



Best Practice for Measuring Channel Content & Value

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future
thinking

Measuring content value

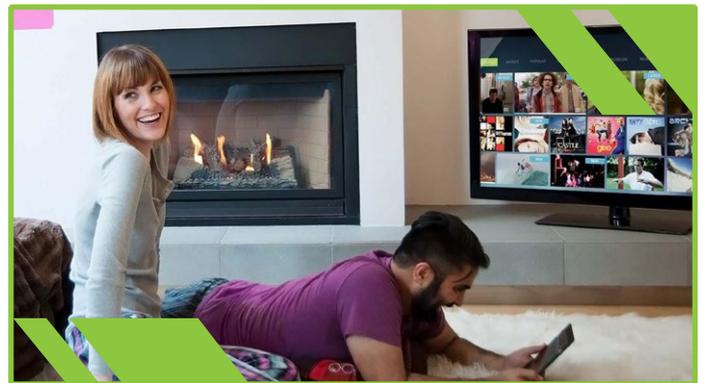


In an omni-channel world understanding the value and importance of content is more important than ever before – particularly to stand out and keep audiences coming back for more.

In this paper we explore the importance of measuring content value and how our Content Optimiser toolkit can help inform channel and content strategy, whatever the platform and wherever in the world it may be.

There are some in the industry who argue that TV channels will be obsolete in 10 years' time. Whilst the advent of video on demand services has opened up the viewing experiences on offer, scheduled TV remains strong and the role of the channel stronger than ever to give viewers the content they want.

VOD services have yet to kill off the traditional TV viewing around the TV but do create a way for consumers to access content they like, whenever and wherever they like.



Engagement and reach

BARB ratings only tell one part of the story relating to the content on our screens. The wealth of data available from BARB gives viewing numbers and an idea of who is viewing but doesn't answer why they view, the level of viewer engagement and what the content brings to the channel. To understand the value of different content a different approach is required.

Content measurement should no longer be focused on just the behavioural elements of programmes (i.e. did they watch). Capturing the engagement through understanding the emotional connection is also important as more engaged viewers give significant benefits.

Key benefits of measuring content value



Why measure?

1

Understanding the value of specific programmes to aid in carriage negotiations, sponsorship and ad sale opportunities

2

Optimising the content mix on a channel to ensure that the content is delivering the right mix of talkability, channel affinity and stand out

3

Finding the right content that both enhances a channel brand but also ensures that the channel fulfils the audience need states

4

Scheduling programmes and content to maximise interest and ensure right balance of genres / programme types that capture broadest audience

5

Develop future content that fulfils needs of specific channels and continues to drive unique reach and engagement

6

Ensuring that content is distributed across the right platforms

7

Feeding in to marketing plans to push the right content that drives stand-out and emotional connections



Influencing channel & content strategy

Our key guidelines for success



Shock content doesn't always drive engagement and talkability.

In fact, when we've looked at programmes that are edgier they can be harder for viewers to relate to and not generate as much word of mouth as other lighter format shows.

Programme affinity isn't always shown by reach figures.

Programmes that drive affinity to a channel don't always have the greatest reach but can be a key part of the wider viewing repertoire and vital to a channel's health. These can often be quickly overlooked by focusing on ratings alone but these are the programmes that with the right marketing push can bring greatest impact to a channel.



Balance of reach vs engagement.

We've seen this with channels that often rely on key genres to drive reach but this doesn't always add to the overall value. Movies can be a great piece of content to fill the schedules and attract some good viewing figures but these don't always attribute back to driving engagement with the channel. In fact, one channel we tested we saw that movies had a negative correlation with advocacy, so despite bringing in audiences they didn't actually improve the channel perceptions.

Breadth of content is key.

Too little key content and the channel is vulnerable, whilst too much and it risks diluting the channel brand. Some of our work looking at international channels discovered a heavy reliance on a few key genres of programming – and whilst these were vital to driving the affinity of the channel it left the channel vulnerable to competitor channels offering similar content.





Influencing channel & content strategy

Our key guidelines for success



Understand when it is important to relate to the audience.

Relatability of the content is important but can vary a lot between channel types – audiences turn to different channels to fulfil different needs so not all content needs to be relatable. You don't watch Sky News to relate to the content but at some level you need to understand that it is a channel for you; and will turn to Sky News over other news channels as it stands for particular values or has a particular look / feel / tonality that appeals – key things that need to be measured and understood to place a value in the channel.

Fulfil emotional and rational needs.

Take for example kids TV channels. From our international work looking at kids TV channels there is a need to deliver fun, light hearted and entertaining content for kids. At the same time parents want educational content as well as entertainment for their kids. Kids (and adults) can relate to programmes like Spongebob – not because he lives under the sea – but because of the emotional connection and enjoyment the content brings. Measuring the implicit associations programmes can help understand where programmes are engaging audiences on an emotional level.



Deliver what viewers expect of a channel.

Viewers don't turn to Comedy Central expecting a hard hitting serious documentary so the content needs to link back to key viewing needs and expectations that the channel brand stands for. Programmes that fit with a channel brand's values helps drive a stronger brand and also set expectations at what viewers will find on a channel. Venturing too far away of what viewers expect can damage perceptions – for example when Discovery went away from traditional documentaries to try its hand at 'mockumentaries' this

confused viewers. It has since announced a return to its core values that has made the brand so successful around the world.

Surprise and delight.

Content performs well if it fits within the core values of a channel whilst engaging audiences and capturing their attention. If the content mix is too much of the same format or type then viewers' ability to be surprised will be limited. This makes the content mix all important.



Tools for content value exploration



We are media specialists having worked closely with channel broadcasters, channels and content distributors since we started out over 20 years ago. Our work has helped drive the launch of new TV channels across the world and refine the content mix to best engage audiences.

Our framework for capturing content value incorporates a number of bespoke tools and established techniques including:

BrandBox

BrandBox is a new and innovative approach to brand tracking providing a transparent, flexible and robust tool that allows clients to customise the solution to best fit their needs.

It identifies the key drivers of brand equity, and how brands compare at a competitive level, providing clear strategic direction on where investment is needed to improve brand performance.

Campaign Optimiser 2.0

Our analysis tool is designed to measure the effectiveness of media campaigns; In it's new interactive format, Campaign Optimiser 2.0 helps identify which platforms used have impacted most on campaign awareness, appeal and call to action. We have adapted this tool to isolate the individual impact of key content. The analysis enables us to explore the relationship between content and channel engagement, affinity and behaviour

As there can be a large degree of overlap of content viewers watch on key channels, using traditional analysis techniques doesn't allow us to isolate the unique impact of specific content.

Timed Emotional Response

The power of emotion derives from an increasing focus aimed at getting closer to understanding real behaviour and the truth. Human behaviour naturally responds and acts on how we feel as much as on the facts in front of us at any time.

TER allows you to see the implicit effects a brand partnership has on your brand. By measuring speed of response to brand attributes and comparing those aware versus unaware of a partnership we can show where the partnership is working at a deeper, emotional level.

About us



Suzy Aronstam, Managing Director - Communicate

Suzy has been with Future Thinking for 14 years and heads up all of our broadcast sponsorship evaluation research, working closely with Sky, Channel Four and ITV.

She developed our extensive norms database for sponsorship, and has been instrumental in the development of Campaign Optimiser, Future Thinkings tool for measuring the relative impact of different platforms within a multimedia campaign. Suzy also has considerable experience of researching Product Placement, Ad funded programming and advertising in general.

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With combined industry experience of over 40 years and offices in the UK and Europe, Future Thinking provide genuine research expertise and understanding across a wide range of industry sectors. Dedicated teams across the business, with a mix of agency and client side experience, ensure we remain at the forefront of innovative thinking, advanced technology and analytical expertise.

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