



MEDIA IMPACT REPORT

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Newly Certified Media Currencies for the 2024-25 Upfronts

Also in this issue:

MRI-Simmons Cord Evolution Study Updates

Leveraging Metadata Optimization in Connected TV Advertising

Two Alternative Currencies Receive Certification in Advance of the Upfronts

By [Mark Brown](#), Chief Investment Officer

On April 3, two of the leading competitors to Nielsen in the TV audience measurement space—ComScore and VideoAmp—received full certification as transactional currencies by the Joint Industry Committee (JIC). This provides a much-needed boost to both services at a critical time as the TV marketplace gears up for the 2024-25 upfront selling season. As we reported in [Media Impact Report 49](#), The JIC had already provided both services with “conditional” certification in 2023, along with a third alternative currency, iSpot. iSpot retains the “conditional” label on their certification, but they are moving forward with the certification process and expect to become fully certified by the JIC in June. The JIC’s announcement comes on the heels of the Media Research Council’s accreditation of ComScore for both National and Local TV ratings.

The JIC put the currency providers through a lengthy data evaluation process that included 670 tests to ensure the data produced was transactable across specific currency use cases. The tests looked for data errors and verified that the providers could accurately forecast reach and frequency. The evaluation also considered the currency provider’s transparency, completeness, methodology, and stability of data. The JIC certification covers a 2-year period through the end of 2025. After that, ComScore and VideoAmp will need to be recertified every two years.

Being certified as transactional currencies by the JIC clears the way for buyers and sellers to transact their upfront deals for the 2024-25 season on ComScore or VideoAmp guaranteed audiences with the level of confidence that was previously only afforded to Nielsen ratings. However, the JIC announcement reiterated that it is still a marketplace decision about what currency will be used for upfront guarantees. As Travis Scoles, SVP of Advanced Advertising at Paramount Global and Chairman of the U.S. JIC’s Board of Directors put it, “the currencies and resulting deal structures are decided solely between buyers and sellers...” But those buyers and sellers now have options.

The fact that iSpot was not certified at this time was not a great surprise. iSpot acquired another video

measurement service, 605, in September and they are still working on integrating 605’s data and methodology with their existing service. iSpot still has conditional certification as a transactional currency certification and they have only delayed their full certification until June.

Assuming that iSpot will receive full certification, they are still a viable option for upfront transactions in this year’s upfront negotiations.

In addition to being in play for upfront transactions this year, the other huge benefit of full certification for ComScore and VideoAmp is that they will have full access to the JIC’s streaming data set when it launches next year. The streaming data will be collected from all publishers and agencies that are members of the JIC. Understanding cross-platform (Linear & Streaming) metrics like reach and frequency is one of the biggest issues that marketers are trying to solve for, especially as the video landscape continues to fragment with the proliferation of ad supported streaming platforms. While the JIC determined that the currency providers “performed strongly for linear...” they found that “improvements should be made to be transactable at scale for cross-platform.”

Put another way, while the transactional certification of ComScore and VideoAmp is good news for the industry, we still have a way to go for media measurement to catch up with the ways that people are watching video and how we as marketers evaluate that viewership.

What is a “transactional currency?”

Transactional certification means the JIC has determined that ComScore and VideoAmp data sets are accurate and representative of census-level data and are approved for buyers and sellers to conduct upfront negotiations and guarantees using their services. It is still up to buyers and sellers to decide which – if any – of these services to write guarantees against.

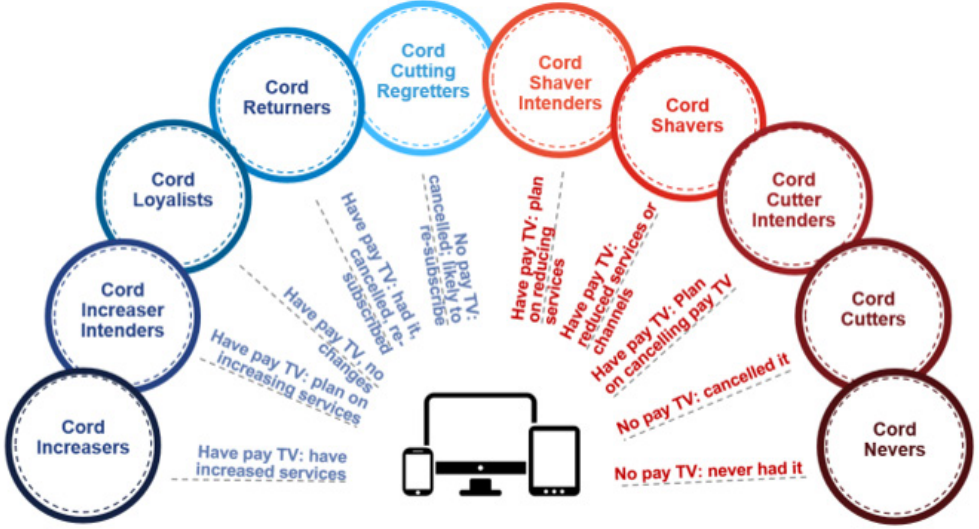
Understanding the Relationship Between Linear and Streaming with MRI-Simmons Cord Evolution Study

By **Joe Bienvenue**, Research Manager, and **Yuki Tanaka**, Group Director, Integrated Media & Inclusion Marketing

The MRI-Simmons Cord Evolution study tracks the interaction between TV, video, OTT, and streaming apps. The study is fielded and released three times per year to understand the shifting demands of TV viewers.

Key features and capabilities include:

- In-depth view of the video landscape tied back to brand and psychographic data for media planning.
- Insight into not only what and how they are watching, but also the whys behind their viewing and subscription choices.
- Details on past, present, and future use of pay TV subscription services.
- Ten segments on the TV “cord spectrum,” and the ability to assess ongoing and accurate market sizing for each.



The most recent study (2024 March Cord Evolution) found that 64% of adults (164M) fall into the Cutting Back or No Pay-TV categories (Cord Shaved Intenders to Cord Nevers)

- 78.4M adults are Cord Cutters (31%)
- 58M are Cord Nevers (23%)

Despite this group being the largest collective group, Cord Loyalists make up the largest segment at 79.2M (31%), highlighting the balance necessary between traditional linear and streaming to reach audiences across TV screens.

Age distribution by cord segment skews younger as we progress into Cord Cutters and Cord Nevers

- 39% of A35-54 are Cord Cutters
- 49% of A25-34 are Cord Nevers

The largest segment of Cord Loyalists are made of A65+, a trend we continue to see with traditional linear TV viewership skewing older.

- 54% of A65+ are Cord Loyalties

The study also asks specific questions around FAST and ad-supported streaming services used. Overall, ad-supported streaming services have higher reach across all ages with YouTube having the highest potential across all age groups.

The Cord Evolution survey helps our clients understand the who, what, how, and why of today’s TV viewership trends. The study dives into the motivations and drivers of cord behavior and usage trends for over 180 streaming services and apps across the ten cord segments.



/NOTEPAD

Case Study: Leveraging Metadata Optimization in Connected TV Advertising

By **David Nyurenberg**, Associate Media Director, Digital Video

Introduction:

In the face of evolving privacy regulations and the diminishing effectiveness of traditional audience targeting, Rain the Growth Agency has been leaning into future-forward privacy by design targeting strategies. Utilizing machine learning (ML), we have developed custom algorithms to optimize programmatic and digital video advertising, with a particular focus on Connected TV (CTV).

Objective:

For our client, a well-known technology platform and a very privacy-conscious brand, our primary objective was to drive account creations as measured by iSpot through CTV advertising, while navigating the challenges posed by privacy concerns and shifting targeting capabilities. Rain aimed to develop a solution that leveraged metadata optimization to deliver measurable results while ensuring compliance with privacy regulations.

Background on Metadata:

In programmatic advertising, metadata refers to the information exchanged in real-time auctions for ad impressions. This data includes a wide range of information about each impression, such as device type, location, content context, and user demographics. By analyzing metadata, advertisers can gain valuable insights into the characteristics of each impression and make informed decisions about ad placement.

Approach:

Rain's custom algorithm solution focuses on processing and analyzing metadata to identify key drivers of performance without relying on personally identifiable information (PII) or traditional audience segments. Our algorithms create tailored buying strategies for each client and campaign based on these insights, offering transparency and control over the optimization process while maintaining strict privacy compliance.

Implementation:

In the case of our client's CTV campaign, Rain's custom algorithms processed granular impression-based log files to identify specific metadata signals correlated with conversions. By prioritizing ad opportunities based on these insights, we optimized the bidding strategy to maximize performance. The algorithms continuously refined their approach through real-time feedback, adapting to changing market conditions.

During the course of data analysis and optimization, we discovered that, in descending order, ZIP code, time of day, genre and channel are the primary factors of conversion in connected TV. Once the algorithms understood which variables within those fields were over indexed for conversions, the algorithms optimized pre-bid to the right mix of metadata signals, i.e. prioritizing impressions within:

- Urban zip codes
- Delivery during primetime evening hours
- Documentary & reality tv genres

Results:

The impact of Rain's metadata optimization approach on client's CTV campaign was significant:

- Lower Cost of Acquisition : Rain achieved a notable 47% reduction in Customer acquisition cost (CAC) compared to historical performance.
- Cost Savings: Our algorithms delivered a 16% reduction in CPMs compared to the average campaign CPM, resulting in improved cost-effectiveness and increased reach.

Conclusion:

Use of metadata optimization represents a pragmatic solution to the challenges facing CTV advertising in an evolving privacy landscape. By prioritizing data-driven insights and privacy compliance, our approach offers a reliable alternative for advertisers seeking effective targeting strategies without compromising consumer privacy.

Industry Ramifications:

This case study highlights the potential of metadata optimization to transform advertising in the face of privacy concerns and shifting targeting capabilities. As marketers adapt to changing regulations and seek alternative targeting methods, Rain's approach provides a model for achieving results while upholding the highest standards of privacy and compliance.

/QUICK HITS



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Need More Guidance?



Steve Miller
Client Development Director
steve.miller@rainforgrowth.com



Robin Cohen
EVP, Integrated Media Investment & Planning
robin.cohen@rainforgrowth.com

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