

2010 Industry Outlook

The past year has been a hugely dynamic period for the television industry, with 2010 and beyond promising further evolution and expansion.

The advent of digital media has forever changed the media industry. It has opened up new ways for people to access content, enabled free-to-view TV multi-channelling and promoted greater interactivity between content producers and audiences. The last twelve months was a very dynamic period for the TV sector as Australia's Free TV networks capitalised on these changes. The formation of Freeview, the launch of additional digital TV channels, the expansion of TV networks' online offerings, and an increase in cross-platform opportunities all illustrate the amazing evolution of the medium. Despite the short-term impact of the global financial crisis on all media, the networks are solidly positioned for a stronger year ahead.

Programming

The extraordinary success of shows like MasterChef, Packed to the Rafters and Underbelly highlights what the networks do best: producing and importing the very best content, and marketing it to audiences that advertisers want to connect with. A great new slate of programming is already in the pipeline to deliver more of what audiences love in 2010.

Reach

Free TV reach remains unrivalled, with a daily average of 13 million viewers. Free TV's programming continues to consistently deliver big audiences, with the top 40 shows on Free TV every week each delivering an average audience of at least 1.3 million viewers.

Digital TV

In the months ahead, Freeview will continue to help educate the market and assist with the nation's transition to the digital platform. At least 56 per cent of Australian households are currently enjoying the benefits of Freeview - more channels, for free. In 2009, Seven, Nine and Ten all launched an extra digital channel with the promise of more services to come in 2010. More channels means more choice for consumers, and more opportunities for advertisers to reach audiences.

Viewing Trends

Whether it's via the internet, mobile phone, or personal video recorders (PVRs), digital technology is enabling consumers to engage with their favourite programming beyond the primary broadcast. The new media world also provides "more opportunities to view" through catch-up TV, expanded content and Time Shift Viewing. Free TV networks have been optimising their content across multiple platforms and portals, recording massive increases in online visitors and video streams viewed.

PVRs

The 21st century version of the VCR, the PVR makes recording and playing back your favourite shows easier than ever. Research shows the majority of viewing in PVR households is still 'live', despite some initial fear among some in the industry that viewers would simply watch shows in playback and skip the ads. Studies have also revealed PVR households watch more TV overall. OzTAM and RegionalTAM began measuring and reporting Time Shift Viewing from 27 Dec, 2009.

Cross-platform

Free TV networks continue to work with advertisers to explore how they can best meet their businesses' needs. This has led to an explosion in new ad formats and cross-platform opportunities. Over the last year, networks have reported a significant increase in partnerships with advertisers to deliver campaigns across a range of platforms. This trend will continue as advertisers look to leverage Free TV's content across different media.

Measurement

Australia's TV ratings system is world's best practice, providing a level of transparency and sophistication that other media still aspire to. In addition to measuring the new digital channels and Time Shift Viewing, the industry has set its sights on capturing TV viewing outside the home and on other devices such as mobiles and PCs. This will provide advertisers with even greater insight into how audiences are engaging with Free TV content in the digital era.