

# Why the Future of Media Buys Is Local, Layered, and Data-Driven

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By now, the conversation isn't whether the media landscape has changed; it's how fast we can adapt to it. The playbook for media buying is undergoing a fundamental rewrite *right now*. It's not waiting for some far-flung distant future.

What's clear is this: The future isn't just about reaching audiences. It's about *reaching the right ones* with precision, efficiency, and adaptability. And that means marketers can't afford to continue treating linear and streaming as separate strategies or defaulting to traditional media definitions that no longer apply.

Let's be honest: "Cable" is an awkward word nowadays. As of 2024, a little less than half of U.S. households no longer pay for traditional TV, and cord-cutting is now the norm, not the exception, [according](#) to Park Associates. But paradoxically, many viewers still rely on linear news sources. So, how do you reconcile that?

You stop selling platforms and start selling *eyeballs*. We've shifted our approach entirely: It's no longer about pushing linear versus streaming. It's about delivering the full layering effect. That means leading with linear, folding in regional news networks that still resonate with local communities, and finishing with one-to-one household addressability through streaming.

Addressability has become *the* breakthrough. For instance, for the first time in New Jersey, NY Interconnect is matching first-party voter lists to our footprint, delivering messages only to those households, and then reporting back on *only* those same households. No waste. No guesswork. Just frequency where it counts most. That's something we weren't doing even a year ago.

Imagine an approach that flips the traditional buying model. Instead of a campaign telling us where they want to advertise, we tell them where their targets live and build the media schedule accordingly. We're using

behavior data to lead, not follow. For example, we can now build specific segments and let that data inform which networks, platforms, and placements make sense across all screens.

These shifts are born out of necessity. Post-COVID behavior fundamentally changed the way people consume media. Two years of being home created an explosion in streaming habits. Today, the average U.S. household subscribes to more than four streaming [services](#), according to the Deloitte Digital Media Trends Survey from 2024, and local live sports remain one of the last must-watch categories in real time. Moreover, all Knicks Playoffs games in the Eastern Conference Semifinals and Finals [ranked as the No. 1 daily program](#) on all TV with A25-54, as found by the Nielsen Company. Likewise, the Yankees' postseason run drove massive national tune-in, with their Wild Card Game 3 drawing more than 7.4 million viewers, making it the most-watched Wild Card game under the current format and ESPN's biggest baseball audience since 2021, according to [Nielsen via MLB.com](#).

The upside of all this unpredictability? We can pilot these new approaches in a live, high-stakes environment. It's not just theory. It's execution. And what we're seeing is that data-driven, layered buys outperform the old playbook. They cost less. They waste less. And they reach more of the right voters more often.

So, here's the advice: Stop thinking in channels. Start thinking in layers. Don't chase impressions. Intentionally pursue outcomes.

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