

Unlocking the  
power of the  
**Adults 18<sup>+</sup>**  
audience

**think**<sup>tv</sup>

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

## INTRODUCTION

*Adults 18+ is now the premier buying demographic in television advertising, aligning with demographic changes, audience trends, and the growth of Total TV.*

In recent years, the effectiveness of linear TV has been enhanced by a range of innovative tools and platforms, all of which are designed to help advertisers understand and engage with their customers in more meaningful and impactful ways.

Total TV (linear TV plus broadcaster streaming) not only delivers premium content with mass reach in a brand-safe environment with full viewability, it offers the opportunity for businesses of all sizes to precisely target specific audience segments. Advertisers can refine and optimize their campaigns informed by viewer insights confident they are adhering to the highest privacy standards.

Alongside television's transformation, the tools buyers and planners use to buy, plan, and assess media campaigns have also advanced.

With the significant changes in the Canadian population, combined with the availability of innovative advertising solutions, advertisers and agencies no longer rely solely on traditional demographic targets for their media campaigns.

**A fresh approach to television advertising is a welcome development.**

Forward-thinking marketers have already embraced the more inclusive Adults 18+ approach and successfully leveraged broadcasters' data-driven targeting solutions to optimize their marketing efforts. This dual strategy is achieving greater efficiency for both advertisers and agencies, without sacrificing the powerful effectiveness of broadcast television.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*The strategic shift to Adults 18+ responds to Canada's changing population dynamics and evolving viewing habits. The move supports marketers' ability to reach broad, diverse audiences more efficiently and effectively in an increasingly fragmented media landscape.*

### Key Takeaways:

- Significant shifts in the Canadian population have rendered the A25-54 demographic less representative.
- While age and gender continue to be valuable starting places for understanding customer preferences, life stage is increasingly influencing consumer purchase of advertiser goods and services.
- Using Adults 18+ as the foundation for Total TV provides advertisers with the broad reach and effectiveness of linear television and the precision targeting of streaming in a privacy-focused, brand-safe environment.
- An Adults 18+ buying demographic aligns with the advertising practices of other video platforms in the market, allowing for more cohesive planning and comparability across platforms (including within marketing mix models) by agencies and advertisers.



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## CANADA'S EVOLVING POPULATION

*The Canadian market, with its unique blend of changing population, cultural diversity, and consumer preferences necessitates a shift to Adults 18+ as the premier television buying demographic.*

Given the dynamic shifts in the Canadian population in recent years, Numeris, the Joint Industry Committee for audience measurement, encouraged Canadian broadcasters to reassess the ongoing market relevance of narrow age-based demographic categories, with particular focus on Adults 25-54.

### **Canada's demographic landscape is undergoing a historic transformation.**

Central to Numeris' analysis was the profound shift in the demographic make-up of the country characterized by certain key trends.

First, Canada's total population has experienced a robust growth rate of +16% since 2010, driven in large part by international migration but only a modest +4.7% growth rate within the Adults 25-54 cohort.

This demographic shift presents both challenges and opportunities for advertisers as our growing and increasingly diverse population continues to drive change in content preferences and media consumption habits.

Second, the improved quality of life related to improved healthcare and overall living conditions mean that Canadians are living longer, healthier lives. In 1990, the median age of the population was 33 years, today it is 41 years (one of the highest median ages in the world).

### **Life stage, and not just age, is increasingly influencing consumer interest in goods and services.**

In addition to population shifts, there are behavioural and lifestyle changes to consider.

Younger adults are delaying major lifestyle milestones such as purchasing a home and having children as they spend more time on education or accumulating savings. In a trend known as "delayed adulthood", adults aged 25 and older are opting to continue to live with their parents. Environics Analytics data reveals a 49% increase in this arrangement in 2023 over 2018, presenting a challenging trend for some advertisers.

On the other hand, with close to five times the wealth of adults aged 25-34, adults aged 55+ years are opting out of traditional retirement. Instead, this affluent group is choosing to work longer and use their sizable disposable income to lead fulfilling lives focused on their interests and new experiences, presenting a significant opportunity for marketers.

The upshot of these trends for advertisers is that targeting Adults 25-54 today means targeting a smaller proportion of the Canadian population, and a fraction of the total buying power than they did even ten years ago. An Adults 18+ approach helps advertisers maximize audience engagement and drive business results that reflect Canada's demographic trends, cultural dynamics, and consumer preferences.

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## TOTAL TV'S POWERFUL COMBINATION

*The majority of Canadian adults watch both linear television and streaming services. Total TV delivers a broad Adults 18+ audience and the incremental reach and targeting capabilities of streaming.*

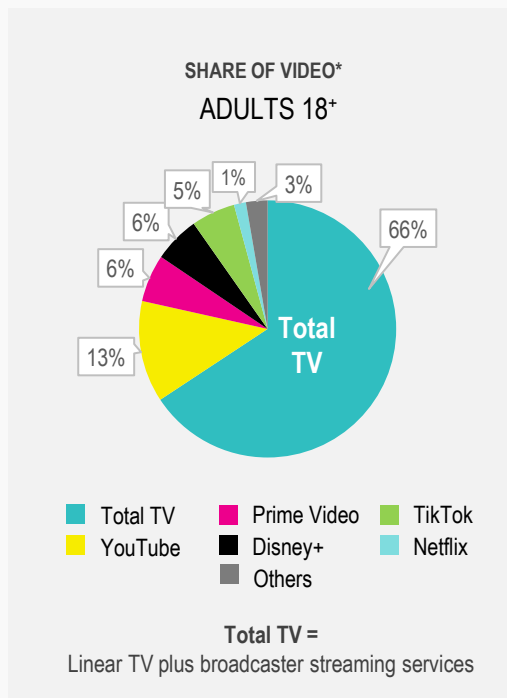
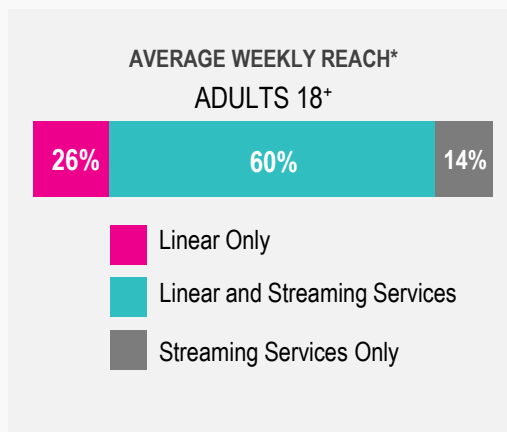
**1. Behavioural Targeting:** Using first-party and third-party data, broadcasters can identify audience segments who have demonstrated specific behaviors or interests relevant to an advertiser's products or services.

**2. Psychographic Segmentation:** Advertisers can overlay psychographic data to target viewers based on their values, attitudes, and lifestyles, regardless of age.

**3. Purchase Intent:** By integrating data on recent online searches or shopping behaviors, broadcasters can identify audience segments who are actively in the market for specific products.

**4. Geographic Targeting:** For businesses with regional or local focus or varying product availability, advertisers can layer geographic data to ensure ads reach the most relevant local audiences.

**5. Contextual Alignment:** Advertisers achieve significant brand lift when advertising is aligned with engaging and entertaining content. With an Adults 18+ buy, advertising can appear in the most appropriate and brand safe programming for a brand.



\*Source: Numeris VAM, Sep 18, 2023 – May 26, 2024, Ontario, composition of average weekly reach %  
Streaming Channels include: YouTube, Prime Video, Netflix, Disney+, Apple+, Crave (OTT only), CBS News, Twitch TV, ET Online US, TubiTV, DAZN, Paramount+, PlutoTV, FuboTV, Daily Motion, Roku Channel, Crunchroll, Discovery+, TED, SamsungTV (in home viewing)



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## FRAGMENTED MEDIA CONSUMPTION

### *Adults 18+ demographic delivers Cost Efficiency - A Broader Base, Lower CPM, and Greater Flexibility*

The ongoing fragmentation of media consumption requires advertisers and agencies to be increasingly strategic about how they achieve their campaign goals. Broadening the buying demographic to Adults 18+ helps marketers deliver on those strategic goals by offering marketers a competitive pricing structure that takes advantage of the economies of scale of a larger audience, without sacrificing the ability to target other audience demographics across other broadcaster platforms.

This approach also aligns with advertising practices of other video providers, allowing advertisers and agencies to benefit from more cohesive planning and comparability across platforms (including within marketing mix models). Marketers will be able to more easily assess the effectiveness of their advertising strategies and make more informed decisions about where to continue to allocate their spending.

For those who may be hesitant to move away from traditional audience buying demographics, broadcasters will continue to provide traditional aged-based demographic reporting on the audience segments that are of the most interest to them during a transitional period.

The Adults 18+ approach also presents an opportunity to develop client KPIs for television advertising that go beyond demographic reach. With the advanced advertising solutions that broadcasters provide, marketers will be able to better address the challenges of balancing brand-building with efficiently finding the right target audiences to drive maximum conversions all within television's brand-safe, high-quality environment.



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## CONCLUSION

Traditional age and gender demographics are just two of many factors that are considered by marketers in crafting advertising strategies.

The shift to Adults 18+ represents an opportunity for the Canadian TV advertising market to create more inclusive, efficient, and effective campaigns that better serve advertisers, agencies, and viewers.

By embracing this change, marketers can unlock incremental reach and increased ROI to help them achieve their business objectives.



The future of television advertising is not just about the ability to precisely target audiences, it is also about broadening our horizons to fully realize the value of the diversity of our audiences and the complexity of modern media consumption. By moving to Adults 18+, broadcasters are not just changing a metric – they are changing a mindset.

We encourage the industry – broadcasters, advertisers, and agencies – to welcome this approach. The potential benefits are too significant to ignore.

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