

Case Study: Mindshare for The Sun

Using TouchPoints to understand the content consumption and media behaviours of the football audience across The Sun's digital and print offering. This understanding contributed to developing strategies to establish the new, united 'Sun Football' banner.

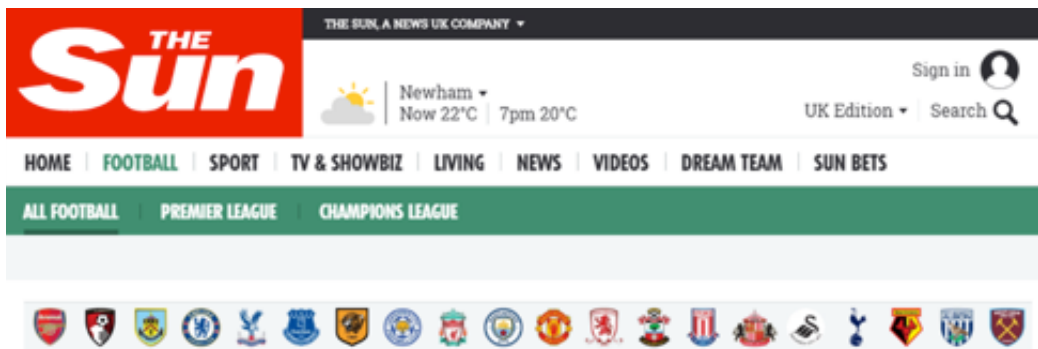


Identifying and differentiating The Sun's football audience

With the launch of 'Sun Bets' (The Sun's Betting Site), The Sun was looking to unite its football properties under one 'Sun Football' banner. Also, the start of the new football season was approaching and The Sun wanted to plan lynchpin strategies to support short term campaigns across the season.

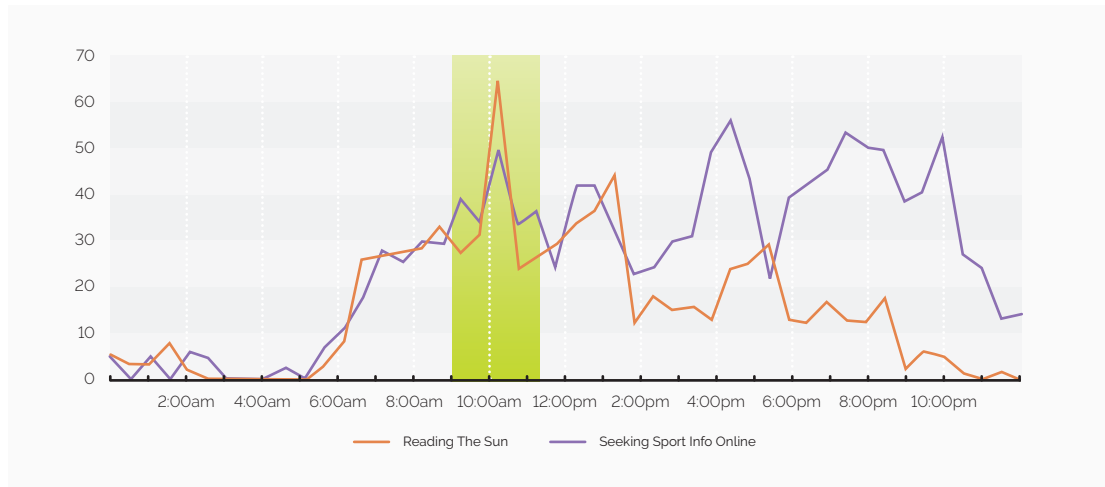
The challenge was that despite football accounting for over a quarter of all paper sales, it still wasn't clear who our football audience was and what drove their interest. Understanding how we could promote both our digital and print offering, without detracting from either, would be key to the success of the campaign.

Using TouchPoints, we could establish the digital and print differences for our identified football audience of 'Male C2DE favourite newspaper section – Sport Football'.



TouchPoints showed a clear spike in paper readership within our football audience as illustrated in Figure 1:

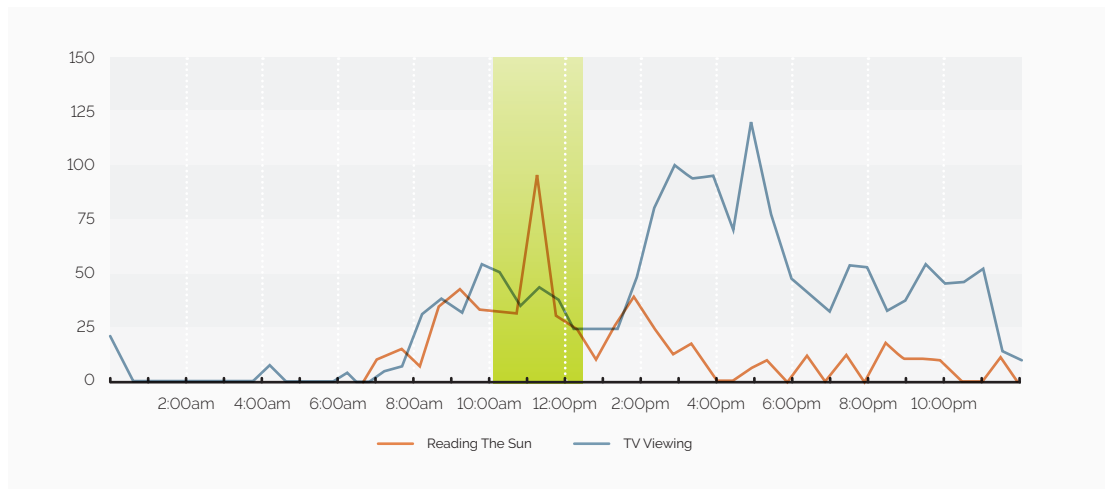
Figure 1: Weekday Average Audience (000's)



Source: IPA TouchPoints 6

On a Saturday, a key day for our audience, this spike is slightly later in the morning but is more pronounced and occurs before TV viewing, see Figure 2:

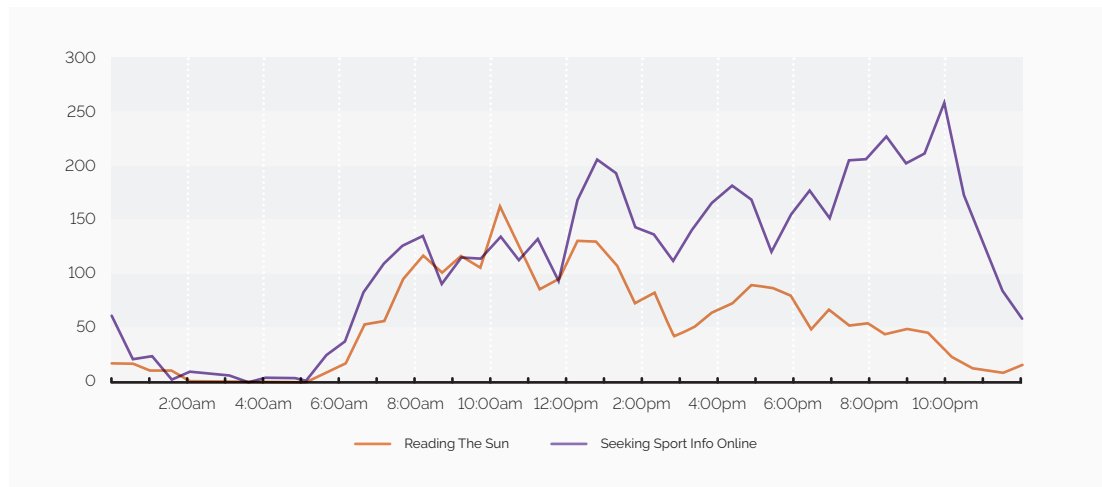
Figure 2: Saturday Audience (000's)



Source: IPA TouchPoints 6

In contrast to this, we noticed that at a total audience level, there was a less pronounced appointment to read the newspaper (see Figure 3). Whilst we see a small spike at 10am, there is a smoother pattern to readership and it is sustained at a higher level throughout the day. Indeed, the spike may well be caused by the football audience.

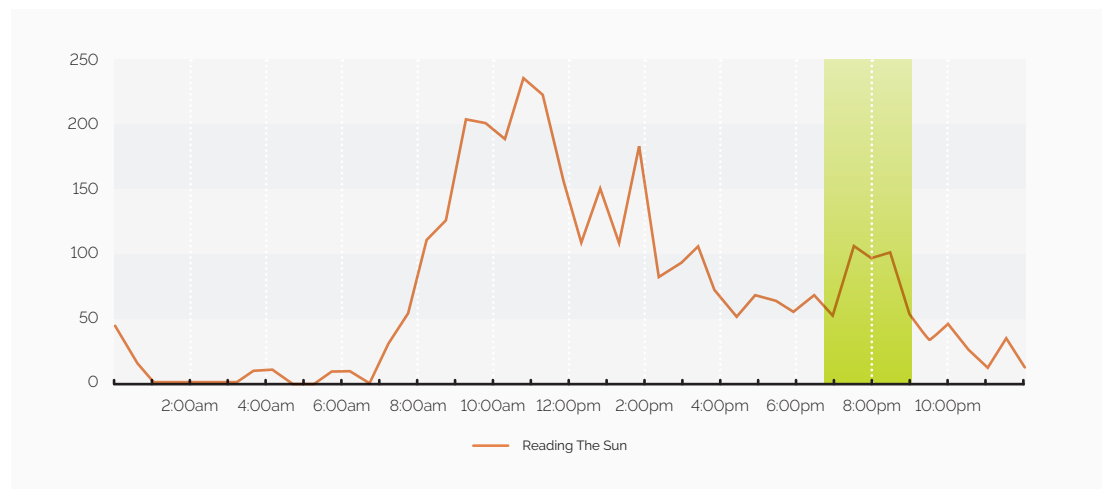
Figure 3: Weekday Average Audience (000's)



Source: IPA TouchPoints 6

Saturdays also saw a more sustained readership through the day as Figure 4 shows:

Figure 4: Saturday Audience (000's)



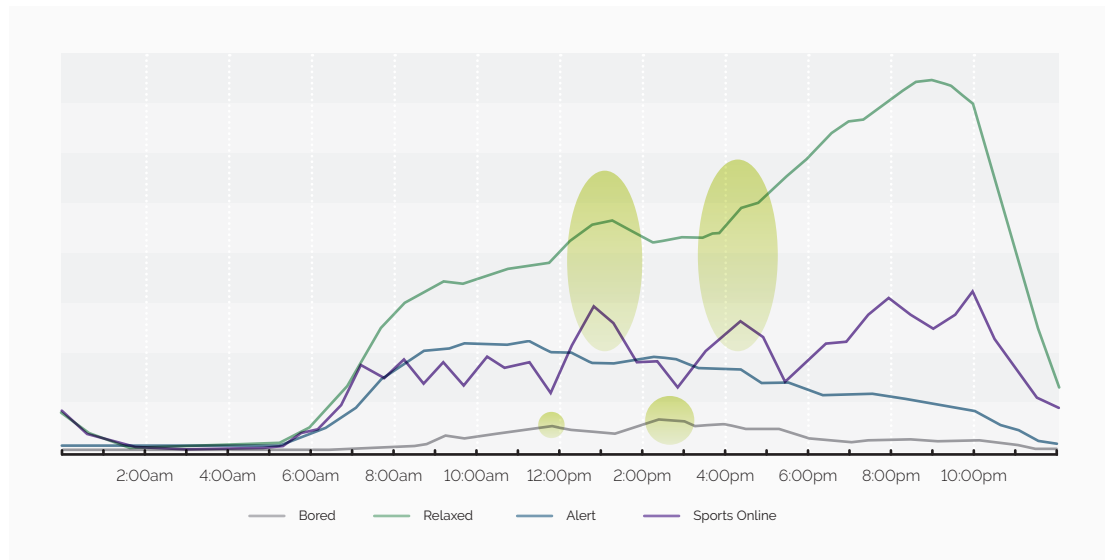
Source: IPA TouchPoints 6

Early findings were:

- Reaching our football audience in the run up to this spike would be key.
- This freed up afternoon communications to promote our online offering, without running the risk of detracting from our paper sales.
- The differing times further indicated that print and online fulfil different roles for football fans, with print a key component of the pre-match ritual, and online forming the post-match element.

TouchPoints was also able to help us identify emotional triggers for sports news.

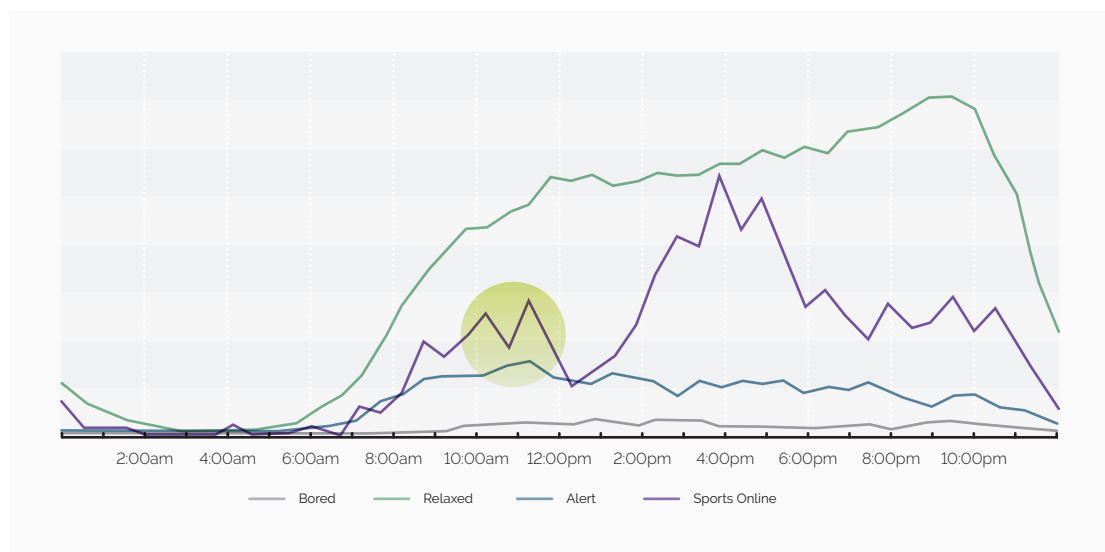
Figure 5: On weekdays our football audience seek sport content after periods of boredom, and this instigates a relaxed mindset



Source: IPA TouchPoints 6

During the week sports fans fill dead time by reading sports content (see Figure 6), in much the same way that many people scroll through the MailOnline. On weekends, however, engagement is purposeful as emotions draw high around the match as demonstrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Saturday mornings, by contrast, show a more alert audience as anticipation builds before a match



Source: IPA TouchPoints 6

Weekends, particularly Saturday, would therefore become the key focus of our media strategy, ensuring we reached our audience at their most engaged.

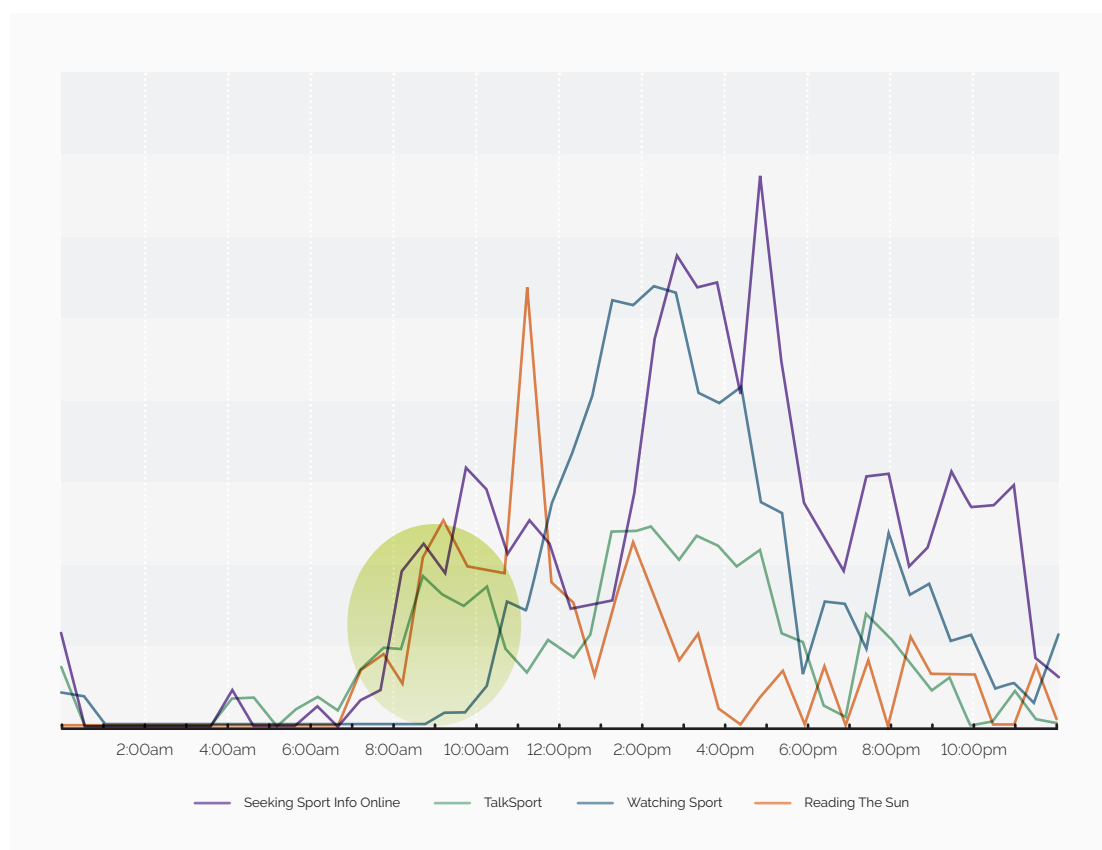
These findings would obviously have implications for our media choices.

Figure 7 shows that the live sports coverage is the pillar of the day, around which all else revolves.

The Sun newspaper is an absolutely vital part of the key Saturday coverage, and it occurs just before kick-off.

This presents us with a fairly long lead time through the morning to promote and push the paper. Key to this is TalkSport, where listening closely correlates to reading the paper. (see Figure 7).

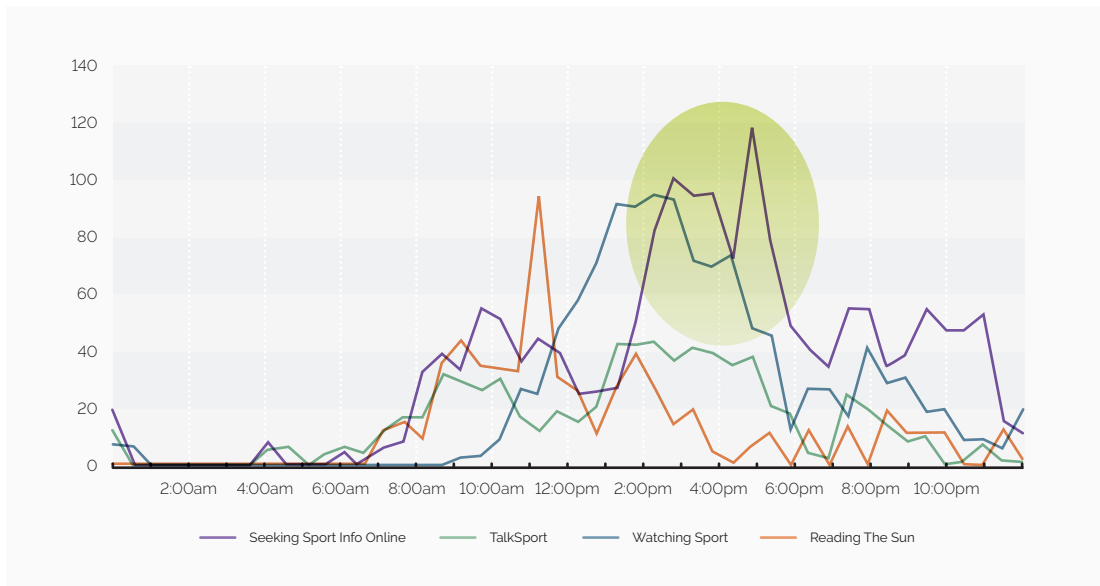
Figure 7: TouchPoints demonstrated that Talksport not only resonated with our audience, but also reached a morning peak well suited to driving our paper sales



Source: IPA TouchPoints 6

In the afternoon and evening it is the online offering that is key, as people rush to check scores before late evening when the match reports come out (see Figure 8).

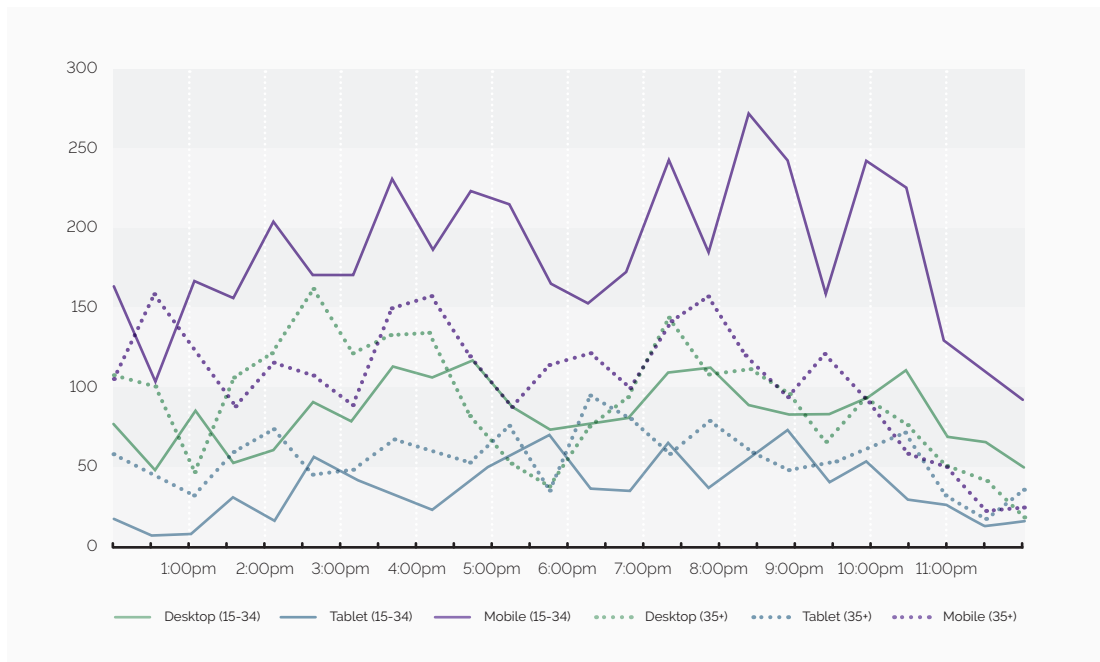
Figure 8: Diverting digital resources to Saturday afternoons minimises wastage and keeps us top of mind online at the key moment of the week



Source: IPA TouchPoints 6

Additionally, TouchPoints helped us show how we should make mobile a priority in our digital strategy, even for an older male audience (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Platform usage on Saturday afternoons



Source: IPA TouchPoints 6