PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL AUDIENCE MEASUREMENT SURVEY TECHNICAL RESEARCH TEAM (NAMS TRT) AND IPSOS RELEASED NAMS WAVE 3 DATA: New Insights Revealed Uganda's Media Audience is being rewritten in real time

Kampala, Uganda, July 2026: The National Audience Measurement Survey Technical Research Team (NAMS TRT) and Ipsos Uganda released the findings from NAMS Wave 3, providing the media, advertising and marketing industry with a comprehensive, independent view of audience behaviour across Uganda. The study is part of an ongoing industry initiative to build a robust media currency that will inform media planning. The data was collected between April and May 2026 across 146 districts, with a cumulative sample of 22,059 respondents. The findings were released in July 2026.

The latest findings showed a shift in the media landscape, with audiences increasingly consuming media across multiple platforms and brands competing not simply for reach, but for moments of consumer attention. According to the study, Uganda's media audience aged 15 years and above stood at 22.3 million people, presenting significant opportunities for advertisers and media owners seeking effective consumer engagement.

Radio Remained Uganda's Most Powerful Mass Medium

The survey confirmed radio's continued dominance, reaching 18.3 million Ugandans weekly and attracting 10.3 million daily listeners. Radio penetration remained strong in rural Uganda, where weekly reach stood at 88%, while still delivering a remarkable 73% weekly reach in urban areas. The findings demonstrated that radio remained an effective platform for achieving scale and regional market penetration.

The research also highlighted the increasing importance of vernacular and regional stations, with audience loyalty driven by local relevance, language and cultural connection.

Television Retained Influence Among High-Value Audiences

While television reached 44% of Ugandans weekly, its strength lay in its concentration among urban and affluent audiences. Weekly TV penetration rose to 77% among the highest Standard of

Living Indicator (SLI) households, making television an important channel for brands targeting high-value consumers and household decision-makers.

The study further revealed that television and digital platforms were no longer operating independently. Consumers increasingly divided their attention between screens, creating new opportunities for integrated media strategies that combined television's impact with digital engagement.

Digital Platforms Continued Their Rapid Rise

Digital media continued to transform how Ugandans consumed content. The survey estimated 7.3 million weekly social media users and 7.6 million users of instant messaging applications, reflecting the growing influence of smartphones and always-on connectivity. Digital engagement was particularly pronounced among younger audiences aged 18-29 years, where social media and messaging platforms were becoming central to communication, entertainment and commerce.

The findings showed that brands no longer relied solely on traditional campaign models. Instead, success increasingly depended on engaging consumers in real time across multiple touchpoints and participating in conversations already taking place online.

Newspapers Still Delivered Influence

Despite a weekly readership of 9%, newspapers continued to deliver access to engaged, educated, urban and affluent audiences. The survey positioned newspapers as a premium medium capable of influencing business leaders, policymakers and decision-makers. Rather than competing on reach, newspapers provided value through credibility, trust and audience quality.

Turning Audience Data into Competitive Advantage

The NAMS Intelligence Hub gave subscribers access to robust audience data, media planning tools, market insights and performance intelligence designed to support smarter media investment decisions. Advertisers, agencies, media owners and marketers could use the platform to understand audience behaviour, optimise media budgets, identify growth opportunities and improve campaign effectiveness.

According to **Ms. Ruth Ruigu, Country Manager, Ipsos Uganda**:

"The media industry is entering a new era where understanding audience behaviour is no longer optional. Organisations that succeed will be those that use data to make faster, smarter and more effective decisions."

Douglas Mutumba, Managing Director, East Africa Radio Advertising Service Limited, said:

"Radio in Uganda thrives because of its proximity to communities. Local and vernacular stations are not just broadcasters; they are part of daily life. NAMS Wave 3 validates this with hard data. It provides the evidence advertisers need to understand the true reach, trust and impact of regional radio, and gives every station the tools to make a stronger case for investment."

Julius Tumusiime, Chairman, Rural Broadcasters Owners Association of Uganda (RUBA), said:

"The latest findings reaffirm something we have always known: radio remains a leading medium in Uganda in terms of penetration, reach and audience connection. More importantly, radio continues to be loved and trusted by millions of Ugandans.

For rural broadcasters, this is especially important. Radio is not just a traditional medium; it is a powerful platform that reaches people where they live, work and make decisions. We speak their languages, understand their communities and connect with them every day.

The findings provide broadcasters with stronger evidence of the value and effectiveness of radio audiences when engaging advertisers. Clients pay for access to audiences, and radio continues to deliver those audiences at scale.

As broadcasters, we must continue investing in quality content, audience research, professional sales capabilities and strong programming so that we can confidently demonstrate our value to advertisers."

Robert Sebunya, Outgoing Director, Thought Leadership, Uganda Marketers Society, said:

"What this data gives marketers is not simply a better picture of where audiences are; it gives us a higher standard for how media decisions should be made. A market of 22.3 million media-active Ugandans cannot be reduced to a ranking of the biggest channels. The real value is in understanding who those people are, how their media habits overlap, and where additional investment genuinely creates new reach rather than paying repeatedly for the same audience.

For brand and media teams, that changes the planning question. It is no longer enough to ask whether radio, television or digital is strongest. The better question is what combination gives the brand the right audience, at the right frequency, with the least waste. That requires us to think in terms of duplication, incremental reach, geography, context and the role each channel plays in moving a consumer.

For marketers, this is ultimately about professional accountability. Better audience data should make our media plans more explainable and our investment decisions more defensible. Creativity will always matter, but evidence should tell us where that creativity has the best chance to work. The ambition should be a market where media is bought less on habit and assumption, and increasingly on a clear understanding of audience value and business impact."

Rommel Jasi, Chairman Emeritus, Uganda Advertising Association (UAA), said:

"What cannot be measured cannot be managed. NAMS Wave 3 gives the industry exactly that: a single, independent source of truth for audience behaviour across every platform Ugandans use.

For the advertising industry, this matters beyond the numbers. Every media plan we build, every budget we defend to a client, and every channel mix we recommend depends on data the whole market trusts; not internal estimates, not platform-reported figures, but shared, independent currency.

This is why UAA has backed NAMS from the start. As audiences fragment across radio, television, digital and print, the industry cannot plan effectively on guesswork or fragmented, self-reported metrics. We need one measurement standard that media owners, agencies and clients all stand behind.

The findings also raise the bar for our own discipline. As radio, TV and digital increasingly compete for the same attention and increasingly work together in integrated campaigns, advertisers and agencies must plan with more precision, not less. NAMS gives us the evidence to do that.

We encourage all UAA members to engage with this data, use it to strengthen the quality of media planning across the industry, and continue supporting NAMS as the shared standard our sector needs.

What we measure, we can manage. What we manage, we can grow; for advertisers, for media owners, and ultimately for the audiences we all serve."

Dr. Innocent Nahabwe, Chairperson, National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) and Member, Technical Research Team (TRT), said:

"The release of Wave 3 of the NAMS report is another important step in strengthening Uganda's media industry. Radio and television are no longer competing only amongst themselves; our biggest competitor today is digital and social media, driven by increasing internet access, wider availability of internet-enabled phones and falling data costs.

Digital platforms have also benefited from their ability to demonstrate audience reach, engagement and impact in ways that make it easier for advertisers and media buyers to justify their return on advertising spend (ROAS). For legacy media to compete effectively for both audiences and advertising revenue, we must be able to demonstrate our value with equally credible, accurate and consistent audience measurement.

NAMS therefore goes beyond audience rankings. It gives radio and television the data and credibility needed to demonstrate their value to advertisers, make better business decisions and compete for advertising investment. Reliable audience measurement is ultimately about giving legacy media a fighting chance in a rapidly changing media environment."

For Further Information

Ipsos Uganda
Email: **info.ug@ipsos.com**