

POLICY BRIEF

GUIDELINES FOR GEOGRAPHICALLY SPLITTING A COUNTY

OVERVIEW

Nielsen Audio implements a geographic split (geo-split) in Diary-measured counties to apply a more discrete level of sample management to the sampled population (Persons 12+). A geo-split divides a U.S. County into portions by grouping one or more contiguous ZIP codes and is recognized as a separate sampling unit for purposes of survey area definition. Geo-splits occur where:

- Sampling within particular sections of a county appears to be repetitively and substantially disproportionate to the population.

OR

- A geographic barrier (e.g. a mountain range) or proximity to other metro(s) yields significantly different listening patterns in the separate sections of a county.

Geo-split Counties must still meet new market guidelines for addition into newly created Metros.

PROCESS

Geo-split analysis can be initiated by Nielsen Audio at any time based on its own interpretation of sample performance. In addition, clients may request a Nielsen evaluation of a given geography. The county in question is then geo-split into proposed portions to review discrete sample performance, geographic barriers, and listening patterns. Factors such as in-tab proportionality and response rate¹ may be considered in determining whether a section of a county is receiving repeated or substantially disproportionate sampling relative to its population warranting a geo-split. Listening analysis alone may warrant a new or revised geo-split in cases where topography or proximity to adjacent metros yields significantly different listening patterns,

Nielsen Audio Policy and Guidelines, in concert with appropriate Nielsen Audio subject matter experts, will make the final decision on whether to implement a geo-split. Newly created geo-split county portions must have sufficient population to support sample target allocation and sample

balancing as well as be in proportion to its original, whole county. New geo-splits will be reviewed for ethnic composition in accordance with policies and procedures regarding differential survey treatments and high density areas.

Note: The evaluation process must be completed by the market change deadline for the survey in which the geo-split is to be implemented (Spring or Fall).

COMMUNICATION

Geo-splits are based on methodological considerations. A letter will be sent to all clients in respective markets to inform each of the any final geo-split changes.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

Analysis for determining whether or not to implement geo-splits may vary based on the unique circumstances particular to that county. We reserve the right to exercise our judgment in modifying, suspending and/or waiving any criteria in cases where the strict application of the criteria would, in our judgment, produce illogical sampling units or would adversely affect the quality of the reported audience estimates.

If you have any questions or seek additional information regarding geo-splits:

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¹ The ratio of in-tab diaries to the Estimated Persons in Usable Households, generally expressed as a percentage.