

# Coronavirus Impact on National TV Viewership: July 27-Aug. 2



By [Kaitlin Sumner](#), Supervisor, Research and Business Development, [Lockard & Wechsler Direct](#)

Among the top 50 Nielsen-rated cable networks, here are the stations that experienced the highest increases and decreases in week-over-week (WoW) TV household viewership:

Week of July 27, 2020		Week of July 27, 2020	
TOP FIVE		BOTTOM FIVE	
The Weather Channel	42%	Freeform	-16%
Disney Channel	24%	VH1	-15%
TNT	16%	Cartoon Network	-11%
Lifetime	6%	National Geographic	-10%
Nickelodeon	6%	Comedy Central	-9%

Source: The Nielsen Co.

The Weather Channel was the week’s biggest gainer, up 42 percent with live coverage of Tropical Storm Isaias adding viewers during the week.

Disney Channel rose 24 percent, seeing audience levels increase across all days of the week. *Upside-Down Magic*, and movies *Moana*, *Up*, *Zootopia*, and *Ratatouille* posted the largest ratings of the week.

TNT increased 16 percent. The network gained viewers on NBA games, *NCIS: New Orleans*, and *The Alienist*.

Lifetime held its position in the top five for a second week in a row and was joined by Nickelodeon to complete

the list. Both networks increased by 6 percent WoW.

Freeform saw the largest ratings decline this week, dropping 17 percent. Shifts in movie selections seemed to influence this decline. Last week, the network saw large audiences for movies like *Pitch Perfect*, *The Blind Side*, and *Wonder*.

VH1 dropped 15 percent, seeing the largest losses occur on Wednesday (25 percent), Thursday (25 percent), and Friday (32 percent). *Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, *Martin*, and *Wayans Bros.* were among the programs to see weekly viewership declines.

Cartoon Network declined 11 percent this week, with average ratings dropping across all weekly scheduled programs. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday ratings took the biggest hit in viewership.

National Geographic dropped 10 percent, faltering after last week’s gain of 14 percent placed it in the top five.

Comedy Central rounded out the bottom-ranked networks for the week, down 9 percent. Reruns of *The Office* and *South Park* typically represent more than 70 percent of weekly telecasts. These programs lost 12 percent and 7 percent, respectively, during the week of July 27.

# Media Spend by Category on Top/Bottom 5 Nets: July 27-Aug. 2



TOP FIVE	Short-Form Products			Lead-Generation			Long-Form			Brand/DR (with phone number)			Brand/DR (web, mobile, SMS)		
	Units	Spend	WoW % Change	Units	Spend	WOW % Change	Units	Spend	WOW % Change	Units	Spend	WOW % Change	Units	Spend	WOW % Change
1. The Weather Channel	108	\$82,582	-67%	412	\$343,250	-5%				835	\$572,649	7%	1,583	\$538,975	-11%
2. Disney Channel															
3. TNT	28	\$2,217	-30%	297	\$532,496	8%				266	\$1,257,425	-10%	2,599	\$5,977,116	10%
4. Lifetime	73	\$475,216	592%	188	\$133,959	32%	59	\$295,733	15%	374	\$1,041,115	14%	2,211	\$2,426,000	-3%
5. Nickelodeon	17	\$43,789	372%	19	\$15,876	-21%				24	\$47,065	-56%	832	\$1,442,109	5%

BOTTOM FIVE	Short-Form Products			Lead-Generation			Long-Form			Brand/DR (with phone number)			Brand/DR (web, mobile, SMS)		
	Units	Spend	WoW % Change	Units	Spend	WOW % Change	Units	Spend	WOW % Change	Units	Spend	WOW % Change	Units	Spend	WOW % Change
1. Freeform	11	\$954	-96%	319	\$412,035	-10%	60	\$49,825	0%	245	\$423,186	-20%	2,432	\$2,612,732	9%
2. VH1	10	\$50,082	-39%	185	\$209,030	-14%				307	\$378,606	10%	2,721	\$1,704,149	-10%
3. Cartoon Network	13	\$26,237	42%	78	\$28,690	-28%				206	\$242,126	-4%	786	\$532,545	-22%
4. National Geographic	13	\$6,790	160%	153	\$105,350	79%	41	\$61,451	3%	468	\$313,269	11%	1,732	\$738,488	-1%
5. Comedy Central	48	\$152,693	-17%	346	\$147,586	12%	27	\$26,091	-3%	322	\$430,610	1%	2,850	\$2,064,083	-16%

Copyright 2020, DRMetrix LLC. DRMetrix's charts show the ad units and estimated spend on the selected networks for different classifications of the direct-to-consumer television industry as follows. **Traditional Direct Response (DR) Campaigns** (campaigns using differing phone, web, or SMS codes in order to better track consumer results back to specific networks, dayparts, and TV creatives) include: **Short-Form Products:** Traditional call-to-order \$19.95 types of campaigns; **Lead-Generation:** Campaigns that don't advertise the full price of the product or service (i.e.: "call for free information"); **Long-Form:** Traditional 28.5-minute late-night advertisements. **Brand/Direct Campaigns** (Campaigns using a single vanity phone or URL which makes it more challenging to measure the immediate impact of television) include: **Vanity 800:** Campaigns using a vanity 800-number call-to-action; **Web/Mobile/SMS:** Campaigns that use a vanity web, mobile app, or SMS call-to-action. To learn more about these classifications, and historical trends over the past five years, please download DRMetrix's latest [industry study](#). You can also find DRMetrix's daily tracker of the effects of the coronavirus on the industry by [clicking here](#).