

Nielsen to combine big data with panel measurement, catching up to competitors

Article

The news: Nielsen will combine big data measurement from set top boxes with its panel measurement for local TV currencies in all markets starting January 1, the company

announced.

Nielsen and big data: Nielsen has planned big data integration into its panel measurement for some time, launching its first major [big data currency last August](#). But this latest news marks a significant step forward for the measurement leader.

- Nielsen will now integrate complex data pools from digital sources into its long-standing panel measurement data, allowing smaller broadcasters like local news stations to access more robust viewer data to entice advertisers.
- Panel measurement has been a staple of TV advertising for decades, but it saw significant disruption during the pandemic, when Nielsen staff was unable to visit homes to perform maintenance. The pandemic also accelerated shifts away from linear TV toward streaming and connected TVs, increasing the need for broader measurement capabilities.

The measurement race: But while Nielsen is just now arriving to the big data table, its competitors like **iSpot**, **Comscore**, **VideoAmp**, and others got there first, often basing their viewership measurement on big data.

- For nearly two years, advertisers and TV networks have wondered if and when an eventual transition away from Nielsen toward its newer competitors (now [backed by a Joint Industry Committee](#) of streamers and broadcasters) would occur.
- So far, the change hasn't happened despite Nielsen's long path to integrating big data. During the 2023 Upfront period, [Nielsen traded solely on its panel-based measurement](#) currencies as it sought accreditation for its big data currency. Despite the reliance on an old measurement stalwart, Nielsen's market share did not take a significant blow.
- A similar dynamic has played out in 2024: 58% of advertisers in an April iSpot survey said they still needed to learn more about Nielsen alternatives before fully adopting them.

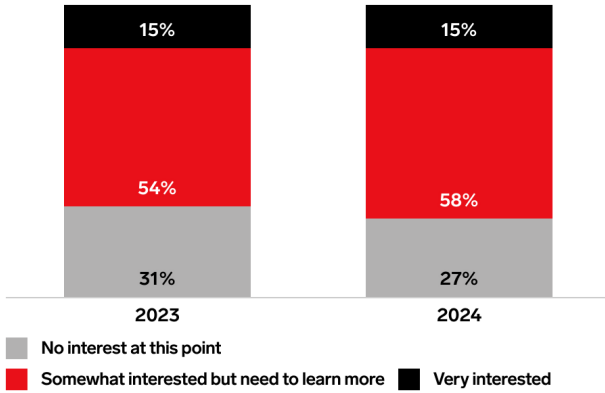
Our take: Nielsen appears to be pulling out of a tough few years relatively unshaken. Advertisers have shown reluctance to move away from Nielsen currencies after decades of use, which has bought the company time to flesh out its capabilities to push back competitors.

With the Joint Industry Committee certifying its major Nielsen competitors, the 2025 Upfront season is set to be a significant showdown between the legacy media giant's attempts to step into the future and its younger competitors.

Most US Advertisers Still Need to Learn More About Non-Legacy Currencies Ahead of the 2024 Upfront

% of US advertisers, 2023 & 2024

Q: What is your interest level in transacting on non-Nielsen currencies upfront this year?



Source: iSpot.tv, "2024 Upfronts Survey Results," April 9, 2024

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