

T»VISION

2022 Creative Attention Series



# The Creative Attention Report

Must-Know Insights and Tips to Maximize Creative Attention

*August 2022*

## Maximizing Creative Attention

Imagine you've crafted a brilliant TV ad and chosen the best placements to engage your target audience. Is that enough to break through when the competition for viewer attention is fierce?

As Marketers, we know that clever media planning and stellar creative are both essential when it comes to winning the battle for attention. But countless other factors can impact how well a creative performs once it's in flight. For instance, how do you strike the right balance between staying top-of-mind with viewers and keeping at wear out at bay? How does the context in which an ad airs play a part? What about the tone of the ad itself?

At TVision, we took a deeper dive into what makes a specific creative more likely to engage viewers. Our Creative Attention Report is divided into three key topics — compiling must-known insights and actionable tips to make sure your creative shines through.

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# Finding the Best Frequency for Ad Attention

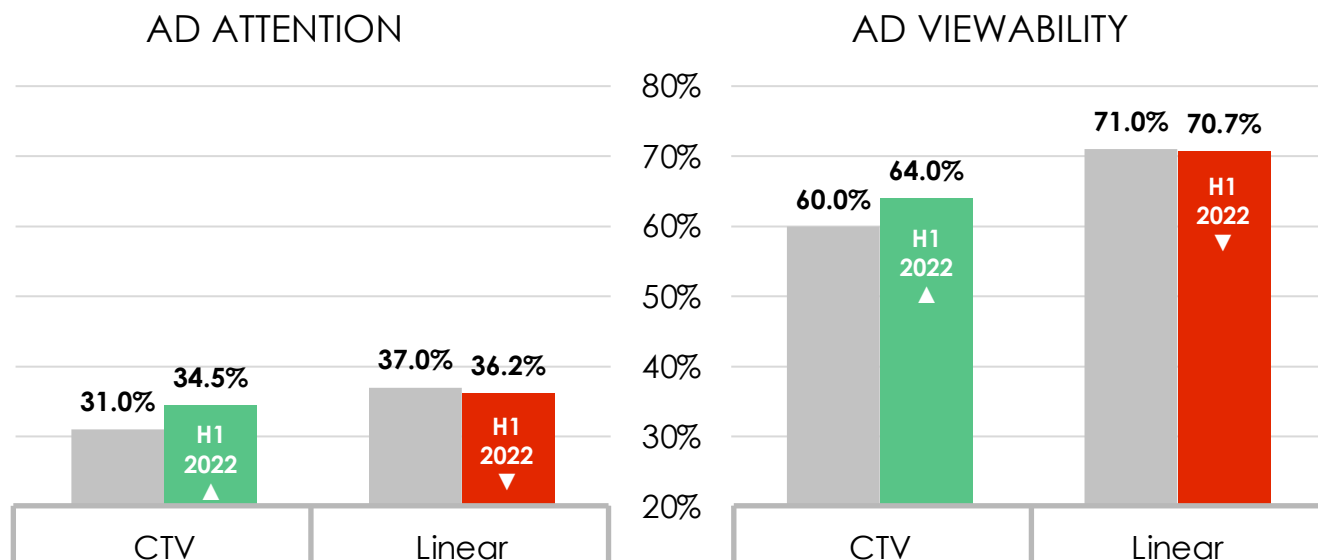
It's common sense: brands need frequent and consistent exposure to stay top of mind with consumers. But when it comes to TV advertising, the industry has often planned campaigns based on the assumption that the more someone sees an ad, the less attention they'll pay, and consequently, the more ad budget will be wasted. In other words, the dreaded wear out.

But what if wearing an ad in was just as important as avoiding ad wear out? What is the right balance between frequency and engagement? Do optimal frequencies differ across linear and CTV? In this first section, we've put together some must-know insights to start using attention to strike the ideal balance between giving an ad enough exposure to capture viewer attention while avoiding the risk of too much repetition.

## Attention Varies Across Linear and Streaming

First off, it's important to note that viewers pay attention differently in linear and streaming environments, as they offer distinct viewing experiences. Linear networks have historically maintained stricter rules around ad placement while the industry is still working towards a standard approach for CTV ad frequency. We see that traditional linear viewing still typically secures higher levels of ad engagement—both in terms of how likely viewers are to stay in the room (Viewability) and how likely they are to keep their eyes on the screen (Attention)—though CTV is closing the gap. CTV Attention increased 11% in H1 2022 compared to 2021, and Viewability is also on the rise.

### Linear Secures Higher Engagement, but CTV is on the Rise



Source: TVision Panel | Jan 2021 - Jun 2022

Lower ad engagement in CTV is likely due to several contributing factors. For instance, not all CTV content is equal, so while CTV has a reputation for intentional viewing, this is in part dependent on the high-quality content that is often gated within SVOD apps that are not yet monetized with ads. CTV viewers also tend to skew younger, whereas we consistently see that older audiences pay more attention overall. Lastly, many CTV viewers are seeing the same ads on repeat with very little time between airings. We'll show later how recency can negatively impact attention.

[Want more details on the changing CTV landscape? Check out our State of CTV Advertising Report.](#)



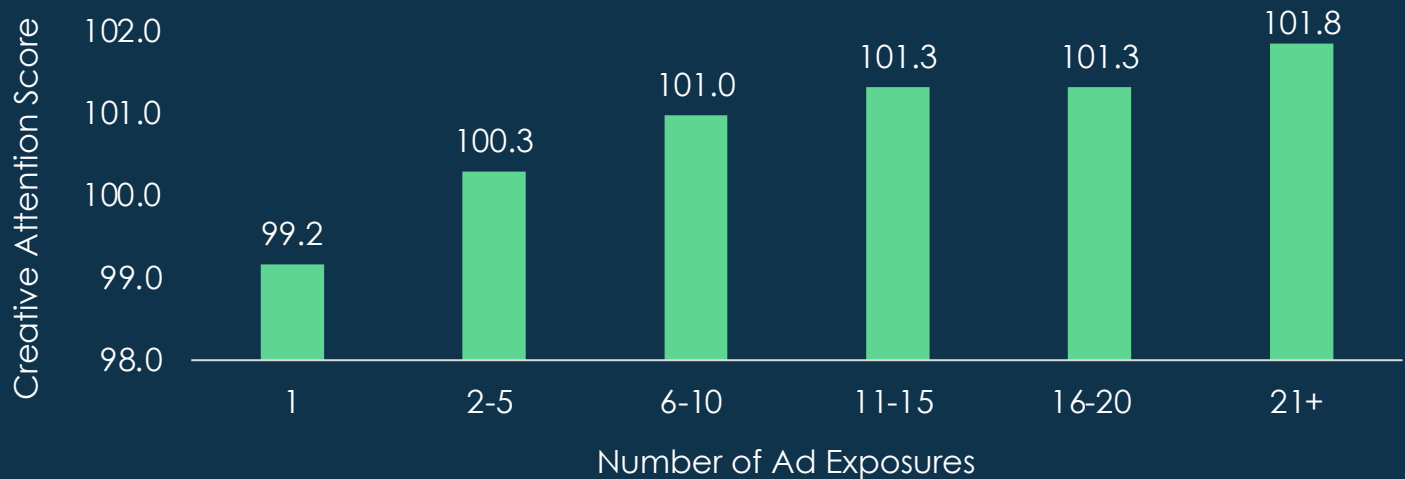
## Linear Attention Depends on Frequency

Regardless of whether an advertiser is running on linear or CTV, frequency is essential for getting viewers to engage with a brand's creative. To better understand the optimal level of frequency and what factors impact this number, TVision looked at the relationship between exposure and Creative Attention Score (CAS)—an ad's ability to grab the audience's attention compared to other ads that ran in the same ad pod.

In linear, it takes approximately 6-10 exposures for an ad to wear in and reach above-average CAS across broadcast and cable. As brands achieve additional exposures beyond that point, attention begins to flatten out slightly, but notably, does not decrease—though few impressions fall within this category.

GENERAL RULE FOR AD FREQUENCY:  
**6-10**  
ad exposures minimum

### Creative Attention by Number of Exposures



**% of Total Impressions:**

43.8%

35.4%

10.4%

4.1%

2.1%

4.2%

Source: TVision Panel | Mar 2021 - Apr 2022 | All Ads in Linear and CTV

## Ad Frequency Across Industries

Looking at average ad frequency and creative attention across industries, the 6-10 threshold becomes especially important. Most industries average only 2-5 exposures per creative when weighted for impressions—well below the range where they start to see their highest scores. One exception is Entertainment, which averages 2-5 exposures per ad and sees exceptionally high attention in that range. This is likely because this category includes promos, which capture attention differently than other ads. Other industries may be missing out on an opportunity to use their creatives to their fullest potential and may not need to rotate their creatives quite as often.

## Creative Attention Score by Frequency by Industry

	1st Exposure	2-5 Exposures	6-10 Exposures	11+ Exposures	Avg. Frequency (weighted)
APPAREL	98.74	100.13	102.46	101.18	2.8
AUTO	98.27	100.53	101.89	102.25	4.2
CONSUMER PRODUCTS	97.70	98.82	99.52	100.48	5.9
COSMETICS	97.51	98.79	99.45	99.92	5.8
EDUCATION	97.99	98.82	100.35	99.39	4.4
ELECTRONICS	98.78	100.68	102.83	104.02	3.8
ENTERTAINMENT	101.68	102.71	102.64	102.60	4.1
FOOD & BEVERAGE	98.01	99.32	99.95	100.12	5.7
GOVERNMENT	99.07	100.29	100.19	100.43	4.8
HEALTH	98.02	99.79	101.06	102.22	6.4
HOME & GARDEN	98.24	99.76	100.20	100.54	4.7
LEGAL & FINANCIAL	98.43	100.30	101.44	102.38	5.8
RESTAURANTS	98.16	99.85	100.57	100.81	4.5
RETAIL	98.17	99.75	100.78	100.76	4.3
SERVICES	98.05	99.31	100.32	101.49	6.2
TELECOM	97.79	100.03	101.30	101.70	4.8
TRAVEL	98.33	100.25	101.14	101.13	4.1

■ Avg. Frequency

■ Highest CAS

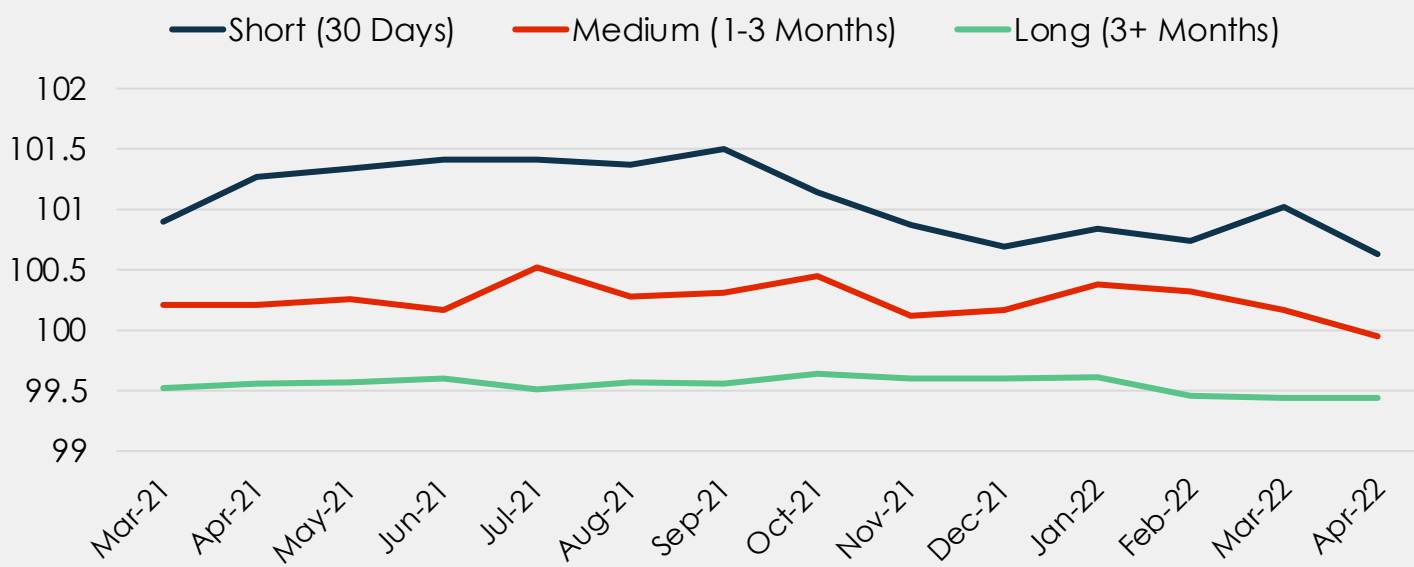
## The Longer the Campaign, the More Frequency Matters

A brand's campaign flight length can also impact its ad attention. In this chart, we've plotted average Creative Attention Scores by day for short, medium, and long linear TV campaigns. In this view, you can see that short campaigns consistently perform better than mid-length campaigns, which in turn, perform better than long campaigns. It is notable that these lines don't cross - further indicating that campaign length plays a role in creative attention.

One reason long campaigns see lower attention may be that viewers are seeing ads too far apart. For long campaigns, ad exposures occur more than five days apart from one another for 50% of impressions. Assuming that Attention is driven in part by familiarity, this longer time between exposures may be too long - subsequent impressions perform more like a viewer's first exposure.

It should be noted that while on average, short campaign flights that run only 30 days see higher Creative Attention Scores, this varies depending on the specific industries, the number of creatives in-market, and how frequently viewers are seeing a brand's ads. Even though the lift performance earned by shorter campaigns may be small, every extra second of captured attention matters for marketers looking to engage potential customers.

### Creative Attention by Campaign Length



Source: TVision Panel | Mar 2021 - Apr 2022 | All Ads in Linear and CTV

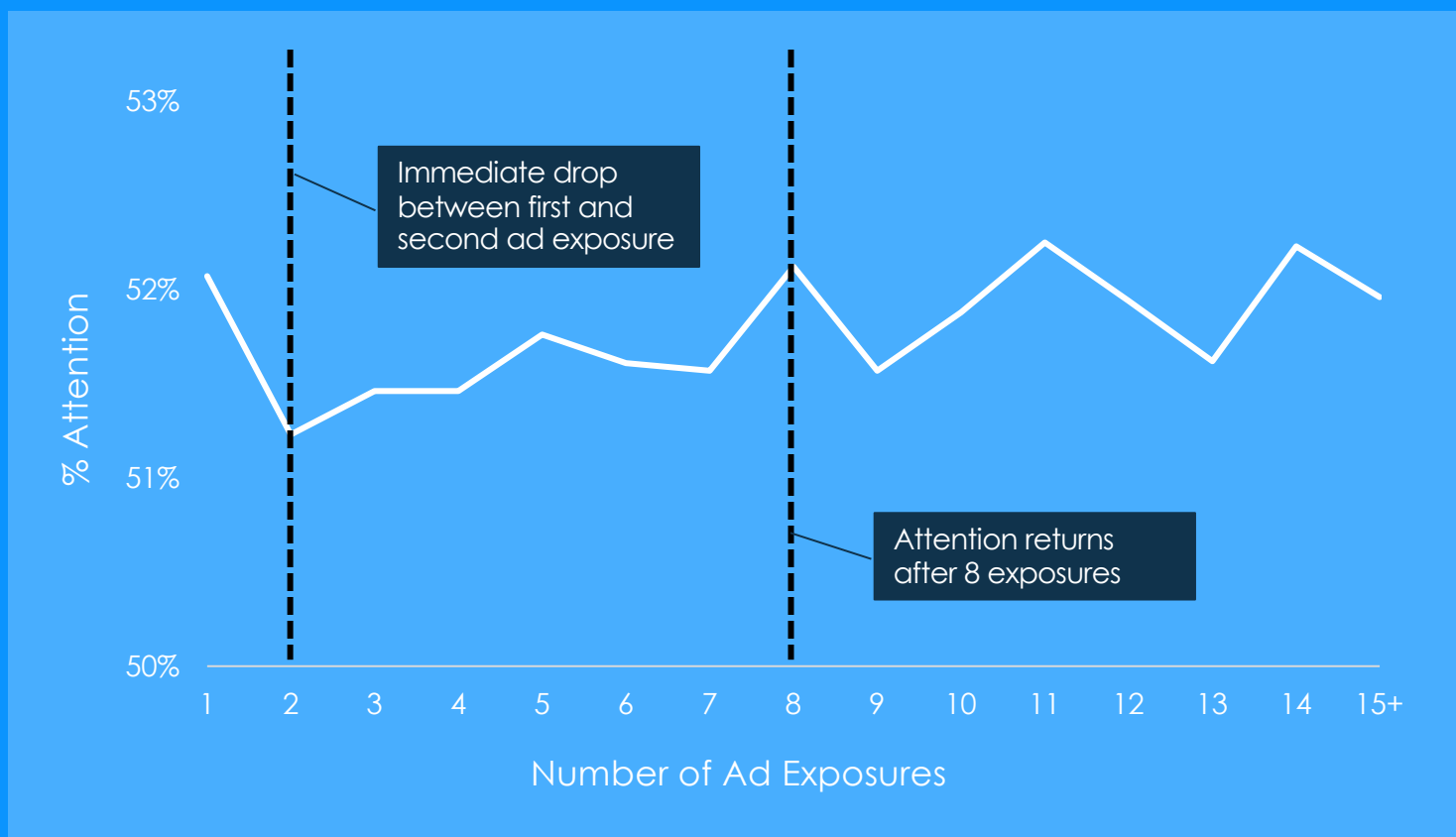


## CTV Attention is More Sensitive to Ad Frequency

As viewers we've all experienced it: you're streaming a show and feel a sense of déjà vu as the same exact commercial plays during every ad break—sometimes back-to-back.

While linear TV exhibits a positive relationship between ad frequency and Attention, CTV quickly shows the reverse effect. On average, when a CTV viewer sees an ad for the same brand more than once in a month, attention immediately drops by a percentage point upon that second exposure and does not recover until the eighth exposure. Due to the notorious oversaturation of ads in CTV platforms, recency is a major factor in engagement. To help understand why wear out happens so quickly in CTV (and how to avoid it), we took a deeper look at how the time between repeat ad exposures in CTV impacts viewer attention on the next page.

### Ad Attention in CTV Platforms Drops After the First Exposure

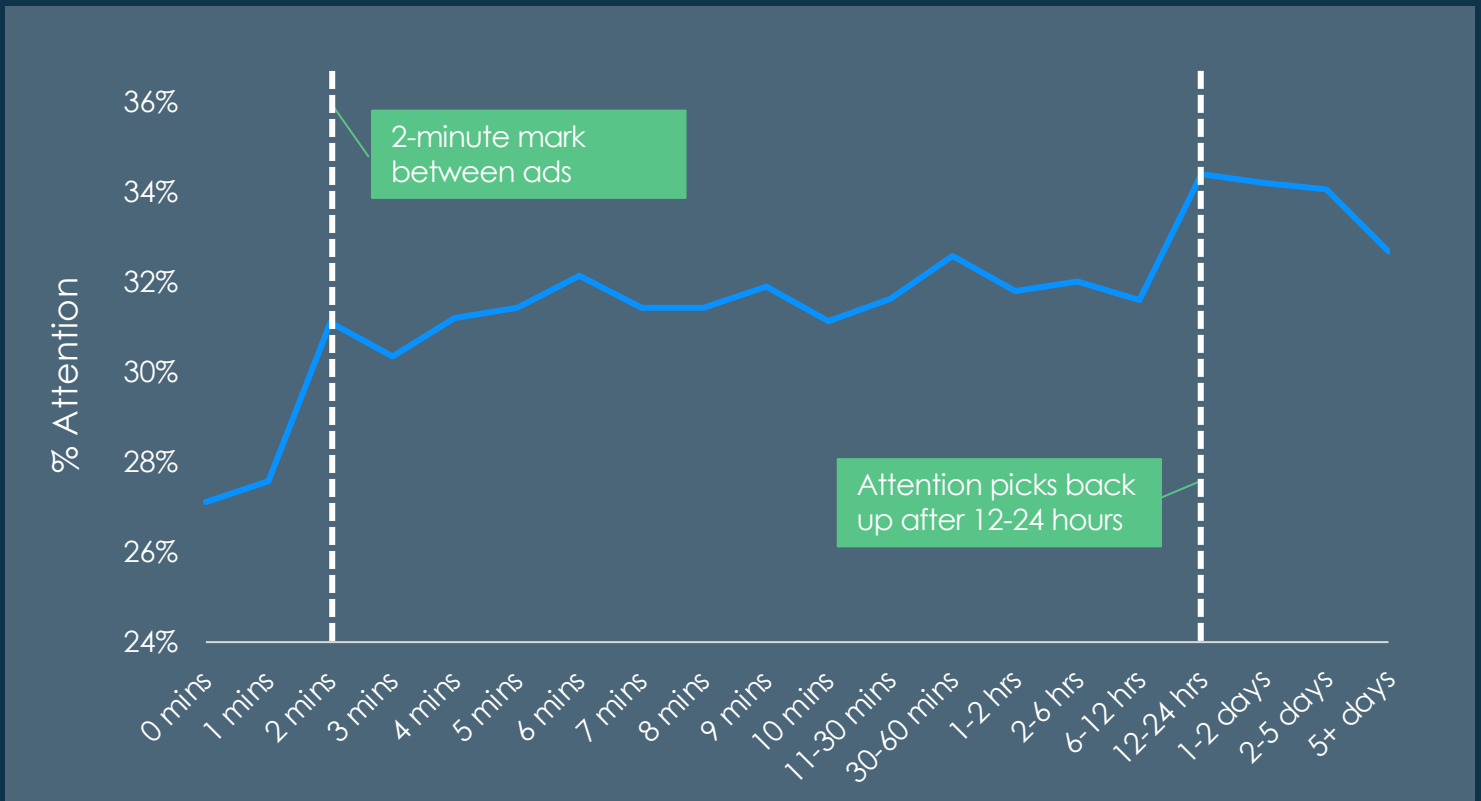


Source: TVision Panel | Jan 2022 - March 2022, Linear & CTV Ad Impressions, P2+

## Streaming Frequency and Ad Repetition

When repeat ads air too closely together, the negative relationship between CTV attention and frequency is especially pronounced. Most notably, viewers streaming content on ad-supported CTV apps pay less attention when the same brand airs multiple ads less than two minutes apart from one another. However, when a brand's CTV ads air farther apart from one another, attention starts to reach higher levels and stabilize. Once at least 12-24 hours pass between the ad repeat exposures, attention comes back. The problem of repeat airings in CTV has yet to be fixed; however, some networks like NBC are taking meaningful steps to solve for ad repetition. For instance, modifying the time between recent airings of the same brand. In the meantime, marketers can use the numbers in this study as guidelines when requesting frequency caps from platforms to keep ads from repeating too close to one another and avoid wear out.

### Attention % by Time Since Last Creative Exposure



Source: TVision Panel | Jan 2022 - March 2022, Linear & CTV Ad Impressions, P2+

## Creative Frequency: Tips to Maximize Attention

1

Linear and CTV should be treated differently as viewers respond differently to more frequent ad exposures in each channel.

2

A general rule of thumb, 6-10 exposures per viewer per ad can be applied to most linear campaigns.

3

If the same ad is being distributed through multiple CTV partners, frequency caps can reduce the chance of customers seeing it back-to-back. Consider adding a wider variety of creatives to your CTV rotation to reduce the risk of repeat ad wear out.





# How An Ad's Pod Position Impacts Attention to Creative

In a world where customers are constantly surrounded by ads, the context in which an ad airs is an essential component in getting and keeping consumer attention. On TV, where your ad plays in the ad pod, the length of the pod, the genre of program, and the order of ad breaks within the program all impact how audiences engage with your ad.

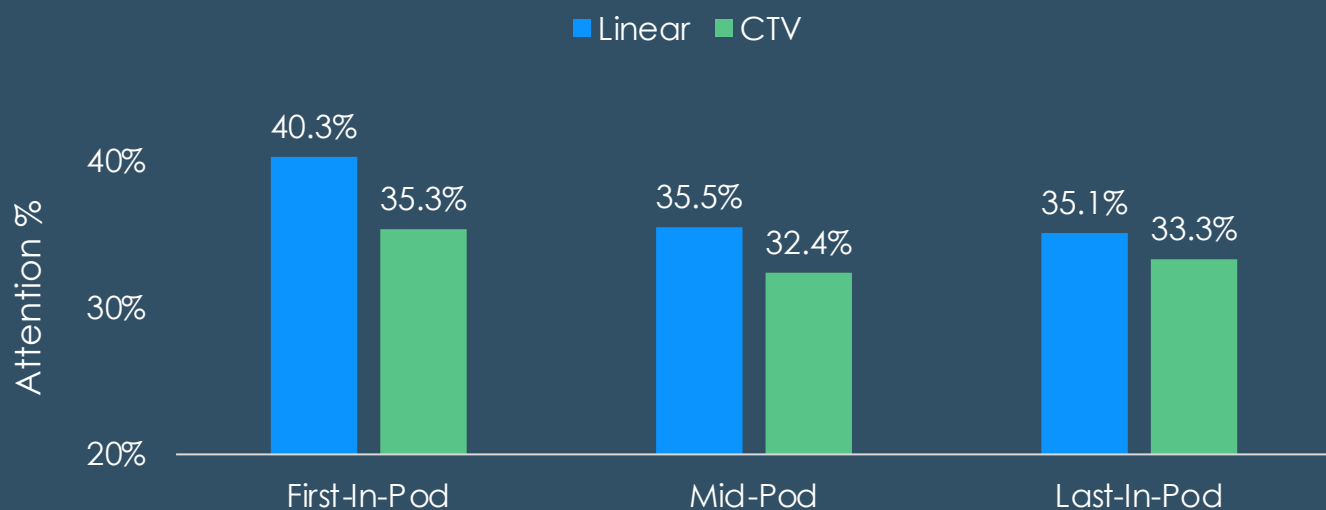
Here are some must-know insights into how ad position impacts creative attention along with tips to set up your creative for success.

## The First Ad in the Pod Performs Best Across Both Linear & CTV

When it comes to pod position, ads that play first during the commercial break consistently command higher attention than those that air later in the same pod. This is especially true for linear TV, where first-in-pod placements average 5 percentage points higher for viewers who keep their eyes on the screen for more than two seconds.

First-in-pod CTV ads also average slightly higher attention; however, there, the benefit is less pronounced. This is the first hint that pod position does not have as much of a material impact on viewer attention in CTV as it has in linear. Furthermore, there is a slight uptick in people paying attention again for the last-in-pod position. This suggests that the attention of CTV viewers, who can more easily track the timing of the ad breaks, may time when they pay attention again with when they know the ad pod ends.

### Average Attention by Pod Position



Source: TVision Panel | Jan – Mar 2022 | Linear & CTV Ad Impressions, P2+

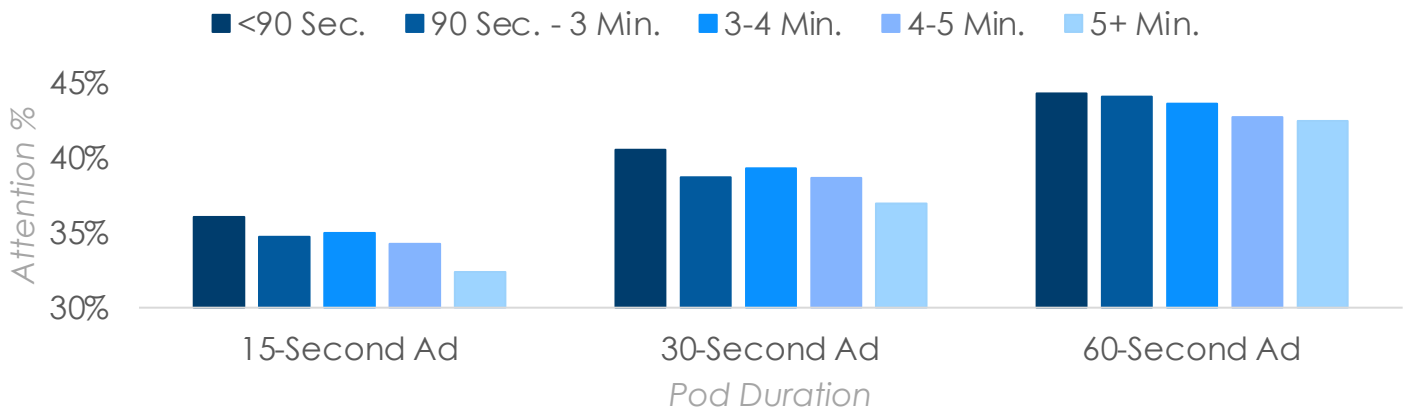


It's important to note that while streaming television allows viewers to be more deliberate with their programming selections, TVision data shows traditional linear viewing still typically secures higher levels of overall ad Attention vs. CTV.

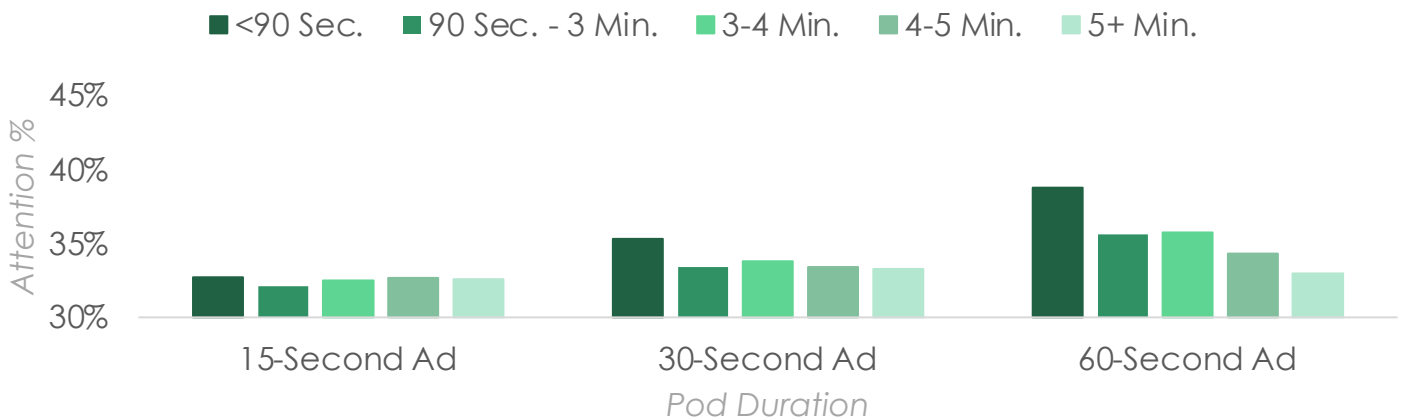
## The Shorter the Pod, the Higher the Ad Attention

We also evaluated how the overall length of both the ad break and the ad itself impact viewer Attention. Shorter ad breaks (90 seconds or less) secure the highest levels of Attention across both linear and CTV regardless of ad length. Meanwhile, ad breaks that last more than five minutes typically see the lowest levels of Attention for each ad length. You may notice that 60-Second Ads generally receive a higher percent of attention – but keep in mind that the longer the ad is on the screen, the greater chance it has of reaching our benchmark for being an attentive impression. On the next page, we'll look more closely at whether longer ads deliver higher ROI.

### Linear Attention by Pod Duration & Ad Length



### CTV Attention by Pod Duration & Ad Length

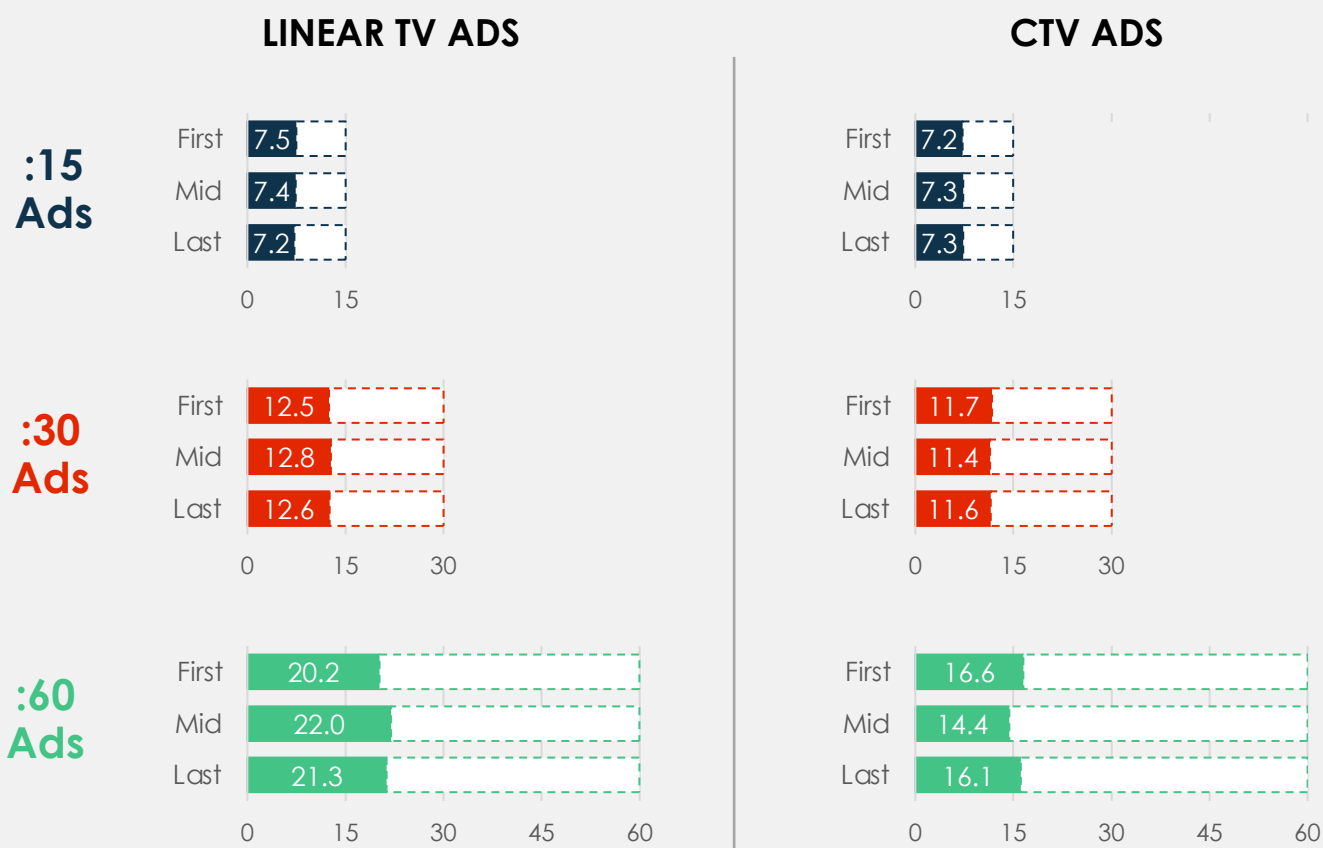




## First-In-Pod, Long Ads Don't Always Equal Better ROI

Traditionally, longer ads have given marketers a greater opportunity to engage their audience. But just because an ad is on the screen for longer does not necessarily mean it's delivering more attention time proportional to the ad's length. Let's take a closer look at how many seconds of attention are actually paid across pod positions.

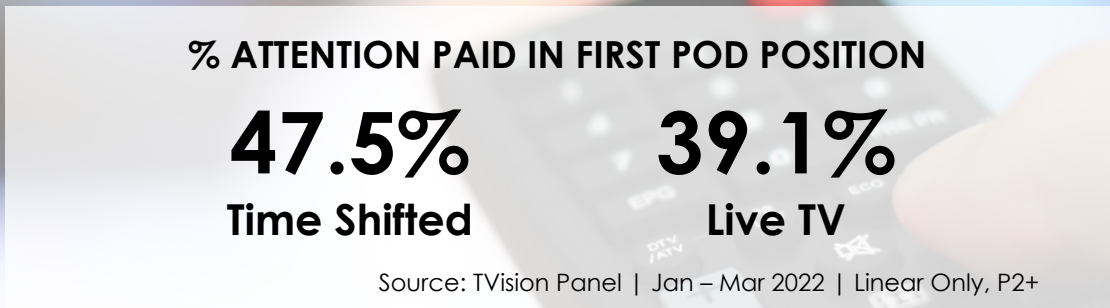
### Attentive Seconds by Ad Length and Pod Position



It is notable that attentive time does not vary that significantly across pod positions – implying that after an advertiser captures viewer attention, it is the quality of the ad itself, and not pod position that will determine its impact. That said, viewers spent more attentive seconds watching 60-second ads than for both linear and CTV, but when factoring in total run time, they watched nearly half of the 15-second ads vs. a third or less of the 60-second ads. Assuming every second of ad time is priced equally, shorter ads may provide better ROI as they deliver more attention for your dollar.

## Time Shifted TV Captures More Attention Than Live TV

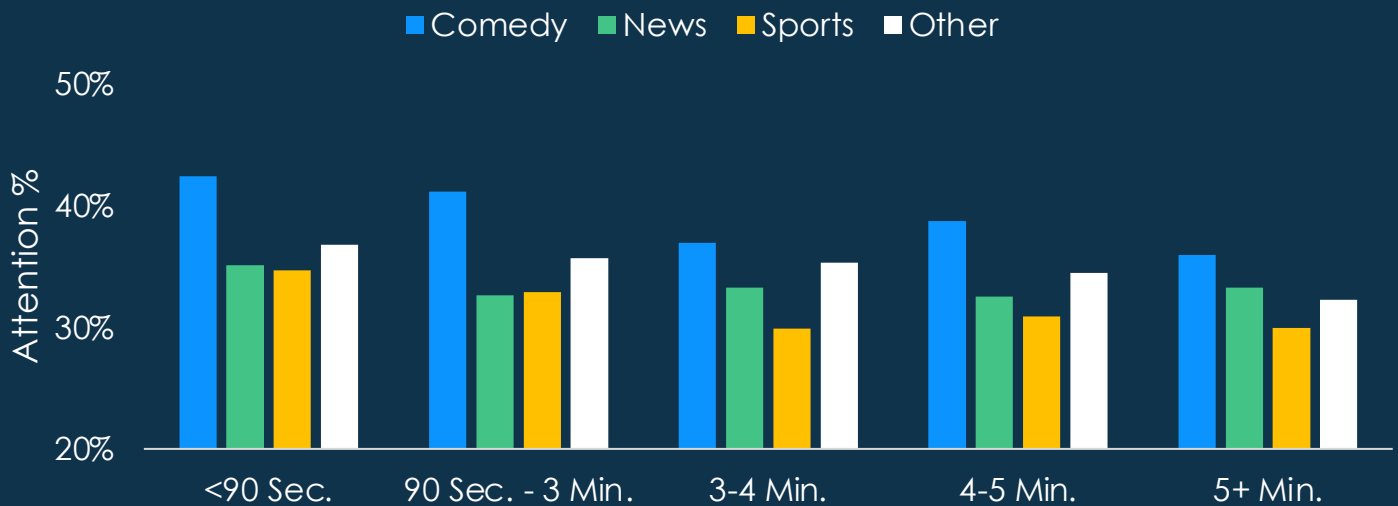
Although audiences viewing content after its original air date often have the ability fast-forward through ads, programs with large time-shifted audiences may still provide additional value. Even if these more intentional viewers choose not to watch all the ads in time-shifted programming (including on-demand), they are more attentive for the ads they do watch as well as less likely to leave the room than those watching live TV.



## Comedy Fans Have Higher Attention Spans for Shorter Pods

Audiences watching comedy programs are more likely to pay attention across pod lengths vs. news and sports viewers—especially for shorter pod durations. This is true across ad lengths.

### Linear TV % Attention by Genre



Source: TVision Panel | Jan – Mar 2022 | Linear Ad Impressions, P2+, Genre Data for 15-Second Ads Only

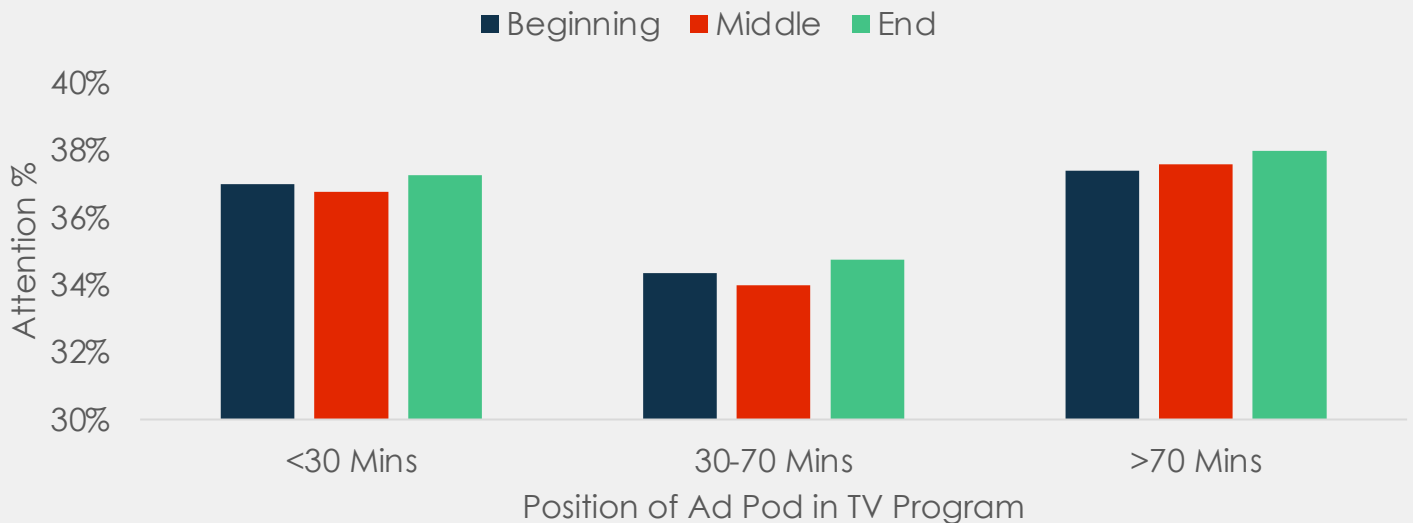
## Ad Attention Is Highest Towards the End of the Show

The break during which an ad airs also has an impact on viewer attention. In general, ad attention decreases slightly between the first third of the program and the second and then rises to its highest toward the end of the program. One exception is longer programming (more than 70 minutes), which sees a gradual increase in ad attention throughout the program. Since some genres typically fall within certain program lengths, the bottom chart may hint at how program genres impact audience attention. We'll investigate the role of program context further in our next Creative Attention Report.

### % Attention Paid By Position of Ad Break In the Program



### Ad Attention Steadily Rises During Ad Breaks for Longer Programs



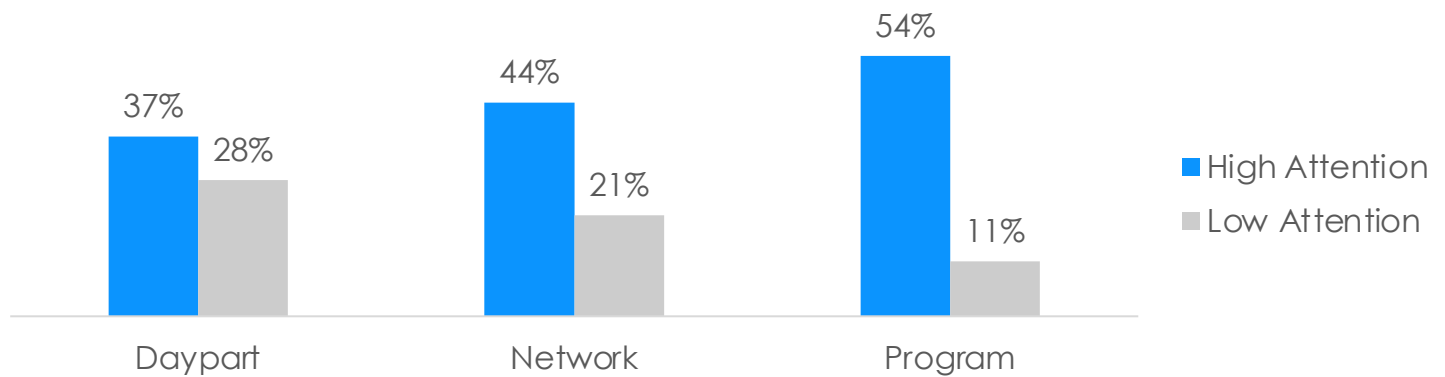
Source: TVision Panel | Jan 2022 - March 2022, Linear & CTV Ad Impressions, P2+



## Finding the Best Opportunities to Drive Attention

While ads that air first-in-pod or towards the end of the program typically command the highest attention, there are several other ways to ensure your ad engages viewers. Our data shows that Attention varies dramatically across dayparts, networks, and programming. In fact, there are programs across all dayparts that deliver higher Attention, and usually at lower costs, than some Primetime spots. Since ads work best when people pay attention, factoring Attention into media plans and media valuations can help both buyers and sellers uncover value.

### Attention Varies by Network, Daypart, and Program



Source: TVision Panel Panel 2021 | Viewers Ages 18-49

## Case Study: CPG Brand Maximizes Upfront Commitments

Advertisers that optimize for Attention can dramatically improve the efficiency of their campaigns and drive real results. Here's what happened when a major household cleaning brand used TVision to identify the dayparts and programs that delivered the highest ad attention.

### KEY RESULTS:

**8%**

Improvement in Attentive CPM (aCPM)

**80%**

Improved aCPM across 80% of network/dayparts

**510K**

Reallocated \$510K of "wasted investment"

**59M**

On track for 59M more Attentive impressions annually

## Pod Position: Tips to Maximize Attention

1

Work with platforms to negotiate ideal pod positions: First-pod garner significantly higher attention—especially in Linear. Ask for optimal pod placements to make your ad stand out.

2

Experiment with shorter CTV ad lengths: Try adding some 15-second ads to your mix. They deliver more attention for your dollar and are less sensitive to pod placement.

3

Use second-by-second insights to identify which creative elements drive engagement.



## Is Context Really Key for Ad Attention?

### How Humor, Programming, and Celebrity Endorsements Engage Audiences

Creative or Media Planning? Which is most responsible for an ad campaign's success? Media planners know that when and where an ad airs on TV matters just as much to the campaign's overall success as the creative itself. Creative teams know that an ad's ability to engage audiences is about more than scoring a placement in the best-rated primetime programs. Likely, all marketers would intuitively agree that attention is earned, in part, by delivering the right ad to the most receptive audience.

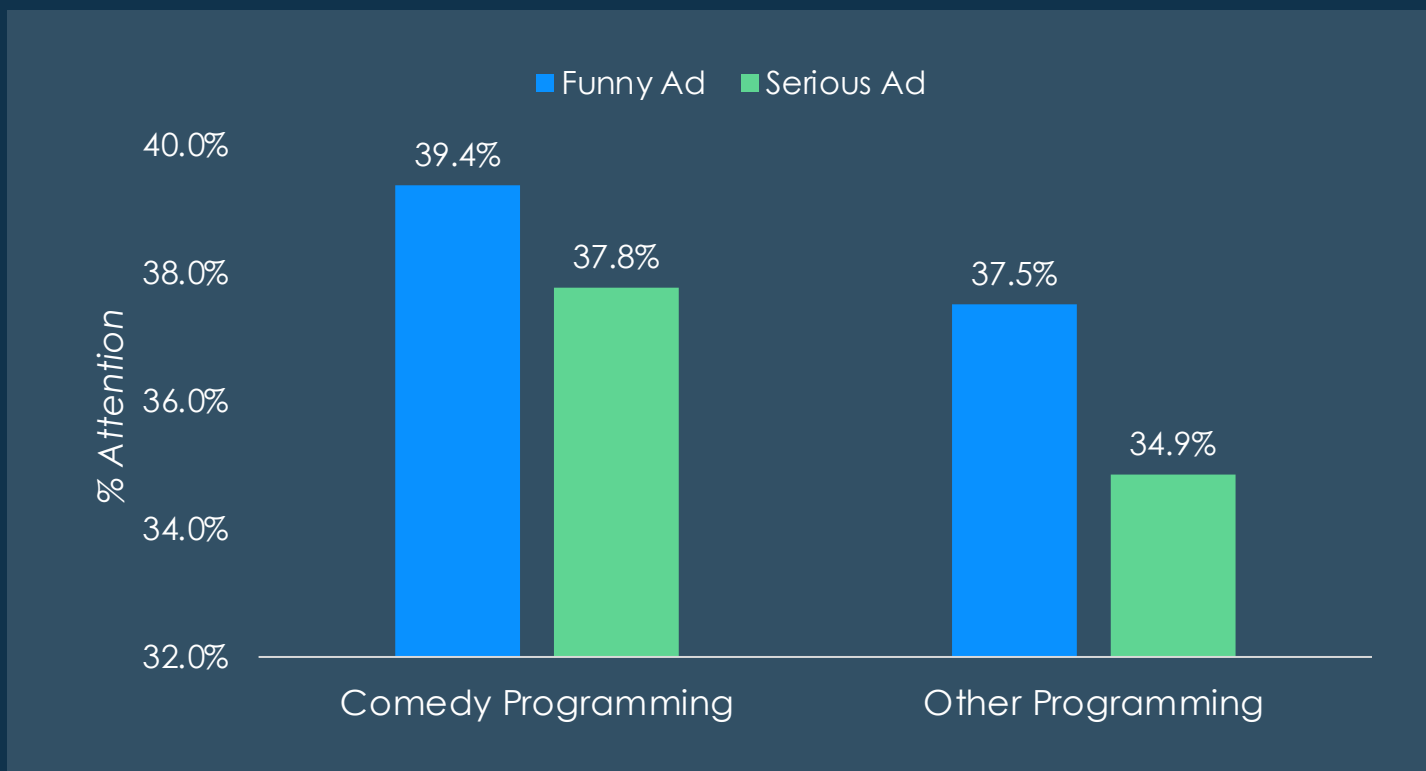
We looked at how the combination of a program's genre and the tone of the ad can impact how well an ad keeps viewers' eyes on the screen. Here are some must-know insights into how contextual relevancy impacts creative attention along with tips to set up your creative for success.

## Humor: The Universal Attention Getter

One of the biggest tools in advertiser's arsenal is humor. But do these funny ads do a better job at engaging viewers who are already watching a comedy on TV, or do they stand out better in more serious programming?

TVision took some of the most iconic ads that ran in the last two years and looked at how they performed across the top Primetime shows by volume. In general, viewers paid more attention to funny ads regardless of programming. These ads captured 5% more attention in comedy programming and 8.4% in other programming than more serious ads. While funny ads captured the highest attention overall during programs of that same genre, the variance in ad attention for other programming is notable. This suggests a tension between ad genre and program genre can also be effective at keeping viewers on the edge of their seats.

### Ad Attention by Programming Genre



Source: TVision Panel | Jul 2020 – May 2022 | comedic and serious ads | linear TV

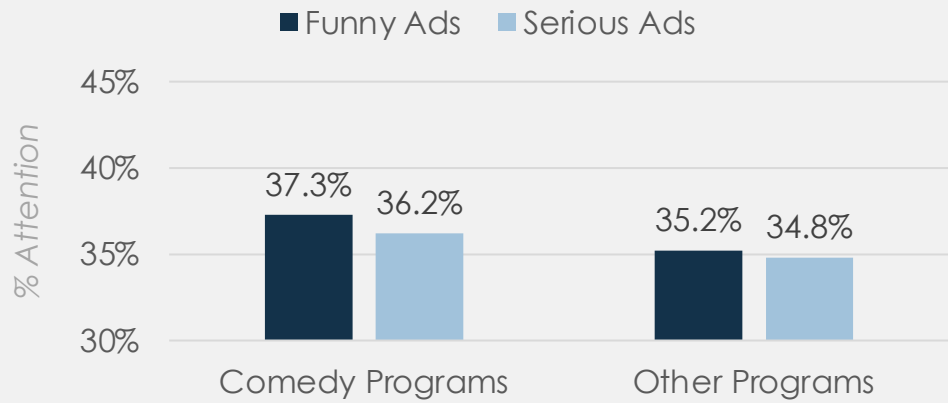


## How Ad Length Impacts Contextual Relevancy

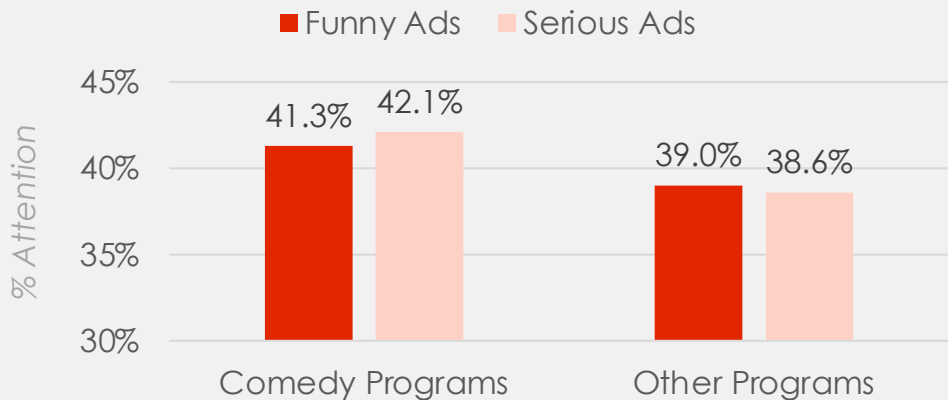
The length the ad also factors into the contextual relevancy equation. For shorter 15-second ads, those that used humor were the best at keeping viewers eyes on the screen. However, serious 30-second ads outperformed funny ads of that same length in comedy programming. While clever and quippy ads may lend themselves well to shorter spots, somewhat counterintuitively, serious ads can still shine with comedy fans when they air in longer formats and have more time to tell their story.

### For Longer Ads, Serious Performs Best in Comedy Programming

#### LINEAR ATTENTION FOR :15 ADS



#### LINEAR ATTENTION FOR :30 ADS



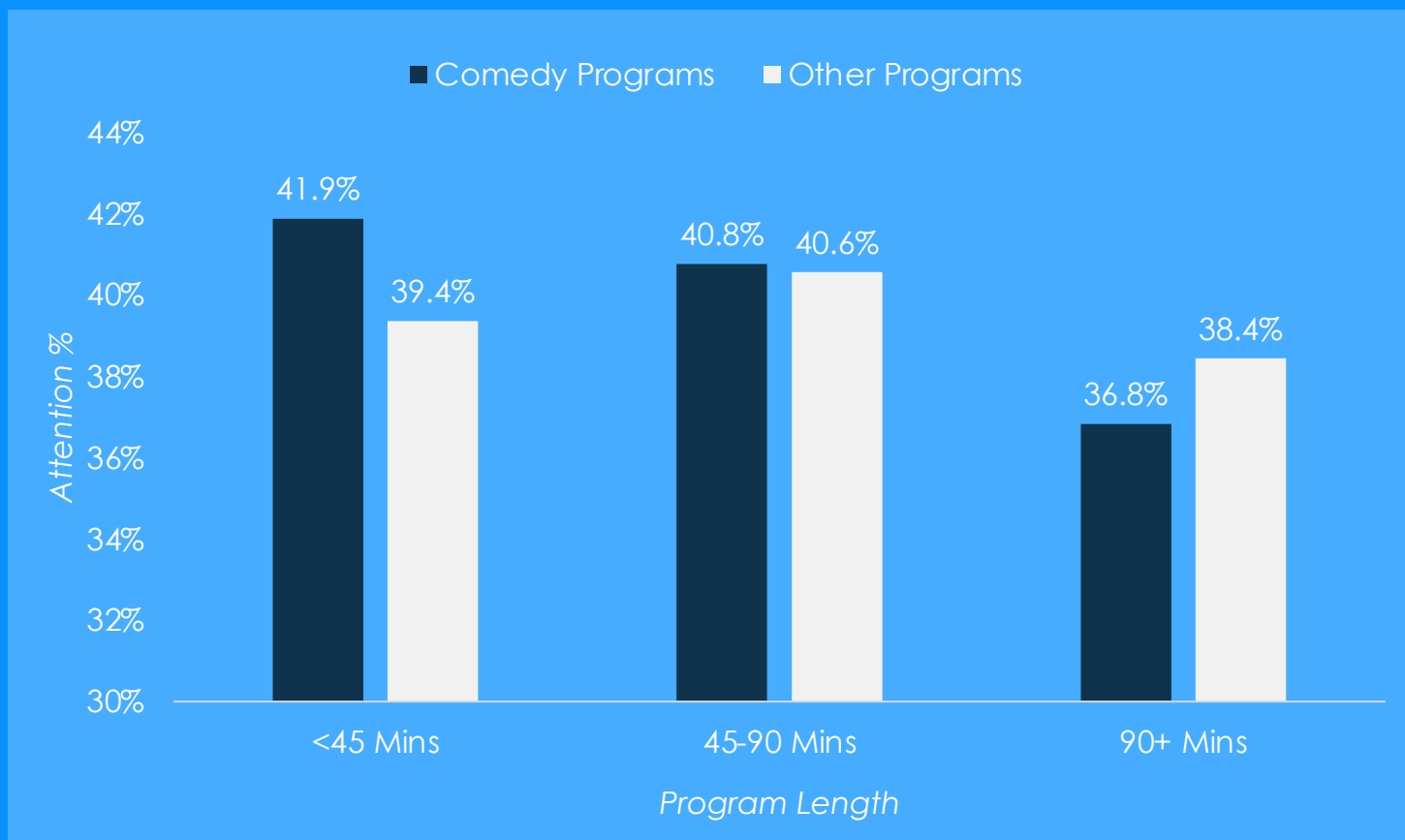
Source: TVision Panel | Jul 2020 – May 2022 | comedic and serious ads | linear TV

## Comedy Ad Attention Varies by Program Length

As we noted in the previous installment in our Creative Attention series, "[How An Ad's Pod Position Impacts Attention to Creative](#)," ads can see a significant variance in attention depending on both the genre and the length of the program in which it airs. This was especially the case when we took a closer look at how funny ads performed across program lengths.

Attention is impacted by a mix of genre and program length. Overall, viewers paid more attention to humorous ads that ran in shorter shows (less than 45 minutes) vs. those that ran in movie-length programs (90+ minutes). That said, the rate of decline in ad attention was more significant in comedy programs than it was in other programming.

### Attention to Funny Ads by Program Genre and Length



Source: TVision Panel | Jul 2020 – May 2022 | comedic ads only | linear TV

## Celebrity Spotlight: Star Power Pays Off for Major Events

Context also plays a critical role in attention during major sporting events. For example, Subway kicked off its brand-new Eat Fresh Refresh campaign just in time for the 2021 Olympics. Appropriately, the ads featured a lineup of star athletes to announce the new menu update.

For Subway, investing in relevant star power paid off. Viewers paid 3.6% more attention to Subway ads during the Olympics vs. the period before. Ads featuring celebrities earned 4.5% more attention than those without and caused attention to spike when celebrities were on the screen.



**+4.5%**  
**ad attention**

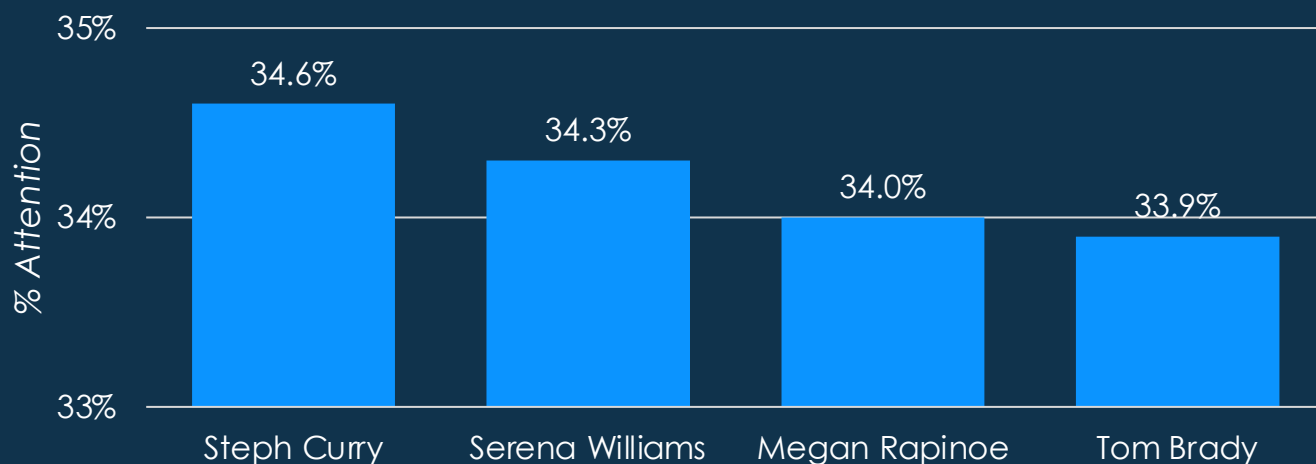
for Subway ads during the Olympics vs. the period prior

Source: TVision Panel | Subway Ads Only | Pre-Olympics: Sep 2020 – Jun 2021, Olympic s.: Jul – Aug 2021

## Which Subway Eat Fresh Refresh Stars Captured Attention?

Subway's Eat Fresh Refresh campaign featured an all-star lineup of athletes. Of all the creative variations highlighting individual sports stars, Steph Curry's ad garnered the highest attention.

### TV Attention for Subway Ads Featuring Sports Stars



Source: TVision Panel | P2+ | September 2020-August 2021 | Normal Sample >= 30 | Subway 15s Ads Only

## Contextual Relevancy: Tips to Maximize Attention

1

Experiment with adding humor into your ads as a surefire way to capture overall attention.

2

Have a more serious ad or message? Consider longer ad lengths and choose programming that is more humorous so that your ad can stand out and grab attention.

3

Analyze your ads' second-by-second performance and compare which elements kept eyes on the screen vs. where attention wandered—for example celebrity appearances or product close-ups.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP  
WITH AD SCOREBOARD



## TV Attention Metrics at Your Fingertips

TVision's new, low-cost, SaaS platform puts actionable Attention metrics for ANY brand, ANY TV ad, or ANY network at marketers' fingertips. With Ad Scoreboard, it's easier than ever to get mid-campaign insights into how TV viewers engage with TV ads and programming. There is no limit to the ad and brand data you'll have access to - making it an essential platform for both creative monitoring and competitive intelligence.

### Check Out Ad Scoreboard To See How Marketers Can:

- Benchmark their Attention KPIs against the norm
- Uncover what ads competitors are running and what drives their performance
- Get second-by-second insight into eyes-on-screen Attention to any ad
- Optimize campaigns to avoid wear out and focus on attentive audiences

Ad Scoreboard is an important step toward TVision's commitment to making value-based Attention metrics accessible and actionable for any TV marketer. It is available today as a monthly or annual subscription. [Learn more](#) or [request a demo](#).



## About TVision

### *The Leader in TV Engagement Metrics*

TVision measures what was once unmeasurable— how people really watch TV. Using cutting-edge computer vision technology, only TVision measures person-level, second-by-second TV engagement. Marketers and media sellers access TVision's TV performance metrics via its software-as-a-service platform. TVision's customers include some of the largest brands in the world, top media networks, and CTV applications.

TVision's single-source panel enables measurement across both Linear TV and CTV, providing critical metrics such as Attention, Viewability, Co-Viewing, and more.

## Key Metric Definitions & Methodology

### Methodology

TVision measures Ad Viewability and Ad Attention for every second of programming and advertising on television. Every time a person walks into the room, our technology detects who the viewer is, where they are in the room, and what their eyes are looking at. We do all this without personally identifying individual users, and without transmitting any images or videos. TVision's data is collected from an opt-in panel of 5,000 homes across the United States. All data are weighted to represent the country. All demographic data is self-reported by the respondents. All data is for linear and CTV ad impressions from January 1 – March 31, 2022, unless otherwise indicated.

### Key Metrics / Definitions

**Viewability (%):** This measures the percentage of all ad impressions in which a viewer was in the room for two or more seconds.

**Attention (%):** This measures the percentage of ad impressions where a viewer was watching the TV screen for two or more seconds.

**Creative Attention Score (CAS):** The ad's ability to grab the audience's attention. CAS is measured by indexing the ad's attention percentage compared to other ads that ran in the same ad pod.

**Attentive Seconds:** This is the average amount of seconds that viewers engage with a program.

**Average Frequency:** The average number of times a viewer is exposed to a brand's ads per month. For every brand exposure within a given month, the exposure frequency per viewer would increment.