

Cablefax Daily™

Tuesday — May 16, 2017

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 28 / No. 093

Five Questions: Turner's Harran on Windowing, OTT and SVOD

With two new SVOD services on the market, record streaming numbers for March Madness and various deals with virtual MVPDs, Turner has its hands in virtually every video pot out there. We sat down with John Harran, svp of business development and digital distribution recently to chat about the ever evolving video content business. He'll be speaking at Cablefax's June 8 TV Innovation Summit in NYC (see CFXTVSummit.com for VIP discount registration). **Turner has experimented with launching all the episodes of a series at once, a la Netflix. What are some of your findings from experimentation?** I think you used a term, which is probably a good one, and that's experimentation. What we're trying to respond to is just the general trends we're seeing in the marketplace around consumers' consumption of video in general and their general behavior around certain types of video, including certain formats. We've done that in a couple forms. In addition to making a full season available, there's rights acquisition. As an existing season is playing out, that can mean investing in stacked season rights so you can catch up anytime during the season and you're not stuck with a rolling five episodes. It's hard to say what the findings are other than to say we're certainly responding to the audience. **As you dabble in things like that, it seems like rerunning programming for networks has become harder.** In general, how you schedule and how you make your programs available and how those shows are cycled is dramatically changing. In some cases, that's being driven by technology. You look at some of these interfaces, whether it's an application or a set-top like X1 from Comcast, and the whole world of discovery and how your content is accessed is completely changing. As a programmer, you have to think about that and what is best to have your audience find and discover your brand. **It feels like there's a new virtual MVPD almost every week. How does that change the environment?** My view as a guy who spends a lot of time thinking about content and how to reach audiences is that the more people who want our networks, the better. Offering choice and having partners come to us with a variety of ideas around packaging and various features they want to highlight, I think those are all good things for the industry. I'm not exactly sure how that trend line will continue, meaning how many more people will participate and become distributors. **Turner went direct to consumers recently with the launch of its Boomerang and FilmStruck SVOD services. Is it too early to share how that's going?** It's too early, but we're pleased with the results so far. You can go to the places where we offer it and see



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the feedback is extremely positive. The ultimate goal is to please the audience. If you can do that, the business metrics will follow in my view. **What about the concept of TV Everywhere?** We're certainly seeing positive signs being recorded from organizations like **CTAM** that talk about people's usage and level of awareness of TV Everywhere. From Turner's perspective, it's a critical component of what we'd like to do in terms of redefining the user experience. We have invested aggressively across all our brands, initially launching on browsers and mobile devices, but now more so moving to television itself. You'll hear about some of this at the upfront. The reason we're doing it is we think we can fundamentally re-define or add value to what the experience can be to that audience.

Fox's Reduced Ad Load: New **Fox Networks Group** pres *Joe Marchese* wasted no time rolling out new ad initiatives, using the programmer's upfront presentation Monday to announce a reduced ad load and various efforts to increase ad effectiveness. Fox will no longer be selling standard commercials across digital and on-demand viewing environments, instead leveraging new ad solutions such as sequenced creative throughout and single sponsor exclusivity within on-demand streams. On the measurement side, Fox and **NBC** are enabling MOAT's Video Quality Score across all on-demand viewing environments, and collaborating to bring MOAT measurement to linear. Fox will guarantee against MOAT's Video Quality Score for the FNG portions of any campaign that implements MOAT campaign-wide. Other announcements include the addition of an exclusive integrated marketing agency. Dubbed **All City**, former **20th Century Fox Film** chief creative officer *Tony Sella* will lead the venture. Digital ad company **true[X]**, which Marchese founded, brand lift optimization system UP//LIFT also will be used to drive decision making in near real time. For example, data gathered on FOX Sports GO during a 1pm **NFL** game can be leveraged to determine which creative a car company will run in the 4pm broadcast.


Arris vs Sony: As is often the case in patent infringement lawsuits, **Arris** answered **Sony's** suit by filing one of its own last week. The vendor claims Sony is infringing on its patents via its Sony Android TVs, Sony Playstation and BluRay players. Last month, the US **International Trade Commission** revealed it was investigating Arris in response to a patent complaint filed by Sony. Arris' five-count complaint includes claims that Sony's devices infringe on patents that include methods for audio, capture and communication during TV broadcasts.

Ratings: **IFC's** new comedy "Brockmire" is its highest-rated new series ever and the most time-shifted new comedy on cable. Since its premiere, the show has drawn nearly 8mln viewers in **Nielsen** Live+3 ratings and nearly 1mln more in video on demand and TV Everywhere plays.

Programming: **ESPN's** "SportsCenter" will increase its digital focus, revising its TV lineup in a series of "enhancements" beginning next month and continuing through early 2018. This August, SportsCenter will start producing up-to-the-minute news updates for both digital and television platforms. There also will be an "emphasis on personality-driven programs with some lineup changes." -- **Poker Central** acquired global TV and digital media rights to the World Series of Poker in Las Vegas. Poker Central and **ESPN** have reached an agreement to expand tournament programming to including live event coverage and original eps throughout the year. The deal runs through 2020, with 2017 being the first-year ESPN airs same-day coverage of the WSOP in its entirety. -- **BET** announced nominations for the 2017 BET Awards on June 25. *Beyoncé* tops the nominations list with a total of 7 nominations including "Best Album of the Year." *Bruno Mars* follows with five nominations. -- **A&E** ordered a new docuseries that will follow seven young adults as they set foot in high schools to re-learn what it's like being a teenager in today's world. The untitled show will take place in Highland Park School in Topeka, KS. -- The Devil is back. **Bravo** ordered new original series, "All that Glitters," which examines the frenemy-like relationship between *Vogue's Anna Wintour* and *Tina Brown*. The six-hour series will be produced by **Universal Cable Productions** in association with **Sony Pictures TV Entertainment**.

WICT Fellowship: **Arris** engineer *Jin Zhou* was tapped as the inaugural recipient of the Nomi M. Bergman Fellowship, a one-year cable award that includes **WICT** membership and a fully funded scholarship to the WICT Leadership Conference and other select programs. The fellowship will be underwritten by WICT's Leadership Endowment Fund and is named in honor of former Bright House pres Bergman, who has been actively involved with **WICT**, **CableLabs**, **NCTA** and **SCTE**.

People: *Donna D'Alessandro* was named svp of programming for **Discovery Channel** and **Animal Planet**. D'Alessandro previously served as vp of programming for both channels.



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