

its no surprise that those who own or sell advertising on internet video sites didnt respond favorably to my last post. Its far more profitable for them to sell 1k views an hour for 24 hours than to have to deliver 24k viewers in an hour or even worse, at the same time.

The number of simultaneous viewers should be the ONLY number that matters to advertisers when selecting where to place an internet video ad. Why ?

It shows the max number of users that a show can have at a point in time , which advertisers will evolve to in buying time critical ads (movie buys on Thursdays before opening on Friday). If an advertiser for Shrek 19 or Saw XX needs to reach 10mm people online before their movies open the next day, knowing the maximum and average number of simultaneous viewers for the content you are buying gives you the proper constraints required to do the math on the buy.

The number of simultaneous viewers a site can support also tells you what happens to your ad if something unique happens. Its hurricane season. Lets say there is amazing footage from a hurricane or some other event, maybe a Paris Hilton prison break and one site has the capacity to handle 1mm simultaneous viewers, the other 100k. If your ad is on one, you might be ok. If its on the other, you might be out of luck. Your ad is delivered at a snails pace if at all, with users seeing more buffering then ad.

Then there is the issue of cheating. its easy to cheat on views. Youtubers game their views all the time, as they do on all video sites. To advertisers, each site defines a view differently. is it when an ad is viewed for 1 second, 10 seconds, to its entirety, to its entirety without buffering ?

If you buy an average of 1k simultaneous viewers, thats a much more difficult number to cheat. The advertiser can get a link into the serving of their ads and monitor how many people are watching at any point in time which is something they can learn from. Which of course scares the hell out of web video hosts. If an advertiser were to see that at 9pm EST only 17 people were watching their ad on the site. Thats not so good compared to TV.

The number of simultaneous viewers also tells the "intensity" or heat of an ad or content. 1mm simultaneous viewers has a completely different impact than 100k per day for 10 days which is different from 1k per day for 1k days. Tracking the number of simultaneous viewers gives you the true feel of the viral nature of the content and it smooths out much of the cheating by video uploaders

Finally, the number of simuls give you a reference point to TV . what is the maximum number of simultaneous viewers that Youtube, or AOL , Yahoo, MSN or ??/ Video have supported in aggregate across all their content ? What is the maximum number of simultaneous viewers that any given piece of content or advertising has achieved ? Thats a number thats easily comparable to a TV rating. The number of views isnt.

Back in 1999, when we broadcast the Cubs during the day, a 6k audio stream could get 25k plus simultaneous listeners and often peaked past 40k. Telling an advertiser that they could reach 40k people at once was powerful. Far more powerful than the number of views or listens content had.

its time we start to use average and maximum number of simultaneous viewers as the benchmark for video .