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Advertising Age

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## Blacks reveal TV loyalty

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While overall ratings for the Big 3 networks continue to decline, a BBDO Worldwide analysis of data from Nielsen Media Research shows that blacks in the U.S. are watching network TV in record numbers.

"Television Viewing Among Blacks" shows that TV viewing within black households is 48% higher than all other households. In 1990, black households viewed an average 69.8 hours of TV a week. Non-black households watched an average 47.1 hours.

The three highest-rated prime-time series among black audiences are "A Different World," "The Cosby Show" and "Fresh Prince of Bel Air," Nielsen said. All are on NBC and all feature blacks.

"Advertisers and marketers are mainly concerned with age and income, and not race," said Doug Alligood, VP-special markets at BBDO, New York. "Advertisers and marketers target shows that have a broader appeal and can generate a large viewing audience."

Mr. Alligood said this can have significant implications for general-market advertisers that also need to reach blacks.

"If you are running a general ad campaign, you will underdeliver black consumers," he said. "If you can offset that delivery with those shows that they watch heavily, you will get a small composition vs. the overall audience."

Hit shows -- such as ABC's "Roseanne" and CBS' "Murphy Brown" and "Designing Women" -- had lower ratings with black audiences than with the general population because "there is very little recognition that blacks exist" in those shows.

"This turns off black viewers who want to see a world that acknowledges blacks, even if they are not the star," he said.

A network show won't be successful unless it also attracts a large black audience, said Ken Smikle, president of the African American Marketing & Media Association, an organization of black-owned ad agencies and communications companies.

"The more advertisers are interested in reaching this audience, the more networks and independent stations will be interested in delivering this audience," he said.

The best way to reach black TV viewers

Black viewers' favorite TV shows differed widely from those of general audiences during the 1990-91 TV season. Ratings are from Nielsen's Television Index for September 1990-April 1991.

Rating among

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TOP 10 SHOWS AMONG BLACKS	Blacks	Gen'l aud.
A Different World (NBC)	43.6	18.0
The Bill Cosby Show (NBC)	39.0	17.4
Fresh Prince of Bel Air (NBC)	34.2	13.2
In Living Color (Fox)	31.1	10.4
In the Heat of the Night (NBC)	27.7	15.2
Family Matters (ABC)	27.3	15.8
Blossom (NBC)	27.1	11.3
Cheers (NBC)	26.4	21.5
Amen (NBC)	25.5	10.1
Ferris Bueller (NBC)	25.4	11.1

Source: Nielsen Media Research

TOP 10 PRIME-TIME SHOWS	Rating among	
	Gen'l aud.	Blacks
Cheers (NBC)	21.6	26.4
60 Minutes (CBS)	20.6	18.7
Roseanne (ABC)	18.2	15.1
A Different World (NBC)	17.9	43.6
The Bill Cosby Show (NBC)	17.4	39.0
Murphy Brown (CBS)	16.9	12.8
America's Funniest Home Videos (ABC)	16.9	7.1

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Empty Nest (NBC)	16.7	19.9
Designing Women (CBS)	16.7	13.9
America's Funniest People (ABC)	16.7	10.5

Source: Nielsen Media Research

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