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Several of the largest television operators have created a consortium aimed at simplifying and scaling the TV industry's targeted advertising efforts in a marketplace many say has become unwieldy.

TV distributors Comcast Corp., Charter Communications Inc., Altice USA Inc. and Dish Media as well as smart TV maker Vizio Inc. are among the eight companies currently involved in Go Addressable, in an effort to advance addressable TV advertising, or TV ads aimed at specific groups of individuals. Advertisers that once spent the bulk of their budgets on national and local TV ads are struggling to reach elusive consumers who favor streaming services and digital media. Some marketers are pushing their TV partners to operate more like the large digital companies that allow them to target ads to specific audiences.

But as media companies evolve their digital ad offerings, advertisers are tasked with cobbling together commercial space from various streaming services, smart TV companies, cable operators and even some

[network infrastructure](#)

**Associated Press**  
[Wave of internet outages hit airlines, financial institutions](#)

**LightReading**  
[Verizon's CFO 'pretty excited' about potential for reduced network capex](#)

**CNN**  
[SpaceX likely to miss July date for Mars rocket test](#)

**Variety**  
[NBC Seeks Record \\$6 Million for Super Bowl Commercials](#)

programmers that are carving out their national ad time to enable more precise targeting, said Larry Allen, vice president and general manager of addressable enablement at Comcast Advertising, a unit of Comcast Corp. “The buyers need a solution to their fragmentation problem,” Mr. Allen said. “That’s a massive constraint on the market and the buyers that either bought individually or had to patchwork together or went through aggregators. Unlocking that scale across multiple endpoints is really the endgame.”

Go Addressable doesn’t plan to build technology or create new systems. Rather, it will identify problems, consider possible solutions and connect with the industry players best positioned to solve them, he said. The consortium, which meets once a month, will discuss issues such as which legacy systems should be updated to enable better workflow, or what jargon to eliminate so that different targeted ad companies can talk consistently about their processes and products.

One topic the group is discussing, for example, is how to make advertisers aware of the scale of available targeted ad inventory across various companies and systems, and to push that information to their planning tools, he said. The ad business has long dreamed about the growth of addressable advertising in traditional TV. That means a mother on one street gets an ad that is different from one targeted at a young single man who is watching the same show a couple of streets away.

However, the cable and satellite operators are limited by the amount of inventory they control and sell (usually two minutes per hour) and, in some cases, the regions they service. Advertisers patch together ad deals with different cable and satellite providers, but some have found it more costly and time consuming than just running a national TV ad and capturing a combination of desired and undesired viewers. Now these operators and TV businesses are faced with growing competition from streaming services that offer precise ad targeting without regional constraints.

The new consortium is one of many groups working on advancing an antiquated TV ad business that faces declining traditional TV viewers. Among them are OpenAP, a group founded by TV networks to advance the use of audience data in TV trades; On Addressability, set up by Comcast and other TV operators to help programmers create more targeted ads; and Project OAR, which was formed by TV and ad businesses to help the TV networks send ads to people with smart TV sets.

To be sure, the consortia have a long way to go before they can help the industry modernize. For now, the collaboration by competitors is noteworthy, said Mr. Allen. “Getting eight companies to talk about their problems—I look at it like a therapy session,” he said. “It took us a while to trust each other.” — **Wall Street Journal**

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A new survey of Pennsylvania voters shows widespread support for some of the most central — and controversial — planks of an election reform bill drafted by House State Government Committee Chairman Seth Grove, R-Spring Grove.

The latest Franklin & Marshall College Poll showed big majorities of respondents leaning in favor of signature matching for mail-in ballots (81%) and ongoing photo identification requirements (74%). The data

represent the responses of 444 registered Pennsylvania voters, who were interviewed by telephone or online between June 7-13

Under current state law, only voters who are making their first trip to a specific precinct are required to show identification. Grove's bill would apply that requirement to everybody who votes in person, each time they turn out. Under Grove's bill, all voters choosing to vote in person would be required to produce a driver's license, or a PennDOT-issued non-license photo ID, or a free Department of State voter identification card, or a free county-issued scannable, durable voter registration card. Or a voter could sign an affidavit affirming their identity under penalty of perjury.

That's exactly the kind of upgrade survey respondent Paul Kelley, 88, of Southampton Township, Cumberland County, said he wants to see. "You have ID for everything else. Why not have ID for voting purposes," Kelley said in a follow-up interview to the poll Wednesday night, calling it and signature verification of any mail-in ballots the kinds of provisions that are needed to quell his concerns about the integrity of the vote. Kelley said he's a registered independent who voted for Donald Trump in 2020.

Grove's bill does contain a robust signature verification system for mail-in ballots, too. It would require counties to subject all received ballots to an automated verification program set to accept every ballot with a signature confidence score of 50% or more. Ballots that are kicked out would then be reviewed manually by elections judges who have been trained in handwriting analysis.

Voters were much more divided on a question about the outright elimination of no-excuse voting by mail, a feature that was first introduced in Pennsylvania in 2020. There, the overall results showed 46% of respondents want the general mail-in balloting to continue, while 45% said they'd like to see it eliminated. Grove's bill keeps no-excuse voting by mail in Pennsylvania, while setting new rules for the use of ballot-only drop boxes, making direct outreach to voters whose mail-in ballots have issues that would prevent them from being counted, and ending the application period for mail-in ballots at 15 days before Election Day, as opposed to the current seven days.

Tuesday's vote to advance Grove's bill to the House floor was split on party lines. That could ultimately spell trouble in the face of promises by Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf of a veto of any voter ID-style provisions, which Wolf and most of his Democratic allies in the Legislature argue smack of voter suppression.

House Republicans, at this moment, expect to put Grove's bill on the House floor next week. It would then go to the state Senate, where its immediate future is less certain in a week that will also likely feature a major push to finalize the state's general fund budget for 2021-22. Senate sources said Wednesday that the majority Republicans, who control the calendar, are committed to discussing the issue, but it's hard to tell, in advance of that discussion, whether the caucus will try to push something as sweeping as Grove's bill, or scale it back to less-controversial issues like expanded pre-canvassing and continue negotiations on the more controversial stuff.

Among other findings, the poll showed that declining case counts here and around the country and widespread availability of effective vaccines

have drastically reduced respondents' level of concern about the coronavirus pandemic. Where it had consistently been rated as "the most important problem facing Pennsylvania" since earning a spot in the question last summer, in last week's polling only 7% of respondents labelled it such, down from 31% in March. The pandemic now ranks below the quality of government performance and politicians, unemployment and personal finances, and tax rates as an issue of concern.

But while pandemic fears are fading, poll director Berwood Yost noted that there has not been a corresponding bump in Pennsylvanians' feeling about where their state is headed, or in their job approval ratings for Wolf. Fifty-five percent of poll respondents said they feel "things are off on the wrong track" in Pennsylvania, a level not seen since the winter of 2016, when Wolf was locked in an epic budget deadlock with legislative Republicans that had stopped the flow of state funding to many human service nonprofits across the state.

Only 35% of respondents felt things are generally headed in the right direction. Wolf's job approval has also taken a clear hit from the pandemic, with only 39% rating his work as excellent (10%) or good (29%), down from a strong 52% in July. A full 60% of respondents said they rate the governor's work as fair (23%) or poor (37%). Wolf, who is now in the final two years of his second term, is barred by the state Constitution from seeking a third.

The poll continues to show the sharp polarization between Democrats and Republicans, no matter the issue. On voter ID requirements, 95% of respondents who identified as Republican were in favor of tougher requirements, as opposed to just 47% of Democrats. Seventy-seven percent of self-described independents also weighed in support of voter ID. Wolf scored a 70% job approval rating among Democrats, but only 10% among Republicans.

In other issues that were specifically surveyed, majorities said they believed more should be done to regulate guns and to confront potential problems posed by climate change. Fifty-six percent of poll respondents said they strongly (42%) or somewhat (14%) favored the idea of creating more laws that regulate gun ownership in Pennsylvania, while a combined 42% strongly (29%) or somewhat (13%) opposed that notion.

On the climate, 62% of respondents said Pennsylvania should definitely (42%) or probably (20%) do more to address climate change, though the majorities got a little smaller when pollsters asked about specifically policy objectives. Asked if they favored President Joe Biden's stated requirement that every state generate all of its electric power through fuels that produce zero carbon emissions by 2035, 53% of respondents said they could get behind that goal, while 45% said they strongly (35%) or somewhat (10%) opposed the president's target. – **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**

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What if, instead of the usual "hard NO" split between R's and D's over everything on the planet (including the planet), the Republican Legislature and Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf cut a deal on proposed changes to state voting laws? I'm talking a 'Grand Bargain' resulting in positive action with something for both. All it would take is some forward thinking and a dose of common sense. And, yeah, I'm aware "forward

thinking” and “common sense” are rare commodities in Harrisburg. But this presents a chance to change that.

Headed into the final weeks before the Legislature’s (well-deserved?) summer break, a clash is coming over a bunch of GOP-pushed voting measures. Some make sense. Some are partisan. That’s what you get in divided government. And why do we have divided government? Let’s start there.

The state is purple, ideologically spit. A Republican U.S. Senator, a Democratic U.S. Senator (only four other states have that). A congressional delegation with nine Republicans, nine Democrats (only two other states have an equal number). In the last two presidential years, when turnout is highest, our statewide elections -- for president, U.S. Senate, attorney general, auditor general, treasurer -- produced five Democratic winners, four Republicans winners. None by anything approaching a double-digit margin. So, as a state, we don’t want all of one party’s plan, no matter the topic. And as citizens and voters we don’t seem to factor in this big-picture truth.

But elected leaders in both parties should. If, that is, their interest is in serving the state rather than themselves and political bases. Neither party should get all it wants. Especially when it comes to voting. Rep. Seth Grove (R., York), sponsor of the [149-page Voting Rights Protection Act](#), says his bill is about “improving elections for the voters.” Democrats say it’s about improving elections for Republicans. Wolf already signaled a veto.

But there are alternate paths to the same old road. The most contentious elements of Grove’s bill require voter photo ID and a new voter registration deadline. Dems argue that makes voting, for some, harder. One means getting a photo ID not everyone has. The other ends voter registration 30 days prior to an election instead of 15 -- though [research shows registration closer to elections increases turnout](#), especially among younger voters.

Common Cause Pennsylvania director Khalif Ali says voting laws should “remove barriers, not add barriers.” But he sees little room for compromise: “We’re in an all-or-nothing phase in this country.” Maybe. But how about this? Wolf gets same-day registration and voting ([like 20 other states](#)). Republicans get voter ID ([like 36 other states](#)). Think it through.

Ray Murphy, coordinator of Keystone Votes, a statewide coalition of voting rights groups, tells me the worst thing in Grove’s bill is “the rollback of the voter registration deadline.” He advocates same-day registration/voting because, he says, it has “the highest impact” on turnout. So, drop the registration deadline. Put same-day on the table.

Voter ID? It’s what Republicans want most. And they’re not alone. A [national AP poll in April](#) shows 72 percent of Americans, including a majority of Democrats, think it should be required. A [just-released Franklin & Marshall College](#) poll shows 74 percent of Pennsylvanians favor it. Plus, Grove’s ID measure doesn’t seem as onerous as opponents portray: either a driver’s license, a PennDOT non-license ID, a county-issued registration card, a free Department of State card, or a signed affidavit affirming one’s identity.



Still. Not a good trade? Fine. Throw in something else. Dems don't like signature verification of mail-in ballots. Drop that from the bill, too. And if there's no gettable deal under any circumstance? There's a second path. If Republicans are serious about making elections better, they can pass elements of Grove's bill everybody likes, rather than insisting voter ID is in the package.

That would include early processing of mail-in votes, in-person voting a week before elections, fixing errors on mail-in votes before polls close, curbside voting for those with disabilities, and paying poll workers more. How novel, right? Get something rather than nothing. Also, GOP lawmakers are pushing a state constitutional amendment requiring voter ID. Governors can't approve or veto amendment bills. So, it could be on a statewide ballot by 2023 as a yes/no question. How do you think that goes?

Point is, stepping toward compromise, or at least common ground, can incrementally improve state elections. Unless, of course, both sides want to maintain noise and rhetoric -- fueled in part by the fantasy of a fraudulent 2020 presidential result -- for use in their 2022 campaigns. In which case, the nothing we get is something for them. – **John Baer's column in *Harrisburg Patriot-News***

