
ITV and RadiumOne programmatic partnership

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Late last year ITV announced a new partnership with RadiumOne, a leading programmatic ad platform, to launch Ad Sync+, which will allow ITV's TV advertisers to buy inventory programmatically across devices and link ITV's broadcast output to RadiumOne's sharing data capability. The platform will allow advertisers to synchronise their spot advertising on 'traditional TV' with a complementary message to viewers consuming content on second screens – or to target those people who they know they haven't been able to reach with their broadcast campaigns, thereby adding valuable incremental reach. RadiumOne's technology further enables advertisers to target those likely to be interested in the ad based on the content they share or engage with online.

The partnership comes shortly after a similar deal announced by Sky Media and Videology, who will work together to create a programmatic, cross-screen video advertising solution set to launch early this year. The 'proof of concept' project aims to develop a

programmatic system which will run Sky Media's digital inventory according to broadcast compliance requirements and spot clash rules.

The partnerships highlight the direction in which the TV marketplace is currently heading in this multi-screen landscape. As BARB data reports changing viewing habits, the future of TV planning lies with those advertisers and technology providers who can successfully bridge the gap between the linear TV and digital worlds, targeting the right people at the right time on the right screen.

Cross platform targeting has the potential to offer advertisers an increase in ROI during a time of ever inflating TV prices, by maximising efficiencies in targeting and opening up new possibilities for cross-platform user journeys and targeting, that mirror audience viewing and consumption habits.

At this moment in time, although advertisers can buy online video programmatically through SSP's and DSP's, and the likes of the Sky Advance platform offer a product which can connect user journeys across screen, the vast majority of TV inventory is still traded offline and measured against BARB audience metrics. Although this has seen some updates recently such as weekly TV Player Reports, BARB data is still a long way from being able to measure audience viewing habits in a fragmented, multi-screen world.

It's unlikely that the ITV and RadiumOne partnership will be the defining moment in the transition to programmatic TV buying. It is a first step into unfamiliar territory for a broadcaster not traditionally known for breaking new ground technically. Nonetheless, it is a statement of intent and a reflection of the direction of travel for all broadcasters and the advertisers who spend with them.

The fully programmatic future of TV is still some way off, with a number of obstacles to be overcome. Understanding journeys between devices is incredibly difficult given the lack of common identifiers and increased mobile device usage. So far, no one has successfully got this right. Facebook and Google have strong solutions, using their own IDs and ad servers, and in the AV world Sky are best placed from this point of view to make this link.

As the delays to BARB's project Dovetail suggest, the transition into the TV market will take time. However, with user-based (as opposed to panel-based) measurement the norm in digital, it's up to agencies, tech providers and media owners to prove the shift to programmatic can maximise their ROI. A test-and-learn approach needs to be applied to find out what works and what doesn't – and most importantly WHY. Those advertisers willing to get these learnings early will be ones who are best placed going forward, future-proofing campaign effectiveness in the face of a rapidly shifting video consumption landscape.

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