

COLUMNS

TV + mobile = millennial engagement

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There is a common misconception that millennials have abandoned traditional television in favor of video streaming, social media and other Web-based activities via mobile devices.

Given that 98 percent of the 18-24 age group now own smartphones, advertisers looking to reach younger audiences could be forgiven for shifting budgets from TV to digital and mobile platforms.

YouTube also recently announced a mobile-friendly TV bundle with the aim of attracting a millennial audience, further emphasizing that publishers feel there is some truth to this perceived migration.

But the stats tell a different story.

Nielsen figures from the third quarter of 2016 indicate that U.S. consumers in this age group still watch an average of 2:33 hours of traditional TV each day, providing huge opportunities for advertisers to reach this valuable audience.

In fact, rather than taking over, mobile is proving to be the perfect companion to TV as media consumption habits become increasingly fragmented. TV and mobile together are the perfect formula for engaging millennials:

TV drives mobile response

Millennials are more likely than any other generation to engage in second-screen behavior while watching video content. They are active-participation TV viewers, immediately engaging when something interests them.

Due to these factors, TV has become a top driver of digital response, including Web site traffic, search and application activity.

One study even found that TV ads drove app install rates by up to 74 percent.

Advertisers can take full advantage of second-screen behavior by providing clear calls-to-action within their TV creatives.

What is more, advances in cross-channel attribution can now help advertisers precisely measure the activity that TV commercials generate on mobile channels, allowing them to fully understand the effect of campaigns across an entire media plan.

Analytics can even track TV's influence on digital channels weeks and months after the initial ad exposure, showing how TV drives revenue through online, mobile and second screen.

TV ads cannot be blocked

While it is true that TV viewers are not obliged to watch commercials, TV ads cannot be blocked by software in the same way as digital advertising.

According to eMarketer, just more than a quarter of U.S. Internet users will employ ad blockers this year.

But the figure is significantly higher for millennials, with more than 40 percent using ad blockers. This is not necessarily because millennials dislike advertising.

Ad blocking among this group is more likely to be an attempt to achieve a faster and less disrupted browsing experience, especially on mobile where speed is of the essence and ads can eat up valuable data.

Millennials trust TV

Despite growing up in a cross-device, cross-channel world, millennials still trust TV ads more than digital formats, according to Nielsen's Global Trust in Advertising survey.

More than two-thirds (67 percent) say they trust TV advertising, compared with 48 percent who trust ads on mobile devices.

This age group is also more willing to take action on TV ads via mobile versus other generations.

To boost the effect of TV, brands should incorporate both TV and digital particularly mobile into their advertising strategy to ensure messaging is reinforced across all channels, delivering a consistent, authentic experience to younger audiences.

WRITING OFF TV as an outdated medium would be a huge mistake for advertisers looking to reach millennial audiences.

TV still plays a trusted role in their lives and can be used as part of a complementary media strategy as a vehicle to deliver action-oriented messaging and drive mobile activity.

We need to stop looking at these channels as separate entities. Mobile is not displacing TV it is the perfect partner for it.

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