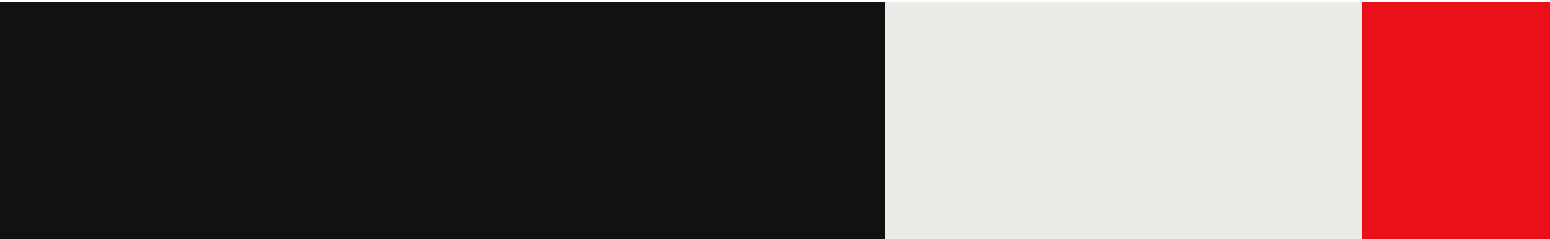



# Retail media 2025: Insights on innovation, growth, and standardization

Article



Retail media was the fastest-growing ad channel we tracked in the US in 2024. While that growth will slow slightly (from 20.4% to 20.2%) in 2025, it's still primed for innovation—and

challenges. Here's what our analysts and podcast guests had to say about retail media, with insights into what it means for 2025.

**“There’s going to be around \$60 billion forecast spend in retail media, and retailers, there’s only so much any one advertiser is going to advertise on one platform, but we also know that there are over 50 platforms right now, so advertisers only really want a maximum of four partners.”** Our analyst Suzy Davidkhanian highlights the significant [growth of retail media](#) and suggests that the increasing number of retail media networks (RMNs) is leading to a more complex landscape for advertisers.

**Key stat:** 58% of US marketers work with at least five RMNs, per a January 2024 Association of National Advertisers study.

**What it means for 2025:** Not only did more retailers join the RMN bandwagon in 2024, but so did those in industries like travel and financial services. Advertisers will continue having a wealth of media network options, but standardization and measurement challenges will continue, forcing RMNs to prove their worth.

Analyst Bill Fisher said there’s [potential for in-store retail media](#), specifically smart shopping carts with digital screens to display ads as shoppers browse the aisles: **“I think that's just absolute genius because customers can be served ads as they're going around and scanning items in, so that brands can serve relevant promotions and ads on things that they're actually looking at and buying.”**

**Key stat:** 27.7% of US adults have encountered ads on screen of smart shopping carts, the lowest encountered in-store retail media format surveyed by EMARKETER and Placer.ai.

**What it means for 2025:** In-store retail media represented less than 1% of all retail media sales in the US in 2024. The infrastructure needed for digital media formats in-store is large, and many retailers are hesitant to invest that heavily. Several retailers have focused instead on in-store audio/radio, which requires a much smaller investment.

**“If we’re addressing a customer in a social environment or in a TV environment or in our own app, and we know a lot about them, it’s a missed opportunity if we don’t also tailor the creative to the environment and to what we know about them. And there’s too much one-size-fits-all use of creative, and I think ... that’s a rich area of innovation and something to change in retail media as we move forward.”** Ryan Mayward, senior vice president of retail sales at Walmart Connect, on the importance of [using creative tailored to the specific](#)

environment and audience, which carries relevancy for retail media because brands often have access to more detailed customer data in these contexts.

**Key stat:** 30% of consumers in the US and Europe said the personalization feature they value most is receiving messages and offers that feel tailored to them. That's the second highest personalization tactic.

**What it means for 2025:** As generative AI is employed more in creative development, advertisers should be cautious and understand how consumers feel about the use of the technology. Most consumers (76%) are uncomfortable with AI tools using their personal information to enhance their shopping experience or recommendations, per EMARKETER and CivicScience.

**“It's really clear ... for an endemic advertiser why you'd want to advertise on any of these retail media networks. But what's the incentive for a non-endemic to start buying this type of advertising?”** Our analyst Ross Benes posed this question about a challenge RMNs will have to address as the channel matures.

**Key stat:** 53% of US brands have used an RMN where they are not an endemic brand, per Merkle.

**What it means for 2025:** Large retailers are likely to take advantage of the non-endemic advertising option—but the area is still in the early stages with some retailers limiting these ads to off-site environments.

*This was originally featured in the EMARKETER Daily newsletter. For more marketing insights, statistics, and trends, subscribe [here](#).*