

BASIC QUESTIONS ON RATING SYSTEM AS RAISED BY TRAI

Q1. Whether there is at all a need for the Government to regulate the system of TRP or whether it should be left to be decided by industry initiative for the growth of the rating services?

A1. As stake holders are majorly the private broadcasters and Advertising agencies, it should be left to the Indian Television Broadcasting Industry itself, to take the initiative for the growth of the Rating System.

Q2. Minimum coverage required over different platforms:

Cable –The current CABLE & SATELLITE household population size in India requires a higher sample size with all population strata classification and adequate representation of the heterogeneous profile (SEC , AGE groups, Mother Tongue, SCRs etc.) of the CABLE & SATELLITE Universe. The current sample size needs to be revised to capture the volume and the heterogeneity of the CABLE & SATELLITE Universe that prevails in the country.

CAS – The CAS population viewership should be separately sampled, classified and reported. It should not be merged with the Cable Home sample panel.

DTH – A separate and exclusive viewership panel is necessitated instead of merging it with any other CABLE & SATELLITE viewership panel for the fast growing DTH population of India..

Rural – The Rural CABLE & SATELLITE population is of significant size and it is strongly recommended that the population strata of 20thousand to 1lac, must also get represented by the Rating services.

Urban – All urban markets (towns) requires representation through adequate and appropriate sample size. **The current Measurement system does not represent the Urban TV households in below 1lac population strata.**

All states including NE, JK and Prasar Bharati Channels –. Inclusion of new markets/states can be considered as per the priority placed or identified by the Advertising Agencies for these markets (states).

Q3. Standards and Norms to be followed by the Rating agencies.

- Individuals, organizations and incorporations with business interests in broadcast directly (e.g. TV Broadcasters) or indirectly (e.g. Production Houses and Advertising Agencies) should not be allowed to have a stake in Viewership Measurement agencies. If at all, there should be a legal clause of autonomy of the Measurement Agency and periodic audits by autonomous third parties or as is deputed by IBF, to ensure transparency in the process. The panel should also be audited periodically and randomly.
- Lowering of the number of individuals that each meter represents and adequate representation of each AGE GROUP and SEC in the panel. The panel home must be a proper representation of the SEC it is supposed to represent. The SEC defining parameters should match the definition as is defined by NRS.
- **Apart from defining the Markets by population strata, it must also be classified as RURAL and URBAN. The CABLE & SATELLITE Universe for respective Age Groups and SEC, as is represented by the Viewership Measurement agencies, should match the reported CABLE & SATELLITE Universe, by IRS/NRS every year. The sample size and composition should be upgraded and updated according to the estimates of NRS as is applicable for that period.**
- The sample size must be adequate to properly represent respective CABLE & SATELLITE Universe and Markets. Inclusion of Markets below 1 lakh population and upto 20thousand population towns for viewership measurement. There should be a separate measurement with

relevant reporting parameters and with adequate representative sample size for different platforms i.e. Cable, CAS and DTH.

- Panel security and adherence to best practices in empanelment. Panel should be monitored and kept away from pilferage. Very strict norms and legal bindings should come into force if vested interests even try to breach the panel.
- **Technology should be upgraded at par with global standards. All Rating service agencies should keep upgrading to advanced technology, in the pursuit of generating viewership data, at a minimum time interval from the real time viewing by panel homes.**
- Raw data should be kept tamper proof by reducing direct access and stringent monitoring.
- Proper terminology should be used in reportage/monitoring thereby reducing confusions in business deals and vindicating the stand of those involved.
- Field personnel/those handling data should be on permanent rolls of the Measurement agency, thereby increasing the accountability of the agency for breaches and tampering of Panel.
- Error levels in data should be mentioned as and when the data is delivered to the subscriber with proper reasons and ground conditions due to which reliability is low.

Q4. Measures to encourage competition in Rating agencies.

1. Encourage Demarcation and Allocation of Markets (States) to different Rating Agencies respectively.
2. Audit of Rating Agencies on Panel Health and adherence to the norms. Any deviation found with the Rating Agency during the process of Audit, will entail, taking-over of the operating market (state) by the other Rating Agency.

Q5. Mandatory Audits to be performed by independent auditors for validation of ratings

- **Required Qualification of the Auditors:**
 - (1) Any Auditing agency that is already associated with the Rating Agency, in any form or role, will not qualify as an auditor.
 - (2) Auditing agency is required to also have expertise in Technical Audit, to also check the technical interface of the RATING SYSTEM.
 - (3) The Auditing agency should have adequate infrastructure to carry out the auditing at a periodicity of at least a semester, if not quarterly.
- **Scope of such Audit:**
 - (1) The Audit will check on the representative Sample Size corresponding to the CABLE & SATELLITE Universe as is reported by IRS/NRS for respective universe of Cable Homes, CAS Homes and DTH Homes.
 - (4) The representation of proper SEC in the panel homes/metered homes, will require auditing.
 - (5) Standard of security for protecting the panel from any pilferage has to be audited.
 - (6) The rationale and transparency for cost of rating service also needs to be audited.
 - (5) Strict adherence to the Norms for setting up panel and reportage of viewership has to be audited. Any deviance from the same will entail disqualification of the Rating Agency.

- **Reporting authorities of the Auditors:** IBF or a Joint Industry Body constituted by members of all stake-holders will be commissioning the Auditing Agency and should remain the only reporting authority for the Auditing agency.
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