

CASE STUDY



The Relationship of Digital Video Viewership and TV Programming

INDUSTRY

Viewership habits have changed dramatically over the past decade. Digital video platforms are increasing in popularity as Americans watch more TV content on desktops, smartphones and tablets. Advertisers have clearly taken notice. Nielsen research shows that digital advertising in the U.S. has been rising at a rate above 15 percent since 2012 and is expected to continue at that pace.¹

As a result of changes in how content is consumed, advertisers and agencies are beginning to pay closer attention to the relationship between digital video viewership and traditional TV programming, and how emerging synergies between the two can boost campaign effectiveness.

CHALLENGE

YouTube, a global online video delivery service, is a major platform for Google, a multinational technology company specializing in Internet-related services and products. As the popularity of video content continues to grow, YouTube has been keenly interested in understanding the relationship and value between watching TV content clips on their platform and audiences tuning in to the same shows on TV.

Establishing a complementary relationship between video content online and on TV could offer YouTube a powerful tool with advertisers and agencies who are constantly looking to improve their brand-building opportunities.

STRATEGY

YouTube commissioned a Nielsen study to explore the relationship between YouTube engagement (views and video uploads) and TV program viewership. YouTube was specifically interested in understanding if there is evidence that viewership persists across both YouTube and linear Television, showing that consumers use YouTube in concert with TV. A multivariate regression analysis was conducted using historical data gathered by YouTube and TV currency data from Nielsen. This analysis looked to see if YouTube and TV viewing habits move in relationship with one another, while controlling for other variables such as seasonality of TV usage, promotions, show engagement, brand effect, etc.

In addition to the regression analysis, the study also looked at the TV viewing habits of those who watched TV content on YouTube and compared it to a group of individuals who didn't, utilizing the Nielsen Cross Platform Homes Panel. The third aspect of the study also used Nielsen's Cross Platform Homes Panel and a general linear analysis model, to determine if statistically significant differences existed between the YouTube exposed group and the control group, while balancing for demos and prior TV program tune-in. The purpose of this analysis was to determine if people who engaged with a TV show on YouTube had a meaningful difference in tune-in as compared to those who did not engage with TV content on YouTube.

¹<http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/how-more-precise-data-science-will-be-advertisings-ultimate-savior-171395>

RESULTS

Nielsen's analysis revealed that there is a positive relationship between both YouTube views, uploaded TV content on YouTube, and TV reach. YouTube was able to utilize Nielsen's study to gain a much better understanding of viewer habits around its content and how that relates to TV viewership.

Some of the key findings included:

- Among persons 18-years of age and older, for 30 specific TV shows evaluated, (which included genres such as comedy, competition, drama, and talk shows), there was a statistically significant relationship between TV reach and higher YouTube engagement.²
 - P-Values bear out this conclusion, showing that in general TV content with more YouTube views and video uploads have larger TV audiences.
- When looking at a leading talk show, there was an 18 percent increase in tune-in on TV amongst those who watched related YouTube content* versus those who did not.³
- Viewers who watched a TV program's content on YouTube* were more likely to tune into that show on linear TV versus those who did not watch that show's content on the digital platform.⁴
- YouTube viewership rises as TV program reach increases.²

* Measurement conducted for YouTube activity on PC only

CONCLUSION

As digital video viewership continues to grow on platforms such as YouTube, advertisers, agencies and TV programmers have an opportunity to leverage the connection between digital views and TV audiences. Nielsen's research shows that YouTube engagement through views and uploads is connected to TV reach or bringing more people to trial the show, and in general playing a part in keeping viewers connected to the TV program.

For advertisers and agencies, this presents a valuable means to communicate their brand message to a wider audience. It also reinforces the connection between digital platforms and TV, and how the two can complement each other and grow audience share.

²Nielsen conducted a multivariate regression model by utilizing YouTube activity (data provided by YouTube) and TV currency viewership (Nielsen data) Time Period: 1/1/2014 – 3/27/2016. Programs: 30 TV programs across mainly comedy, drama, and talk show genres. The R² of the model was 0.91, while P-Values for YouTube uploaded videos and views were <0.005.

³A general linear model run on Nielsen Cross Platforms Homes Panel. Program: TV talk show program with engagement on YouTube. Source: Nielsen Cross-Platform Homes Panel TV: Live+7, 1 minute qualifier YouTube: TV-related YouTube URL visitation.

⁴Nielsen Cross Platforms Homes Panel. Programs: Subset of 12 TV programs across mainly comedy, drama, and talk show genres with engagement on YouTube. TV: Live+7, 1 minute qualifier, YouTube: TV-related YouTube URL visitation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Viewers who watch a TV program's content on YouTube are more likely to tune into that show on linear TV.
- Advertisers and agencies can leverage the relationship between YouTube and TV viewership trends to increase brand engagement.
- Viewership of TV content on YouTube rises as TV program reach increases.



As viewership of videos online continues to expand, Nielsen has demonstrated that platforms such as ours can be an important means for engaging viewers of TV content. The direct relationship between YouTube views and TV viewing is strong, which means advertisers and agencies have a tremendous opportunity to increase brand engagement through campaigns that harness this relationship.

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