

RETAIL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES FOR RETAIL MEDIA & COMMERCE MEDIA NETWORKS

IAB EUROPE'S RETAIL & COMMERCE MEDIA COMMITTEE HAS CREATED A BITE-SIZED OVERVIEW OF BEST PRACTICES FOR RETAIL AND COMMERCE MEDIA NETWORKS (RMNS AND CMNS) TO SUPPORT THEM IN BUILDING AND SCALING SUCCESSFUL RETAIL OR COMMERCE MEDIA OFFERINGS.





WHAT IS COMMERCE (INCL. RETAIL) MEDIA?

Commerce Media Networks, which includes Retail Media Networks, allow brands and merchants to address shoppers with products and services throughout their buying journey on and off owned platforms. It uses commerce/retail data for planning, execution, and measurement. Commerce media includes an increasing range of activations in on-site, off-site, and in-store environments.



TOP THREE TIPS FOR SUCCESS

OMNICHANNEL STRATEGIC FOUNDATIONS

Maximise Retail Media total addressable market by offering scaled and differentiated propositions across on-site, off-site, and in-store channels, balancing managed vs. self-serve buying mechanics. Prioritise based on scalability, margin, and effort.

CUSTOMER-CENTRIC EXECUTION

Keep media seamless and fully integrated within the customer experience. Ensure media on retailer-owned properties aligns with customer interaction, while off-site balances buyer needs with privacy considerations.

ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY

Embed retail media within the broader retail strategy - from team structure to P&L. Secure early internal buy-in to break down silos and unlock full potential.



MONETISING DATA

BALANCE SCALE WITH UNIQUE CUSTOMER INSIGHTS

Build broad and niche audiences by combining high-scale purchase segments with valuable customer traits, ensuring relevance for advertisers.

LEVERAGE RETAIL INSIGHTS AS STRATEGIC ASSETS

Standardise planning and measurement outputs, creating tiered access models to unlock commercial value from behavioural data.

DRIVE INSIGHT-LED ACTIVATION & TARGETING

Ensure customer insights inform planning, activation, and measurement. Offer granular targeting through self-service tools while safeguarding data usage and brand experience.

EXTEND LOYALTY DATA FOR OMNICHANNEL GROWTH

Activate data beyond site and app - leverage it for off-site campaigns across e.g., open web and CTV. Adopt a test-and-learn approach to enhance customer experience and refine performance metrics.



AD INVENTORY & PLACEMENT OPTIMISATION

TEST CONTINUOUSLY FOR OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE

A strong, live testing capability is crucial. Experiment with different formats and creative variations to identify what resonates best and drives results.

BALANCE REVENUE WITH SHOPPER EXPERIENCE

Optimise ad inventory for both relevance and performance, ensuring placements enhance rather than disrupt the shopping journey while maintaining full control over user experience.

DIVERSIFY FORMATS & LEVERAGE DYNAMIC AD DECISIONING

Go beyond static banners - use video, carousels, and interactive formats for greater engagement. Implement real-time decision-making to serve ads at high-intent moments, ensuring relevance across channels like CTV and retail sites.



MEASUREMENT & METRICS

COMPREHENSIVE MEDIA METRICS

Track impressions, viewability, attention, and completion rates across formats to assess engagement, particularly in omnichannel environments like CTV, on-site display, and social.

ROBUST ATTRIBUTION & INCREMENTALITY TESTING

Use closed-loop attribution models to link exposure to measurable outcomes such as ROAS, conversion lift, and in-store sales impact. Apply SKU-level attribution and, where appropriate, incrementality testing to distinguish ad-driven results from organic behaviour.

ADVANCED INSIGHTS & REPORTING FOR STRATEGIC GROWTH

Standardise KPIs (CPA, cost per incremental sale, loyalty tier movement) and leverage clean rooms and privacy-safe IDs for cross-channel measurement. Adopt test-and-control experiments to validate Retail Media's true incrementality while balancing acquisition, retention, and brand equity metrics beyond short-term ROAS.

ADHERE TO INDUSTRY MEASUREMENT STANDARDS

Ensure your reporting complies with IAB Europe's measurement standards for on and off-site Retail Media campaigns, so that buyers can easily compare campaigns.



NAVIGATING BRAND & AGENCY PARTNERSHIPS

TRANSPARENCY & DATA SHARING DRIVE TRUST

Provide clear performance insights and full visibility into inventory, pricing, and results to strengthen partnerships and encourage long-term engagement.

FLEXIBLE ACCESS & CUSTOMISABLE MEASUREMENT

Offer both managed services and self-service platforms, ensuring advertisers retain autonomy while staying within a controlled framework. Provide adaptable measurement tools, including standard and customisable attribution windows.

COLLABORATIVE PLANNING & CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Integrate brand teams early in creative and data strategies, fostering insight-driven experimentation. Prioritise post-campaign learning by sharing loyalty trends and shopper behaviors to refine future strategies.

ENGAGE AGENCIES BEYOND PERFORMANCE ADVERTISING

Expand Retail Media's role beyond ROAS-driven eCommerce teams. Highlight opportunities for broader campaign activations, such as CTV, where unique reach and brand lift become primary KPIs.



WATCHOUTS

RETAIL MEDIA EXTENDS BEYOND ON-SITE CHANNELS

It's not just website or app-based - Retail Media now includes off-site activations like programmatic, CTV, and social, enabling broader reach and omnichannel strategies.

INTEGRATION WITH OMNICHANNEL STRATEGY IS ESSENTIAL

Retail Media should align with offline channels and digital marketing efforts rather than operate in isolation. Success requires deep collaboration across commerce, content, and identity.

DATA MANAGEMENT & MEASUREMENT COMPLEXITY IS OFTEN UNDERESTIMATED

Closed-loop attribution isn't automatic across all platforms; it depends on identifiers and shared standards. Strong data structures help measure impact, build audiences, and unlock media value.

MANAGED SERVICE RMN OPERATIONS REQUIRE SPECIALIST EXPERTISE

Media trading for advertisers is more complex than retailers often anticipate. Outsourcing to RMN agency specialists can help, but retailers must weigh the cost implications while ensuring accessibility for agencies and advertisers.



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Head to IAB Europe's [Retail Media Hub](#) for more insight and content on Retail & Commerce Media in Europe
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GET INVOLVED!

Join IAB Europe's Retail & Commerce Media Committee to help shape the sector in Europe. Contact: Marie-Claire Puffett, Industry Development & Insights Director: puffett@iab europe.eu