



The Engagement Effect:  
**How Interactivity  
Indicates CTV Success**



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## Introduction

### We know interactive ads work. Now we're asking: how can we make them work harder?

Interactive CTV ads are buzzing for one reason: they work. Through years of research, we have proven that they drive real-world impact, from brand lift all the way to foot traffic. And industry studies back us up. FreeWheel, for example, found that over [70% of viewers say interactive ads are attention-grabbing](#).

Last year, we set out to prove that interactive formats are not just impactful, but that they outperform standard video ads. The results were striking: [a 36% lift in brand recall](#).

This year, we set out to answer the next big question: does deeper engagement lead to stronger brand outcomes?

For the first time, we can prove that it does. The more compelling an interactive ad — whether due to format, creative, trends, or other factors — the more likely the viewer is to recall the brand and want to purchase from it.



# Introduction: Interactive Ad Formats

In this study, we tested a variety of innovative formats built for streaming TV, from product carousels to advergames. Every ad allowed viewers to engage with their remote controls.

## STANDARD AD FORMAT

### VIDEO



Classic, non-skippable  
and non-interactive :30s commercial spot

## INTERACTIVE AD FORMATS

### CAROUSEL



Enable viewers to browse branded content like  
products, benefits, services, and more while  
watching the commercial.

### TRIVIA



Challenge viewers to test their  
knowledge by answering a question  
before the commercial ends.

All interactions made via the viewer  
engaging with their remote control



# Do higher household engagement rates lead to better brand outcomes?

## Methodology

We worked with MediaScience to recruit 700 participants to watch a 30-minute, lifelike viewing experience with natural ad breaks. Within those breaks, we embedded 64 interactive BrightLine ads and paired each one with a standard control version. Participants only saw one version (interactive vs. standard) per brand.

After viewing the TV episode, participants completed a survey capturing key brand metrics including brand recall, brand attitudes, and purchase intent.



## Understanding Household Engagement

We defined Household Engagement as the percentage of exposed households that actively engage with an ad using their remote – through clicking, scrolling, or interacting in any way.



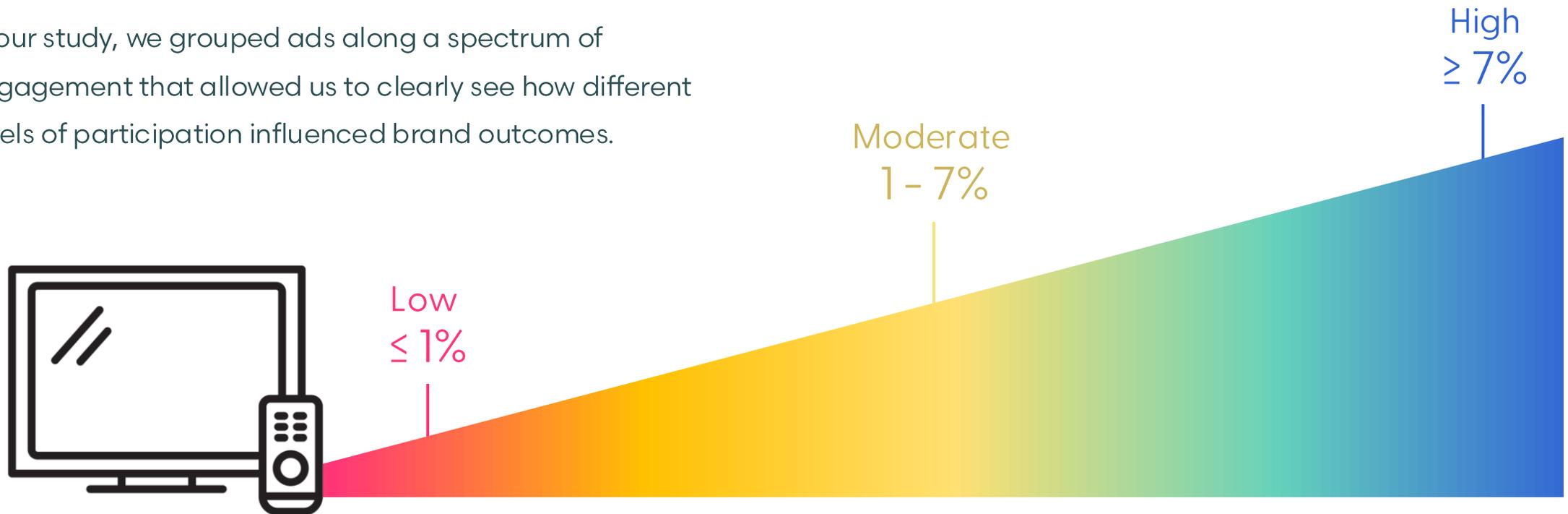
A 10% household engagement rate means  
1 out of 10 households engaged

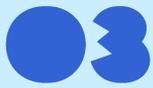




# Quantifying Household Engagement

In our study, we grouped ads along a spectrum of engagement that allowed us to clearly see how different levels of participation influenced brand outcomes.





**Higher household engagement rates directly correlate with stronger brand recall and greater purchase intent. Engagement is further proven to lead to stronger metrics across the funnel.**



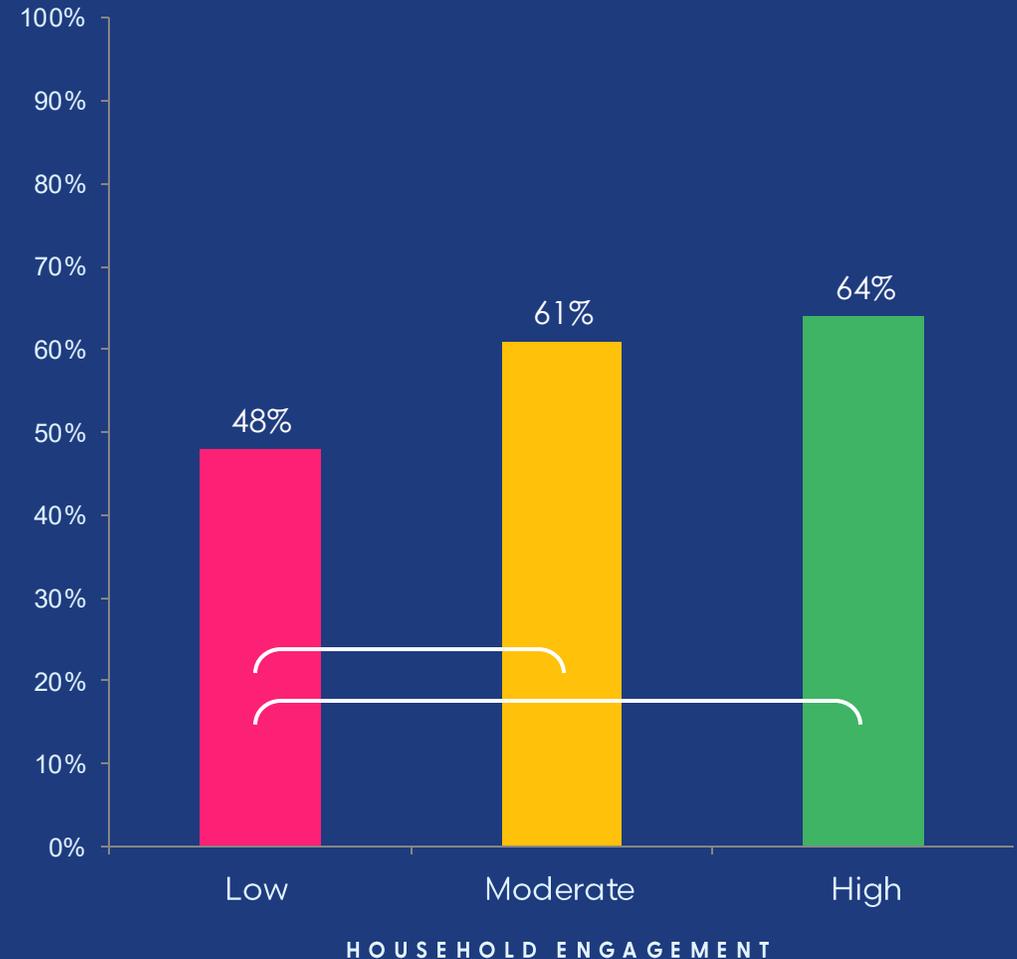
## Key Finding #1

# Higher engagement = greater brand recall

As engagement rates increased, brand recall increased. This indicates that an ad that is highly engaging helps viewers remember the brand after they finish watching a program.

Tip: The strongest engagement comes from advergames, longer spots (:60s vs. :30s), ads that leverage recognizable IP, and standout creative.

### UNAIDED RECALL OF INTERACTIVE ADS



Indicates statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level



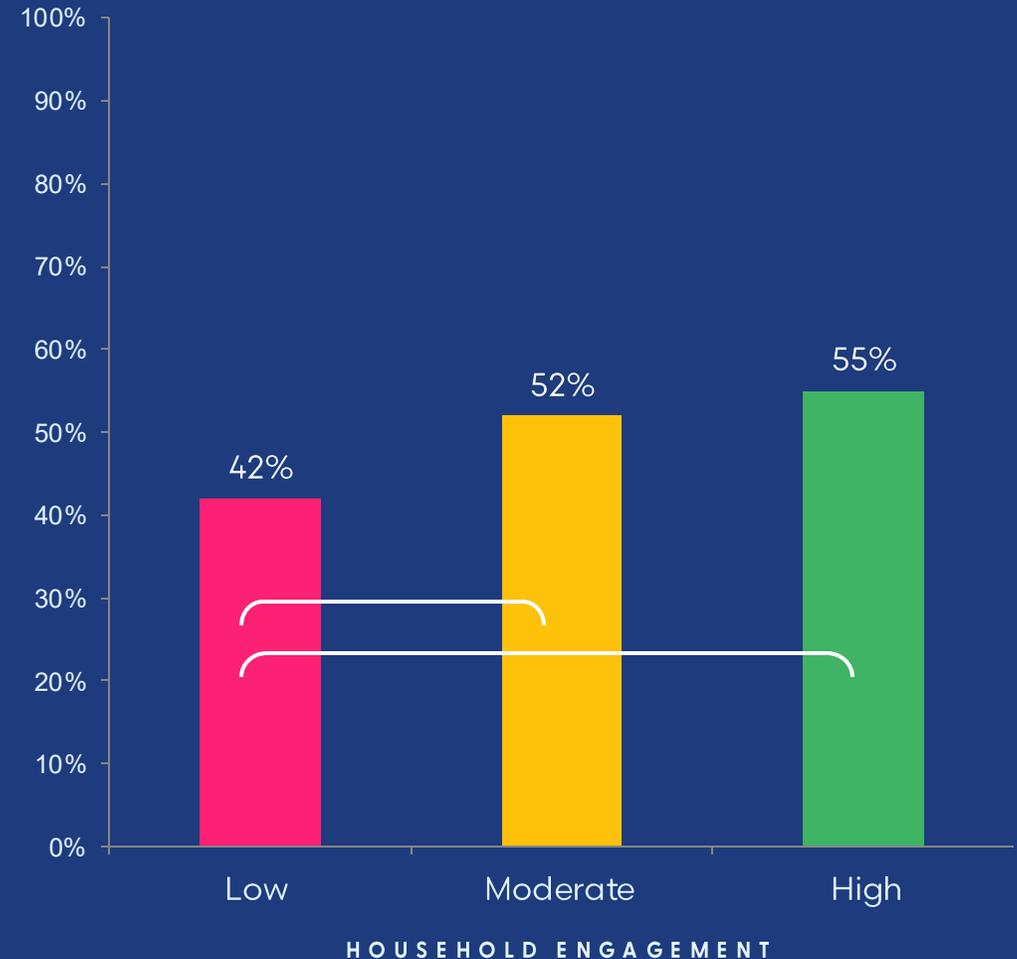
## Key Finding #2

# Higher engagement = stronger purchase intent

As engagement rates increased, purchase intent also increased. This indicates that an ad that is highly engaging is not only memorable but also encourages viewers to purchase the product.

Tip: Creative matters just as much as the interactive format. With this portion of the study, we found that the highest lift in purchase intent compared to standard ads was for the Low Engagement group, indicating that interactivity boosts the performance of weaker creative.

### PURCHASE INTENT OF INTERACTIVE ADS





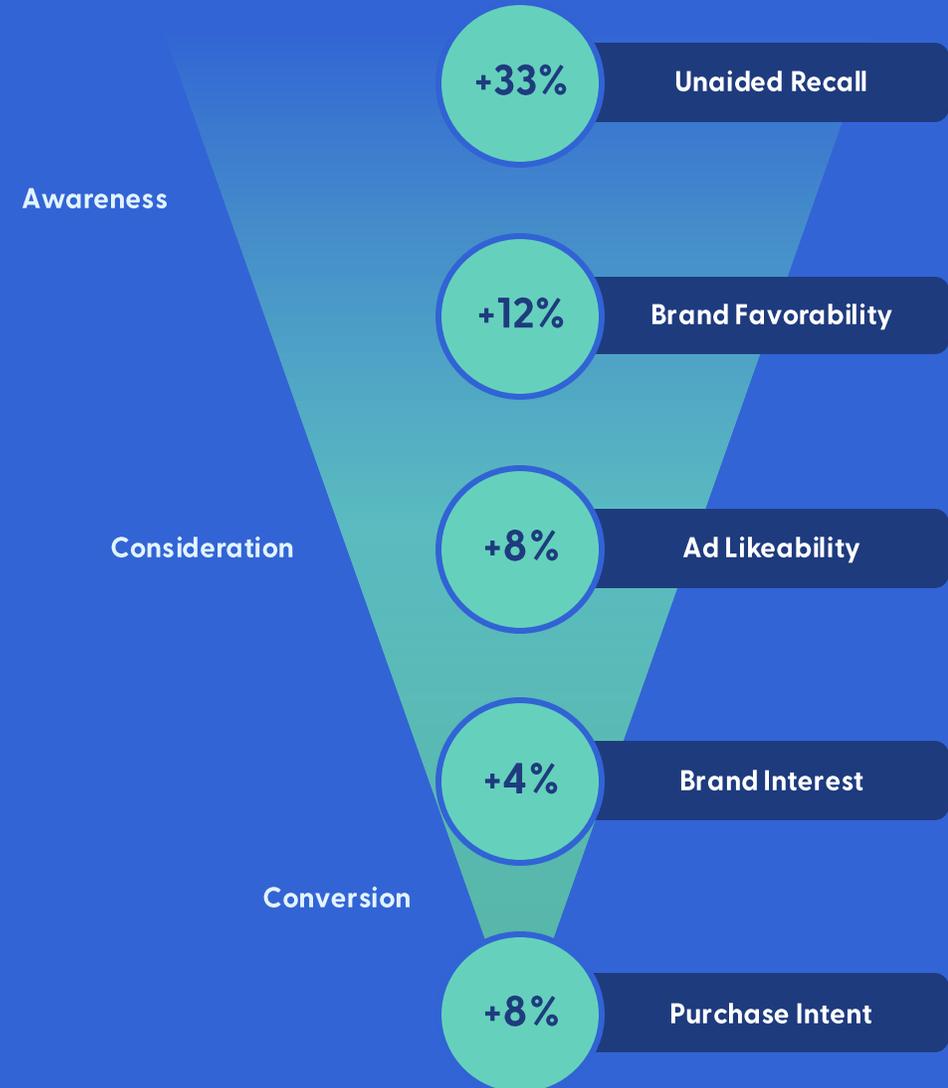
## Key Finding #3

# Engaged ads perform better, in general

When viewers were shown an interactive ad, they either engaged or chose not to. We measured outcomes for both groups — and across every metric tested, the engaged group showed a positive lift. This included top- and bottom-funnel metrics like brand recall and purchase intent, as well as mid-funnel measures such as brand favorability, ad likability, and brand interest.

Tip: These findings suggest that interaction strengthens emotional and cognitive connections to a brand – helping advertisers build affinity, not just attention.

## ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT LEADS TO FULL-FUNNEL IMPACT



# Actionable advice for CTV advertisers

1

## Interactivity is a must-have for CTV advertisers.

The numbers don't lie: remote-controlled interactive ads enhance the impact of standard ads. They consistently drive stronger recall, deeper brand affinity, and higher purchase intent.

We have found this to be true across 1,000+ participants, in partnership with independent, third-party measurement companies over years of research.

2

## Aim for higher engagement rates.

Not all creative is created equal. The stronger your creative execution—both the main commercial and the interactive element—the higher your engagement rate, and the better your brand outcomes.

Leveraging recognizable IP, tapping into popular trends, and designing truly engaging experiences all help drive participation.

3

## Invest in remote-control interactivity.

Every lift we documented comes from remote-control participation. A click isn't just a metric — it's the moment that makes a brand stick. Our creative directors have crafted hundreds of national TV campaigns and can help bring yours to life.

Quick-fix formats like QR codes fill a need, but we find that being intentional with interactive elements — like programming remote-control interactivity in — sparks more interest, and therefore leads to stronger brand outcomes.

**Need a hand with strategy & opportunity?**

**Let the BrightLine team help set your campaign off for success.**

# Thank You!

For questions, contact:

- [Research@BrightLine.tv](mailto:Research@BrightLine.tv)
- [Sales@BrightLine.tv](mailto:Sales@BrightLine.tv)