

# Media Companies Roll Out Efforts to Improve Audience Measurement

## MediaVest, Starcom Among Those Making Behavioral-Based Ad Deals

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NEW YORK (AdAge.com) -- Despite the difficulty in wrapping up this year's protracted TV upfront ad market, networks and media agencies still took time to deliver on one promise they made to each other going into the marketplace: premium pricing for better audience measurement.

Not only did a [consortium](#) of some of the industry's top media companies and marketers -- Walt Disney Co., News Corp., Viacom, Time Warner, Discovery Communications, Procter & Gamble, AT&T, Unilever, WPP's Group M, and Publicis Groupe's Starcom MediaVest Group among them -- emerge from this year's negotiations but so did a pair of upfront deals using so-called secondary guarantees based on consumers' purchasing behaviors and lifestyles.

MediaVest is preparing its first round of deals for this fall with Discovery Communications based on [TRA's Media TRAnalytics system](#), which receives set-top box information from 2.1 million cable subscribers (or 1.5 million households) and marries that to a single-source database of shopper-card information from a 370,000-household sample of purchase data (from a database of 54 million cable homes.)

In other words, MediaVest clients such as Procter & Gamble, Kraft Foods and Coca-Cola will know exactly what percentage of viewers saw their ad on, say, Discovery's "The Deadliest Catch" or TLC's "Jon & Kate Plus 8" and actually went to the local grocery store and bought their product. They could even find "brand swingers," or consumers who previously purchased a competitor's brand and switched to their product.

"This is where the future needs to be," said Donna Speciale, MediaVest's chief investment officer. "Our ultimate goal is to figure out how to better reach consumers and get our inventory much more targeted, not just buy the typical demographic breakout. That's where all the testing in these different areas is heading, to get much more granular research."

### **Taking it one step at a time**

MediaVest's first ads to test TRAnalytics' system will likely air on Discovery Channel and TLC and feature three brands from P&G, Kraft and Coca-Cola, according to executives familiar with the deal. But because the deals are based on more than just ratings, compensation will be similar to how advertisers are reimbursed for low ratings with additional network inventory, or "make-goods," based on Nielsen ratings and IAG's engagement metrics. NBC and Toyota made headlines three years ago with one of the first TV deals specifically based on viewer

engagement. Using IAG's engagement data as a guide, NBC offered make-goods for shows that underperformed in the ratings by placing more Toyota ads in shows that were most likely to engage the viewers' attention.

One executive suggested the TRAnalytics data could be used more as a "program allocation tool," much in the way agencies use data from Simmons and MRI to determine which programs have the highest propensity to attract their target consumer. "There's lots of potential here, we just have to take it one step at a time," said the executive.

The MediaVest-Discovery pact is not without precedent, and represents a growing marketplace trend toward behavioral-based TV ad deals. NBC Universal's Women@NBCU, a cross-platform sales group that includes female-targeted properties such as Bravo, Oxygen and iVillage, has done several deals based on behavioral guarantees outside of this year's upfront, and has [recently worked](#) with major clients such as Walmart, General Mills and American Express.

Starcom, meanwhile, has cut several similar upfront deals with alternate guarantees based on how a particular program delivers on certain lifestyle behaviors -- working women, households with pets and households with kids being among them. No specific networks are formally attached, but the deals will be based on Nielsen Audience Demographic data, according to an executive familiar with negotiations. The alternate guarantees come during Starcom's third year of subscribing to Nielsen's minute-by-minute data, which has seen the agency partner with networks such as Nickelodeon and Discovery in the past.

Industry-wide efforts to unearth set-top box and purchasing data have been in the works for years, but ultimately don't scale because of the incremental costs and manpower for both parties to manage the data. "The industry has a difficult time supporting two-high quality measurement systems," said one executive familiar with the unnamed media-measurement consortium. "We need to either find something either less expensive like set-top box data, because it already exists, or you have to do some sort of combining of data to get closer to a single source" for data, much like the TRA deal and Nielsen's Fusion product. "We can't just keep spending more and more money for research. We're trying to measure more and more smaller things."