

## Documents

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**Unlocking untapped potential in free-to-air TV advertising for East Coast SMEs in Malaysia**  
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### Abstract

Advertising contributes to the revenues of the broadcasting industry, paving the way for a sustainable broadcast and media ecosystem. However, due to the popularity of streaming services, advertising has been siphoned from broadcasters, leaving them struggling to survive. This paper explores free-to-air (FTA) television (TV) advertising opportunities in the East Coast region of Peninsular Malaysia. The East Coast region was an ideal location for this study due to its strong sense of community, cultural pride, and attractive identity that would offer a unique perspective on FTA TV viewing. Surveys were conducted with 403 respondents, selected using a multi-stage sampling procedure, from August to September 2023. The sample also included small-medium entrepreneurs (SMEs) to explore their interest in FTA TV advertising. The findings show that viewers in the East Coast region had favourable perceptions of the commercial breaks on FTA TV. The study also reveals that if broadcasters are prepared to adapt to their viewers' shifting demands and watching preferences, FTA TV advertising will remain competitive with digital platforms. In conclusion, this paper is a thoughtful effort to assist proper FTA TV content development to ensure the sustainability of the broadcast and media ecosystem. By focusing on advertising opportunities in Terengganu, Kelantan, and Pahang, this study taps into a niche audience in the region often overlooked in broader media research. © SEARCH Journal 2024.

### Author Keywords

Advertising; broadcasting; free-to-air channels; revenue; viewing habit

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