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What the Industry Reads First

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Bad Actors: Rise in Connected TV, Rise in Ad Fraud

Until a few years ago, connected TV wasn't really on anyone's radar. Now, media execs believe it will supercede everything else. But with the rise in CTV, there also comes the rise in fraud. "Unfortunately as dollars shift to a platform, bad actors are now incentivized to do bad things," *Michael Reidy*, svp of digital ad sales at **NBCU**, said during a panel at Advertising Week in NYC Monday. The rise in fragmentation in the industry has accelerated the growth in fraud across OTT services. Non-profit consortium **AdLedger** released a report in July finding that 18% of the 8 trillion ad requests for OTT inventory are fraudulent. "Given how fragmented digital has been, there's not really been universal standards in how sharing data and the handling of consumer's private information has been done," said **WarnerMedia** evp, product revenue and operations *Amit Chaturvedi*. "There's not a degree of consistency." To combat the rise in fraud in OTT, execs agree there are several things that need to be done industry-wide. Reidy said environment transparency is essential. "I still ask people 'do you know where your ads are running?'" he explained. "Is that content being viewed to completion, and is the ad being served a qualified ad? Is that a real person on the other end of that?" He said that's why NBCU took a leadership position with the **IAB**, as well as working specifically with **Integral Ad Science** on connected TV. For Chaturvedi, three practices are necessary to fight and prevent fraud in digital. "Industry standards and data privacy and data handling, the investment so that we're not behind the eight ball ourselves, and the third is consortiums," he said. WarnerMedia and NBCU are both members of **Project OAR**, an industry consortium focused on addressable advertising. "Programmatic introduces an amazing opportunity to create an open marketplace, dynamic pricing, correct media value, all the flexibility for being in a more modern and full environment. Any time you add those layers, you add the potential for bad behavior," said *Chris Paul*, executive director at **Verizon**. As Verizon is both a media buyer and seller, Paul was able to offer a unique perspective from both directions. "It is really up to us to take a leadership position in ensuring that all other buyers and all other sellers in media know that we're purveying quality out there," he said. "We're going to see a little bit more chaos going forward. Some of what we've been able to do on some digital platforms has gotten us to a place where you can make good investments and know where you're getting your next dollar in terms of ROI, but I think this is the last frontier." And what's the timeline for the connected TV takeover? Reidy said it's truly up to

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the viewers to decide when they're ready to stream everything through connected TV.

Disney, AT&T Shake Hands: Disney and AT&T reached an agreement in principle on a new retransmission carriage deal Friday evening. ESPN began warning viewers of a blackout during Monday Night Football on Sept 9. The deal keeps Disney-owned nets including FX, ESPN and Disney Channel in homes with DirecTV, U-verse TV and AT&T TV Now. It also keeps ACC Network on DirecTV and expands it to U-verse and AT&T TV Now homes.

FCC Media Ownership Setback: The US Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit has told the FCC to go back to the drawing board when it comes to revamping media ownership regulations. The court said the agency didn't adequately consider the effect its sweeping rule changes will have on ownership of broadcast media by women and racial minorities. "Although it did ostensibly comply with our prior requirement to consider this issue on remand, its analysis is so insubstantial that we cannot say it provides a reliable foundation for the Commission's conclusions," said the opinion, which was released Monday. The ruling throws out the FCC's attempt to relax the newspaper-broadcast station cross ownership ban and other broadcast deregulatory proposals. FCC chmn Ajit Pai said the agency intends to seek further review, hoping that Judge Anthony Joseph Scirica's dissenting view on the three-judge panel will prevail. He complained that the Third Circuit has thwarted efforts to revamp the regs for the past 15 years. Democrat Jessica Rosenworcel applauded the block, saying the court "rightly sent the FCC's handiwork back to the agency because the FCC's analysis was so 'insubstantial.'"

HBO Takes Emmy Gold: HBO won the Emmys race, with 34 total wins, including nine Primetime Emmys Sunday night. The premium net's "Game of Thrones" led all programming with 12 Emmys, tying its own record for the most wins of any scripted program in a single season. It won Outstanding Drama, while Amazon's "Fleabag" took home Best Comedy. Streamers Netflix (27) and Amazon Prime Video (15) took second and third place, respectively, for total Emmy wins. HBO's "Chernobyl" was runner-up in most wins for a program (10), followed by Amazon's "The Marvelous Mrs Maisel" (8). Best TV Movie went to Netflix's "Bandersnatch (Black Mirror)," Chernobyl won Best Limited Series and HBO's "Last Week Tonight with John Oliver" snagged Outstanding Variety Talk Series.

Roku, Innovid Launch Linear Measurement Solution: Roku and Innovid have teamed up for an analytics solution that measures daily demographic reach and frequency on TV campaigns run across the Roku platform and linear TV. The product is an expansion of Roku's Activation Insights and joins OTT and linear TV occurrence and identity data from Roku's 30.5mln active accounts and with Innovid's OTT ad serving footprint across over 75mln households. The product is now being tested with several Innovid and Roku clients, including Verizon. It will soon expand to include all



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of OTT, not just the Roku platform. “I think the most important thing about this is there’s a lot of different ways brands today buy OTT,” *Alison Levin*, Roku’s vp of ad sales and strategy, said during a panel at Advertising Week in NYC on Monday. She said the tool will allow brands to understand reach and frequency regardless of how it’s delivered on a TV screen. “That’s truly important for brands, especially ones that are investing quite a lot in linear to quantify how much they should be moving.” Levin said that data suggests the reason there’s so much reach and unduplication in OTT is because it’s uninvested in currently. “Our hope is this will truly speed up investment to right-side it and truly allow brands to get back the audience or find they missed on linear.” **Omnicom Media Group** is backing the partnership. “The closer we can get to a unified understanding of what’s happening on people’s TV sets, the easier it is to get our clients to move money. The way to understand that movement is not clear today, and especially understanding okay if I move my money from broadcast and from GRP goals, how do I know that I’m picking up incremental reach by moving those dollars to OTT?” Omnicom chief research officer *Jonathan Steuer* said.

Disney+ Taking Orders: **Disney+** doesn’t launch until Nov 12, but it’s already encouraging people to sign up for pre-orders of the \$6.99/month or \$69.99/year service. All new subs are eligible for a free seven-day trial that begins on Nov 12. Those interested in a bundled offering of **Disney+**, **ESPN+** and **Hulu** (with ads) for \$12.99/month should wait until it becomes available at launch on Nov 12.

BELD Helping Customers Drop Video: **BELD Internet** is the latest small operator dropping its video offering in favor of broadband products. But instead of just announcing a service end date, the Braintree, MA, company is offering to help customers cut the cord with its “K.O. Cable” campaign. “As of December 2, 2019, BELD will no longer offer cable television service due to costs beyond our control,” BELD general manager *Bill Bottiggi* said in a statement. “So for any Braintree resident thinking about cutting the cord, now’s the time and we’ll coach you through it with straightforward, step-by-step guidance.”

Advertising Week Notebook: **NCC Media** kicked off Advertising Week in NYC Monday with a bang, announcing its re-brand to **Ampersand**. That’s not all. The jv from **Comcast**, **Charter** and **Cox** is also rolling out a new suite of addressable ad offerings and capabilities. It’s unified aggregated viewership data insights across the Charter, Comcast and Cox combined footprint allow marketers to target audience segments across nearly 40mln households. Additionally, Ampersand is deepening its partnership with **OpenAP**, previously announced earlier this summer. Ampersand is launching a National TV Extension platform to complement network TV buys by driving incremental reach to under-exposed brand audiences. -- Ad dollars are consistently heading to what cable legend *John Malone* coined “walled gardens” over the open web. Put simply, a walled garden is a closed ecosystem in which all the operations are controlled by the ecosystem operator (think **Facebook** or **Amazon**). Walled gardens are taking about \$1mln a year over from the open web, and at some point there isn’t going to be anything left to take. So how do we confront that? “We made a very complicated ecosystem, and we haven’t tied it together very well,” said **LiveRamp** vp of strategic partnerships *Travis Clinger* during a panel at Advertising Week in NYC on Monday. “Facebook is one platform, and with ad tech, you need a whole team to manage that. It’s making the infrastructure better connected and making the workflow much more seamless for the advertiser.”

Programming: **Viacom** acquired the exclusive cable rights to all 180 eps of “Seinfeld” from **Sony Pictures**. The deal begins in Oct 2021, with the sitcom to air across Viacom brands such as **Comedy Central**, **Paramount Network** and **TV Land**. Kudos to Viacom for giving us a laugh with a press release that referred to *Kent Alterman* as president of Comedy Central, Paramount Network, TV Land and Vandelay Industries—the latter a fictional company *George Costanza* claimed to have interviewed with. -- **ESPN** is bringing some exclusive content to the **Facebook** Watch platform, including “The People’s MMA Show,” sports comedy show “Always Late with Katie Nolan” and exclusive versions of “Countdown to GameDay” and “Fantasy Focus Live.” -- **AMC Networks** is continuing its strategy of collaboration between linear and streaming platforms, announcing **WE tv** and **UMC** (Urban Movie Channel) will produce a second season of confessional episodes of the WE hit “Marriage Boot Camp: Hip Hop Edition,” which are available exclusively to UMC members. The programmer claims the first round of confessionals helped drive sub growth at UMC and raised awareness of WE tv’s lineup. AMCN has taken a similar hybrid approach with “State of the Union” (**SundanceTV** and **Sundance Now**) and “A Discovery of Witches” (**Shudder**, **Sundance Now**, **AMC** and **BBC America**).

People: *Lizzie Fox* and *Rebecca Quinn* will lead **HBO Max**’s non-fiction programming department as svp, non-fiction programming and vp, non-fiction original programming, respectively. Both will report to *Jennifer O’Connell*, evp, original non-fiction and kids. Rounding out the team will be svp, non-fiction production *Brett Boydston*, reporting to svp, production *Mark Weissman*. Fox joins from **CNN**, where she served as vp, CNN original series. Quinn served as head of development for **Pulse Creative** and Boydston acted as evp/head of production for **Karga Seven Pictures**.

CFX TECH

CBRS Launched. So What Now?

Last week marked a major milestone in a six-year journey for a handful of the **CBRS Alliance's** 130 member companies. The **FCC's** Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and the Office of Engineering and Technology approved the Spectrum Access Systems operated by **Amdocs, CommScope, Federated Wireless, Google** and **Sony** and gave the companies a green light to begin their initial commercial deployments.

That stamp of approval led to a limited opening of the General Authorized Access tier of CBRS service, allowing them to use any spectrum not in use by incumbent and Priority Access License users. But those companies still have plenty to prove when it comes to their SAS.

During the ICD period (which will last for a minimum of 30 days), the FCC will keep a close eye on the operations of those access systems. Working together with the **NTIA** and **DoD**, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and the OET will review reports from each in order to determine who will receive final certification. Those folks will be allowed to make their SASs available for commercial use for five years.

If these launches progress smoothly and more users are able to access the power of the 3.5GHz band, the possibilities for greater innovation and smoother experiences seem endless. **Verizon** is looking to use the band to further densify its wireless network in urban areas while **Midco** has plans to use CBRS to provide a low-cost LTE fixed wireless solution for residents and business in hard-to-serve areas. And, of course, CBRS midband spectrum is ideal for 5G and its many use cases.

Lower latency and faster speeds are always welcome, but where CBRS may have had the biggest impact is in breaking the traditional mold of what spectrum re-

allocation should look like. It's a lesson in being flexible and creative, putting on your thinking cap rather than calling it quits when the usual way to reallocate spectrum just isn't going to work.

"Ultimately, it is truly amazing what ingenuity occurs when one's back is against a wall," FCC commish *Michael O'Rielly* said in his remarks at the CBRS commercial launch event in DC Wednesday. "Clearing spectrum should always be the goal, but the dynamic sharing model that has been created will serve as a blueprint for when sharing is the only option, not only in the US, but also for the many nations that have been carefully following this proceeding."

He also identified additional spectrum that should be cleared for next-gen wireless systems, including the frequencies between 3.45 and 3.55. The frequencies between 3.1 to 3.45GHz and 7GHz should also be looked at for clearing or for a sharing model similar to that being used for CBRS. And, of course, there's the reallocation of the C-band, which O'Rielly said he'll continue to serve as the lead advocate on.

"This spectrum is crucial, because it can be combined with CBRS to provide the large spectrum channels needed for the development of 5G services," O'Rielly said. – *Sara Winegardner*

Comcast Expands Cybersecurity Protections:

Comcast Business launched a cloud-based internet security solution Monday designed to help small businesses protect themselves from cyber attacks. Comcast Business SecurityEdge, developed in partnership with **Akamai**, doesn't require any additional hardware or software beyond an internet modem and prevents business owners, employees or guests from accessing infected sites. Businesses also have the ability to filter web content from a personalized platform. The solution protects against threats including malware, ransomware, phishing and botnet infections.

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