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How does the 50+ audience stream? Key facts for pharma brands

In 2023, TV streaming has become mainstream. Streaming, as a method of TV viewing, is not just for young people. In fact, seventy-nine percent of adults 50 and over use streaming services. Moreover, older adults who have both streaming services and cable spend 56% of their TV time streaming, and 52% are streaming more in 2023 than they did last year.[1]

Those figures come from a new whitepaper by DeepIntent and Roku. *Silver Streamers: A Golden Opportunity for Pharma Advertisers on CTV*. We surveyed more than 3,000 U.S. adults across every age group, and found that 79% of adults 50+ use streaming services.

For pharma brands who want to reach older consumers, streaming is a relatively untapped market.

To discuss the findings of the whitepaper, we took the stage at the "Innovating with Intent" conference in New York to discuss how streaming campaigns reach scaled audiences who aren't present on cable TV.

Below are six takeaways from the panel discussion.

1. Adults 50+ stream just as much as other demographics

There is little difference in streaming frequency between younger and older demographics. Across all age groups, the majority watch streaming content and about two-thirds stream at least five days a week. The average number of streaming services used was fairly consistent, as were the most popular platforms.

2. The older the viewer, the more likely they are to prefer ad-supported streaming

Breaking down the survey results by age, we found one key generational divide: Older viewers prefer ad-supported streaming services that allow them to view content free or at a reduced cost in exchange for watching ads. In fact, 65% of streamers 50-and-older prefer advertising-based video on demand (AVOD)— 11% more than 18- to 29-year-olds and 5% more than 30-49 year olds.

One reason these audiences are more amenable to seeing ads is familiarity. They've been watching free content with ads their entire lives. Why stop now? Plus, AVOD services generally show fewer commercials per break than linear TV, so it is ultimately a better viewing experience.

3. Just because they have cable doesn't mean they're watching

People 50+ are more likely to keep cable subscriptions despite the rise of streaming TV. In fact 53% of 60- to 64-year-olds have cable compared to 23% of 25-to 29-year-olds. But that doesn't mean they're actually watching it. In fact, older adults who have both cable and streaming services spend the majority (56%) of their TV time streaming.

"What if having a cable subscription is like having a gym membership? Having a gym membership doesn't mean that I work out everyday," said **Sue Hyon Jo, senior lead, ad measurement at Roku.**

4. CTV campaigns reach audiences that aren't on cable

TV streaming isn't just a compliment to linear TV, it's a way to discover brand-new audiences. In fact, 92% of Roku's pharma campaign reach in Q3 2022 was unique to linear TV — meaning those viewers were not available through linear TV alone.[2]

DeepIntent shared a recent camapaign promoting a cancer medication that ran on both streaming and linear TV. The linear campaign reached 288,000 people while the streaming campaign reached 37,000 unique patient households. The overlap: Just 4% of households were exposed to both linear and streaming ads.

5. Cord-cutters are less familiar with top medication brands

Due to their reliance on linear TV, pharma brands are increasingly disconnected from cord-cutters. Our analysis found that streaming-only consumers are 35% less likely than cable customers to be familiar with top prescription drug brands.[3] The differences in brand awareness were stark for psoriasis (64% for cable/staellite box viewers compared to 41% for cord cutters), diabeties (56% to 38%), and migraine (46% to 26%).

6. Adults 50+ don't think pharma ads are relevant

While adults aged 50+ represent a key demographic for pharma advertisers, these consumers are not being exposed to relevant messaging. Compared with the general population, silver streamers find pharma ads to be less relevant for their specific health conditions.

TV streaming solves this problem with data-driven programmatic reach. Going beyond demographics, pharma advertisers can create campaign-specific modeled audiences using privacy-first health and behavioral data. The result? Relevant ads that silver streamers prefer and a major opportunity for pharma brands to boost awareness while reaching their key demographic.

Eric Lloyd, head of industry healthcare at Roku said,

"There is a tremendous opportunity to reach adults 50+ in streaming environments, which offer much more than traditional TV in terms of impacting the patient journey and driving script lift. The survey results only confirmed that it's paramount for pharma advertisers to capitalize on this paradigm shift."

Interested in learning more about 50+ streamers and how pharma brands can find them? *Download Silver Streamers: A Golden Opportunity for Pharma Advertisers on CTV*.

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[1] Roku Internal Data, 2022

[2] Roku Internal Data, Reach Insights Norm Q3'22

[3] Roku + Lucid Pharmaceutical Survey, October 2022; N=853; Non-Roku Pay TV users N=976

The campaign measurement period (1/1 - 6/14/22) and exposure period (1/1 - 4/30/22) account for a 45-day conversion window. Script lift reflects conversion lift between test and control for the exposure period. % of doctor visits represent visits specific to migraines that resulted in a new-to-brand script for the brand for the exposure period. Linear and connected TV reach is calculated based on ACR data for 30M+ LG Smart TVs, projected to the total patient population. All measures are statistically significant at 95%+ confidence level.

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