The use of retail media networks (RMNs) has exploded in recent years as companies realize the benefits of direct-to-consumer marketing opportunities. Yet there is one substantial shortcoming that runs the risk of limiting their effectiveness: a lack of standardization.

By standardizing product characteristics with common product specifications, advertisers can gain efficiencies and experiences that save them time and effort. According to eMarketer estimates, the value of RMNs will reach $5 billion to $15 billion in incremental value across RMNs, marketers, and agencies would realize thousands of hours in staff time savings per year, according to Kristi Argyilan, Albertsons SVP of Retail Media.

Dealers and agencies can provide the following services an RMN offers:

- Inventory management solutions
- Creative management options
- Self-service offerings
- Competitive separation
- Non-IAB standard products (e.g., RMN-specific ad formats & services an RMN offers)

With most advertisers using between five and nine different platforms that they have to go to in order to transact, "That's a problem if you want to be looked at the same as other media networks," according to eMarketer. That's more than double the $45 billion expected in 2023.

The Retail Media Standardization Framework concentrates on four high-priority areas:

1. **Product Specifications**: To date, the IAB maintains product guidelines on:
   - Brand appropriateness and safety
   - Non-disruptive ad experiences
   - Geographical and audience targeting
   - Video views and video ad completion rate
   - Impressions and frequency

2. **Measuring Performance**: The framework provides standard definitions and calculation methodologies especially for metrics such as return on advertising spend (ROAS), incremental ROAS, and new-to-brand households.

3. **Third-Party Verification**: Offered for each of the following areas:
   - Display Ads
   - Native Ads
   - Digital Video
   - CTV

4. **Disclosure of Services**: RMN disclosures should include its:
   - The type of attribution window
   - The statistical model offered (e.g., tagging and tracking), as well as the vendor used for verification.

"With most advertisers using between five and nine different platforms that they have to go to in order to transact," according to Kristi Argyilan, Albertsons SVP of Retail Media. RMNs are a "win-win-win" for RMNs, advertisers, and consumers, but this approach is far from optimal. For more information, please contact mediacollective@albertsons.com.

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