# The DRMetrix Difference

DRMetrix uses automated content recognition (ACR) technology to track the occurrence of television commercials. It takes the industry's most accurate data to power products like AdSphere™, AVS™, and to drive the next generation of television attribution solutions.

All of these applications and more, are only as good as the quality of the underlying airings data. Knowing this, DRMetrix has built the next generation airings verification platform that monitors commercial grade network cable feeds in a DPI compliant manner. To help explain, let's review a diagram of how national cable television ads are delivered to consumers.
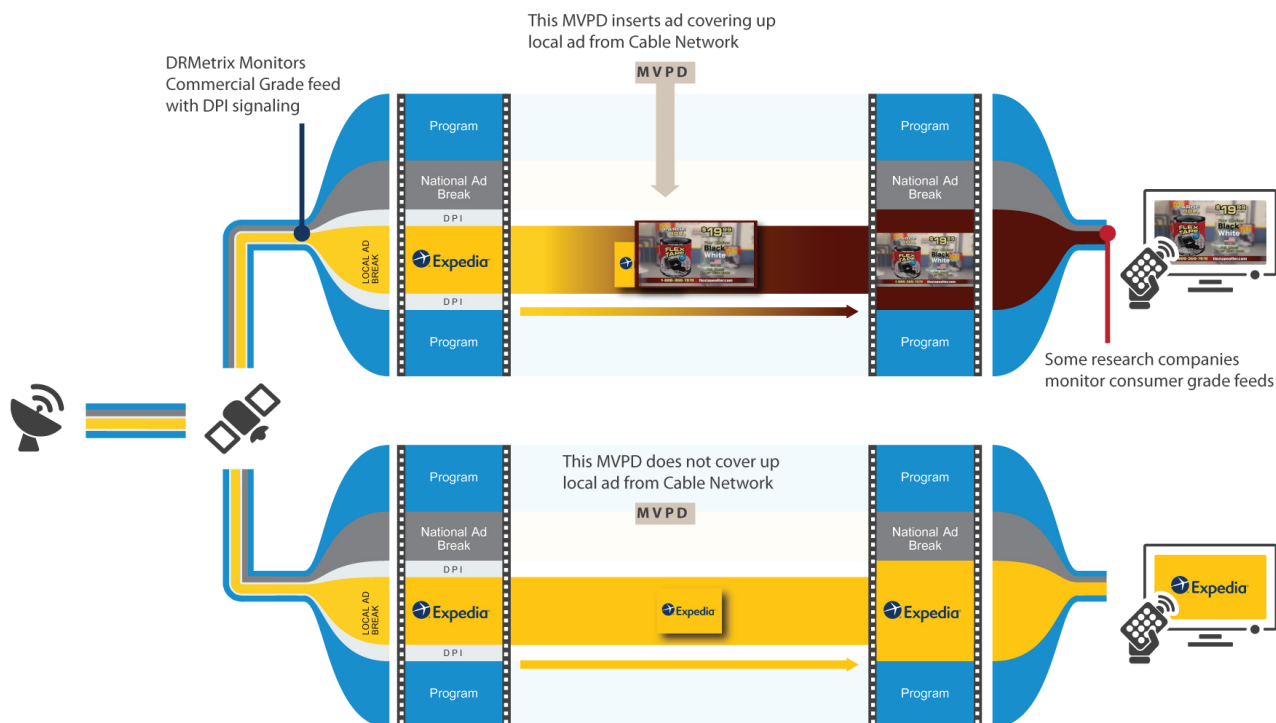
On the left side of the above diagram, a cable network sends its signal via satellite to two different Multiple Video Program Distributors (MVPDs). MVPD is a catch-all phrase to describe all of the television distribution companies that sell access to cable programming via cable, satellite, fiber, or via internet (for those of us who have "cut the cord"). It's important to realize that there are two different types of ad breaks in the mix. We have the national ad break, in which commercials are seen by all viewers nationwide, and we have a local ad break. As shown above, the cable network is airing an Expedia spot in the local ad break. Local ad breaks are preceded by a Digital Program Insertion (DPI) signal. Most MVPDs have ad-insertion equipment that listens for the DPI signal. As soon as the DPI signal is detected, the ad insertion equipment begins inserting commercials sold to local advertisers by the MVPD. In the above diagram, one of the two MVPDs is shown inserting a Flex Tape commercial covering up the Expedia commercial. In most markets, including the vast majority of urban markets, the MVPDs aggressively sell local advertising covering up most, if not all, of the ads inserted by the cable network. However, in smaller rural markets, the MVPD may not sell local advertising allowing the Expedia ad to be seen by viewers. The second MVPD above passes through the Expedia ad to viewers in their market.

As an ACR monitoring company, DRMetrix monitors commercial-grade feeds ahead of local MVPD ad inserters. This allows for accurate reporting of the ads being inserted by the cable networks in both national and local ad breaks. DRMetrix understands that the network above ran an Expedia ad in their local break while other companies, monitoring consumer grade feeds, may incorrectly conclude that Flex Tape ran on the network. Unfortunately, the DPI signals that allow DRMetrix to recognize that Expedia ran in a local break are removed by the MVPD and are not included in consumer grade feeds. Without DPI signaling, it is easy to confuse break types. Additionally, with consumer grade feeds, it is impossible to see the ads being inserted into local breaks by the networks because of MVPD cover up.

To try and solve for their inability to detect the break type, some ACR monitoring companies have taken to monitoring consumer grade feeds from multiple markets. If they see the same ad appearing in two or more markets they assume it is running on the network and will report the airing as national. There are problems with this strategy because MVPDs are able to insert ads across multiple markets, regionally, or even nationally across their entire footprint. It has become common place to target consumers regardless of locality via programmatic and advanced cable advertising models. Many of these models are able to target viewers across multiple MVPDs as well. Given that targeted cable advertising is the future, the problem is only getting worse over time.

Numerous problems exist when airings data from consumer grade feeds is used for competitive media research, airing verification, or for media attribution. Because DRMetrix monitors commercial grade feeds in a DPI complaint manner, we are able to provide the most accurate occurrence level airings data in the industry with the ability to report 100% of cable network airings in both national and local ad breaks!