

New Audience Metrics Aim to Leapfrog Web Buzz

Advancements attempt to connect measurements of viewing with purchasing **By Robert Marich**



As the upfront season nears its conclusion, the push for advanced audience metrics, especially given depressed market factors, has become even more of an imperative.

Measurement developments are being driven not only by technology, but by TV's desire to unseat the advantages of the Web, to one-up Internet click-throughs and user interaction with content.

Nielsen and other audience research outfits now aim to leapfrog new media's consumer activity data with measurements they hope will be more meaningful to marketers.

Last week, NBC Television signed on for Nielsen's Fusion service, which marries data about purchasing behavior with TV viewing. "This is a way for advertisers to look at media through the prism of their target demographic beyond just age and sex, which has been the standard for 30 years," says Howard Shimmel, senior VP of client insights for NielsenConnections.

Another researcher, TRA, offers its own return-on-investment (ROI) metric that compares in a single data dashboard changes in consumer purchases of specific brands after exposure to quantified TV ads. Clients of its TRAnalytics service include CBS Television

and ad buyer MediaVest USA.

The goal is to go beyond the traditional basic profile of consumers by delving into their purchasing habits in specific categories where they may also be segmented by heavy, moderate and light buyers. A further enhancement is tracking brand purchases from which consumer groups are classified as either new to the brand, lost, loyal or switching brands constantly.

Another metric is consumer media consumption across multiple platforms—subscription TV, Websites, mobile phone—in a format that advertisers can use for deciding how to allocate their

"We believe the granularity of set-top box data gives the TV business the chance to recapture sizzle with advertisers when it is combined with purchasing data," says TRA CEO Mark Lieberman.

The accompanying TRA data dashboard (see table) combines consumer TV viewing data with purchases of breakfast cereals. The consumer target is defined by two criteria—dual-income households as well as cereal buyers showing moderate brand loyalty. The in-tab 53,452 households are evaluated by how many cereal ads they viewed and their subsequent purchasing.

Ventures, ad agency giant WPP, former Time Warner Cable vice chair John Billock and company management.

Nielsen's Fusion effort with NBC amalgamates consumer data from two separate samples—TV/Web audience panels and the Homescan panel, which tracks consumer purchasing. In April, Hispanic broadcaster Univision signed on for a similar viewing-purchasing combination.

In a Nielsen case study for a premium women's skin-care brand, a Fusion analysis estimates that the unnamed advertiser could increase by 10% or more the delivery of heavy buyers by reallocating its TV spending from daytime to evening news. In addition, TV buys shifted to specific programs deemed to have high "brand ratings points" (BRPs), meaning heavy buyers of skin-care products, Nielsen estimates the skin-care product's \$10.5 million in TV ad spend got an additional \$1.5 million in media value by this reallocation.

The new-wave data metrics are more costly because they come on top of traditional viewing data, but presumably advertisers get better targeting. Also, new metrics require larger consumer pools, since the consumer pie is segmented into finer slices than previous broad categories. Capturing a household's total purchases is another challenge. ■

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cross-media ad spending. Other measures include TV commercial viewership by the minute or second, and engagement with programming and commercials.

TRA aggregates consumer purchasing and viewing TV data from 320,000 households with set-top boxes in the Los Angeles area, from which it calculates an ROI for advertising. Purchasing information is collected by frequent-shopper cards that consumers use in store checkouts.

Though TRA crunches viewing and purchasing data, for privacy protection the identities of consumers are not archived. Because every consumer is tracked for both TV viewing and buying, TRA president and methodology developer Bill Harvey calls it a "single source" census.

TRA is scheduled to expand audience data measurement to a national footprint by year-end. The 2½-year-old startup is owned by venture capital firm Kodiak

Sample Return on Investment (ROI) Dashboard

Category: Moderately Loyal Users of Breakfast Cereals; Dual-Income Households (HH) Only, Report Period: 11/20/2007-3/11/2008, In-Tab Households: 53,452

TV Channel	Daypart	Cost	# Insertions	% Target Reach	Avg. Frequency	Rating Points	CPM	Increases As %	Incremental Sales	% Increase In Revs.	ROI	TRA's ROI Index
Channel A	Prime	\$1,700	15	9.7%	3.5	33.95	\$48.12	7.0%	\$10,371	1.7%	6.1	108
Channel B	Prime	\$3,325	15	11.6%	4.3	49.88	\$38.97	8.3%	\$24,938	1.9%	7.5	134
Channel C	Day	\$500	10	7.9%	7.1	56.09	\$25.62	4.5%	\$2,700	1.0%	5.4	96
Channel D	Late	\$50	10	3.1%	1.4	4.34	\$34.51	4.1%	\$55	0.1%	1.1	20
Channel E	Day	\$50	15	10.3%	3.2	32.96	\$15.71	4.1%	\$160	0.5%	3.2	57
Channel F	Prime	\$2,100	15	12.0%	4.4	55.00	\$35.09	10.2%	\$21,630	2.1%	10.3	183