

Server-Side Ad Insertion: The Key to Better Ad Delivery



Synamedia
IRIS

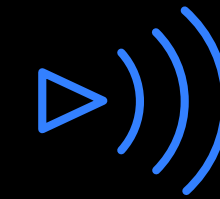


Why is streaming advertising more important than ever?

Viewing behaviour is shifting toward streaming services. The abundance of choice, availability of bandwidth, and convenience of consumption have made streaming the de facto preference for many viewers. In response to that shift, video providers are investing heavily in premium content, including live sports and blockbuster originals.

Aside from streaming's recent growth, there's been another major shift in the video landscape – the transition to ad-supported models. Given streaming's competitive nature and high content costs, subscription rates can't be expected to rise endlessly without triggering subscriber churn.

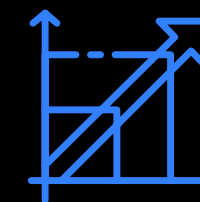
That's why the streaming and advertising "one-two punch" is key to your success. You need an ad delivery solution that not only ensures the highest quality viewing experience, but also maximises monetisation opportunities for your most valuable content.



38% of TV viewing in the US is through streaming, representing a larger share than cable or broadcast
(Nielsen, Dec 2023)



Top streaming platforms spent **\$42 Billion** producing and acquiring content in 2023
(Filmtake, Oct 2023)



The **8 leading** streaming services offer ad-supported pricing tiers
(Digital Trends, Apr 2024)



CTV spend is expected to grow **22.4%** in 2024, faster than any other advertising channel
(eMarketer, Jan 2024)

What are your options for targeted ad delivery?

Ad delivery solutions fall into two categories:

- **Server-side ad insertion (SSAI)** – a server or cloud service inserts the ad
- **Client-side ad insertion (CSAI)** – client device software inserts the ad either by making a tuning change or by splicing a previously downloaded ad

SSAI technology offers several benefits not found with CSAI:

- It supports any device via standard HLS or DASH protocols, eliminating the need to integrate and maintain myriad client application versions.
- It delivers a smooth viewing experience by ensuring seamless transitions between content, with no black screens resulting from discontinuities or latency issues due to tuning or splicing.
- It's not affected by client-based ad blocking software installed on the target device that prevents ads from being shown.

SSAI vs. CSAI

	SSAI	CSAI
Client Integration	▶ Lower effort ▶ 1 solution for all devices	▶ Higher effort ▶ 1 solution per device type, player, or app
Creative Transcoding	▶ Cloud-based ▶ Just-in-time	▶ Pre-transcoded
Ad Decisioning and Delivery	▶ Near real-time	▶ Near real-time
Viewing Experience	▶ Seamless ▶ No black frames or buffering	▶ Mixed ▶ Potential tuning or decoding latency
Ad Blockers	▶ Not susceptible	▶ Susceptible

How does SSAI deliver ads seamlessly?

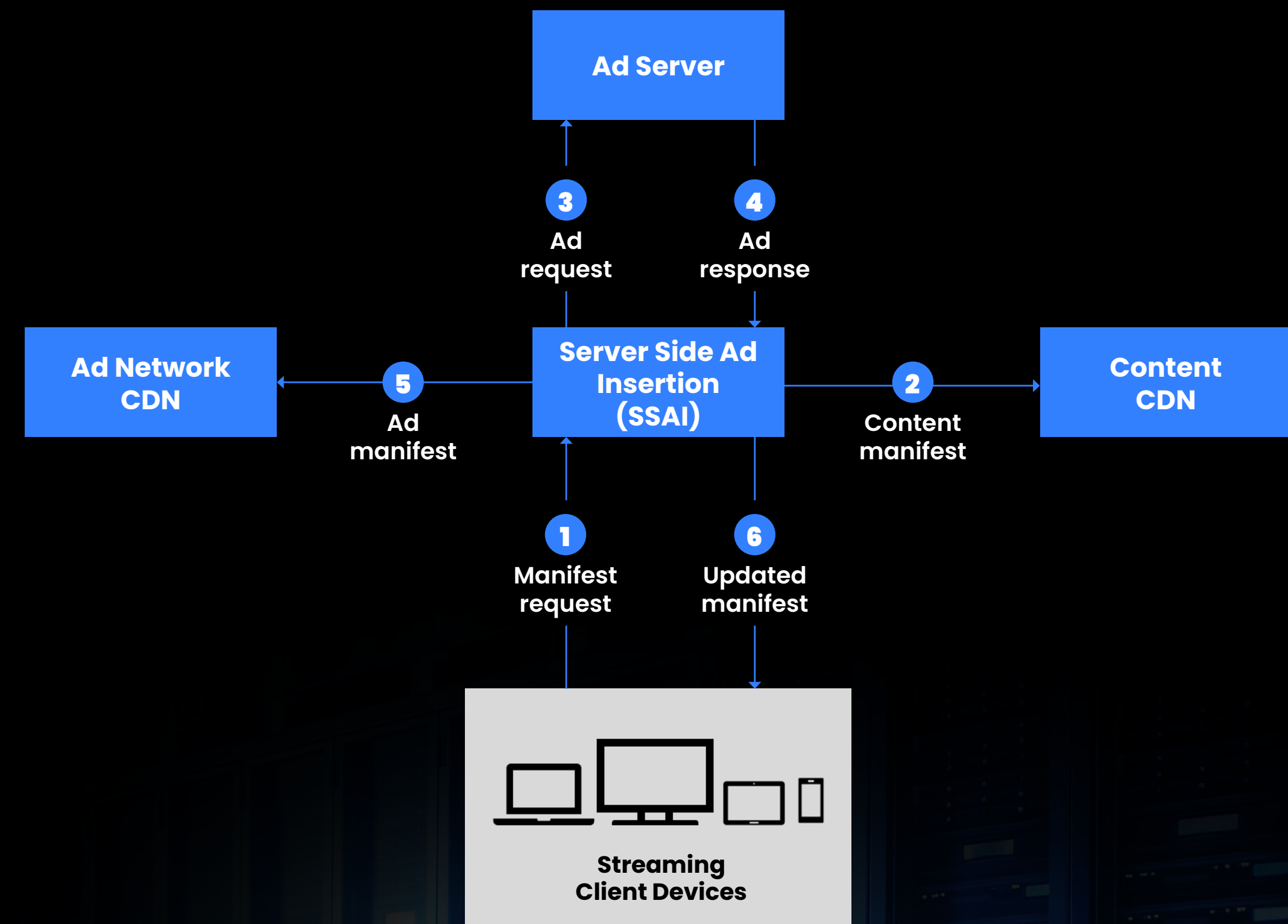
To provide a smooth overall viewing experience, streaming services use adaptive bitrate (ABR) streams comprising a series of files, each representing a video segment between 2 and 10 seconds long. The segments are encoded so they can be downloaded and decoded in sequence seamlessly.

- 1 Playback begins after a client requests a manifest
- 2 The manifest contains information about the segment's location (e.g. a CDN) as well as bitrates, timestamps, and metadata
- 3 When an ad opportunity is denoted by an embedded timing cue (a.k.a. an SCTE-35 ad marker), the SSAI requests one or more ads
- 4 The ad server responds with the location of the selected ad
- 5 The SSAI then retrieves the ad manifest from the ad network
- 6 The updated manifest redirects the client to a streaming ad for the ad break's duration

The client then reports back to the server as to whether the ad was played and, if so, for how long. After the ad break, the SSAI reverts to the original content manifest and video segments.

By manipulating the manifest and leveraging the precise timing and segmentation of ABR streams, SSAI enables transitions that avoid issues arising from splicing, tuning, or content flow interruption.

Ad Delivery Workflow



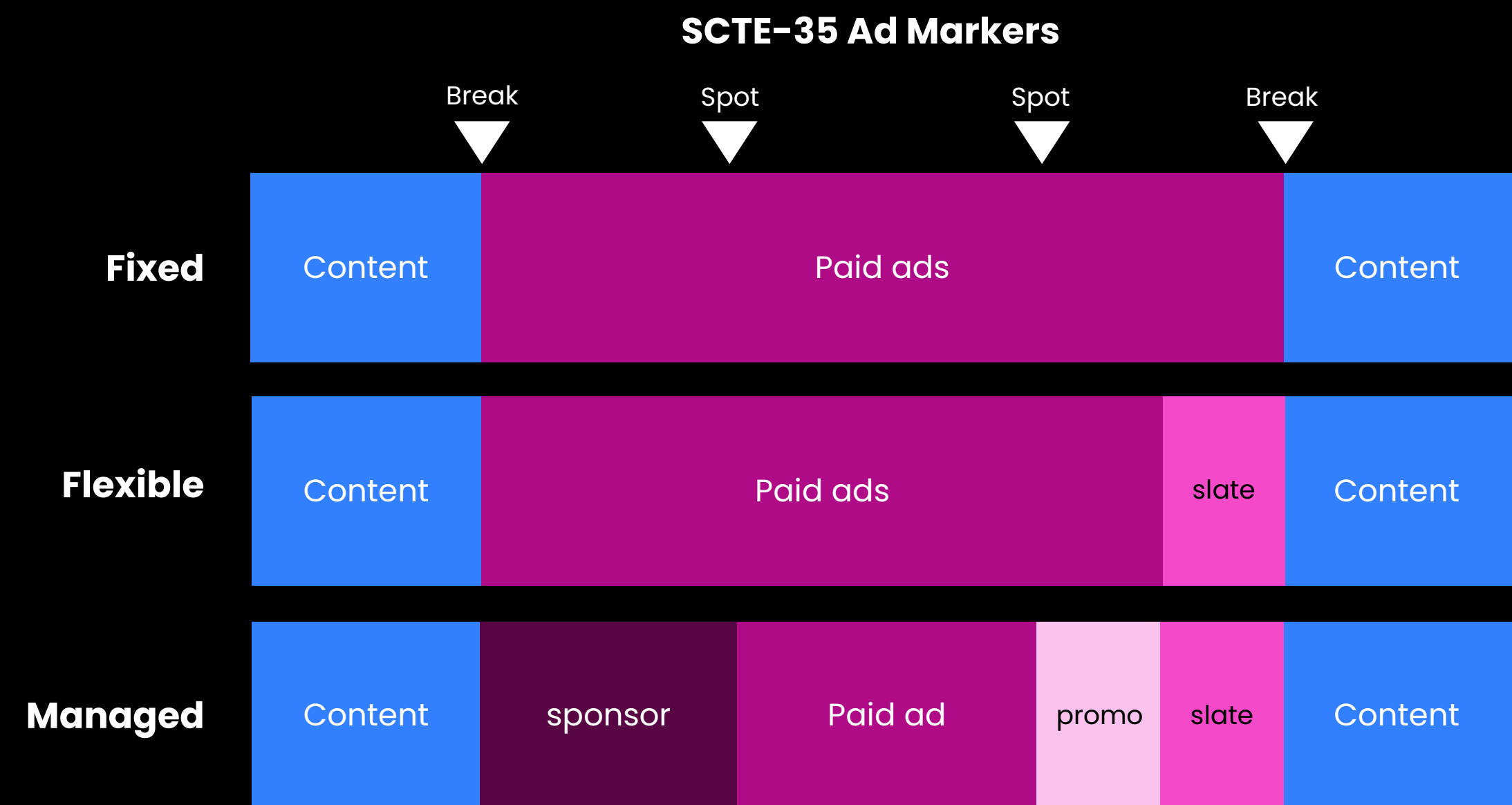
What additional capabilities does SSAI offer?

Typically, SSAI responds to spot and break markers by delivering ads that precisely match the opportunity's duration in a **fixed** configuration. However, selected ad durations are not always an exact match. An SSAI solution with **flexible** break management can help fill these gaps with slates – non-revenue videos that promote either the channel or other in-house advertising.

With access to break-related information, an SSAI solution with **managed** breaks can subdivide them into individual ad spots as well as deliver them to maximise impact and yield. Such a solution gives FAST, time-shifted TV, and VOD the same flexibility and control available to linear OTT, providing more options for structuring, filling, and monetising breaks.

Since SSAI receives all manifest requests and is capable of seamlessly manipulating them, it can perform other useful functions, such as live program substitution for triggered events like emergency alerts or for scheduled changes like blackouts or regional content.

Break Management Approaches



Finding an SSAI Solution That Delivers

Given how important it is for you to deliver both a premium experience and valuable ad impressions, finding the right ad delivery solution is key to your streaming service success.

Synamedia Iris SSAI brings unprecedented value as a cost-effective ad delivery solution that works with all streaming devices. The scalable, cloud-SaaS offering enables you to replace or insert ads into Live, VOD, TSTV, or FAST services that support millions of concurrent streams. It rapidly integrates with any ad server, player or CDN using industry-standard protocols and easy-to-use interfaces and APIs.

Synamedia Iris SSAI is part of a suite of addressable advertising products that unifies campaigns, inventory, and measurement across broadcast and streaming to make ads more targeted, relevant, and valuable for your business.



Learn more about Synamedia Iris SSAI:

-  [Synamedia Iris SSAI At-A-Glance](#)
-  [Understanding the Fundamentals of SSAI Blog](#)
-  [Going Beyond the Fundamentals of SSAI Blog](#)
-  [Understanding Server-Side Ad Insertion Webinar](#)



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