

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Five Questions: Tuning In to Out-of-Home Viewing

Capturing viewership that takes place out-of-home has long been a pain point for programmers. There are various options, including Nielsen's Portable People Meters, but like most forms of measurement—they have their limitations. One player experimenting in the space is Tunity, which raised \$12mIn last year in Series A funding with MGM Resorts as a backer. The idea is that users launch the Tunity mobile app to hear live audio from muted TVs, or TVs that can be hard to hear because of surrounding noise. We spoke with Tunity's head of research & analytics Paul Lindstrom, who spent four decades at Nielsen before joining the company in January of 2018, to get a sense of how it fits into the measurement equation. Excerpts from the conversation follow. **How is Tunity tackling out-of-home differently?**

Tunity is using video recognition to identify what's playing by actually taking a scan of the screen, but most out-of-home viewing being done right now by Nielsen and most anyone else is through a form of audio recognition. Under that scenario, they have devices or PPMs that are listening all the time and pick up what's being viewed. But the reality is it doesn't pick up any exposure is going on where the set is muted or any exposure where there's significant ambient noise. You're in a situation where it's less likely to pick up tuning when there are crowds around. **Since you must scan the app, Tunity's measurement is active vs passive?** Yes. Think about if there are two sets on in a bar. This isn't a knock on Nielsen, but the PPM may not pick up the one they're watching. What sound is coming through may not be what they're actually tuned to. **How many people are using the app and how do you extrapolate the data?** We are modeling the data we get based on the input we get from the app. We're not just looking at it as counting users who are using Tunity. There's been about 2mIn downloads in total for Tunity. They get about 250K users a month. **Do you have deals in place for the data?** We have companies participating on both the buy and sell sides. We're in a vetting period right now and are working with a number of networks in order to figure out the best way to be able to utilize this data and work within the full holistic environment—meaning we don't want out-of-home as just a standalone, we want to see how it fits in with the rest of linear and digital. We need to keep that confidential. The one I can say is **Omnicom Media Group**. We're going to present jointly at **ARF** in April. I think it's fair to say at this point and time we have the majority of the largest networks working with us. **Any interesting Tunity findings that you can share?** Fox News tends

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to do better as a whole, day in and day out in out-of-home compared to **CNN**. They tend to do better in-home as well. But when there's breaking news, what we end up seeing is that CNN passes Fox News virtually every time. We think CNN is the channel of choice for locations that normally don't carry news programming. Bars and restaurants might usually have **ESPN** on or who knows what on, but when there's breaking news, they switch to CNN. It occurred with the *Michael Cohen* testimony. CNN moved ahead. But **NBC Sports** ended up having a soccer game on in the afternoon, and you actually saw NBC popping up as people tuned in and CNN declining in almost equal numbers, while Fox News stayed about the same. The impact of these curation issues is really coming out with Tunity data.

AT&T DirecTV Block-ed: On Friday, **AT&T-DirecTV** lost five broadcast stations owned by **Block Communications**, which is also the parent of cable op **Buckeye Broadband**. The losses impact DirecTV, **DirecTV Now** and **U-verse** in the markets of Louisville, KY, Champaign-Springfield IL and Lima, OH. Block is directing viewers to hometownstations.com to watch local, live newscasts, while AT&T-DirecTV are telling subs that network programming is available for free over-the-air and often online. "We want to prevent our local customers from enduring any extended Block blackout and continue to work toward a new agreement," AT&T-DirecTV said. This is the third broadcaster dark on DirecTV, which lost **Northwest** stations on Feb 22. **Bonneville**-owned **KSL** in Salt Lake City has been dark for DirecTV and DirecTV now since August.

The Ides of March: In the words of **FCC** commish *Jessica Rosenworcel*, "welcome to the far frontier of spectrum policy." That comment came Friday at the Commission's March open meeting, where it unanimously approved the latest Spectrum Horizons Report and Order. It creates a new category of experimental licenses for use between 95GHz and 3THz, giving innovators the ability to conduct experiments lasting up to 10 years. The item also frees up 21.2GHz of spectrum for use by unlicensed devices. Commishes *Michael O'Rielly* and *Brendan Carr* both offered their full support, with Carr applauding the fast rate at which the US is opening new spectrum bands. But while speed is important, it's not everything. Commish *Geoffrey Starks* cautioned the FCC to look further ahead and anticipate spectrum issues before opening bands for wider use. "The plain fact of the matter is that I have some questions about the Enforcement Bureau's ability to even detect interference in these and other higher frequency bands," Starks said, adding that it is not currently capable of policing a significant amount of mmWave spectrum. "I want to make a call for sufficient resources to develop these 21st Century enforcement tools as we look into interference." Through the rest of the meeting, the FCC adopted a Report and Order to continue implementing the Improving Call Quality and Reliability Act of 2017 for rural call completion and approved the setting aside of \$150mln for the reimbursement of low-power television, TV translator and FM broadcast stations for broadcast stations for costs brought

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on as a result of the broadband television spectrum incentive auction repack. "Under a tight timeline, the [FCC] staff worked incredibly hard to reach a balanced outcome that is as fair as possible given the challenges presented by the repack," **NAB** evp, communications *Dennis Wharton* said in a statement.

EEO Move: The **FCC** is moving its Equal Employment Opportunity team from the Media Bureau to Enforcement. "For half a century, the FCC has been tasked with ensuring that broadcasters, cable operators and other multichannel video programming distributors comply with our national policy against discrimination in hiring," FCC chmn *Ajit Pai* said. "This reform will help us fulfill that charge." The team's work includes periodic random audits of broadcast licensee and MVPD EEO programs along with necessary enforcement actions following those audits.

On the Circuit: The **Broadband Cable Association of Pennsylvania's Cable Academy** returns to Kalahari Resorts in the Poconos May 1-2. The program includes a keynote from **Google's** Director of Global Partnerships *Jennifer Koester*, a Beltway briefing by **ACA** pres/CEO *Matt Polka* and **ACA** chmn/**MCTV** pres *Bob Gessner* and an executive briefing with **Atlantic Broadband's** *Rich Shea*, **Armstrong's** *Jeff Ross*, **Service Electric's** *Mark Walter* and **Shentel's** *Dave Heimbach*.

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#Hearties, we assure you that Hallmark Channel has no plans to cancel When Calls the Heart. Hope Valley has many more stories left to share and we will let you know the details soon.

Up Ahead

- March 19-21:** [ACA Summit](#); DC
- March 26:** Free State Foundation Eleventh Annual [Telecom Policy Conference](#); DC
- March 27:** [T. Howard Foundation Diversity Awards Dinner](#); NYC
- April 3-4:** [CableLabs European Conference 2019](#); London
- April 4-7:** [SkiTam Adaptive Spirit](#); Vail, Colorado
- April 6-11:** [NAB Show](#); Las Vegas

Research

- 31.8% of all conversations related to paid-ads are related to digital paid ads, up from 16.6% five years ago.
- Meanwhile, TV ads have dropped from first place at 37.4% in 2013 to second place, inspiring 31.6% of conversations related to paid ads.
- Conversations among consumers related to brands drive 19% of total purchases.

(Source: Engagement Labs "Cutting the Cord That Engages Us" White Paper)

Quotable

"It's a sad moment. The Turner brand was a fantastic brand. It was synonymous with the underdog. Ted had the idea to put his little UHF station on cable, and to do 24 hours of news for the first time. Time after time, he innovated. I think that will be the greatest shame—to not have something physical to remember him by."

– **Former CNN director of operations Steve Stahl**, who began working for Turner in 1984, speaking to **NBC News** on the expected stripping of **Ted Turner's** name from **WarnerMedia**



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