



# Define Your Odds:

*Finding Bankable TV Personalities*



Case Study

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## Background: About Dr. Frank Luntz

Dr. Frank Luntz is one of the most honored communication professionals in America today. Time magazine named him one of "50 of America's most promising leaders aged 40 and under" and he is the "hottest pollster" in America according to the Boston Globe. Frank was named one of the four "Top Research Minds" by Business Week and was a winner of the coveted Washington Post "Crystal Ball" award for being the most accurate pundit. 'Legendary' is the word The New York Times used to describe Luntz's language skills.

His focus groups have become so influential that Sir David Frost has labeled him **"the Nostradamus of pollsters."** Then-presidential candidate Barack Obama had this to say following the PBS Democratic presidential debate: **"When Frank Luntz invites you to talk to his focus group, you talk to his focus group."**

The "Instant Response" focus group technique pioneered by Frank has been profiled on 60 Minutes, Good Morning America (on Election Day 2008) and on the award-winning PBS show Frontline. He has been a guest on virtually every talk show in America, including: Meet the Press, Nightline, The Today Show, Charlie Rose, The Jim Lehrer News Hour, The O'Reilly Factor, Tavis Smiley, and Hardball. He also served as a consultant to the award-winning NBC hit show "The West Wing."

More media outlets have turned to Dr. Luntz to understand the hopes and fears of Americans than to any other political pollster. In 2008, Frank was the "Focus Group Czar" for Fox News, conducting over 40 sessions in 14 states, as well as co-hosting four live hour-long prime time specials and dial sessions during every debate. He was a primary night and election night commentator for The News with Brian Williams on MSNBC in 2000 and for Hardball in 2004. His recurring segments on MSNBC/CNBC, "100 Days, 1000 Voices" won the coveted Emmy Award in 2001. Frank has conducted focus group sessions for all three major television networks, two of the three cable news channels (PBS and the BBC,) as well as for The Wall Street Journal, Newsweek, The New Yorker, and U.S. News & World Report.

"Luntz has an amazing ear. As a linguist, I look at him and say, 'He knows how to frame the debate.'"

- **George Lakoff, *The New Yorker***

"Luntz' forte is constructing the phrase that persuades -always a skill in demand in Corporate America."

-**BusinessWeek**

"Great words can accomplish great things. If you really want to capture the power of communication, you have to read Frank Luntz's book."

-**Frederick W. Smith, Chairman and CEO, FedEx Corporation**



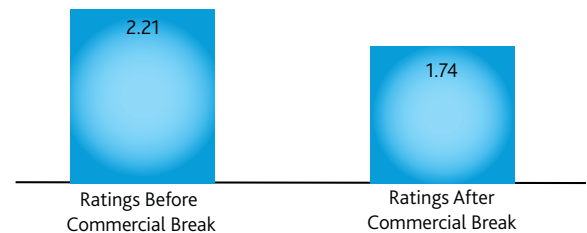
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## The Commercial Conundrum

Television producers are all too familiar with the term one step forward, two steps back. On a daily basis, across the globe, these professionals work hard to strike the right balance between programming viewers want and commercials producers and broadcasters need. In an age of on-demand content and innumerable media outlets, getting viewers to stick through a commercial pod is getting tougher and tougher by the day.

Case in point: this graph highlights what one network program goes through on an average day. The program highlighted here is a nationally televised program, well received in its time slot and garnering a 2.21 TV rating. However, as soon as a commercial airs, the average rating for this program falls to a rating of 1.74. This implies that during any particular commercial break, a net of about a half a million viewers choose to leave the program for some other programming choices. For any television producer or advertiser, this "leaky bucket syndrome" is a hurdle.

Ratings Before and After Commercial Break  
Program X  
March 3, 2009



Because of this back and forth, the transition out of a commercial pod and into programming has got to be a strong one. A successful program requires strong transitions out of commercial. Television producers know it is up to strong personalities, such as Frank Luntz, to dazzle viewers and pull the program through a commercial pod.

### Key Insight:

Without explicit foreshadowing of a popular guest, program segment or plot twist, viewers are sure to leave during a commercial break, and some won't return. Guaranteed viewership declines during commercials must be countered with strong programming content and personalities that are guaranteed to generate post-commercial interest.

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## Who's your Go-To Guy? Or Gal?

Even the best of scripts and formats require personalities and strong characters that connect with an audience and drive ratings. In the eternal search for the "IT" factor, a sea of complications abound when one considers the number of personalities sharing a television programming format. But what if you could know unequivocally which personalities consistently drive ratings up? **For the first time ever, it is possible to decipher who has the IT factor.** Knowing minute-by-minute how ratings fluctuate based upon on-camera appearances will help maximize your financial return.

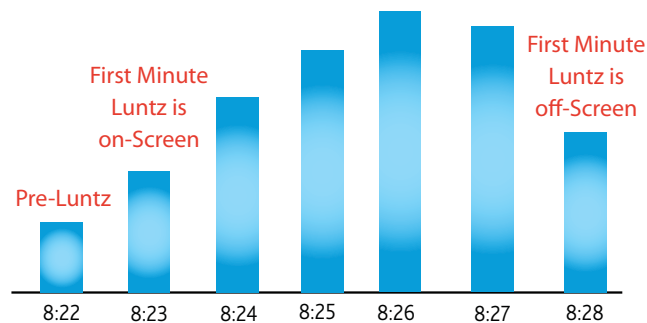
Case in point: Frank Luntz made over 19 cable appearances between January 1st and March 21st, 2009 (the time period of this analysis). During this period, average ratings were substantially impacted for the better every time he was a program contributor. For example, on a March 3rd 2009 appearance on The O'Reilly Factor, Frank Luntz was able to improve household ratings by as much as 30% (or half a rating point) while he was physically on the screen speaking.



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required.*

Frank Luntz Appearance on O'Reilly  
Minute by Minute Ratings Data  
March 3, 2009



Source: Nielsen Grabix.

### Key Insight:

Knowing which personalities deliver the ratings takes the uncertainty out of programming.

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## Forget Vegas, Bet on Frank

One rating data point is not enough. Two or three rating data points can still be misleading. But imagine the power of knowing exactly which personality, character or segment raises (or lowers) the bar each and every time they appear. Now, for the first time, you can learn how these individual programming components perform under various formats, settings, and even time of day (explored later in this report).

So was the prior page example of the March 3rd appearance of Dr. Frank Luntz a fluke? Absolutely not. By looking at the composite of his 19 appearances from January 1st through March 21, 2009, it defines perfection. ONE HUNDRED PERCENT of the time Frank Luntz generated a ratings increase – a perfect record. Frank is an example of a television sure bet versus a speculative ratings gamble.

### Odds of Frank Luntz improving the ratings of a televised program during an appearance January 1st 2009 through March 21st, 2009

Outcome	Probability
Odds of Increasing	100%
Odds of 5% Increase	68%
Odds of 10% Increase or more	37%

**"I feel that I owe my current job to this incredibly innovative technology. Nielsen Grabix made a genuine difference in my ability to demonstrate value to my Television employer"**

**- Dr. Frank Luntz**

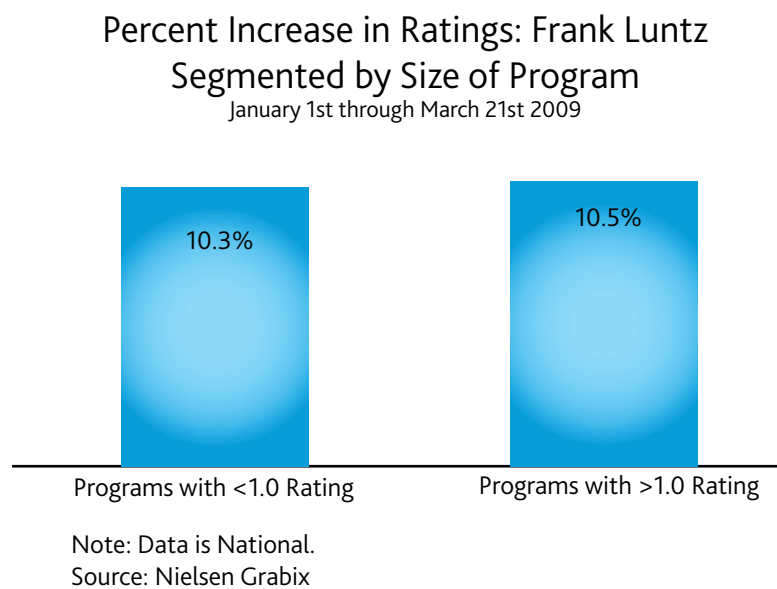
### Key Insight:

TV personalities and their rating impact have a definable value that is both measurable and comparable. Understanding this value is the first step towards improving the overall quality of all televised programming and finding a fair market value for both personalities and programs.

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## Big and Small Shows Alike

Frank Luntz's ability to drive additional ratings is not restricted to just small or large TV audiences. In fact, as the below chart illustrates, Frank's ability to drive ratings is confirmed across both small and large audiences alike.



Regardless of a program's average viewership, it is vital to understand whether or not a personality can and will lift ratings. Nielsen Grabix enables unprecedented accuracy and predictability and alleviates any doubts or uncertainty. When a single rating point represents the gain or loss of millions of dollars in ad revenue, a personality such as Frank Luntz who can demonstrate an increase in ratings 19 out of 19 times is money in the bank.

### Key Insight:

To effectively utilize personalities/celebrities, you need to understand whether their appeal is broad or specific to a certain niche audience.