



Questions to consider asking Connected and Streaming TV Partners



Developed in partnership
with:
iab.TECH LAB

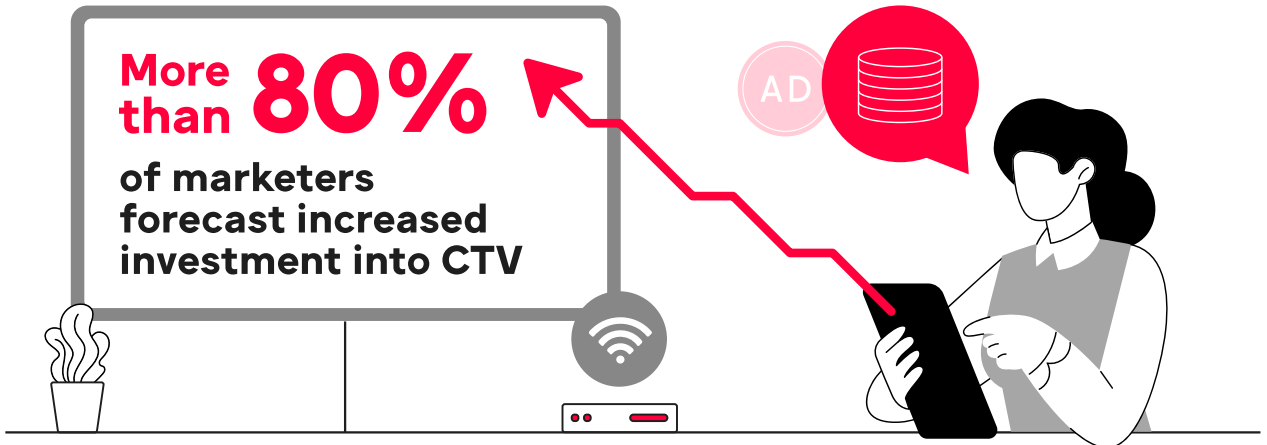
May 2026

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	5
How to use this document	7
Suggested questions and why you might ask them	8
Planning	8
Video Asset Delivery	10
Brand Suitability	11
Measurement & Reporting	11
Ad Fraud	13
Interactivity	15
Appendix: Key Tech Lab Standards to ask about	16

Executive Summary

Connected and Streaming TV (CTV) is rapidly becoming a core component of media plans — but not in the same way, or at the same pace, in every market. In WFA’s [2026 Global Media Budget Survey](#), more than 80% of marketers forecast increased investment into CTV; the highest share of any media channel. Yet members consistently report very different levels of maturity, priority and confidence across regions.



A familiar (if apocryphal) tension illustrates the issue. US media teams question why European counterparts seem slow to embrace CTV; European teams, in turn, question why the US places such emphasis on it. Both perspectives are rational within their local market ecosystems, with differences in broadcaster commercial models, inventory availability, regulation, data access, buying mechanics, and so forth. A challenge for global media teams is to operate coherently as budgets continue to scale.

This document is intended to help bridge that gap. It does not assume CTV is the same everywhere, but offers a practical framework of questions buy-side teams can ask their partners to better understand

- what is actually being **bought**,
- how it is **delivered**,
- And **how outcomes can be assessed**, across markets, platforms and buying routes.

Note: The aim of this voluntary initiative is to suggest proposals for industry best practice with a view to assisting the market on its journey to maturity. Ultimately the objective is to provide support to advertisers towards their individual strategic marketing goals which they may choose to rely on or not on a voluntary basis. Nothing in this document is intended to align, coordinate, or harmonise the approach of competing advertisers to their individual supplier relationships or procurement decisions.

About the authors:



IAB Tech Lab: Established in 2014, the IAB Technology Laboratory (Tech Lab) is a non-profit consortium that engages a member community globally to develop foundational technology and standards that enable growth and trust in the digital media ecosystem. Comprised of digital publishers, ad technology firms, agencies, brands, and other member companies, IAB Tech Lab focuses on solutions for brand safety and ad fraud; identity, data, and consumer privacy; cross-channel programmatic effectiveness and ad measurement; and the impact of LLMs and AI agents on advertising. IAB Tech Lab's Advanced TV initiative develops comprehensive foundations for TV advertising technology and standards, including VAST, ACIF, SIMID and the CTV Ad Portfolio, all of which are covered in this document, along with OM SDK, the critical Open Measurement standard for CTV.



WFA is the only global network for senior marketers. We champion more effective, efficient and sustainable marketing communications. We represent over 150 of the world's biggest brands and more than 60 national advertiser associations worldwide. Together, this voluntary peer-to-peer network of the world's best marketers offers a unique source of expertise, inspiration and leadership.

Introduction

Connected and Streaming TV (CTV) have become strategically important for global media teams, but its role, maturity and value proposition vary significantly by market. While some geographies have seen rapid growth in addressable inventory and programmatic buying, others remain anchored in strong linear TV ecosystems with very different commercial and regulatory foundations. For global advertisers, this has created a channel that is increasingly important but inconsistently understood, making it harder to plan, buy and evaluate CTV in a coherent way across regions.

Current penetration and revenue by region as of recent research is:

Note: In the detailed questions below we have addressed some additional market specific nuances where appropriate.

Region	Streaming/ CTV HH Penetration 2025	Est. 2025 Spending (data sources listed below)
US	83% Pew Research Center	\$33.3bn eMarketer / Insider Intelligence
Europe	65% eMarketer	€11.3bn WaveConnect CTV
UK	88% S&P Global Consumer Insights 2026	£2.31bn eMarketer / Insider Intelligence
MENA	65% CampaignME	\$3.1bn Mordor Intelligence
SE Asia	71% Magnite "Screens and Streams"	\$3.9bn iMarc
India	20% Adgully / Deloitte-MPA	~\$240M GroupM / Exchange4Media
Latin America	65% Streaming Media	\$11.6bn Streaming Media

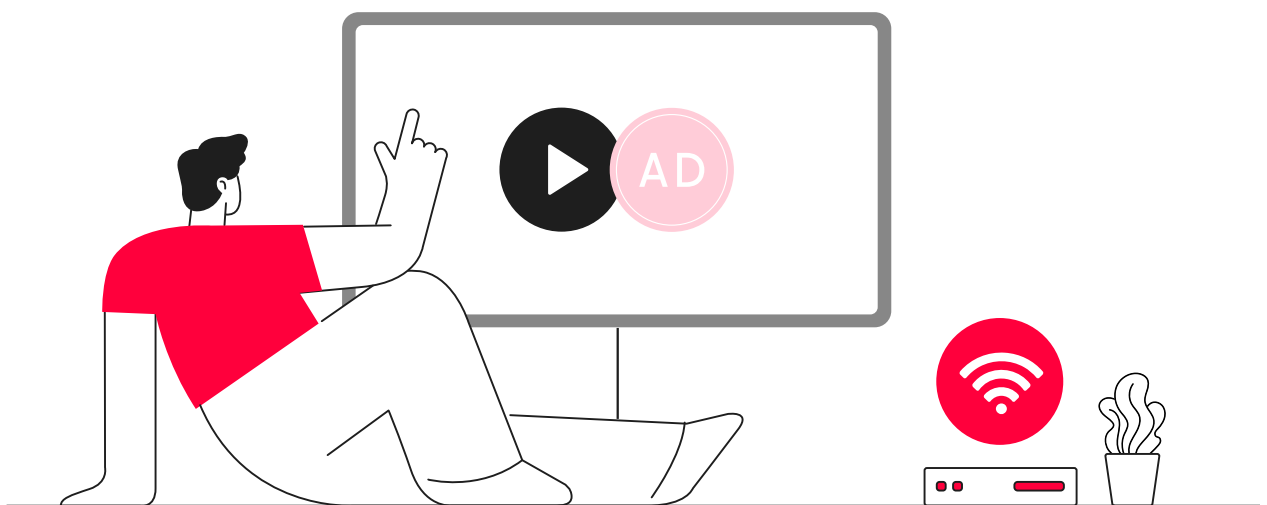
Much of the penetration and growth comes from Gen Z and Millennials audience outside the US. These consumers are also very Mobile-first (and in some regions Mobile-only), which does impact CPMs. These trends, combined with the proliferation of FAST (Free Ad Supported Television), and specialized, long tail, streaming services create significant fragmentation across the Streaming, VOD, and CTV ecosystem. Enabling Programmatic CTV/Streaming is a significant step towards creating scale in this challenging environment, and to being able to focus on meaningful outcomes in addition to eyeballs.

CTV introduces a new level of operational and commercial complexity, which means practices long taken for granted in Linear TV cannot be assumed in streaming environments. This can result in higher operational costs, unpredictable delivery and difficulty to explain performance. At the scale CTV now occupies, these can create material challenges to campaign outcomes.

This document is designed to support advertisers in navigating the complexity in a practical, market-agnostic way. The questions listed in the main body of this document form part of IAB Tech Lab's proposed voluntary industry standards for CTV. They believe widespread industry adoption of these standards is a necessary step for CTV to fulfill its promise of combining Linear TV's massive reach with digital advertising's precision and efficiency.

Note from IAB Tech Lab

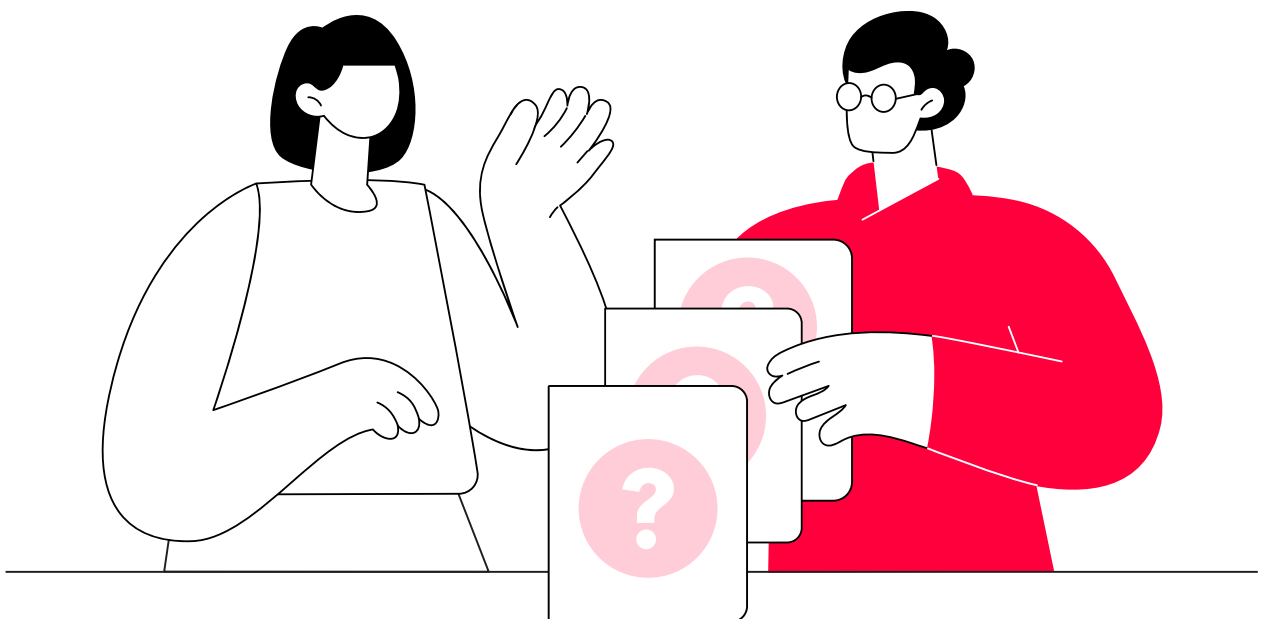
Some of these standards are in a period of public comment at time of writing (March 2026): to find out more you can visit the IAB Tech Lab website, review the specifications, and contribute comments where needed. You can learn about IAB Tech Lab [Working Group procedures](#) on the website as well.



How to use this document

Establishing robust partnerships with Connected TV partners may already be one step to successfully navigating the complexities of the media channel. However, this involves understanding the technical and strategic aspects of the different forms of CTV and OTT, but also understanding how each organization's internally set goals, metrics and expectations may (or may not) align with those of partners. When advertisers consider working with a CTV partner, they may want to consider a range of questions that may help them to improve that alignment, as well as to positively impact, even maximize, effectiveness. Asking the right questions may also help organizations gain better understanding of the value proposition.

The suggested questions below are the result of discussions with external senior CTV experts within IAB Tech Lab Advanced TV and Programmatic Supply Chain working groups, covering various Tech Lab standards for this sector, including LEAP, ACIF, and the CTV Ad Portfolio. These suggested questions are not specific to any advertiser or retailer, and are not intended to replace standard procurement processes.



Suggested questions and why you might ask them

This section calls out some of the questions IAB Tech Lab suggests you may want to ask from CTV inventory partners, and explains why the answers are important in ensuring that you are able to run impactful and successful campaigns.

We have grouped these questions into the following categories:

PLANNING: Enabling the alignment of audience, content type, and supply paths upfront to balance reach, quality, and cost in a fragmented streaming ecosystem.

How can I determine the schedule for high demand events, such as live sports, and expected audience size?

Reasoning: The Forecasting API, part of the [Live Event Ad Playbook \(LEAP\) initiative](#) will provide information about upcoming events which enables more effective longer term planning for the moments when the Concurrent Streams API will be needed. Live events are inherently volatile, but they're not completely unpredictable. Historical data, promotional campaigns, and competitive scheduling all influence expected viewership. The problem is this intelligence lives in silos, and with the shift to streaming, publishers have lost the decades of linear TV historical data that powered network upfronts.

The Forecasting API helps rebuild that planning capability for the streaming era.

Which regions is this most relevant to? [Every region](#), noting that Live Event streaming is growing fastest in [US](#), [LatAm](#), [SE Asia/India](#), where cricket is a driving force.

How do I scale ad delivery for live event audience sizes?

Reasoning: A broadcasting company is hosting a major event with an expected 40 million concurrent viewers. They need to tell their partners that the unanticipated spike in traffic will impact the amount of ads that need to be delivered in the next commercial break. Using the [concurrent streams API](#), the broadcasting company can communicate how many devices are streaming the event to help their partners prepare for the scale.

Which regions is this most relevant to? [Every region](#), noting that Live Event streaming is growing fastest in [US](#), [LatAm](#), [SE Asia/India](#), where cricket is a driving force.

Do you provide genre or other extended content identifiers in the bid request?

Reasoning: The [Content Taxonomy 3.1](#) introduced a comprehensive set of standard Genres that can also be included in the bid request. OpenRTB now also includes the ability for publishers to include extended content identifiers in the request, where the content is described without needing to be named in the bidstream. Both of these capabilities ensure that the right audiences in brand suitable content can be targeted by the buyer.

Which regions is this most relevant to? US & Western Europe

Can you support competitive separation in your CTV Ad Pods?

Reasoning: The use of dynamic pod bidding in OpenRTB, allows demand partners to fill entire commercial breaks with multiple ads of varying lengths while maintaining competitive separation, among other CTV-specific use cases, and avoids the challenges posed by the overuse of bid duplication from publishers.

Which regions is this most relevant to? US due to carriage agreement complexities, but competitive separation may be less of an issue in other regions.

Do you have an automated way to sync Deals between your system and my Demand platform?

Reasoning: The [Deals API specification](#) establishes a standardized framework for transmitting deal metadata between advertising systems, turning a mess of different codes into a consistent process. This eliminates manual entry across the many different systems most buyers and sellers are using, reducing deal setup time from hours to minutes with far fewer errors along the way. Now you can have confidence that the deals will deliver if they were the right deals in the first place.

Not only that, but the API provides transparency into who sold the deal, who packaged it, AND who curated it—critical for understanding inventory quality and economics. Thanks to a new Object: Curation, which provides the foundation for industry-first standardization on how curated deals are described and transacted.

Which regions is this most relevant to? Everywhere where Deals are used for transactions.

VIDEO ASSET DELIVERY: Creating support for multiple formats, lengths, and bitrate requirements to ensure seamless playback across diverse streaming platforms and devices.

How do I ensure my digital video asset fits the screen resolutions it will be served on?

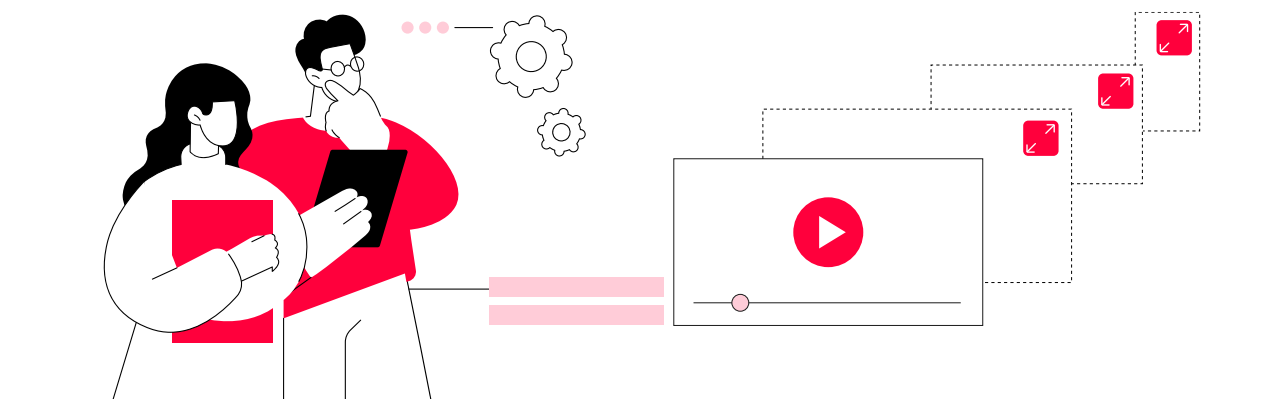
Reasoning: An agency is looking to buy ad space for a digital video ad for an online streaming platform. Using a [Mezzanine](#) file, the agency can ensure that the video asset fits the screen resolutions that it will be served on. A Mezzanine file is the raw high-resolution video file that publishers can use to render the best quality file available. Using the highest resolution Mezzanine file dimensions, the digital video asset size can be changed without distorting the ad.

Which regions is this most relevant to? Every region

How should the bid request for video be specified when a VAST response is desired?

Reasoning: A streaming platform has TV shows and movies with video advertising breaks. In order to efficiently track impressions and have seamless cross-platform ad delivery, the platform is looking to receive a [VAST](#) response from the buying platform or ad server. In order to receive this, the video player will create an ad request. In programmatic this is most often translated into an OpenRTB request with a [video object](#). The winning bid would include a VAST XML document with information about the ad.

Which regions is this most relevant to? Every region, but some advanced VAST features may not yet be adopted worldwide.



BRAND SUITABILITY: Using accurate content classification and transparent supply signals to ensure ads run alongside premium, contextually appropriate programming.

How do I ensure my ads are not being served alongside non-brand safe content?

Reasoning: A DSP does not want the ad that they're representing to be served alongside content that is not an appropriate fit for the brand's identity, values, or audience. The streaming platform that the DSP is bidding for ad space on has tagged all of their content with their corresponding [Content 3.1 taxonomy](#) categories. Since the content was properly tagged by the platform, the DSP can use the 'bcat' attribute and block their ad from completing a bid that goes hand in hand with unbrand-suitable content.

Which regions is this most relevant to? Brand Safety concerns are subjective to the advertiser except in the case of regulations.

MEASUREMENT & REPORTING: Reconciling impression delivery, reach, and outcomes across platforms while addressing limited device-level signals and walled-garden constraints.

How do I ensure comprehensive measurement across CTV devices?

Reasoning: A publisher wants to deliver ads across a wide range of CTV devices (LG, Samsung, Apple tvOS, AndroidTV, Fire TV) while delivering reliable metrics for viewability and verification to their partners. Using the [Open Measurement SDK](#), they are able to provide a unified framework for third-party impression measurement and verification across all supported CTV platforms. Without the OM SDK, the advertiser would see inconsistent measurement metrics and increased overhead as each CTV platform behaves differently, requiring individual SDKs for each.

Which regions is this most relevant to? For Mobiles devices (AndroidTV/FireTV/ AppleOS etc.) this is globally applicable. For CTV different vendors may exist in different markets, but OM SDK is region-agnostic.

How do I verify that my impression was viewable?

Reasoning: Buyers require viewable impressions according to MRC standards. The [Open Measurement SDK](#) supports the standardized collection of native application signals used to calculate ad viewability. All CTV apps or ads SDKs should integrate OM SDK in supported environments. OM SDK for CTV aims to address the issue of fragmentation of measurement signals across various platforms by providing a unified framework for measuring CTV-specific viewability signals like is the screen on, device type, and how long since the user has interacted with the TV.

Which regions is this most relevant to? See above.

How do I uniquely identify a creative asset across different media or screens?

Reasoning: brand wants to run a video campaign across multiple platforms and devices. If each creative is given different IDs when uploaded to each platform for distribution, we will see increased fragmentation with impressions. Unified campaign reporting for reach and frequency will be a challenge because the creative doesn't look like its the same in each platform. Using [Universal AdID](#) in VAST (now available for both VAST 2.0, 3.0 and 4.x), these issues are resolved as each of the creatives will receive the same AdID.

This will help to accurately report on which ad was seen where, and ensure that the same competitive separation rules that apply in Linear can be carried forward to CTV, when the sellers verify the creative metadata using the ACIF validation API

Which regions is this most relevant to? This is designed agnostically, but usage is impacted by local regulations and regional registry orgs.
(e.g. US - AD-ID, UK- Clearcast, France - ARPP)

Are you able to provide creative level cross platform reporting?

Reasoning: Using the Universal AdID and the ACIF standard, reconciling and producing consolidated reporting of delivery at the creative ID level becomes efficient and straightforward.

Which regions is this most relevant to? See above.

AD FRAUD: Mitigating invalid traffic, spoofed apps, and made-for-advertising streaming environments through supply-path controls and independent verification.

How do I protect and trust in messages sent from a partner's server?

Reasoning: A digital publisher wants to sell ad space on their streaming app. They want to ensure that the bids coming in for their ad unit are not being misrepresented. Using [Authenticated Connections](#), parties receiving cryptographically signed requests in Ads.cert can authenticate the sender to a specific domain, even if they don't have a direct relationship with that party. Compliance organizations and security vendors sharing the ads.cert Call Signs cause recipients to gain better visibility into the business originating these server-to-server communications and their business practices.

Which regions is this most relevant to? US-centric, though designed agnostically

How do I protect against spoofed CTV app inventory?

Reasoning: App spoofing was a common ad fraud use case that the industry previously confronted in web and mobile app inventory. Ads.txt and app-ads.txt were developed as tools to understand which entities are allowed to sell what inventory. Largely, those specifications apply to CTV with an enhancement to help with some of the complexities of Television distribution rights.

The CTV environment includes the concept of inventory sharing; when multiple entities have sales rights over ad slots. The value of INVENTORYPARTNERDOMAIN was added to [App-ads.txt](#) and allows for another domain to be designated as an authorized seller.

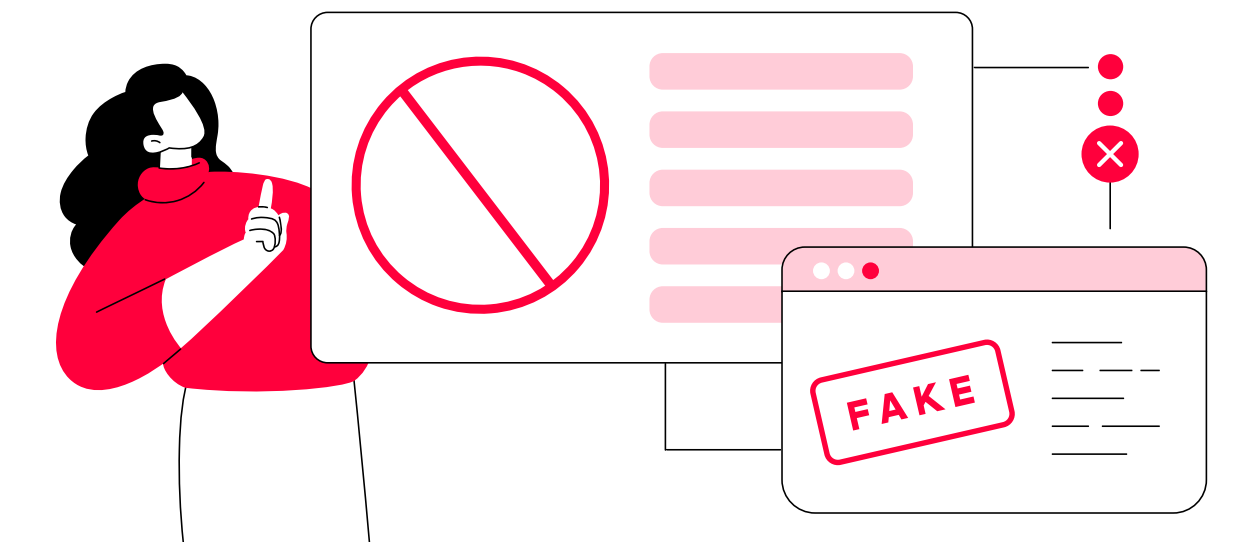
Validation of authorized sellers in CTV still happens the same way as with app-ads.txt. There is a developer url listed in the app's app-store listing, found from the bundle ID in the bid request. The developer url points to the location of the app-ads.txt file. From there, the buyer is able to validate the seller IDs authorized by the app to sell their inventory.

Which regions is this most relevant to? Every region, but has some dependency on local app store business models.

How do I protect against spoofed devices?

Reasoning: Bid requests and measurement beacons contain information about the device, which is used for various purposes, including ad selection and measurement. In OpenRTB bid requests, the “device” object carries this information, while the User-Agent HTTP header represents the same in case of measurement beacons, including impressions. Since this information is represented in a text string, it can be easily manipulated by intermediaries in the OpenRTB protocol and by actors fabricating HTTP requests. Such misrepresentation of device information is termed as device spoofing and can be performed for both benign and malicious purposes. To combat device spoofing, the device manufacturer, acting as a trusted party, attests to the authenticity of their devices. This is termed **Device Attestation**, and it can be used to verify that ad impressions are being rendered on authentic devices and to uncover Sellers of spoofed inventory.

Which regions is this most relevant to? Device spoofing is a global issue. OM SDK is a proven solution, but subject to adoption of the Privacy Pass protocol by the OS and region.



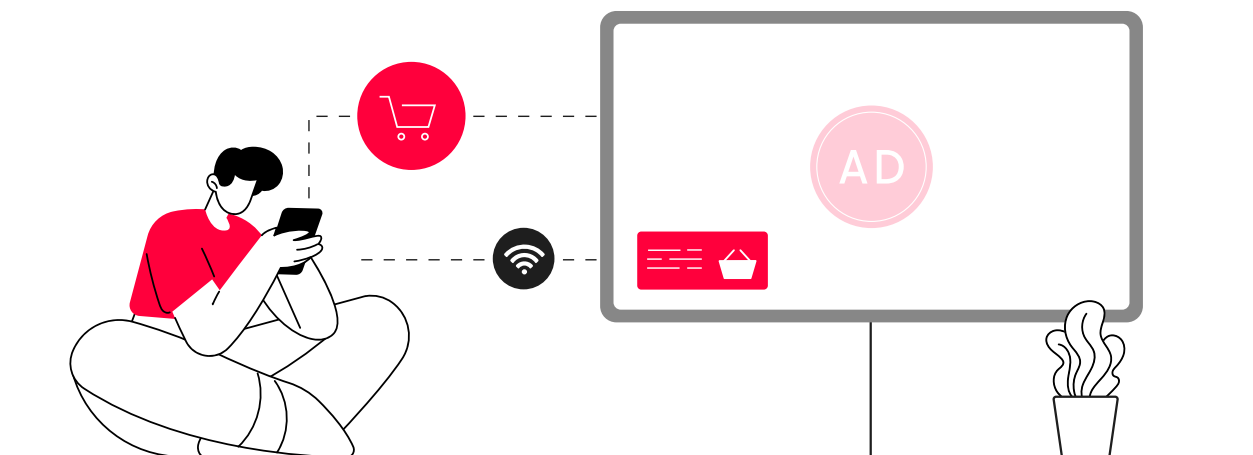
INTERACTIVITY: Enabling shoppable, clickable, or companion experiences that bridge the living-room screen with second devices to drive deeper engagement and performance.

Am I able to execute an interactive ad (e.g. shoppable, end cards)?

Reasoning: A shoppable video ad appears during a show on a streaming service that allows viewers to engage with products highlighted with interactive hotspots or QR codes. Scanning a QR code opens a webpage on your mobile device where you have the opportunity to purchase the products seen in the ad. At the end of the ad, an interactive end card summarizes all featured products, letting viewers browse or purchase any item that they saw. The **SIMID** container manages communication between the ad's interactive elements and the video player, ensuring the ad can request actions without accessing sensitive player data or the user's device.

Which regions is this most relevant to? This is regionally agnostic, but does require SIMID adoption, which varies by platform and region.

Non-dynamic QR codes are independent of SIMID and can be baked into any video creative.



Appendix

This section covers the key Tech Lab Standards you should be aware of when buying Connected TV inventory on a programmatic basis. Each summary provides a link to the IAB Tech Lab website where you can access the specification, either as PDF or in a Github repository.

Tech Lab Standard	What it does
<p>ACIF (Ad Creative ID Framework)</p>	<p>The Ad Creative ID Framework (ACIF) v1.0, defines a framework to enable a persistent identifier for ad creative at every phase in the video advertising supply chain. ACIF is foundational in bridging the gap between linear programming in CTV and the on-demand video we've become accustomed to in web and other connected environments.</p> <p>It also includes a validation API specification that enables the sell-side to verify details on the Creative from the Ad Registry to help support competitive separation, which is currently supported by Clearcast, AD-ID, and ARPP.</p>
<p>LEAP (Live Event Ad Playbook)</p>	<p>Live Event Ad Serving refers to the process of delivering digital ads within live-streamed programming. The Concurrent Streams API is the first deliverable for this initiative from IAB Tech Lab. The API aims to provide a standard methodology for subscribers to ask “how many viewers are in a stream?” when a live event is occurring.</p>
<p>OM SDK (Open Measurement)</p>	<p>OM SDK (Open Measurement) brings consistent impression measurement to CTV environments, building a consistent and scalable measurement of TV and Video advertising across devices. The fragmentation of measurement signals across various platforms has long been a challenge.</p> <p>OM SDK for CTV aims to address this issue by providing a unified framework for measuring CTV-specific impression signals like TV off, device type, and how long the user has</p>

been watching, similar to its successful implementation in mobile apps and web video. Advertisers and buyers, confronted with the escalating complexity of CTV inventory, can leverage the standardized measurement provided by OM SDK signals to ensure transparency and accountability in their campaigns.

ECAPI **(Event and Conversion API)**

The Event and Conversion API is a server-side tool that allows businesses to send data about actions consumers have taken directly from their servers to advertising platforms they partner with for measurement and optimization use cases.

ADS.TXT **& APP-ADS.TXT**

Ads.txt stands for Authorized Digital Sellers and is a simple, flexible and secure method that publishers can use to publicly declare the companies they authorize to sell their digital inventory.

CTV/OTT Inventory Sharing is based around multiple entities selling ads within the same streaming service or app. ads.txt/app-ads.txt supports inventory sharing, allowing publishers to list other parties that are authorized to sell their inventory which improves transparency in the industry and helps combat fraud.

SELLERS.JSON

Sellers.json provides a mechanism to enable buyers to discover who the entities are that are either direct sellers of or intermediaries in the selling of digital advertising. A published and accessible sellers.json file allows the identity of the final seller of a bid request to be discovered (assuming that they are ads.txt authorized). It also allows the identities of all nodes (entities that participated in the bid request) in the SupplyChain object to also be discovered.

SUPPLY CHAIN OBJECT

The SupplyChain Object enables buyers to see all parties who are selling or reselling a given bid request.

**CONTENT,
AUDIENCE, AND
AD PRODUCT
TAXONOMIES**

Standard taxonomies are essential for creating interoperable technology standards because they provide a common language and framework for organizing and classifying data. This consistency allows different systems to communicate effectively, reduces complexity, and ensures compatibility across platforms. By aligning on shared definitions and structures, organizations can streamline development, enhance data accuracy, and improve collaboration, ultimately driving innovation and efficiency across the ecosystem.

DEALS API

The Deals API streamlines operations by clarifying the high-level terms of each deal, significantly reducing manual data entry and supporting automated configuration. It further enhances visibility into Curated Deals, offering transparency not currently present in the bid stream.

**VAST
(Video Ad
Serving Template)**

VAST is the abbreviation Video Ad Serving Template and is used to structure ad tags that render ad creatives to video players. Using a common XML schema, VAST transfers important metadata about an ad from the ad server to a video player. VAST 4.0 is the most recent version, with full support for SIMID and ACIF, but many accompanying standards are available in VAST 2.x and higher, including the ACIF Universal AD ID.

**SIMID
(Secure Interactive
Media Interface
Definition)**

Secure Interactive Media Interface Definition (SIMID) is a container that enables communication between the player and any ad creative. Because the ad creative is securely enclosed in the SIMID container, none of its code can access the player or the environment where the player is executed. And with the communication SIMID enables, the ad creative can request certain player operations based on ad interactions.



World Federation of Advertisers
London, Brussels, Singapore, New York

wfanet.org

info@wfanet.org

+32 2 502 57 40

[linkedin.com/company/wfa](https://www.linkedin.com/company/wfa)

[youtube.com/wfamarketers](https://www.youtube.com/wfamarketers)

WFA Competition law compliance policy

The purpose of the WFA is to represent the interests of advertisers and to act as a forum for legitimate contacts between members of the advertising industry. It is the policy of the WFA that it will not be used by any company, or individual, to further any anti-competitive or collusive conduct, or to engage in other activities that could violate any antitrust or competition law, regulation, rule or directives of any country or otherwise impair full and fair competition. The WFA carries out regular checks to make sure that this policy is being strictly adhered to.

As a condition of membership, members of the WFA acknowledge that their membership of the WFA is subject to competition law rules and they agree to comply fully with those laws. Members agree that they will not use the WFA directly or indirectly, (a) to reach or attempt to reach agreements or understandings with one or more of their competitors, (b) to obtain or attempt to obtain, or exchange or attempt to exchange, confidential or proprietary information regarding any other company other than in the context of a bona fide business or (c) to further any anti-competitive or collusive conduct, or (d) to engage in other activities that could violate any antitrust or competition law, regulation, rule or directives of any country or otherwise impair full and fair competition.