

Why the new IRS can't and should not be compared with the old one?

A Note from Mr Paritosh Joshi – Chairman, IRS Technical Committee

The RSCI today published the IRS for the period ending December 31, 2013.

This release is the first since the new vendor, Nielsen, was appointed in early 2013.

The new IRS has several features that distinguish it from the previous edition.

1. The entire study was done using DS-CAPI (Dual Screen- Computer Aided Personal Interview) devices for administering and recording all interviews. In the past, the majority of interviews were conducted in the traditional PAPI (Paper And Pen Interview) method.
2. The core, AIR, part of the study was administered to ALL respondent homes while many other sections were administered to part samples to maximise output without imposing an unbearable interview upon either the interviewer or the respondent. This meant a reduction in average interview duration to well over an hour to just about 30 minutes. The compact duration meant that both interviewer and respondent did not suffer from administration fatigue. Important causes of non-sampling error that had crept into the study were thus eliminated.
3. All readership was measured only and exclusively on the AIR standard and other measures such as TR or CR were dropped. This was to ensure that the published measure had a direct relationship with people's normal media consumption behaviours. Media such as TV and Radio were measured on the basis of consumption in the previous
4. All numbers in IRS are statistical estimates. Estimates always operate within an interval. This is the best of all readership studies as all non sampling irregularities have been eliminated to get the most robust data. The RFP attracted some of the best global researchers that ensured advance technology enabler with latest methodology for greater accuracy.
5. Audience measurement data make most sense when seen in a time series. This is just the first point, and patterns will only begin to emerge once the first round of 2014 is published about a quarter hence. Using historic data to do any projections or extrapolations is contrary to our sincerest professional advice and RSCI/MRUC disclaim all responsibility for decisions made or conclusions derived by such methods. Hence no real comparison should be made with the old data on account of superior methodology, advanced technology and greater statistical accuracy.