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Movie Marketing: TV Trends Don't Translate to Web

Online-Viewing Data Buck Conventional Media-Buying Wisdom

Posted by Waikit Lau on [08.31.09](#) @ 12:12 PM



It's becoming as cliché as the hero who gets the girl in the end, but as the digital-advertising landscape evolves, patterns that worked well in traditional media may not be as optimal in the digital arena. This holds especially true for movie advertisers.

Traditionally, for TV ad buys, movie studios have appointed Thursday as the big day to promote upcoming or now-playing films. This seems to make sense: A big Thursday effort can help launch a weekend box-office bonanza. So it came to pass that this became the tried-and-true method for movie ad campaigns.

As an in-stream online-video-advertising company with an appetite for better understanding consumer behavior, we conducted an experiment last month to find out which days and times people were watching and engaging with online video across different categories. As you can probably guess, it's a trend we found within the movie category that has taken us by surprise.

First, a note about our research: Our system saw hundreds of millions of movie-related video streams (movie trailers, movie-review videos, interview videos with actors, etc.) from January through July this year. We also analyzed all video streams to serve as a baseline for comparison.

The baseline data show that consumers watch about the same amount of video on weekdays and slightly more on the weekend. Ad engagement, defined as click-through rate in the study, peaks during the weekend.

When it becomes interesting is when we compare movie-related video data with the baseline data. As with the baseline data, consumers generally watch much more movie-related video on weekends than on weekdays. Of interest to advertisers, consumers watch the least amount of movie-related video on Thursday. Ad engagement (our proxy for this is click-

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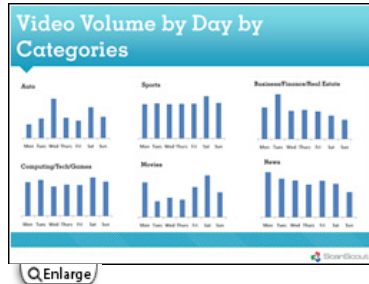
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through rates) for movie-related videos peaks on Friday, Saturday and Sunday and is lowest on Thursday. Also something to consider: More people watch movie-related video on Monday than on any other weekday. Whether it's the water-cooler crowd or a case of the "Mondays," people are thinking about movies as they ease into the workweek.



Video Volume by Day by Categories

The data suggest that what works for TV does not carry over into online video, bucking conventional media-buying wisdom. If you want to promote a movie release in the online-video medium, Friday, Saturday and Sunday rule from a reach and ad-response standpoint, and Thursday is by far the worst day to spend ad dollars.

We're just speculating on why such behavior happens, but one thing is certain from what we've uncovered: entertainment advertisers should allocate more of their online-video ad dollars on Fridays and weekends because that's

when consumers tend to watch movie-related online videos and engage with ads associated with them. Tradition dictates a big push starting on a Thursday, but data suggest that Thursday does not provide the best ROI. It would be more worthwhile to increase the ad run the weekend before the opening and then lower the ad spend proportionally during midweek before increasing it again on Friday of the debut weekend.

With better understanding of how people watch online videos and interact with ads, movie studios and ad agencies can make smarter media-buying decisions.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Waikit Lau is co-founder and president of ScanScout, an in-stream online video advertising company. Prior to co-founding ScanScout, Waikit helped lead product strategy for next-generation media-delivery platforms at Scientific Atlanta (a division of Cisco); was a private venture capitalist, investing in and working with early-stage technology companies; and co-founded Photo.net, one of the largest online photo databases.

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By Rodney33 | FRISCO, TX [September 1, 2009 12:24:12 am](#):

Excellent insight on peak view days by specific product category. Platforms like Klickable, which rolled out their updated platform, tracks information on where consumers are engaging most in the video, and how often the view and which parts.

We have a study we're releasing this month entitled "XL Marketing Trends" that explores the top 10 trends changing the marketing landscape right now and well into the future.

Video is #2 and current, existing technology now being embedded in televisions, on computers and mobile devices are quickly migrating video from a mass-audience only tool, to a truly one-to-one relationship builder.

Rodney Mason, CMO
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By Mitogosh | Una Zanuwate, ZA [September 1, 2009 05:12:05 am](#):

The problem is exactly that, treating one medium like another simply because they have similarities. Television was a more interactive medium than print and radio, and in the same the Internet is a different and even more interactive (dare I say the most interactive) medium than any of the previous ones.

To embrace the web, they need to treat the content properly. Content on the web is far more open and portable, and that's the way the platform was designed to be. They aren't

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willingly to embrace the truth behind the web, but they know they should have a presence on it. That's inexplicably the heart of the problem.













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