

# Checking in on some 2023 predictions

## Article

In January, our eMarketer Daily newsletter editors made a slew of **marketing and advertising predictions**, from streaming to ad measurement. We already know the elephant in the room—we didn't even mention **generative AI**. But the predictions we did make were a mixed bag in terms of accuracy. Here's a look at how we did.

### **Prediction: Streaming services will consolidate and wall off content**

HBO Max and Discovery+ **consolidated to create Max**. Paramount+ is blending Showtime into the aptly named platform **Paramount+ With Showtime**. The Walt Disney Co. is acquiring

Hulu in full and **combining Disney+ with Hulu**. And along the way, ads are showing up everywhere as streamers pull back from purely subscription-supported platforms.

This prediction was spot on, with one recent twist. We wrote that “in the future, most streamers will focus on securing their own content libraries.” While this is definitely the case, The New York Times reported just last week that **cash-strapped streamers are licensing their content to Netflix again**.

**Outcome: Correct**

**Prediction: Spotify will be the Netflix of audio**

When we made this prediction, **Spotify had just introduced its audiobook library**. While that was seen as an asset for Spotify at the time, the company has had a challenging year, **cutting jobs** and **canceling podcasts**.

Spotify’s US ad revenues grew by 15.1% this year to pass the \$1 billion mark, according to our forecast. And Spotify has about twice as many US listeners (100.8 million) as the next-most used platform, Amazon Music (51.9 million). But Spotify hasn’t had the standout year it would need for us to consider it the Netflix of audio.

**Outcome: Incorrect**

**Prediction: The privacy panic will take over**

It certainly was a big year for privacy concerns. Google is officially starting to phase out third-party cookies. Apple’s AppTrackingTransparency is still shaping the industry. Concerns surrounding **email policy changes** have been front of mind. And AI chatbots are posing an entirely new set of risks to data privacy.

“The time to act is now,” we wrote at the start of the year. But for all the privacy issues facing advertisers, panic hasn’t actually been that high. The **majority of programmatic ad spend** is being put toward cookied inventory across verticals, according to Q3 2023 data from 33Across.

**Outcome: Correct, kind of**

**Prediction: Connected TV (CTV) measurement will improve (because it has to)**

In January, we wrote, “As CTV ad spend grows, there will be an increasing need for more accurate and transparent measurement. 2023 will have massive opportunities for ad tech and measurement companies to find ways to give marketers better clarity into CTV.”

While no part of that statement is wrong, the industry is still fragmented, with no measurement standard rising to the top. US ad spend is high, having grown 20.0% to reach \$24.60 billion in 2023, according to our forecast.

One thing we’re watching? **CTV’s partnerships with retail media networks**. This is one area where CTV can be supercharged with fresh, relevant data—although the measurement issue persists. Both CTV and retail media face measurement and standardization issues, and as more partnerships emerge, the need for better measurement will grow.

**Outcome: Incorrect**

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