

Prime Video misses the mark on Black Friday football, but it's not a loss

Article

The news: Amazon's attempt to make a "mini-Super Bowl" out of the **Black Friday NFL** match between the New York Jets and Miami Dolphins fell short of expectations, per [Ad Age](#), delivering approximately half its expected viewership.

- According to Ad Age, some ad buyers expected approximately 20 million viewers. Instead, the game delivered an average of **9.61 million** viewers (or 10.83 million, with Amazon data included), peaking at **11.8 million**.

Causes: There were several factors driving the lower-than-expected viewership on Black Friday.

- The matchup didn't do Amazon any favors. The Jets' star quarterback, **Aaron Rodgers**, has been out all season due to an injury in the first match of the year, hampering the game's star power and viewership.
- Airing on Black Friday was considered a boon, with families presumably still together after the Thanksgiving holiday. But the proximity to the much-more widely viewed Thanksgiving game may have caused viewer burnout, leading to lower viewership.
- The match was also Amazon's first attempt at creating a major event out of a Black Friday game, so relatively low adoption isn't terribly surprising. The company encouraged brands to make unique creative for the game, Super Bowl-style, and had **Dolly Parton** perform at half-time, generating headlines and attracting pop culture attention.

Not a loss: Despite significantly underdelivering on viewership, Ad Age reported that major advertisers were not terribly upset with the results and are hopeful about future events—a vote of confidence in Prime Video's unique advertising and direct-to-consumer capabilities.

- This isn't the first time Amazon has underdelivered on football viewership. Its first-year figures for **Thursday Night Football** landed below expectations, forcing it to compensate advertisers with other ad placements—something it may also do after Black Friday.
- Amazon used the game to push a number of new ad formats, including one that allows a single advertiser to display different versions of the same ad to viewers depending on their demographics or targeting information. Those new formats are expected to bring in **\$100 million** for the company this year.

Our take: As advertising shifts away from linear TV, typical metrics like traditional viewership are still crucial but don't give the full picture. Advertiser reactions to low numbers show that the ability to reach consumers directly, more effectively target ads, and create opportunities for in-stream purchases is highly valued.

Activities Conducted While Watching Live Sports From Home According to US Sports Fans, by Generation, March 2023

% of respondents in each group

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Baby boomers	Total
Look up player or team statistics	51%	49%	49%	34%	44%
Use social media to read comments and opinions from others	51%	46%	39%	18%	36%
Use social media or a messaging service to interact with others	44%	47%	35%	19%	34%
Watch another game on a separate device	21%	30%	23%	15%	22%
Bet on a website or mobile app (21+ years)	22%	24%	16%	6%	15%
Play fantasy sports	17%	25%	18%	4%	15%
Purchase sports merchandise or memorabilia	17%	20%	14%	5%	13%
Play a game related to the event	22%	18%	7%	2%	11%

Note: among US sports fans who watch live sporting events from home; Gen Z born 1997-2009, millennials born 1983-1996, Gen X born 1966-1982, and baby boomers born 1947-1965
Source: Deloitte, "2023 Sports fan insights: The beginning of the immersive sports era," June 27, 2023

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