

Effective Television Attribution for Improved Television ROI

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Introduction

It's clear that digital has changed just about everything in advertising and media. Most importantly, it has radically changed marketers' expectations. Digital brought marketers an abundance of continuous cross-screen consumer data, the ability to quickly determine what's working and what's not, new capabilities for targeting more precisely, and myriad analytic options for evaluating performance. But digital's Achilles heel has its lack of transparency and data quality.

For years, traditional media were burdened with legacy systems that couldn't rival digital's agility and utility. New services, particularly in television, are now emerging -- without the negatives of poor data quality and shrouded analytics -- that provide what marketers want: granular, precise data, near-real time campaign performance measurement.

iSpot.TV is one of these new services. Since Sequent Partners has long championed innovation and transparency in media analytics, we took the opportunity to delve into how iSpot's television conversion analytics and attention metrics are solving problems for marketers and helping them maximize television campaigns and ROI.

Effective Television Attribution for Improved Television ROI

Summary

The media world gets more complex every day. Making effective and efficient media decisions is a challenge for all advertisers. Our study of iSpot's clients suggest they enjoy a surprisingly simple and reassuring solution that clarifies a complex marketplace – by directly linking television exposures to online outcomes and KPIs, nearly in real-time. A simple idea that requires sophisticated technology.

We found that marketers who have met the challenge of linking online and offline benefit from more strategically aligned targeting and more impactful media placements. This allows them to reduce excess frequency in favor of greater reach and more synergistic program environments – resulting in more conversions for the same media investment.

Keeping impactful creative on air is another significant challenge for advertisers. Numerous studies have shown that creative efficacy accounts for the majority of campaign effectiveness. Yet, the mysteries of creative development, the complexities of versioning and breakneck time requirements make it hard for a marketer to keep their eye on the ball.

The simplicity of the iSpot solution brings this blurry world into focus – allowing marketers to know which spots work and which spots don't shortly after they are first aired. And older spots that continue to work can be distinguished from those which have worn out through continuous tracking over time. iSpot's Attention and engagement metrics help decode the situation. Net – we found advertisers who are on their way to ensuring they have hard-working creative on air at all times.

That's the quickest route to improved advertising ROI.

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Campaign Analytics	2
Insights & Applications	3
Case 1 - Going Deep on TV Audience Dynamics	3
Organizational Barriers?	4
Business Impact	5
Case 2 - Competitors “Drafting” Off Their Strategy	5
Making The Business Case	6
Case 3 - Directly Impacting Direct Marketers	6
Business Impact	7
Benchmarking “Related” Brands	7
Strengthening Digital Assets	7
Summary	7

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Introduction

His name is Alan Ruck, and he is best known for his role as Cameron in John Hughes’ 1986 hit, “Ferris Bueller’s Day Off.” So when we had the chance to test drive iSpot.tv’s television advertising analytics platform, we looked up our friend, to see if he’d done any new commercial work. Turns out, iSpot was a treasure trove of info about Alan’s latest work.



Domino’s Pizza developed a commercial for their new delivery tracking service based on “Ferris Bueller” and recreated, frame for frame, the iconic scene of Ferris racing home. In this spot, Ferris has to make it home in time to meet the delivery guy. Alan drives by, giving the in-the-know viewer with a trip down memory lane.



iSpot reported the Domino’s campaign had over 18,000 airings, ran between March through July, that there were 60s, 30s and 15s on TV and online and the fact that it aired last on TruTV. They estimated Domino’s spent about \$30MM and garnered over 2 billion national impressions, 38 million local impressions and 15 million OTT impressions.

But equally interesting is how strong a commercial it is – iSpot not only tracks when the spots air, they track viewer behavior and interest in them. The iSpot.tv “Attention Score” (a proprietary measure of interruption) for this spot was 95 versus the industry average of 90.

iSpot.tv Attention Analytics
Measures the length of time an ad appears on a TV screen and the propensity of consumers to interrupt “ad play.”

When thinking about what marketers really care about, Alan Ruck’s campaign reach numbers aren’t the whole story for Domino’s. There are far more important questions to be answered: how the campaign drove pizza orders, how many people visited the website, made online sales, downloaded the tracking app and overall, how well the campaign worked throughout the consumer consideration and sales journey.

Campaign Analytics

If Domino’s really wanted to know about the full impact of this campaign, they could track all of their own TV activity, and their competitors, in real-time with iSpot. From an opt-in panel, with over 7.310 million internet-enabled television sets, TV advertising is connected to other devices, like mobile, laptops, etc., through the

home IP address. They deliver connected TV and web activity on a household-by-household basis.

This system provides powerful closed-loop analytics – particularly if Domino’s wanted to directly connect its own 1st party data sets with iSpot’s sample. Then the connected loop would also allow them to see how their proprietary audience segments reacted, and how television creative, media and frequency drive orders, website visits, app behavior and other critical KPIs.

iSpot.tv Conversion Analytics

The pixel-based, multi-touch attribution platform shows how TV ad exposures drive web conversions and sales activities.

iSpot data intrigues us here at Sequent Partners. Here’s why:

- iSpot data offers a precise link between television exposure and digital outcomes and other KPIs. In an era of identity matching and data integration, we know how important deterministically integrated cross media data (like iSpot’s) are to marketers.
- iSpot offers a unique view into television advertising value – unlocking the qualitative and quantitative impact of exposures. Attention metrics and online behavioral conversions are a powerful combination.
- iSpot’s real-time TV analytics demonstrates the potential of smart TV data for cross-platform planning and buying. The benefits of immediacy are obvious – legacy systems are out of whack with the tempo and granularity required for improving

impact, mid-campaign.

- These data can be used to drive multi-touch analytics, deterministically linking offline and online exposures and behaviors.
- And finally, iSpot places the focus squarely on the power of creative messages and campaigns. We know creative accounts for at least half the equation in effectiveness – maybe even more. The data are aimed at what the C-suite cares about: who’s viewing their commercials, who’s paying attention, who’s converting and how that trends over time relative to their competition.

Insights & Applications

iSpot offered us a glimpse into the transition taking place in today’s media metrics – and what the future will look like. Fast, actionable reporting of online and offline interactions and conversions, plus new real-time measures of exposure value earmark the next generation media practices.

iSpot’s Objective for Every Client:

Moving from measurement of media investments to real-time management of those investments.

We had the opportunity to speak with a few iSpot customers to learn about the kinds of decisions that are being made with these data, and the financial impact those decisions had on the organization.

Case 1 - Going Deep on TV Audience Dynamics



A major technology services provider has made extensive use of iSpot data for several years. Given the complexity of the category, the volume of messages and the focus on time-sensitive promotions, it's not surprising that they turned to iSpot to stay on top of what's on-air on a daily basis. They chose to work with iSpot because "there's no [competitive] edge in using what everybody else is using – everybody and their dog is using Nielsen GRPs." They studied the nature of the sample and found, unlike set-top box data, it does not appear to have an extreme geographic bias.

This marketer produces a report with real-time television data that highlights the media practices and every ad their competitors are running. The entire category!

We use iSpot to optimize the TV channel.

Then, they append a quality score to each spot, by combining qualitative and quantitative data sources, they've developed aligned with the real-time airings data from iSpot. This allows them to monitor the entire category's commercial efficacy. They monitor their own ads too – keeping great creative on air and monitoring wearout. "We use iSpot to optimize the TV channel," said the marketer.

TV is their greatest investment and they need maximum coverage of their television plans. They are working to impact the entire consumer journey.

This work will pave the way towards a behavioral measure of qualitative performance. Their use of iSpot's data provides a strong solution and the ability to quickly compare new creative and respond to competitive messaging.

We're looking to find unique ways to buy television that gives us a competitive advantage. "It's our biggest spend area and we want to have television in the consumer journey."

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Understanding reach and frequency is another important goal for this marketer – building reach without over-delivering frequency. The dollars spent on excess frequency can be better applied to building reach.

By using conversion metrics from iSpot, they have developed frequency goals tied directly to outcomes.

They use iSpot to determine which level of frequency impacts conversion and to see the incremental contribution of each level of frequency by creative message. iSpot's attention analytics provide another layer of synergy for the marketer – they consider attention a measure of creative efficiency and coined the phrase “eyeball-weighted reach and frequency.”

Organizational Barriers?

From other work we've done, we know organizational structure can create hurdles for adoption of new insights. We were curious about how the transition to iSpot, for competitive tracking and measurement, went for this marketer. After all, it's a new, relatively futuristic dataset.

iSpot is the most trusted vendor we have. They have moved mountains for us.

An analytically-oriented CMO, passionate about fact-based effectiveness and efficiency analytics, made all the difference.

“Initially, we wrestled with issue of causality or correlation – are the television ads actually causing conversions, or are they merely correlated with subsequent conversions? We're still on the learning curve.”

A program of controlled-design experiments, which is planned, will provide conclusive evidence of causality. The response curve could be measured by running an exposed/unexposed test on an addressable TV panel.

This marketer has challenged their agency to work with the iSpot insights. It took some

convincing but once the agency understood the power of iSpot, they were on board. The most immediate application of the data will be more real-time television planning and optimization. In addition, they use iSpot to understand how short/long form can drive an optimized media mix.

Business Impact

“iSpot is the most trusted vendor we have. They have moved mountains for us.”

In the process, this technology giant used daily by tens of millions of people with a need to speak to millions of people each day has gained between 5-10% greater efficiency in their television buys. “We believe there is at least 10% or more to be squeezed out of the system.”

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Case 2 - Watching Competitors “Draft” Off Their Strategy



Another client, a big spender in the highly competitive weight loss category, has learned a lot about their competitors’ media strategy.

They were surprised to learn that a key competitor was putting their weight in the same dayparts and networks as they do. *“They’re mimicking our media plan! They’re piggybacking off us!”* the clients explained.

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but it’s a bit disconcerting.

Typically, we look at our competitors’ strategy and say, ‘that’s what we don’t want to do.’ We need to be able to differentiate ourselves.

This client relies on iSpot for daily, category-wide activity tracking. They learn *instantly* when new creative breaks and what media plan their competitors are using. They routinely monitor channels/networks, dayparts, spend levels and creative.

“Typically, we look at our competitors’ strategy

and say, ‘that’s what we don’t want to do.’ We need to be able to differentiate ourselves.”

Testing new network placements based on web traffic and conversion is a key application of the iSpot data – helping them discern which network or program creates the strongest response. This strong test/control environment, with almost real-time measurement and turn-around, has enabled this advertiser to innovate with confidence.

They integrated their own first party data into the system and monitored the conversion patterns of their target consumers in specific segments. They learned how to reach them – with the specific ads and placements that drive actions, including the all-important sign-up on their website.

Throughout the process, they’ve learned the dynamics of TV-driven conversion – what works and what doesn’t. Their study of the category suggests messages that contain promotions, offers or incentives tend to drive more conversion than others. They have the answers to critical questions marketers ask today: “Am I being effective with my TV ad spending?” “Do people care about my ads?” “Are my ads working?”.

Making The Business Case

iSpot helps us feel more confident about these new decisions.

They stopped using their previous attribution provider because their results did not give them the confidence they needed. “The other tool reported that the Golf Channel was extremely effective for us. But we knew it wasn’t driving conversions.”

iSpot is a particularly useful tool for this marketer to help prove to management that new media tactics are working. “It helps us feel more confident about these new decisions.”

Case 3 - Directly Impacting Direct Marketers



Television plays an extremely important role in our next case study, a well-known direct marketer.

Their campaigns are short bursts with high levels of television weight that drive people through their conversion funnel, into an actual sign-up. This marketer can't wait 90 days to receive placement and GRP data from their agency in order to show campaign performance on a network, show or ad level. They need solid insights to maximize their media budget each time they're in flight.

Like other marketers who want to minimize waste, iSpot provides guidance and helps this marketer find programs, channels and dayparts that work for them. They identify areas of inefficiency and move dollars to drive more conversions more efficiently.

“Certain genres and programs do well for us – and we’ve shifted out of primetime. iSpot has given us the platform to see what works best for our target audiences. Certain program environments are really supportive of our ads – they match the mindset of our audience and our message.”

Before this marketer had iSpot data, with their specific TV-web conversion capabilities, they gleaned these insights more casually, from their own first party data – by seeing when people converted – and made educated guesses about daypart strengths. For many years, they assumed primetime was the best vehicle for them, but now, with three campaigns worth of iSpot conversion data under their belt, they know what works for them and have retooled their plan to optimize the more efficient dayparts.

iSpot has given us the platform to see what works best for our target audiences’ decisions.

Business Impact

Like other upfront advertisers, they are somewhat constrained by their upfront buys and do not have full flexibility to refine their plans in-flight. However, they have been able to move parts of their syndication and cable budgets and have saved money, while producing the same results. “Overall, we’ve been pretty happy with the iSpot product.”

Benchmarking “Related” Brands

This marketer does not necessarily have direct competitors – they’re quite unique. As a result, they have turned to other direct response advertisers whom they admire for best practices – to see what works for them. These brands, rather than direct competitors, are loaded into their tracking dashboard from iSpot, which helps them activate against the learning. It’s an interesting way of utilizing best practices and the knowledge of what works for other brands.

Strengthening Digital Assets

Of course, iSpot data is useful in refining a television advertising plan, but more broadly, the service is also being applied to other aspects of media as well. iSpot helps this marketer understand how people move through their purchase funnel – and how they respond online. They look at iSpot data to identify issues with their website – and see if there’s friction or something not working quite as well as it could be – based on conversion behavior. The digital department receives the report on TV-led conversions immediately after each flight.

Summary



The media world gets more complex every day. Making effective and efficient media decisions is a challenge for all advertisers. iSpot’s clients enjoy a surprisingly simple and reassuring solution that clarifies a complex marketplace – by directly linking television exposures to online outcomes and KPIs, nearly in real-time. A simple idea that requires sophisticated technology.

Linking online and offline is a challenge most marketers struggle with today. Those that meet the challenge benefit from more strategically aligned targeting and more impactful media placements, reducing excess frequency in favor of greater reach and more synergistic program environments – resulting in more conversions for the same media investment.

Keeping impactful creative on air is a similar challenge for advertisers. Numerous studies have shown that creative efficacy accounts for the majority of campaign effectiveness. Yet, the mysteries of creative development, the complexities of versioning and the breakneck time requirements, make it hard for a marketer to keep their eye on the ball.

The simplicity of the iSpot solution brings this blurry world into focus. Which spots work and which spots don’t is pretty clear shortly after they are first aired. Which spots continue to work and which spots have worn out can be tracked continuously over time. iSpot’s attention and engagement metrics help decode the situation. Net: advertisers can be assured they have hard-working creative on air at all times. That’s the quickest route to improved advertising ROI.

Over the past few years, Sequent Partners has

interviewed almost 200 leading marketers, we always hear common themes, among them – we are struggling to connect our online and offline campaigns. They are trying to accurately attribute sales/conversion effects and they are trying to coordinate the impact of those campaigns to move consumers through their purchase journey. We have seen cases in which the lack of coordination of television and digital, in particular, has cost companies significant revenue and weakened their brands. Even brands with enviable legacies.

Recently, Bob Liodice, CEO of the ANA noted that more than half of the fortune 500 have not seen revenue growth for the past two years. He called upon marketers to be the solution. We know marketing fuels growth. But that engine seems to have stalled for too many brands. At Sequent Partners we have seen two revenue drivers that are often under-managed because they are under-measured – powerful creative and impactful media placement, especially the coordination of television and digital investments.

iSpot does not offer a comprehensive solution to every marketing investment question. They have focused on the consumer linkage from television to digital. Making this solution work at the tempo and granularity necessary to drive creative and media decisions mid-campaign requires awesome technology and smart simplifying assumptions. And we've seen it work in each of these three cases.

We appreciate iSpot providing these cases and we thank their clients for their openness. We've learned a lot. It looks like the future to us!