

Unilever calls for a set of retail media network advertising standards

Article

The news: Soumya Donkada, **Unilever's** head of digital, media, and ecommerce for beauty brands, restated the company's intention to find a post-third-party-cookie measurement solution in an [interview](#) with Insider and reiterated the consumer giant's call for retail media networks to adopt a set of measurement standards to aid advertisers.

New kids, new rules: Retail media advertising networks exploded in 2022, with dozens of retailers launching ad businesses in hopes of capturing shifting revenue budgets. But rising interest rates and softer spending are mixing poorly with a lack of standards for the relatively new ad channel.

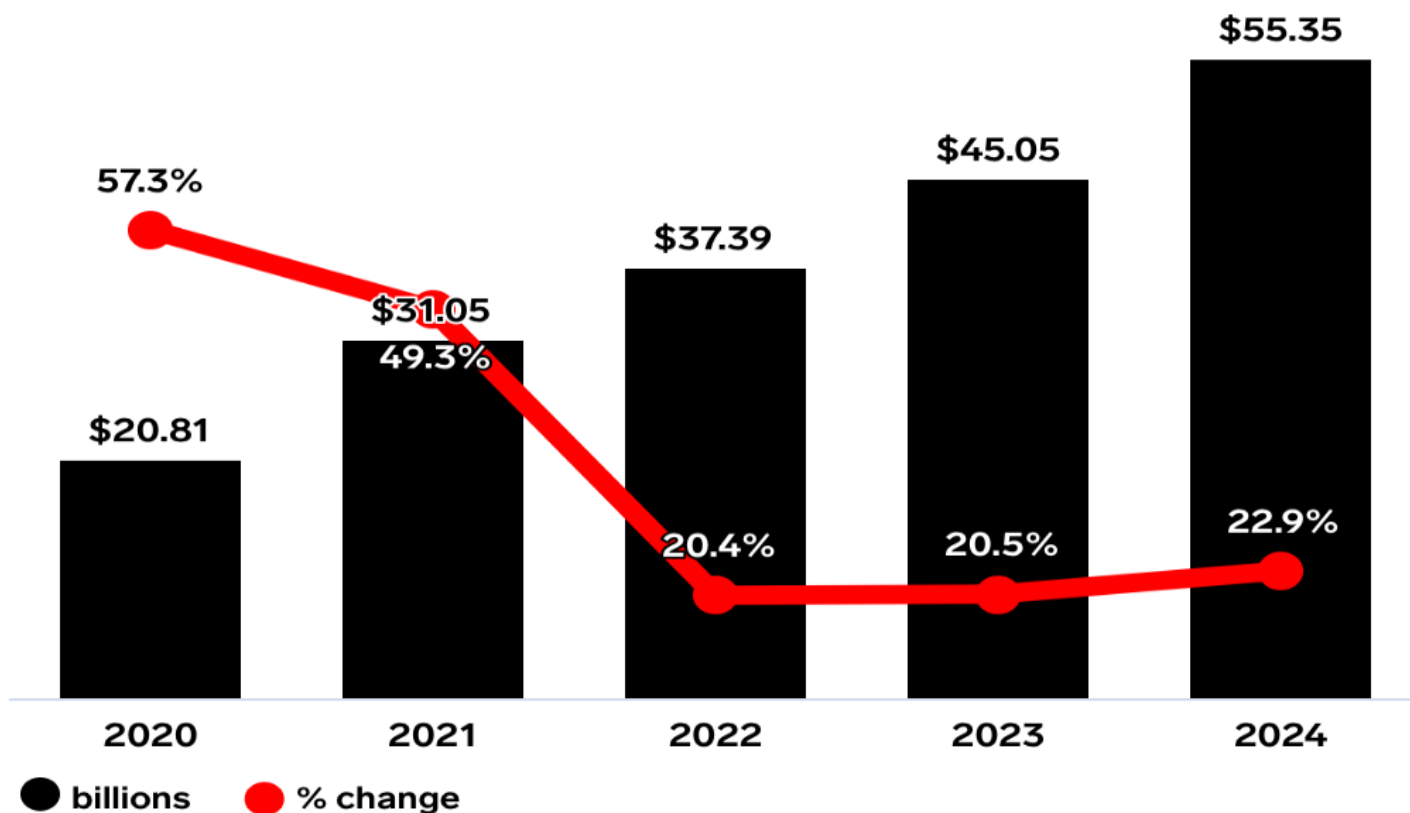
- Despite the rapid uptick in retail media networks, the sector does not have agreed-upon measurement protocols, nor does it have a framework currently in the works (like the IAB does for clean rooms, for example), making it hard to gauge the effectiveness of ads on **Walmart's** network versus, say, **Michaels'**
- Unilever has urged retail media networks to unite and agree on standards to help anxious advertisers get on board. Last year, it launched the “**Digital Responsibility Framework**” using its learnings from advertising on tech platforms to measure digital ads.
- Getting other networks to agree is harder than it may seem. Part of the appeal of launching a retail media network is the trove of first-party data that retailers can then leverage to advertisers, which could be devalued if shared with competitors. While it may seem in retailers' interest to keep their cards close to their chest, Unilever argues that ad spending will increase if a list of standards is created.

Our take: Despite the issues with unified standards, retail media networks remain in a strong position to grow throughout the ad downturn, which could discourage networks from coming together.

- US retail media ad spending will grow from \$37.39 billion in 2022 to \$55.35 billion by 2024, per our October forecast.

Retail Media Ad Spending

US, 2020-2024



Note: digital advertising that appears on websites or apps that are primarily engaged in retail ecommerce or is bought through a retailer's media network or DSP; examples of websites or apps primarily engaged in retail ecommerce include advertising on Amazon, Walmart, and eBay; examples of retail media networks include Amazon's DSP and Etsy's Offsite Ads; includes ads purchased through retail media networks that may not appear on ecommerce sites or apps
Source: eMarketer, October 2022

eMarketer | InsiderIntelligence.com

Correction: This article originally contained an outdated chart and forecast data. We updated the content and chart to include our most recent figures on January 26, 2022.