

Cablefax Daily™

Monday — May 7, 2018

What the Industry Reads First

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Killing Eve: BBC America Series Snags Ratings to Die For

A lot of ratings press releases hit our inbox, but one from **BBC America** on Friday caused us to do a double-take. “Killing Eve” is the only new ad-supported drama in more than a decade to show consecutive ratings growth over its first four episodes across total viewers and both key demos,” it said. We’re putting trust in the **AMC Networks** research team here, but it’s certainly not the norm to see these sorts of gains. Sunday night’s episode had 892K total viewers and 386K 25-54s, according to Nielsen L+3. That’s up from 669K for the premiere, 692K for ep 2, and 758K for ep 3. While it may sound like a gradual build on audience makes sense, it seldom works that way, with viewership usually dropping off from the premiere. Take **ABC’s** reboot of “Roseanne.” There’s been a gradual decline with Tuesday’s ep notching 10.3mln viewers, down from 18.1mln for the premiere. The second ep notched 15.2mln and the third had 13.5mln. Don’t cry for Roseanne. It is still the top broadcast series of the year thus far. One show in recent years to see a huge lift from its premiere is **Fox’s** “Empire,” whose Season 1 finale jumped to 16.7mln viewers—a 69% lift from its premiere. And like Killing Eve, it did see a steady uptick in viewers. In fact, Fox said in 2015 that it was the first primetime scripted series to grow in total viewers over each of its first five telecasts since at least 1991 in L+SD. The difference between Empire and Killing Eve is that BBCA’s claim is based on L+3 data, with Empire not seeing total viewer growth for ep 4 in L+3. The Fox series also saw slight dips in ep 4 for 18-49 and 25-54 demos in L+3 and L+SD, while Eve was up in viewers and both demos for its first four eps in L+3, according to AMCN research. While ratings can get a bit confusing with all the different ways things can be sliced, the main takeaway here is that continuous gains in viewers for a new show is really rare. “I think this show lands with a certain kind of relevance and cultural resonance. It has an electrifying ability to connect with people,” BBCA pres/gm *Sarah Barnett* told **Cablefax** Friday. “It’s part of a wave of shows representing women in a refreshing way. We saw it as a network somewhat with ‘Orphan Black,’ which grew spectacularly from Season 1 to Season 2. Fast forward to today and there’s this sort of peeling back of this invisible bias, this masculine sense of storytelling toward so many shows.” Not only does Killing Eve turn the typical spy-action thriller on its head with two female leads (*Sandra Oh* and *Jodie Comer*), but it also comes at it from the feminine POV of writer/creator *Phoebe Waller-Bridge*, who Barnett calls the “mistress of surprising the viewer.” With buzz so huge for Eve (it has 100% rating on **Rotten Tomatoes**), Barnett’s team is using social media



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to “join in enthusiasm with fans.” Part of that approach right now is urging people to get caught up now so they can watch this Sunday’s episode (5/6), which marks a pivotal point in the show. But Barnett ultimately sees viewers as the biggest drivers of growth. “It’s amazing the power word of mouth can still have.”

Retrans Hemisphere: DirecTV Puerto Rico lost **WAPA** and **WAPA 2 Deportes** as the clock hit 12:01am Friday. WAPA is Puerto Rico’s leading broadcast network, producing approximately 70 hours of news and entertainment programming per week. WAPA America, a cable network targeting Puerto Ricans and other Caribbean Hispanics in the US, is not impacted and remains on DirecTV in the US mainland. “We share our local Puerto Rico customers’ frustration, as Hemisphere is blocking WAPA and WAPA 2 Deportes there until it receives nearly double its current fees. We continue to ask Hemisphere to allow these customers to watch while we work this matter out privately,” DirecTV owner **AT&T** said. Hemisphere released 1Q earnings on Friday, reporting that progress continues in Puerto Rico’s restoration following last year’s hurricane. Power has been restored to 98% of homes—a major improvement from the 50% homes that had it at the beginning of the year, said Hemisphere pres *Alan Sokol*. Still, the company said it lacks the visibility to provide 2018 guidance. Retransmission fees for 1Q lagged year-ago numbers with the overall number of television subscribers well below pre-storm levels, Sokol said. The DirecTV impasse was mentioned in Hemisphere’s earnings call Friday, with Sokol saying that the company has engaged in extensive discussion with DirecTV, but doesn’t think it has properly valued the programming. “We think it was a bad decision to deprive Puerto Ricans of programming from WAPA and WAPA Deportes. It’s the equivalent of depriving Americans in the US of programming from **ABC, FOX, CBS** and **NBC** combined,” Sokol said. In addition to the Puerto Rico broadcast stations and cable nets, Hemisphere has Spanish-language OTT service **Pantaya** launched with **Li-ongate** last summer. The company said Pantaya is “one of the top” downloaded entertainment apps on iOS and Android, but no sub numbers were released.

The Big Broadcast: YouTube’s newfront event Thursday evening saw the company announcing a number of new programs, continuing projects and addressing concerns surrounding its position as an open platform. Four new series and specials were announced, including “Will Smith: The Jump Off” and “Priyanka Chopra: If I Could Tell You Just One Thing.” Returning to YouTube is *Demi Lovato* with an untitled project, *Kevin Hart* and the *Slo Mo Guys*. Users are now watching more than 150mln hours of YouTube on TV screens every day, according to CEO *Susan Wojcicki*, and nearly 7 out of 10 YouTube viewers claim to watch on their TVs. She called the open platform an opportunity to inspire creativity in its more than 1.8bln monthly logged-in users, but noted that YouTube has also taken steps to tighten its content guidelines and policies. “We just released our first transparency report to give everyone

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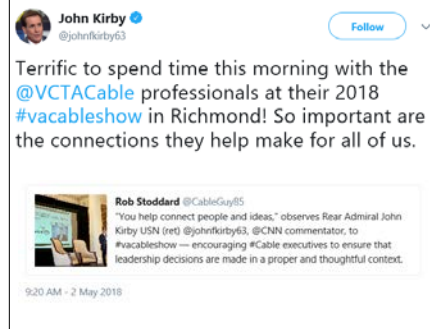
the latest numbers on our progress removing violative content with both people and machines,” she added. Brands found reason to cheer with the platform’s focus on expanding advertising capabilities, extending sales life measurement to **Nielsen Catalina Solutions**. Advertisers will also be able to reach viewers watching **YouTube TV** for the first time. “This is YouTube’s focus in 2018: continuing to innovate and enhance the power of open, while delivering on our responsibility to viewers, creators and advertisers,” Wojcicki said.

Fighting Facebook: Sen Ed Markey (D-MA) is calling for greater privacy safeguards surrounding **Facebook**, sending a letter to the **FTC** commissioners with concerns that the social media platform violated a 2011 consent decree with the Commission. Markey called on the Commission to introduce new privacy safeguards for Facebook to follow, including one that would place a hard stop on Facebook’s tracking of users across websites after they have logged out of their accounts.

People: Fox News appointed Lily Fu Claffee to the role of general counsel. Dianne Brandt, evp of legal and business affairs, remains on voluntary personal leave, which she took as there is an investigation into how sexual harassment claims were handled at Fox News. Claffee joins the net from the **US Chamber of Commerce**, where she had served as svp, general counsel and corporate secretary since 2010.

Cablefax Dashboard

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Up Ahead

May 6-11: SCTE Leadership Institute: Tuck Executive Education at Dartmouth

May 10: WICT Rocky Mountain 19th Annual Hall of Fame

May 12: NAMIC Southern California Hike & Brunch, Culver City, CA

May 14-15: 5th Annual MoffettNathanson Media & Communications Summit, New York, NY

May 21-23: Media Finance Focus 2018, Arlington, VA

Research

- The Media & Entertainment industry emerged as the top industry in terms of brand intimacy in 2018, earning a 45.8 score out of 50.
- YouTube, earning 6th place on the report, saw daily usage rise 9% across all ages to 66% and 14% with Gen Z to 86%.
- Netflix, snagging the eighth slot, resonates more with A45-54 (5th rank) than with A25-34 (13th rank).

(Source: MBLM’s Brand Intimacy 2018 Report)

Quotable

“I’m 68 years old and I want to affect this game and one, help to save the Cosmos and two, try to find a way of helping to change the game in this country because it’s embarrassing. It’s truly embarrassing. We joined Fifa before Brazil and Uruguay—look how much Brazil and Uruguay have won. And now, with TV, American kids are more aware of Salah in Liverpool, Messi, or whoever, in Europe, than the people who play in this country.”
 – **Mediacom CEO/NY Cosmos owner Rocco Commisso** in an interview with *the Guardian* on his \$500mln investment proposal for the NASL.

Cablefax Industry Jobs

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