

U.S. Joint Industry Committee

Currency Certification 2026-2028 Term

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Contents

3	Currency Vendor Analysis Overview
5	Understanding How A Number is Made
6	Comscore
7	iSpot
8	VideoAmp
9	Understanding the Different Approaches
10	Conclusion

U.S. Joint Industry Committee Currency Vendor Analysis

Introduction

The television measurement ecosystem has evolved dramatically over the past three years. As new currencies, data sources and methodologies have emerged, the industry has benefited from increased innovation and choice. At the same time, greater methodological diversity has made it more difficult for buyers and sellers to understand not only what different audience estimates represent, but how those estimates are produced.

Since its inception, the U.S. Joint Industry Committee (JIC) has played an important role in bringing greater rigor, speed, transparency and confidence to the marketplace through its Currency Certification process, which was designed by, and for, the industry.

As the market continues to mature, however, the JIC's work must continue to evolve in line with the rapid pace of innovation. Guided by feedback from buyers, sellers and measurement providers, the JIC's aim is to serve as a

standards-based translator, helping the industry better understand measurement methodologies, establish common frameworks for understanding, and provide ongoing clarity without prescribing how measurement providers build their systems or determining which approach is best.

As buy-side and sell-side members of the JIC have discussed the current state of the multi-currency market, one message came through consistently: we need to know how a number is made.

While the industry has become increasingly familiar with the outputs of modern measurement systems, there remains a need for a shared language that explains the methodological decisions behind those outputs. Understanding the underlying process—how viewing is observed, how populations are defined, how audiences are modeled, and how estimates are ultimately constructed—is essential to understanding why reported audiences may differ across providers.

Purpose of This Report

This report is intended to provide that common framework. Rather than evaluating which methodology is superior, it outlines the common stages that underpin modern television measurement and summarizes, in plain language, how each certified provider approaches those stages. By creating greater transparency into how a number is made, the JIC hopes to equip buyers, sellers and the broader marketplace with the context needed to interpret measurement with greater confidence, facilitate more informed conversations, and support continued innovation across the television ecosystem.

Executive Summary

How a Number Is Made



iSpot.tv



videoamp

This report summarizes how Comscore, iSpot and VideoAmp construct television audience estimates and where their approaches align or differ. The full responses of the measurement companies are provided to the JIC members as a separate document.

All three companies use large-scale passive viewing datasets combined with weighting, calibration, identity systems, and personification models to estimate household- and person-level audiences. While each is attempting to answer the same question – “who watched what?” – they highlight different strengths.

VideoAmp combines set-top-box and Smart TV viewing with identity graph modeling calibrated by TVision-based personification.

Comscore relies heavily on large-scale return-path set-top-box data combined with calibration and weighting.

iSpot takes an ad-centric approach to cross platform measurement. It primarily uses Smart TV ACR data projected through a synthetic identity spine, plus a census-weighted panel for co-viewing and probability-based personification.

Collectively, these systems use “big data first” architectures built around passive observation rather than traditional active panel-centric measurement.

The following sections summarize how each company constructs audience estimates across the major stages of the measurement process.

Measurement Step The JIC's Plain English Interpretation

Population definition

Uses census benchmarks local market surveys, MVPD subscriber data, and ACR data to define TV household and demographic universes.

Viewing observation

Collects second-by-second viewing from cable, satellite, and vMVPD set-top boxes plus Smart TV ACR sources.

Data preparation & normalization

Validates provider data, removes duplicate or invalid data, applies TV-off detection, and normalizes viewing data across operator feeds.

Content attribution

Uses operator tuning data and schedule providers to map viewing to programs and advertising exposures.

Projection to population

Applies calibration and weighting models to account for demographic distributions, OTA viewing, and missing viewing.

Person assignment

Uses survey data, demographic matching, Bayesian models, and Monte Carlo simulations to estimate which household members were watching.

Viewing context (OOH & cross-device)

Primarily measures in-home TV viewing and does not currently include out-of-home viewing in reported metrics. Non-TV devices are excluded.

Metric calculation

Produces ratings, impressions, reach, average audience, share, and household audience estimates using calibrated viewing projections.

Validation & transparency

Publishes methodology documentation and maintains MRC accreditation for household-level measurement including "households with" age/gender.

Measurement Step The JIC's Plain English Interpretation**Population definition**

Uses Census (ACS, CPS) to build a privacy compliant synthetic household and person identity spine representing the national population and ARF DASH for TV universe estimates.

Viewing observation

Collects viewing data from Smart TV ACR sources, set-top-box data, and streaming exposure feeds (pixel, S2S or Clean Room) and layers in co-viewing and viewer-level distributions to estimate audiences and persons.

Data preparation & normalization

Validates provider devices, removes invalid records, flags anomalies, and normalizes viewing data across devices and markets.

Content attribution

Uses proprietary MRC accredited ad catalog and occurrence data to validate viewing and audience impressions; utilizes ACR fingerprinting, Gracenote schedules, and proprietary matching systems to map viewing to programs and advertising exposures.

Projection to population

Applies synthetic census scaling and weighting models to project observed viewing to establish national and local populations.

Person assignment

Uses Epsilon & Experian data for household & device by demo, TVision panel co-viewing inputs, and probabilistic models to estimate which household members were watching.

Viewing context

Measures viewing across TV, streaming, desktop, mobile, and tablet devices and includes modeled out-of-home viewing using a proprietary customer application/panel (Tunity) along with weekly OOH universe estimates using surveys.

Metric calculation

Produces impressions, reach, second-by-second view through rates and average audience metrics for advertising and programming using modeled HH and person-level viewing and exposure thresholds.

Validation & transparency

Publishes methodology documentation, maintains calibration processes, and is the only provider to hold MRC accreditation for national ad occurrence measurement.

Measurement Step The JIC's Plain English Interpretation

Population definition

Uses Census (ACS), Kagan, ARF DASH, and Capital IQ data to define TV household and person universes across OTA, cable, satellite, vMVPD, and streaming homes.

Viewing observation

Collects viewing data from MVPD set-top-box data with Vizio Smart TV ACR sources.

Data preparation & normalization

Validates provider data, removes duplicate or invalid data, normalizes tuning information, removes inactive households, and applies Box On/Set Off capping for set-top-box sessions.

Content attribution

Uses program schedules and provider metadata to map viewing to programs and advertising exposures.

Projection to population

Leverages the VideoAmp identity graph to resolve viewership to households, then applies weighting models based on demographics, geography, and TV access type to project observed viewing to the national population.

Person assignment

Identifies household members using VideoAmp's identity graph (not modeled or imputed for linear data). Separately, uses a model built from TVision and survey data to predict which household member is likely watching a given program; these predictions are applied to person weights and aggregated into person-level viewing.

Viewing context

Measures in-home TV viewing and includes modeled out-of-home viewing based on geolocation, on-screen data and surveys. Out-of-home viewing reported separately. Cross device viewing for streaming & digital only.

Metric calculation

Produces impressions, reach, and average audience metrics using modeled person-level viewing and household estimates.

Validation & transparency

VideoAmp is not currently in the MRC audit process. They are investing in enhancements based on the findings of the MRC pre-audit.

Understanding the Different Approaches

While Comscore, iSpot and VideoAmp use different methodologies and datasets, they share several important similarities.

All three are built around passive large-scale viewing collection rather than traditional active panel participation. Each combines observed viewing with modeling, calibration, weighting, identity systems, and personification to estimate audiences at scale.

Collectively, these systems are fundamentally “big data first” architectures built around:

- set-top-box data,
- Smart TV ACR data,
- streaming integrations,
- Identity systems,
- and digital exposure data.

The primary differences are not whether they use modeling – all do – but rather:

- which signals they prioritize,
- how they calibrate missing viewing,
- how they assign viewing to people,
- how aggressively they optimize for speed and cross-platform system interoperability,
- if they focus on ads vs programs,
- and uses cases that the data sets are calibrated for.

Comscore

Comscore is centered around large-scale return-path measurement combined with extensive calibration and weighting systems. Its primary focus is statistical stability, representation, and governance.

iSpot

iSpot uses an ACR-first “glass-level” observation system combined with identity-spine projection models. Its primary focus is speed, cross-platform optimization, and AI-compatible outcomes measurement.

VideoAmp

VideoAmp uses a hybrid architecture that combines (set-top-box) STB viewing, Smart TV data, identity systems, and personification models. Its primary focus is cross-platform interoperability.

Conclusion

Comscore, iSpot and VideoAmp represent a broader industry shift away from traditional panel-centric measurement toward passive large-scale behavioral observation and AI-compatible audience architectures.

For buyers and sellers, the most important takeaway is that these companies are not simply producing different numbers — they are producing numbers through different methodological philosophies.

As the industry moves toward AI-driven planning, optimization, and transacting systems, understanding how each company constructs audience estimates becomes increasingly important.

The future market leaders will likely be the systems that best balance:

- direct observation,
- representational accuracy,
- modeling discipline,
- transparency,
- cross-platform interoperability,
- and AI compatibility.