

Nielsen will exclude Amazon data from Thursday Night Football measurement after industry uproar

Article

The news: Nielsen reversed course on including first-party data from Amazon for Thursday Night Football in its panel-based currency [following an uproar](#) among TV networks, the company announced late last week.

- Advertisers will still be able to trade on the Thursday Night Football data but only as part of Nielsen's measurement product that combines [big data and panel measurement](#), which is currently being reviewed by the **Media Rating Council** (MRC).

What this means: Combining Amazon's first-party data into its panel measurement would have been an unprecedented move. It would have given Amazon broadcasts a nearly 9% boost in recorded viewership, according to Nielsen analysis, which would result in higher trading volume—and prices—for Amazon.

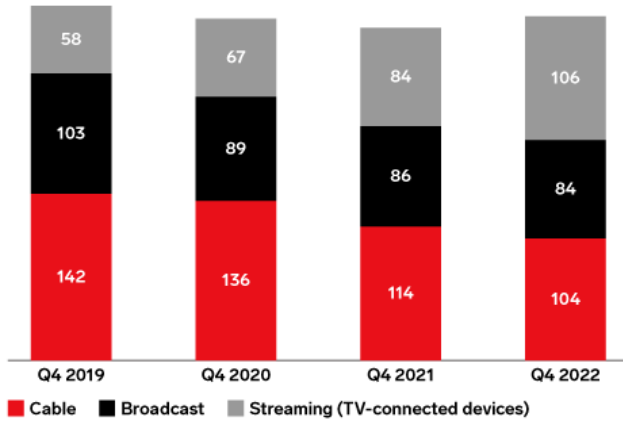
- Integrating first-party data into its popular currency is a privilege that Nielsen has historically denied TV networks and even other streaming services, causing groups like the **Video Advertising Bureau** and **CBS** to cry foul.
- Football broadcast and streaming rights are currently split among many providers bound by yearslong deals. But after the next decade of splintered rights ends and they are once again up for grabs, more thorough data and higher viewership numbers could give Amazon a leg up in negotiations—a leg up that networks were fearful of.
- Nielsen is trying to diversify its measurement offerings—hence its big data currency and the launch of [Nielsen One](#)—but it's doggedly [sticking to panel data](#). Losing MRC accreditation in 2021 kicked off an era of fractured measurement, but its panel-based currency is still one of the most traded on currencies at Upfronts.

Network-measurement relations: Excluding Amazon data from panel-based currencies was not an easy decision: An MRC meeting on August 30 was highly contentious, according to Ad Age reporting, with Nielsen fielding criticism from networks and buyers alike.

- Some TV networks have struck their own partnerships with Nielsen competitors like **iSpot** but have banded together with competitors to form the **Joint Industry Committee** (JIC) to make the new landscape more navigable for advertisers.
- But the JIC has struggled to be an industry unifier. Nielsen [refused to take part](#) in a JIC certification round earlier this year, and **YouTube** executives also traded jobs with the group over standards that they felt devalued user-generated content.

Our take: The controversy swirling around the proposed change highlights the strained relations between TV networks, streamers, and measurement companies as the industry moves to accept more Nielsen alternatives. Excluding Amazon data will ease relations between Nielsen, networks, and buyers—for now.

Daily Time Spent With TV Among US Adults, by Type, Q4 2019-Q4 2022
minutes



Note: ages 18+

Source: Nielsen National TV Panel as cited in company blog, March 13, 2023

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