



COMCAST TO LAUNCH INDUSTRY-CHANGING, CROSS-PUBLISHER ADVERTISING SOLUTION FOR THE PREMIUM VIDEO CATEGORY

Universal Ads to Empower Marketers of All Sizes to Easily Purchase Scalable, Performance-Driven Video Ad Campaigns Directly from Premier Media Companies

Launch Partners Include A+E, AMC Networks, DIRECTV, Fox Corporation, NBCUniversal, Paramount, Roku, TelevisaUnivision, Warner Bros. Discovery, Xumo; Forging Groundbreaking Cross-Industry Partnerships to Strengthen the Ad Ecosystem for the Future

Set to Launch in Q1, Universal Ads is Powered by FreeWheel Technology, Which Enables Video Advertising for a Majority of Premium Video Publishers in the U.S.

New York, NY – January 6, 2025 –Ahead of the Consumer Electronic Show, today Comcast announced [Universal Ads](#), a one-stop TV advertising platform that brings premier media companies together in a strategic partnership to simplify access to the premium video category. Universal Ads will allow advertisers of all sizes to buy premium video directly from some of the most prestigious media companies today at scale, as easily as they buy from social media platforms. Launching in Q1, Universal Ads is built on top of FreeWheel’s industry-leading ad technology and will seamlessly allow ad buyers and sellers to directly transact all in one place.

By strategically partnering with premium industry partners, Universal Ads will provide simplified access to scaled, qualified audiences delivered on premium content that will drive full-funnel performance for advertisers while opening new demand channels for publishers. This is Comcast’s first-ever cross-industry collaboration at this scale, with A+E, AMC Networks, DIRECTV, Fox Corporation, NBCUniversal, Paramount, Roku, TelevisaUnivision, Warner Bros. Discovery, and Xumo all committed as launch partners, and more to be announced in the coming months.

“Universal Ads has been purpose-built in response to what advertisers have been asking from Comcast. That is, make TV simpler to buy, scale and measure in a way that is compatible with the needs of performance marketers, and really, all marketers,” said James Rooke, President, Comcast Advertising. “Comcast has tremendous assets across tech, media and data. Universal Ads brings those assets together in a way that has never been done before. And, just as importantly, we are thrilled that our partners, many of whom are already FreeWheel clients, have signed on to join us in this initiative, as we seek to transform the TV ad marketplace of the future.”

According to a 2024 study of 250 performance-based advertisers conducted by Comcast Advertising, 50% of advertisers who have never advertised on TV or only done so minimally felt that their ROI from social media buying had peaked or is diminishing, and 89% are willing to try TV advertising. By building Universal Ads with an advertiser-centric approach, as an ecosystem on top of a shared technology infrastructure across publishers, performance advertisers, who were previously limited in their ability to purchase premium, brand-safe inventory from some of the top TV publishers, can now access premium video at scale directly, with a simple, consistent buying experience regardless of the publisher.



“The north star of advertising has always been combining the premium reach of linear with the precision of data-informed targeting for marketers,” said Mark Marshall, Chairman, NBCUniversal Global Advertising & Partnerships. “Now with Universal Ads, we are delivering that vision to businesses of all sizes. TV has always been a performance vehicle for brands, and Universal Ads puts the scaled reach and premium content that TV is known for into the hands of marketers everywhere.”

More specifically, Universal Ads will offer:

- Universal Ads Manager, a free self-service, easy to use TV ads buying tool.
- Direct access to premium, brand-safe video that reaches over 90% of U.S. Households.
- Plans to offer free, automated AI creative production of TV commercials.
- A marketing API, which will enable developers to build reporting, measurement, creative generation, and other applications.

“The biggest mistake TV has made is acting like it’s still 1995. SMBs want in, and they deserve to be in. The same way social democratized advertising, TV needs to drop the barriers and let brands of all sizes play at scale,” said Gary Vaynerchuk, Chairman of VaynerX, CEO of VaynerMedia, CEO of VeeFriends.

Comcast executive James Grant has been tapped to lead the Universal Ads initiative. On the product front, former Snap executive, James Borow, who helped platforms such as Snap, Reddit and Discord launch their ad businesses, has been hired to lead the Universal Ads’ product and engineering teams, in collaboration with the FreeWheel product and technology team.

According to the IAB, 75% of ads on CTV are now bought via programmatic, yet only about 20% of premium video is transacted programmatically, according to FreeWheel, due to greater complexity and guardrails that protect both brand and viewer experience. By allowing users to interact with multiple supply, data and technology partners simply, in a single, safe, ecosystem, Universal Ads would facilitate a greater percentage of media dollars to be traded programmatically in the premium video space.

“Universal Ads offers the solution to the fragmented premium video advertising category. Coming together as publishers allows us to present a singular platform for brands of any size in any category to advertise in premium video — all with the ease and familiarity of buying on social. This is a terrific opportunity for advertisers and publishers alike, said Jeff Collins, President of Advertising Sales, Marketing and Brand Partnerships for Fox Corporation.”

For more information visit www.UniversalAds.com.

About Comcast Corporation

Comcast Corporation (Nasdaq: CMCSA) is a global media and technology company. From the connectivity and platforms we provide, to the content and experiences we create, our businesses reach hundreds of millions of customers, viewers, and guests worldwide. We deliver world-class broadband, wireless, and video through Xfinity, Comcast Business, and Sky; produce, distribute, and stream leading entertainment, sports, and news through brands including NBC, Telemundo,



Universal, Peacock, and Sky; and bring incredible theme parks and attractions to life through Universal Destinations & Experiences. Visit www.comcastcorporation.com for more information.

About Comcast Advertising

Comcast Advertising is the advertising division of Comcast. As a global leader in media, technology and advertising, Comcast Advertising fosters powerful connections between brands and their audiences as well as among publishers, distributors, MVPDs, agencies and other industry players. Effectv, its advertising sales division, helps local, regional and national advertisers connect with their audiences on every screen by using advanced data to drive targeting and measurement of their campaigns. FreeWheel, its media and technology arm, provides the technology, data enablement and convergent marketplaces required to ensure buyers and sellers can transact across all screens, across all data types and all sales channels, in order to ensure the ultimate goal – results for marketers. Comcast Advertising, along with NBCUniversal and Sky, is part of the Comcast Corporation (NASDAQ: CMCSA). Visit <http://comcastadvertising.com/> to learn more.

About FreeWheel

FreeWheel empowers all segments of The New TV Ecosystem. We are structured to provide the full breadth of solutions the advertising industry needs to achieve their goals. We provide the technology, data enablement and convergent marketplaces required to ensure buyers and sellers can transact across all screens, across all data types, and all sales channels, in order to ensure the ultimate goal – results for marketers. With offices in New York, Chicago, London, Paris, Beijing, and across the globe, FreeWheel, A Comcast Company, stands to advocate for the entire industry through the FreeWheel Council for Premium Video. For more information, please visit <https://www.freewheel.com/>, and follow us on [X](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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