

# While VideoAmp and iSpot make gains, Nielsen lays off 1,000

Article

**The news:** VideoAmp and iSpot, two major measurement players vying against Nielsen, stepped up their game this week with separate announcements of a new funding round and acquisition.

- **VideoAmp** raised \$150 million in a Series G funding round led by **Vista Credit Partners**. In a statement to Axios, CFO **Paul Ross** said the funding will be used for maintenance of existing products.
- **iSpot** has acquired **605**, an advertising measurement company that iSpot CEO **Sean Muller** says will help his firm flesh out its big data capabilities and improve ad attribution.

**Nielsen today:** These major moves from iSpot and VideoAmp come at a tough time for Nielsen, which is still adjusting after being taken private last year in a \$16 billion acquisition. Last week, Nielsen laid off 9% of its staff, or approximately 1,000 employees.

- In a statement, Nielsen said the layoffs were an effort to bring costs in line with revenues. The measurement giant had over 15,000 employees at the time of its acquisition, which Ad Age reports saddled the company with approximately \$10 billion in debt.
- Nielsen has been racing to launch big data and cross-platform measurement products as competitors make strides, but it shocked advertisers earlier this year when it opted to stick with panel-based measurement at Upfronts.
- Nielsen released its big data currency in late August just days before the Media Rating Council convened to approve it. The company also riled networks after it said it would incorporate **Amazon** first-party data into its **Thursday Night Football** panel-based measurement, a decision it later walked back.
- On Thursday, Nielsen seemed to recognize the need for a change by appointing seasoned executive **Karthik Rao** as its new CEO, replacing **David Kenny**.

**The competition:** The VideoAmp and iSpot announcements show the two companies finding success in the fractured media space. While Nielsen's recent moves have damaged relations with networks and streamers, VideoAmp and iSpot continue to win support.

- VideoAmp, whose partners include Warner Bros. Discovery, Disney, TelevisaUnivision, and others, said its funding round was a vote of confidence for the switch from panel-based data to larger, robust datasets. The company claims to support nearly 40 million households and 60 million devices across the US but is still not profitable.
- iSpot similarly has a major deal in place with **NBCUniversal** and gained a \$325 million investment from Goldman Sachs last year. With 605 under its wing, iSpot's device footprint will jump to 82.7 million households, the company said.

- 605 specializes in advertising attribution, or measuring how views of an ad directly translate into sales—an increasingly in-demand metric for advertisers.

**Analyst take:** “Nielsen’s incumbent’s advantage is huge,” said Insider Intelligence senior analyst [Evelyn Mitchell-Wolf](#). “It has very few enthusiastic supporters, and still, advertisers relied heavily on the familiar legacy currency during Upfronts. But Nielsen plans to sunset that currency in 2024, and unless it’s able to rebuild industry goodwill, it may find itself playing catch up in 2025.”

**Confidence in ROI Measurement According to Marketing Professionals Worldwide, by Marketing Tactic, Dec 2022**

*% of respondents in each group*

	<b>Extremely/ very confident</b>	<b>Moderately confident</b>	<b>Slightly/ not at all confident</b>
Social media	62%	23%	15%
Search	57%	27%	16%
Display	57%	27%	15%
Video	58%	28%	16%
Email	50%	28%	21%
Native advertising	48%	29%	19%
OTT/connected TV (CTV)	49%	30%	18%
Podcasts	45%	26%	23%
Streaming audio	44%	27%	22%

*Note: numbers do not add up to 100% due to displaying aggregate responses denoting high or low confidence*

*Source: Nielsen, "2023 Annual Marketing Report" calculated by Insider Intelligence, April 26, 2023*

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