

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Smart Ads: The Future of AI-Powered Integration in OTT

Advertising Week in NYC continued Thursday with lengthy discussions of AI-powered integration in OTT content. Advertising company **TripleLift's** native advertising tech may soon make it possible to use artificial intelligence to digitally insert advertisements into OTT content, and potentially even develop into addressable advertising. However, we aren't quite there yet. "Being able to show that it can work, that the tech is no longer a hurdle, is just the first part," explained *Ed Davis*, evp and CPO, advertising products for **Fox**. "You can get tests done, you can experiment, but it's really a responsibility for people selling these opportunities to coordinate a little bit. You have to establish a common language that everyone can start to coalesce around." Davis also discussed how it may be possible to have one form of integrated advertising when the program first airs, and then alter it for streaming. When it comes to integrated ads, there's the matter of the content creators. "There's a battle brewing, and we're going to have to ballroom dance with a lot of the individuals that create this content and agree on the ads being shown. It's not really feasible to have enough participation early in the creative process to define what all the placements are going to be," said *Kirk McDonald*, CMO of **Xandr**, **AT&T's** new advertising business. Ultimately, unless you're a content producer or studio that has rights to everything being shown, you're going to have a hard time convincing the director on the technology," said *Ralf Jacob*, head of digital media services for **Oath**. And there's one other very important party to keep in mind. "We forget about the consumer, the real subject of all of this. Right now we're duct-taping in the technology and it feels really interruptive. This is the future," said McDonald. He went on to explain that people operate currently with "continuous partial attention," in that consumers are constantly distracted. "We're constantly not too far away from a mobile device. We think we're multitasking, but the truth is we're not," McDonald said. So where should we start with AI addressable advertising? "Relevance," McDonald stated. "Having something that's not relevant to me follow me around is creepy. However, if it is relevant to me, it enables me. An ad that is more addressable should be worth more to the marketer, and it should be worth more to the consumer that is giving their finite attention. We have to start with relevance first. We want to do more addressable ads in all formats, I think you can get more value,



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and everyone wins.” *Peter Naylor*, svp of **Hulu Advertising**, has a slightly different approach to ad integration in OTT. “I think the advertising model of the future has to be based in restraint. What we’re trying to embrace is more interesting models. I think the product integrations are all in this grand scheme of things. The traditional commercial can still exist, but we’ve ‘overstuffed the bird’ when you have four or five minute breaks,” Naylor explained.

WICT PowerBrokers: Speaking to the crowd gathered for the **WICT DC/Baltimore** chapter’s annual Power-Brokers Breakfast Thursday, **Comcast** regional svp for the beltway region *Mary McLaughlin* said that everyone has the power to be a catalyst. Her first suggestion was to have a point of view and the courage to speak out. “If we are silent, we can’t be a catalyst for anything or anybody,” McLaughlin said, pointing to the example set by Nobel Prize winner *Malala Yousafzai*. “Have a point of view, speak out.” She also encouraged the audience to be lifelong learners, spend time with those that have different viewpoints, to say yes and get uncomfortable and to give back anytime you get a chance. The event also honored the winners of the chapter’s Touchstones of Leadership Awards. Honorees included **Cox Communications** vp, national inbound sales, centers of excellence, *Stephanie DeWald* (Geraldine B. Laybourne Fearless Award); **NCTA** svp, industry & association affairs, *Rob Stoddard* (Inspire Award); **The T. Howard Foundation** pres/CEO *Jo Pamphile* (Connect Award); **CTAM** svp, advanced products, *Angela Britt* (Communicate Award); **TV One** svp, consumer marketing and creative services, *Lori Hall* (Know Yourself Award); **Comcast** regional vp, project management, *Kelli Hill* (Catalyst Award); **National Geographic Partners** vp, national marketing operations, *Melayne Cohen* (Listen Award) and **Charter Communications** vp, regulatory & government affairs, *Christianna Barnhart* (Glenn Britt Emerging Leader Award).

Extra Cheese: Subscribers to **Hulu** with Live TV and **YouTube TV** have full access to **Cheddar’s** live and on demand programming at no extra charge as of Thursday. The content will be available on the Cheddar web site as well as mobile and TV apps. The first platform for authenticating subscribers is Cheddar’s website, but there are plans for its connected TV and mobile apps as well. **Synacor’s** Cloud ID cloud-based identity management platform is being utilized to speed the authentication integrations.

Altice Engages: **Altice USA** hosted an event with Bronx Borough pres *Ruben Diaz Jr* to announce it is expanding its low-income broadband service, Altice Advantage Internet, to all qualifying households with a child attending NYC public schools in the **Optimum** service area. The \$14.99 a month service will also be available for eligible families and senior citizens in Optimum and **Suddenlink** service areas and will provide in-home WiFi.

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The company also announced that two Kips Bay Boys & Girls Club locations will get free broadband, allowing kids and community members access to internet at no charge.

Closing The Gap: The Senate Committee continued its assessment of the progress of broadband development in rural America in a hearing Thursday while also evaluating ways to close the digital divide. Committee chmn *Sen John Thune* (R-SD) criticized the **FCC** for not conducting an economic analysis on the impact of USF funding cuts on broadband development in those rural areas. Instead, the cuts resulting from the FCC's budget control mechanism have increased by almost 25%, according to Thune. "The FCC's failure to ensure sufficient and predictable funding jeopardizes the vitality of America's rural communities and makes it much, much harder for our witnesses and others like them to deploy broadband," Thune said. The witnesses on hand included **Mescalero Apache Telecom** gm *Godfrey Enjady*, **Golden West Telecommunications** gm/CEO *Denny Law*, **Cheyenne Ricer Sioux Tribe Telephone Authority** gm *Mona Thompson* and **US Cellular** vp federal affairs and public policy *Grant Spellmeyer*. Enjady highlighted a lack of broadband performance goals and measurements on Tribal lands, recommending the development of training, mapping, data collection and performance goals for Native communities. Law called support from the federal High-Cost USF program essential to making a business case for rural broadband. Thompson tackled unique financial factors affecting Native communities, arguing that broadband deployment could go a long way in in cultivating and attracting businesses that could allow Native communities and their residents to thrive economically. Spellmeyer emphasized the need for urgency in broadband deployment, especially as 5G services begin to roll out in 2019.

WE Should Vote: **WE tv** and the **NAACP** are working together on a voter awareness campaign targeted at the network's African American audience. Called "WE Make a Difference," the nonpartisan effort features WE tv talent delivering messages on how important it is to get involved and vote in the midterm elections on Nov 6. The national spots were scheduled to begin running on the network's social and linear channels on Thursday, Oct 4.

Habla Inglés: **DISH** and **Sling TV** launched an HD channel with the purpose of teaching English as a second language. Inglés Para Todos is available at no extra cost to DishLATINO subscribers regardless of their programming package as well as subscribers to Sling TV's "Best of Spanish TV" service. The content will also be available on demand, allowing viewers to learn and practice English at their own time and pace.

Awards Season: The Peabody Awards is kicking off its yearly search for top-notch storytelling in TV, radio and digital media on Oct 15. Submissions for productions released during 2018 will be accepted through Jan 9. Nominee and winner announcements will be made on a rolling schedule by categories during April, while the 78th Annual Peabody Awards Ceremony will be held at Cipriani Wall Street in NYC on May 18.

New Additions: **fuboTV** added another 13 local channels to its programming lineup, bringing the grand total to 499. Channel additions include **KSCC** (Corpus Christi, TX), **WLTZ** (Columbus, GA), **KOIN** (Portland, OR), **WNCN** (Raleigh-Durham, NC), **WSPA** (Greenville, SC), **KLAS** (Las Vegas, NV), **WIAT** (Birmingham, AL), **KRQEDT** (Albuquerque-Santa Fe, NM), **WPRI** (Providence-New Bedford, RI), **WIVB** (Buffalo, NY), **KGPE** (Fresno-Visalia, CA) **WYOU** (Wilkes Barre-Scranton, PA) and **WKRG** (Mobile-Pensacola, FL).

Ratings: With the red hot **Atlanta Braves'** regular season coming to a close, **Fox Sports South** and **Fox Sports Southeast** announced they delivered the highest YOY household ratings growth of any MLB team. The networks' average household rating in the Atlanta DMA (3.20) represented a 76% uptick YOY, and marks the highest average household rating since 2013.

Programming: **ID** greenlit a second season of "Twisted Sisters" ahead of its first season finale on Monday at 10pm. Season 2, which will see *Khloé Kardashian* return as an executive producer, will premiere on ID in the summer of 2019. -- **Bluprint**, the **NBCU Cable Entertainment** subscription service, teamed up with **Warner Bros** and **DC** to launch "Suit Up!," a DIY costume design series. Each of the four-episode series focus on a DC super hero including Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman and Aquaman. From Oct 5-12 the program is available to stream for free. -- **Discovery** announced a new competition series "Master of Arms," premiering Nov 2 at 10pm. Each episode, three builders tackle two challenges that require building historic weapons. -- **HBO Sports** acquired the rights to the doc "Momentum Generation." The surfing film will debut on Dec 11 at 10pm on HBO.

People: **Discovery** upped *Karen Leever* to the role of pres of US digital products and marketing. She most recently served as evp/general manager of digital media at Discovery. Before joining the team, she spent ten years at **DirectTV**, driving the satellite TV company's business as svp, digital and direct sales.

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

Pilots Rule the Galaxy In 'Star Wars Resistance'

You don't have to be one with the Force to connect with **Disney Channel's** animated adventure series "Star Wars Resistance," premiering Sunday. The series follows Kazudo Xiono, a young pilot recruited by the Resistance for a mission to spy on the First Order, a growing threat. But while hearing the title of the show may bring to mind visions of lightsabers and Jedi, this particular story will shed light on the other inhabitants of the galaxy far, far away. "There are all kinds of different characters and backgrounds, even careers. You get a sense of not just the pilots, but the working class people too," ep/supervising director **Justin Ridge** told **CFX**, saying it's been a fun ride crafting and telling a story with these unfamiliar characters. "What do they do when it's a time of war? What are their lives like? It's a different take than what we're familiar with." This is far from Ridge's first venture into the Star Wars universe, growing up as an avid fan before serving as episodic director and supervising director on **Disney XD's** "Star Wars Rebels." While creating the perfect animated content can be quite challenging, there are plenty of positives that come with the creative freedom. "It's funny because the live-action movies have quite a bit of animation in them, making them all kind of animated movies," Ridge joked before saying that the ability to push character expression is a definite plus. The animation capabilities allow the team to get a bit more creative, thinking outside the box and pushing the bounds of what's possible with human actors. "Our characters can definitely emote more than live action characters." -- *Sara Winegardner*

Reviews: "Sorry For Your Loss," 9pm ET, beginning Tuesday, **Facebook Watch**. Viewers needn't worry if they've missed the first eight eps of this story of Leigh Shaw, a young woman (*Elizabeth Olsen*) trying to salvage her life after the unexpected death of her husband. Tuesday's ep is the penultimate of this series and its story is beautifully told, with gorgeous footage of the CA dessert. Viewers seeking an escape from reality will enjoy this ep as Shaw heads impulsively to a resort and meets a guy who seems perfect for her. Or does she? -- "Into The Dark," Friday, **Hulu**. You have to love the setup for this first of a 12-episode horror anthology. A no-nonsense hired killer does the first part of his job, which is to off a famous person. When he gets to his car, dragging a corpse wrapped in heavy plastic, he discovers partiers have slashed his tires and toilet-papered his car. Welcome to Halloween in the big city. In a dark suit and carrying a corpse, a group approaches, thinking he's got a killer costume (pun intended). They urge him to join them at a Halloween bash. Needing a car to deliver the corpse, he goes to the party, where, unfortunately, the story splatters a bit. Still, props to Hulu for stepping into the horror genre. -- *Seth Arenstein*

Basic Cable P2+ Prime Rankings* (09/24/18-09/30/18)		
Mon-Sun	MC US	MC US AA (000)
ESPN	1.052	3,213
FNC	1.031	3,149
MSNBC	0.674	2,057
USA	0.383	1,169
CNN	0.383	1,169
HGTV	0.365	1,114
HALL	0.332	1,014
TLC	0.315	961
ID	0.295	902
TBSC	0.294	897
FOOD	0.293	894
A&E	0.277	846
HIST	0.269	823
DISC	0.264	805
NICK	0.228	695
NFL	0.213	649
FX	0.212	646
NAN	0.193	590
AMC	0.190	579
ADSM	0.187	571
DSNY	0.178	543
TNT	0.170	520
INSP	0.170	518
CRN	0.166	508
FRFM	0.166	506
BRAVO	0.154	472
VH1	0.150	458
DSJR	0.149	455
LIFE	0.145	442
MTV	0.141	432
NKJR	0.137	420
TVLAND	0.134	410
APL	0.133	407
SYFY	0.133	406
TRAVEL	0.127	387
NATGEO	0.125	380
HBO	0.116	354
HMM	0.116	353
GSN	0.114	348
FS1	0.111	339
COM	0.111	339

*P2+ L+SD rankers are based on national Nielsen numbers, not coverage.


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