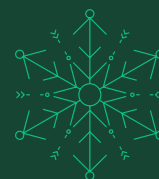


‘Tis the Season for CTV

The Retail Marketer's Guide to
Building, Launching & Measuring
Holiday Campaigns



Contents

Introduction	3
What is CTV Advertising?	4
Building a Holiday Campaign Strategy	5
Case Study: How Outer Crushed Their ROAS Goals	11
Designing Your CTV Creative	12
Launching Your Holiday Campaign	14
Measuring Your Holiday Campaign	15
Unwrapping the Power of CTV	17

Introduction

The holidays are full of traditions for those who celebrate: baking (and eating) sugar-filled treats, decorating the house, spending time with family, and shopping for the perfect gifts. With more than [90% of consumers](#) in the US celebrating the holidays, that's a lot of cookies consumed and presents wrapped.

That's also a lot of people brands can reach with their holiday advertising campaigns.

Over the past few years, brands have relied heavily on digital channels, like social media, to advertise holiday sales. Digital channels have been perceived as more measurable and data-driven than TV — but that's no longer true.

“People become fatigued as their social media feeds are taken over with holiday promotions that all start to look the same. CTV stands out as a premium medium for more compelling storytelling.”

Bridget Hall

Group Account Director, M&C Saatchi Performance

The rise of connected TV (CTV), combined with improvements in targeting and attribution, unlocks the opportunity to leverage TV advertising as a performance channel, driving sales and optimizing toward ROAS. With [88% of US households](#) having at least one connected device, viewers are no longer tied to watching shows in their living room in real time, but rather anywhere, at any time, on any connected device.

That means TV is actually now a data-centric, digital channel. It means measuring performance of CTV advertising campaigns just got a whole lot easier. And that means CTV advertising will be one of the most effective ways to reach holiday shoppers this year.

So where do you start?

That's where this guide comes in. We'll walk you through everything you need to know to get started with CTV advertising for your brand's holiday campaigns, from understanding CTV in general to measuring how your campaigns perform. We'll also give you data and insights into planning campaigns for the early holiday shoppers and those who leave it for the last minute. Let's dive in.



‘Tis the season for the telly. 65% of US consumers watch holiday-related content on TV in the fall and winter.

What is CTV Advertising?

Simply put, **CTV advertising** is promoting your brand on connected devices where consumers watch television shows, like smart TVs, streaming devices (think Roku and Amazon Fire TV), and gaming consoles.

And it's kind of a big deal. It not only has the tracking capabilities it lacked for so many years, but it also offers these benefits:

1

You can advertise on multiple streaming apps with only one campaign setup process.

2

The length of your entire ad is non-skippable content.

3

CTV advertising is proven to lift conversion rates on all other marketing channels.

4

CTV still supports increased brand awareness and improved consumer trust.

It's no wonder why performance marketers are gearing up to make CTV advertising a permanent part of their media mix.

Building a Holiday Campaign Strategy

Now that we've covered the basics and benefits of CTV advertising, let's talk about the most critical piece to getting started: your strategy. There are two foundational questions we want to answer when building a holiday campaign strategy:



Historically, consumers start researching holiday shopping ideas around October and November. Major holidays (like Christmas and Hanukkah) are approaching at this time, and people are in-market for gifts, discounts, and deals.

That's why testing CTV advertising testing throughout the year, especially as September nears can give you a baseline understanding of conversion rates and possible ROAS. These insights will enable you to learn what works (and what doesn't), and therefore what to scale your budget against in October through December.

Measuring Holiday Campaign Success

You'll measure campaign success through a diverse set of metrics, but understanding your main KPI will help align expectations and define a "north star" goal. For a holiday campaign, your main KPI will probably be around building brand awareness or driving conversions.

Let's dive a little deeper into cross-device conversion rate first. This is particularly interesting because it helps marketers assess the true value of their CTV advertising efforts and hit revenue goals in the final quarter.



To measure brand awareness, you can analyze video completion data, unique reach, or brand lift surveys.

If you're more focused on driving conversions, particularly cross-device on mobile or desktop, you will likely look at cross-device conversion rate, ROAS, and number of installs (if you're a mobile-first brand).

Cross-device conversion rate measures the percentage of users who viewed or interacted with your CTV ad on their television and later purchased your product on a different device, like their phone. A high cross-device conversion rate indicates that your CTV ad successfully captured shoppers' attention and motivated them to take action later.

Although it's ideal to define your north star, you also don't have to "pick a side" between branding or acquisition objectives. Many brands using CTV effectively craft a full-funnel strategy, differentiating the creative and targeting according to where a user is in their buying journey.

How quickly you see results will depend on consumer demand, how compelling your creative and messaging is, and how regularly you optimize your campaigns. Investing in a new channel means investing in time, testing, and learning.

How to Reach Holiday Shoppers

To learn how you can best reach holiday shoppers, let's first walk through how CTV targeting fundamentally works.

CTV targeting is powered by Automated Content Recognition (ACR), a technology that enables devices to identify and recognize the content being played on a screen in real time. ACR technology has been widely adopted in CTV advertising to enhance targeting capabilities and deliver more relevant ads to viewers. This means brands can deliver more engaging ad experiences, ultimately improving the effectiveness of holiday campaigns.

When it comes to specific targeting tactics, it's recommended to test various kinds. If you start broad, you'll know a lot more about who's engaging with you, what's resonating with them, and who you can cut from your audience. This stage of testing is critical for success. (This is also why you should start your holiday campaigns early.)

“Traditional TV ad spots are typically purchased in a more blanketed manner, reaching broad audiences. These agreements are locked in, rather than flexible investments. CTV advertising allows more narrow targeting and flexibility to optimize elements of your buy in real time.”

Bridget Hall

Group Account Director, M&C Saatchi Performance



Behavioral Targeting

Use third-party data to target users based on their online behavior, like browsing history, online purchases, and intent signals. This lets you reach potential customers who have shown interest in similar products or are actively researching holiday shopping.



Interest-Based Targeting

Target audiences based on their interests, hobbies, and activities related to the holiday season. For example, you can reach people interested in winter sports, holiday recipes, or festive decorations.



Affinity Targeting

Identify audiences attracted to specific themes or brands related to the holidays and target them with relevant ads. For example, you can target people who have a likeness for holiday traditions or gift-giving.

Types of Holiday Shoppers

The last step to effectively reach consumers for the holidays is to understand the three types of holiday shoppers and what they value most.



The On-the-Fly Shopper

On-the-Fly Shoppers don't buy all their holiday gifts in one trip, but rather shop throughout the season. Your goal is to engage this kind of shopper at the very beginning and continue exposing them to your brand throughout the holiday season.

Reach On-the-Fly Shoppers by starting your holiday campaigns early (at least by early October) and use retargeting strategies to continue putting your brand in front of them. Because they're more inclined to purchase gifts when the mood strikes, or when they see something they like, it's critical that they remember who you are.

Pro Tip:

Start broad. If you cast a wider net up front, you'll know a lot more about who's engaging with you, what's resonating with them, and who you can cut from your audience. This stage of testing is critical for success.



The Early Shopper

According to the National Retail Federation, [61% of consumers](#) start their shopping by early November. That's up from previous years, indicating that more and more people are shopping earlier.

Early Shoppers are often planners. They want to shop as early as possible and typically would prefer to buy all gifts at one or few stores, rather than shopping around. Early Shoppers value efficiency, meaning that if you engage them right, you can capture all of their holiday spend.

Like with On-the-Fly Shoppers, you'll reach Early Shoppers by starting your holiday campaigns early. The difference is that you don't have time on your side with Early Shoppers. Once they've finished their shopping, that's it.

Pro Tip:

Your CTV campaigns should focus on showing Early Shoppers how they can get all (or most) of their shopping done with your brand.





The Last-Moment Shopper

Last-Moment Shoppers might be in denial that they have some work to do. They might not enjoy shopping, or they might simply not know what to buy. Whatever the reason, your goal shouldn't be to reach this shopper early, but rather to reach them later and with convenience in mind.

Engage Last-Moment Shoppers by making it easy for them to start and finish their shopping in one trip. These shoppers tend to prefer online shopping, which can be a problem if they wait too long to shop. If your brand is able to solve this problem for them, it'll be more likely that you'll earn their business.

Pro Tip:



Your CTV campaigns should highlight how they can get all (or most) of their shopping done with your brand (like with the Early Shoppers) — while also catering to their needs. Offer extended store hours on the days before a holiday, free in-store pickup for online orders, or overnight delivery to catch their eye (and their wallet). The easier you can make their experience, the more inclined they'll be to spend with you.

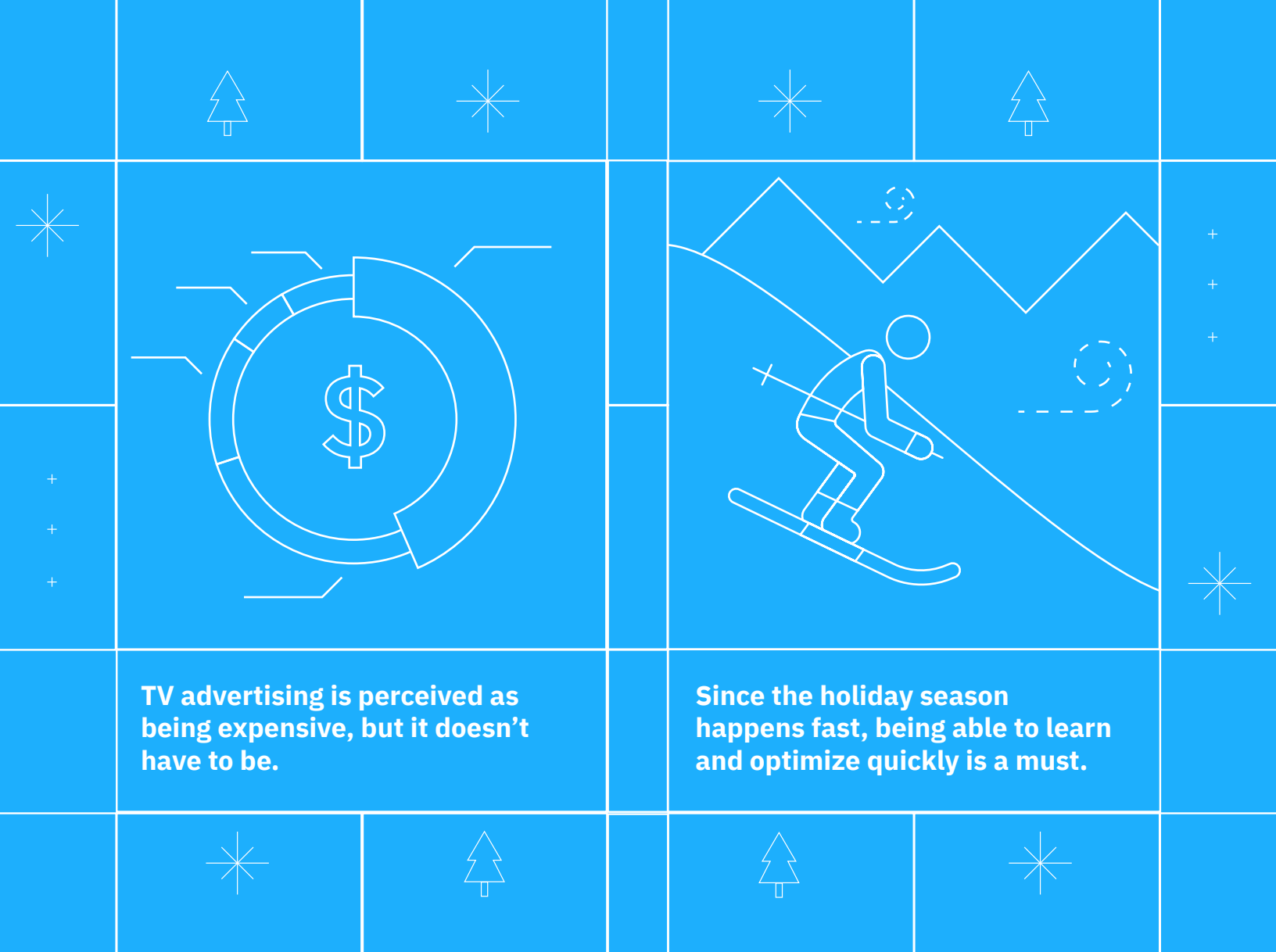
Prospecting vs. Retargeting

Most retail marketers who are new to CTV will start with prospecting campaigns, which just means you're looking to find brand-new customers. These ads tell viewers exactly what to do (buy your product) and where to do it (your online or brick-and-mortar store). This means your ad creative needs to make two things clear: the call to action and your URL or app store logo. We'll get into creative best practices later.

There's a good chance that someone will see your ad, look you up online, and leave without buying anything. In fact, whether they're looking at customer reviews or their product options, 81% of in-store shoppers research products online before purchasing. This is the audience you want to retarget.

Although retargeting is often seen as more sophisticated and saved for “phase two” of advertising strategies, it shouldn't be — especially when planning a timely campaign around the holidays. We usually recommend launching retargeting campaigns with prospecting campaigns because they can be incredibly effective at bringing people back to your website and driving conversions.

Retargeting campaigns may include more ads on CTV, display ads online, or a mix of both. But regardless of where you retarget, look at these ads as an opportunity to reel people back in. Offer a promotion, create a sense of urgency, and show best-selling products.



| Setting Your Holiday Budget

TV advertising is perceived as being expensive, but it doesn't have to be.

The reality is that CTV advertising, even during the holidays, can be comparable to what you'd spend on other marketing channels. So rather than asking how much it would cost to run a CTV campaign during the holidays, the better question is: Is there a budget that drives better CTV results?

Marketers with a starting budget of \$25,000 – \$30,000 per month say they have room to test more and learn faster than their

peers with smaller starting budgets. With a budget in this range, you can learn enough in less than four weeks to make significant optimizations in your second month. And since the holiday season happens fast, being able to learn and optimize quickly is a must.

Does this mean you can't test and learn with a smaller budget? Of course not. It just means that it'll take a little longer to get the information you need to optimize (and that's time you may not have, depending on when you start your holiday campaigns).



CASE STUDY

How Outer Crushed Their ROAS Goals

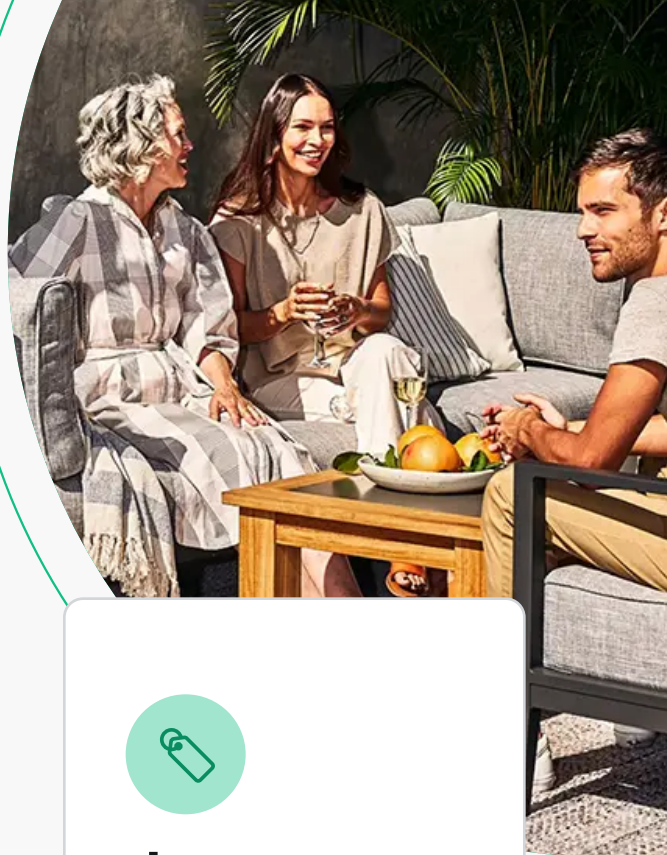
Launching CTV campaigns always came at a high expense for Outer, a home goods retailer. And with their previous CTV partner, they had limited visibility into their data. It wasn't clear what was working (and what wasn't), and they wanted to get more eyes on their content per dollar spent.

The Outer team decided to partner with tvScientific to get more comprehensive data on purchase journeys and improve ROAS. Working closely together and sharing data transparently, Outer's first campaign was tailored to their long attribution window and optimized continuously.

They not only achieved their goals, but surpassed them. They maintained a \$25 CPM with a 6.4 ROAS, which was +42% higher than their initial goal. The Outer team also found that tvScientific's real-time data offered more insights from each purchase journey and simplified visibility into the attribution of spend via pixel tracking.

Pro Tip:

The holidays come and go fast. There's limited time to test your CTV campaigns, so make sure you have your platform set up to give you all the insights you want before starting your campaign.



\$25

CPM



6.4

ROAS



+42%

Higher than initial goal

Designing Your CTV Creative

The benefits of CTV campaigns, especially during the holidays, are hard to argue with — after all, what company doesn't want to reach more of the right shoppers, build their brand, and drive more holiday sales?

You could have a bulletproof CTV strategy that defines the right goals, targets the right people, and gives you more than enough budget. But without compelling creative, you've got nothing, and it requires more than just throwing together a few images and a catchy jingle. The most memorable and effective holiday ads follow these creative best practices:

Weave in the magic of holiday stories.

During this time of year, people are drawn to heartwarming stories that evoke emotions and memories. Craft your ad with a compelling story that'll help your audience connect with the holiday spirit and your brand.

Keep it simple.

Amid the holiday rush, simplicity will win. This is not the place to cram in everything a buyer needs to know about your brand. Focus on a concise message that highlights how your product or service makes someone's life better.

Captivate your audience.

So many consumer brands advertise during the holiday season, including many of your competitors. You need to capture your buyers' attention instantly using engaging visuals, festive music, or an unexpected twist to make it stand out.

Keep your brand visible.

Don't forget to infuse your holiday messaging with elements of your brand identity. Use the same recognizable colors, fonts, and tone that people associate with your brand, and make your logo and URL prominent to ensure a lasting impression.

Unwrap creativity with A/B testing.

Marketing is all about trial and error. Create multiple ads so you can test versions and find the winning one. Make sure your different versions vary in design, messaging, and length.

Give the gift of a CTA.

What do you want the audience to do? Encourage viewers to take action, whether that's visiting your website, making a purchase, or participating in a holiday promotion. Guide them with a clear call to action, and you can boost engagement and conversions for the holiday season. completed views

Technical Requirements

CTV campaigns aren't complicated, but video technical requirements can be. Here's a quick list of the requirements your creative will need to meet before getting started.

Aspect Ratio	16:9
Bitrate	Greater than 15Mbps
Dimensions	1920 x 1080
File Type	.mp4 or .mov
Frame Rate	23.98, 25, or 29.97
Length	15 or 30 seconds
Maximum File Size	10GB



Launching Your Holiday Campaign



After building your strategy and designing the creative assets, it's time to launch your holiday campaign. It's the moment when all the hard work pays off and you get to see your campaign in action.

But before you hit the launch button, make sure you keep a few things in mind:

Choose your platforms wisely.

Roku, Amazon Fire TV, and gaming consoles are just a few of the platforms that run ads. Audience, pricing, and ad formats can vary, so you have to do your research. Choose the ones that best align with your brand and where you'll have the most success.

Set your budget and bidding strategy.

At this point, you should already know what you have allotted to spend each month. But you'll need to choose between one of two pricing models: Cost Per Impression (CPM), which charges you every time your ad appears on the screen, or Cost Per Completed View (CPCV), which charges you when a viewer watches your entire ad. Most advertising technology platforms will help you make this decision.

Monitor your campaign.

Figure out how you'll keep tabs on your campaign once it's live. You'll want to check your ad delivery, frequency, and targeting to make sure everything continues to align with your campaign goals. Again, if you're working with a CTV platform, you should be able to monitor performance in real time.

Optimize, optimize, optimize.

The whole point of monitoring your campaign is to make adjustments. Analyze the data to see what's working (do more of that) and what's not (eliminate that). Use A/B testing to compare messaging, design, and audience segmentation. Continue making tweaks until you've found your sweet spot.

Measuring Your Holiday Campaign

You've built your strategy, finalized video assets, and launched your campaign. The hard part is over, right? Not so fast.

[Measuring campaign performance](#) can be complex, but it helps brands better understand what path someone took to take a specific action. The highly specific attribution model of CTV means that brands are able to track a buyer's journey from seeing an ad on their TV glass to making that purchase on another connected device.

Once you've launched your campaign, here are some of the most common metrics marketers should use when reviewing CTV performance:

Pro Tip:

If you find reporting on CTV campaigns daunting, you're definitely not alone. Engage with a CTV advertising platform to help make sure everything is done from a technical perspective (like placing pixels on the right sites) and get access to robust, built-in dashboards.



Website or app store visits (the number of visits) and the **clickthrough rate** (visits as a percentage of ad views) both measure traffic. Although some may see them as vanity metrics, they can give insights into what messaging is prompting people to click. You can also use traffic data for retargeting.



The **completion rate** measures the percentage of viewers who watched your entire ad. The higher the number, the more likely your ad is engaging for the audience. Lower numbers may mean you should shorten the ad or refresh the creative.



The **cost per completed view** is the amount you pay for each ad that viewers watch completely. This is helpful for marketers who want to compare cost-effectiveness of different campaigns, messaging, or platforms.



The **conversion rate** is critical if your goal is to drive conversions. It measures the percentage of viewers who took the desired action after watching your ad, like subscribing to your content or downloading an app.



The **return on ad spend** (ROAS) measures the revenue generated from your campaign compared to the total amount spent on CTV advertising. The higher the ROAS, the more profitable your campaign is.



Brand lift is particularly helpful if your goal is to build or improve brand awareness. It measures how your ads shape consumer behavior and impact your brand image.

What is CTV Incrementality?

As marketers continue to spend on CTV advertising, they'll have to prove its value as a growth channel. To support this, performance marketers are turning to incrementality reporting.

Incrementality is the value a brand gets by adding CTV advertising into its media mix. It's a big deal in CTV advertising because it essentially means you're getting more for your money. Let's clarify with an example.

A popular fitness app has been advertising on a variety of channels, including linear TV, search, and social. After adding connected TV to its landscape, its marketing team wanted to measure how their CTV advertising was impacting brand awareness and conversions, comparing that against their efforts in other channels.

When you add connected TV to your advertising efforts, you're not just duplicating the reach of your other channels — you're actually reaching new audiences who might not have been reachable otherwise. This means you're getting incremental value from your CTV ads, and this can translate into stronger brand awareness and purchase intent.

As an app marketer, measuring incrementality is especially important because it shows the additional value that CTV specifically brings. You can use these insights to make data-driven decisions on your ads, and they're also helpful for end-of-year budgeting conversations.





Unwrapping the Power of CTV

CTV advertising isn't just the new, shiny thing in marketing. It's popular because it's effective. It offers precise audience targeting like other channels, but with the immersive experience that few other channels can claim.

That said, getting started with CTV advertising doesn't happen overnight. To be successful, marketers must build a strong strategy, design compelling creative assets, launch with all the boxes checked, and measure performance with the relevant KPIs. It's no easy feat, but the right platform can take a lot of the heavy lift off marketing teams.

Connected TV has forever changed the way we (literally) view TV. As more consumers cut the cord and shift their viewing habits to streaming apps, CTV advertising will become a must-have in the digital advertising space. And as it should. If you're a consumer brand advertising on social channels, branching out into connected TV is a natural next step.

About tvScientific

tvScientific is the most sophisticated performance advertising platform built for connected TV, making TV advertising accessible and measurable for brands and apps of all sizes. tvScientific offers a self-managed solution custom-built for performance marketers, that simplifies and automates TV buying and optimization, leveraging massive data to prove the actual value of TV advertising. The platform reaches 95% of AVOD inventory using proprietary, deterministic ID technology to measure ad exposure to outcome in an approachable, radically transparent and scalable way. An Idealab company, tvScientific was co-founded by senior executives with deep roots in programmatic advertising, digital media, and ad verification. Today, the company continues to make strategic alignments with key players — the most recent being NBCUniversal — to advance CTV performance advertising forward. The company is headquartered in Pasadena, California. For more information, visit tvscientific.com.

About M&C Saatchi Performance

Born as a mobile agency at the forefront of the smartphone revolution, M&C Saatchi Performance has evolved with how people connect with media and each other. The agency delivers profitable growth for brands through full-funnel performance marketing enabling growth in the digital economy, with a specialism in their heritage of growing apps and mobile first businesses. M&C Saatchi Performance does this by using effective, measurable, and evolving media strategies combined with best-in-class client service to deliver profitable growth for clients. The agency takes a human approach to data, connecting with brands to determine objectives and audiences to meet people where they are. The team of expert marketers develop creative, paid search, programmatic, and remarketing solutions to optimize performance and deliver results. For more information, visit mcsaatchiperformance.com.