

acmonsters

# playbook:

Cross-Platform Video



sponsored by: **SPOTX**

According to Nielsen, the 2016 Super Bowl had a peak audience of 115.5 million and an average one of 111.9 million viewers on broadcast, cable and satellite TV—a slightly smaller figure than the previous year. However, 4 million unique viewers streamed the game through various digital mediums—desktop Internet, mobile apps and connected TVs—compared to 2.5 million the year before. The average viewer session time was 101 minutes and the average audience per minute was 1.4 million. Part of this surge could be attributed to CBS’s expansion of streaming to popular OTT devices like Roku and AppleTV.

Four million uniques might seem pretty puny next to 115.5 million, but at the same time we’re talking about the most popular live televised event in the world. The audience streaming the Super Bowl nearly doubled from the previous year, suggesting that when given access across platforms, consumers will diversify their viewing habits for live television just like they have for video. This is a harbinger of what’s coming—fast.

Even people living under rocks know that viewers are accessing video content on a variety of devices and platforms (most popular OTT device under rocks—Roku). Audiences are fragmented, but advertisers want to reach them wherever they are. It’s handy that video—good old sight, sound and motion—is not only advertisers’ preferred way to reach consumers, but also a universal medium across just about every digital platform (wait till you start watching YouTube on your smart watch). Digital video is neither bought nor sold in silos anymore—inventory can be found on a wide swath of platforms and devices.

However, delivering content—including advertising—differs from platform to platform. Streamlining and optimizing video delivery across devices requires developing the right tools and processes, as well as working with a variety of tech partners. This playbook will explore how digital video providers are delivering cross-platform video advertising, diving into the various channels available and best practices in campaign management. We’ll take a look at programmatic opportunities and how audience metrics compare between linear and digital.

A playbook is an extension of what the AdMonsters community has been doing at our conferences for more than 14 years. A playbook solidifies what has made our events "must attend" for many digital strategists. By bringing people together to share learnings and best practices in a focused way, people can create a plan and avoid hours—if not days—of doing research on their own.

The AdMonsters playbook concept takes existing AdMonsters content (from conferences and AdMonsters.com) and, with the help of the AdMonsters community, "crowd sources" a document that outlines best practices on a particular topic. Our belief is that this will allow for a free exchange of ideas with the benefit of curation for accuracy. This document does not get into specifics around individual solution providers intentionally.

Great effort has gone into writing the playbook in a fashion that applies to as many publishers as possible without becoming too general. In a technology-driven industry like digital advertising, information quickly becomes obsolete. The intention is that, based on the feedback of the AdMonsters community, the next version of this playbook will start to take shape and, with additional contributors, grow in both depth and breadth. Publication of future versions will be scheduled based upon the needs of the community.

For the purposes of this playbook, a video content provider that also broadcasts on linear television is considered a broadcaster.

You're bound to see a lot of trade headlines freaking out about the so-called decline of linear television—that is, scheduled programming delivered via antenna, cable or satellite. There is much flailing to be found about cord-cutters and a drastic drop in live audiences according to ratings. Indeed, consumers are increasingly watching video content on a plethora of devices—from mobile to over-the-top boxes—and on demand.

The true testimony revolves around the money: **upfront ad spends** have been trending downward for three years, while MagnaGlobal predicts that barring non-repeating events (e.g., the Olympics), TV ad spend will actually drop by 0.3% in 2016.

At the same time, Nielsen reports that the average American over the age of 18 watched more than 4 hours of live television a day in 2015—and this is down only 20 minutes from 2013. eMarketer finds that U.S. viewers in 2015 spent 1 hour and 16 minutes a day watching digital video—around 40 minutes on mobile (22 on smartphone, 17 on tablet), 24 minutes on desktop video and 13 minutes on other connected devices (consoles, OTT, etc.). And while strictly linear TV sales might be on the decline, eMarketer still places U.S. TV ad spend at \$66 billion in 2016, compared to \$9.59 billion for digital video.

So TV isn't going anywhere and its dominance over video ad spend is pretty firm. Instead of viewing them as bitter rivals, consider digital video just an evolution of TV. In that case, TV is thriving: digital video ad spend is estimated to reach \$15 billion in 2019. The effects of cord-cutting are finally being felt as Pew reports that 24% of American households have forgone cable or satellite connections; 9% have never had them. Among those aged 18-29, the amount without cable or satellite connections rises to 34%.

The younger generation is leading the charge in watching TV and video in a whole new manner. The advertising potential here is high—viewers are moving from recording programs on DVRs and fast-forwarding through the ads to accessing their content (with ads) directly from a platform on demand. Many of these platforms offer the transactional and targeting capabilities that have become commonplace in digital advertising.

It may be a while before digital video ad spend truly rivals linear TV, but to employ that ol' Gretsky cliché, broadcasters need to be skating to where the puck—in this case, their audiences—is headed. The ad money tends to lag a bit, but it will eventually follow. Also exciting though is the opportunity for up-and-coming video producers to expand their horizons and build their audiences across a host of devices—including the holy grail of the television set.

Digital video is quite a fragmented landscape, so what's all included in the Internet-based video platform family? You have to be on top of it all because your advertisers are going to demand it.

**Desktop Video.** Where the digital video revolution began! According to comScore, in 2015 192 million Americans watched digital video on desktop devices (e.g., laptops).

**Mobile Video.** This includes both smartphones and tablets. But will people watch videos on their tiny cell phone screens? Oh yes, and how—Cisco suggests video will account for 75% of global mobile data traffic in 2020. Mobile data plans are getting larger and larger as the cost of access goes down. That said, ensuring delivery of properly formatted creative is a high priority on this platform.

**Video on Demand (VOD).** Content accessed by on demand services provided by a cable or satellite set-top box (e.g., Comcast Xfinity). In this merging of linear and digital execution, dynamic ad insertion is used to plug in ads, sometimes using services like Canoe, Cadent (previously Black Arrow) or Comcast. VOD execution is sort of a hybrid between linear and digital, but it's increasingly added to digital packages.

**Subscription VOD (SVOD).** Internet-based streaming services like Hulu and Netflix. While ad-based streaming services like Hulu have revenue-share agreements with content providers using their centralized platforms to reach audiences. Increasingly, broadcasters are building their own SVOD services, offering consumers access to all of their programming either with cable/satellite authentication or for a fee (e.g., HBO Now, CBS All

Access). These same broadcasters can offer advertisers sophisticated cross-platform targeting and messaging based on logins.

**Connected TVs.** But where are these SVODs supposed to run their wares? We lump three types of devices together:

- Smart TVs—television sets with Internet connections (according to IHS, these will have 50% penetration by 2019)
- Over-the-top (OTT) devices—e.g., Roku, Apple TV
- Gaming consoles—e.g. Microsoft Xbox, Sony Playstation

In addition, some connected TV providers offer advertising support and services within their platforms, and increasingly ad servers have access to this inventory.

**Streaming Live Television.** Video content providers such as Bloomberg, Turner (CNN) and Scripps Network (HGTV, Food Network) offer digital streams of their broadcast programming. Last year, Dish introduced SlingTV, a digital stream of several basic cable/satellite channels including ESPN and Disney. All of these use dynamic ad insertion technology for monetization.

**Programmatic TV.** Well, this is the only one that isn't technically digital but can be bought in a digital manner. Programmatic TV is not addressable linear television bought on an RTB basis; instead it's data-based television buying that employs audience data in targeting inventory. To some extent, this is an update of the linear scatter market that allows for more precise audience targeting.

Programmatic TV inventory tends to be limited and only available on a local market basis, but this can be ascribed to the fledgling nature of the space. The definition of programmatic TV—and even its name—is likely to change in the near future.

**Social Video Distribution.** This includes YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and up-and-comer SnapChat, which the kids are apparently crazy about. These platforms stretch across desktop, mobile and connected TVs, and offer revenue-share agreements to certain content providers—you don't necessarily have to be a big-shot broadcaster.

### Should I Be on Every Platform?

Yes. No. Maybe.

Really you should be where your audience is—if it skews to a younger demographic, you should seriously consider SVOD, connected TV devices and social distribution platforms. Younger viewers are forgoing cable and satellite connections in favor of such on demand services. At the same time, viewers of all ages across the country (and the globe) are realizing they're no longer prisoners to TV schedules—more and more of the content they crave can be found on demand on a variety of platforms. This number is only growing by the day, as is the revenue opportunity.

Taking control over cross-platform monetization means building apps: for smartphones, for tablets, for connected TV devices. These can be authenticated by cable/satellite subscriptions or sold on a subscription basis. While the connected TV space is fragmented, it's clear that certain brands (Apple, Amazon, Roku) are leading the pack; gaming consoles are popular among the gaming subset, but Smart TV apps have not taken off at scale—yet. There's also consolidation of sorts—Roku has been building operating systems for several Smart TV providers and is **now selling branded TVs.**

Just consider that with additional presence comes more audience, more inventory when demand is through the roof and more opportunities for advertisers to reach their audiences. For non-broadcast, digital-based content providers, it's also a chance to break beyond the cage of desktop and access the big screen in the house. But proliferation also makes running unified, cross-platform campaigns that much more complicated...



As little as 18 months ago, no ops professional could imagine trafficking a single video campaign across desktop, mobile and Internet-connected TV. Now, while still splitting linear and digital buys (for reasons we will go into later), agencies are buying all digital platforms wholesale, even reaching for set-top impressions via VOD or programmatic TV.

With the help of software development kits (SDKs), your video ad server should be able to smoothly deliver into desktop, mobile and most connected TV environments. Inventory availability and pacing controls per platform should be built into your interface. For VOD through a set-top box, you will likely either have to work with a proprietary system or tech provider. Despite the fragmentation, technology has come to the rescue in streamlining campaign management for cross-platform video campaigns.

That doesn't mean these campaigns are set-'em-and-forget-'em. The human element means a lot—you need a video team that understands the nitty gritty about video quality assurance, including bit rate, file size, audio level, etc. Basically, they should have the **IAB Digital Video In-Stream Ad Format Guidelines** memorized, and dream of VAST, VPAID and MRAID every night.

**User Experience.** As we might have mentioned before, the younger generation is leading a shift from scheduled to on demand content viewing, placing the viewer firmly in charge. With the users asserting control, one ops professional remarks, “It all starts with user experience—everything else is meaningless.”

Whether you're going direct or leveraging programmatic channels, make the ad experience optimal for each platform, as well as the type of content associated with the ad. It can be as simple as asking yourself what would you, as a viewer, like to see on each platform? Don't forget that when advertising is done well, people actually enjoy it (how many people watch the Super Bowl just for the ads?).

**Maintenance.** To hook into all these wonderful platforms, your ad server (and likely your SSPs) will need to connect via SDKs. Your development team will take charge of this, but make sure to keep close contact so you have someone to call if things go screwy.

**Encoding:** Ever had a terribly grainy, low-resolution video load on your 52-inch TV screen? Doesn't it make you wince? Alternatively, have you ever watched a video ad struggle to buffer on a mobile device and wondered how big a file was trying to load (as well as how much of your data was being sucked away)?

You have to ensure the creative that comes through your door is appropriate for the device it will end up on. Certain platforms (e.g., Apple TV) have rigid rules when it comes to creative specifications like bit rate. In the past, this would mean checking that the advertiser had appropriate creative files for each platform.

But now video ad files typically will have three streams of varying quality—high (target bit rate of 1500-2500 kbps for 720p; 2500-3500 kbps for 1080p), medium (700-1500 kbps) and low (500-700 kbps). The video player should be able to pass information about the device and optimal bit

rate so that either the SDK or ad server can pick which quality stream would fit best. A smartphone with a 3G connection would grab the low quality stream while an OTT device hooked up with high-speed Internet would get high quality.

Most video players support adaptive bit-rate streaming (e.g., HTTP Live Streaming or HLS) for content. This process involves breaking the various streams into small sequences of HTTP-based file downloads usually a few seconds long, and the player serves the stream based on the Internet connection. While this process can be used for advertisements, sources say it is rarely utilized at the moment.

Alternatively, a “mezzanine” file—large, high-quality—may be referenced in the tag, which could be encoded by the ad server and sent to the proper device in real-time. (As the sidebar below notes, VAST 4.0 offers support for three varying quality video files as well as a large mezzanine file.) Also, a content provider may choose to do its own encoding before campaign launch, particularly if it’s planning to insert the ads on the server-side through stitching.

**Stitching.** Most digital ads for desktop are served from client-side ad servers or CDNs, which enables tracking and measurement capabilities for advertisers. However, many on the video content side don’t believe client-side SDKs have the capability to deliver TV-like experiences, particularly in the case of live streaming. In addition, many emerging platforms (e.g., OTT) do not execute ads the same way as desktop and cannot offer the same tracking.

Therefore, some video content providers will stitch advertising to content for in-stream advertising—this is also known as server-side insertion. This can reduce latency, ensure proper creative is always loaded and (currently) get around ad blockers. There are downsides—namely, tracking and measurement must either be done with a client SDK or a server-side beacon.

Video content providers looking to give an uninterrupted, TV-like experience—especially with long-form content—are pushing this seemingly regressive move (that is, it’s very similar to linear TV execution) simply to have more control over the entire stream across platforms. At the same time, don’t expect to do a lot of stitching with pre-roll ads on two-minute clips.

**Creative.** But beyond encoding, how does the creative vary across the platforms? An advertiser shouldn’t just re-hash a 30-second TV spot anywhere and everywhere. Different types of creative with different options perform better across the various platforms. For mobile, are you dealing with in-app pre-roll or interstitials? What about native or outstream video?

How long are the videos in question? With mobile you might want to lean on the side of shorter (or at least offer skippability), while a TV spot could work on an OTT device because the user is having something similar to simulated linear experience. What kind of interactivity will be featured—overlays? Well, it’s difficult to click through an overlay on an OTT device but a video game console might offer some interesting capabilities. And then by using logins or probabilistic device graphs to track users,

a video content provider could theoretically enable sequential messaging.

Varying creative by platform also simply offers your audiences more interesting ad experiences as they “move around.” It might be as simple as switching up the messaging. By optimizing advertiser creative for each platform (and maybe even each device), you’ll be doing a solid for both your advertisers and your viewers.

**Audio.** How irritating is it when the volume on a video ad is **10 TIMES LOUDER THAN ITS ADJACENT CONTENT?** Before a campaign gets rolling, ensure ad audio levels matches the content—sometimes this requires asking more (possibly additional creative files) from an advertiser, but in the end you’re protecting both your brands’ reputations.

Fully leveraging audio encompasses more than just matching audio volume to content. It also includes being able to understand the audio environment across different devices. Some types of video—like in-feed or in-content—may not play with sound until initiated. So it’s important for advertisers to understand how to get their brand messaging across to viewers without sound in some instances on both desktop and mobile.

**Pods.** Typically three or more video ads grouped together in a manner similar to television commercial breaks. As a best practice in TV, you will not have competing companies appearing in the same pods—for example, Toyota and Ford commercials wouldn’t be seen back-to-back. In fact, TV campaign terms and conditions regularly ensure competitors do not show up in the same pod.

As you can imagine this adds a contextual layer of complexity to scheduling TV ads (and part of the reason addressable TV buying via RTB is still a dream). Pushing such a rigid pod format for RTB-based programmatic is quite challenging, though not impossible.



## Sidebar: VAST 4.0

In November 2015, the IAB released version 4.0 of the Video Ad Serving Template (VAST) for public comment. VAST is an xml schema used as a communication layer between third-party ad servers and publisher video players. The code does not play the ad, but submits metadata related to the video ad: length, bitrate, file format, dimensions. In addition, the backwards-compatible standard can transmit tracking data around amount of video played and click-throughs. If the player is VAST compliant and the ad boasts a VAST tag, the video should play—though there may be issues such as latency, which is what the latest update hopes to quash.

VAST 4.0 offers verification and viewability measurement functionality, which previously required the Video Player Ad-Serving Interface Definition (VPAID). Because of concern over how much control and access the standard offered the buy side, video content providers had not embraced VPAID to the same extent as VAST.

But VAST 4.0 is a great leap forward for the standard because of how it addresses cross-platform issues. First, 4.0 separates video files from interactive APIs to ensure ads can be played on systems and platforms that may not be able to read the interactive components. This should reduce playback issues on mobile and OTT devices. In addition to three ready-to-serve video files of various quality and size, VAST 4.0 offers “support” for the high-quality “mezzanine” file that can be transcoded or used for stitching. Finally, the update offers support for ad stitching or server-side insertion, which is becoming popular with purveyors of long-form or episodic video content.



It was a big deal when Hulu opened its gates to programmatic transactions in 2015, essentially highlighting the maturation of the programmatic video space. Advertisers have never been shy regarding their desire to transact more programmatically to take advantage of data-targeting (first-party, demo, etc.), and video content providers are obliging them by offering up their most valuable inventory. However, there's a lot of nuance in this still-developing channel, so it needs extra hand-holding.

**Multiple SSP Management.** Latency is a big concern when dealing with video, especially when the client-side is delivering the assets (hence the popularity of server-side stitching for episodic and long-form content). Adding the complexity of RTB auctions—yup, nested auctions within auctions are a sad reality—ups the potential for latency, and may push some video content providers away from programmatic entirely.

But there are ways to mitigate latency, starting with partner management. Smart video providers will want a lot of demand sources, which means working with multiple SSPs including ones with a mobile or cross-platform focus. Video providers tend to run into issues with latency and playback when DSPs direct them to wrong-size files or slow-loading clients. Specialized SSPs will have tighter connections with similarly specialized DSPs built to deliver into non-desktop environments.

The moral is to pay regular attention to SSP performance to make sure those that deliver optimally to various devices are given priority in cross-platform situations. And if certain SSPs are sending in bad files or causing

latency, better chat with your account managers, lower their priority or all-out cut them out.

**Open vs. Private Marketplaces.** Many video content providers actually enter programmatic video through private marketplace deals leveraging DealID. For a premium, advertisers are given higher priority within auctions and have more transparency into exactly what they're buying and where.

There are many questions circling the open marketplace regarding inventory quality, issues with viewability and non-human traffic. Recent reports found inventory listed on some platforms being listed as pre-roll was actually in-banner. Truth be told, the demand for pre-roll video outstrips the amount available—particularly when it comes to programmatic channels. In-banner is typically less desirable because it's particularly small and can easily be delivered to non-viewable placements. However, new out-stream ad units (video units that run seamlessly within a web page's text content—sometimes called in-content or in-read units) are providing opportunities for publishers to create more inventory that is highly viewable by design while delivering a great user experience.

**Curated Marketplaces.** In this situation an SSP or other programmatic operator will bind together cross-platform video inventory from a variety of providers for advertiser access. This may inspire flashbacks of ad networks, but advertisers are able to employ data and transact programmatically. The marketplace highlights transparency, including devices, viewability rates and audience. Inventory is grouped together for advertisers

browsing by audience and/or content categories. Content providers retain a great deal of transactional control, and have transparency into buyers and pricing.

**Data.** Although the http cookie, long the golden standard of digital targeting, is sadly limited to web browsers, emerging platforms offer unique data sets for targeting. Most notably, mobile apps may have access to geolocation data, and device and operating system information can often be used for targeting.

Connected TVs may have similar data availability, but intriguingly most apps require logins. Content registration across devices is becoming more popular so providers can develop cross-platform audience profiles. These are used for both improving the content experience (e.g., recommendations) and offering advertisers advanced targeting with both demo and interest data.

With or without logins, techniques such as IP tethering can help content providers establish connected households and build consumer device graphs. Probabilistic matching techniques are often used in these cases, which are not 100% precise, but the right data management company will have a 70%-80% accuracy rate.

**Targeting Beats Measurement.** The major third-party measurement companies are now making inroads into connected TV devices, but the lack of coverage has actually made inventory on these platforms more appealing for programmatic targeting. Though direct-sold audience guarantees cannot be realistically mediated with measurement support, advertisers can use a variety

of data to target audiences in real time.

**Build a Cross-Platform Advertising Base.** The digital video revolution enables a whole new generation of content providers access to the once restricted TV set. Now any content provider can build a connected TV app to reach its audience on the big screen as well as develop new viewers. Programmatic can be a useful tool for monetizing on these platforms. Advertisers fall back on TV audience data when buying inventory for broadcaster programming on emerging platforms. Digital-based content providers don't have this advantage, but digital video inventory across platforms is a hot commodity, so advertisers will still be interested given the right data/targeting parameters. Because of the transparency programmatic offers, content providers can determine what advertisers are interested in their audience and how much they are willing pay. Quite handy knowledge when trying to broker a direct deal or a private marketplace.

**Programmatic TV.** As we mentioned before, this is not like digital RTB, but more a form of workflow automation. Basically, advertisers can digitally buy broadcast TV inventory based on audience, targeted via the set-top box. What's handy is that digital tech providers such as SSPs are enabling publishers to sell this inventory similar to digital inventory. To some extent, it's more like programmatic direct—the advertisers are buying a guaranteed amount of audience impressions, regardless of the program they appear in. Sources mention that scale here is still limited, and it's a great tool for local market inventory rather than national.

The introduction of panel-based GRP metrics—e.g., Nielsen’s Digital Ad Ratings (DAR) and comScore’s Validated Campaign Essentials (vCE)—can be credited for launching digital video ad mania. Finally, digital was speaking the language of TV, and the buyers could not get enough. Being able to guarantee against demographics measured by a third-party brought digital video closer into line with linear TV. For many advertisers, GRPs and demos are directly tied to sales and other tangible metrics. Originally only available for desktop video, DAR and vCE can now be used for mobile and are in beta for OTT devices like Roku and Apple TV.

But while digital and linear might be speaking the same language, they are definitely different dialects, making the two hard to compare. For one thing, ratings are calculated at a household level (as a percentage of the entire TV audience) while digital impressions are measured on a one-to-one basis. The two metrics can work in tandem and be compared and contrasted in terms of audience reach, but they can’t be easily combined. A look at how linear versus digital is measured makes clear why.

### Traditional TV Measurement

Audiences reported for traditional TV (defined as a one-to-many distribution of content received through either over-the-air antennas or the managed networks of multichannel video programming distributors, or MVPDs) are sample-based projections.

While the techniques and methodologies of viewership data collection vary between Nielsen and comScore/Rentrak, the two leading TV measurement services, the impracticality of census-based measurement require statistical weighting and data science to produce a stable “currency” known colloquially as GRPs, or Gross Rating Points. A TV rating point represents one percent of a known population, such as Women 18-49 in New York. Thus a program rating value of 5.0, means that 5% of that population is tuned to that program.

The summation of rating points to GRPs across a campaign equates to the total reach of this population, factored by the average number of times the population was exposed to an ad. For example, a 500 GRP campaign could have reached 50% of a population, who on average saw the ad ten times. This “Reach x Frequency = GRP” expression creates what is commonly referred to as TV’s “reach curve.”

Audience reporting demonstrates consumption of content live, as it originally airs, as well as audiences that consumed time-shifted content through DVR playback.

Unlike digital video, the measurement and reporting of traditional TV audience are separated from the ad occurrence by a matter of days or weeks, meaning the absolute value of delivered TV audience may not be known until well after a flight has concluded.

Many cable operators, however, are able to synthesize their own set-top-box data for the purpose of pacing campaign performance. While few advertisers accept this as a binding measure of audience value, it has proved quite instructive in predicting rating value and proactively fulfilling campaign audience obligations.

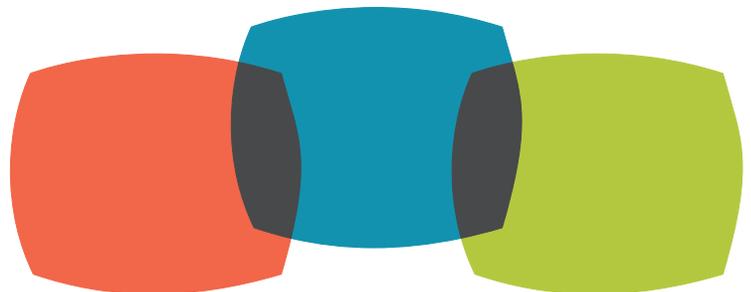
### Digital Video Measurement

As they are being served, impressions are analyzed by third-party measurement companies to see if end-users were in the target demographic. This is accomplished by comparing against social media data, lookalike modeling, panel data and more. Impressions within the demo are added to the “comp,” and advertisers only pay for these impressions. Publishers try to limit the amount of impressions served outside the target demo by using first-party segments (typically modeling against demos in DMPs) and third-party demo data to focus ad serving, but still many impressions are “wasted”—what advertisers call extended reach.

While digital and linear numbers are related, they don’t match up entirely. These are the same demos, but comparing their face value is complicated by the fact TV is measured on a household basis and digital is impression-based. This is further complicated by changing consumption patterns—how many people are actually sitting on the couch watching that SVOD programming through an OTT device? It might not be 1-to-1 anymore.

Promises of a unified linear-digital metric always seem to be on a horizon. Calls are growing louder from TV buyers about moving beyond demo guarantees into psychographic data—which, coincidentally can be targeted and measured in digital video. In addition, digital is a far more measurable platform, allowing for viewability and engagement metrics.

So the current measurement situation is working for both the buy and sell sides, but no one should get comfortable because change is coming fast. Just remember that while digital and linear metrics can be used together, they’re still a world apart.



**The TV Show.** There's a reason why most ad dollars are spent on TV—it's a good experience for everyone involved. Television commercials are a great way for an advertiser to reach an audience (Sight! Sound! Motion!). From the audience perspective, you may be a bit annoyed by ads interrupting your viewing, but you have to admit it's much better than eight flashing banners on a website. (And hey, a well-timed ad break can actually be useful in building tension in a narrative.) Therefore it's good practice to take the lead of the tube to make your cross-platform video ad experiences as TV-like as possible. They've been doing it well on TV for a long time—they must know something about this advertising business.

**People Are Everything.** In the end, it's your people that will make or break your cross-platform video platform—the technology is all there to make it work, but only the right skill set will keep it running. Make sure your team is well trained in video quality assurance and can spot potential hiccups before they muck up the works. Stay up to date on the standards like VAST 4.0, because they can quickly become industry game-changers. For programmatic, ensure your team is knowledgeable about the intricacies of programmatic video (especially compared to display) as well as in tune to the running of all their SSPs.

**Ready, Aim, Fire.** Audience guarantees are not going away, but the popularity of targeting specific users based on data (or data modeling) will continue to grow. Programmatic may have some worrisome elements such as potential latency, but there's a bounty to be reaped by those willing to take risks.

**That's Curated.** In addition to open and private marketplaces for programmatic transactions, consider curated marketplaces, where an SSP will group together cross-platform video inventory from a host of content providers based on audience and/or contextual categories.

**Stitch It Good.** To avoid latency and other quality dampeners in long-form content, consider doing your own encoding and using server-side stitching to tie ads and content.

**Different Worlds.** Audience measurement on linear and digital are so close and yet so far. While the respective metrics can be used together, comparison is tricky business.

**Variety Is the Spice.** Your content is experienced differently from platform to platform; shouldn't your ad creatives differ too? Even if it's the same campaign, modify creative from platform to platform to take advantage of native capabilities.

**Fragmentation Persists.** The number of places where users access video content continues to expand. While you may not embark on every platform out there, stay up to date—find out about the experiences of your contemporaries and mull whether it's worth the extra complication. Also, remember live television still pulls in a lot more ad spend than digital video.

The merging of linear TV and digital seems inevitable, yet the final barriers are quite intimidating. For starters, the executions are radically different (unless you compare with server-side stitching) as is how the inventory is bought. TV budgets and price points also diverge greatly from digital. Audience measurement might share terminology, but the results are hard to compare. Consumers even watch in a different way—the majority of digital inventory is on demand while live TV is scheduled.

Despite these impediments and the fragmentation of the digital video space, video ad buying is far more streamlined than it was just a few years ago. Technology and process have come a long way to offering digital video buyers the ability to easily advertise on a wealth of platforms and devices. Programmatic offers incredible targeting abilities as well as transactional and operational efficiencies. Finally, audience measurement keeps creeping toward a unified metric.

As users flock to consumer video on a profusion of devices, already many digital deals are signed during the linear television upfronts. While the final picture isn't quite clear yet, the video pieces are clearly coming together.





AdMonsters is the global leader in strategic insight on the future of digital media and advertising technology. Through our conferences, website, original research and consulting services, we offer unparalleled in-person experiences and unique, high-quality content focused on media operations, monetization, technology, strategy, platforms and trends. Founded in 1999, AdMonsters began serving the advertising operations professional through live media and its online community. We provided a forum to share best practices, explore new technology platforms and build relationships. Today's expanding ecosystem now includes publishers and content creators, agencies, SSPs, DMPs, DSPs, RTB and service providers, technology and platform developers, advertising networks, brands, and investors.

This vibrant community is forward-looking and results-oriented. Their success depends on strategic insights about technology and monetization, and the exchange of actionable peer-to-peer best practices. AdMonsters has built its reputation on providing objective editorial leadership based on deep, real-world expertise. We have continued to evolve our editorial strategy to address the changing needs of the market and as a result, AdMonsters has attracted a highly focused audience who are at the forefront of the industry, and leading marketing partners have found AdMonsters to be a powerful channel to reach these decision makers. Today, our portfolio of integrated media solutions includes industry leading live events, our innovative Connect content solutions, email marketing programs, and more.

As of March 2015, AdMonsters is part of the [Access Intelligence](#) family of companies.

For more info:

See [admonsters.com](http://admonsters.com)

Follow us on Twitter: [@AdMonsters](https://twitter.com/AdMonsters)

Facebook: [facebook.com/admonsters](https://facebook.com/admonsters)

Media contact:

[marketing@admonsters.com](mailto:marketing@admonsters.com)

Sponsorship contact:

[sales@admonsters.com](mailto:sales@admonsters.com)

# SPOTX

SpotX is a video inventory management platform for premium publishers and broadcasters, helping them manage all of their demand sources from one place, and monetize content across all screens. The SpotX platform offers publishers unprecedented transparency and insight, creating a safe, controlled environment that allows them to connect with advertisers, and achieve the highest revenue possible. Premium publishers and mobile app developers trust SpotX as the independent solution that helps them better understand the buying behavior of today's leading brands and maximize inventory yield across private marketplace, programmatic direct and open marketplace deals. SpotX's ad serving, leading programmatic technology, and open and extensible architecture help simplify the complex digital video ecosystem for global publishers.

Headquartered in Denver, Colorado, SpotX also has offices in New York, San Francisco, London, Sydney, Amsterdam, Hamburg, Belfast and Singapore. In July 2014, leading European entertainment network RTL Group acquired a 65% stake in SpotX, which was founded by CEO Mike Shehan and CFO and COO, Steven Swoboda, in 2007.

For updates, please follow SpotX: [@SpotX](#)  
or visit: [www.spotxchange.com](http://www.spotxchange.com)

*sponsored by:*

**SPOTX**