

if (jQuery == "hot")
credit(Rosig);
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MASS HIGH TECH

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VC hotel: Stromedix grew in
Atlas Venture's digs. P10

HARDWARE

Close to the vest

Biometric tech firm uses Super Bowl to test viewer responses to ads



INNERSCOPE CO-FOUNDER Brian Levine has a vested interest in ad analysis tech.

BY EPHRAIM YEGOROLADAKIS
STAFF WRITER

As you watch next weekend's Super Bowl, you may think you have no interest in the commercials, but your body will respond in myriad tiny ways to each bit of stimuli you see on the screen. For advertisers and programmers, that biological data is gold — and two local companies want to measure it.

In Boston, **Innerscope Research Inc.** will be conducting a test on game day, as it did last year, using biometric measurement to track the physical responses of subjects to the commercials they see during the game. Participants will wear a lightweight vest developed by Innerscope Research co-founder **Carl Marsi** that measures responses to what viewers see on the screen, including changes in heart rate, skin conductivity and perspiration, respiration and physical motion.

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HEALTH-CARE IT

No clear path

Summary of the Mass. e-health legislation

- Mandates statewide medical records and information system
- Creates within the Massachusetts Technology Leadership Institute (MTLI) to oversee the program
- A nine-member Health Information Technology Advisory Board
- The state is providing \$15 million to MTLI through grants and other mechanisms
- The deadline for the records and info exchange is 2011

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FROM THE FRONT

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Companies hope biometric data will bring science to their focus groups

FROM PAGE 1



BRIAN LEVINE of Innerscope Research Inc. suits up in the company's biometric sensor vest.

Each biological response is very subtle, according to Marsi, who is also a staff psychiatrist at **Massachusetts General Hospital** and assistant professor of psychiatry at **Harvard Medical School**, but they are automatic and provide a much clearer picture of engagement than what a viewer may say to an interviewer (what researchers call "self-reporting").

In the world of advertising and programming, that kind of physical data helps both advertisers and developers determine what works — and what doesn't. During last year's Super Bowl, Innerscope performed a similar test, measuring the greatest emotional response from a commercial for **AMP Energy Drink**, **USA Today's AdMaven**, a traditional ad measurement service, had ranked a **Levi's** commercial first, while **Sands Research**, using a neuroscience measurement called **electroencephalography**, ranked a **Diet Pepsi** ad in the top spot. Nine months later, after all the ads had been placed on a common **MySpace.com** page for viewer reaction, Marsi said Innerscope's ranking was validated when the **AMP Energy Drink** ad received the most views (167,712) and the most comments (709).

With 20 employees, Innerscope has performed studies for a variety of networks and advertisers, including the **National Geographic Channel**, **Fox Television**, **NBC** and **Telemundo**. Innerscope's system can be used in a variety of media, from television and films to print and online, but the company has carved a niche in television, according to co-founder **Brian Levine**. "It is much easier to sell to people accustomed to using a lot of metrics, and television and advertising seems to be that sweet spot," he said.

Across town in Charlestown, digital marketing firm **One to One Interactive Inc.** launched its own biometric research lab last year. Two years ago, One to One

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Brian Levine
Co-founder of
Innerscope Research Inc.

had done a series of projects with Innerscope around viral videos. Seeing the potential of such technology, officials made an offer to acquire Innerscope. When that deal fell through, One to One acquired Maryland-based **Quantomo Usability Labs Inc.**, and formed a research group around Quantomo's technology, now called **OTOInsights**.

While both companies focus on using new technology to measure the physical response to media, One to One also incorporates traditional marketing research methods, such as self-reporting, to get a larger overall picture of a given project. One to One also uses a vast and other tools to collect data related to heart activity, breathing, movement and other factors.

One to One has also been focused on the interactive arena, including online video, gaming and web advertising, for the past year. However, as OTOInsights progresses, the firm may move into other areas such as television, according to president and co-founder **Jeveed Karnell**.

One thing both companies agree on is the potential of the new industry. "We all agree that traditional reporting methods are inherently flawed because people have a cognitive bias and aren't always going to tell you exactly what they are feeling," said Karnell.

But a person can't hide his physical reactions.

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