



MRC Statement – Nielsen’s Measurement of Thursday Night Football

September 21, 2023

Nielsen informed the Media Rating Council (MRC) of its intention to consider certain first-party streaming information provided by Amazon in its national panel-based measurement of Thursday Night Football (TNF) for the 2023 NFL football season. Because of the proposed change in the national measurement method for TNF, the MRC needed to complete an examination of these processes at both Amazon, covering the origination of first-party data from Amazon and processing/transmission of this data to Nielsen, and Nielsen, covering Nielsen’s receipt and use of Amazon’s first-party data to adjust panel-based estimates for TNF. Both Nielsen and Amazon agreed to these examination procedures and that work was completed during the Summer and reviewed by the MRC Television Committee earlier this month.

Nielsen’s new measurement method for TNF relies on Nielsen’s National Service panel, which is accredited by MRC, and information on total minutes tuned to segments of the TNF stream supplied by Amazon, the origination of which was examined for this assessment. Amazon’s data is cut-back and adjusted to measurement coverage and parameters consistent with Nielsen’s National panel; these processes were also examined. MRC’s examination was not intended to enable MRC accreditation of Amazon’s data, but solely executed for the purpose of ensuring that its contribution to Nielsen’s National Service and use of it by Nielsen is appropriate for the accredited service and that the examination covers all relevant methods used.

As part of this examination, findings were communicated to both Amazon and Nielsen and the resolution of these findings remains in process; accordingly, the new TNF measurement method is not considered a part of the accredited Nielsen National Service. Based on the feedback from MRC, Nielsen chose to not integrate the new measurement into its accredited National Service panel at the present time. Separately, Nielsen decided to produce a custom non-accredited report for the use of Amazon and others solely for the purpose of non-transactional press information. In summary, the Nielsen National Service panel-based estimates remain accredited by MRC, but the new measurement method for TNF has not yet met MRC requirements for integration into Nielsen’s National Service panel.

The MRC will update the marketplace when this status changes. Questions on these matters should be directed to:

George W. Ivie, CEO and Executive Director
Media Rating Council, Inc.