



**September 26, 2005**

## **Update on the Total Viewing Sources Interconnect Product**

In June 2004, Nielsen Media Research announced that additional information would be made available to clients on ratings at the Interconnect/MSO Cluster level. The purpose of this communication is to provide an update on the development of this product

The Total Viewing Sources (TVS) Interconnect Published Data-DVD will feature audience estimates and universe estimates for any Interconnect/MSO Cluster that reaches the qualifying criteria of 100 in-tab households. In addition to these estimates, "interconnect totals" will be provided for each interconnect for November, February, May and July measurements. As with station totals, the interconnect totals are comprised of audience data from all counties served, both inside and outside the primary DMA.

Although the development work is proceeding in a timely fashion, we have decided to release the product in late 2006 so that some additional key enhancements can be made to improve the value of the product to our clients. These enhancements are:

### **Development of Sample Based Interconnect Universe Estimates**

Prior to July 2005, our process for deriving interconnect universe estimates was based on subscriber count submissions from cable systems across the local markets. The preferred approach for the reporting of interconnect universe estimates would involve a methodology that uses sample based information rather than subscriber count submissions. Work was recently concluded and the transition was made over to a sample-based methodology for the collection and reporting of interconnect universe estimates effective with the July 2005 survey.

### **Implementation of a Zero Cell Model**

Zero Cells occur in metered markets when there is set-meter tuning reported for a channel during a quarter-hour, but there is no corresponding tuning from the diary sample. A Zero Cell ascription model has been designed to address this phenomenon. Nielsen Media Research originally targeted a Fall 2005 implementation of a Zero Cell ascription model but we are now anticipating a first quarter 2006 release. This additional time is needed for the Media Rating Council to provide us with feedback on the proposed model, as well as to give the marketplace time to review impact analysis data when the model is finalized. Nielsen believes that an interconnect product delivered with the Zero Cell ascription model will yield a more useful and complete data product for the marketplace to use.



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**Use of National Cable Communications (NCC) CableTrack® "Syscodes"**

Nielsen Media Research and National Cable Communications (NCC) are in discussions and testing to determine the feasibility of including NCC's CableTrack® "Syscodes" within the product. These unique codes are assigned to each local cable interconnect, system and channel and are currently used in the planning and buying process by a large number of local clients.

The new implementation date will also provide necessary preparation time for TVS data processors. A TVS Interconnect "test file" and updated format will be delivered to third party processors and in-house data processors in order to allow them enough time to prepare their software to integrate interconnect data into their product lines.

Nielsen Media Research will continue to keep our clients updated on any further developments regarding the TVS Interconnect product. When available, this product will replace the current TVS file as the syndicated Viewers in Profile (ViP) published data quarter-hour file.

If you have further questions, please contact your Nielsen Media Research representative.