

TV TO REPORT MULTIPLATFORM RATINGS

OzTAM has given the green light for its TV ratings system to enter a multiplatform world by the end of the year, with plans for a new system that measure online viewing and multitasking.

The move could position Australia as a world leader in audience measurement along with the US and UK, which are also beginning similar trials.

Priority for the expanded TV ratings service will go first to online areas such as Catch-Up TV and iTunes along with reporting on the level of viewers' media multitasking.

The move follows a US study by Nielsen in 2009, which found 57% of people watched TV and used the internet simultaneously.

OzTAM has also indicated that Smartphones and tablets are also on the agenda for the broadcaster-controlled ratings agency, but there are no immediate plans to launch these systems.

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- **Ratings for TV and internet**
 - **Catch-Up TV and iTunes**
 - **Smartphones, tablets to be rated**
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The revamped OzTAM board, which includes the new ACCC-approved chairman and former Austereo chief executive Michael Anderson, signed off on the project at its last board meeting.

The move represents a major departure from the more conservative line OzTAM has taken in the past to track and report on the splintering viewing options for TV programs – and the alternative use of TV screens in the home for gaming and IP services.

OzTAM chief executive Doug Peiffer said he did not expect data from the new “stand-alone” dual screen TV ratings pilot until the year's end and there remained “huge challenges” as to how the figures would be reported.

He said discussions would take place with media buyers and advertisers to determine how additional online audiences could be allocated to TV programming.

Peiffer said home TV viewing, including time-shifted, accounted for an estimated “98-99%” of TV viewing in Australia, despite greater interest in online video.