

CPO of My Future Purpose Speaks on Programming and Advertising for an Aging Audience

Today, the median age is 38.5, the median age of television viewers is 64.6. This illustrates a shift in audience demographics for TV networks and cable

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Traditional television is experiencing a demographic shift, with the median age of TV viewers now at 64.6—far surpassing the U.S. median age of 38.5.

As younger generations turn to streaming services like Netflix, Hulu, and YouTube, networks and cable providers face a critical reality: their [core audience is aging](#). To remain

relevant, the industry must evolve its programming and advertising strategies to better serve and engage this growing demographic.



Older couple in their late 60's enjoy watching their favorite TV show

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Americans 50-64 years old claimed a larger share of streaming time than those 35-49, according to Nielsen. Will we see Super Bowl commercials reflect the shifting demographics?”

Vicki Thomas, Chief Purpose Officer My Future Purpose

Vicki Thomas, Chief Purpose Officer for My Future Purpose, said, "Today, for the first time, Americans 50-64 years old claimed a larger share of streaming time than those 35-49, according to Nielsen. The median age of the TV viewer is 64.6. Will we see TV commercials in the Super Bowl reflect the shifting demographics?"

The Departure of Beloved Shows Like Blue Bloods and Magnum P.I.

For years, networks chased the coveted 18-49 and 25-54 age demographics, considered the sweet spot for

advertisers. This pursuit led to the cancellation or removal of shows like Blue Bloods and

Magnum P.I., despite their popularity with older viewers. One of the reasons for the /CBS decision was cost cutting.

The shifting demographics and the sheer spending power of the 60+ age group, networks and advertisers are beginning to change their strategies.

Responding to the Aging Audience

TV networks and cable companies are now exploring ways to appeal to older viewers while maintaining some balance to attract younger audiences. New programming strategies include producing shows that reflect the interests, values, and lifestyles of older adults. For example:

- [Dramas with Depth and Purpose:](#)

Shows like *The Crown* and *Yellowstone* have demonstrated the appeal of rich, character-driven stories that resonate with mature viewers.

- **Reboots of Classics:** Reviving beloved classics with a modern twist, such as the recent *Frasier* reboot, taps into nostalgia while appealing to older audiences who fondly remember the originals.

- **More Representation:** Networks are beginning to greenlight projects featuring older actors and storylines that reflect the challenges and triumphs of aging, from careers and relationships to health and reinvention.

Cable networks are also investing in programming designed to appeal to the over-60 demographic. Hallmark Channel, for example, has long catered to older viewers with feel-good movies and family-centered content. Meanwhile, platforms like PBS thrive by offering documentaries, dramas, and educational content that engage intellectually curious viewers of all ages.

Madison Avenue Adjusts: Older Icons Take the Stage

Advertising is finally catching up to the changing demographic landscape. The upcoming Super Bowl on February 9th will serve as a revealing showcase of this shift. Advertisers paid an eye-popping \$7 million for a 30-second spot, and many are focusing their messages on older viewers. Expect commercials featuring beloved icons like Martha Stewart, Antonio Banderas,



Our purpose is to inspire yours, Co-founder My Future Purpose



Future Purpose

Meg Ryan, Billy Crystal, Willem Dafoe, Catherine O'Hara, Peyton Manning, and Eli Manning. These familiar faces are poised to resonate with older audiences, reminding them of their relevance and purchasing power.

The focus on older celebrities signals a broader recognition that advertisers can no longer rely solely on youthful imagery to sell their products. Older consumers are a vital market segment, and they're more willing than ever to spend on travel, luxury goods, healthcare, technology, and more.

Balancing Programming and Advertising for All Ages

While catering to older viewers is a smart move, networks and advertisers must also strike a balance to engage diverse age groups. Younger viewers are not abandoning TV entirely but are consuming it differently—primarily through streaming services and on-demand content. To bridge the gap, TV companies need to:

1. Invest in Cross-Generational Programming: Shows like *This Is Us* succeeded because they resonated with both younger and older viewers, thanks to their intergenerational themes.
2. Expand Digital Offerings: Making traditional TV content more accessible through streaming platforms can help networks retain younger audiences.
3. Craft Inclusive Advertising Campaigns: Commercials that appeal to all ages—by focusing on universal themes like family, friendship, and personal growth—can resonate broadly while respecting each age group's distinctiveness.

The Future of TV: Embracing the Power of Older Viewers

As the TV industry evolves, the key to success lies in recognizing and respecting the growing influence of older audiences. Networks and advertisers must view this shift not as a limitation but as an opportunity to engage a loyal, engaged, and financially powerful demographic.

This year's Super Bowl will test how well Madison Avenue and networks are adapting. Will the commercials strike the right balance and capture the hearts of the aging audience? Tune in to find out—and enjoy watching icons from generations past light up the screen. It's time for TV to fully embrace its changing face, celebrating viewers of all ages.

Vicki Thomas

My Future Purpose

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