

PROGRAMMATIC CINEMA IS COMING TO NA!

Or is it?

August, 2023

National CineMedia has announced plans to sell movie screen inventory programmatically in America starting in Q4, 2023. They are looking at this as a growth strategy that is much needed in Cinema since the pandemic catastrophe for that media channel. This offering would most likely be available in Canada shortly after if successful. Although this might be new to North America, Luminatik has been offering cinema ads programmatically from Argentina since 2019.

What does programmatic mean for Cinema?

On one hand, the Inventory will be purchased with similar buying parameters as movie theatres offer today, including selecting theatres based on region, city, address, including individual locations.

However, the bonus would be that you can add additional parameters such as buying up to an hour before the showtime and the ability to buy with way shorter lead times.

Even more exciting (but unproven currently) should be the ability to merge theatre 1st party data with 3rd party transaction data (where available) to attribute sales to the exposure, thus the possibility of changing cinema advertising into a performance vehicle.

There may even be an opportunity to mirror DOOH tactics where we rely on past devices and first party data enrichment to achieve any real audience targeting.

So, at the outset, programmatic Cinema will not (and maybe never) have sophisticated audience targeting, because the audience in the room, is the audience... which means it will never really be truly programmatic!

But, agility and potential performance measurement are a significant step forward for a media channel that has a history of being the most powerful brand medium, but the least agile and least measurable.

The good news is that by the time it comes to Canada, we will have evidence from the US launch.

Sometimes a fast follower strategy is best!