

2024

COMCAST ADVERTISING REPORT

Actionable Insights for the
Modern Multiscreen TV Advertiser





Succeeding in a complex and evolving landscape

Dear Reader,

As we set out to develop our third annual Comcast Advertising Report, one thing became clear: The industry has continued to evolve and become more complex.

TV, across traditional and streaming, remains a cornerstone of impactful advertising, and advertisers continue to invest in multiscreen TV advertising in order to reach their audiences at scale. However, reaching engaged audiences – and measuring the results of that advertising – has become more complicated.

Advertisers have known for years now that good creative is no longer enough; today, good data, good media, and good technology are the keys to success, along with simple ways of activating all three.

By analyzing data across our vast Comcast Advertising business, including FreeWheel, our advertising technology arm, and Effectv, our advertising sales division, we've uncovered what has been working for advertisers in 2024 and what will help them move the needle in 2025.

Read on for actionable insights to help you succeed in today's multiscreen world.

James Rooke

President, Comcast Advertising

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How viewers are viewing

Five things to know about how viewers are viewing

01

Majority of viewing takes place on the big screen

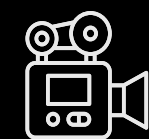
Over 87% of viewers prefer watching streaming content on the TV screen – across paid TV, paid streaming, and free streaming.¹ And homes with a cable connection still watch over 6 hours of TV per day.²



02

Viewers have an appetite for live TV

Research shows that viewers flock to live because it's engaging, it's current, and it's communal.³



Live special events garner **+22% longer** tune-in time compared to other programs.³



Top sports typically garner **+31% higher** visual attention compared to the average program.³

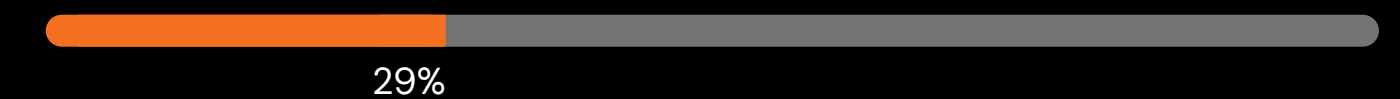
03

Viewers are watching FAST for its high-quality content

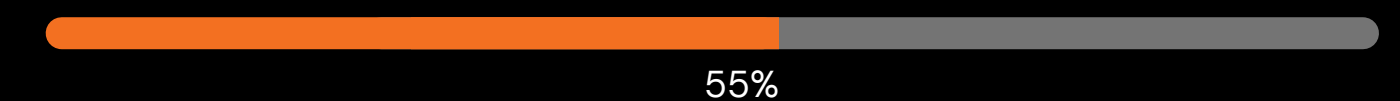
93% of consumers have heard of at least one major free streaming service that offers FAST and report liking it for the content and experience.¹

Reasons viewers watch FAST:¹

Similar to watching live TV



The content



04

Content discovery is becoming increasingly important for viewers

As content fragments across devices and platforms, finding great programming can be difficult.



Only 28% of viewers say they can easily search for and find something to watch.⁴



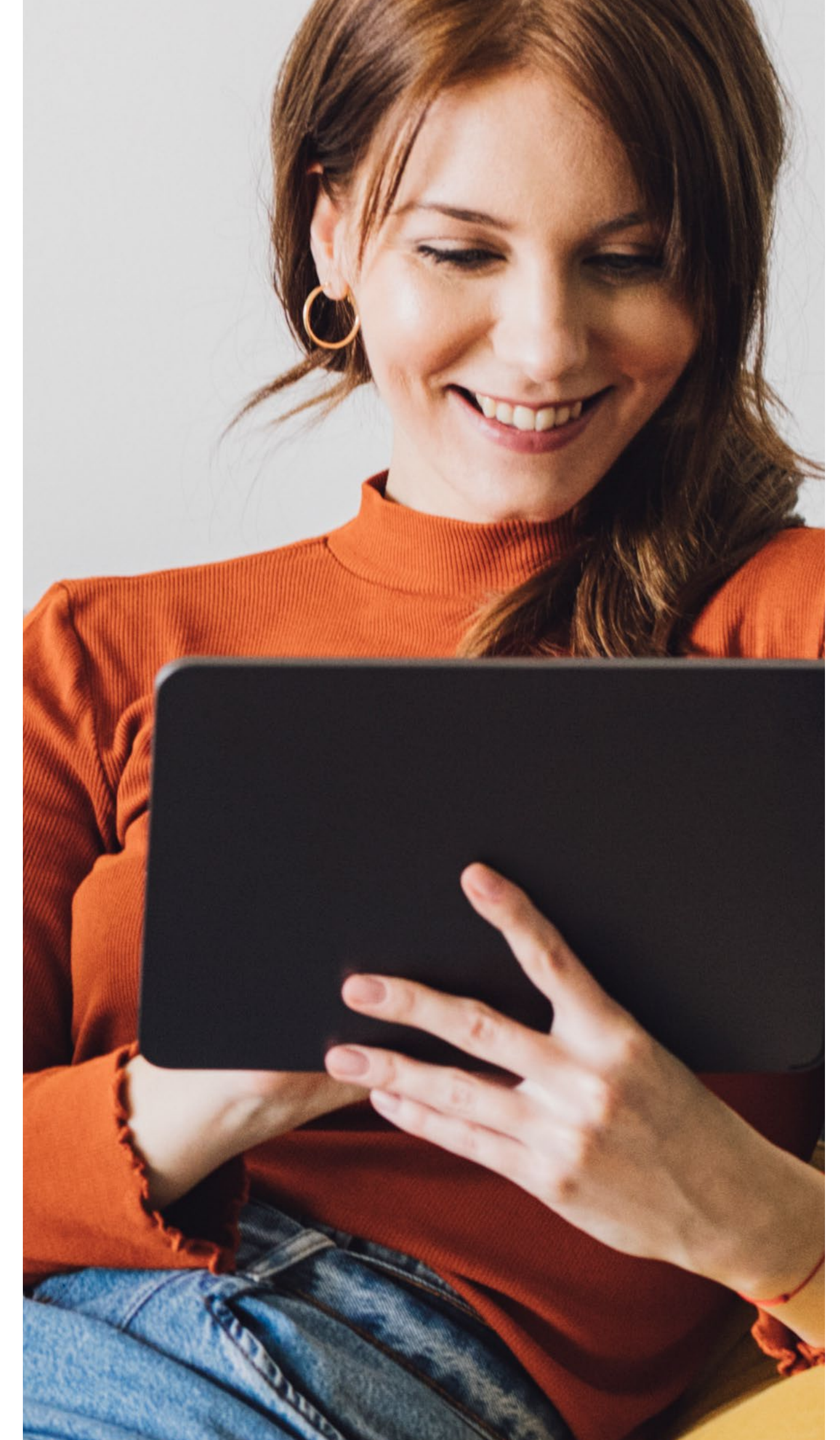
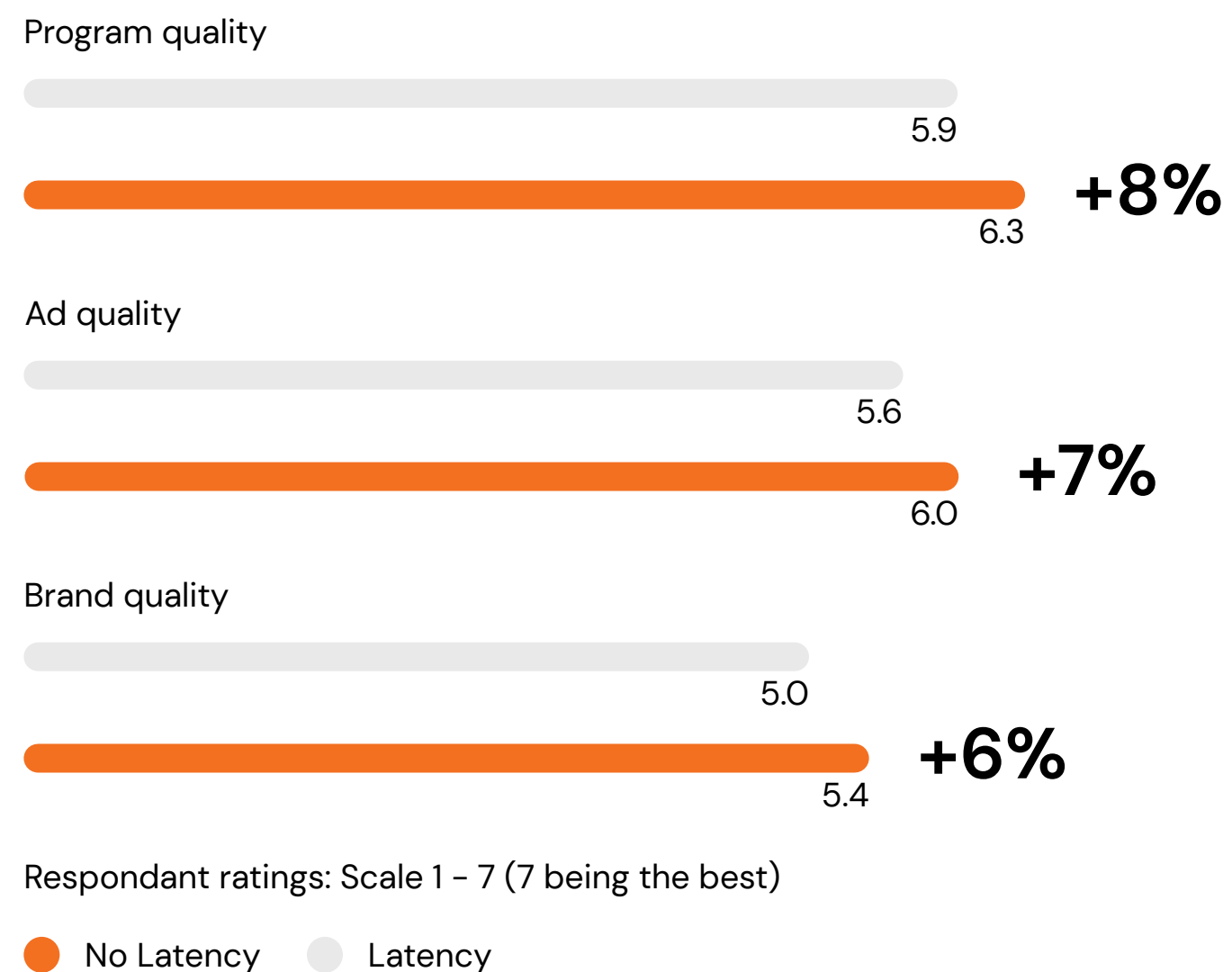
63% of U.S. viewers are spending 6+ minutes searching for new content, with European audiences spending slightly more time searching.⁴

05

Bad ad experiences can harm program enjoyment

Nearly 80% of respondents said that latency, or slow and buffering ads, bothers them moderately or a lot, which can ultimately negatively impact ad and brand perception.⁵

Ad breaks without latency can lead to higher ratings of the program, ad, and brand quality:⁵



What this means for the modern multiscreen TV advertiser

Viewers are seeking entertaining premium video content regardless of where it lives – across both traditional TV and streaming. More than ever, advertisers must look to partners that offer direct access to premium inventory across screens with reliable audience data to reach viewers with relevant ads, wherever and whenever they are watching.

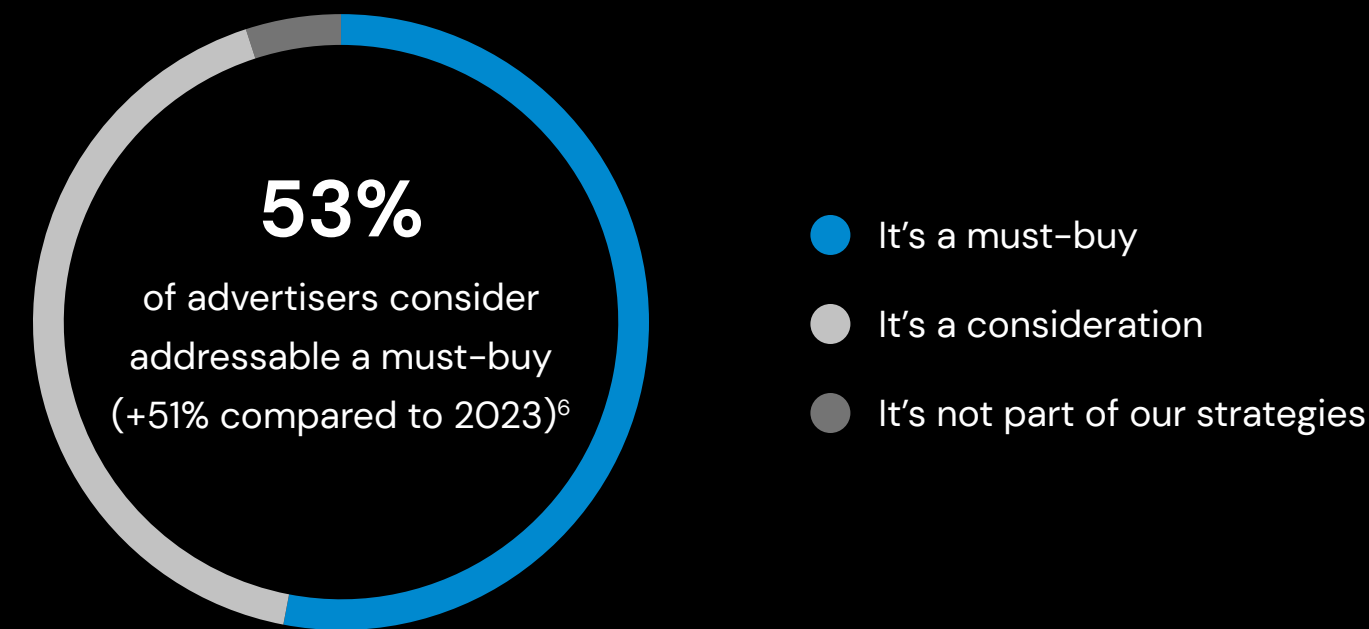
How buyers are buying



Five things to know about how buyers are buying

01

Buyers are increasingly prioritizing addressable TV advertising



02

Viewer experience is playing a bigger role in planning and buying premium video

80% of buyers consider ad loads when planning premium video campaigns.⁷

Consider limited ad loads as an aspect of premium video:



Research from the [FreeWheel Viewer Experience Lab](#) shows that ad pods of **two minutes or less** can improve brand impact and ad experience.⁸

03

Audience-based buying and targeting is becoming more important for advertisers

Audience engagement and targeting capabilities are considered one of the most important factors of premium video to buyers.⁷ This is demonstrated by the significant growth of ad views using audience targeting for streaming campaigns (**+39% YOY**).⁹



04

Advertisers of all sizes are increasing their use of programmatic



Programmatic ad views have increased in the past year by **+15%**⁹ YOY and independent programmatic demand growth has increased by **+24%** YOY in the U.S.¹⁰

05

Buyers will spend more on multiscreen TV as transparency of measurement and attribution continues to increase



56% of advertisers would increase video advertising spend with better measurement, attribution, or optimization capabilities to understand how campaigns performed.⁷



What this means for the modern multiscreen TV advertiser

As advertisers look for new ways to target audiences, it is more important than ever that they understand the validity of audience data. This means having the confidence to reach precise audiences and then measure that delivery in a privacy-centric way.

With tools like addressable TV advertising, buyers can leverage the value of deterministic data to ensure they are reaching consumers across screens, in premium, brand-safe environments. Tools like programmatic will also ensure advertisers are reaching those audiences in the most automated, efficient manner possible.

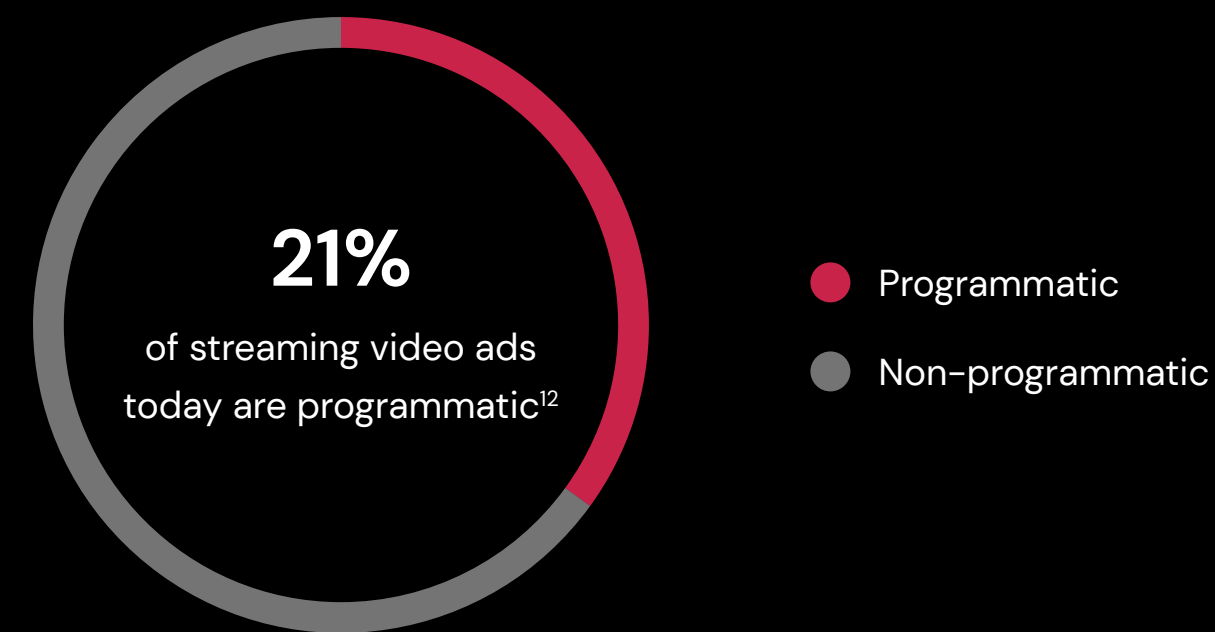
A man with glasses and a beard, wearing a blue denim shirt, is looking intently at a laptop screen. He has his hand on his chin, suggesting deep thought or concentration. The background is dark with some blurred lights, creating a focused and professional atmosphere.

How sellers are selling

Five things to know about how sellers are selling

01 Sellers are increasingly enabling streaming inventory to be transacted programmatically

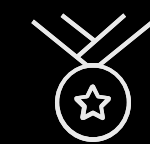
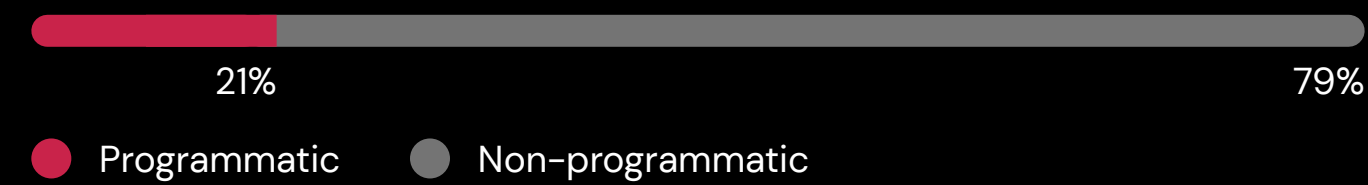
While 9 in 10 digital display ads are transacted programmatically, only 21% of streaming video ads today are programmatic.^{11,12}



02 Publishers have a opportunity to enable programmatic automation for live TV, especially live events

Publishers are utilizing more programmatic tools to expand diversity of advertisers, especially when it comes to live events.⁹

Programmatic vs. non-programmatic live content:⁹

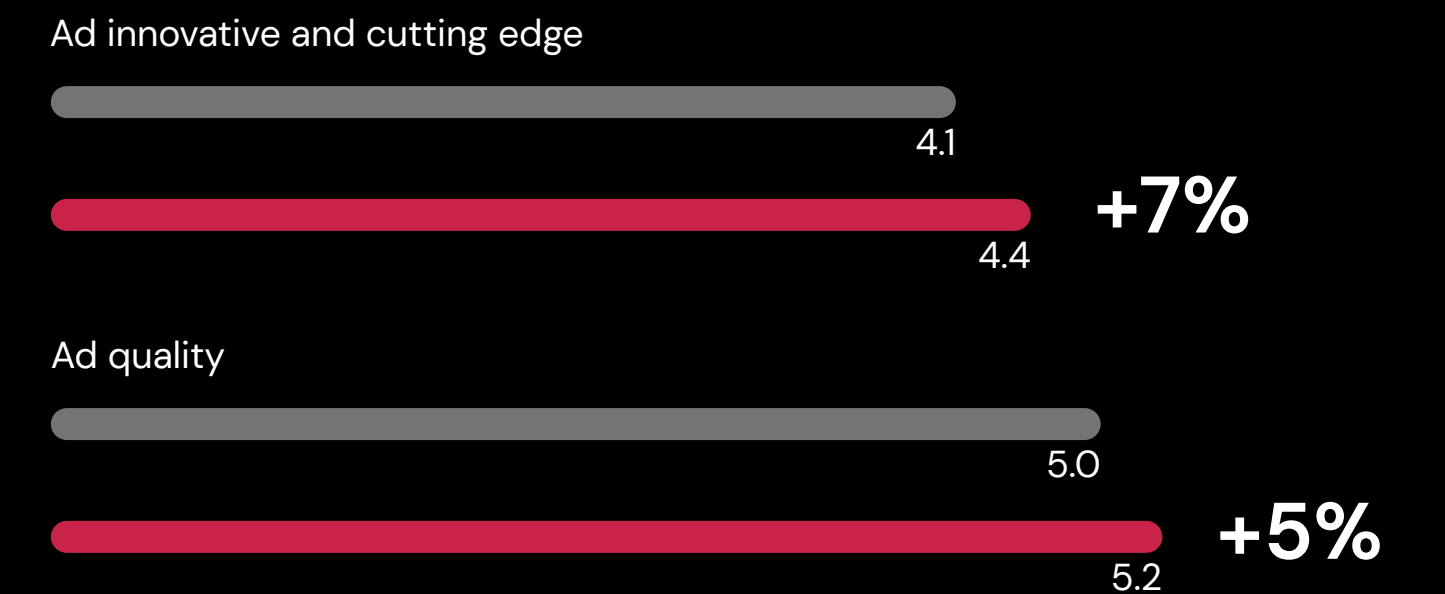


The Paris 2024 Summer Olympics had a **record-breaking** number of ads and programmatic impressions for a live event.

03 Publishers are looking for ways to enhance the ad experience and keep audiences engaged

Grouping consistent ad lengths within individual pods can improve ad sentiment and make breaks feel shorter.⁸

Average rating, mixed and consistent ad lengths:⁸



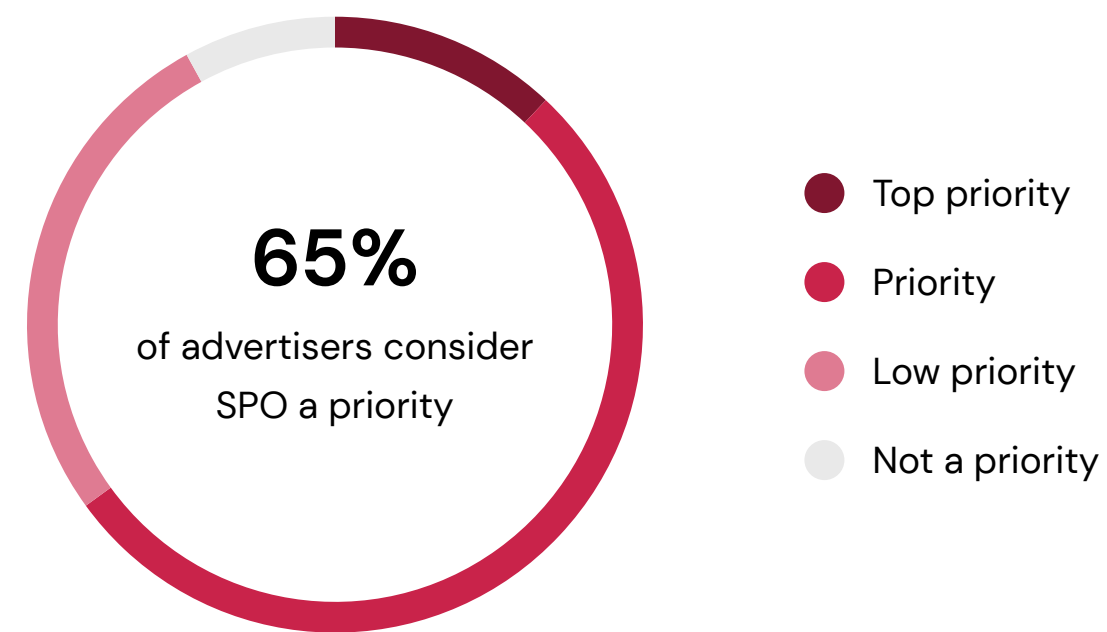
Respondant ratings: Scale 1 - 7 (7 being the best)

● Consistent ad lengths ● Mixed ad lengths

04

Publishers offering a more optimal supply path to their inventory are well positioned with buyers

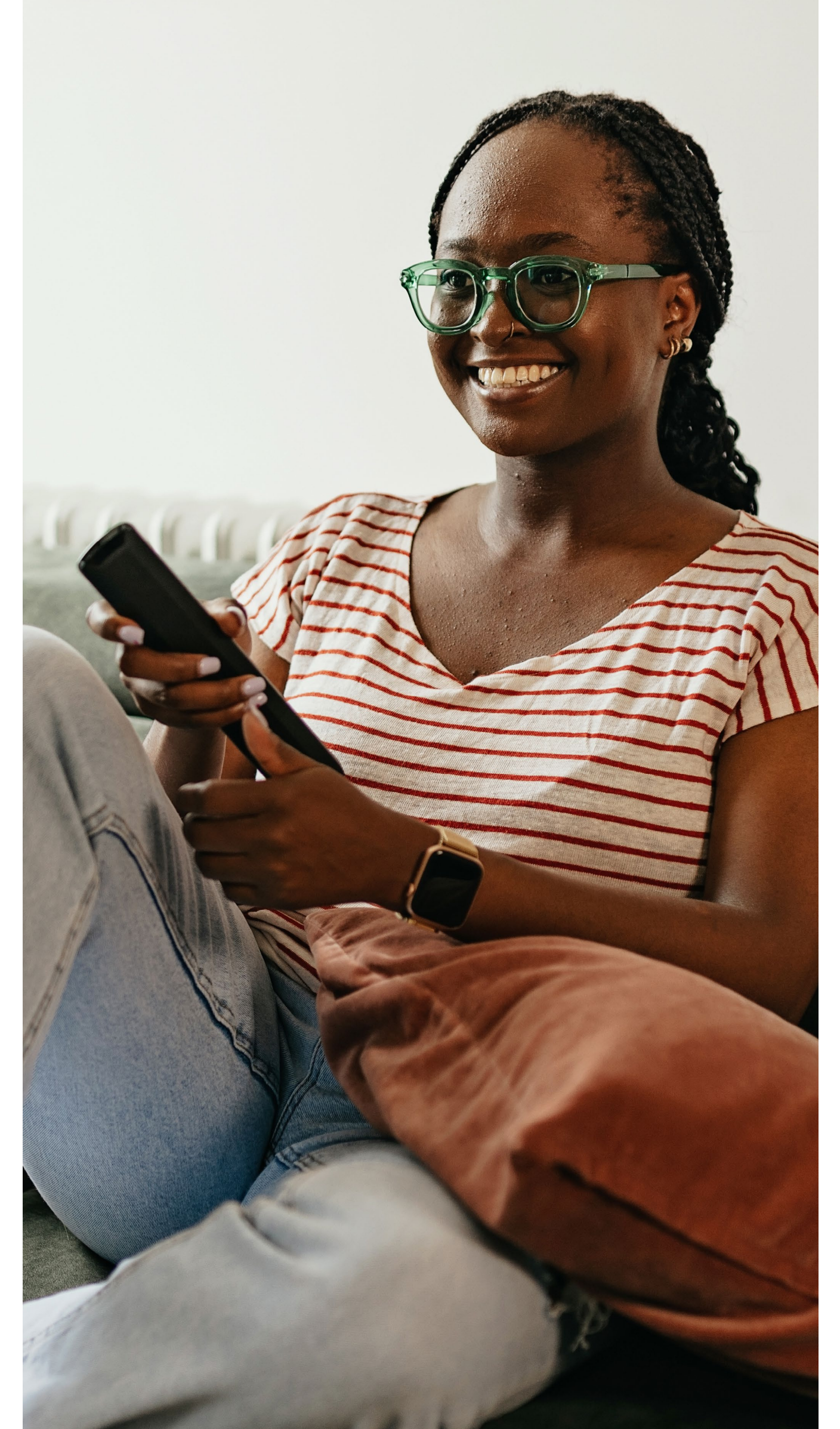
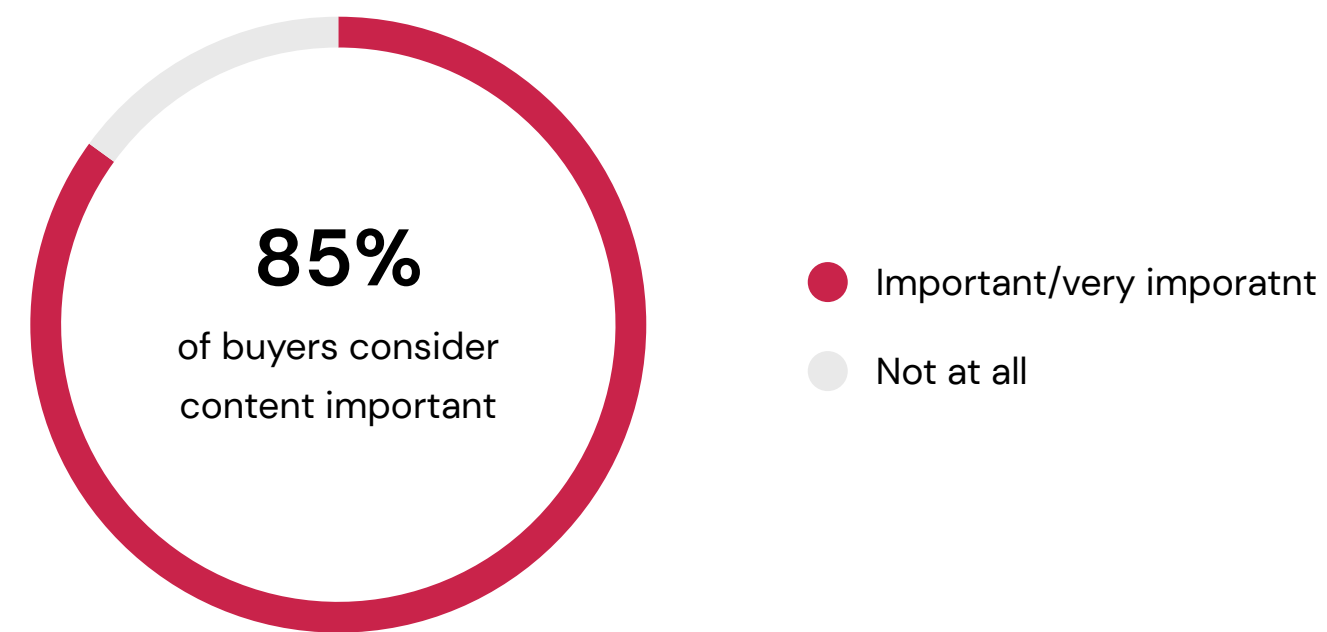
Nearly 65% of advertisers cited supply path optimization (SPO) as a priority when asked to rate its importance in the TV ad buying process.¹³



05

Publishers that offer premium environments are coming out ahead

85% of buyers cited that the publisher of the content is important or very important when it comes to buying premium video inventory.⁷



What this means for the modern multiscreen TV advertiser

Buyers have an insatiable appetite for streaming inventory, and they are increasingly buying it programmatically. Buyers should acquire content as close to the source as possible to ensure it is delivered efficiently and as intended. In addition, priority should be given to suppliers that commit to a high-quality ad viewing experience. Taking these steps will give advertisers more visibility into where and how their ads are delivered.

A man with glasses is sitting on a dark, ornate chair, smiling as he looks at a tablet computer he is holding with both hands. He is wearing a dark blue jacket over a collared shirt. The background is softly blurred, showing more of the chair and some indoor decor.

Driving success in a changing landscape

Data, media, and technology

Opportunities abound for viewers, buyers, and sellers alike, but only with the right tools in place. Gone are the days of single-channel, manual planning, as fragmentation demands more sophisticated solutions.

In today's complex market, media success lies at the intersection of good data, good media, and good technology. But what does "good" look like? Each has its unique requirements, but **all three are supported by a foundation of transparency.**

What is good data?

- **Deterministic:** Based on authenticated information linked to an individual consumer or household such as physical address.
- **Sizable:** Consists of high match rates and ability to connect consumers across devices.
- **Privacy-centric:** Adheres to evolving privacy regulations and respecting the preferences of households that opt out.
- **Timely:** Regularly refreshed and validated against other data sources.
- **Transparent:** Disclosure of data origination, recency, integrations, and modeling techniques.

What is good media?

- **Brand-safe:** Decreases the chance of advertisers having their ads placed next to unsavory content.
- **Fraud-free:** Ensures that impressions are viewed by real, legitimate viewers.
- **High-quality:** Maintains standards for the production and delivery of ad impressions across platforms including relevant creative and optimal ad loads.
- **Editorial/narrative:** Fulfills the viewer's desire for full immersion in the content, regardless of length. This will ensure they are engaged and paying attention.
- **Transparent:** Clear visibility into where their impressions will run and detailed reporting after the campaign is delivered.

What is good technology?

- **Direct:** Connects buyers and sellers in the most efficient way possible.
- **Global:** Has established global strategy with ongoing innovation that can support unified business needs globally and adapt to unique local market needs.
- **Interoperable:** Able to integrate with other platforms and across transaction types to make supply as interchangeable as possible.
- **Secure:** Strict technical controls in place to ensure data is maintained in a safe way and there is no data leakage.
- **Transparent:** User control and oversight into campaigns, tracking, and associated costs.



What advertisers are saying

01

Advertisers are planning to increase spend across key channels like traditional, streaming, FAST, and addressable TV

Over two in five advertisers say they will increase their share of streaming spend in 2025.¹⁴

Expected share of 2025 ad spend by media types/channels compared to 2024:

Streaming video advertising



Addressable TV/video advertising



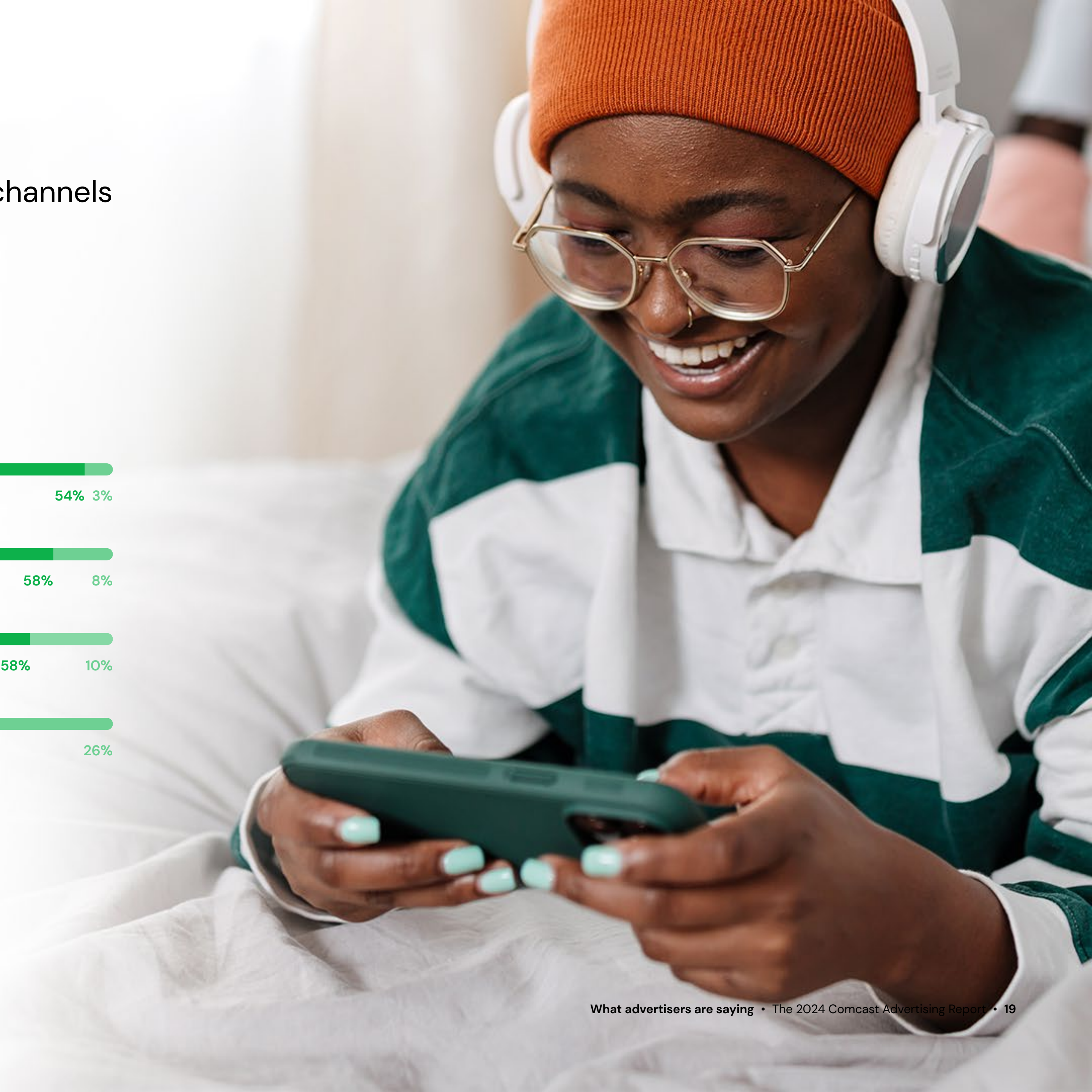
Free ad-supported streaming TV (FAST)



Traditional TV



● Increase spending ● Maintain spending ● Decrease spending



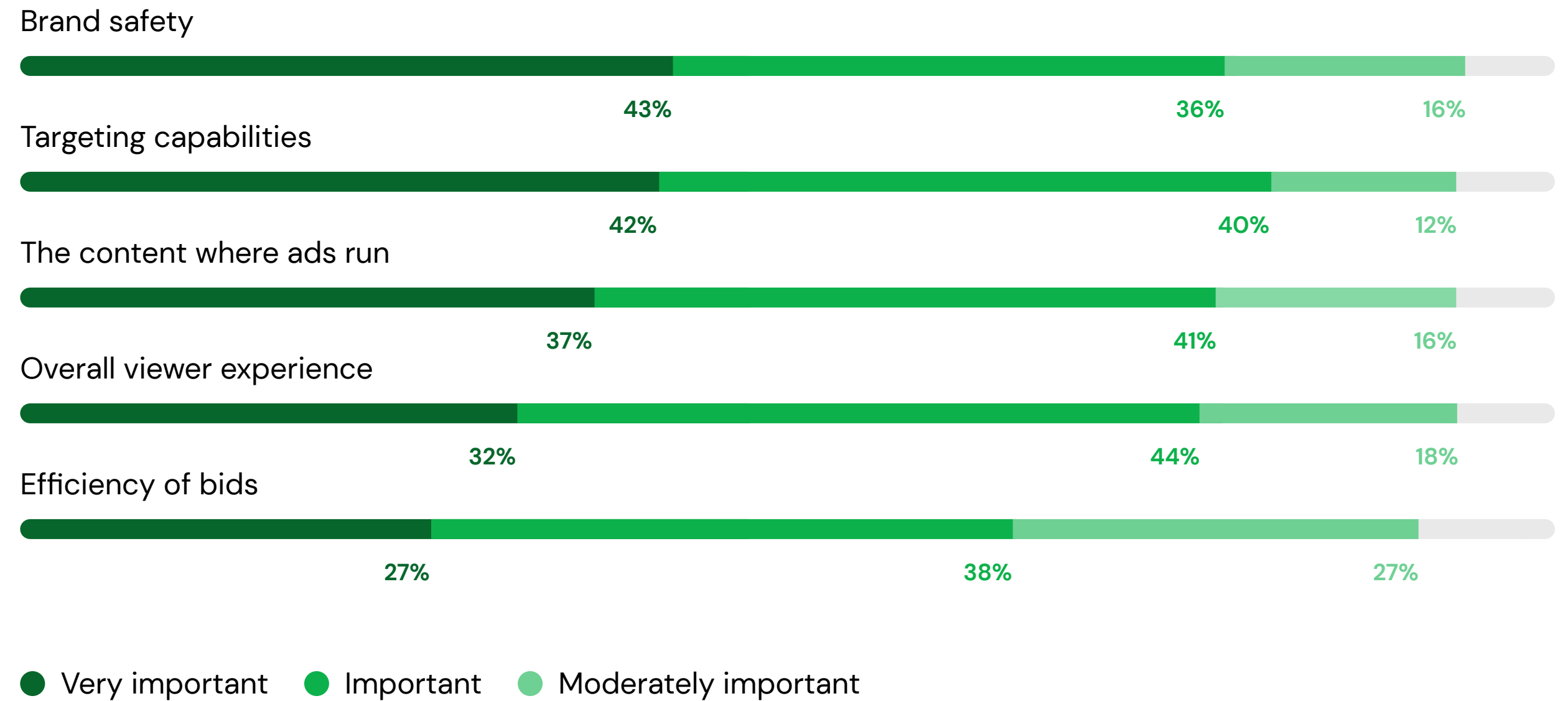


02

Advertisers rank brand safety, targeting capabilities, and content as the most important factors when planning video campaigns

82% of advertisers ranked targeting capabilities as important or very important.¹⁴

Factors advertisers consider important when planning video advertising campaigns:

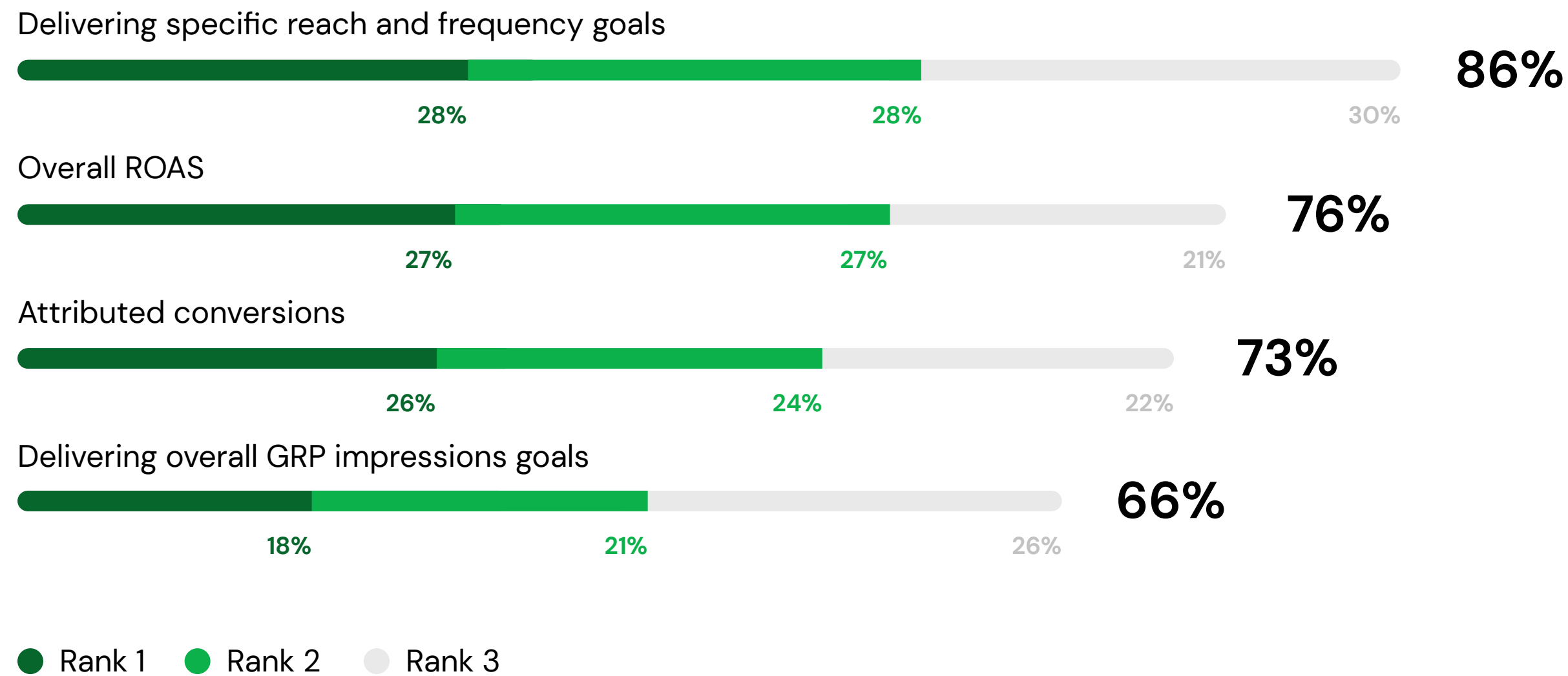


03

Advertisers are split among how to measure success, but delivering reach and frequency goals ranks highest

Over 50% of advertisers rank delivering specific reach and frequency as their first or second most important factor for measuring success.¹⁴

Most important factors for measuring success of video advertising campaigns:



04

Advertisers cite scale within their target audience as the biggest challenge when maximizing reach

Nearly half of advertisers said scale was their biggest challenge, while two in five stated the cost to add incremental viewers.¹⁴

Biggest challenges when maximizing TV/video advertising reach:

47%

Scale within target audience segments

41%

Cost to add incremental viewers

39%

Controlling frequency when adding incremental reach

35%

Inability to effectively reach light TV viewers/cord cutters

32%

Siloed reporting between platforms

26%

Inventory challenges when buying programmatically



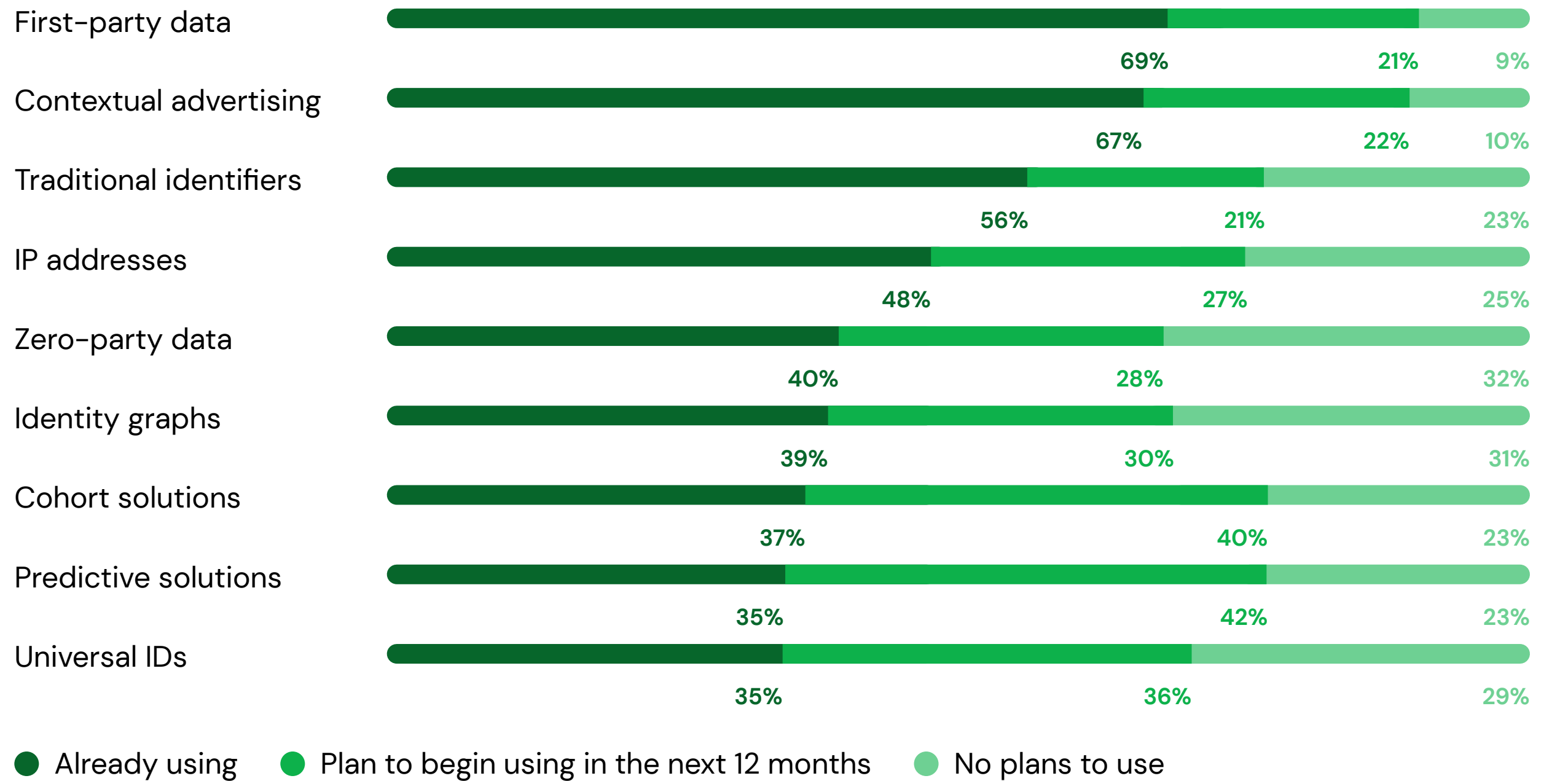


05

Advertisers are looking to implement additional solutions to solve for identity challenges

Over two-thirds of advertisers are actively using first-party data and contextual advertising solutions, while two in five plan to start using cohort/predictive solutions in the next 12 months.¹⁴

Identity solutions currently/planning to use for media campaigns:



What's next in 2025



Simple predictions on complex topics

Live events like sports will shape the streaming landscape

Advertisers will continue to flock to live TV, where viewers are engaged and sharing cultural moments together. But the shift to streaming will no doubt continue as demonstrated this year by record-breaking streaming of the Olympics and big-ticket events like NFL games. The real key to the growth, and success, of advertising for live TV events, especially on streaming, is programmatic activation. In the next 12 months, there will likely be increased investment in technology needed to successfully activate programmatic ad insertion in live events on streaming.

Streaming viewers will expect better experiences

Today's streaming viewer is savvy and has little patience for negative experiences in both finding and watching content. New viewing choices make customer churn a real threat for even the most successful streaming providers. It's therefore crucial that the industry works to improve the current content discovery process by making it easier to find, watch, and share. Meanwhile, as more platforms adopt ad-supported models, providing great advertising experiences will be important lest their viewers leave them for a less disruptive competitor.

Advertisers will turn to providers with simple solutions and proof of performance

Marketers and their agencies are under increasing pressure to prove the impact of their media and validate their investments. And, as advertising becomes even more complex and crowded, they are looking for simple, straightforward, and transparent ways to do this. In 2025, advertisers will look to work with fewer, more strategic and trusted partners that can offer easier ways of connecting them to publishers – as well as tangible and timely results.





Simple predictions on complex topics

Addressable will continue to grow and mature

For years, addressable TV advertising was considered a tactic for brands that either had precise target audiences or those that had the budget to allow for experimentation with different methods. Today, this is no longer the case as addressable TV has grown exponentially and its scale and technology have advanced the medium to be a must-have strategy for many advertisers, regardless of size, budget, or vertical. Addressable is an extremely valuable tool for both national and local advertisers to drive incremental reach and maximize exposure, across traditional and streaming. As addressable matures, it will play an even bigger role in the Upfronts, leading to increased adoption among advertisers looking for accuracy, accountability, and unification across screens.

Advertisers will look to multiscreen TV as a full-funnel performance engine

Traditional TV has always been known for its ability to reach mass audiences and drive brand awareness. Once digital advertising burst onto the scene, advertisers leaned into it to help drive lower-funnel metrics like actual purchases. With TV's evolution and its expansion across screens, devices, and platforms, there has been a real shift in how advertisers are harnessing it to drive results throughout the full marketing funnel. The main driver of this is the rich data that is now available to inform things like targeting, audience behaviors, viewership, measurement, etc., to better structure ad campaigns. Advertisers looking to deploy effective performance marketing will increasingly look to harness the power of multiscreen TV to drive awareness, consideration, and ultimately action.

Sourcing

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3. FreeWheel, It's Only Live Once: How Advertisers Can Capture Audiences in the Moment, June 2024.
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5. FreeWheel Viewer Experience Lab, Improving the Quality of Ad Experiences, May 2024.
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7. Comcast Advertising, What is Premium Video? Redefining What it Means to Be Premium in Advertising report, 2023.
8. FreeWheel Viewer Experience Lab, Designing a Better Ad Pod report, January 2024.
9. FreeWheel, Video Marketplace Report: The Expansion of Streaming, 1H 2024.
10. FreeWheel, State of Programmatic Independent Demand report, 2024.
11. eMarketer, Programmatic Ad Spending Forecast H1 2024.
12. FreeWheel, Updating the Programmatic Playbook report, 2024.
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