A REDEFINING MOMENT

Leading the definition and measurement of total viewing

February 21st 2023

Executive Summary

People watch their favourite content in many different ways. Viewing behaviour isn't constrained by devices or distribution platforms, nor by the business models of established TV companies, pure-play VOD streamers and video-sharing platforms.

Barb is the industry's standard for understanding what people watch across all platforms and devices. We integrate people-based panel data with census-level online viewing data to measure total viewing across a wide range of linear channels and on-demand services. Our data delivers definitive, trusted and actionable insight that supports investment accountability and societal responsibility across the UK TV and advertising ecosystem.

November 2021 was a defining moment for Barb. Thanks to our constant innovation — and an inclusive measurement strategy — we introduced daily audience reporting for SVOD, AVOD and video-sharing platforms.

Since then, the commitment of Disney+ and Netflix to join Barb demonstrates our relevance to new and established players in the market.

With fresh input from an industry-wide consultation, Barb is now in a position to redefine our industry's measurement of total viewing. This new definition sees Barb committing to a future in which we expand our measurement of total viewing to include content on video-sharing platforms that is fit for TV.

This decision reflects an industry-wide consensus on the value of content produced to quality standards that include;

- the importance of editorial input, oversight or design,
- an intention to deliver content that aligns with prevailing regulation, and
- content that provides a safe and suitable environment for advertisers.

> *Back in 2019, at the RTS conference in Cambridge, I welcomed the idea of Netflix audiences being measured independently. We've kept in touch with Barb since then and are pleased to make a commitment to its trusted measurement of how people watch television in the UK.*

Reed Hastings — Netflix Executive Chairman
October 12th 2022

Barb is also committed to exploring ways to report all content on video-sharing platforms that is produced in line with industry-accepted standards of brand safety.

As Barb moves into the next phase of our evolution, we've formally changed our company name to Barb Audiences. With the on-going support of broadcasters, who have nurtured our trusted industry currency for the last 40 years, our new name reflects an ambition to extend our audience-centric measurement across established TV companies, pure-play VOD streamers and video-sharing platforms. BARB is no more — long live Barb.

As the past, present and future of total viewing measurement, Barb is uniquely placed to deliver integrated audience data and actionable insights that empower the transformation of the UK TV and advertising ecosystem.

Read on to learn more about the following:

- The industry's 360° audience view of what people watch
- An industry consultation: Expanding our measurement of total viewing

For many years, viewers have become increasingly accustomed to watching what they want, when they want. The rise of VOD services and video-sharing platforms has been a significant driver of this trend.

We first reported the industry's 360° audience view in a white paper published in April 2021. Since then our pioneering developments have provided the industry with even greater insight into what people watch across linear channels, VOD services and video-sharing platforms.

Our inclusive measurement strategy has been designed to deliver comprehensive understanding of what people watch. Figure 1 brings to life the time people are spending with different types of service, and on which devices they are watching.

During the calendar year 2022, people spent an average of four hours a day watching linear channels, VOD services and video-sharing platforms.

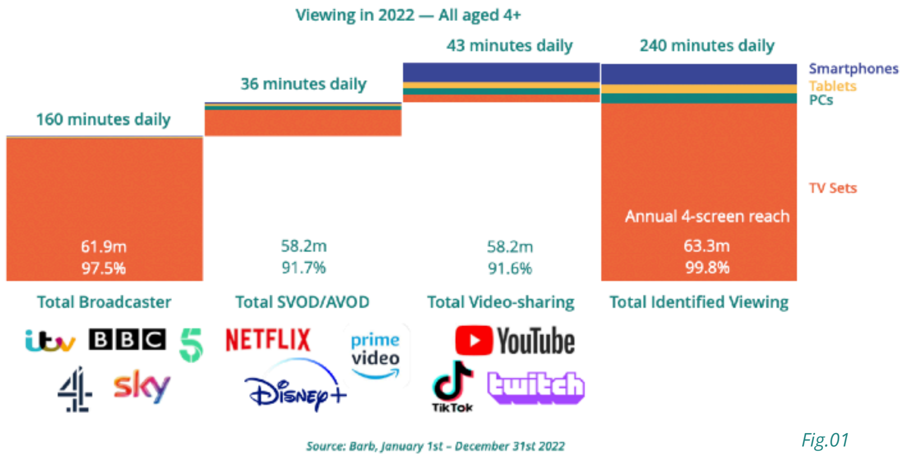

Fig.01

The lion's share of this time — 160 minutes — was spent watching linear and VOD services delivered by broadcasters, with video-sharing platforms being the next biggest category. The average of 36 minutes a day that people spend watching SVOD/AVOD services is spread across 16 different services, although the big three — Netflix, Amazon Prime Video and Disney+ — account for nearly 99% of this viewing.

As well as demonstrating how Barb reports audiences across all types of service, Figure 1 shows our device-agnostic approach to reporting. People spent 196 minutes a day watching on TV sets — that's over four-fifths of all viewing. And it's not surprising they're most likely to head to the biggest screen for the professionally-produced content that is at the heart of services provided by broadcasters and pure-play VOD businesses.

Smartphones are the second-most used device with viewing on these screens dominated by the video-sharing platforms.

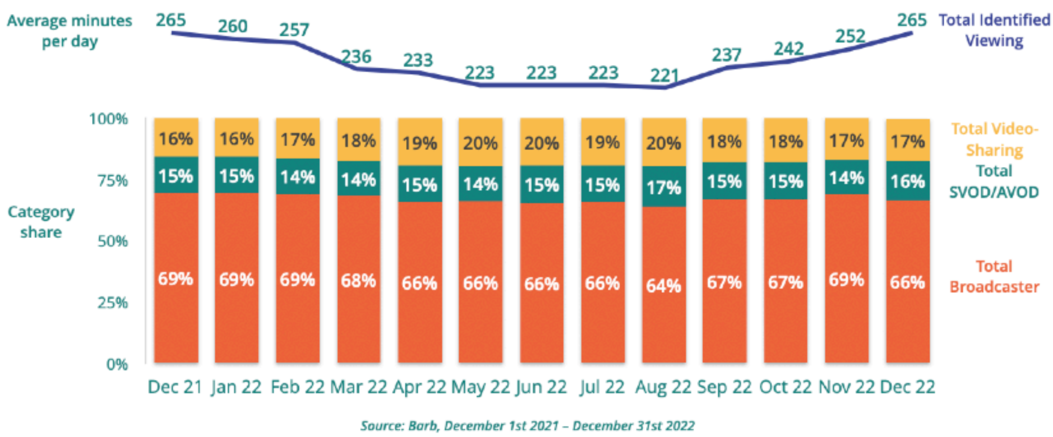

Fig.02

Figure 2 provides a month-by-month breakdown across 2022.

At a total viewing level, the seasonal trend is familiar. Viewing dips in the summer when the weather is good and people go on holiday. As the nights draw in, viewers begin to watch more.

The breakdown by sector shows a higher proportion of viewing to video-sharing services during the summer months. This shows that services such as YouTube and TikTok are bucking established seasonal patterns of viewing. This could be for environmental reasons — for example, our data show evening peak is less important to overall viewing levels for the video-sharing services. Or it could be because there is a more steady release of new content on video-sharing platforms, which is in contrast to the carefully-timed content-launch strategies used by broadcasters and pure-play VOD streamers.

Since we started reporting what people watch on SVOD services, there's been a widespread welcome for how our data support the transparent, like-for-like analysis of how many people are watching the most popular shows. Our audience figures have found their way into the public narrative about how Matt Hancock's appearance in the I'm a Celebrity jungle fared against the latest season of The Crown, and how many people chose to watch Harry & Meghan's documentary on Netflix.

Looking back at the whole of 2022, Figure 3 shows Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery sitting at the top of the SVOD content ratings. Launched on Netflix at the start of the end-of-year holiday season, the movie attracted an audience of 6.7m in its first seven days, which is comfortably more than seven other Netflix shows which feature in the top 10. Disney+'s biggest hit was Turning Red, with an audience of 3.6m, while The Rings of Power led the way on Amazon Prime Video — it ranked 10th overall with an audience of 3.2m.

Rank	Launch Date	Title	Service	Aggregated average audience – all 4+ (m)
1	Dec 23rd	FILM: Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery (2022)	Netflix	6.74
2	July 1st	Stranger Things: S4 E8	Netflix	4.95
3	Dec 8th	Harry and Meghan: S1 E1	Netflix	4.49
4	Jan 14th	After Life: S3 E1	Netflix	4.14
5	Mar 11th	FILM: The Adam Project (2022)	Netflix	3.81
6	Nov 23rd	Wednesday: S1 E1	Netflix	3.73
7	Mar 11th	FILM: Turning Red (2022)	Disney+	3.61
8	Mar 25th	Bridgerton: S2 E1	Netflix	3.44
9	Dec 31st 2021	Stay Close: S1 E1	Netflix	3.29
10	Sept 2nd	The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power: S1 E1	Amazon	3.23
11	Sept 30th	FILM: Hocus Pocus 2 (2022)	Disney+	3.16
12	May 27th	Obi-Wan Kenobi: S1 E1	Disney+	3.05
13	Sept 21st	Dahmer: S1 E1	Netflix	3.05
14	Nov 9th	The Crown: S5 E2	Netflix	2.87
15	June 24th	Man vs Bee: S1 E1	Netflix	2.83
16	Apr 6th	Jimmy Savile: A British Horror Story: S1 E1	Netflix	2.69
17	Nov 4th	FILM: Enola Holmes 2 (2022)	Netflix	2.67
18	Sept 8th	FILM: Thor Love and Thunder (2022)	Disney+	2.46
19	Oct 13th	The Watcher: S1 E1	Netflix	2.43
20	Jul 22nd	FILM: The Gray Man (2022)	Netflix	2.36

Fig.03

Yet, it's telling that none of these SVOD titles found their way into the top 20 most-watched shows of the year.

Our What People Watch insight article on January 30th confirms the power of social-glue programming. Whether it is live football, I'm A Celebrity, Bake Off or news events such as the funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth II, the shows that attract the largest audiences are shown on linear channels.

The success of Glass Onion on Netflix is clear, although our data reveal that an equivalent level of success can sometimes take a bit longer.

A year before the launch of Glass Onion, the child-friendly Encanto launched on Disney+. Figure 4 shows how the audience for these two movies builds across the 28 days following launch date. Glass Onion had a strong opening and comfortably leads on a first-seven-days audience metric. Yet after 28 days, Encanto has continued to grow its audience steadily and has overtaken Glass Onion. Even now, over a year later, Encanto is still frequently in the most-viewed films on SVOD services each week.

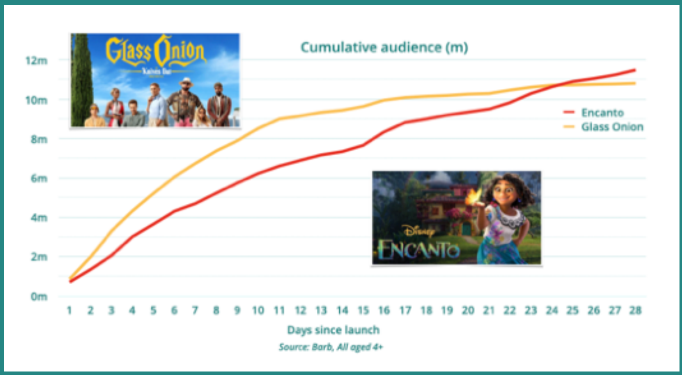

Fig.04

This demonstrates the challenge of determining one metric to rule them all. Clearly live sport and major news events will see very little audience growth after the live broadcast.

These kind of analyses show the benefits of Barb's inclusive measurement strategy. We have been able to produce this insight without the active involvement of the SVOD services. And the same can be said of some content on YouTube, which is relevant to our industry consultation. When Liverpool played Real Madrid in the 2022 Champions League Final, BT Sport streamed live coverage of the game through its YouTube channel. Thanks to our audio-matching technique, we can identify when people watched this on a TV set.

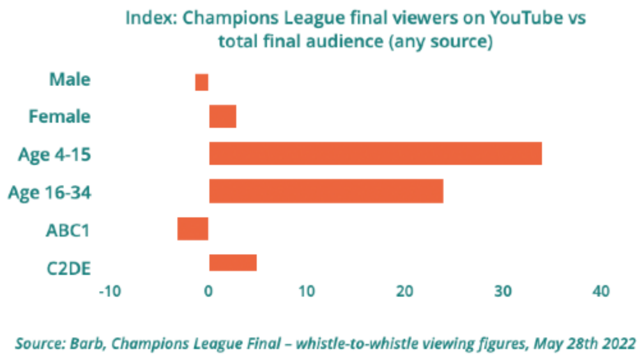

Fig.05

The result is we know 26% of the 6.2m viewers watched the game via YouTube – that's over 1.5m viewers. And as Figure 5 shows, those who watched through YouTube were younger than the overall audience on average, thus broadening the profile and vindicating BT's decision to use YouTube to reach a wider audience.

This is just one example of how we report the content people watch through YouTube on a TV set.

We are already reporting — as part of our daily audience figures — how people watch 15 channels which stream their linear content through YouTube. These include Sky News, National Geographic, GB News and Talk TV. This again relies on our audio-matching technique and is limited to viewing on the TV set.

In the same way, we are also reporting audiences to Channel 4's archive content that's available through YouTube.

You can review the full extent of our current measurement capabilities in the appendix to this paper.

An industry consultation: Expanding our measurement of total viewing

The previous section of this white paper highlights how our constant innovation, and inclusive measurement strategy, has provided independent insight on how people watch streaming services provided by pure-play VOD businesses and video-sharing platforms.

Last summer we asked the industry to help us specify the next evolution in our delivery of the industry's standard measurement for understanding what people watch. The exam question for our consultation was how can we extend our measurement to embrace quality content on video-sharing platforms.

An immediate point of clarification is what is meant by quality content? Is there a clearly-defined threshold that content should exceed?

In a seminal speech a few years ago, Marc Pritchard of P&G talked about the importance of responsible editorial control over the quality of content. He also talked about investing in places where brands are proven safe and where the content is known. This articulation of content quality was the catalyst for a working definition we tested as part of our consultation. Under the working title of TV-like content, we proposed a definition underpinned by three principles.

Firstly, the videos/channels should be under the editorial control of a professional media services provider. Secondly, they should operate to industry-agreed standards for brand safety. And they can be classified into genres to help advertisers and agencies know the editorial environment their ads are appearing in.

As well as resonating with Marc Pritchard's view, the proposed definition reflects principles and language in legal frameworks, such as the EU Audio-visual Media Services Directive.

To test whether this could form the basis of a consensus definition, we appointed an independent adviser, Paul Evans of SixtyForty%, to lead a consultation. As part of this, he conducted nearly 40 interviews across buy-side and sell-side practitioners. The full list of participants is shown in the accompanying image.

A near-universal definition of content quality

While there wasn't an appetite for "TV-like content" as a phrase, there was a near-universal appreciation of the definition and role of content quality. Inherent to this definition was the value and values attributed to the investment made in production — and not just investment as measured by the production budget.

Importance was given to editorial input and oversight, while regulatory compliance — or an intention to deliver in the spirit of regulation — was also emphasised. And critically the content has to be safe and suitable for audiences.

There was also consensus that how the content is distributed — and on which device it's consumed — shouldn't be a determining factor. Any definition should be agnostic of device and platform, as well as embracing all services regardless of the content-producer's business model. It should be an audience-centric definition.

In summary, content that is — to coin a phrase — fit-for-TV provides a benchmark of quality that has the substantial backing of the industry.

The importance of context

There was also consensus that — while the nature of the content is vital — contextual measures of quality are critical.

There was a clear perspective that any reporting of fit-for-TV content should inform a spectrum of inferred quality that advertisers and agencies feel are integral to the value judgments they need to make. These contextual factors include;

- Details about the channel/platform?
- Which screen/device is being used?
- What's the orientation of the screen?
- Is the sound on or off?
- How much of the content is in view?
- How long is the content watched for?
- And where does the viewing take place?

Many of these are already measured and reported by Barb, and the industry's expectation is these contextual quality factors should be available in any audience reporting for content on video-sharing platforms.

An audience-centric definition that meets the demand for investment accountability

The consultation also emphasised the importance of looking at the question from the perspective of audiences.

It was widely acknowledged that people — as they decide what to watch — don't respect boundaries between different types of services. Viewing behaviour isn't constrained by devices or distribution platforms, nor by the business models of established TV companies, pure-play VOD streamers and video-sharing platforms.

In response to this reality there's a demand for better, holistic viewing data to support assessment of sales and brand outcomes. And recognising that some advertisers do invest in video content that doesn't meet the fit-for-TV definition, audience data should also include environments which adhere — at a minimum — to industry-accepted levels of brand safety.

Next steps

As the past, present and future of total viewing measurement, Barb is uniquely placed to deliver integrated audience data and actionable insights that empower the transformation of the UK TV and advertising ecosystem.

Our new brand positioning builds on a heritage of forty years of continuous innovation and development. In this time, Barb has become synonymous with trusted, industry-standard data.

And our new brand reflects an inclusive approach to measuring viewing behaviour that isn't constrained by devices or by distribution platforms. Or indeed by the business models of companies that make and distribute the content that people want to watch.

We've delivered on this promise with service-level and content-level audience data for services such as Netflix and Disney+. Now we are committing to extending our service-level measurement of video-sharing services in line with the findings of our consultation.

We don't yet have all the answers for how and when we will deliver all aspects of this commitment. Yet we do know our capabilities are always enhanced by the active participation of businesses that make content, and the platforms that distribute what people want to watch.

And as we engage with companies who can help us extend our industry's standard for measuring what people watch, we will continue to be guided by the principles and values that have served our industry so well for more than 40 years — independence, transparency, objectivity and accountability.

	Content type	TV set		Tablets/PCs/smartphones	
		Status	Technique(s)	Status	Technique(s)
Linear channels	Total reach & time spent	Yes	Panel & Census data SDK tags*	Yes	Panel & Census data SDK tags*
	Programmes	Yes	Audio watermarking/audio matching & Sky service-information codes	Yes	Census data SDK tags
	Linear ads	Yes	Audio watermarking/audio matching & Sky service-information codes	Yes	Census data SDK tags*
	Dynamically-inserted ads	Yes	Sky Adsmart service-level reporting Audio watermarking	Yes	Census data SDK tags*
BVOD services	Total reach & time spent	Yes	Panel & Census data SDK tags*	Yes	Panel & Census data SDK tags
	Live stream programmes	Yes	Audio watermarking/audio matching Census data SDK tags*	Yes	Census data SDK tags
	Archive & other non-linear	Yes	Audio watermarking/audio matching & Sky service-information codes	Yes	Census data SDK tags
	Linear ads	Yes	Audio matching Census data SDK tags*	Yes	Pre-campaign planning through Advanced Campaign Hub Post-campaign validation through CFlight
	Dynamically-inserted ads	Yes	Pre-campaign planning through Advanced Campaign Hub Post-campaign validation through CFlight	Yes	
FAST channels	Total reach & time spent	Yes	Audio watermarking/audio matching & router meter	Yes	Router meter
	Content ratings	Yes*	Audio watermarking/audio matching & router meter	No	Need engagement with platform operator
	Dynamically-inserted ads	Yes*	Audio watermarking/audio matching & router meter	No	Need engagement with platform operator
SVOD/AVOD e.g. Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney&	Total reach & time spent	Yes	Router meter Audio watermarking*	Yes	Router meter
	Content ratings	Yes	Audio matching & router meter Audio watermarking*	No	Need engagement with platform operator
	Dynamically-inserted ads	No	Possibility = audio watermarking	No	Need engagement with platform operator
Video-sharing platforms e.g. YouTube, TikTok, Twitch	Total reach & time spent	Yes	Router meter Audio watermarking*	Yes	Router meter
	Content ratings	Partial	Audio matching for Barb-reported linear channels, linear TV events and broadcasters' VOD archive Audio watermarking*	No	Need engagement with platform operator
	Dynamically-inserted ads	No	Need engagement with platform operator Possibility = audio watermarking	No	Need engagement with platform operator

* Capability available for use by content providers