Giving
attention
a little
attention

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Attention: A hot topic

Attention metrics have been shown to be effective

$R^2=0.9192$

STAS index / Seconds in view

Aided recall

Ad recall lift / ad time with visual attention (seconds)
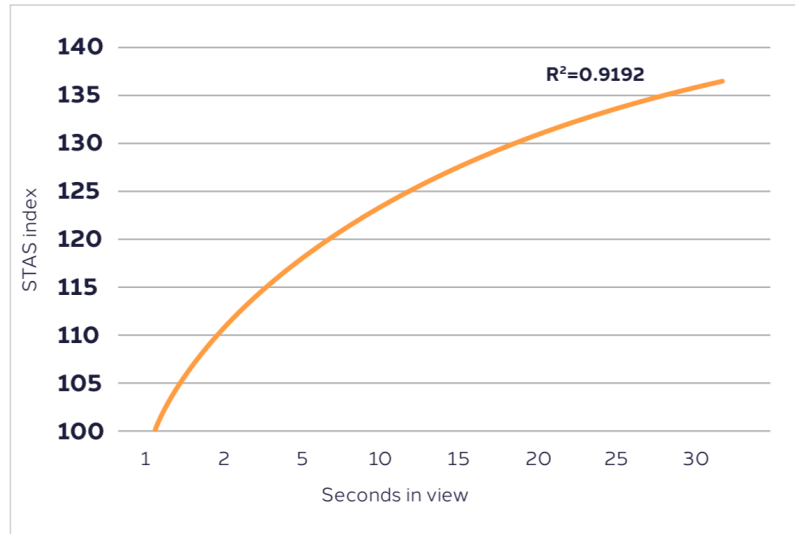
Dentsu: STAS results increase with how long a (digital media) ad is viewed for.

This has been built into a predictive attention model Dentsu use for trading.
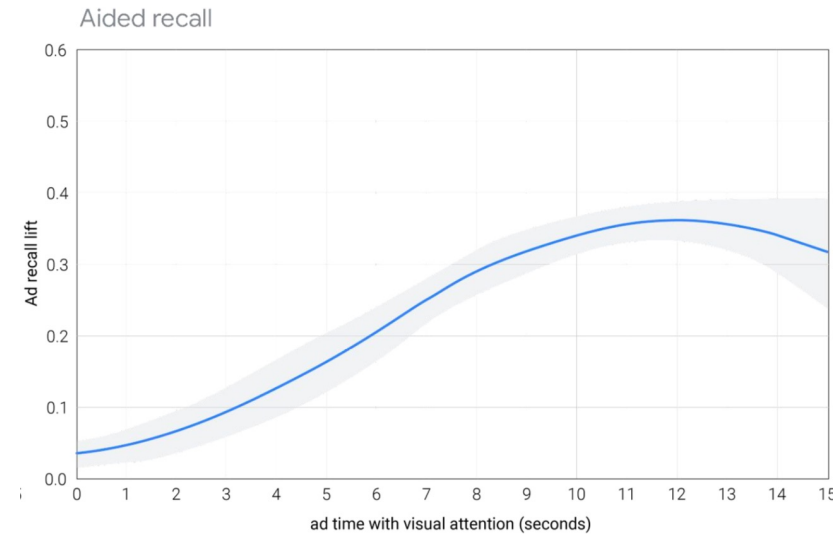
Google: there is a positive relationship between visual attention and recall (both unaided and aided)

This relationship was strongest when both visual and auditory attention occurred

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TV is an 'attention bargain'
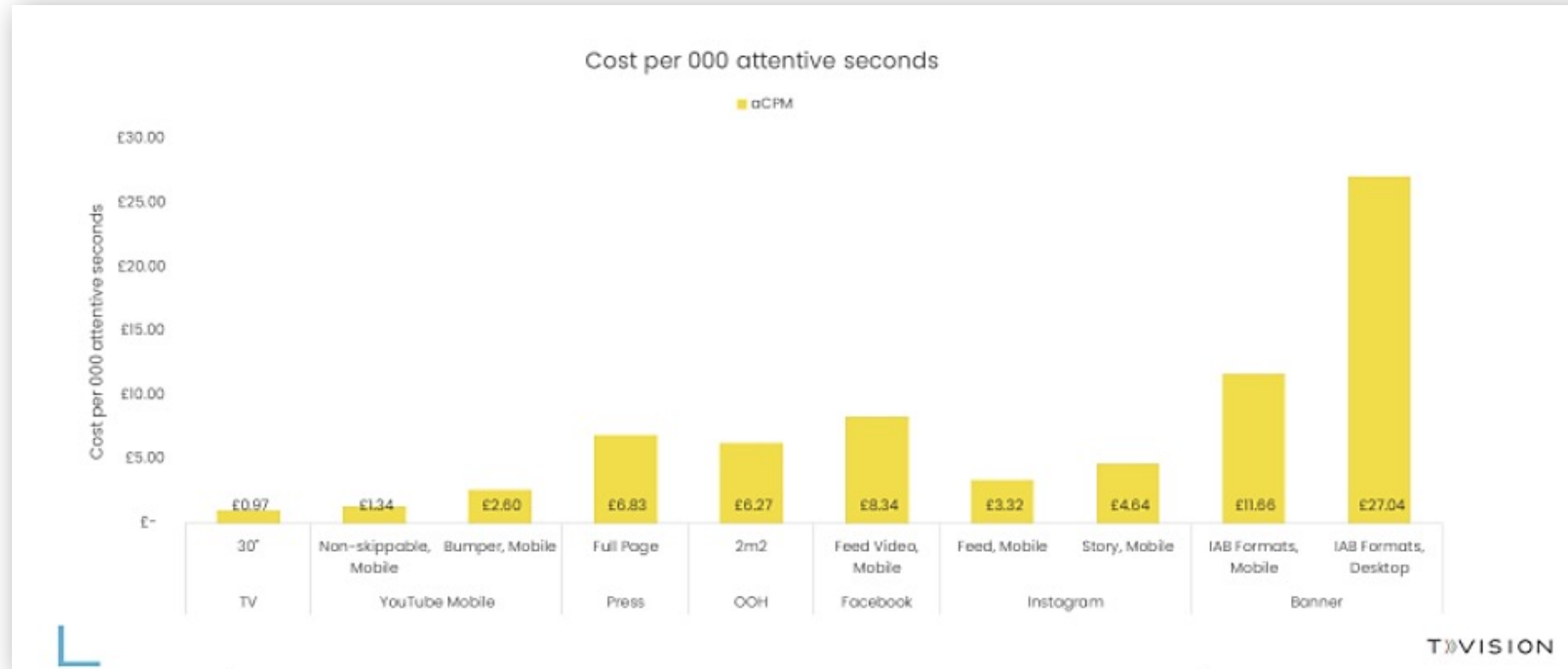
Some questions raised…

—Do the visual attention approaches born out of digital advertising fully transfer to other media?

—Eye and head tracking methods commonly just report passive measures (gaze / dwell time) that do not guarantee actual attention. Does this matter ?

—Does the focus on eyes-on attention miss some communications impact?
(e.g. Robert Heath's Low Attention Processing)

The Flight Attendant, Sky

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Understanding what we do (and don't) know about attention

Including consultations with…

Prof Anil Seth

Cognitive Neuroscientist

Director of Sackler Centre

for Consciousness Science

(Sussex University)

Prof Maria Chait

Auditory Cognitive Neuroscientist

The Ear Institute

(University College London)

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Academic view of attention

Toyota, One Breath
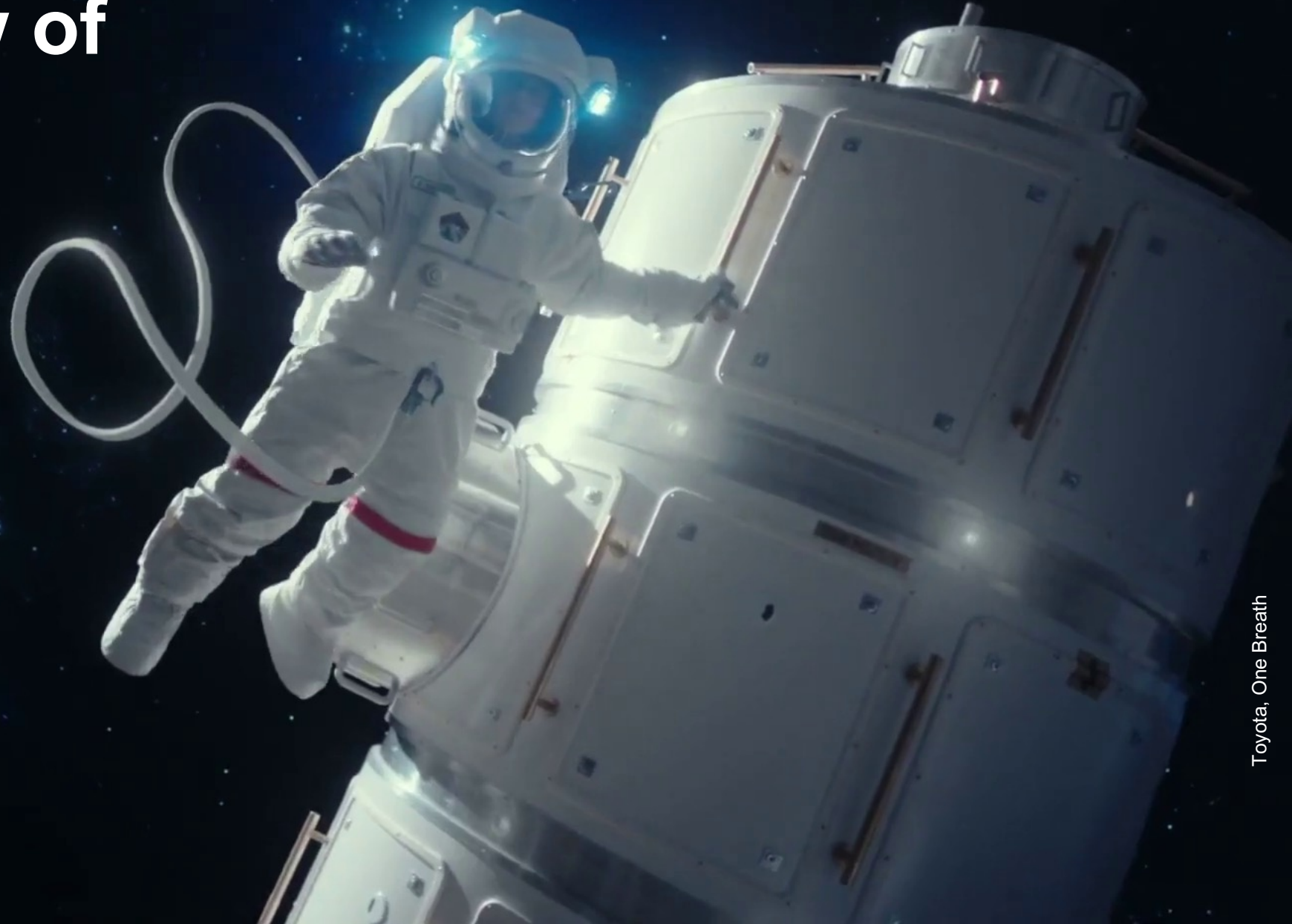
Commercial vs academic focus

Where most commercial research has focussed so far…

Sensory Input

Our senses' ability to take in information
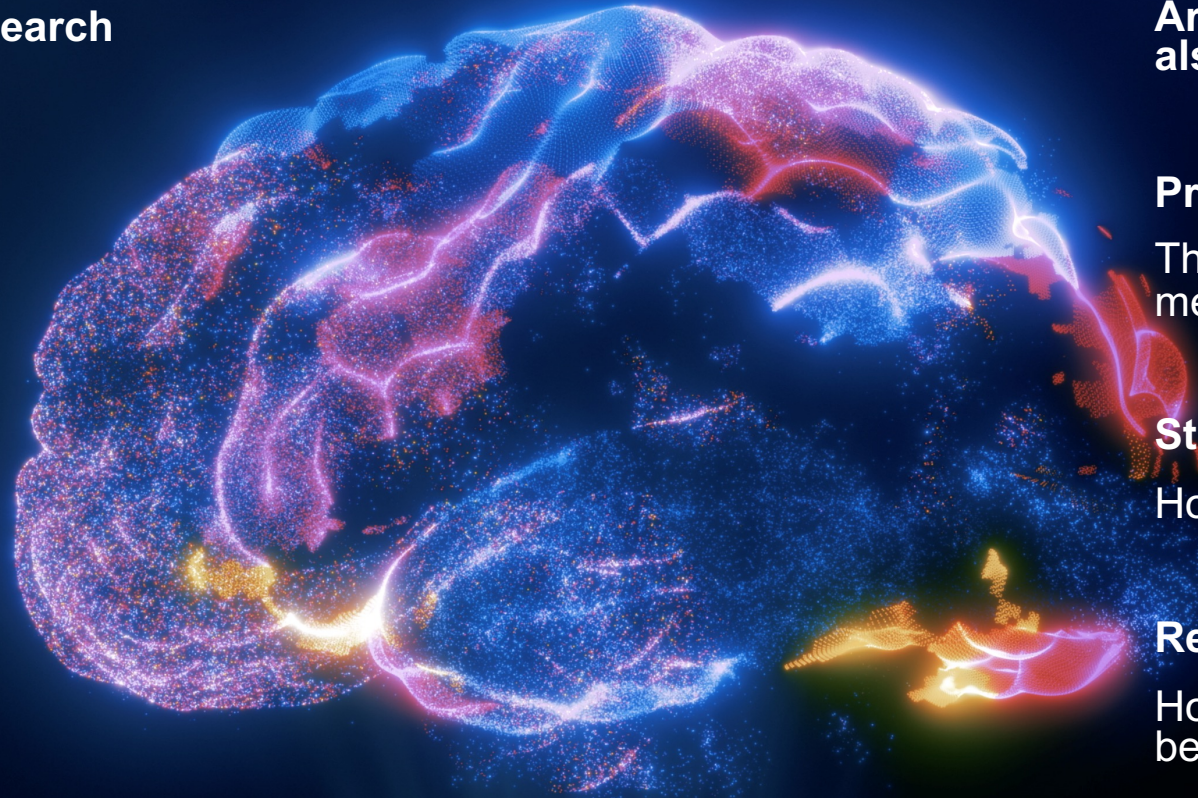
Areas that academic research also look to understand…

Processing / Encoding

Thinking and how it transfers to memory

Storage

How it is retained in memory

Retrieval

How it is comes back to influence behaviour

THE ATTENTION TEST

Areas in the academic study of attention to consider

1. How does our attention move around the environment?

2. How do we select what to pay attention to?

3. How do we divide our attention up amongst our senses?

The Ipcress Files, ITV

1. How does our attention move around the environment?

Top Down
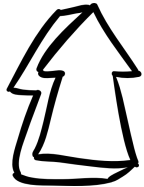
Bottom Up

Top Down

Where we push our attention around to achieve a task

Bottom Up

Where something in our environment pulls our attention towards it

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Top Down vs Bottom Up
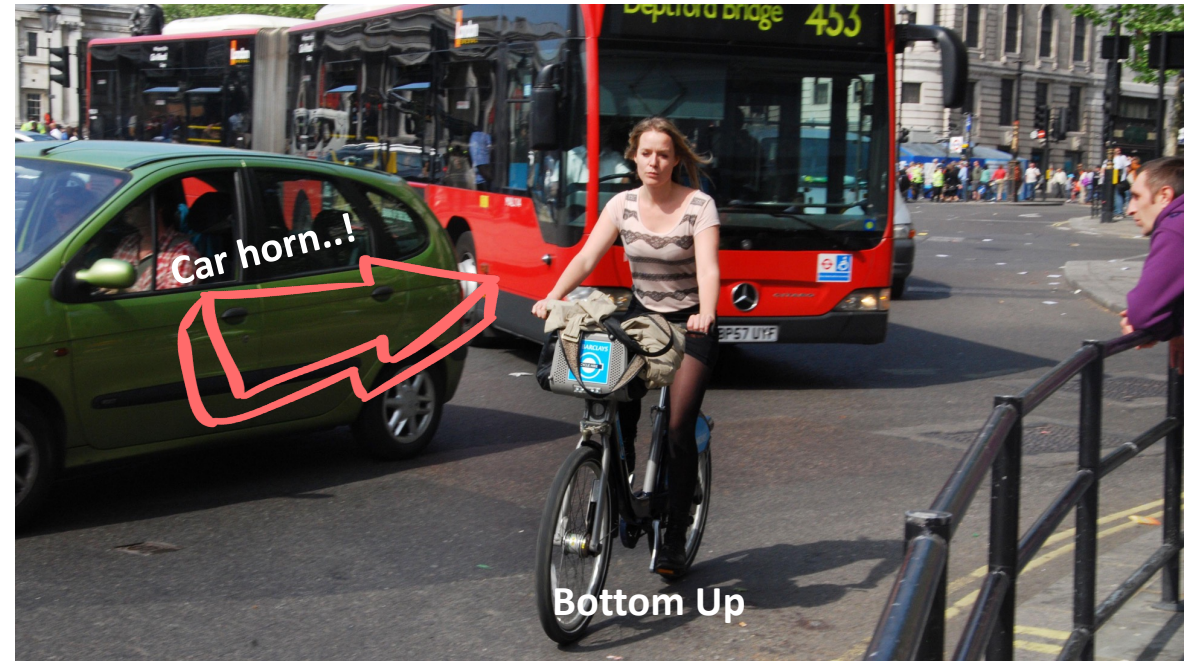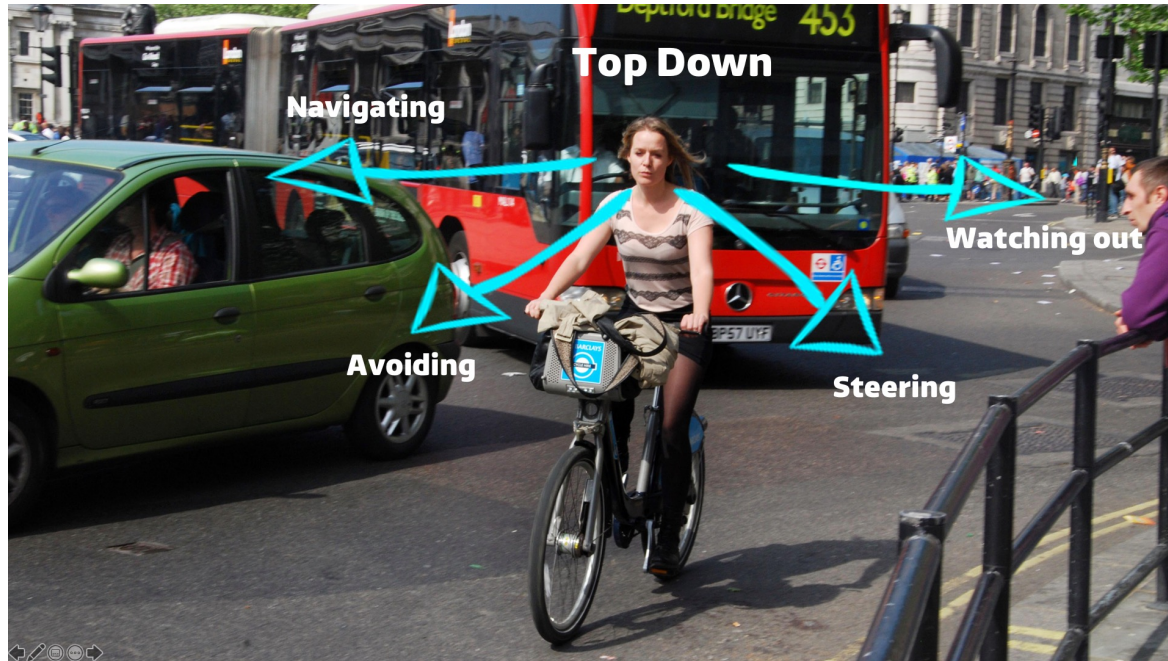
Perceptual Load Theory

Attention is a finite resource across all senses.

The amount of 'Perceptual Load' you are asking the brain to do, has an effect on how much else can be processed

1. You can do two things at once but one has to take up a low Perceptual Load

2. But if you try and do two tasks that take up more than your Perceptual Load allows, you exhaust your available attention and fail to do one or both

Listen to music

Drive a car

Use your mobile

Drive a car

Attention deficit

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3. How do we divide our attention up amongst our senses?
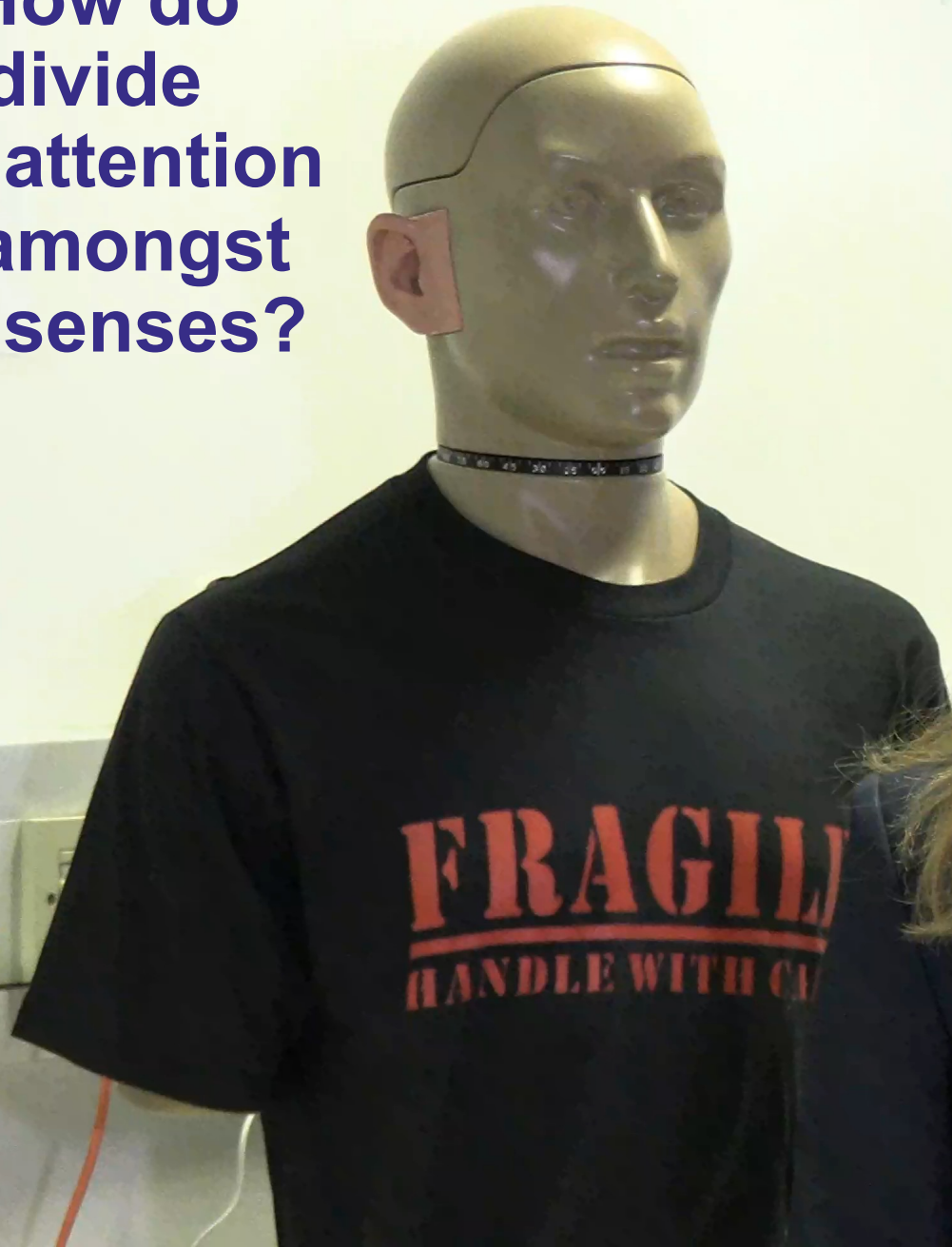
So what does attention look like in the home?

Just Eat, Katy Perry

ITV: Virtual Reality (VR) filming of families

— 64 households

— 136 participants

— Oct 2019 - March 2020

— 17,000 ad exposures

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Some level of attention 83% of the time (ads at normal speed)

Leaves room / isn't present (10%)

Present but fully distracted (1%)
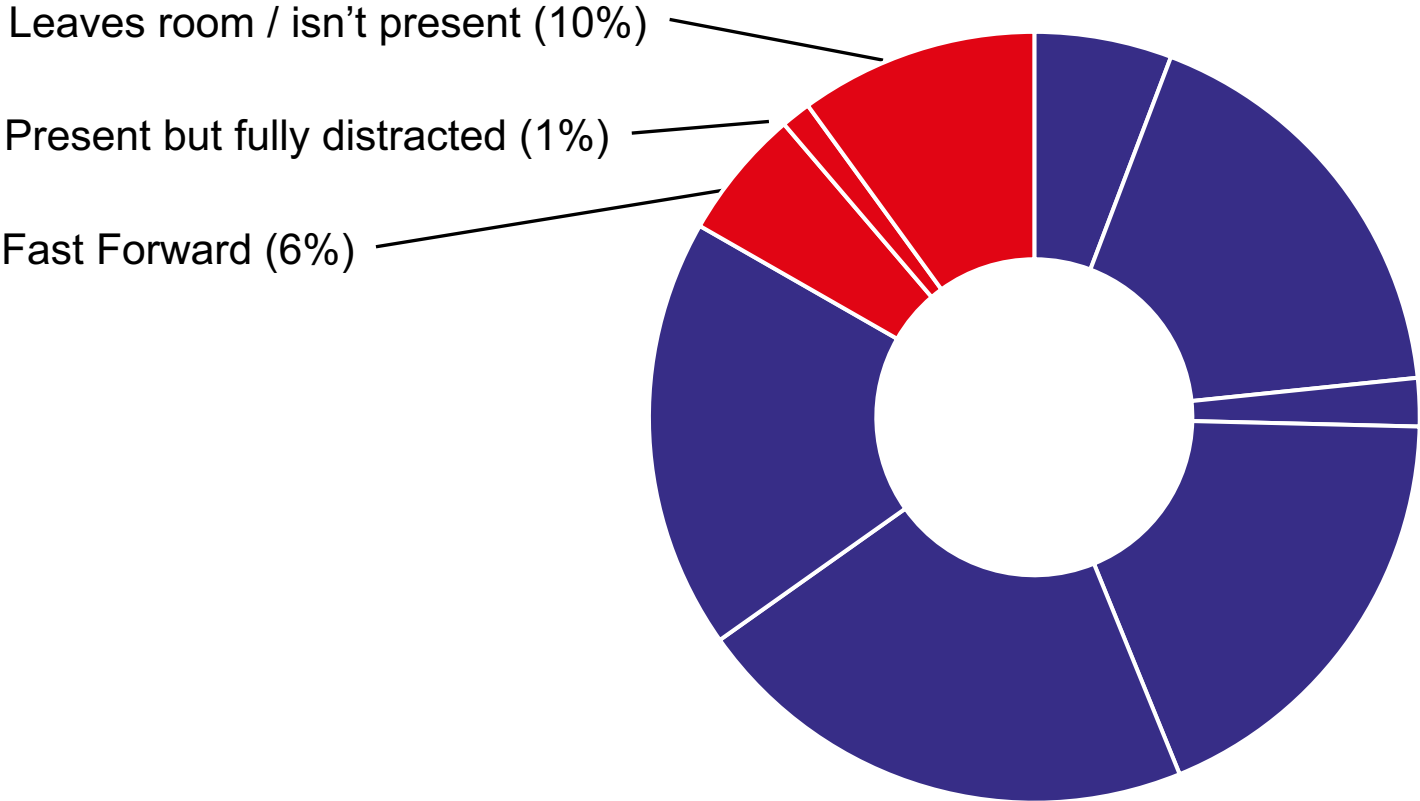
Fast Forward (6%)

Including fast-forwarding there is a level of attention 89% of the time

Source: ITV, Virtual Reality 360° filming of families, 2020

Total viewing behaviour - spot ads, sponsorship & programme promos; Live and recorded / catch-up TV; 17,017 exposures

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Re-profiled to remove non-chargeable viewing criteria

Present but fully distracted (1%)
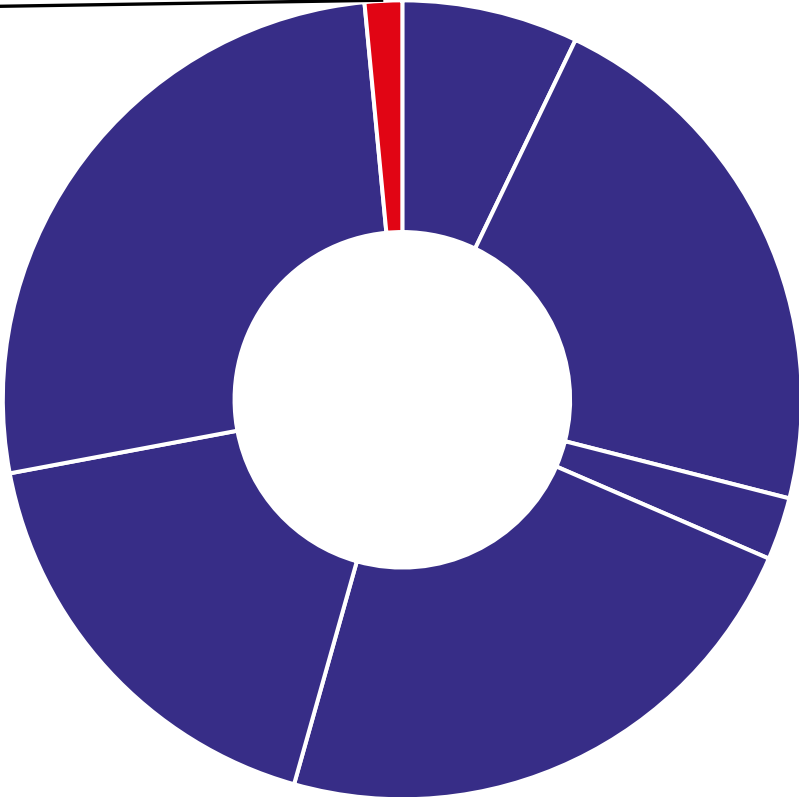
Source: ITV, Virtual Reality 360° filming of families, 2020
Total viewing behaviour - spot ads, sponsorship & programme promos; Live and recorded / catch-up TV; 17,017 exposures

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High attention or discussion about ad 29% of the time

Discussion about ad (7%)

High Attention (22%)

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Low attention for 26% of exposures
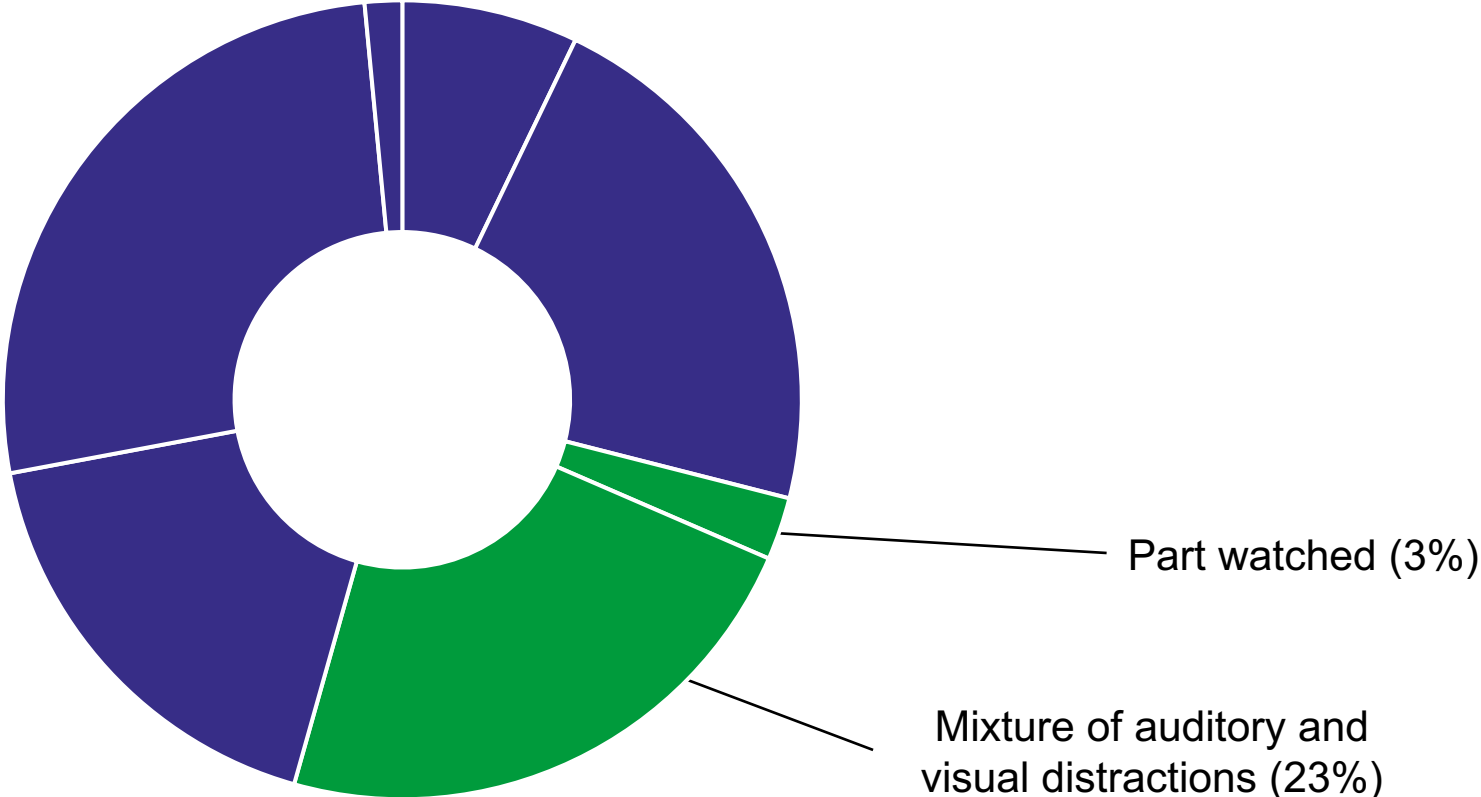
Part watched (3%)

Mixture of auditory and
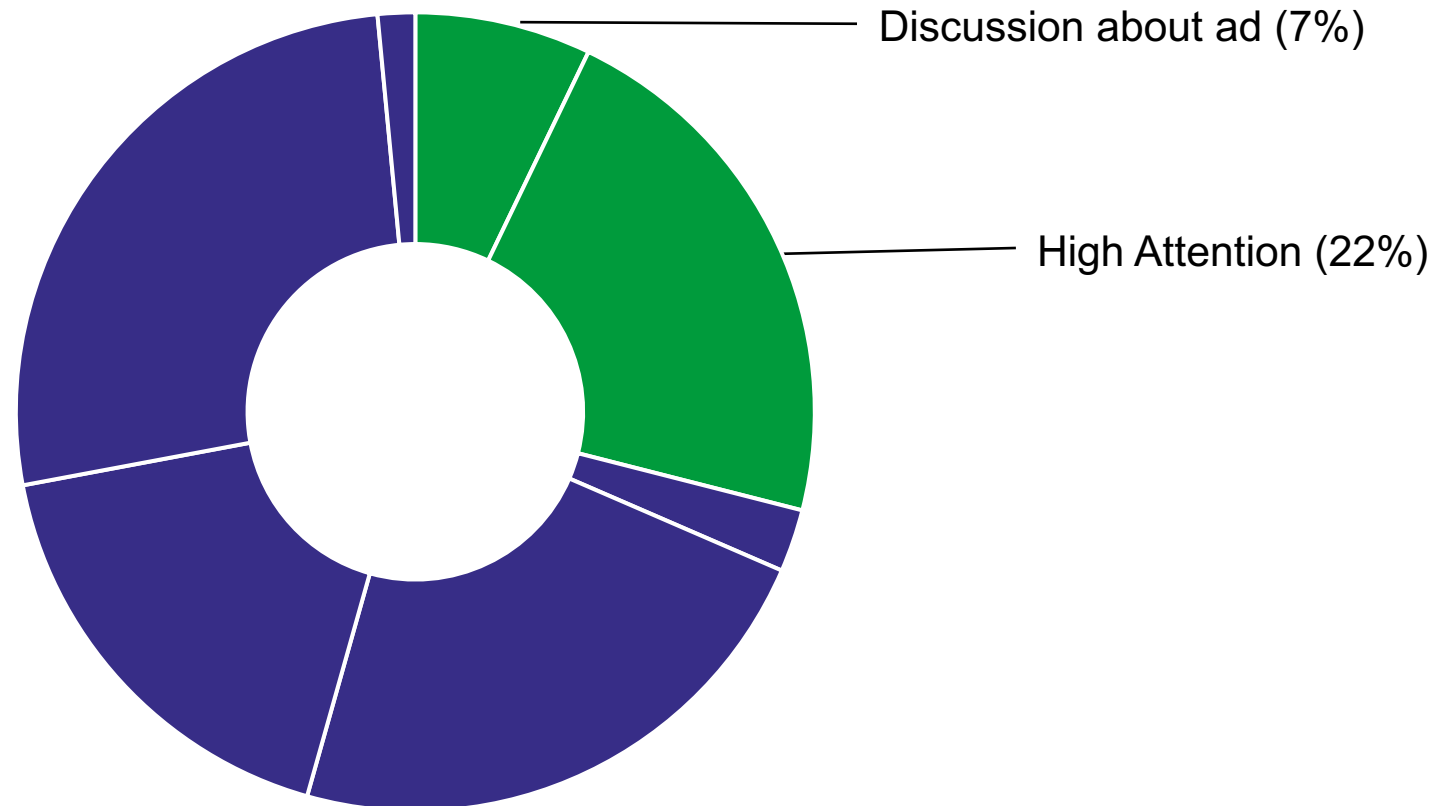visual distractions (23%)

Source: ITV, Virtual Reality 360° filming of families, 2020

Total viewing behaviour - spot ads, sponsorship & programme promos; Live and recorded / catch-up TV; 17,017 exposures

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Auditory distractions during 18% of events

Auditory Distraction
Listening to others (18%)

Source: ITV, Virtual Reality 360° filming of families, 2020

Total viewing behaviour - spot ads, sponsorship & programme promos; Live and recorded / catch-up TV; 17,017 exposures
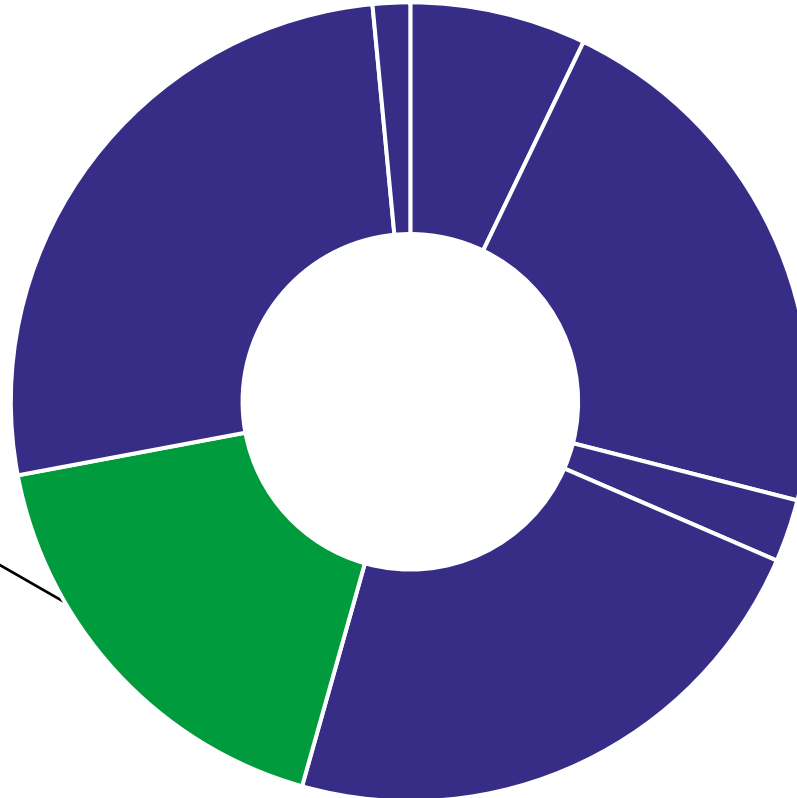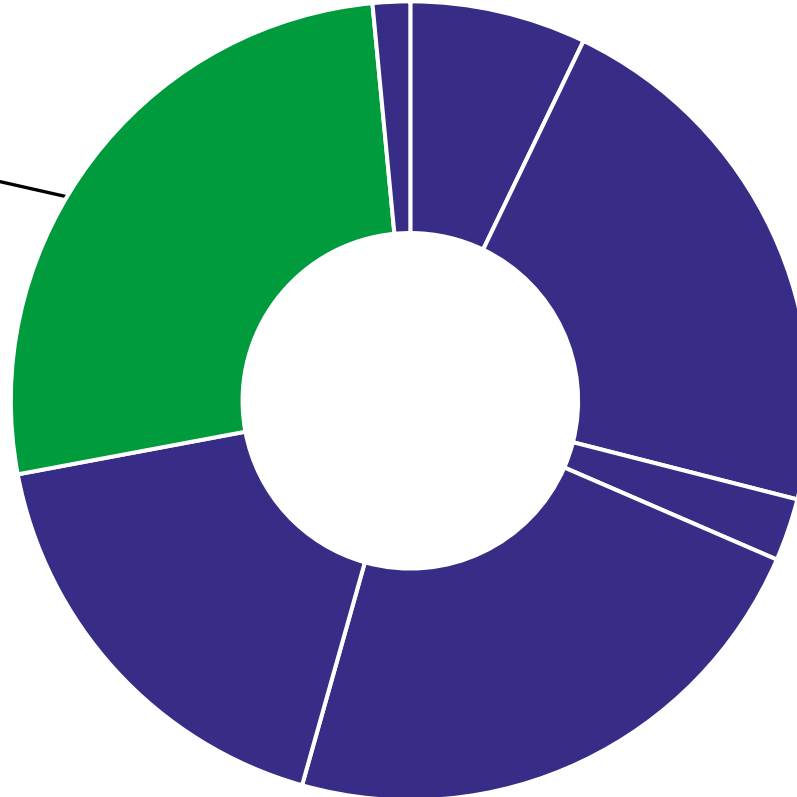
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26% of the time there are visual distractions

Visually Distracted
(Phones, people, pets,
chores) (26%)

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It's not about getting all the attention and using it, it's about using all the attention you are getting

In summary

" Attention is…
complicated "

Prof Anil Seth

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