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# Who's really seeing ads on video screens

*It's a surprisingly young audience, and it's huge*

By Toni Fitzgerald  
Apr 14, 2010

One of the biggest concerns for out-of-home media buyers has always been measurement, or the lack thereof. Without reliable means for measuring whether their ads were seen, buyers had to rely on anecdotal evidence or whatever data the vendor might provide.

Now the industry is starting to address that void. Last year the TAB released its first Eyes On measurements, which provide viewership data for billboards.

And Monday Nielsen rolled out its first-ever out-of-home video ad numbers for movie theaters and such other venues as gas stations, health clubs, restaurants and convenience stores. The data is compatible with Nielsen ratings for TV and the internet, thus allowing media buyers and sellers to make cross-media comparisons.

The numbers are certainly striking.

During the final four months of 2009, adults 18 and older saw 237 million video ads per month in the 10 locations measured by the so-called Fourth Screen Audience Report.

To put that in context, Nielsen says video ad exposure to two movie theater networks, NCM and Screenvision, combined for 61.7 million impressions, the equivalent audience of 20 primetime 30-second ads.

"We're trying to bring simplicity and order in what we hope will facilitate the buying and selling process for this media," says Paul Lindstrom, Nielsen's senior vice president for On Location. "The idea is that someone walks in with a report, and the agency is able to read it right away, similar to the TV ratings."

Right now, Nielsen is only measuring 10 digital networks: the two in movie theaters, three in bars and restaurants, two in health clubs, and one apiece in gas stations, hotels and elevators.

Lindstrom says the hope is to add other ad networks over time. The reports will be issued on a quarterly basis.

As for this report, NCM had the largest number of ad exposures over the four months, 35.3 million, followed by Captivate (elevators) at 31.3 million and Zoom Fitness (health clubs) at 29.4 million.

The report also found one other very interesting thing that media buyers and planners will surely note. Adults ages 18-34, an increasingly difficult audience to reach via traditional media, accounted for half of the ad exposures.

Lindstrom says that's because these digital ad networks are in locations young people frequent.

"I don't know if it's surprising, but it is significant how young this audience is," Lindstrom says. "It's people going to health clubs, bars, traveling. They're families, they're working in office buildings, etc., and they have a younger profile overall."

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*Toni Fitzgerald is a staff writer for Media Life.*

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