

Reimagined advertising strategies for an evolved TV audience

Despite the rapid adoption of over-the-top (OTT) television services such as Showmax, Amazon and Netflix brought on by the pandemic, linear television is still very much alive and well, as are innovative advertising strategies for linear channels.



Clare Frances O'Neil, commercial director for South Africa at Discovery Inc,

Clare Frances O'Neil, commercial director for South Africa at Discovery Inc, discusses the importance of choosing an advertising approach that seamlessly tunes in to what audiences are watching to keep them glued to the set.

The way viewers watch and interact with TV may have changed significantly, but inherently they are still drawn to channels serving content that aligns to their lifestyle interests. Viewers seek out programmes that speak to their passions and are drawn in by topics they can relate to. This bodes well for broadcasters because passions require content.

For example, the vibrant and rapidly growing food scene in South Africa has seen stars such as Siba Mtongana and Jenny Morris propelled to the top of the watch list of many passionate foodies, and they're constantly hungry for more. The same can be said about animals, true crime, relatable lifestyle stories and reality shows and science-related programmes.



Boomtown encourages inclusion of 'marketing for good' elements in client campaigns

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For those who feel streaming services are taking over, The MultiChoice Group released its financial results for the year ending March 2021 revealing the second-highest number of new pay-TV subscribers in MultiChoice's history - 20.9 million active subscribers. This proves that delivering the right content for the right audience in the right place is still compelling for many lean-back consumers.

Bespoke channels

Advertisers too should see these types of channels as the ideal platform to reach their audience - bespoke channels able to meet this hunger for content already have captive and loyal viewers. When choosing a media space that offers optimal reach, lifestyle channels provide 'quick win' persona-based targeting strategies for an advertiser.

For example, if the audience is a younger, DIY-type, brands may target HGTV. While there is the option to buy specific programmes at higher spot costs, it is not always necessary since all the programming on these networks is geared toward specific audience interests, and choosing a broad rotator instead makes financial sense.

The time of the traditional 30 second advert has long passed and channels with the ability to see this and look for ad models that aren't intrusive and may cause the viewer to switch channels are bound to attract more brands looking to advertise within their space. It is important for brands to choose channels that understand how to innovatively manage their clock.

Instead of simply fitting an overburdening number of adverts into the break time period of a programme, audiences are much more likely to be drawn into advertising managed for viewership trends. Essentially the audience blends into the programme while the programme blends into the ad break, and vice versa, which adds enormous value for the advertiser.

Partnership between channel and brand

Further strategies such as roadblocking across channels to ensure that brands own 100% voice for certain time periods, the creation of L boards that don't detract from content, and channel idents developed from partnerships between a channel and a brand, such as the one Discovery networks HGTV recently did with Telkom, are all complimentary ad models. This is the type of media space landscape which channels should be creating for reimagined advertising strategies.

It all comes down to relationships and creative teams that truly understand their channels. Collaboration is both critical and increasing as the TV and media landscape becomes more diverse and complex. The key to success is building partnerships with brands who embrace the flexibility of exploring new ways of working and packaging content outside of the traditional paid-TV space.



Digital ad spending in the US to pass \$200bn mark by 2022

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As a company owning eight TV channels (Discovery Channel, Investigation Discovery, TLC, Discovery Family, RealTime, HGTV, Food Network and The TravelChannel), the Discovery Network is incredibly lucky to be able to engage multiple markets through cross channel promotion because this is the value that advertisers are currently seeking. Our primary approach, with the assistance of DStv Media Sales, is to build partnerships with advertisers which work towards maintaining viewership continuity. This ability to cross-promote creates more value for viewers and substantially more bang the

advertisers buck. We refer to this as "the Power of 8"!

Another strategy to boost viewership is to provide cutting-edge digital offerings. Once two separate worlds, traditional TV and digital have now collided and an innovative crossover between linear and digital ensures that channels not only remain relevant as digital becomes more sophisticated, but also that audiences can be holistically targeted and engaged from all angles.

Like most things in marketing, TV advertising is changing by the day. But, linear TV remains reliable. Viewers are comfortable with the fact that if they tune in at a certain time they will get their passion fix and this customer is still the mass market most advertisers are hoping to reach. Once channels effectively leverage this with advertising that is progressive and in tune with both viewers and advertisers, new targeting capabilities with massively enhanced ROI potential can be achieved in this transformed reality of television.

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