

4 predictions for the future of retail media ad buying

Article

Retail media networks may be working on standardization, but a universal measurement system is still a dream. Aside from a sluggish move toward standardization, here are four predictions about the future of retail media networks our analysts gave on our [“Behind the Numbers: Reimagining Retail”](#) podcast.

1. The prevailing retail media measurement standard doesn't exist yet

Even as the **IAB**, the **MRC**, and **Albertsons Companies** propose standardization, the measurement that will actually achieve mass adoption doesn't exist yet, our analyst Max Willens predicted.

"I think that this is something that's a ways away, and being the first to sort of posit something often does not confer much advantage," said Willens.

How will retailers know when the right standard has arrived? When one starts getting adopted, according to Willens.

2. There will be a slowdown in emerging retail media networks

New networks will stop popping up as frequently, following an influx of retail media networks.

"At the same time, I think we're going to see smaller players and more regional players outsourcing more of these operations, whether that's to ad tech partners [or] to agencies, and focusing instead on their core competencies," said Nicole Perrin, vice president of business intelligence at Advertiser Perceptions.

3. Shopify will be key in the standardization conversation

Shopify works with a mass of merchants and potential advertisers, offering some power in retail media measurement standardization, said Willens. As the company makes more partnerships, it will have leverage to assert a retail media standard.

4. A retail media upfront marketplace will emerge ... maybe

Admittedly, this is a spicy prediction, but as advertisers increasingly think of retail media as part of their ad budgets, suppliers may move toward contractually guaranteed pricing on ads, said Perrin.

"I think that as the teams at brands become less siloed, the shopper marketing people [will] work more closely with the ecommerce or digital people," said Perrin. "As agencies continue to do their best to take on retail media as a competency for themselves, I think we'll see those silos between the offline and online sides of this breakdown."

The result would be a comprehensive joint planning process between retailers and suppliers.

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