How An Ad's Pod Position Impacts Attention to Creative

Imagine you've crafted a brilliant TV ad. The question remains, is it well-positioned to engage your target audience?

In a world where customers are constantly surrounded by ads, the context in which an ad airs is an essential component in getting and keeping consumer attention. On TV, where your ad plays in the ad pod, the length of the pod, the genre of program, and the order of ad breaks within the program all impact how audiences engage with your ad.
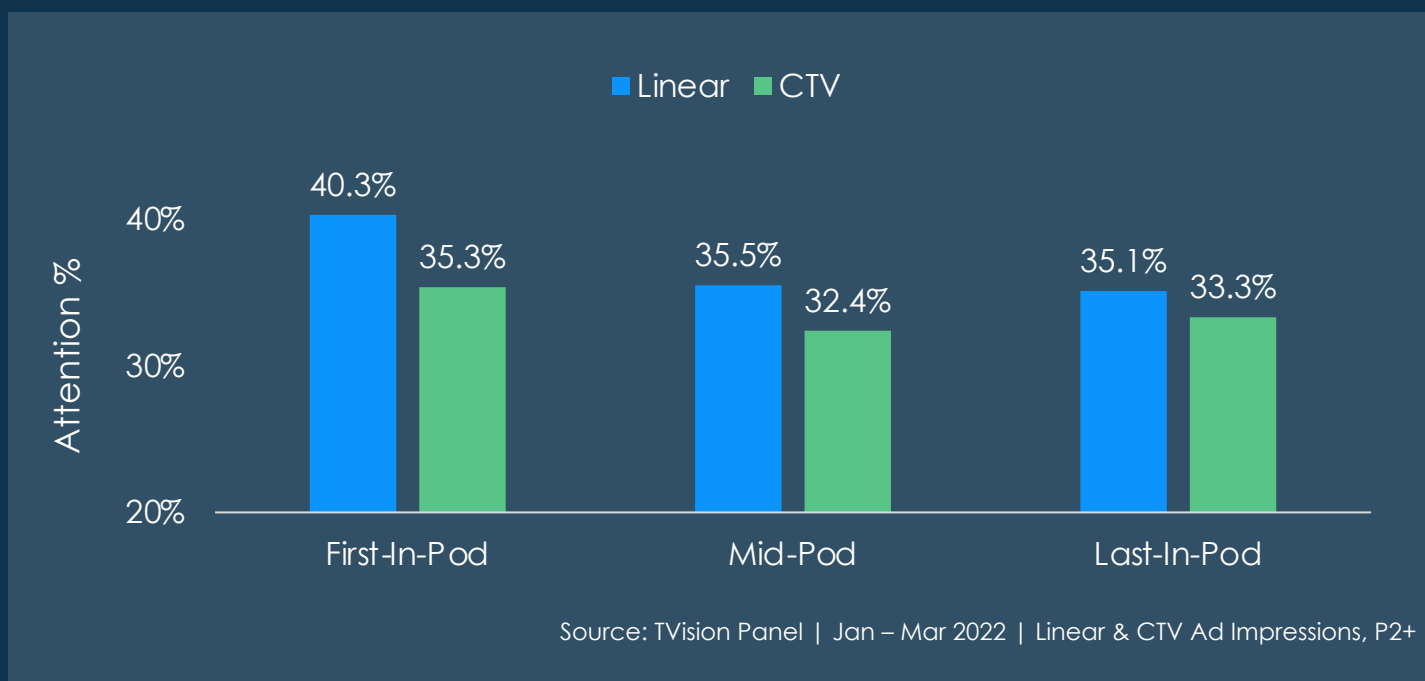
Here are some must-know insights into how ad position impacts creative attention along with tips to set up your creative for success.

The First Ad in the Pod Performs Best Across Both Linear & CTV

When it comes to pod position, ads that play first during the commercial break consistently command higher attention than those that air later in the same pod. This is especially true for linear TV, where first-in-pod placements average 5 percentage points higher for viewers who keep their eyes on the screen for more than two seconds.

First-in-pod CTV ads also average slightly higher attention; however, there, the benefit is less pronounced. This is the first hint that pod position does not have as much of a material impact on viewer attention in CTV as it has in linear. Furthermore, there is a slight uptick in people paying attention again for the last-in-pod position. This suggests that the attention of CTV viewers, who can more easily track the timing of the ad breaks, may time when they pay attention again with when they know the ad pod ends.

Average Attention by Pod Position

■ Linear ■ CTV

Pod Position	Linear	CTV
First-In-Pod	40.3%	35.3%
Mid-Pod	35.5%	32.4%
Last-In-Pod	35.1%	33.3%

Source: TVision Panel | Jan – Mar 2022 | Linear & CTV Ad Impressions, P2+

It's important to note that while streaming television allows viewers to be more deliberate with their programming selections, TVision data shows traditional linear viewing still typically secures higher levels of overall ad Attention vs. CTV.

The Shorter the Pod, the Higher the Ad Attention

We also evaluated how the overall length of both the ad break and the ad itself impact viewer Attention. Shorter ad breaks (90 seconds or less) secure the highest levels of Attention across both linear and CTV regardless of ad length. Meanwhile, ad breaks that last more than five minutes typically see the lowest levels of Attention for each ad length. You may notice that 60-Second Ads generally receive a higher percent of attention – but keep in mind that the longer the ad is on the screen, the greater chance it has of reaching our benchmark for being an attentive impression. On the next page, we'll look more closely at whether longer ads deliver higher ROI.
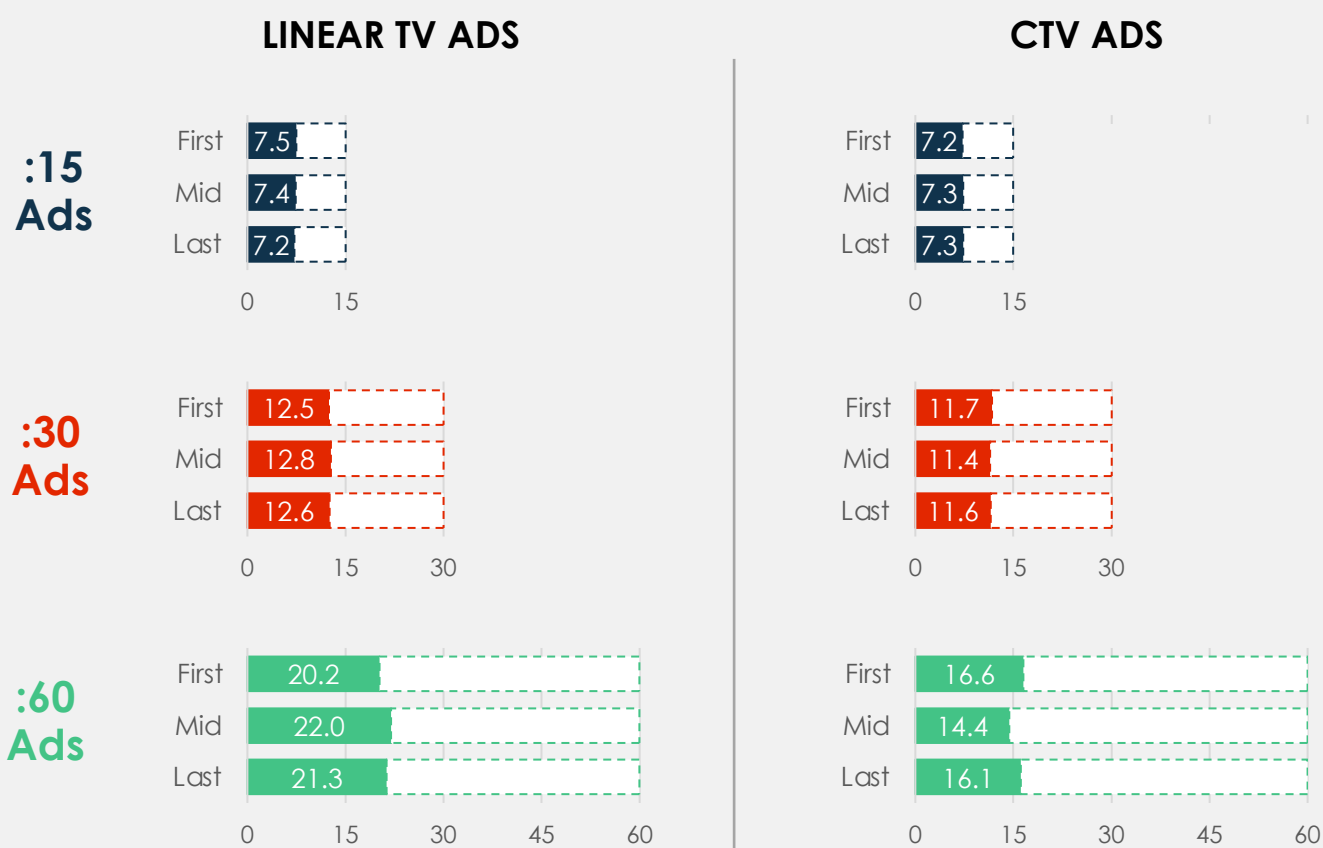
Linear Attention by Pod Duration & Ad Length
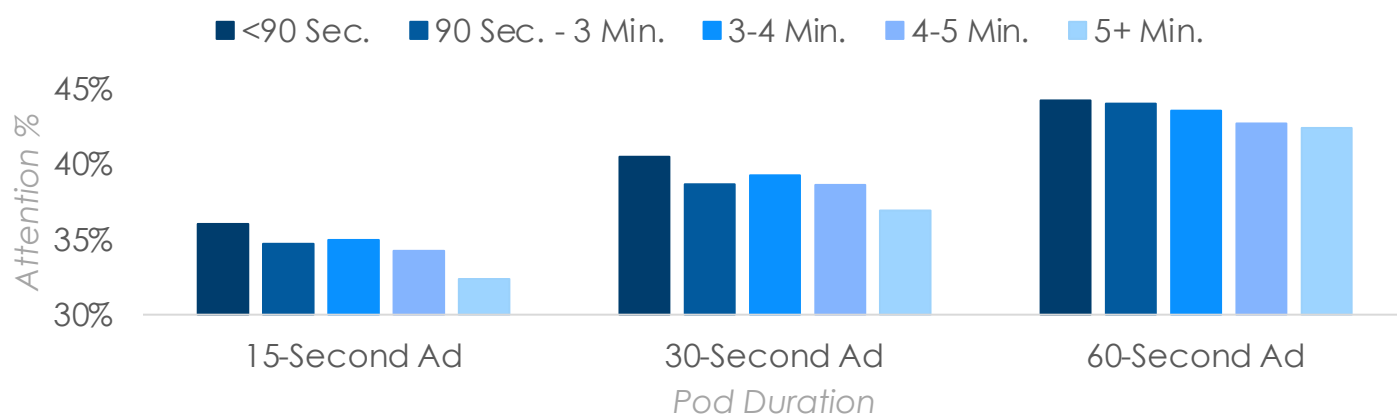
CTV Attention by Pod Duration & Ad Length
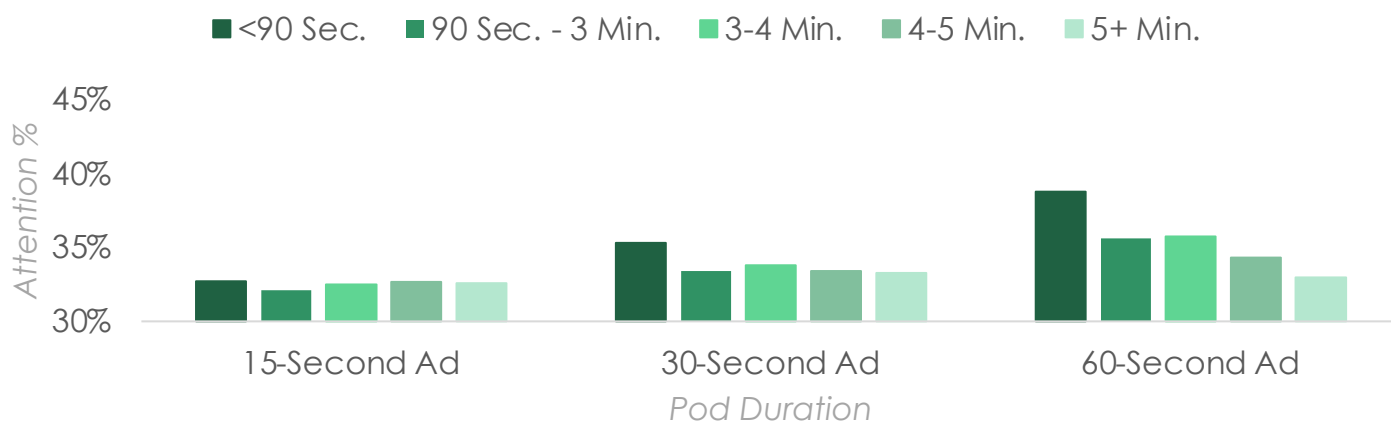
First-In-Pod, Long Ads Don't Always Equal Better ROI

Traditionally, longer ads have given marketers a greater opportunity to engage their audience. But just because an ad is on the screen for longer does not necessarily mean it's delivering more attention time proportional to the ad's length. Let's take a closer look at how many seconds of attention are actually paid across pod positions.
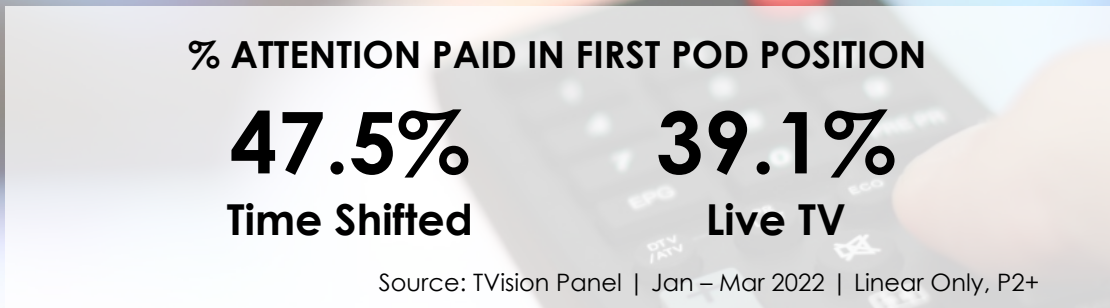
Attentive Seconds by Ad Length and Pod Position

LINEAR TV ADS

:15 Ads

First	7.5
Mid	7.4
Last	7.2

0 — 15

:30 Ads

First	12.5
Mid	12.8
Last	12.6

0 — 15 — 30

:60 Ads

First	20.2
Mid	22.0
Last	21.3

0 — 15 — 30 — 45 — 60

CTV ADS

:15 Ads

First	7.2
Mid	7.3
Last	7.3

0 — 15

:30 Ads

First	11.7
Mid	11.4
Last	11.6

0 — 15 — 30

:60 Ads

First	16.6
Mid	14.4
Last	16.1

0 — 15 — 30 — 45 — 60

It is notable that attentive time does not vary that significantly across pod positions – implying that after an advertiser captures viewer attention, it is the quality of the ad itself, and not pod position that will determine its impact. That said, viewers spent more attentive seconds watching 60-second ads that for both linear and CTV, but when factoring in total run time, they watched nearly half of the 15-second ads vs. a third or less of the 60-second ads. Assuming every second of ad time is priced equally, shorter ads may provide better ROI as they deliver more attention for your dollar.

# Time Shifted TV Captures More Attention Than Live TV

Although audiences viewing content after its original air date often have the ability fast-forward through ads, programs with large time-shifted audiences may still provide additional value. Even if these more intentional viewers choose not to watch all the ads in time-shifted programming (including on-demand), they are more attentive for the ads they do watch as well as less likely to leave the room than those watching live TV.

% ATTENTION PAID IN FIRST POD POSITION

47.5%
Time Shifted

39.1%
Live TV

Source: TVision Panel | Jan – Mar 2022 | Linear Only, P2+

Comedy Fans Have Higher Attention Spans for Shorter Pods

Audiences watching comedy programs are more likely to pay attention across pod lengths vs. news and sports viewers—especially for shorter pod durations. This is true across ad lengths.

Linear TV % Attention by Genre

■ Comedy ■ News ■ Sports ■ Other
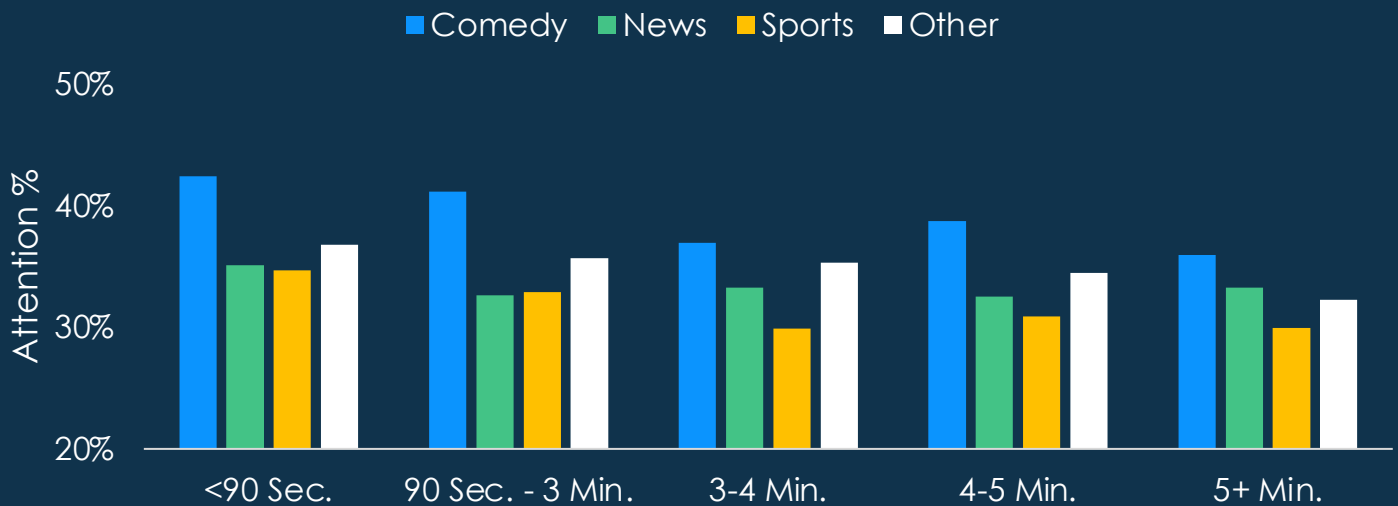
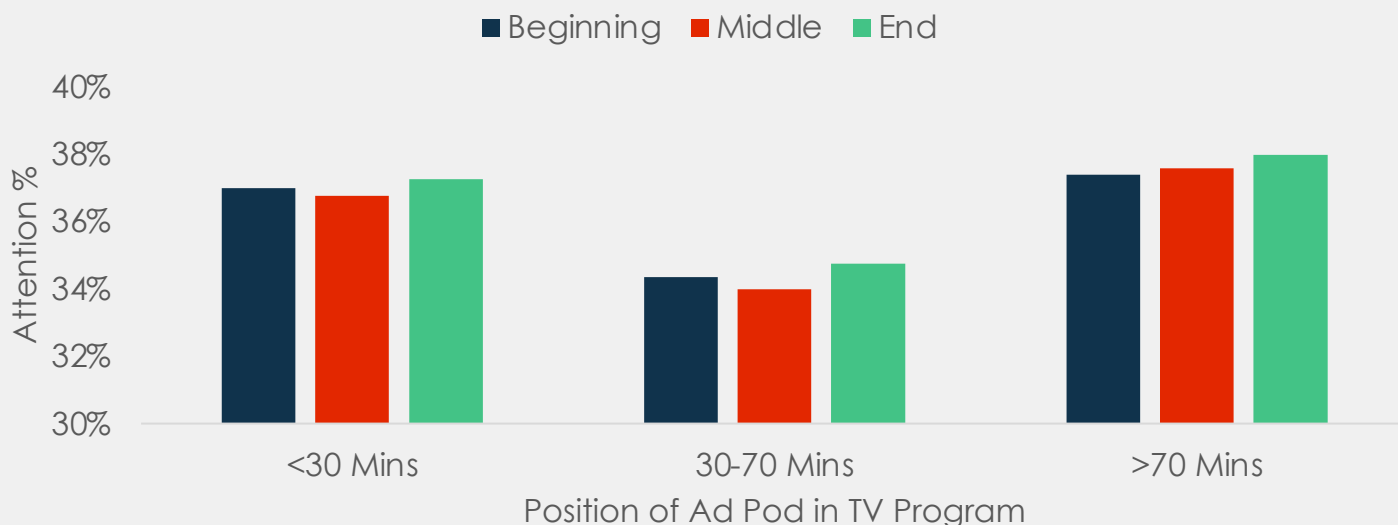Source: TVision Panel | Jan – Mar 2022 | Linear Ad Impressions, P2+, Genre Data for 15-Second Ads Only

Ad Attention Is Highest Towards the End of the Show

The break during which an ad airs also has an impact on viewer attention. In general, ad attention decreases slightly between the first third of the program and the second and then rises to its highest toward the end of the program. One exception is longer programming (more than 70 minutes), which sees a gradual increase in ad attention throughout the program. Since some genres typically fall within certain program lengths, the bottom chart may hint at how program genres impact audience attention. We'll investigate the role of program context further in our next Creative Attention Report.

% Attention Paid By Position of Ad Break In the Program

BEGINNING	MIDDLE	END
36.1%	36.0%	36.6%

Ad Attention Steadily Rises During Ad Breaks for Longer Programs

■ Beginning ■ Middle ■ End


Position of Ad Pod in TV Program

Source: TVision Panel | Jan 2022 - March 2022, Linear & CTV Ad Impressions, P2+

Finding the Best Opportunities to Drive Attention

While ads that air first-in-pod or towards the end of the program typically command the highest attention, there are several other ways to ensure your ad engages viewers. Our data shows that Attention varies dramatically across dayparts, networks, and programming. In fact, there are programs across all dayparts that deliver higher Attention, and usually at lower costs, than some Primetime spots. Since ads work best when people pay attention, factoring Attention into media plans and media valuations can help both buyers and sellers uncover value.

Attention Varies by Network, Daypart, and Program
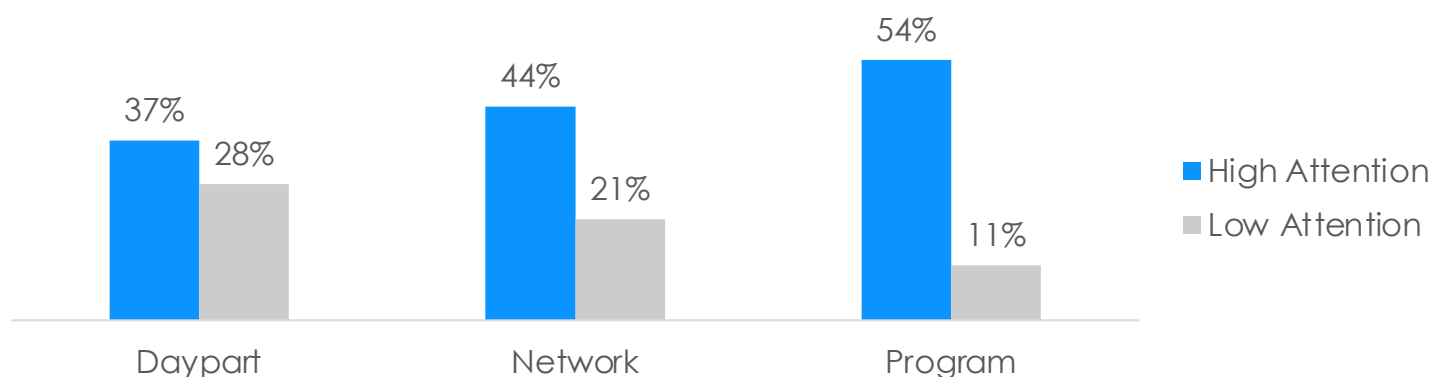
Source: TVision Panel Panel 2021 | Viewers Ages 18-49

Case Study: CPG Brand Maximizes Upfront Commitments

Advertisers that optimize for Attention can dramatically improve the efficiency of their campaigns and drive real results. Here's what happened when a major household cleaning brand used TVision to identify the dayparts and programs that delivered the highest ad attention.

KEY RESULTS:

8%	80%	510K	59M
Optimized media reduced aCPM by over 8%	Improved aCPM across 80% of network/dayparts	Reallocated $510K of "wasted investment"	On track for 59M more Attentive impressions annually

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

WITH AD SCOREBOARD

TV Attention Metrics at Your Fingertips

TVision's new, low-cost, SaaS platform puts actionable Attention metrics for ANY brand, ANY TV ad, or ANY network at marketers' fingertips. With Ad Scoreboard, it's easier than ever to get mid-campaign insights into how TV viewers engage with TV ads and programming. There is no limit to the ad and brand data you'll have access to - making it an essential platform for both creative monitoring and competitive intelligence.

Check Out Ad Scoreboard To See How Marketers Can:

- Benchmark their Attention KPIs against the industry norm
- Uncover what ads competitors are running and what drives their performance
- Get second-by-second insight into eyes-on-screen attention to any ad
- Optimize campaigns to avoid wear out and focus on attentive audiences

Ad Scoreboard is an important step toward TVision's commitment to making value-based Attention metrics accessible and actionable for any TV marketer. It is available today as a monthly or annual subscription. Learn more or request a demo.

Tips to Maximize Your Creative's Attention:

1 Work with platforms to negotiate ideal pod positions: First-pod garner significantly higher attention—especially in Linear. Ask for optimal pod placements to make your ad stand out.

2 Experiment with shorter CTV ad lengths: Try adding some 15-second ads to your mix. They deliver more attention for your dollar and are less sensitive to pod placement.

3 Use second-by-second insights to identify which creative elements drive engagement.

About TVision

The Leader in TV Engagement Metrics

TVision measures what was once unmeasurable— how people really watch TV. Using cutting-edge computer vision technology, only TVision measures person-level, second-by-second TV engagement. Marketers and media sellers access TVision's TV performance metrics via its software-as-a-service platform. TVision's customers include some of the largest brands in the world, top media networks, and CTV applications.

TVision's single-source panel enables measurement across both Linear TV and CTV, providing critical metrics such as Co-Viewing.

Key Metric Definitions & Methodology

Methodology

TVision measures Ad Viewability and Ad Attention for every second of programming and advertising on television. Every time a person walks into the room, our technology detects who the viewer is, where they are in the room, and what their eyes are looking at. We do all this without personally identifying individual users, and without transmitting any images or videos. TVision's data is collected from an opt-in panel of 5,000 homes across the United States. All data are weighted to represent the country. All demographic data is self-reported by the respondents. All data is for linear and CTV ad impressions from January 1 – March 31, 2022, unless otherwise indicated.

Key Metrics / Definitions

Pod Position: This is the position of an individual advertisement within a certain commercial pod.

Viewability (%): This measures the percentage of all ad impressions in which a viewer was in the room for two or more seconds.

Attention (%): This measures the percentage of ad impressions where a viewer was watching the TV screen for two or more seconds.

Attentive Seconds: This is the average amount of seconds that viewers engage with a program.