

# How DVR is changing the world of TV advertising

July 11 2019, by Sunny Rosen

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Research from UD's Robert Kent suggests that DVR is changing the landscape of television advertising. Delayed viewing means that advertisers need to consider what types of ads to use based on a TV program's genre. Credit: University of Delaware

As digital advertising takes over the world of marketing, with popular focus on everything from social media ads to search engine ads, it can be easy to forget about television. In recent years, though, the TV landscape has changed significantly. For example, half of TV drama viewers now

watch through digital video recorders (DVR).

What does this mean for advertisements? Are there certain types of ads that work better for DVR viewers? Or are viewers just fast-forwarding through all of the ads?

Exploring this issue is "Advertisements in DVR Time," an article by the University of Delaware's Robert Kent that was recently published in the Journal of Advertising Research. In it, Kent and his coauthors found that DVR viewers aren't fast-forwarding through ads as much as we might think.

DVR viewers "fast-forward only two-thirds of the ads," said Kent, who is an associate professor of marketing at UD's Alfred Lerner College of Business and Economics. "So one-third of the ads from all that viewing adds up to a lot of delayed normal-speed ads."

These statistics mean, Kent said, that many DVR viewers are still seeing ads, but they may be doing so days or even weeks after their initial broadcast. This is something that advertisers of the future will need to keep in mind.

"You have to look at when you want people to see a television ad, not just who you want to see it," he said. "Advertisers should look at the content of their message... is it for a retail sale, a concert, the opening weekend of a Hollywood movie?"

Time-sensitive content like this might not be a great fit for programs with high rates of DVR viewers. These rates, Kent said, often depend on a [television program](#)'s genre.

"Half of the people watching drama shows, the most common show type in expensive primetime TV, are now watching with some delay," he said.

This means that DVRs account for more than 25% of all advertisement views from dramas.

In contrast, Kent said, "At the other extreme, in a sports show, there are very few delayed viewers, so there are very few delayed ads. A live sports show, live reality show installment, live news show, an award show—those would have many more live viewers than a drama.

"You have whole channels that no one's going to watch on a DVR. Who would DVR "The Weather Channel," right?"

Kent said the situation requires advertisers to consider where to place their ads: "If it's time-sensitive, be careful advertising in all those primetime dramas."

In the future, Kent plans to expand his TV-related research into the realm of live-tweeting with TV. He is working with colleagues to understand the ways that TV networks can use [social media](#) to encourage more people to watch live.

"TV networks can't stop simultaneous use of multiple screens, the phone and the television, but can they sometimes fuel content on the phone that gets more people to watch their TV [show](#) live?" Kent asked. "No one has the ability to create a better social media platform than the television network itself—it has all behind the scenes access and contracts with the actors. Those are the types of content that we're trying to learn about right now."

Provided by University of Delaware

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