# CTV: LINEAR, DIRECT, & PROGRAMMTIC VIDEO BUYS

October 2025

# CTV: AUDIENCE FIRST SOLUTION TO DRIVE PERFORMANCE

Linear and Programmatic CTV aren't competing acts. They're collaborators in a well-orchestrated media performance.

When combined, they give your brand the best seat in the house: premium reach and measurable results.

**It's not either/or—it's yes/and.**



## LINEAR TV & DIRECT CTV = INVENTORY PLAY

- Inventory/content first-approach.
- Guaranteed presence, but doesn't guarantee audience alignment.



## PROGRAMMTIC CTV = AUDIENCE PLAY

- Targets audiences based on data, not placement.
- Delivers impressions where your audience actually is (across 300+ platforms).



## WHY IT MATTERS FOR STRATEGY:

- Audience-first = less waste, more efficiency.
- Aligns spend with performance outcomes, not platform or content brands.
- Unlocks scalability in a fragmented TV and CTV landscape.

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# Blocking the Scene: Direct & Programmatic CTV Strengths

Balanced Reach & Control: Direct secures premium inventory via contacts (e.g., Hulu, Peacock); Programmatic expands reach into niche and premium platforms, through cost-efficient buys.

Strategic Budget Management: Direct offer predictability; Programmatic pivots spend in real-time.

Smarter Testing & Optimization: Use Programmatic to test audience/messages, then scale with Direct.

Measurement & Frequency Management: Programmatic consolidates cross-publisher insights and aligns with digital KPIs.

| | Direct CTV | Programmatic CTV |
|---|---|---|
| Purchase | Direct with publishers | Auction-based via DSP |
| Inventory | 1:1 publisher deals | Aggregated cross-publisher inventory |
| Audience | Publisher-based audience profiles | Leverages 1st and 3rd party targeting |
| Flexibility | Fixed, limited agility | Agile based-on real-time data |
| Reporting | Walled-garden | Near real-time and unified with other digital media investments |
| Optimizations | Manual | Automated, in real-time |

# OUR EDGE: SMARTER SPEND, STRONGER RETURNS

## WHEN IT COMES TO PERFORMANCE, PROGRAMMATIC DRIVES EFFICIENCY

Programmatic CTV delivers greater transparency, targeting precision, and optimization, helping stretch budgets further and drive higher returns. Our analysis shows a –36% to –42% drop in CPMs with programmatic buys versus direct, unlocking measurable performance gains for campaigns.

**-36-42%**

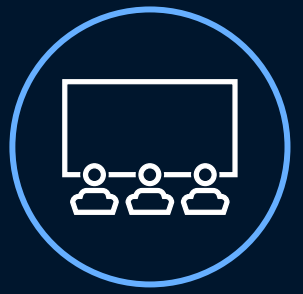
DECREASE IN CPM FOR PROGRAMMATIC ($20-$35) OVER CTV DIRECT-BUYS ($35-$55)



TRANSPARENT DELIVERY



PERCISION TARGETING



ALWAYS-ON OPTIMIZATION

*Source: EDGE 2024-2025 Activation Data & National Benchmarks, 2025*

# FROM APPLAUSE TO IMPACT: NEW CTV MEASUREMENT



## CONVERSION TRACKING

### Tie CTV to Performance

Programmatic CTV now tracks conversions, delivering ~23% higher ROI than Linear.



## TVQI SCORES

### Quality, Experience, & Context

EDGE delivers a ~29% lift on ad quality and experience vs. industry standard.



## iSPOT INCREMENTAL RESERCH

### Qualify Reach Gains

Quantifies new viewers reached through CTV; Comscore also validates incremental lift.



## PATHS TO CONVERSION

### Multi-Touch Journey Tracking

Shows how CTV influences the full customer journey, not just last-touch.



## TARGET OR BLOCK LINEAR USERS

### Precision Targeting

Target or exclude Linear users based on client objectives.

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# EDGE CASE STUDY: TRACKABLE CTV REDEFINING DISPLAY ROAS




3x

HIGHER SITE VISITATION RATE VS DISPLAY

EDGE leveraged Peace Center's premium video assets for *Back to the Future: The Musical* to maximize campaign ROAS.

Recent Google Marketing Platform updates have elevated CTV as a core tactic in conversion-focused, omnichannel direct response campaigns.

### ENAHANCED MEASUREMENT

New measurement features unlock conversion & site visit tracking for CTV.

### DIVERSIFIED ASSET MIX

Positions premium CTV as a core-conversion driving tactic.

### HIGH-IMPACT MID-FUNNEL STRATEGY

Targeted immersive storytelling nurtures purchase intent of high-value audiences.

*Source: EDGE Performance Data*

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# YOUR QUESTIONS, ANSWERED



### % OF DEMO/HOUSEHOLDS

Yes. – There are tools to help estimate reach and audience size.



### SPLITTING PREMIUM vs. BROADER INVENTORY

Technically Yes – Premium Placements are possible, but we recommend starting audience-first then layering in premium strategy informed by data.



### NETFLIX MINIMUMS

Technically Yes – With Netflix published minimums of $150K/month for a direct buy, we would need to centralize budgets and buying to even consider this option.

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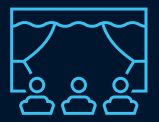
# EDGE RECOMMENDSATION:
# PROGRMMATIC CTV FOR PERFORMANCE



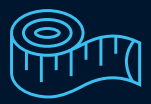
## AUDIENCE FIRST-DELIVERY

Anchor the strategy around 1st party audiences, not the platforms. We will engage the right people, on the right platforms.



## TEST & VALIDATE

Start programmatically to measure quality and conversion, then layer in premium buy strategies backed by performance and data.



## MEAUREMENT - FIRST

Track performance and revenue lift tied to your CTV investment. This will include testing both DV360 and TTD buying platforms to drive impact.



## MESSAGING AS STORYTELLING

CTV is now both a storytelling and performance engine. Focus on awareness and measure the impacted results programmatically.

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# THANK YOU

QUESTIONS?

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