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# Admap

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## How to exploit media geography

By Vanessa Lenton, Starcom MediaVest

# How to exploit media geography

**Vanessa Lenton**, Starcom MediaVest, shows how maps can help planners sort out their priorities between competing local newspapers for retail campaigns

**P**LANNING LOCAL CAMPAIGNS for retailers is getting easier and more robust thanks to advances in the past year in the tools available to planners. Media planning for individual retail locations used to be a fiddly process, involving the use of several different tools and systems and with a limited ability to visualise the plan as you created it.

Now, the industry-standard systems are becoming more and more integrated, and more and more sophisticated, making for simpler and better planning.

Maps assist with regional press planning in a number of ways. Not least because they lift the media selection process out of being a pure numbers game into a much more effective and persuasive visual arena. They help a planner make a title selection and, all importantly, they illustrate that selection when the planner explains and justifies it to a client.

There are several mapping systems available to UK media planners: regional

media planning on MediaTel, Beacon Dodsworth JICREG (Joint Industry Committee for Regional Newspapers, the industry research body for the sector) mapping, Experian Micromarketer and CACI InSite mapping, to name but a few. Some of these mapping tools have been available for several years and all are being developed and improved continually. Each provides different elements of media planning. MediaTel and JICREG mapping allow the planner to overlap radio and press against any given geography. Micromarketer and InSite are more about demographic mapping, based on either Mosaic or Acorn target audiences.

We will be exploring Beacon Dodsworth's JICREG mapping system in this article. This system allows the planner to map regional press titles against a given geographic (and demographic) audience. JICREG mapping is a relative newcomer to the mapping market. The main advantage of the system is the interconnection between JICREG mapping, JICREG

online regional press planning and the online Brad (British Rate and Data) intelligence database. This web-based one-stop shop for regional planning only became available in 2003.

This case study highlights some of the real advantages of using a mapping tool such as JICREG mapping.

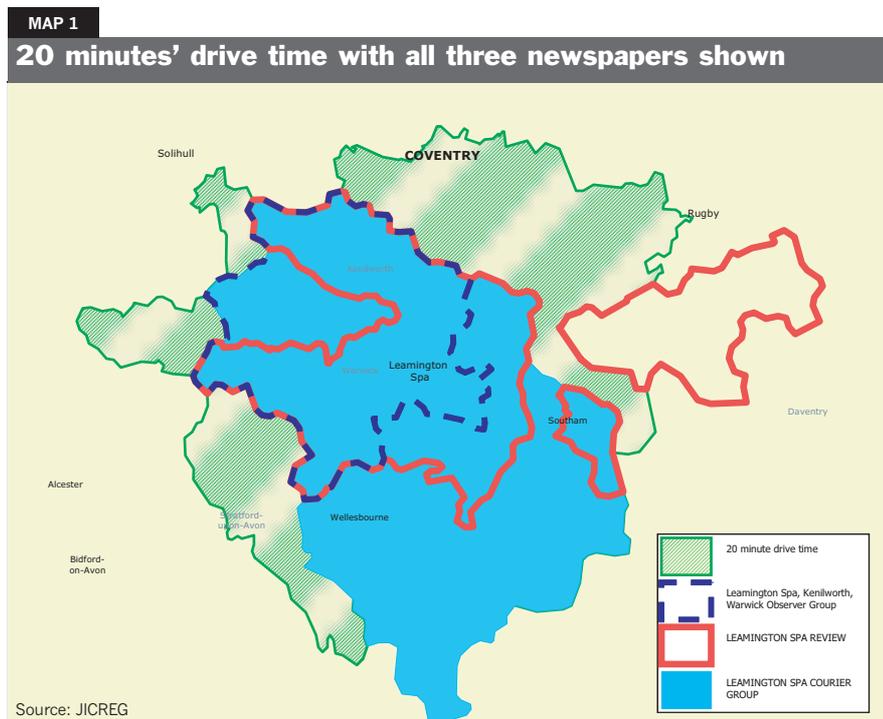
## An upmarket retailer – Leamington Spa, UK

We have been tasked with selecting a newspaper in which to advertise this store for a specific sales promotion. We start with a postcode location for the store. We know that 90% of business comes from a 20-minute drive-time catchment area. We also know that the majority of the client's customers are ABC1.

We use JICREG to produce a report showing which newspapers are being read by ABC1 adults within this 20-minute drive-time area.

The JICREG data show a number of titles that cover the 20-minute catchment area and highlight potential secondary catchment areas such as Coventry, Stratford-upon-Avon and Rugby. But there are many reasons why we would not use these titles for this store. This is a Leamington Spa-based store and we want to use only one title. For this campaign, we will automatically discount titles with high wastage outside the core catchment area because of the following reasons.

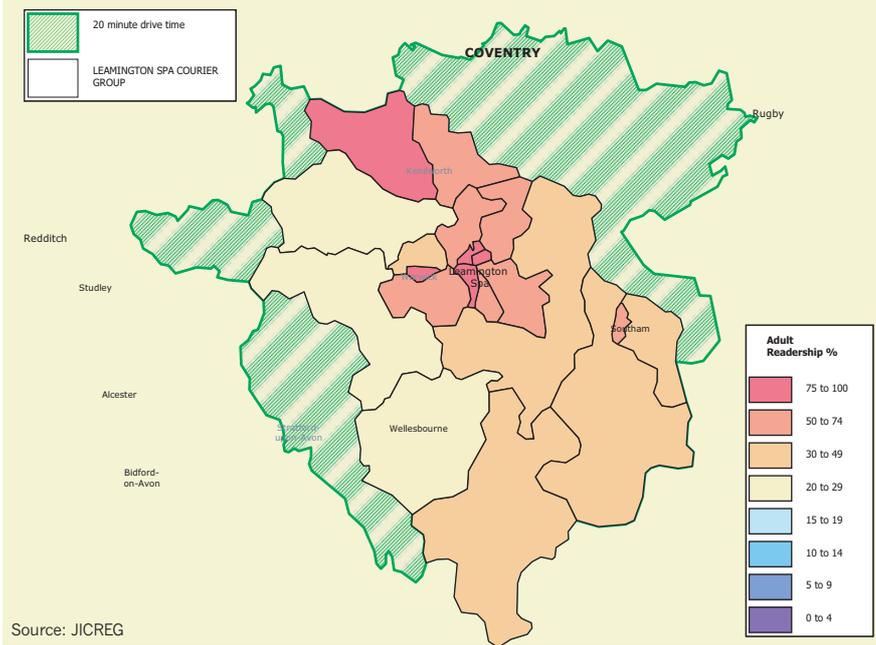
- 1.** Many of these titles yield too much wastage as over 45–50% of their circulations are outside of the core catchment area.
- 2.** The ABC1 demographic profile for some of these titles is low; our client's customers are predominantly ABC1.
- 3.** There are competitor stores in some of these other areas. This significantly diminishes the draw that our client's store in Leamington would have for customers outside the core Leamington Spa area.



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**MAP 2**  
**Leamington Spa Courier**



The three highest covering titles for Leamington Spa are the *Courier*, the *Review* and the *Observer*. These provide our core title selection. Now we have to choose just one title. They all have a reasonable ABC1 index and provide limited wastage.

We get hold of copies of the newspapers. Many clients are pre-disposed to use paid titles because of their perceived higher quality and greater proportion of local news. In this instance, the JICREG figures show that the paid-for *Leamington Spa Courier* does have a lower ad ratio as well as more pages than the free contenders.

We look at the papers to check the quality of the editorial, the general look, layout and accessibility of the paper, and the quality and strength of the core classified platforms such as motors, property, entertainment and recruitment. Having seen the papers, it is clear that the *Leamington Spa Courier* is a very strong, high-quality local paid-for paper. The *Observer* is the next strongest title in terms of quality and is a better free paper than the competitor *Review*.

The next stage of the title selection is to look at the maps of these titles,

collectively and individually. We use JICREG mapping. This mapping tool is the easiest to access because it is an integral part of the online JICREG planning site.

Map 1 shows the 20-minute catchment area of the store and overlays this with the circulation maps for the three titles we are considering. It is important to see all the titles considered on one map so that we can see the interplay between them.

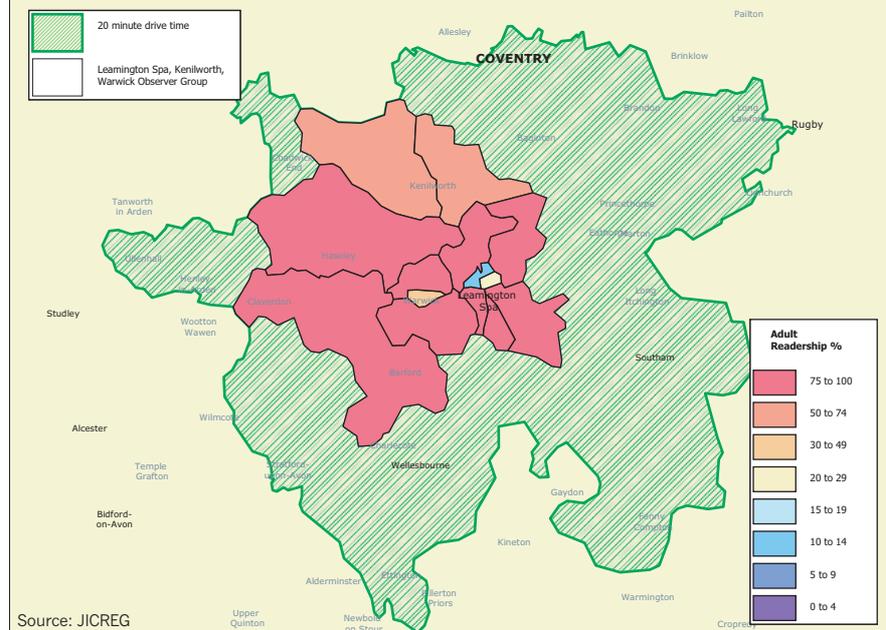
**Leamington Spa Courier** stretches down to the south, giving us coverage of areas at the bottom end of the 20-minute catchment area not reached by the other titles.

**Leamington Spa Review** stretches to the east between Rugby and Daventry, but some of this coverage is outside the 20-minute drive time.

**Leamington Spa Observer** covers a neat contained area within the 20-minute catchment. It does not cover any unique areas compared to the *Courier*. However, there is a gap in the coverage offered by the *Review* which the *Observer* plugs.

The next step is to look at the individual maps for each title. JICREG mapping allows us to see the readership penetration by postcode sector. These maps take us one step beyond just looking at coverage areas and allow us to understand how this coverage is made up. The readership breakdown of a newspaper is crucial when deciding whether the

**MAP 3**  
**Leamington Spa Observer**



paper covers the right people in the right areas.

Map 2 shows us that the *Courier's* key areas are the very centre of Leamington Spa and Kenilworth to the north-west. Warwick is also well covered.

The readership map (Map 3) for the *Leamington Spa Observer* series demonstrates the titles' strong coverage of ABC1 readers throughout the whole circulation area.

It does not dip below 50% in any postcode sector. Although the paper has a smaller geographical coverage than the other two being considered, it packs a more potent punch, with high coverage of our core target audience in the core target area.

The *Leamington Spa Review* (Map 4) sprawls across a wider area than the *Observer* but, in some of the postcodes that it covers, less than 20% of the ABC1s would read the title. This is very low penetration for a free title. The only area where the title is read by more than 74% of the ABC1 adults is to the north-east of Leamington Spa centre. This level of coverage is too low for this title to be considered as a viable contender for the budget.

Based on the JICREG information and seeing the papers, we would have selected the *Courier* as the title for this store.

JICREG mapping has effectively allowed us to add another title to the consideration list for this store. By demonstrating the evenly high level of quality ABC1 readers that the *Observer* delivers, JICREG mapping has led us to consider this title as a contender for this business. We now have two titles we would consider for this campaign.

The next stage is the negotiation with the media owners. This is where we can click through to Brad intelligence and find out more about the titles, such as who owns the papers, ABC and VFD circulation histories and basic ratecard information.

**Connected sources aid planning**

Before JICREG, JICREG mapping and Brad intelligence were all connected, the process of sourcing and using regional press planning information was a fragmented and time-consuming business. All of the information that is now online was available separately, but a planner would have to go from one system to another in order to gather the pieces of the puzzle. The development of this united resource has saved a lot of time and effort.

Developments such as the JICREG mapping readership penetration maps even alter the way we plan media,

because they allow us to investigate newspaper circulation areas at a more in-depth level. Rather than providing us with a mind-boggling list of numbers against seemingly meaningless postcodes, the maps allow us to see instantly a newspaper's strong and weak areas. As we have shown, a map is a persuasive argument for getting a title included or removed from an advertising shortlist.

Maps are a key part of the planner's armoury, but there are developments that are needed to make them even more useful.

In particular, Beacon Dodsworth is working on including site points on its maps so you can see precisely where an advertiser is located and you can also plot the locations of its competitors, a facility that is available on most of the other more mature mapping systems.

The huge amount of data that mapping systems incorporate makes some of them very slow, especially if you are trying to access them online. This is exacerbated if you are looking at a large area or trying to overlay more than six or seven newspapers on the same map – which would look very untidy anyway.

As a planner, you do need to work out exactly what you want to see on a map before you produce it, as too much information can be confusing and can result in visual overload. For example, if you were running a map for a central London store and wanted to list all the postcode names as well as local newspapers, the map would look too messy to be useable. There is a fine line between too sparse visual information and too much. Too little, and it is difficult to locate what you are looking at and the map does not illustrate any useful data. Too much, and it becomes unreadable and unintelligible.

**Conclusion**

Media maps do work, for planners and media owners alike. Where geographic targeting is the key, maps show the relevance (or lack of it) in one clear and easy image. Maps sell a campaign in a much more effective way than numbers alone can, and they bring home the impact and power of regional press. ■

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