



## **Linear TV Accounts for Nearly 70% of Long-Form Ad-Supported Viewing Among Adults 18+**

*Linear TV Still Tops Streaming Where It Counts. Nielsen's Latest Gauge Report Only Tells Part of the Story.*

**NEW YORK, New York**, (June 18, 2025) – TVB, the not-for-profit trade association representing America's local broadcast television industry, analyzed Nielsen's May Gauge Report data with a focus on determining what is actually most impactful for advertisers: ad-supported viewing among adults ages 18+. The analysis found that linear TV remains the dominant force in ad-supported viewing.

### **The Facts – Nielsen's Gauge Report Vs. Nielsen's New Ad-Supported Gauge Report:**

Growing confusion around streaming's share of total TV viewing has resulted from Nielsen's original Gauge Report, which by combining both ad-supported and ad-free viewing has led to misperceptions surrounding streaming's share of total TV viewing. This broad approach is often misleading for advertisers, as many streaming viewers are not exposed to ads, making it almost impossible for advertisers to assess if their ads are being seen by targeted audiences.

In response to industry feedback, in May 2025, Nielsen released an additional Gauge Report focused exclusively on ad-supported platforms across both linear and streaming. However, this version of the Gauge Report will only be published quarterly and limited to persons in the 2+ demographic, with Q1 2025 marking the first release.

The May 2025 Gauge Report includes all viewing with and without ads for persons 2+, and shows that linear television represents 44% of viewing, compared to streaming TV's 45%. Using Nielsen guidelines, TVB developed an ad-supported only Gauge pie for the month of May. Linear television's portion of this ad-supported pie increased to 55% of total ad-supported viewing, compared to streaming TV's 45%—underscoring the continued dominance of linear TV in ad-supported viewership.

### **Linear TV Remains Dominant Among Adults 18+:**

While both Nielsen’s original Gauge Report, and the newly introduced ad-supported Gauge Report focus on persons 2+, TVB conducted its own analysis using Nielsen NPower’s Streaming Platform Ratings to isolate ad-supported viewing among adults 18+— a more relevant audience for local advertisers. When focusing on adults 18+, linear TV’s share increases to 59%.

### Linear TV is the Most Watched Long-Form Content:

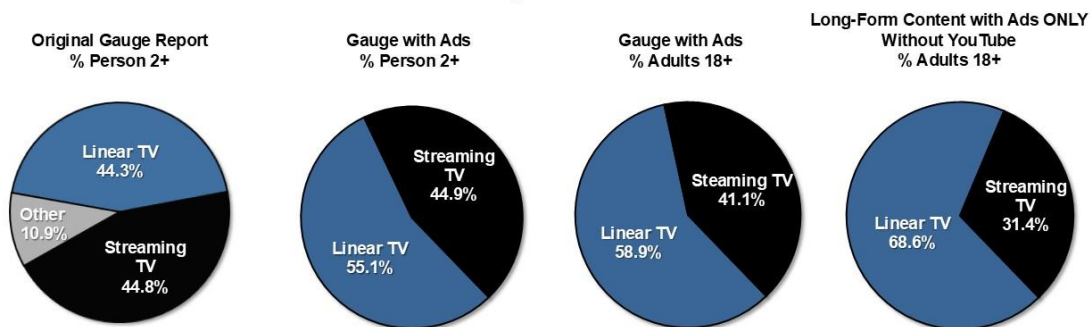
Nielsen includes all AVOD (advertising-supported video on demand) platforms in its ad-supported category, including YouTube, which predominantly features short-form video. However, linear platforms offer long-form content, making the comparison uneven. TVB re-analyzed the data to focus only on long-form, ad-supported content, excluding YouTube, and the results were striking as in this analysis, linear television accounts for a staggering 69% of long-form ad-supported viewing among adults 18+.

### Key Takeaways: Focus Matters!

- **Advertising Only Versus All Viewing:** An advertising only Gauge pie for linear TV accounts for 55% of ad-supported viewing among persons 2+, a significant increase from the original Gauge pie figure of 44%.
- **Adults 18+:** Local advertisers are more focused on adults 18+ and the linear number for this demo rises to 59% in an advertising only Gauge pie.
- **Long Form Content Only:** Linear television accounts for 69% of long-form ad-supported viewing among adults 18+.

## Focus Matters!

May 2025  
Total Day of Platforms



8 Source: Nielsen NPOWER May 2025 Persons 2+ & Persons 18+ Live+7, Total Day of All Viewing Platforms: Percent of Broadcast (Includes PBS), Cable, and Streaming to TUT Levels, Total Day of Ad-Supported Viewing Platforms, Percent of Broadcast (No PBS), Cable, and long-form ad-supported streaming divided by long-form ad-supported total. YouTube excluded from long-form ad-supported pie. MVPD/MVPD category is included in Linear bucket.



TVB is the not-for-profit trade association representing America's local broadcast television industry, including linear and digital platforms. Its members include the U.S. television stations, television broadcast groups, advertising sales reps, syndicators and associate members. TVB actively promotes local media marketing solutions to the advertising community and works to develop advertising dollars for the medium's multiple platforms, including on-air, online, and mobile. TVB provides a diverse variety of tools and resources, including its website, to support its members and to help advertisers make the best use of local ad dollars.

For more information, visit [www.tvb.org](http://www.tvb.org).

**Contact:**

Jennifer Neuman

JCIR

212.835.8500

[tvb@jcir.com](mailto:tvb@jcir.com)