

# Introducing DRMetrix: The Next Generation in Direct Response Research

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**TEMECULA, Calif.** — Industry veteran Joseph Gray, founder and former CEO of Media Property Holdings (MPH) and REVShare, returns to the direct response marketing space with DRMetrix, a direct response monitoring, verification and research company. DRMetrix monitors more than 100 national cable networks 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week and, through a special partnership, *Response* will provide monthly snapshots of DRMetrix's rankings of the leading short-form, long-form and branded direct response television commercials (see facing page for the debut charts).

DRMetrix's technology appears to be a vast upgrade to the monitoring systems and researchers who have attempted to track direct response advertising. Among many other highlights, DRMetrix: monitors both short-form and long-form advertisements on more than 100 national cable networks; discerns whether ads are running in local or national breaks; and tracks the network and ROS daypart, creating the most comprehensive and accurate spend index ranking for direct response brands.

While DRMetrix is new, the concept isn't. "Back in 2003, a group of DRTV professionals joined together with the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) to form the DMA Broadcast Council," Gray recalls. "In the early days of the Broadcast Council, its co-chair, Jake Weisbarth, approached me to join. Jake had helped bring Sears and its Craftsman line into the direct response world and also served as president of King World Direct. I shared some of my frustrations with him about the lack of data in our industry and I was invited to co-chair the DRTV Research Committee

with Tim Hawthorne."

Gray credits his relationship with Weisbarth on a "mutual drive to make a difference in the industry." He adds, "We spent many hours brainstorming together. Jake worked behind the scenes to support me as I began to work on a whitepaper to document solutions that would enable the DRTV industry to quantify itself with credible research data to answer the most basic of questions: how large is the industry; what are the growth trends; who really are the top DRTV advertisers?"

Gray's whitepaper documented "the fact that leading media tracking



companies at the time failed to segment DRTV advertising from traditional," he says. "The only segmentation was based on a narrow definition of direct response, which only included hard offers pitching products not available in retail."

At the time, the expansion of lead-generation, retail-driven and brand-response campaigns had just begun in earnest — and although many of these campaigns included toll-free numbers, and a call to action, they weren't considered direct response by companies such as TNS Media Solutions (now Kantar Media) and Nielsen. "Our whitepaper requested that TNS and Nielsen change their approach and, at a minimum, begin to flag offers using toll-free numbers in their systems," Gray recalls. "We had great hopes that the DMA would lobby these two companies

after the Broadcast Council unanimously voted to adopt the whitepaper. But the DMA was never able to prevail with either TNS or Nielsen."

When Weisbarth passed away later in that same year at 52, Gray was stung by his death. "Losing Jake was a terrible loss for the industry," he says. "I lost a kindred spirit."

At that point, Gray refocused back on his businesses. Years later, he stepped down as CEO of MPH and REVShare. "After my exit, it didn't take me very long to figure out what I wanted to do next — I immediately thought about Jake and our past efforts," he says.

DRMetrix went on to form a business relationship with Enswers, a subsidiary of KT Corp., also known as Korea Telecom. "Enswers, a play on the words 'entertainment' and 'answers,' has a deep portfolio of patented technologies and know how in the areas of video and audio pattern recognition, as well as optical character recognition technologies," Gray says.

In 2013, DRMetrix negotiated the exclusive worldwide rights to use this technology in the field of DRTV media monitoring services. That same year, Brent Peterson, former senior vice president of technology at REVShare, joined with Gray.

Now, 10 years after Weisbarth's passing, they are ready to debut their brainchild to the DR world. Gray says, "Jake and I shared a vision, and it's poetic to think that DRMetrix will start fulfilling that vision. While we dreamed of it, creating our own technology solution was simply out of reach back then. I would not have taken on this challenge and created DRMetrix without people like Jake, and many others, who have shared a common vision and have encouraged me over the years." ■