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## Total TV Viewership Hits All-Time High

### Rash Report: ESPN's 'Monday Night Football' Beats Broadcasters

By [John Rash](#)

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MINNEAPOLIS (AdAge.com) -- Americans, a new Nielsen report indicated today, are watching more TV than ever, with the average viewer spending four hours and 49 minutes a day in front of the set. And it showed in prime-time last night, as ratings rose for prominent programs on Fox, CBS and the CW, and stayed even for ABC.



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ESPN's 'Monday Night Football' sacked all other broadcast and cable competition with TV's highest-rated show.

Fox finished first in the ratings race for ad-centric adults 18-49, with an overall 4.1/10 rating and share. After a few weeks with baseball playoffs, "House" (5.3/13) was up 18% from its most-recent telecast and was the highest-rated show on network TV. "House's" lead-out, "Lie to Me" (3.0/7), had its second highest ratings this season and was up 25% from its last showing.

CBS was close behind in second place with a 4.0/10, with two of its sitcoms, "How I Met Your Mother" (3.5/9) and "Two and a Half Men" (4.6/11) matching their season-to-date original episode averages, while "Accidentally on Purpose" (2.9/7) and "Big Bang Theory" (4.7/11) were each two-tenths of a point off regular ratings levels.

At 10 p.m., drama "CSI: Miami" locked up its 4.0/11 original episode average and elevated 11% from last week, which is a good sign for upcoming episodes of "CSI: NY" and "CSI," as the trilogy has intertwined plots as a sweeps scheduling stunt.

ABC's third place 3.1/8 had "Dancing with the Stars" (3.4/8) off two-tenths of a point while "Castle" hit its 2.4/6 average. And despite finishing fifth, the CW's "One Tree Hill" and "Gossip Girl" (both 1.3/3) were up 18% and 8%, respectively.

And after a good weekend for football, it was a great night for it as well, as ESPN's "Monday Night Football" sacked all other broadcast and cable competition with TV's highest-rated show. The 6.5/17 watching the Pittsburgh Steelers beat the Denver Broncos was 27% higher than last week's game.

Of course, the record-high viewership is a multi-day-part number, and despite the strong ratings for many shows Monday night, overall prime-time viewing is relatively flat, although Nielsen indicates it is still at its highest levels since 1991.

The networks, no doubt, hope that there's growth in the evening as well. NBC in particular could use it, as it finished fourth with a 1.8/5, as "Heroes" (2.3/6) hit an all-time low, and "Trauma" (1.8/4) and "The Jay Leno Show" (1.2/3) tied their lowest levels yet with adults 18-49.

#### WHAT TO WATCH:

**Tuesday:** Given the buzz over Taylor Swift on last weekend's "Saturday Night Live," it's surprising that "In the Spotlight with Robin Roberts: Bright Lights, Big Stars, All Access Nashville" doesn't have her as one of the country stars interviewed. But it does have plenty of other country crooners, all in advance of Wednesday night's 43rd Annual CMA Awards.

**Wednesday:** And if you like "All Access Nashville," why not stay for the CMA Awards? Country not your cup of tea? (Or can of beer?) Then get your music fix on Fox's "Glee."

#### WHAT TO WATCH FOR:

Ratings retention for week two of "V," ABC's sci-fi series that premiered last Tuesday with the season's best demo delivery for a new show.

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*NOTE: All ratings based on adults 18-49. A share is a percentage of adults 18-49 who have their TV sets on at a given time. A rating is a percentage of all adults 18-49, whether or not their sets are turned on. For example, a 1.0 rating is 1% of the total U.S. adults 18-49 population with TVs. Ratings quoted in this column are based on live-plus-same-day unless otherwise noted. (Many ad deals have been negotiated on the basis of commercial-minute, live-plus-three-days viewing.)*

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Network	8:00pm	8:30pm	Dem.
CBS	How I Met Your Mother 3.5/9	Accidentally on Purpose 2.9/7	
NBC	Heroes 2.3/6	House 5.2/12	
FOX	Glee 1.3/3		
CW	One Tree Hill 1.3/3		

See how all the shows did in the ratings.

