OTT STREAMING VIDEO PLAYBOOK FOR ADVANCED MARKETERS

As it turns out, the revolution will be televised over the internet.
It’s called OTT streaming video and it is now a mainstream consumer medium.

“Over-the-Top” (OTT) streaming video—which is video streamed to a TV that is connected to the internet—has shifted the traditional TV landscape, bringing the interactivity, data and targeting associated with digital media, to the television ecosystem. It has also opened a vast and expanding universe of choice in content and pricing models for consumers who can choose from a continually growing landscape of services, with professionally produced long-form, short-form and user-generated content.

Brands are catching on fast. For the first time, the high-impact, brand storytelling power of the big screen television has been seamlessly integrated with the targeting, analytics and interactivity of digital media. Moreover, OTT streaming video presents an opportunity to speak to an audience that is increasingly difficult to reach through traditional media channels. We’re now seeing stats that show that non-pay TV households are projected to almost reach parity with pay TV households in the next five years and many of those non-pay TV households are streaming video. Given this shift in viewership, OTT streaming video represents a largely incremental audience and a way for brands to “reach the unreachables” and engage directly with their target consumers.

This isn’t to say that TV is going away. TV is still a powerful way to quickly attain mass reach, and should be a part of a brand’s overall media strategy. But for emerging brands that need to build awareness among new audiences while also driving performance with target consumers, and for incumbents that need to connect to and remain relevant with younger, digitally-savvy future audiences, OTT streaming video is becoming a core part of their cross-platform video strategy as well.

So, who is this audience watching OTT streaming video and how should brands approach marketing to them?

In the following pages, we’ll be sharing both the why and the how. IAB’s OTT Streaming Video Playbook for Advanced Marketers provides advertisers with a framework for leveraging this remarkable new media. It is intended to educate brands on the OTT streaming video ecosystem, technologies and opportunities, and includes key terms, use cases, industry data and practical advice on how to leverage the power of OTT streaming video.

1 eMarketer, July 2019
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Background and Objectives

Over the past two years, IAB has—through its groundbreaking “21st Century Brand Economy” research—highlighted the paradigm shift away from an era of indirect marketing in which brands typically reached their marketplace and consumers through middleman agents and intermediaries such as retail stores. Today, the media industry has transitioned to a direct brand economy where advanced brands are creating value through low-barrier, capital flexible, leased or rented supply chains, with value extraction accomplished primarily through the direct relationships between the company and its end consumers.

And while physical retail is still important, direct consumer relationships, and the CRM and first-party data capabilities required to manage them, are core to these brands. With a focus on the consumer and data capture at every interaction, brand experience itself has become a key differentiator that informs how marketers tell their brand story and create communities of consumers that ultimately lower acquisition costs. While we've seen this transformation of marketing occur on mobile and social platforms, the same level of audience targeting and performance measurement favored by direct brands is now playing out in streaming video and through whatever screens and means the consumer chooses; offering brands a direct connection to the viewer in a personalized and often communal, on-demand event.

This Playbook is based on a synthesis of perspectives from industry thought leaders, gathered through one-on-one interviews, as well as discussions at key IAB gatherings such as IAB's Video Leadership Summit. Participants included brands, agencies, publishers, and advertising technology providers. Our thanks to Hulu as well as Pinterest and Spotify for their support in making this work possible.
The OTT Streaming Video Landscape

Television’s Third Revolution (or “TV with Benefits”)

The evolution of television from a mass medium to an on-demand medium capable of targeting individual households (or, just individuals) has accelerated over the past decade. Since the first digital cable systems made on-demand video possible in the mid-1990s, the growth of the internet has unlocked entirely new channels for video delivery, fostered new business models and funding for content creators, and ushered in the latest golden age of television for consumers and brands alike.

Though mobile created a robust second screen ecosystem for internet-delivered video, the growth of connected televisions in U.S. homes means that video is returning to the big screen in the living room, only this time with the ability to dynamically target, place and measure advertising. It is, as Darren Olive, EVP, National Advertising Sales and Strategy at Crackle Plus called it, “television with benefits.”
## Technology Trends and Consumer Adoption

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### Advertising Advancements

**TV advertising takes the form of sponsorship “brought to you by…”**

- TV ads are broadcast and Nielsen measures household viewership
- Set top box becomes source of audience targeting data
- 5.9 million TV homes are addressable
- Kraft Foods and TCI agree to run digitally inserted ads in 20 metro markets
- For the first time, advertisers can leverage data and targeting associated with digital media to the TV ecosystem with OTT
- Addressable Advertising is now available for half of cable TV
- OTT streaming programming extends beyond traditional broadcast season, opening door to flexible ad pods, interactive ads, less interruptive ad formats
What Is OTT Streaming Video?

OTT stands for Over-the-Top, which originates from the idea that consumers were receiving television programming without a cable or satellite television subscription, by getting content streamed through an internet connection that goes “over” the set-top box. Early OTT streaming video examples include Hulu and Netflix.

The exact definition of OTT streaming video is a subject of ongoing debate in the industry today. Ask 10 different people how they are defining it and you very well may get 10 different responses. For some, what matters most is the device through which the content is viewed, with OTT streaming video existing either within the confines of the big screen (through a connected TV device or Smart TV) or conversely, streamed to any screen (on smartphones, tablets and desktops). Others see content quality as a determinant of what is and isn't OTT streaming video (for example premium, TV-like long-form, professionally produced content versus the kind of user-generated content often found on YouTube).

Why the concept of streaming is critical to understand OTT

Today we’re seeing television quickly “converging” with digital as the Internet becomes a primary delivery method for TV-like content (with OTT streaming apps being the embodiment of that transformation). What this means technically is that OTT content publishers (‘streaming services’) compress extremely large video content files and then “stream” small packets of that information over the internet to the user, who then can access the content on their connected device as it is received (either live or on-demand). While there’s a lot of talk about convergence creating a more “fragmented” marketplace, the reality is the internet is actually bringing it all together with consumers seamlessly accessing content across their portfolio of devices and streaming services. The differences between device, screen and platform will continue to blur as everything moves to the internet and becomes streamed, and usefulness of terms like “OTT” will eventually fall away, with the remaining differences being use case and viewing context of the device (mobile = personal viewing, connected TV = potential for shared viewing) as opposed to the underlying technology (broadcast versus streaming).
OTT Streaming Video vs. CTV (They’re Not the Same Thing)

While OTT streaming video content can be seen on any internet-connected screen, the majority of OTT streaming viewing—at least in the U.S.—occurs on a connected TV. For example, 80% of Hulu viewing happens on a connected device (whether a smart TV, AppleTV, Roku, Chromecast, Xbox, etc.). Reflecting this reality of viewing habits, IAB’s official definition for OTT streaming video which was developed in conjunction with our members—focuses on the big screen, and as OTT streaming video is referenced throughout the paper, it will predominantly be referenced here in conjunction with the big screen experience—unless otherwise noted.

Along with these terms and definitions, the ecosystem in and of itself is complex, involving traditional media companies, content owners, device manufacturers, internet giants and the access providers themselves. OTT streaming services deliver video programming both in live and on-demand formats across all programming genres. There are different access options with ad-supported streaming services and subscription services. Though the OTT streaming marketplace has become more complex and competitive in recent months, one thing seems certain; consumers are embracing OTT streaming video as both a complement to traditional television services and increasingly as their only source of video programming. For these viewers, the traditional model of television advertising no longer applies. This is where advanced marketers see the opportunity to connect with their “streaming only” audiences in new, innovative ways.

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2 TechCrunch, Hulu Tops 28 million customers, unveils new shows and a ‘binge watch’ ad experience, May 2019
How OTT Streaming Video Is Delivered and Consumed

There are now over 97 million homes that have a connected TV device in 2019 equating to over 75% of all homes in the United States, and surpassing cable TV households (89M). According to Nielsen, most of connected TV device owners are users as well—with 85% streaming video content at least once a month.

There is a myriad of ways to access and consume this content. OTT streaming video is delivered through various internet protocol (IP)-enabled devices that can be accessed via a wide range of options, from HDMI sticks (Roku, Amazon Fire TV, Apple TV, Chromecast), gaming consoles, Blu-ray players, and connected television sets.

Together, the ubiquity of internet access and the penetration of internet-enabled devices means that OTT streaming video is available on every screen throughout the home and on the go as well. According to OpenX, the average customer owns three connected devices that can be used to watch OTT content. In addition, eMarketer finds that along with smart TVs (owned by 54.6% of U.S. homes,) Roku devices, connected gaming consoles, and Amazon Fire TV are the most used devices to connect televisions to the internet. In terms of actual viewing, most viewing hours occur on Roku, Amazon Fire TV and Apple TV.

Big Screen’s Gain

We expect these numbers to only grow as more new manufactured sets are being delivered with connected TV functionality built in (aka “smart TVs”). Nielsen data observes the same trend, estimating that smart TV penetration jumped from 32% to 41%, the biggest growth of any type of device from the prior study year.
Another key factor for the rapid growth of the connected TV universe is the affordability of connected TV devices like Roku and Amazon Fire. For consumers who can’t afford to buy a smart TV, they can pay anywhere from $20 to $60 for a connected TV device that will connect their “non-smart” TVs to the internet.

As the audience for OTT streaming video has grown, it’s not surprising that ad impressions are also growing. Looking at data from across Extreme Reach, Innovid, and FreeWheel, connected TV ad views now account for nearly half (45%) of all digital video ad impressions in Q2 2019. The mainstreaming of the OTT streaming living room is upon us.

The OTT Streaming Audience

As one proof point that OTT streaming video has entered the mainstream, a Roku study shows that 31% of the U.S. population are cord-cutters or cord-nevers (about 30 million households). In the next 5 years, Roku predicts that this number will double, with approximately 60 million TV households that will be cordless by 2024. Among other things, the study found that 82% of cord-cutters are satisfied with their decision to cancel their cable subscriptions in favor of streaming services and OTT providers. In addition, OpenX’s report about OTT streaming video report found that 56% of cord-cutters say cable is no longer necessary with services like Netflix and Hulu.

A study by eMarketer illustrated this trend further by showcasing that the U.S. is almost at a point where cord-cutter and cord-never households will outnumber pay TV households.

What does this mean for advertisers? The cord-cutter and cord-never segments represent a significant unreachable audience for traditional television advertising. For advertisers looking to add incremental reach to their campaigns, this is a compelling opportunity.

It’s also important to note that the OTT streaming audience isn’t the millennial-only audience many expect. A 2019 study from Magna and IPG Media Lab titled “Reaching the Un-Reachables” analyzed consumers who watch little or no traditional linear TV and found that many of them are older and more affluent than previously thought.

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9 Extreme Reach, Q2 2019 Video Benchmarks Report; Innovid Q2 2019, FreeWheel Q2 2019 Video Marketplace Report
10 Roku, The New Generation of Cord Cutters, 2019
11 OpenX, 2019 Consumer OTT Report
12 eMarketer, July 2019

Pay TV vs. Non-Pay-TV Households in the U.S., 2013-2023

Note: Pay TV households are households with a subscription to traditional pay TV services; includes cable, satellite, telco/fiber operators and multiple system operators (MSOs); excludes IPTV and pure-play online video services (e.g., Hulu, Netflix, YouTube, etc.) Source: eMarketer, July 2019
The report found that half of light linear TV viewers and 40% of non-linear TV viewers are Generation X (age 38 to 53) or older. The light linear viewers had the highest proportion of households with incomes of $100,000 or more.13 “Streaming is mainstream,” Roku’s Vice President of Ad Sales and Strategy, Alison Levin, told TechCrunch. “Brands need to shift to OTT to become whole again and find the consumers they’ve lost on linear” she said.14

And it’s not only that consumers are moving to OTT streaming video; they are spending more time there. According to OpenX, most Americans spend more time watching OTT streaming video than they spend watching traditional cable television. Millennials are reported to spend more than twice as much time watching OTT streaming content than live TV.15 It should be noted however that while time spent with OTT streaming video is growing, time spent with traditional TV still far outweighs it at this point by more than 4 to one according to Nielsen’s Q1 2019 Total Audience Report. However, at the same time, traditional TV is experiencing an aging affect and the share of 18 to 49’s – the demographic most coveted by advertisers – is the biggest area of growth in OTT streaming audiences.

Communal Viewing in OTT Streaming Video

Another statistic that heralds the coming age of OTT streaming video is the rise in co-viewing. According to MRI, 60% of those in the 18 to 34 age group say they are co-viewing more often now than they did three years ago, with 58% of co-viewing time spent watching with a “significant other,” with children accounting for 19% of that number.16

This behavior is becoming commonly accepted and advertisers have begun to count co-viewing as part of their connected TV campaigns. Dentsu Aegis Network, Horizon Media, MullenLowe’s Mediahub, and RPA are some of the agencies that have agreed to count co-viewing impressions on CTV towards the impression guarantees they have negotiated with Hulu and Roku. This acceptance of the role of the connected TV as the focal point of shared viewing in the household bodes well for parity in audience value between traditional TV and OTT streaming video.17

13 Magna Global and IPG Media Lab, Reaching the “Un-Reachable”, January 2019
14 TechCrunch, Roku launches new ad tool to compare linear and streaming audiences
15 OpenX, 2019 Consumer OTT Report
16 MRI, Cord Evolution research, January 2019
17 Digiday, ‘A turning point’: Buyers are adopting TV-style co-viewing metrics for connected TV, January 2019
Ad-Supported OTT (AVOD) Viewer

- Male (54%)
- HH Income $75k+ (34%)
- Cord Cutters/Shavers (52%)
- Married (54%)
- Light TV Viewer
- Caucasian – 59%
  Hispanic – 19%
  African-American – 14%
  Asian/Other – 8%
- Have Children in HH (50%)

Source: IAB Ad Receptivity and the Ad-Supported OTT Video Viewer, August 2019

**OTT Streaming Video Viewers Are Watching (and Interacting with) the Advertising**

While the landscape of OTT streaming content is made up of both ad-free SVOD and ad supported AVOD, what’s interesting to note is that consumers tend not to be “either / or” viewers. In fact, IAB has found that 76% of OTT streamers watch ad-supported OTT streaming video and 49% of them said they watched ad-supported OTT streaming video most of the time. These AVOD (ad-based video on demand) viewers provide marketers with an attractive target audience as they are more affluent, diverse, have children in the household, etc.

IAB also found that AVOD viewers don’t mind seeing ads if there is an appropriate value exchange (i.e., 62% don’t mind seeing ads if they aren’t paying anything for the content, 54% don’t mind ads if they get to watch the content they want, and 50% don’t mind ads if they are paying a reduced fee). In fact, 47% of AVOD viewers said that ads can be useful or enjoyable. Echoing these findings, Hulu’s SVP of Ad Sales, Peter Naylor adds, “People don’t hate ads, they hate irrelevance. Relevant ads are not seen as intrusive.”

Most important of all, ads in OTT streaming video are proving to be effective. An OpenX study found that 72% of OTT streaming consumers recalled seeing an ad and 40% of those reported having paused the programming to purchase or learn more about a product mentioned in an ad. OTT streaming video advertising platform Innovid reported seeing a 304% higher engagement rate with big screen OTT streaming video compared to video viewed on desktop or mobile.

“This is an astounding insight,” wrote Beth-Ann Eason, Innovid’s President. “People are leaning into advertising on TV and choosing with their remote to engage with OTT advertising at a higher rate than on devices that are inherently ‘lean forward’ devices. TV is evolving from a brand awareness and reach vehicle to a data-driven performance-based marketing platform.”

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18 IAB, Ad Receptivity and the Ad Supported OTT Video Viewer, October 2018
19 OpenX, 2019 Consumer OTT Report
20 The Palmer Group/Innovid, 2019 Media & Tech Report, January 2019
21 Innovid blog, OTT TV Advertising Takes the Lead in Attention and Engagement, January 2019
Why Direct Brands Love It

Digital Performance Meets Big Screen Branding

Many emerging direct brands start out by leveraging social platforms which offer organic as well as paid media advertising, precise targeting and easy to use self-serve interfaces. But with ever-changing algorithms, declining organic reach and increased competition, many of these advertisers find that after initial success, they begin to top out in terms of growth, and need to look for alternative media to reach new audiences and grow their brand. DTC brands are realizing that there is no substitution for television when it comes to branding at scale but there is a perception that getting into television can be hard. As Mike Reidy, SVP of Digital Ad Sales at NBCUniversal Media stated, “We quickly recognized the need to think and operate differently to provide value to these brands and as a result, created an entire “Direct to Scale” team that makes it easy to create and implement campaigns that drive ROI. We work closely with each brand to develop a strategy that fits their specific needs across our national TV campaigns and digital video and OTT initiatives that reach audiences across our owned and operated apps, content on Hulu, digital MVPDs, YouTube, Apple News, Snap and more, with Peacock as the next step in our content and technology journey.” Through these various solutions, partnerships and education, brands are starting to realize that expanding beyond the social channels to platforms like advanced television provides an easy on-ramp to upper funnel, awareness-driving media while mirroring the creative flexibility, targeting and measurement of digital advertising.

In terms of programming, OTT streaming video may resemble, or in fact be, traditional television programming, with long-form episodes, sports, movies and other types of popular video entertainment but the internet-enabled delivery mechanism provides the data driven targeting and measurement that allows for control over the spend and performance that DTC brands require. Why consumers and advertisers love OTT streaming video:

• **It’s On-Demand as well as Live.**

• **It has Targeting and Measurement Characteristics of Digital Advertising.** Though connected TV platforms don’t support cookies, they do offer household level targeting and performance data akin to online video. As Heidi Zak, Co-Founder and Co-CEO from ThirdLove stated, “What we love about OTT is that it is easy to go after specific audiences and it is measurable. If our team sees that a certain strategy is not working, they can close it out and conversely if we see that a specific tactic is working, we can spend more.”

• **It Reaches the Cord-Cutters and Cord-Nevers.**

• **It Offers New Creative Freedom.** Since OTT streaming programming doesn’t have to conform to a traditional broadcast season or clock, content creators have embraced new creative possibilities.
For DTC Brands, OTT Streaming Video Is a Move Up the Funnel

The new breed of direct to consumer brands have flipped the traditional awareness > trial > purchase funnel by starting out with an emphasis on product-based performance marketing versus top-down brand building. But with rising online acquisition costs, many direct to consumer brands are looking to move up the funnel, turning towards more scalable yet targetable media vehicles like OTT streaming video to lower CAC (customer acquisition costs) while adding a patina of “As Seen on TV” legitimacy to their businesses. As Katie Jokipii, Director, Acquisition & Mass Media at Dollar Shave Club stated, “An advertiser who is not having an evergreen moment with OTT is missing the boat. OTT has exploded in reach. Dollar Shave Club has been experimenting with OTT for a few years and we select partners that can provide reach, as well as smaller partners with more niche audiences.”

Melanie Travis, Founder and CEO of Andie swimwear told Modern Retail that “You need to start branching out from direct response, which is bottom funnel. If you don’t fill your top funnel, the bottom funnel costs will rise more than what the platform is worth. It’s also about legitimacy. Different demographics want to see your brand in more places to know you’re real and legitimate.”

“The focus is in direct to consumer and disruptor brands,” said Michaela Giovengo, Head of Performance Marketing Sales at Hulu. “They’ve found that it’s important to go beyond social and digital as they mature. They’re making a statement that they are not just a brand living on Instagram or Facebook anymore. They want to build their brand.”

The DTC Consumer At-A-Glance

Demos: A Desirable Audience

- More educated
  - 47% DTC graduated college+
  - 32% Non-DTC graduated college+
  \[\uparrow 48\%\] higher than Non-DTC

- More affluent
  - $56K Median DTC HHI
  - $43K Median Non-DTC HHI
  \[\uparrow 30\%\] higher than Non-DTC

- Younger
  - 49% DTC age 22-34
  - 39% Non-DTC age 22-34
  \[\uparrow 24\%\] higher than Non-DTC

Shopping: Digital-First Shoppers

- 62% Prefer purchasing via mobile device than at a store
- 74% Frequently shop online
- $785 Average spend on DTC products

Values: Conscientious Consumers

- Simplicity
  “Simplifying my life is a high priority” – 88%

- Charity
  “I donate to charitable causes as often as I can afford it” – 80%

- Ethnically Minded
  “Buying from ethical companies is important to me” – 82%

They look a lot like CTV viewers!

Source: Telaria | Hulu

22 Modern Retail, “Faced with rising online costs, DTC brands are now spending more money on traditional marketing channels, August 2019”
DTC Consumers Are Heavy Streamers

Not surprisingly, DTC consumers tend to live a highly digital, on-demand lifestyle. Research commissioned this year by the video ad platform Telaria and Hulu found that DTC consumers spend 13 hours per week watching live or on-demand streaming TV. That is 20% more time than they spend watching cable TV, and 70% more time than they spend on social media.\(^{23}\)

Importantly, AVOD viewers are also direct brand consumers. According to IAB research, a quarter of AVOD viewers say they buy more products directly from the brand online vs. in stores. They also reported spending more on direct to consumer subscription services ($119.19 per month vs. $94.46 for the general population).\(^{24}\)

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\(^{23}\) Hulu & Telaria, Emerging Alliances, April 2019

\(^{24}\) IAB, Ad Receptivity and the Ad Supported OTT Video Viewer, October 2018
Ad Creative

A New Video Ad Experience

OTT streaming video advertising opens a new world of creative opportunities for brands with standard, interactive, short- and long-form messaging types. According to Extreme Reach Q2, 30 second ads made up 64% of CTV ad impressions, dominating 15 second ads, which made up about 33% of Q2 impressions, while six second ads saw a decline of 7% year over year. DTC brand advertising on CTV performed especially well in terms of time spent on 30 second ads, with an average of 28 seconds in Q1 and 27 seconds in Q2.25

Though the ad creative can look like traditional television commercials, the standard interruptive model and heavier ad loads of broadcast television are a challenge for many OTT streaming video consumers who are used to shorter or skippable ads. This has lead to an industry-wide re-think of ad experiences overall. One common solution is shorter, less interruptive ad pods. Earlier this year, Hulu committed to capping commercial breaks at 90 seconds and investing in frequency management to limit the number of times a viewer sees the same ad in a day. Conversely, some brands are thinking big, and using OTT streaming video as a platform to tell long-form brand stories.

“Some of the Grand Prix work at Cannes this year, where brands were creating short films, documentaries and other forms of content, was truly as good as anything people may choose to spend time with...” said Scott Donaton, Global Chief Creative Officer at Digitas.

Extreme Reach’s “Video Benchmarks” report notes that the growth of CTV and its mostly unskippable ad inventory is driving a shift to longer ad lengths—those of 60 seconds or more—that will become more prevalent in the future, offering brands new storytelling formats for engaging consumers.

Advanced Ad Products

Advanced ad products in OTT streaming video are giving brands a new creative palette for storytelling that combines sight, sound and motion with options such as dynamic overlays, live social integrations, customer acquisition tools (like email capture) and couponing. The opportunities are nearly limitless. As Peter Naylor from Hulu said, “It’s easy to take 15 and 30 second ads and put them in an OTT streaming environment. The bigger opportunity is to think about the creative possibility. In the world of IP addresses, you should try to replicate everything that can be done in a browser space in an OTT streaming space.”

25 Extreme Reach, Video Benchmarks, Q2 2019
As a result, Hulu and Brightline, an interactive advertising company that helped create the ad, ran a commercial for Sleep Number mattresses earlier this year that allowed viewers to request a promotional offer via the email address associated with the subscriber's Hulu account. According to Hulu research, interactive ad units can produce up to a 50% increase in ad recall and a 45% increase in purchase intent.

Innovid also teamed up with Volvo and MODI Media to serve interactive video across Roku and Samsung devices that allowed viewers to explore the Volvo S90, receive personalized messaging based on their location, and enter their phone number to receive details about local dealerships. This activation drove a 35% average sales lift vs the control group (as measured by Experian).²⁶

Another interesting creative opportunity is being tested by Hulu to take advantage of a frequent behavior of on-demand streaming: pausing (on a monthly basis Hulu sees more than a billion pauses among viewers of their ad-supported service). To capitalize on this, Hulu is allowing brands to advertise within the paused environment. “For the pause ads, we have two beta advertisers from some of the worlds’ biggest advertisers: Coca-Cola and Procter and Gamble” said Hulu’s Peter Naylor. “In an example for Charmin, when you hit pause, copy will appear for Charmin that says, ‘Need a Break? Enjoy the Go! Charmin.’ It’s contextually relevant.”

Speaking on the importance of breaking the creative mold and thinking beyond standard 0:15, 0:30 and 0:60 second ads, Carl Fremont CEO of Quigley Simpson says: “Publishers along with agencies and brands need to look at new creative ways for how we can bring alignment between the consumer, what they are engaging with and watching, what’s meaningful and valuable, and how brands can participate that. While that takes white board time and mental time to sit together and break the boundaries, I am hopeful that we will see 2 to 3 breakthrough ideas in the coming years.”

²⁶ Innovid, Volvo, Modi Media, and Innovid Drive Sales Lift through CTV Engagement, July 2019
Viewers Are Choosy (Sometimes Even with the Ads They See)

Giving viewers a choice as to what commercial they can see in an OTT streaming video environment is another opportunity for brands. Scott Bishoff, VP of Fox Film, told IAB at the 2019 NewFronts “If you’re watching OTT content, you can be given a choice of three different brands. Which ad do you want to see?” Not only is the viewer given a lean in experience, but the advertiser gains valuable insights that they can use to improve relevancy. “I know that you chose not to watch the trailer for the horror film the last few times, so I won’t show you a commercial for a horror film moving forward.” Bishoff added.

Owning a Channel

Another significant opportunity for brands comes from the long tail of content available in OTT streaming video. With so much programming being created and licensed, OTT streaming video can allow for niche programming and custom (brandable) channels. An airline can, for example, create a specific channel of travel programming. A CPG brand can curate a series of cooking shows. Zack Coffman, CEO/Founder of One World Digital, explains “Brands can view these new, hybrid OTT channels as an extension of social into the living room. The conversation can be two-way [between the brand and customer] in a way that isn’t possible in traditional television.”

Pluto’s Harold Morgenstern, SVP, National Head of Advertising Sales said, “Pluto TV always leads with contextual targeting as a time-tested approach, but we also love to innovate. We ask our advertisers who they are trying to reach and what type of content they are looking for across News, Sports, Entertainment and lots of other choices. In some cases, we will even curate and create a channel that is unique to their business needs.”
Targeting, Measurement & Attribution

Advanced Targeting (Beyond Age/Demographics and Audience Indexing)

The traditional approach of using indexes to evaluate the relative composition of a target audience that typically watches a specific TV program or network has offered a way for marketers and their agencies to gauge the value of a different program or network in terms of potential viewership. While these index-based approaches offer an improved, scalable way to deliver impressions for a given show, it doesn't offer the specificity that some advertisers need to reach just their target audience.

Since OTT streaming content is delivered over the internet to connected TVs with reasonably Persistent IP addresses, advertisers can target and serve ads to specific households/subscribers with similar precision as digital video, resulting in greater efficiency and less waste. Advanced targeting in OTT streaming video can also leverage cross-device maps that tie devices consumers use (such as mobile phones, tablets and laptops) in a household while viewing OTT streaming content on those devices, bridging households and individuals within them. Combining this device-level viewer data with other available sources enables advertisers to build more detailed profiles and segments that go beyond traditional gender and age demo targeting. Household income, family status, hobbies, food preferences, etc. can be used to better define and reach the desired target audience. Instead of purchasing media based on average viewership for a program, OTT streaming video enables audience based targeting and dynamic ad insertion to reach specific households and individuals.

For new brands that have grown up on direct response marketing, it can be hurdle to jump into a medium without knowing that the return is going to be there. As Nate Checketts, Co-Founder & CEO of premium men’s activewear company Rhone points out: “Where we're spending our budgets today is in areas where there's a strong link between content and viewers. OTT solves this because we have the ability to combine the right content with the right audience, to test into it and to make sure it’s relevant so that we're not wasting ad dollars. This is critical as we're growing quickly and need to make sure that every dollar counts.”

Below is a sampling of widely available targeting options for OTT streaming video:

- **Demographics:** age, gender, presence of kids, language preference
- **Location:** country, state, region, city, DMA, zip code
- **Behavioral & Interest:** purchase behaviors, category preferences, hobbies and interests, brand preferences
- **Contextual and Content Verticals:** broken out by publisher, app (bundle ID), channel
- **First- and Third-Party Data:** using data from brand, publisher and third parties (Experian, Acxiom, etc.) it is possible to target specific customer attributes, such as brand ownership
- **Cross-Device and Retargeting:** reaching OTT streaming viewers on additional devices, apps, websites, etc.
While age, gender, and location continue to be a mainstay, data management platforms (DMPs) are enabling more sophisticated targeting options. In March, for example, Adobe announced that their DMP customers can now target the more than 32 million Roku households with OTT programmatic ads using their own first-party data. Comcast-owned FreeWheel announced that it will use Nielsen’s DMP to provide insights on media consumption and purchase data to help advertisers target and optimize campaigns in real time on their CTV/OTT streaming services.

There is also syndicated, third- and first-party advanced data such as panel-based set-top box (STB) data from Rentrak, Kantar, and TiVo Research and Analytics (TRA), data from third-party data management platforms (DMPs), and even census data.

As with all media, the narrower the target, the more difficult it can be to scale. While it is possible to hyper-target, doing so can reduce a brand’s ability to reach impression goals. Always begin with clear campaign KPIs before determining targeting parameters.

**Measurement: Knowing What Works**

The marketer’s age-old dilemma has always been, “Is my advertising working?” OTT streaming video addresses this question by giving advertisers, through more granular measurement and attribution, the opportunity to understand which viewers saw their ad, whether or not the whole ad experience was viewed, and whether there was a favorable outcome to viewers seeing their ad (such as a purchase, or a store visit or other important KPIs like brand lift). Furthermore, buyers can start to understand which segments, platforms, and content they should be investing in more.

Many advertisers start out in OTT streaming video wondering how metrics used in traditional linear TV differ from streaming. In traditional linear TV, advertisers typically leverage metrics like reach, frequency and GRPs (Gross Ratings Points). In OTT streaming video, a metric is impressions (which enable confirmation of which households viewed the ad). Quartiles can be leveraged to determine how much of the ad was viewed, while video ad completion rates can measure the percentage of all ads that play through for their entire duration.

Buyers who come to OTT streaming video with a digital background will often ask how viewability is measured. In fact, for these buyers, viewability—the opportunity for an ad to be seen—is considered table stakes for their cross-platform video buys. Viewability measurement started with desktop environments and was typically calculated based on the position of the ad on a web page, confirming whether a user had scrolled to that part of the page where the ad was being served. Mobile app viewability then followed.
Historically, viewability measurement hasn't been available specifically on connected TV inventory because of connected TV screen's limited technical capabilities for executing 3rd party verification logic code. Verification vendors are now beginning to provide viewability measurement in CTV environments using the Media Rating Council’s definition of viewability for video ads, which states that a video ad is viewable when 100% of the ad is visible on the screen for at least 2 seconds. These solutions can be device-specific, which makes it important for the advertiser to confirm which CTV platform viewability is being tracked on. It’s also important to note that Connected TV ads are, for the most part, inherently viewable as they’re delivered full screen, in-focus (meaning users can’t move to another screen or tab as they might on a desktop or tablet) and typically are without the ability to skip ads. Therefore, campaigns running on connected TV have high completion rates (sometimes as high as 95% according to Extreme Reach).27

For hybrid digital/TV buyers, by using the right set of metrics, they’re able to compare their OTT streaming video campaigns running on connected TVs, for instance, with their mobile and desktop results.

Because viewers consume OTT streaming content across multiple devices and platforms, piecing together a full picture of OTT streaming video campaign effectiveness requires digital savvy and patience. “Very often we’re looking at how to enable a specific measurement for the advertiser,” said Asaf Davidov, Director of Ad Sales Research at Hulu. “That could be audience-specific measurement like Nielsen DAR, ad effectiveness by leveraging IP address and panel data, or using our subscriber data to connect viewing behavior to a business outcome for attribution.”

As Asaf stated, in addition to basic ad delivery metrics, advertisers are also looking to understand whether their campaign resulted in a favorable business outcome (like purchases or store visits). It’s the role of attribution to confirm how a campaign delivered against these specific KPIs. In OTT streaming video, advertisers can partner with publishers and various measurement vendors to report on metrics like brand lift, sales lift and actual store visits:

- Brand lift studies are used to determine if a campaign impacted the consumer’s knowledge or opinion of the brand. By sending a survey to consumers after they saw an ad, a brand can measure how consumers feel about their product, comparing the survey data from these viewers to a pool of respondents who didn’t see their ad. As Shane Pittson, VP of Growth at quip explains: “We believe the combination of direct response media and quality creative can contribute to growing our brand. That’s why we’re putting in a lot more time and effort to make sure brand perception based off our advertising is tracking towards our larger story: that oral health is much bigger than simply brushing your teeth. While we focus in part on core lower and mid-funnel direct response, we’re also running Millward Brown studies to see if we’re moving the needle in terms of brand awareness and overall perception of quip.”

- Sales lift studies are used to prove the ROI of OTT streaming video campaigns by analyzing whether consumers who saw the ad then purchased online or in store.

27 Extreme Reach, Q2 2019 Video Benchmarks Report
Foot traffic attribution is used to measure post campaign visits to brick and mortar retail stores. By leveraging mobile location data and using the same controlled vs. exposed methodology, advertisers can partner with measurement vendors to determine if a consumer who was exposed to their ad then visited the store. Advertisers can also gain additional insight into the types of consumers that are interested in purchasing the brand.

An even more advanced approach is called multi-touch attribution, which looks at a consumer’s journey through the sales funnel across several devices and calculates which ads, on which platforms, led to the most sales or actions.

OTT streaming video measurement is, of course, not without its challenges especially in terms of connecting the dots across a fragmented landscape of platforms and apps. We certainly need to understand what OTT streaming video provides from a pure delivery standpoint, but are there new currencies beyond GRPs, which have been around for decades, or metrics that can showcase the success of OTT streaming video advertising efforts? It’s not always easy for agencies and marketers to take the leap of faith. However, as Jesse Judelman, SVP of Sales, Americas at Vevo says, “It’s just the nature of the industry. There will be measurement hang-ups as the advertising world will always lag behind the audience. How do we generate more investment and have advertisers and agencies work with us to get us there? It will take time. It will never be as fast as we want it to be.”
What’s Next

As television settles into its third revolution, OTT streaming video is no longer the disruptor of the video world but rather a mainstream part of the consumer entertainment experience. If you had any doubt, just look at the recent Emmy Award nominations of Ozark (Netflix), The Handmaid’s Tale (Hulu) and The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel (Amazon Prime). OTT streaming video is still in its early stages and there will be challenges ahead as the shift in consumer viewing preferences solidifies and the media marketplace adjusts to the new economics and advertising opportunities at play. While it’s always hard to predict the future, we believe there will be a few major trends:

**AVOD growth as ad dollars follow the eyeballs:** Ad spend in OTT streaming video is expected to grow 37% this year reaching almost $7BN. This influx of ad dollars combined with the high cost of producing quality original content may prompt some SVOD services to explore hybrid, ad-supported and integrated sponsorship business models.

**DTC brands jump into OTT streaming video:** We expect to see DTC advertisers embracing the reach of OTT streaming video and growing scale for connecting with eCommerce-friendly consumers. By combining advanced targeting personalization and attribution with the storytelling power of sight, sound and motion on the big screen, advertisers can achieve both performance and branding. To quote LUMA partners, “OTT is DTC’s nirvana.”

**Restrictions around content licensing and data:** With major new content producer-owned OTT streaming services launching, Disney+, Peacock and HBO Max among them, we expect to see rights holders move to exert more control over their content. For example, the popular series The Office will move from Netflix to NBC Universal’s Peacock service in 2021. Expect further shifts as rights holders consolidate programing to protect against audiences migrating from one service to the next. Moreover, there is risk that device platforms which hold the most robust data for targeting and measurement could become more like “walled gardens” making it difficult for advertisers to freely execute campaigns and measure results across the OTT streaming video ecosystem.

**Consolidation of services:** The jury is out as to how many OTT streaming services consumers are willing to buy and use, but history would suggest that paradox of choice will be a limiting factor. As Ryan Johnson, SVP, Group Director of Branded Content from RPA said, “You will see a wide-open universe narrow down to partners that are going to come together for survival to grow their scale and have a bigger marketplace to serve. This consolidation will happen so that it will be manageable for the advertising community to standardize, but more importantly, for the viewer who is asking why they have to pay so much for each individual service.” A 2019 survey from Amdocs found that 70% of U.S. respondents are prepared to pay for a single provider that could package all their preferred content into a dedicated service bundle.

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28 eMarketer, Oct 2019
29 Amdocs, The New Viewer, February 2019
Best Practices

1. **Tailor the creative to the audience and platform.** OTT streaming video replicates the one-to-one experience DTC brands have on social. Rather than one size fits all creative, leverage the interactivity and targeting of OTT streaming video. Test different offers and creative.

2. **Introduce the brand early in the creative.** The beginning of commercials garners the greatest attention. Consider having a logo on the creative throughout the commercial.

3. **Consider the platform.** New types of ad messaging are available, from paused-content ads to menu placements. Work with your platform partners to understand the entire creative toolbox available.

4. **Make creative actionable.** Remember, OTT streaming video can be a two-way medium. Develop creative that prompts action; engaging with the brand, capturing data, and driving immediate purchase.

5. **Identify the KPIs.** Know your campaign objectives in advance to ensure creative, targeting and attribution measures can be set up properly.

6. **Measure what matters across platforms:** Utilize digital metrics to compare CTV to mobile or desktop campaigns, while accessing linear metrics to understand how CTV campaigns compare to traditional TV.

7. **Use third-party data.** Use third-party vendors to enhance targeting efforts, gain audience insights, and enable more precise target definitions. For example, utilize online/offline purchase data from companies like Acxiom, Experian, and Neustar as well as TV viewership data from companies like comScore/Rentrak and Nielsen, and third-party consumer data from companies like Lotame and Oracle.

8. **Take advantage of the feedback loop.** OTT streaming video provides performance data that brands can use to gather insights and optimize campaigns.
Appendix: Key Terms

**Addressable Television** - Technology that allows an advertiser to identify and target television households watching the same program with different advertising. Most cable television services offer addressable solutions, but this is primarily an IPTV/OTT attribute.

**Advanced Television** - Any television that has evolved beyond being a receiver of traditional, linear broadcasting. The term is inclusive of the following:

- **Connected TV (CTV)**: A television set that is connected to the internet via OTT devices or has built in internet capabilities (i.e., a Smart Television).
- **Smart TV**: A subset of Connected TV, usually with the streaming hardware and software built into the television, versus through an external device.
- **Addressable Linear**: A system where the television is addressable, and advertising is dynamically inserted, but through a more traditional linear infrastructure and experience. DirecTV (Now AT&T), Dish and Cablevision's inventory is all addressable.

**AVOD (Ad-based Video on Demand)** - A video streaming service that offers customers a catalogue of on-demand content that contains advertisements

**MVPD** - A multichannel video programming distributor. This is your traditional cable or satellite service such as Comcast or DISH, previously referred to as Multi-System Operators (MSOs).

**OTT Streaming Video (Over-the-Top Video)** - Content streamed to a connected OTT device (connected TV, or other device) over the internet, outside the closed networks of telecom and cable providers, without the need for set top boxes or converters.

**vMVPDs** - Virtual Multichannel Video Programming Distributors provide multiple television channels like the above-mentioned MVPDs, but through the internet, without supplying its own data transport infrastructure (i.e., coaxial cable, fiber, or satellite technology). These services are sometimes called “skinny bundles” as they often contain fewer channels than a traditional cable or satellite subscription. Some vMVPDs examples include AT&T TV Now, Sling TV, PlayStation Vue, Fubo, Philo, YouTube TV and Hulu Live.

**VOD** - Video on Demand. A term applied to non-linear, non-live video. Some OTT streaming services provide live streaming, but for the most part the defining characteristic is the ability to choose from a menu of video programs to be played on-demand. This includes cable company on-demand services.

**Streaming** - 1) Technology that permits continuous audio and video delivered to a device from a remote website. 2) An internet data transfer technique that allows the user to see and hear audio and video files. The host or source compresses, then “streams” small packets of information over the internet to the user, who can access the content as it is received.

**SVOD** - A streaming service that consumers subscribe to for a fee to access a catalogue of on-demand content. Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Video are examples. Notable is that the subscription periods tend to be short, often monthly, so the subscription operators must work hard to retain viewers.
**TV Everywhere** - An online business model in which television broadcasters, particularly cable networks, allow their customers to access live and/or on-demand video content from their networks through internet-based services. The fee for such access is covered as part of their subscription to the service via an MVPD. The viewers use credentials from their MVPD for authentication and access to the content.
Video Interviews: OTT Streaming Video Insights

- What is the OTT Streaming Video Opportunity for Advertisers? | Darren Olive, EVP, National Advertising Sales & Strategy, Crackle Plus and Scott Bishoff, VP, Fox Film
- Why Direct Brands Are Leaning Into OTT Streaming Video | Michaela Giovengo, Head of Performance Marketing, Hulu
- Advertising Integration in OTT Streaming Video | Scott Donaton, Global Chief Creative Officer, Digitas
- OTT Streaming Video Measurement | Asaf Davidov, Director Ad Sales Research, Hulu
- OTT Streaming Video Ad Spend Trends | Darren Olive, EVP, National Advertising Sales & Strategy, Crackle Plus and Jesse Judelman, SVP of Sales, America, VEVO
- Direct Brands & Measurement | Asaf Davidov, Director Ad Sales Research, Hulu
- Creative Innovation in OTT Streaming Video | Ryan Johnson, Group Director Branded Content, RPA
- Planning and Buying OTT Streaming Video | Lindsay Issler, Director Media Strategy (Sony Pictures) OMD Worldwide
- Predictions for the OTT Streaming Landscape | Ryan Johnson, Group Director Branded Content, RPA
- A Brand Perspective on OTT Streaming Video | Nate Checketts, CEO and Co-Founder, Rhone
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The final report, findings and recommendations were not influenced by strategic partners or sponsors.

Strategic Partners

hulu  
Pinterest  
Spotify
About Our Strategic Partners

**hulu**

Hulu is the leading premium streaming service offering live and on-demand TV and movies, with and without commercials, both in and outside the home. Launched in 2008, Hulu is the only service that gives viewers instant access to current shows from every major U.S. broadcast network; libraries of hit TV series and films; and acclaimed Hulu Originals like Emmy® and Golden Globe Award-winning series The Handmaid’s Tale, Emmy® Award-nominated series including The Looming Tower, The Act, Catch-22, Castle Rock, and Pen15 alongside hit series Marvel’s Runaways, Ramy, Shrill and Oscar® and Emmy®-nominated documentary film Minding the Gap. The service also streams live news, entertainment and sports from 21st Century Fox, The Walt Disney Company, NBCUniversal, CBS Corporation, The CW, Turner Networks, A+E Networks and Discovery Networks – available all in one place. Upcoming Hulu Originals include Little Fires Everywhere from Reese Witherspoon and Kerry Washington and The Dropout based on the ABC News investigative podcast and starring Kate McKinnon.

For more content, please visit hulu.com

**Pinterest**

Pinterest is a visual discovery engine people use to find inspiration for their lives, including recipes, home and style ideas, travel destinations and more. People have saved more than 200 billion Pins across a range of interests, which others with similar tastes can discover through search and recommendations. Located in San Francisco, Pinterest launched in 2010 and has more than 300 million monthly users around the world. Available on iOS and Android, and at pinterest.com.

For more content please visit pinterest.com

**Spotify**

Spotify transformed music listening forever when it launched in Sweden in 2008. Discover, manage and share over 50m tracks for free, or upgrade to Spotify Premium to access exclusive features including offline mode, improved sound quality, Spotify Connect and ad-free listening. Today, Spotify is the most popular global audio streaming subscription service with 217m users, including 100m subscribers, across 79 markets. We are the largest driver of revenue to the music business today.

For more information, please visit spotify.com
About Us

The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) empowers the media and marketing industries to thrive in the digital economy. Its membership is comprised of more than 650 leading media companies, brands, and the technology firms responsible for selling, delivering, and optimizing digital ad marketing campaigns. The trade group fields critical research on interactive advertising, while also educating brands, agencies, and the wider business community on the importance of digital marketing. In affiliation with the IAB Tech Lab, IAB develops technical standards and solutions. IAB is committed to professional development and elevating the knowledge, skills, expertise, and diversity of the workforce across the industry. Through the work of its public policy office in Washington, D.C., the trade association advocates for its members and promotes the value of the interactive advertising industry to legislators and policymakers. Founded in 1996, IAB is headquartered in New York City.

DIGITAL VIDEO CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

Serving as the go-to for all things video, the IAB Digital Video Center of Excellence simplifies the video supply chain and provides best practices and education for brands, agencies, and media companies to drive continued growth through the evolving convergence of television and digital video. A dedicated unit within IAB, the center is devoted to the advancement of the digital video medium in the global marketplace. Its board and members reflect a dynamic mix of top television brands, original digital video content producers, prominent cross-media publishers, digital video technology leaders, and innovative start-ups spanning across the digital video programming, marketing, and distribution spectrum. Together with its member companies and in cooperation with the IAB Tech Lab, the center helps produce technical standards, common measurement, metrics, research, and thought leadership critical to the field, while identifying emergent best practices in the fast-growing arena of digital video. Working with the IAB Public Policy office, the Digital Video Center also advocates to legislators on behalf of the burgeoning medium. Established in November 2014, the Digital Video Center is based at the IAB New York City headquarters, and membership is open to all IAB member companies.

For more information on how to get involved, please contact digitalvideocenter@iab.com.
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