Coalition for Innovative Media Measurement

The Paradox of Plenty

Advertisers' Perspectives on the State of Measurement

Executive Summary

March 2026

About CIMM

The Coalition for Innovative Media Measurement (CIMM) is a non-partisan, pan-industry association of companies from across the media and advertising ecosystem, focused on cultivating and supporting improvements, innovations and best practices in measurement and currency development, the use and application of new metrics, and data collaboration. CIMM's role is to convene stakeholders, illuminate emerging issues, and help the marketplace make informed decisions. CIMM embraces the entire media and advertising ecosystem and prioritizes effective collaboration to deliver meaningful change.

About the 4As

The 4As was established in 1917 to promote, advance and defend the interests of our member agencies, employees and the advertising and marketing industries overall. We empower and equip our members to confidently navigate the ever-changing ecosystem of the agency world. We ensure they remain relevant, are positioned to compete, and have the resources to thrive and grow. With a focus on advocacy, talent and creating impact, the organization serves 600+ member agencies across 1,200 offices, which help direct more than 85% of total U.S. advertising spend. The 4As includes the 4As Benefits division, which insures more than 160,000 employees; the government relations team, who advocate for policies to support the industry; and the 4As Foundation, which advocates for and connects rising talent to the marketing industry by fostering a culture of curiosity, creativity and craft to fuel a more equitable future for the industry.

About our Sponsors

We thank our three sponsors, Kochava, Nielsen, and TechEdge whose guidance and industry expertise helped shape the focus and relevance of this study.

Kochava

Kochava is the premier provider of real-time data solutions powering outcomes across every marketing channel. They support the world's most performance-focused brands and platforms in achieving measurable growth. Through multi-touch attribution, modern marketing mix modeling, end-to-end campaign management, and AI-driven workflows, all backed by an acclaimed customer success team, Kochava helps clients verify results, predict what's next, and take informed action.

Since 2012, Kochava has been helping brands understand the efficacy of their advertising, evolving from a mobile-first attribution and analytics provider to a fully omnichannel measurement partner. With particular strength in the CTV space, Kochava helps customers achieve both brand and performance goals for this important marketing channel as well as tying performance from CTV to mobile, DOOH and more.

Nielsen

Nielsen is a global leader in media intelligence, shaping the future of media. Measuring behavior across all channels and platforms to discover what audiences love, we empower our clients with independent, trusted and actionable intelligence so they can connect and engage with their global audiences — now and into the future. Insights that fuel action.

TechEdge

TechEdge is the industry's most flexible audience analytics toolkit. Turn audience data into decisions. Connect data from any source, at any scale — in one view. Go as deep as you need to plan, analyse and evaluate campaigns and audiences.

TechEdge's toolkit supports advertisers and their agencies in working across datasets of any size, from any source, in one standardized view. It processes big data efficiently and gives teams visibility into the details that matter for making decisions.

For example, TechEdge's KxM planning tool enables cross-media planning and optimization. Advertisers, often through their agency partners, can model different budget allocations and see how channel mix changes reach and audience delivery before committing spend. With AdvantEdge, teams can analyze audiences and evaluate campaigns in-depth across multiple variables using consistent definitions. Advertisers and their agency partners can assess reach, frequency, and audience composition across platforms within one framework. The TechEdge API integrates outputs into existing agency and advertiser tools and planning systems, improving interoperability and reducing manual data handling — strengthening, not replacing, established workflows.

No matter the vertical, TechEdge often works within established agency-advertiser models to provide in-flight and post-campaign visibility into ad-exposed reach, frequency and pacing. These workflows create a clearer understanding of how data sources relate, supporting more confident cross-media decisions.

As media grows more complex, advertisers and agencies need connected measurement. TechEdge enables interoperable analysis, planning, and evaluation so teams can focus on decisions, not reconciliation — bringing strategies to life collaboratively across the ecosystem.

Trusted in 70+ markets by top broadcasters, streamers, agencies and advertisers, TechEdge arms you with the tools needed to win in the hybrid measurement era.

About the Authors

Sarah Mansfield is a highly respected media consultant and former VP Global Media at Unilever, a role she held for 12 years. She is recognized as a global marketing leader with deep expertise across end-to-end media, digital marketing, e-commerce, and communications spanning multiple industry sectors.

Currently, Sarah advises major advertisers on how to plan and optimize media investments, drive transformational change agendas, and design and deliver effective agency operating models. She also serves on several advisory boards, contributing her strategic insights and experience to shape the future of marketing and media.

During her tenure at Unilever, Sarah pioneered and embedded full-funnel communications planning frameworks, introduced innovative media technology solutions, and championed brand safety and responsibility standards. She played a key role in advancing retail media strategies and developing advertiser–agency partnership models. Sarah continues to represent the advertiser's voice as Vice Chair of ISBA, advocating for industry best practices and responsible media investment.

Alice K. Sylvester is an independent consultant in media measurement and analytics, formerly of Sequent Partners. She is currently involved in industry initiatives focused on advertising performance measurement, new media metrics development, and cross-media measurement, helping organizations navigate evolving measurement frameworks in a complex media environment.

Previously, Alice held senior roles in media research, branding, and account planning at major global advertising agencies. She is a past Chairman of the Board of the Advertising Research Foundation and has been recognized with multiple industry honors, including induction into the Market Research Club Hall of Fame in 2019 and the ARF's Erwin Ephron Demystification Award in 2021. She is also co-author of *Advertising and the Mind of the Consumer*, published by Allen & Unwin and Kogan Page.

Leslie Wood, Ph.D. is a highly regarded advertising analytics and data science leader with more than 30 years of experience advancing how media effectiveness is measured and applied. She has held senior research and data leadership roles at iSpot and NCSolutions, where she helped pioneer modern approaches to incrementality, outcome-based measurement, and cross-media analytics across linear and digital video. Earlier in her career, she was deeply involved in foundational single-source measurement initiatives including BehaviorScan, Scan America, and Project Apollo, and worked closely with organizations such as Procter & Gamble and ABC Television.

Today, Leslie works independently through LeslieWoodMedia, advising advertisers, industry groups, and measurement providers on research design, measurement strategy, and the evolution of media currencies. She is a long-standing leader within the Advertising Research Foundation, chairs its Cross-Platform Measurement Committee, and has been recognized with multiple industry honors, including the Erwin Ephron Demystification Award, induction into the Market Research Council Hall of Fame, two Great Mind Awards from the Advertising Research Foundation, and the 2023 Charles Coolidge Parlin Marketing Award from the American Marketing Association. She holds a Ph.D. in Single Source Data and AI from the University at Albany.

Research Objectives and Approach

This research study was commissioned by CIMM, the 4As, TechEdge, Kochava and Nielsen to explore the varying needs and perspectives of major advertisers and marketers related to measurement, metrics and data, across seven different industry categories — Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG), Pharma/Healthcare, Financial Services (FS)/ Insurance, Technology/Telco, Automotive, Travel/Leisure, and Retail.

The study set out to understand how U.S. advertisers prioritize and evaluate key measurement metrics in today's evolving TV and video ecosystem, and whether preferences, perspectives and priorities vary meaningfully across major B2C advertiser categories. It examines how marketers use measurement today, how confidence varies by category and organizational model, what beliefs shape those patterns, where the industry has the greatest opportunity to restore trust and coherence, and how advertisers see these metrics changing in importance over the next 3–5 years.

The research has focused on seven major types of measurement areas, which we label as "Measurement Domains." These domains are as follows, and are described in detail in Figure 1:

1. Media Delivery
2. Media Verification
3. Audience Delivery
4. Attention Metrics
5. Brand Impact
6. Media Performance
7. Attribution Metrics

Research Objectives and Approach

Figure 1: Major Media Measurement Domains

	What it measures	Example Metrics	Purpose
Media Delivery	Quality & efficiency of media placements.	**Impressions, Reach, Frequency,** Completion and Duration Rates, Cost Per Thousand Impressions (CPM), Cost Per GPR (CPGRP), Ad Server Verification.	Evaluates whether TV, video and other media are being delivered effectively and at the optimal cost.
Media Verification	Accuracy, compliance & fraud detection.	Ad & In App **Fraud Detection**, Invalid Traffic (IVT), Brand Safety Compliance, % In- Geo Target, Viewability, Validation.	Ensures that TV, video and other media placements were delivered in the right geographical area, free from fraud, brand safe, bot-free and contextually relevant.
Audience Delivery	Reach & targeting accuracy against required audience eg: Demos, Custom/advanced audiences using First Party & Third-Party data.	On Target %, Average **Reach/ Frequency & GRP's against Demo and/or Advanced Audience.**	Validates that the right audience is seeing the TV, video and other media content.
Attention Metrics	How effectively media captures consumer focus.	**Attention Time**, Facial Coding, Mental Engagement.	Helps optimize TV, video and other content to maximize audience engagement.
Brand Impact	The effectiveness of media in impacting brand awareness, association, consideration, preference.	**Brand Lift %** **Awareness, Recall, Favorability, Intent.** Brand Association (with Key Attributes). Brand Sentiment.	Determines the positive or negative brand impact of media communication and investment over time in TV, video and other media.
Media Performance	The effectiveness of media in driving desired outcomes — absolute or incremental impact.	Click-Through Rate (**CTR**), Cost Per Lead (**CPL**), Cost Per Acquisition (**CPA**), Return on Ad Spend (**ROAS**), Sales Lift %.	Measures how effective TV, video and other paid media translate into required business outcomes.
Attribution Metrics	Contribution of different media touchpoints to conversions.	Multi-Touch Attribution (**MTA**), Customer Journey Mapping, Marketing Mix Models (**MMM**).	Determines how various TV, video and other media channels impact consumer actions and outcomes.

Methodology and Sample

The study is based on two research inputs — a broad quantitative survey of 197 marketers, plus a deep-dive set of 16 executive interviews.

1. An online survey of 197 experienced marketers (each with >8 years of experience) with direct involvement in selecting and/or using measurement solutions. This was conducted by NewtonX. Survey respondents were Director-level or above. The sample was exclusively composed of brand advertisers, not agencies. The research focused on B2C marketers at companies with annual US marketing budgets over $50 million. Respondent companies have been split into three segments: lower spending companies ($50-100 million); medium spending companies $100-250 million); and higher spending companies (over $250 million).

Research Objectives and Approach

Figure 2: Survey sample details

n=197 survey respondents

Sector	
CPG	n=30
Pharmaceuticals and Healthcare	n=30
Financial Services	n=30
Technology and Telecommunications	n=30
Automotive	n=28
Travel and Leisure	n=30
Retail	n=30

Job Department	
Marketing or Advertising	93%
Data Architecture / Data Science / Data Analytics	2%
Software Engineering / Developing / Coding	2%
Research and Development (R&D)	2%
Sales	1%

Job Seniority	
C-Level	8%
Deparrtment Head or Line of Business Head	11%
Vice President (Executive, Senior, etc)	29%
Senior Director or Director	52%

With a sample of 197 advertising executives, the margin of error at the 95% confidence level ranges from approximately ±3 percentage points for very small or very large percentages (e.g., 5% or 95%) to ±7 percentage points for percentages near 50%. As is typical in survey research, estimates closer to 50% carry greater statistical uncertainty than those near the extremes. Reported mean scores are more precise, with 95% confidence intervals generally between ±0.12 and ±0.15 scale points. As a result, small differences in percentages or averages should be interpreted with caution, while larger gaps are more likely to reflect meaningful differences in the broader advertiser population.

2. A program of 16 one-on-one in-depth interviews with senior marketing executives across the 7 industry sectors. All interviews were completed in confidence. All quotations featured in the paper come from these interviews, unless otherwise noted, and have not been attributed. Examples of the companies interviewed include Google, T-mobile, Intuit, Mastercard, Bank of America, Kraft Heinz, Unilever, Bank of America, Sanofi, Toyota, Optum, Wayfair, and Microsoft.

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CONTENTS – FULL REPORT

This Document

This document is a limited extract from the full *Paradox of Plenty* report, highlighting some of the key findings from the study of advertiser perspectives on measurement and metrics.

The full version of the *Paradox of Plenty: Advertisers' Perspectives on the State of Measurement* report is available solely to members of CIMM and members of the 4As, and can be found on the members-only areas of their respective websites.

The full version of the report, at over 50 pages, contains more survey data results, interpretative analysis, and a full discussion of advertiser perspectives as outlined in its table of contents:

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Chapter 2 — How Advertisers Navigate Measurement Today

Chapter 3 — Where Confidence Breaks Down

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Executive Summary

Over the past decade, advertisers have built increasingly sophisticated marketing data environments. They have integrated first-party data with second- and third-party sources, layered in identity graphs, adopted advanced analytics, and invested heavily in measurement solutions spanning performance, attribution, brand impact, attention, and verification. By most external measures, the industry has never been more data-rich.

At the same time, confidence in media and marketing measurement has not advanced at the same pace as measurement capability itself. The sharpest pain point is not skepticism in data accuracy per se; rather, executives are overwhelmed with the task of prioritizing data inputs, linking disparate data across different sources, and harmonizing definitions across "black box" metrics, leading to a crisis of confidence despite the proliferation of measurement resources. Marketers, more than ever, have access to a world of plenty, but paradoxically feel increasingly challenged to derive clear conclusions on the impact of their advertising investments. Confidence is strongest where signals are direct and operationally familiar, and more measured where insights depend on stitching together datasets, modeling outcomes, or reconciling multiple systems.

Differences Across Industry Categories

At a high level, advertisers across different industry categories do have varying attitudes towards measurement, but the differences are more nuanced than category stereotypes would suggest. The study looked at attitudes around 7 different types of measurement areas, which we term "Measurement Domains" (see page 5 for a detailed explanation of each domain). While Media Performance remains the most important measurement domain across all advertisers regardless of industry category, there is meaningful variation in how categories prioritize speed, rigor, and comparability, and in where confidence breaks down. These differences don't reflect fundamentally different goals, but rather distinct operating realities: how directly outcomes can be observed, how regulated the category is, and how much reliance advertisers place on first-party versus other data.

Categories with direct, observable signals and closed data environments tend to prioritize speed and near-term performance, while those with indirect outcomes, longer purchase cycles, or higher regulatory scrutiny place greater value on comparability, standards, and triangulation. These dynamics shape not only what advertisers measure, but how confident they feel using those measurements.

Retail, QSR, Financial Services, and some Technology advertisers rely heavily on first-party data and are strongly performance-oriented. Speed, return on ad spend, and the ability to optimize in near real time are central measurement priorities. Among these, Financial Services advertisers are more compliance-driven and tend to operate within highly governed, closed data environments.

CPG advertisers, by contrast, operate with indirect sales signals and significant offline outcomes. While performance remains important, they also emphasize brand metrics and structured, comparable measurement frameworks. *"We do brand awareness studies… quick reads… MMM… clean rooms… and the whole plethora of media metrics." (CPG executive)* Inconsistent data, cross-platform comparability, and signal fragmentation are key concerns.

Pharma and Healthcare advertisers show a similar measurement orientation, shaped by regulatory sensitivity and compliance requirements; as a result, they tend to be more conservative and slower to adopt new or opaque measurement approaches.

Automotive advertisers are both brand-led and performance-driven, while also navigating rapid digital acceleration. From a measurement perspective, this creates persistent tension between attribution, brand studies, MMM, and platform-reported data, often resulting in frustration with conflicting signals. *"Did I get what I paid for and did it move the business? … I can't say that we have done a good job at that." (Auto executive)* Travel and Leisure advertisers are also highly digital, but operate in fast-moving, demand-driven environments that place a premium on real-time decisioning; for these advertisers, identity resolution and cross-platform comparability remain significant challenges.

Technology advertisers tend to stand apart. They express the highest aspirations for both speed and methodological rigor and are more open than other categories to future-focused approaches like AI-enabled measurement and synthetic data. At the same time, this category experiences one of the largest gaps between current measurement capabilities and where they believe the industry needs to go. *"Cross-media measurement where the advertiser, agency, and platforms all come together is really important. The speed needs to accelerate." (Tech executive)*

Executive Summary

A Sophisticated but Multi-System Environment

Advertisers almost universally acknowledge that today's measurement challenges are not driven by a lack of data or data integrity issues per se. Instead, complexity stems from the multiplicity of systems, tools, and "truths" that must be reconciled every day. Media fragmentation, platform-specific metrics, incompatible identity systems, and mixed methodologies have become the norm. The result is an environment where advertisers can optimize continuously — yet struggle to explain, defend, or unify results with confidence.

Importantly, advertisers have adapted. Most have developed practical workflows that allow them to plan, optimize, and report effectively within this environment. What they lack is certainty: certainty that the numbers align across systems, certainty that modeled outputs reflect reality, and certainty that they can confidently represent outcomes to internal stakeholders such as finance teams and executive leadership. Advertisers are most assured when metrics are observable, timely, and widely understood internally, and more cautious when insights depend on probabilistic models or cross-system alignment.

> ***We're drowning in dashboards. We don't need another report. We need a single version of reality. Everything is technically measurable, but none of it lines up without a lot of manual reconciliation.***
>
> *— Gaming executive*

Media Mix and Advertising Spend are Vital — but Differently Than Expected

Media mix and advertising spend shape measurement priorities, but do not dictate a single measurement philosophy. Nearly all advertisers now operate across a broad mix of digital video, social video, search, streaming, and traditional channels, with roughly one-third of advertisers participating in the study using nearly all major channels simultaneously, and upwards of 80% of advertisers using digital video, social media, SEO, broadcast TV and streaming channels. Each channel offers its own delivery systems, metrics, identity frameworks, and reporting standards, multiplying the number of signals advertisers must interpret and reconcile. As media mixes widen, advertisers are not just managing more channels – they are managing more versions of performance, reach, and impact.

Advertising spend clearly influences measurement priorities, but not in a prescriptive way. Larger advertisers tend to emphasize exposure quality and holistic performance indicators, reflecting the greater scale and scrutiny of their investments. However, spend alone does not determine how advertisers think about measurement.

Instead, expectations are strongly shaped by a complex mix of organizational business models and internal decision processes. Similarly, whether media is managed in-house, by agencies, or through hybrid models does not fundamentally change the measurement challenge. Agencies help manage fragmentation and normalization, but having media capabilities in-house does not eliminate the burden of stitching together inconsistent data sources. In all cases, advertisers confront the same challenge: multiple systems producing competing versions of the truth, leading to a paradox of plenty.

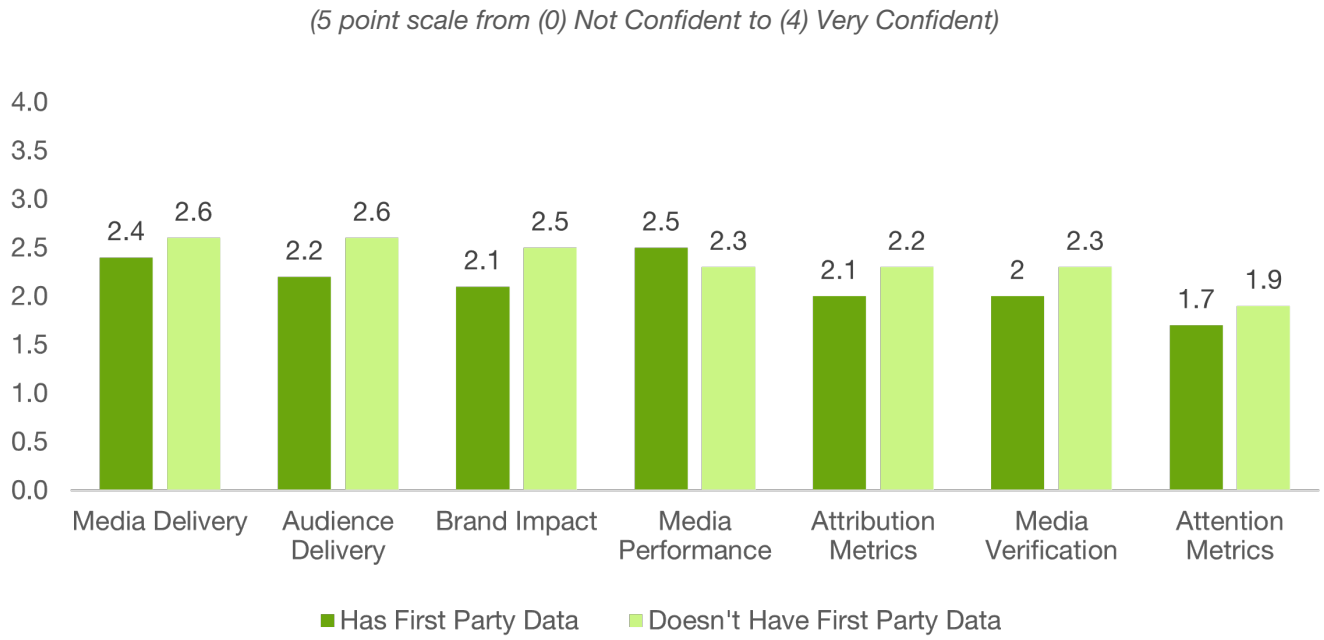
The Distinct Worldview of First-Party-Data-Led Advertisers

Advertisers that rely heavily on first-party data — most commonly in Retail, QSR, Financial Services, and some Technology sectors — exhibit a distinct measurement orientation. These organizations are performance-first by design. Their confidence is anchored in what they can directly observe: conversions, ROAS, lift tests, and daily optimization signals.

These advertisers express strong confidence in Media Performance measurement, where signals are direct and actionable. At the same time, they are more cautious about measurement domains that depend on ecosystem-level identity, third-party modeling, or cross-platform reconciliation. This doesn't reflect skepticism, rather selective trust. First-party data provides speed and autonomy, but it also narrows the set of signals advertisers feel confident using. As a result, these advertisers tend to operate with clarity inside their own environments, while approaching broader ecosystem metrics with greater scrutiny. *"If we're talking about our first party data, our internal data, then I have very high confidence in it. This is a company that prides itself on data and integrity and we have a lot of policies/regulations to govern that." (Tech executive)*

Executive Summary

Figure 1: Confidence in Media Measurement Among Advertisers With First Party Data



Three Measurement Orientations Shape Confidence and Expectations

To move beyond category labels, the study identifies three distinct measurement orientations that cut across industries:

1. *Fast Proof Advertisers* (primarily Retail and Financial Services) prioritize speed, causal clarity, and near-real-time optimization. Confidence breaks down when signals are slow or contradictory. *"Everything ladders to ROI and incrementality. If it's not driving incremental transactions, it's not working." (QSR executive)*

2. *Comparable Proof Advertisers* (CPG, Pharma, Auto, and Travel) value consistency, rigor, and cross-channel comparability. They rely on triangulation and lose confidence when measurement feels opaque or non-standard. *"We look for consistency. The most important thing is that we can compare channels in the same language." (Auto executive)*

3. *Future Proof Advertisers* (Technology/SaaS) aspire to both speed and rigor. They have the highest expectations, and perceive the largest gap between current capabilities and future needs, particularly in areas such as AI-enabled and predictive measurement. *"If I can't see the signal in near real-time, I can't optimize against it — so the measurement is incomplete." (Tech executive)*

These segments help explain why confidence varies so widely even when advertisers use similar tools. Measurement expectations are not random; they are operationally and culturally rooted.

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Figure 2: Key Characteristics of Orientation Clusters

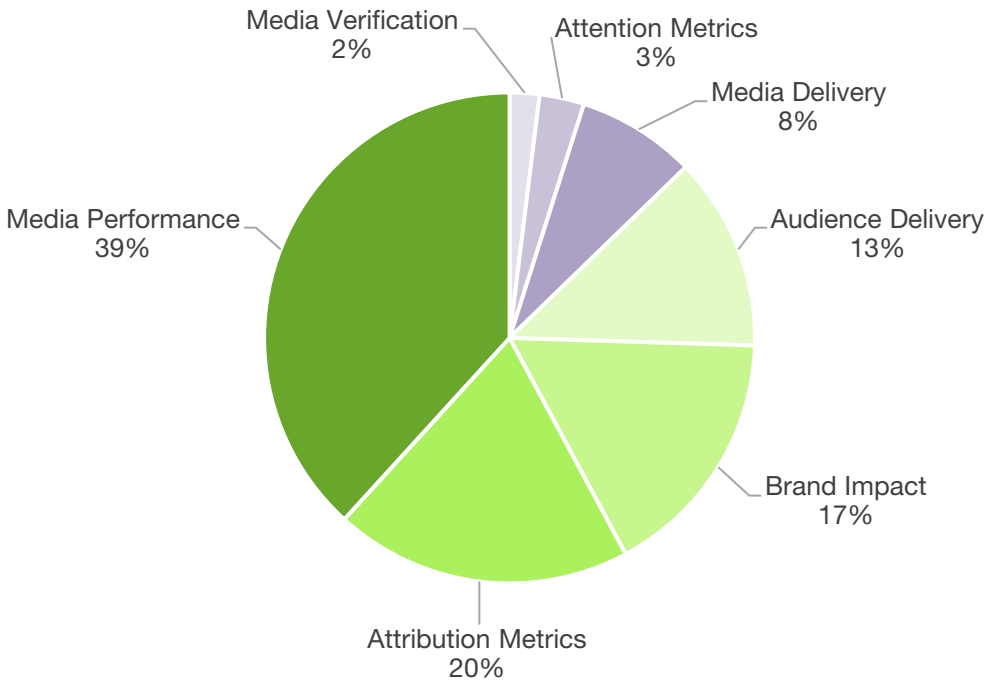
Fast Proof (Retail, Finance)	Comparable Proof (CPG, Pharma, Auto, Travel)	Future Proof (Tech / SaaS)
Outcomes-First measurement culture.	Standards-First measurement culture.	Hybrid, High-Maturity measurement culture.
Proof is Possible (expect causal clarity, rapid feedback).	Proof is Probabilistic (expect triangulation, directional evidence).	Expects *both* causal speed *and* methodological rigor.
Data-as-Integral Tool: always-on, 1PP-driven, frequent optimization.	Data-as-Evidence: careful, validated, structured frameworks (MMM, lift).	Data-as-Infrastructure: integrated systems, AI-enabled modeling.
Strong reliance on in-channel signals, incrementality, ROAS, and observed transactions.	Strong reliance on identity scaffolding, cross-platform consistency, comparable reporting.	High tolerance for experimentation; comfortable with synthetic data and predictive systems.
High confidence only where visibility is direct (e.g., Media Performance).	Higher confidence in structured systems (MMM, audience definitions, cross-channel planning).	Highest expectations of all categories; sees the biggest gap between where they are and where they want to be.
"Everything ladders to ROI and incrementality." (QSR executive).	*"We look for consistency… compare channels in the same language." (Auto executive).*	*"MMM needs to be daily and used for real-time decision-making." (Tech executive).*

Measurement Is Broadening Beyond ROI — Even as Confidence Levels are Inconsistent

Media Performance remains the single most important measurement domain across all advertisers, serving as the common "boardroom metric" for justifying budgets. However, the study shows a clear and decisive shift underway — a growing focus on other measurement categories as well as performance. Advertisers expect attention, verification, audience delivery, brand impact, and attribution to grow significantly in importance over the next three to five years.

But confidence in these newer metric areas, such as attention, brand impact, and attribution, is currently constrained due to lack of standardization in methodology, limited transparency, and frequent interoperability across systems. Advertisers are not rejecting these new metric areas; they value them conceptually, but are cautious about using them as primary decision inputs until they are more comparable and interpretable. This is especially true when results have to be reconciled across multiple partners and justified to management.

Figure 3: Share of Advertisers Rating Media Domains as "Singe Most Important"



Confidence Varies with Observability and Alignment — Where Systems Must Be Joined

Advertisers are most confident when metrics are direct, observable, and organizationally validated — most notably Media Performance KPIs such as click-through rate (CTR), cost per lead (CPL), cost per acquisition (CPA), return on ad spend (ROAS), and sales lift %.

Confidence becomes more tempered when insights depend on joining multiple data sources, applying statistical inference, or reconciling outputs across systems. Attention, attribution, and verification are consistently described as "black boxes." Brand impact and audience delivery are better understood, but still constrained by speed, comparability, and identity resolution limitations. During the research, advertisers repeatedly emphasized that their greatest anxiety is not about data quality, but about their own ability to reconcile signals and communicate a coherent story internally.

The confidence gap, in this sense, is as much human and organizational as it is technical.

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> ***The future of measurement isn't about replacing current signals – it's about making them work better together. Hybrid measurement that combines panels and digital data brings clarity to a complex landscape, but its value depends on access, usability, and the ability to turn data into meaningful insights. This makes powerful analytical tools indispensable in the ecosystem.***
>
> *— Zuber Nosimohomed, President, TechEdge*

Pragmatic Expectations for the Future

Despite inconsistent confidence levels, the majority of advertisers (over 90%) do not see any severe measurement barriers emerging in the next 3-5 years. Issues such as cross-platform measurement, transparency, signal loss, and incrementality are viewed as moderate to major challenges — but manageable ones. They are material constraints, not crises. Major and even moderate barriers complicate workflows, slow decision-making, and require reconciliation. But this is not new and these barriers will not significantly impact effective media measurement in 3-5 years.

Advertisers have adapted to a fragmented ecosystem and developed ways of working within it. They have normalized the complexity. As ambitions increase — particularly for attribution, brand insight, and cross-media coherence — these measurement challenges and barriers become more salient, but they are not viewed as existential threats.

Emerging Technology Mirrors Today's Needs

Advertiser enthusiasm for emerging technologies maps directly to the pressures undermining confidence today. AI-powered measurement stands out overwhelmingly as the technology most likely to impact measurement in the near future, reflecting a desire for faster interpretation, predictive insight, and relief from manual reconciliation. Over 80% of advertisers agree AI solutions will impact measurement in the next 3-5 years.

Cross-media measurement is the second-strongest priority, underscoring advertisers' continued aspiration for comparability, even as they accept fragmentation today. Privacy-preserving identity solutions, synthetic data, and clean rooms further reflect a future that is probabilistic, collaborative, and privacy-safe. *"The real holistic measurement of different channels is not there… a unified metric to compare linear TV with digital is missing. We built our own combined qualified reach number." (CPG executive)*

These expectations are not expressions of technology optimism alone. They reflect a clear demand for measurement systems that are coherent, interpretable, and usable at the speed of decision-making.

In Conclusion: Bridging the Confidence Gap

Advertisers are not seeking a single source of truth. Instead, they are looking for greater clarity about how different truths relate to one another, and for systems that make measurement easier to explain, validate, and use with confidence.

What practical steps could the industry take to close the confidence gap? We see four priorities:

- Stronger governance through shared definitions and standards. Advertisers crave unified definitions, identity standards, verification norms, etc.

- Greater transparency into methodologies and assumptions. Advertisers want fewer black boxes. Research providers can make the most impact by enabling independent review/audits, explaining model logic, and enabling cross-vendor calibration.

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Innovation paired with guardrails that support trust and usability. Advertisers are betting big on next-gen tools like AI. Confidence in these innovations will rise when they are paired with strong governance (e.g., unified definitions, standards and norms) that supports advertisers' experimentation and adoption.

Focused investment in interoperable, future-ready infrastructure. Advertisers trust data that can be compared, interpreted and reconciled across systems. The industry's role is not to just push measurement forward, but to make measurement interoperable, intelligible and fit for decision-making.

Ultimately, confidence will grow not from more data or more tools, but from measurement systems that help advertisers understand what counts, why results differ, and how to act with assurance in a complex ecosystem.

As one advertiser succinctly put it: *"The data is there. The question is what counts."*

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