



**The Magical 2.5 Seconds**

**Media  
Attention Benchmark**

# eye square Media Attention Benchmark

## The gift of attention – and the experience of a (short) moment

First of its kind, eye square's analysis has managed to systematically establish correlations between "the moment of perception" (human experience) and memory in advertising. Our meta-analysis media benchmark can be ordered exclusively here.

### Three core theses of our meta-analysis:

1. Moments are short
2. Short moments can be effective
3. Moments are gifts – creation is the determining factor

### Theoretical basis

Our meta-analysis is based on a three-system model: (physical) perception, implicit and explicit factors (emotions and surveys respectively).

### Scope of benchmark

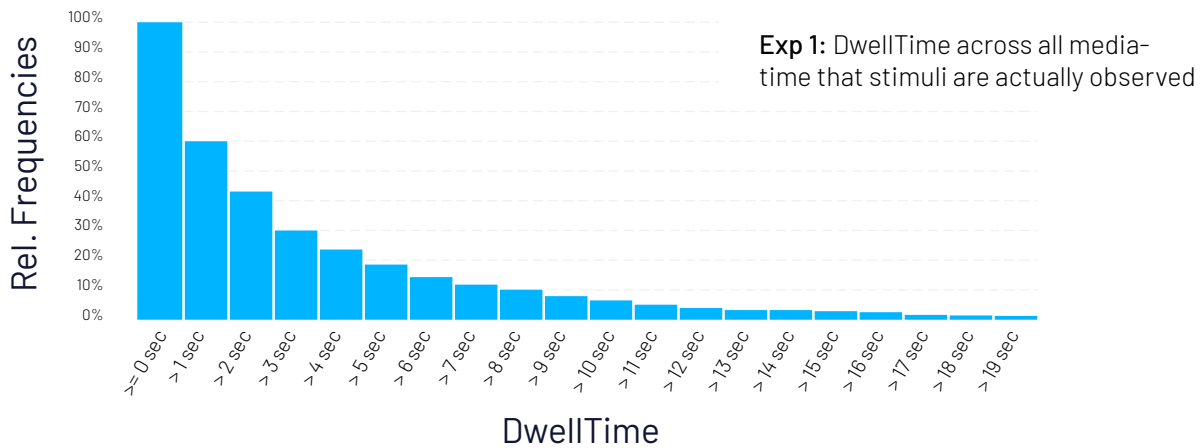
**'In context studies'** from 2003-2019: More than 320 studies with 340.000 total participants along with ad material consisting of 3283 visual stimuli (1671 online, 746 tv, 748 print, and 118 poster ads). Eye-tracking data was comprised of 57 studies with a total of 698 stimuli (262 online).

### Indicators

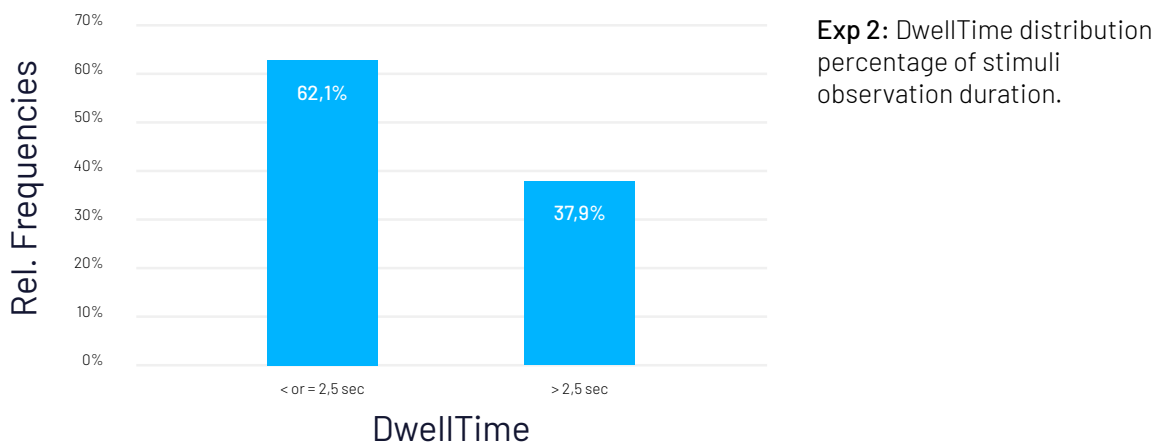
**For perception:** DwellTime (average time of observation of any given ad material) measured with eye-tracking data.

**For memory:** Recall (unassisted recollection of a specific advertisement) and Recognition (recollection of a certain creation)

## Thesis 1: Moments are short



Exp 1 shows the percentages of advertisements still being looked at after a specific time. This shrinks rapidly from 100 to almost 0 with time progresses. These results show just how much attention span concerning ads is severely fragmented in times of intensive media usage and multi-screening (the use of several screens by users). Visual attention of more than 10 seconds becomes very rare. **After only 2.5 seconds, 62.5% of users have already left.**



**As the majority of moments are very short, advertisers can resort to two strategies in response:**

- **Be Fast:** deliver your message in less than 2.5 seconds.
- **Be Inviting:** use creativity to invite longer observation and achieve deeper perception.

In any case, acceleration of storytelling and drama will prove advantageous for either approach.

## Thesis 2: Short moments can be effective

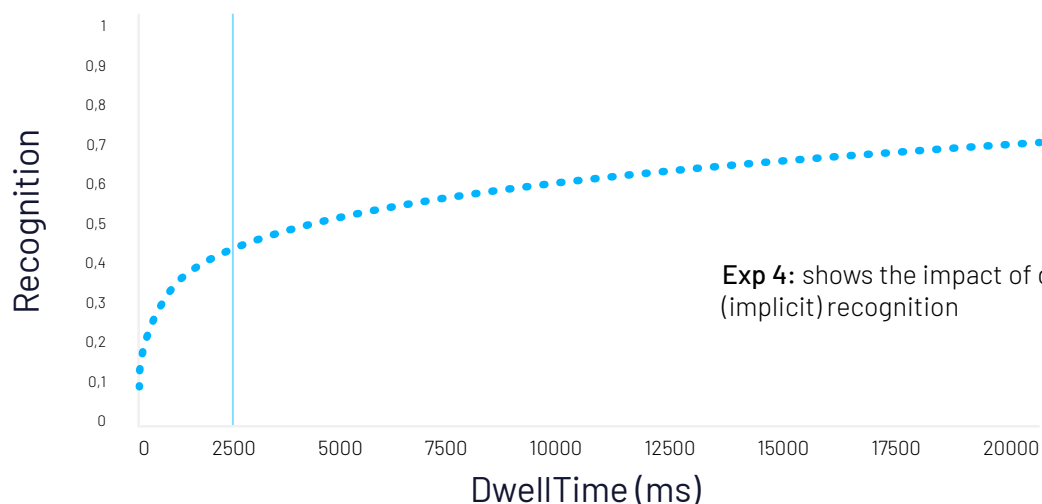
There is a connection between intensity of observation / perception and memory. Fundamentally, the length of observation is positively correlated to memory. But short moments can have an impact as well: **actual impact increases dramatically within those short moments**. A significant predictor for memory is dwell time. (There is strong correlation between memory and dwell time).

Parameter	R <sup>2</sup> for Free Recall / Recognition
DwellTime	0,104 / 0,523 (10.4% / 52,3%)

Exp 3: DwellTime distribution-  
percentage of stimuli observed for  
how long

DwellTime explains a 10.4% variance in free recall (an explicit factor) and a 52.3% variance in recognition (an implicit factor)

The time window of under 2.5 seconds is of great significance.



The strength of this impact is shown by the **incline of the regression curve in the first 2.5 seconds**. After 2.5 seconds the incline factor drops. Further observation does not significantly increase recognition.

## Analyzing the findings:

eye square's media benchmark analysis shows a strong correlation between dwell time, attention and memory (especially its implicit factor "recognition"). The longer a creation is observed, the better chances for advertisers' messages are to be memorized implicitly and explicitly.

However, this **correlation has its most dramatic incline up to 2.5 seconds and drops off after that** – marking the **threshold for the effectiveness of advertising**. This means that even the shortest and most superficial perception has an impact on memory.

## Thesis 3: creativity turns these moments into gifts

The most important driver of attention and perception is creativity, as also proven by our recent MAX-study about the correlation between implicit perception and customer conversion rate (published in cooperation with Jacques Blanchard), as well as our implicit 'Impact Study'.

This means that the main challenge faced by advertisers is creating stories and perception in short moments – not long ones. Focus on short moments needs to move further to the center of designers' awareness so they can be addressed more creatively.

While classic design (such as print and OOH) can be effective for making stories work in short time frames, this efficiency gains further importance as moments of attention become even shorter and more fragmented in digital environments. Purely technical optimization – such as improvement of target audience selection – is not a sufficient response to that challenge.

Instead, that response lies more in creating a brand which honors each moment – long or short – and produces real momentum. What this involves is a new paradigm that can be called a "emblematic and implicit ad code" generating icons. While difficult to detect with explicit methods, this impact can be measured using implicit InContext methodology and the corresponding technology. Only such InContext methods can actually reach "system 0" (the "real perception"). For many years, research on the effectiveness of advertising has neglected context. While this seems sufficient for longer moments, the need for measuring "quality of moments" means that dealing with the context becomes a precondition for reliable measurement of perception.

**eye square is a leading global provider of human experience technologies.**

We offer a unique live and implicit market research approach to detect decisive signals in the "digital now". eye square also specializes in brand and media experience, user experience and shopper experience.

Founded in 1999, eye square pioneered the use of eye tracking for user and market research. Besides eye tracking, we enrich the classic methods of market research by live "InContext research", reaction time measurement, emotion recognition, behavioral analysis and neurosemiotics using a groundbreaking 3 level-model. We develop unique and profound market research technologies in-house.

Based on our experience, we have built up one of the largest databases of commercial eye-tracking and emotion measurement data worldwide. This allows us to benchmark how users experience new websites, mobile applications, products, advertisements and marketing material against established biomarkers. eye square's client portfolio includes major companies such as Google, Facebook, eBay, P&G, Daimler, Unilever and more. Our teams are based in Berlin, London, Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Kerala, and are here to help you understand your customers and succeed.

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SWIFT: COBA DE FF XXX

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