

WHITEPAPER

# CTV and Retail Media: The Perfect Match





## Introduction

Connected TV (CTV) is growing. More viewers are choosing streaming services over traditional TV. Lured by the opportunity for emotionally resonant, contextual placement opportunities, advertisers are shifting budgets to follow them, but measurement remains a challenge. Advertisers need proof that CTV ads drive action, not just views.

Retail Media offers a solution. It has access to first-party data—actual purchase information that helps advertisers understand what works. By combining forces, CTV and Retail Media can close the loop, linking ad exposure to real-world purchases, but to do so, they must integrate their data while navigating strict privacy regulations.

### CTV+ RMNs, Style meets Substance: The Ultimate Power Couple

People around the world are moving away from traditional pay-TV to streaming platforms like Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, Netflix and YouTube.

Although Europe lags behind the US in CTV adoption, in the UK it is estimated that over 91% of the population are watching CTV with European CTV adoption at 86%.<sup>1</sup>

CTV's reach combined with rich opportunities for personalised, contextual targeting creates powerful opportunities to influence audiences by leveraging its emotionally-charged content. However, without clear attribution, it risks being perceived as just “traditional TV 2.0,” struggling to prove its direct impact on sales and losing out on ad budgets to Retail Media Networks (RMNs).

# 91%

Estimate of the UK population  
watching CTV

# 86%

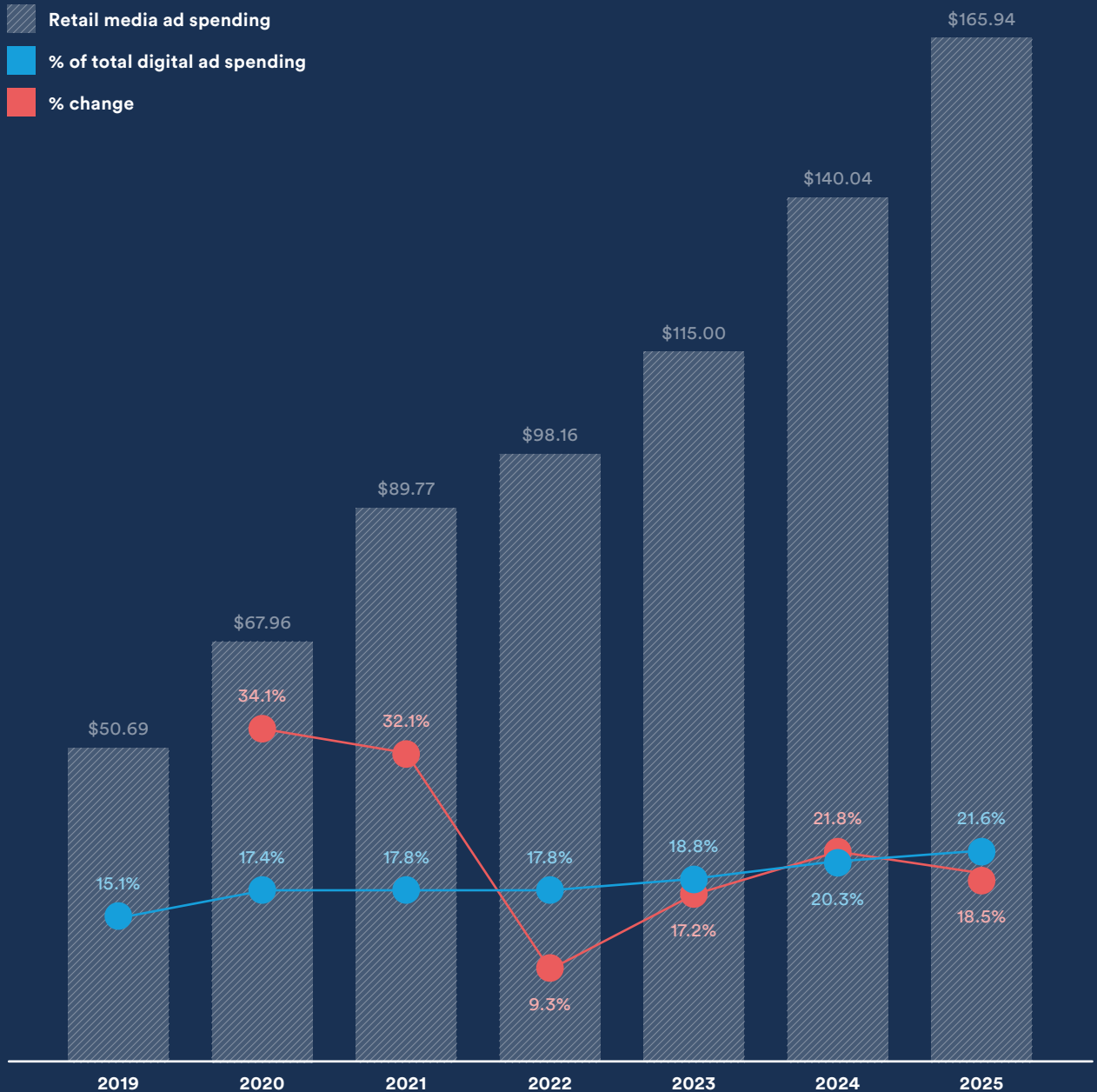
Estimate of European  
CTV adoption

<sup>1</sup> <https://uk.themedialeader.com/european-ctv-use-hits-86-as-viewing-grows-among-young-people/>  
<https://showheroes-group.com/press-releases/new-study-by-showheroes-group-and-kinesso-reveals-key-trends-in-video-ad-engagement-across-europe/>



Global Retail Media spending will reach \$160 billion by 2025, surpassing TV advertising.

### Retail Media Ad Spending Worldwide, 2019–2025 billions, % change, and % of total digital ad spending



**Note:** digital advertising that appears on websites or apps that are primarily engaged in retail ecommerce or is bought through a retailer's media network or demand-side platform

(DSP); examples of websites or apps primarily engaged in retail ecommerce include Amazon, Walmart, and eBay; examples of retail media networks include Amazon's DSP and Etsy's Offsite Ads; includes ads purchased through retail media networks that may not appear on ecommerce sites or apps.

Source: Insider Intelligence | eMarketer Forecast, Dec 2023



Yet the chance for both RMNs and CTV to fulfil their potential relies on addressing their respective weaknesses:

## Retail Media's Challenges

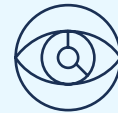
1



### New entrants

The influx of new retail media networks (from both traditional retail as well as new sectors like Finance, Telco and travel) is intensifying competition, making it harder for smaller players to achieve scale and forcing brands to navigate an increasingly complex landscape.

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### Perception challenges

With its strength in performance metrics, Retail Media tends to compete with other performance-focused channels like Search and Social. At the same time, thanks to its proximity to purchase it's traditionally been viewed as a low end of the funnel channel. In stark contrast to the emotionally-engaging, high impact creative which CTV attracts, Retail Media is seen as suited only to more direct response ad formats.

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### Shoppable social

Social commerce platforms like TikTok and Instagram are blending discovery and purchasing, challenging traditional retail media to prove its value and adapt to changing consumer behaviours.

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### Fragmentation

The proliferation of retail media networks has led to a lack of standardisation in measurement, buying mechanisms and performance metrics, creating operational challenges for brands and hindering cross-platform comparisons

Without CTV integration, Retail Media risks being confined to lower-funnel tactics, limiting its ability to drive long-term brand growth.

This reliance on performance marketing reduces its role in the discovery phase, introducing new products and attracting new customers.

However, as we will address, to consign Retail Media solely to the lower-end of the funnel would be a mistake.



## The Measurement & Attribution Challenge for CTV

While Retail Media grapples with the complexities of abundant measurement, it is the lack of measurement capabilities that threatens CTV's success.

CTV excels at brand awareness, but struggles with lower-funnel conversion tracking. Tech giants like Google and Meta dominate because they provide clear performance metrics. Without better attribution, CTV risks losing ad spend to digital platforms that promise measurable ROI.

In a world where advertisers are demanding **full-funnel measurement** and better attribution, CTV has an urgent need to address its measurement gap.

Retail Media can solve this problem. It provides first-party purchase data that links ad exposure to sales, but to make this work, Retail Media and CTV need a shared measurement framework. That means **better data integration** and **privacy-safe attribution** models.



CTV has an urgent need to address its measurement gap



## CTV & RMN: A Match made in Marketing Heaven

As brands seek to engage audiences more effectively, these two channels offer complementary strengths.

### CTV Vs. Retail Media Comparison

#### Feature

Feature	CTV (Europe & US)	Retail Media (Europe)
 1. Targeting Precision	High — Behavioral & Contextual	Very High — Purchase-Based
 2. Measurability	Moderate	High
 3. Ad Format Flexibility	High — Dynamic & Programmatic	Highly Personalized
 4. First-Party Data Usage	Limited (Improving)	Yes — Loyalty & Transaction Data
 5. Interactivity	Medium	Low
 6. Conversion Tracking	Improving with Retail Media	Very High — Direct Attribution
 7. Audience Engagement	Strong	Strong



## The match provides:



### Closed-Loop Attribution: Solving CTV's Measurement Gap

One of CTV's biggest challenges has been linking ad exposure to real-world outcomes. Retail Media solves this by connecting CTV ad views directly to in-store purchases through POS data, providing a clear and measurable path from awareness to conversion.



### Future-Proofing Against Cookie Deprecation

As third-party cookies phase out, Retail Media's first-party data dominance offers a future-proof solution. With 50% of EU buyers already collaborating with retailers brands can convert loyalty card data into CTV-targetable ID+ graphs, ensuring continued precision in audience targeting.



### Maximising CTV's Potential with Contextual Alignment

Retail Media not only enhances targeting precision, but also ensures contextual relevance, aligning CTV ads with content that resonates with viewers. This synergy drives better engagement, stronger brand recall, and, ultimately, higher conversion rates.

While CTV provides opportunities to access vast audiences with compelling, premium, high-impact creative opportunities and ad placements, Retail Media provides deterministic, purchase-based targeting and first-party data. By integrating Retail Media's deterministic data with CTV's storytelling power advertisers can unlock highly measurable, privacy-compliant and future-ready advertising solutions that bridge the gap between awareness and purchase.



As Jeffrey Bustos, the former vice president of measurement addressability data at the IAB who recently joined Dentsu's Merkle as senior vice president of retail media analytics explains:

"Authenticated data from CTV is hugely valuable, and comparatively, you're actually able to do better identity matching with that authenticated data, whereas you're really not able to do so much with authenticated data from social,"

"As a retailer, I can use [CTV] data to create a lookalike audience, to then target a larger subset of people than just my [audience], and then I can see within that larger subset how many other people went to my store afterwards and bought something, whether it's online or in store. So that's the value"

However, without proper integration, advertisers may struggle to maximise the benefits of these platforms — particularly given the complexity of Europe's data privacy regulations.

“

**I can see within that larger subset how many other people went to my store afterwards and bought something, whether it's online or in store”**

Jeffrey Bustos, Senior vice president  
of retail media analytics, Merkle



## Challenges in CTV and Retail Media Collaboration

However, several challenges prevent seamless collaboration between CTV and Retail Media:



### Data and Media Fragmentation

With increasing media fragmentation (outside the tech giants) it is becoming increasingly difficult to create a unified view of customer interactions. Retail Media has emerged as a leading force in first-party data. With at least 90% of European consumers willing to share personal data for rewards, it provides a powerful solution for brands seeking precise audience targeting. Yet, without an integrated data system, advertisers struggle to connect ad exposure to real-world purchases.



### Audience Segmentation Limitations

Retail Media excels at deterministic targeting based on purchase behaviour, while CTV relies on contextual and behavioural data. Bridging the differences requires sophisticated segmentation capabilities.



### Cross-Channel Activation Hurdles:

Many brands struggle to coordinate CTV and Retail Media campaigns across multiple platforms. Without a centralised system, marketing efforts remain disjointed, reducing efficiency.



### Real-Time Insights and Personalisation:

CTV viewers are open to ad-supported content, but relevance is key — 71% expect ads tailored to their interests. By leveraging Retail Media's deterministic data, brands can deliver hyper-targeted ads that enhance the viewer experience while driving stronger engagement and sales. However, delivering timely, relevant ads on CTV based on recent purchases in Retail Media is challenging. Advertisers need real-time data processing to make personalisation effective.



### Authenticated purchase data

allows brands to reach high-intent shoppers, offering a level of accuracy unmatched by traditional targeting methods. When combined with CTV's storytelling power, this data closes the gap between awareness and conversion, making advertising more measurable and effective. In most cases, CTV and retail media players are unable to bridge the gap due to privacy and technological constraints.



### Privacy and Compliance Concerns

As privacy regulations tighten, sharing data between Retail Media networks and CTV platforms becomes more complex. Secure solutions are needed to ensure compliance while enabling effective targeting.

For too long, integration challenges have impeded this promising union. This is where both parties rely on a holistic CDP as the linchpin.



### Addressing the challenges of Europe's data privacy regulations

- For Retail Media Networks, privacy regulations pose a challenge in collaborating with CTVs to share their highly protected first party data.
- By integrating CDPs for consent governance and using data clean rooms for secure collaboration, marketers can balance personalisation with privacy—turning GDPR compliance into a competitive advantage.



### Consent Orchestration and Clean Room adoption

- CDPs centralise consent records across touchpoints, ensuring explicit opt-ins are tracked and respected whilst automated workflows delete or suppress data when consent is revoked, addressing GDPR's "right to erasure".
- By providing anonymisation and encryption and (in the case of mediarithmics, keeping data within EU borders), Clean Rooms enable Marketers to collaborate on lookalike modeling or attribution without sharing raw data. Around two-thirds (64%) of companies leveraging privacy preserving technology are using Data Clean Rooms.

*For example, by joining forces, [Channel 4](#) and [Nectar360](#) worked together to provide data to brands to show how many customers purchased the product after seeing it through targeted ads on Channel 4's All 4 streaming platform.*



## The holistic CDP match-maker

The promise of this alliance is the ability to leverage the data-rich consumer insights of a RMNs within the emotionally powerful contexts of CTV so well-suited to upper-funnel activity.

By doing so marketers can connect with users in highly targeted, personally-relevant ways to drive measurable influence from top of funnel awareness through to purchase.

In a world of restricted third-party data, CDPs are essential to piecing together the disparate elements of customer data (emails, device IDs etc) to create an ID graph in a privacy safe way.

A holistic CDP plays a critical role here providing:



### Unified data management

Activating campaigns across channels is only possible if data silos can be broken down. By collecting and processing both known and anonymous data, in real-time and any format, a holistic CDP can provide a comprehensive view of customer interactions across CTV and retail touchpoints.



### Advanced audience segmentation

mediarithmics enables clients to dynamically create audience segments based on viewing habits, purchase history, and behavioural data. This ensures highly targeted CTV advertising and personalised retail experiences.



### Real-time data processing

Combined with advanced audience segmentation: The ability to process data in real-time with no compression or aggregation and combine this with advanced audience segmentation (based on viewing habits, purchase history, and behavioural data) is key to delivering highly targeted CTV advertising and personalised content and retail experiences for users.

**Advanced ID resolution:**

mediarithmics enables clients to store and use any type of ID—whether from their own data, a partner's, or from third parties—within their own ID graph. This, coupled with the ability to collaborate with other third party ID solutions, ensures that advertisers can easily and effectively target and track audiences across different channels, including CTV and Retail Media.

**Data clean rooms:**

mediarithmics provides CDP-integrated data clean rooms, allowing secure data sharing between media, brand, and retail partners while maintaining privacy standards.



**By collecting and processing both known and anonymous data, in real-time and any format, a holistic CDP can provide a comprehensive view of customer interactions across CTV and retail touchpoints**

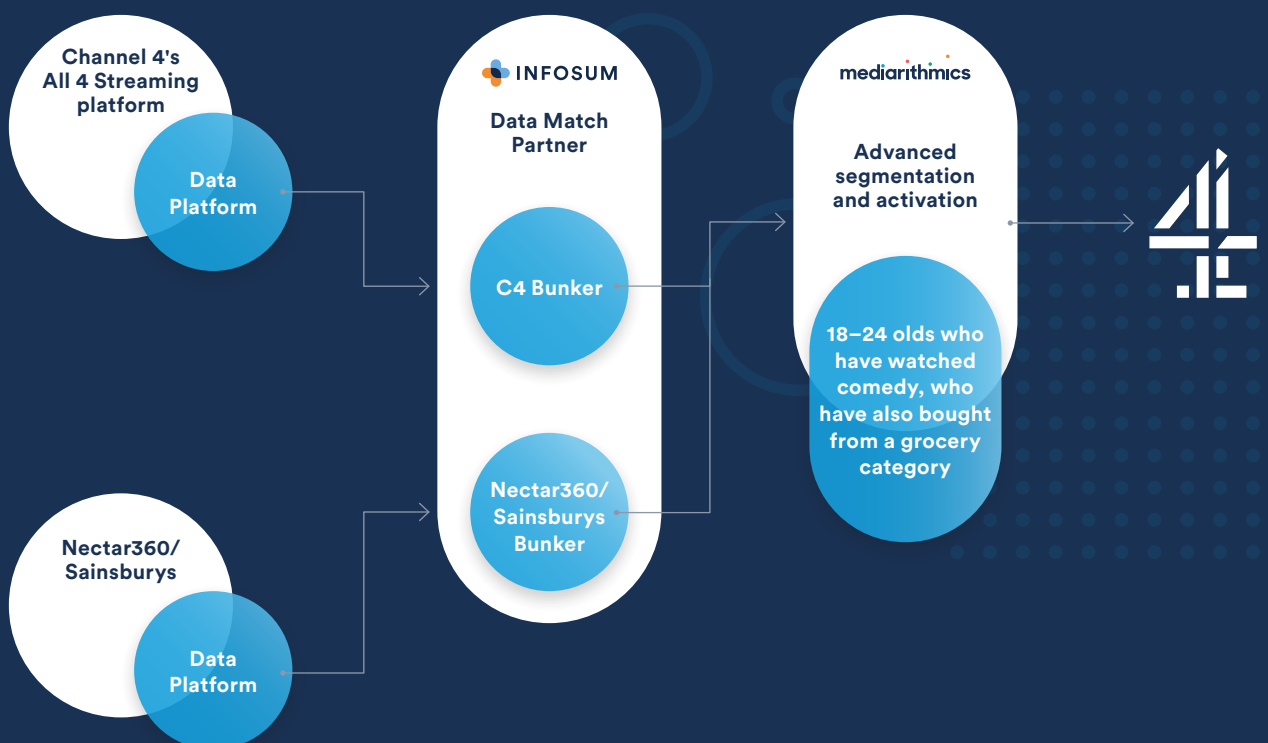


## Case study: UK Broadcaster, Channel 4 Launches Several New and Innovative Advertising Products



**Problem:** Rather than competing with the other leading broadcasters, Channel 4 realised it was increasingly competing with walled garden tech platforms such as Facebook. These platforms were offering something different—machine-learning lookalike modelling paired with first-party data sets. Yet, working with these platforms has certain drawbacks, focused around ownership of data and transparency of results. Channel 4 set out to offer a new and improved offering for advertisers which would help overcome these drawbacks.

**Solution:** By leveraging mediarithmics' clean-room partner, InfoSum's technology, Channel 4 and Nectar360 were able to collaborate to match consumer data between the two organisations and create brand new audience segments at a product category level. This enables brands to identify and market to audiences that have a higher inclination to purchase their product. [Read more about mediarithmics' work with Channel 4.](#)





**Marketers can connect with users in highly targeted, personally-relevant ways to drive measurable influence from top of funnel awareness through to purchase**





## Conclusion:

Failure to collaborate would pit the RMNs against CTV forcing advertisers to split budgets between measurement and brand impact or turn to the giants like Amazon for through-the-funnel tracking.

In fact, eMarketer projects that in the US 1 in 5 CTV ad dollars could be allocated to Retail Media by 2027<sup>1</sup>.

By integrating Retail Media and CTV, brands can unlock full-funnel marketing opportunities—combining storytelling with measurable outcomes, ensuring both awareness and conversion in an increasingly competitive landscape.

Yet the ability to realise the potential of this alliance hinges on the presence of a go-between. A holistic CDP isn't just advantageous—it's essential for Europe's CTV Retail Media sector to avoid being outpaced by walled gardens. Failure to realise the potential of this alliance could see both CTV and RMNs missing out to the tech giants, failing to realise the new wave of opportunities for personalisation and dynamic targeting at scale offered fuelled by AI.

### Key Takeaways

If Retail Media and CTV integrate successfully, they will:



Create a **powerful alternative** to walled gardens like Google, Meta, and Amazon.



Provide **full-funnel measurement** that proves ROI.



Offer **future-proof advertising solutions** in a privacy-first world.

If they fail to integrate:



CTV will struggle to prove its value beyond brand awareness.



Retail Media will be limited to lower-funnel tactics, reducing its long-term growth potential.



Advertisers will continue to allocate budgets to platforms that provide better measurement.

<sup>1</sup> <https://content-naf.emarketer.com/what-advertisers-retailers-need-know-about-retail-media-2025>



## About mediarithmics

mediarithmics is the holistic Customer Data Platform that helps enterprise players revolutionise growth by re-architecting consumer engagement at scale. It powers real-time marketing personalisation, cookieless audience monetisation and agile data collaboration within a single technology solution. By de-siloing data across a client business, it enables marketing, monetisation, product and data teams to action insights to create more compelling customer experiences.

Since 2013, mediarithmics has partnered with some of Europe's most forward-thinking businesses, including Channel 4, Orange Advertising, Groupe TF1, Showroomprivé, Fnac Darty, and France TV. In 2023 we acquired Easyence to strengthen our ability to connect retail and media and improve revenue performance for clients.



For next-gen CDP support and expertise, contact mediarithmics:  
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