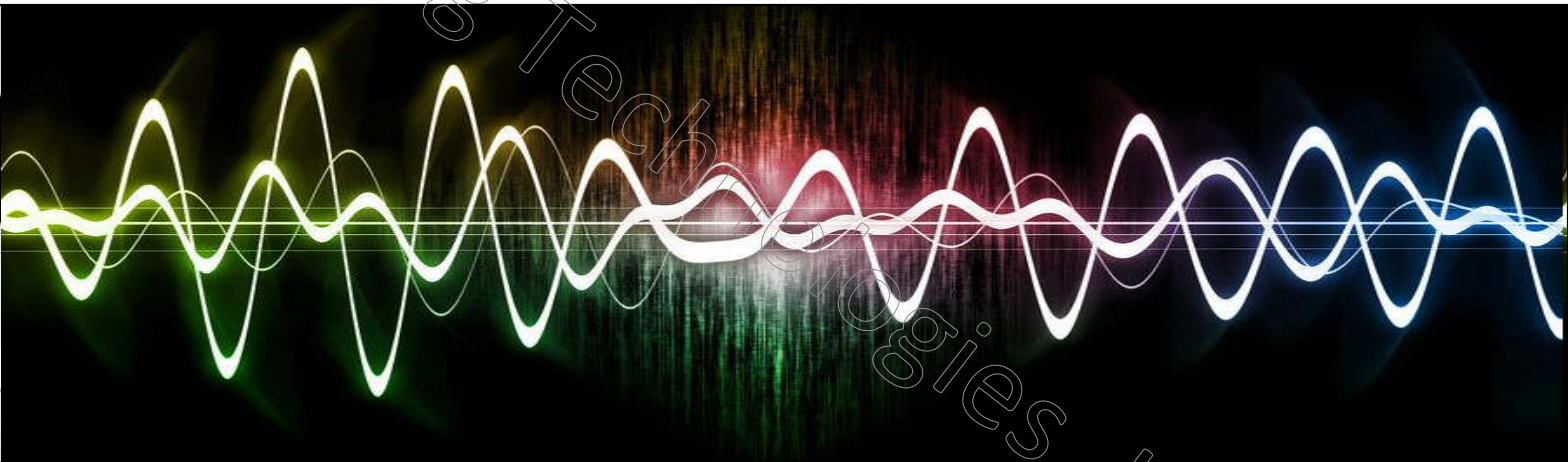
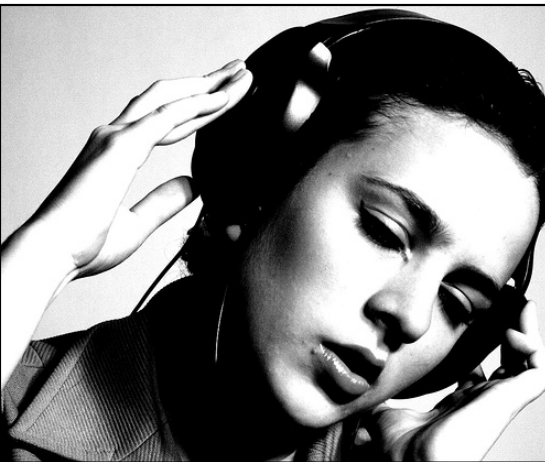
Video Sample #7: Motion



Supplied by: Amscreen
Client: Renault

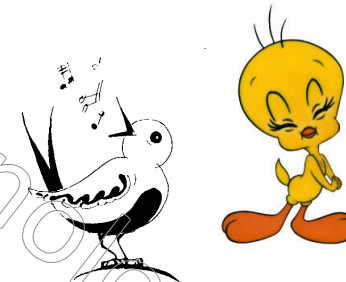
2012 - Wirespring Technologies, Inc.

Sound



The 5 Classes of Sound

- Human Voice
- Music
- Natural Sound
- Noise
- Silence



Two Sound Approaches

- Inside the store, there are two approaches for using sound:
 - **Passive**: Employing sounds that aim to influence shopper behavior without their specific knowledge (e.g. Muzak “tempo programs”)
 - **Active**: Using sounds to interrupt current shopper behaviors with the goal of shaping a new behavior

Why you shouldn't use it

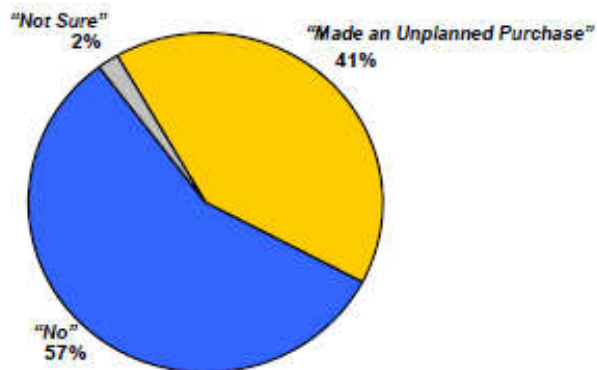
- Annoying soundscapes have been shown to reduce shopper dwell time
- If your sounds compete with those of the host venue, the venue may decide to disconnect you
- Employee fatigue may encourage workers to disconnect or otherwise sabotage your digital signage equipment

2012 Why you should use it

*“Appropriate, well-designed soundscapes can increase sales in shops by up to 50% in some cases, and **between 5 and 10% as a rule.**”* – Julian Treasure, Chairman, The Sound Agency

More Than 40% of Shoppers Made an Unplanned Purchase After Hearing Retail Audio Ad

“Have you ever purchased a product that you hadn’t planned to buy after hearing an announcement about it in the store?”



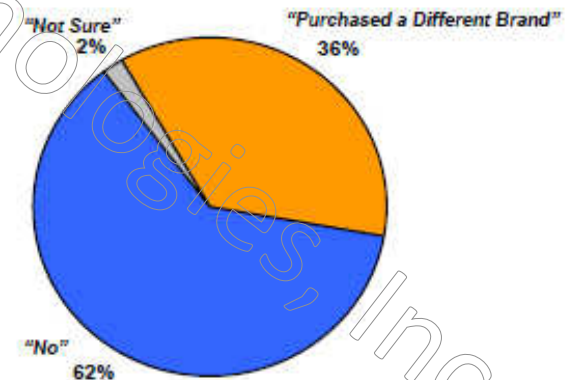
Base: U.S. primary household shoppers 18+ who heard commercials or product announcements in the stores.



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More Than a Third of Shoppers Purchased a Different Brand After Hearing Retail Ad

“Have you ever purchased a different brand than you had planned on buying because of an announcement you heard in the store?”



Base: U.S. primary household shoppers 18+ who heard commercials or product announcements in the stores.



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Some rules of thumb with sound

- Don't rely on sound alone to make your message
- Use sound to augment an already-compelling visual message
- Visual messages should always work (i.e. be comprehensible) without sound
- Consider closed captioning ONLY if your visual storytelling is confusing

Video Sample #8: Sound



Supplied by: PRN

Client: Nabisco

Video Sample #9: Sound



Supplied by: DDN

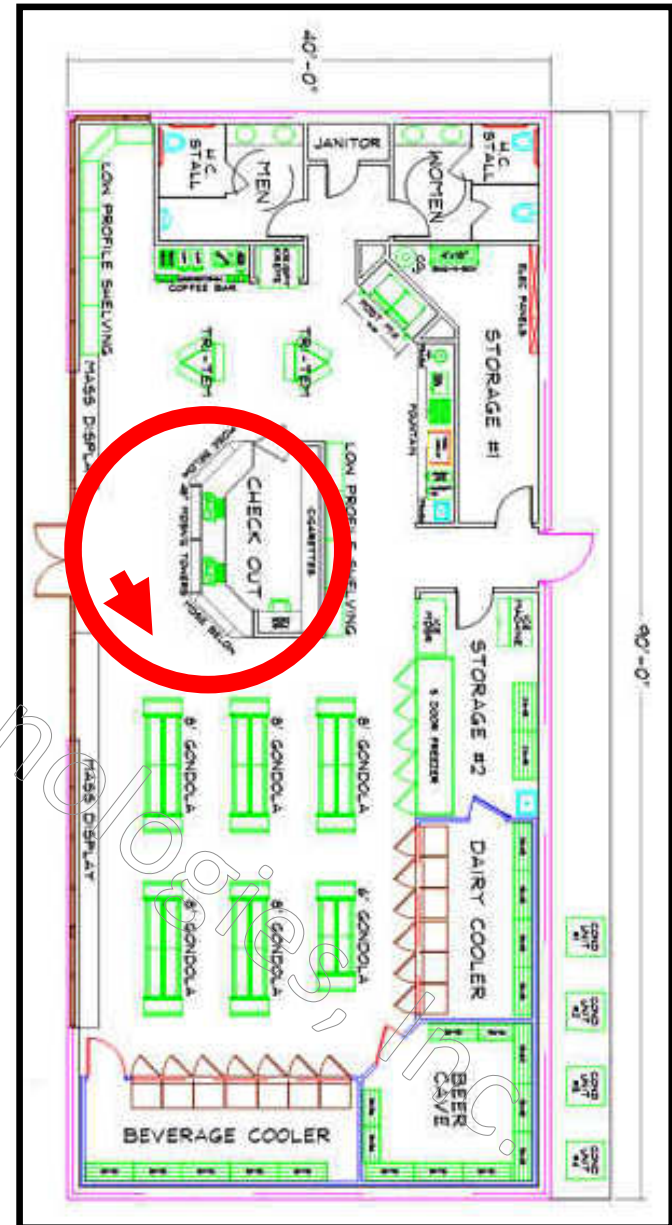
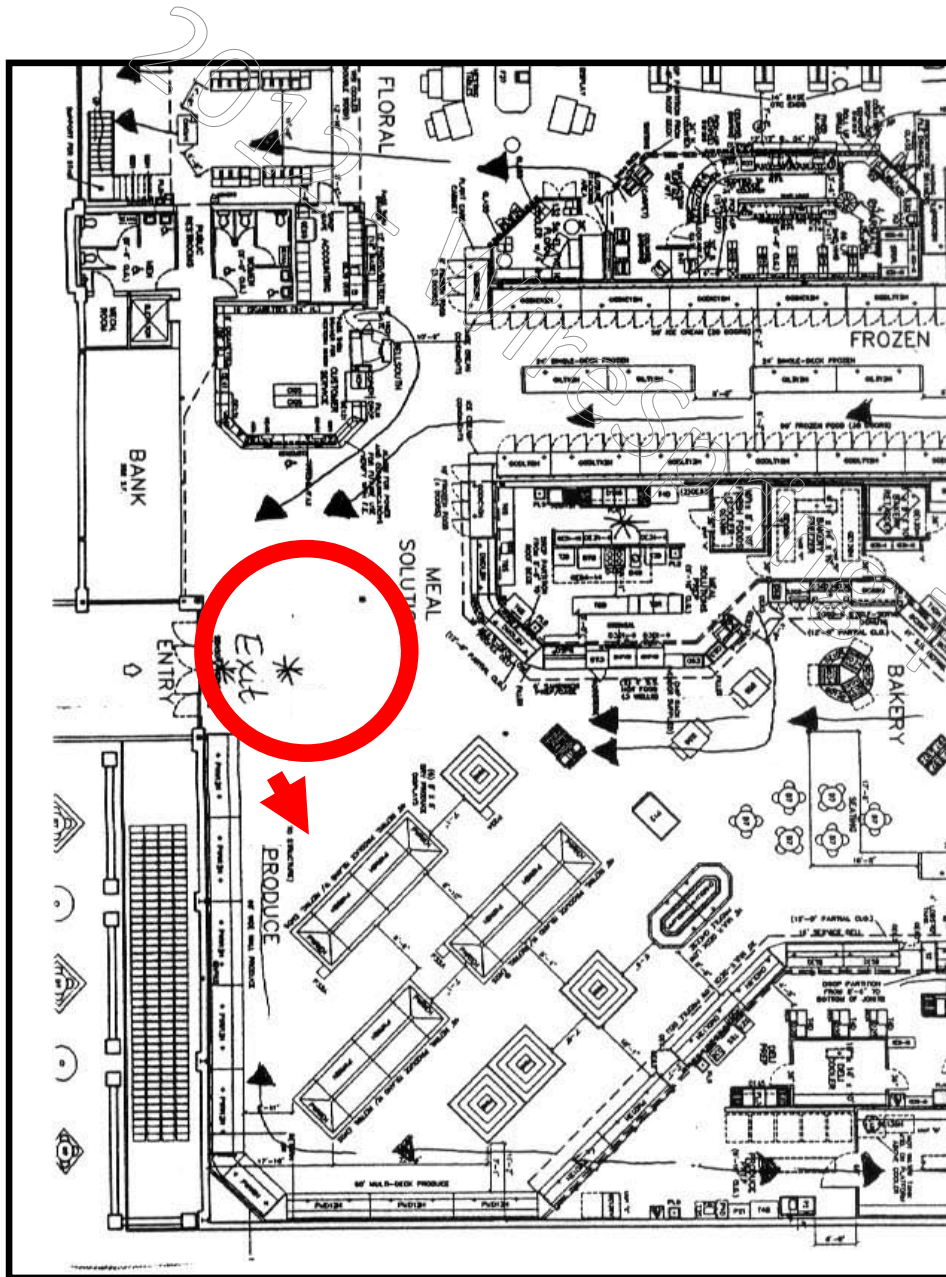
Client: 7-Eleven (House spot)

2012 - Wirespring Technologies, Inc. Environment



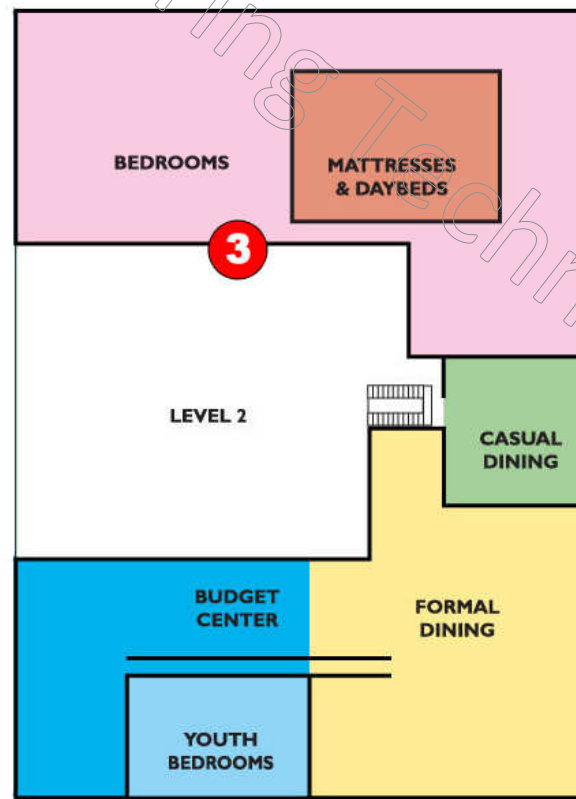
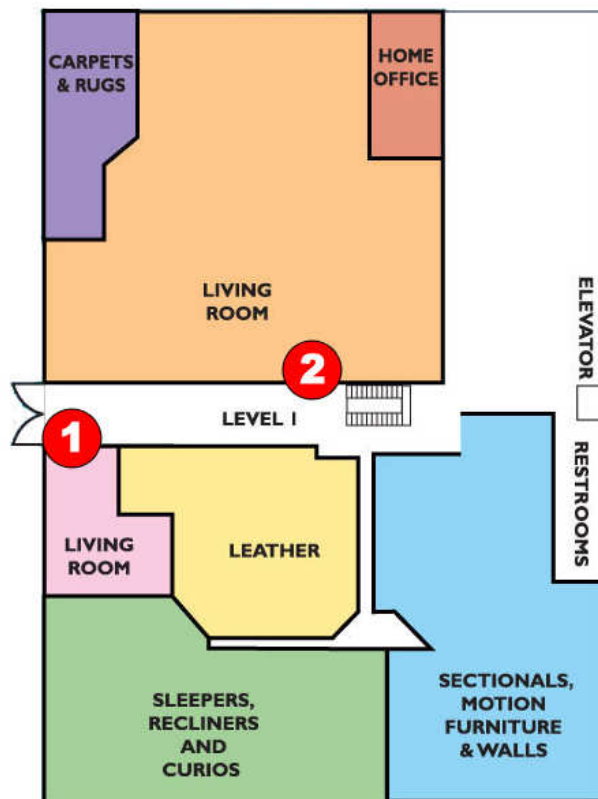
The Decompression Zone

- The “decompression zone,” as Paco Underhill describes it, is a messaging no-mans land at the store entrance
- Lasts for 15-20 feet inside the store
- Thus, in general we do not recommend placing digital signs near entryways

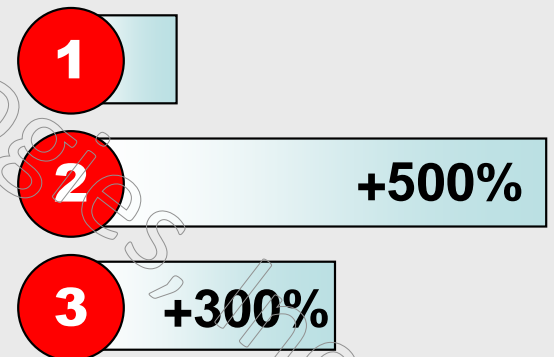


Performance by Location

In a 2-story furniture store chain, kiosks in the main channel were used 6x as often as those in the landing area:



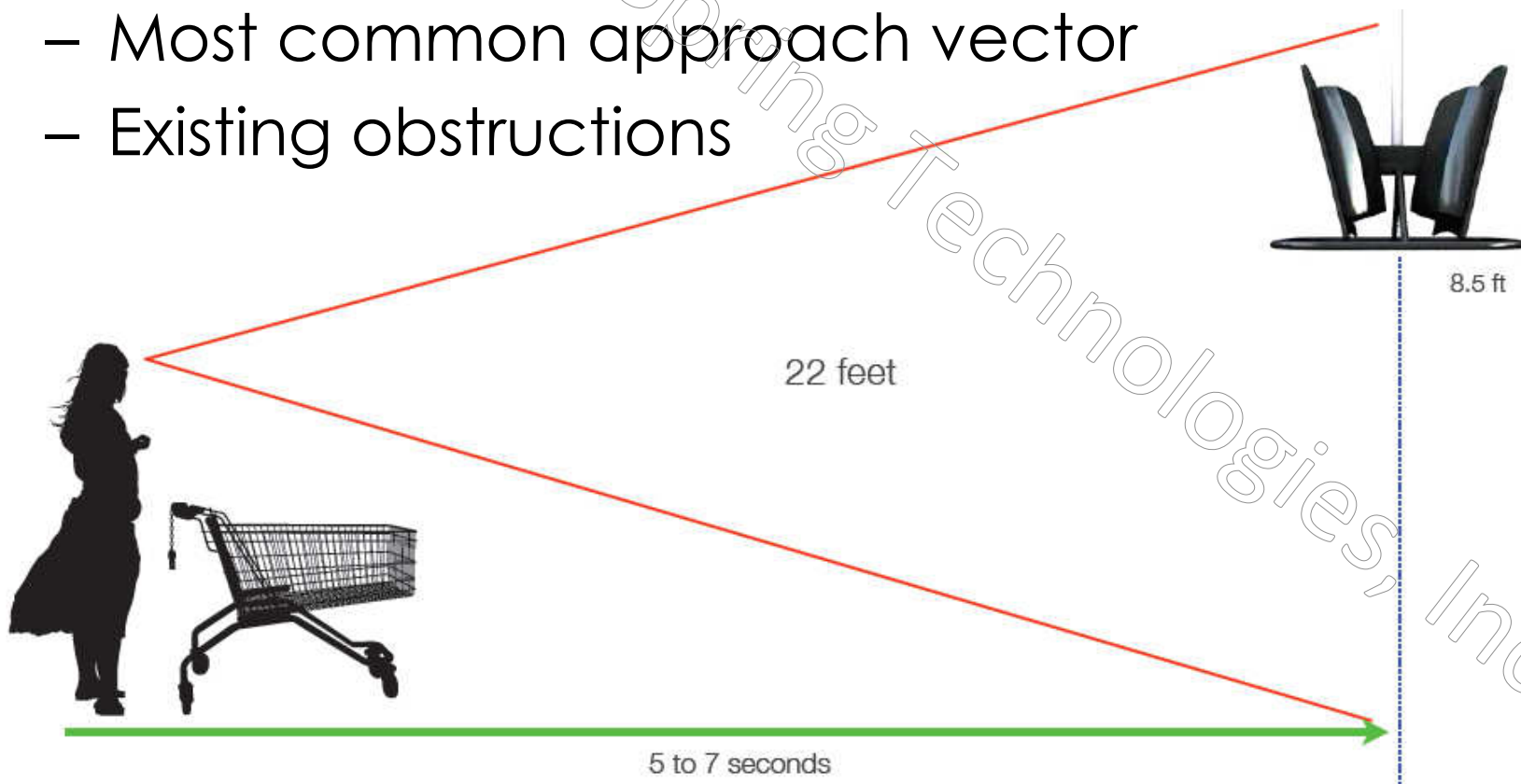
Kiosk Utilization Rates



Viewing Angle

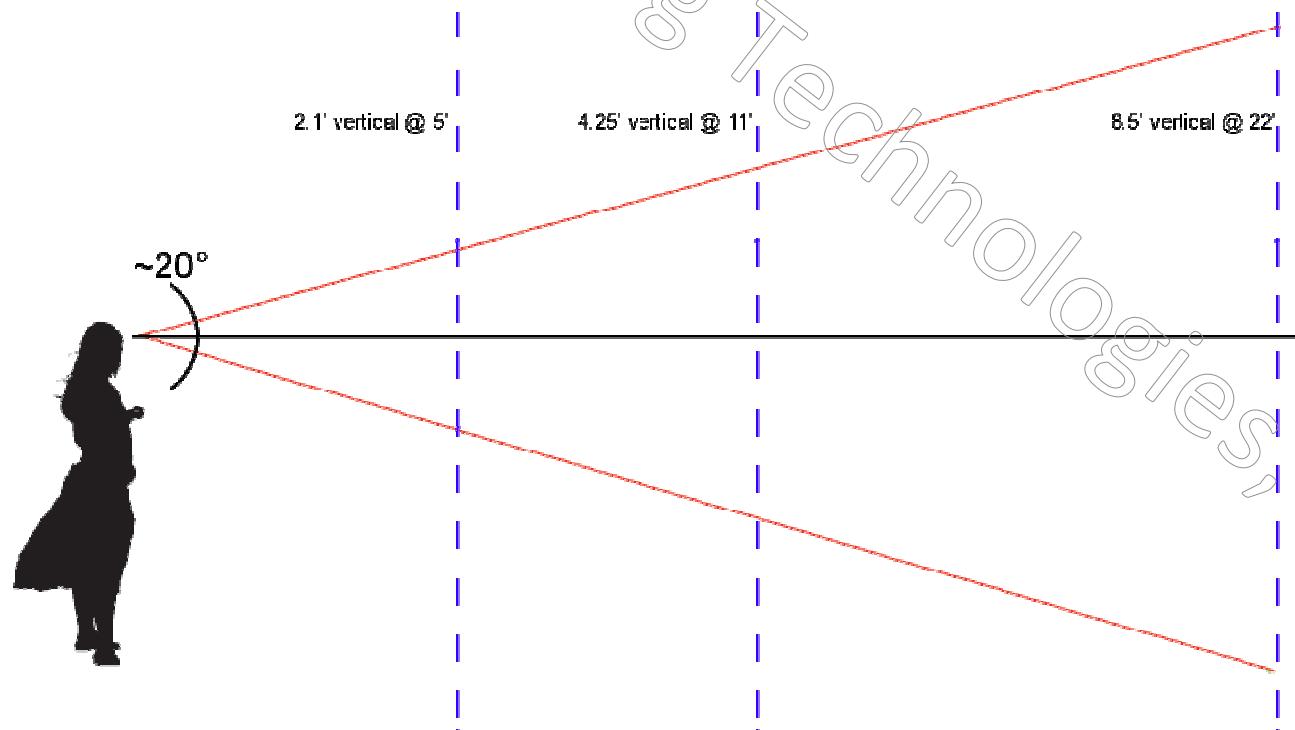
Optimal viewing angle is a function of:

- Screen & content size
- Most common approach vector
- Existing obstructions

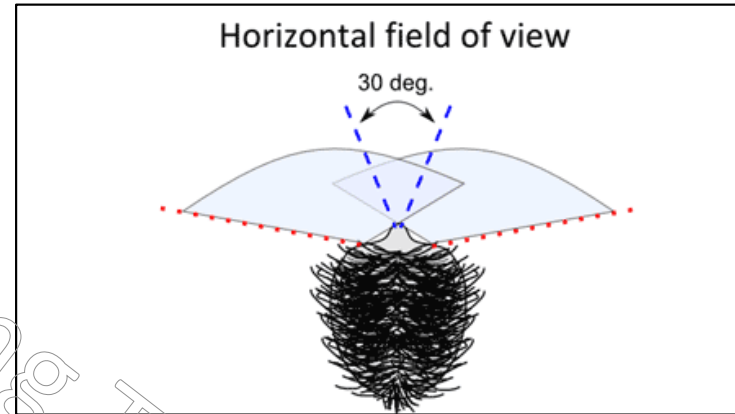
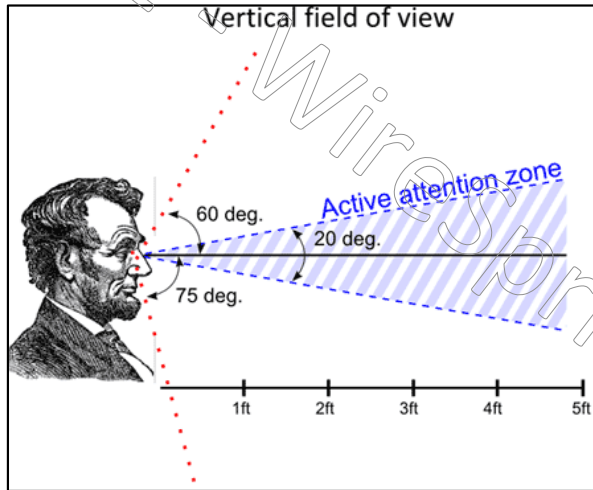


The Angle of Awareness

- Moving shoppers keep a roughly 20 degree FOV in active attention
- Keep screens within the FOV range that you expect shoppers to see it from



The Active Attention Zone



Distance between viewer and screen	Vertical % of attention zone occupied	Horizontal % of attention zone occupied	Total % of attention zone occupied
5 feet	91.6%	100%	91.6%
10 feet	45.8%	50.5%	23.1%
15 feet	30.5%	33.7%	10.3%
20 feet	22.3%	25.3%	5.8%

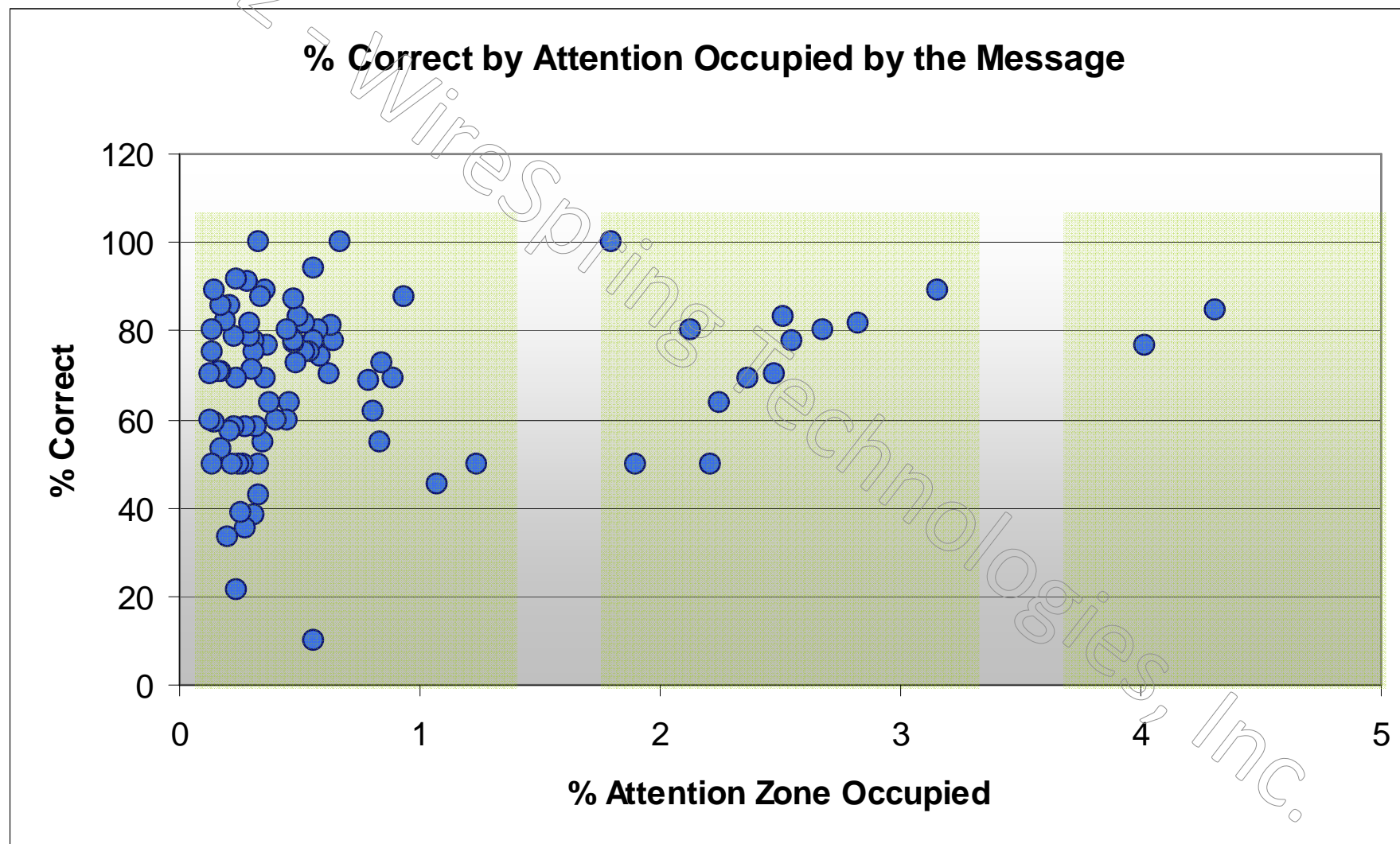
Sizing text for HD screens

- Optimal text size depends on screen resolution and desired character height:

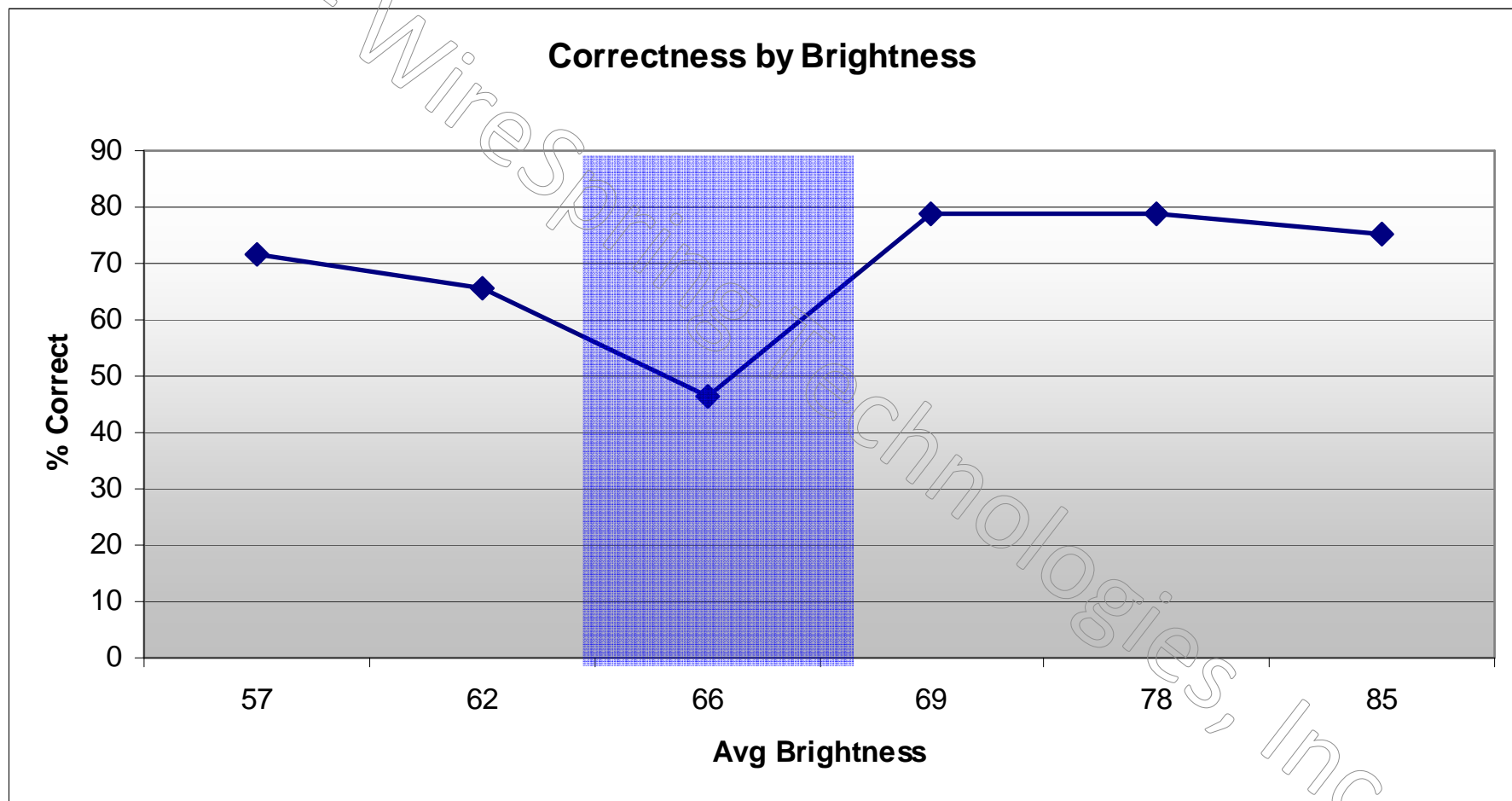
Distance (feet)	Minimal Readable Text Height (inches)
5' - 50'	1" - 2"
50' - 100'	2" - 4"
100' - 200'	4" - 8"

- On a 40" screen with 1366x768 resolution, 2" text is about **50 pixels tall**. On a 40" 1080p screen, it's about **125 pixels tall**.

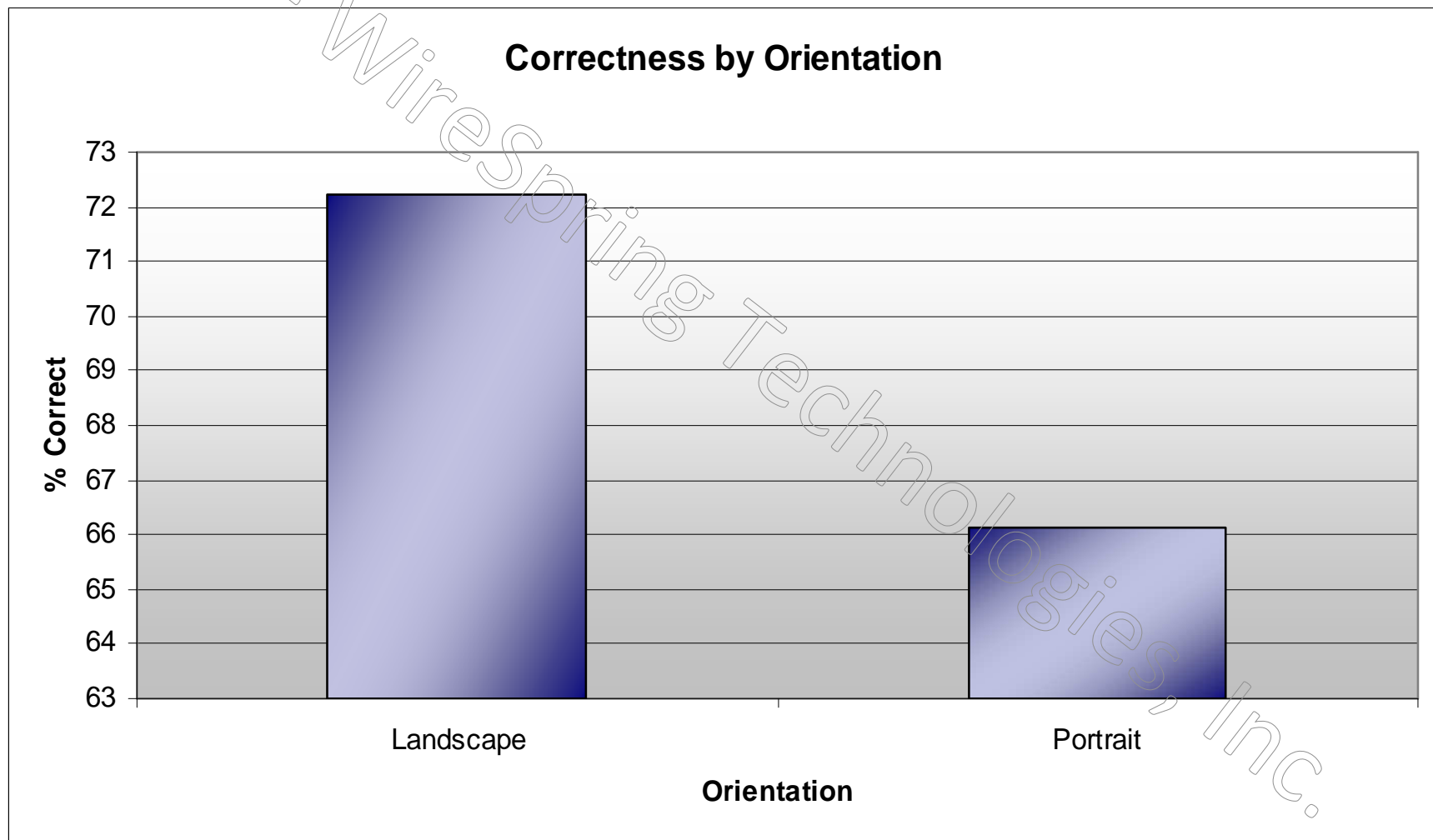
Is a Bigger Screen always Better?



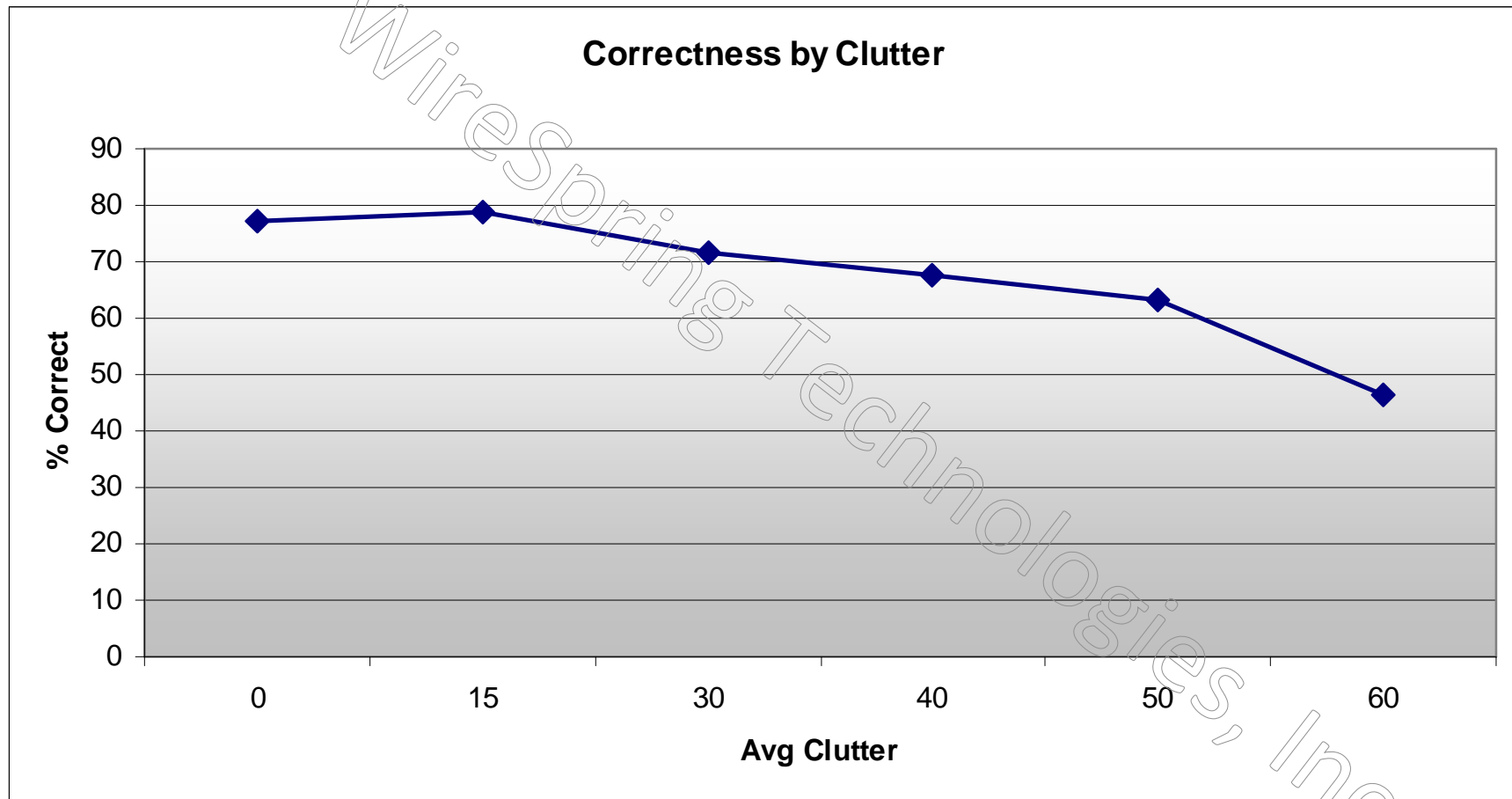
Does Venue Lighting Affect Performance?



What about Screen Orientation?

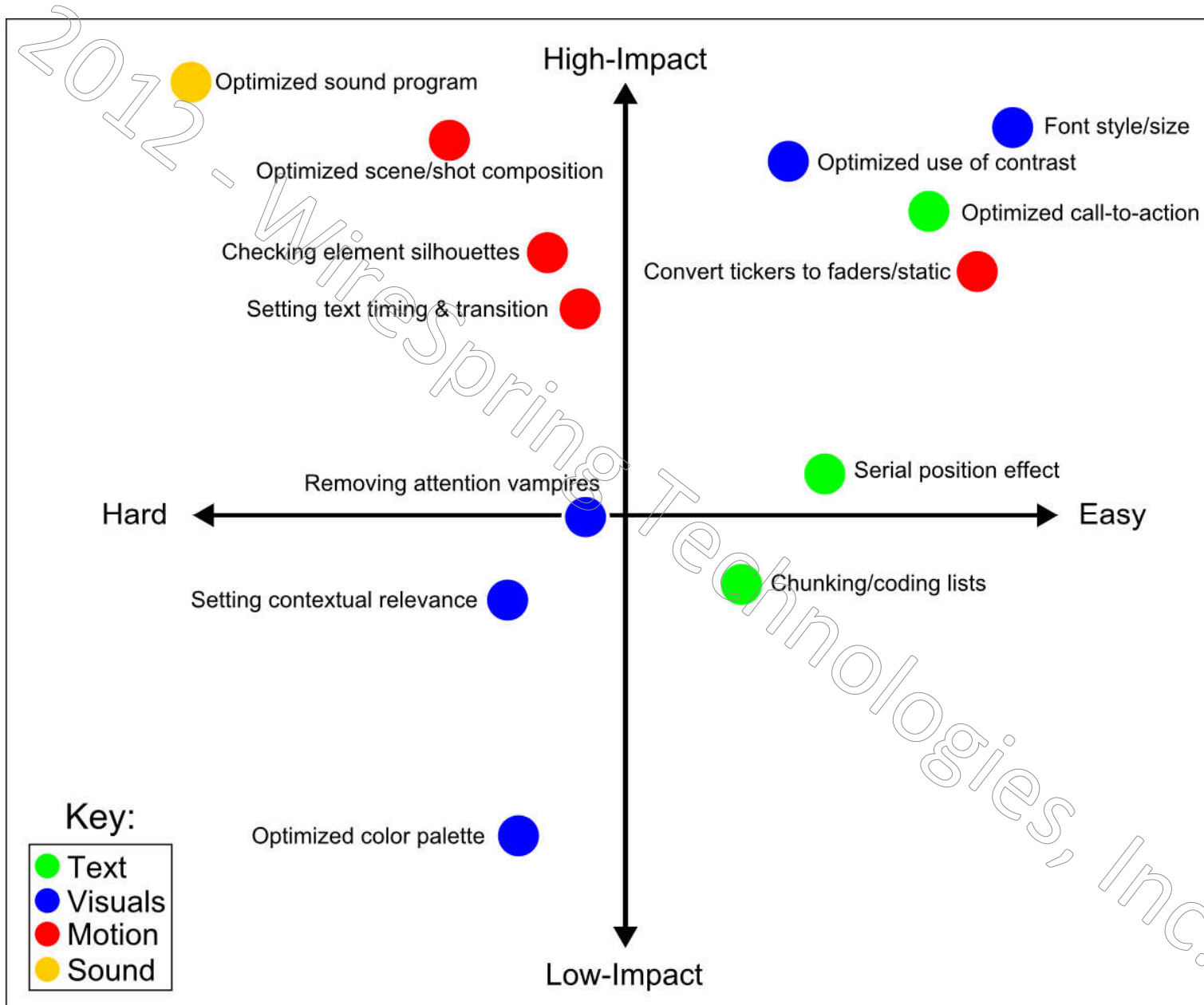


What is Visual Clutter, and why does it Matter?



2012 - Wirespring Technologies, Inc.

So, where should you spend your time?



What about environmental factors?

2012 - Wirespring Technologies, Inc.

Environmental Items to Act On

#1: Visual clutter in your environment is BAD.

Maybe those “clean store” policies have some legs...

Environmental Items to Act On

#2: The higher the
contrast, the better the
visibility

It's one of those “duh” concepts that people still ignore.

Environmental Items to Act On

#3: Landscape, not portrait.

This one still surprises me.

Environmental Items to Act On

#4: Shorter message = higher recall.

We saw significant differences even within the confines of the “seven plus or minus two” axiom.

Environmental Items to Act On

#5: A little bigger \neq a lot better.

Even quintupling the amount of space that a message occupied had little effect when it still only took up a small amount of the active attention zone.

About the Author



Bill Gerba is CEO of WireSpring Technologies, whose software and services power thousands of digital signs, kiosks and other devices around the world, serving companies like Procter & Gamble, BP and Walmart. He is a member of POPAI's digital signage technology standards and awards programs, and is a regular speaker at industry events. Bill also authors WireSpring's popular Digital Signage Insiders blog at wirespring.com/blog

Bill is always happy to talk about new projects, tech trends, and best practices for making great digital signage content. He can be reached at:

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About WireSpring

Since 2000, WireSpring has provided hardware, software and expert advice for digital signage, kiosk and machine-to-machine (M2M) projects. Learn more about us at www.wirespring.com



FireCast EasyStart

www.simplifiedigitalsignage.com

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FireCast Enterprise

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An advanced product suite for customers managing large numbers of digital signs and touch screen devices.