

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Measuring Up: Nielsen Overhaul a Long Time Coming, Industry Says

After a few months of taking **Nielsen** to task for its undercounted ratings in 2020 amidst the pandemic, major players are starting to sort out what the ratings service's suspended **MRC** accreditation truly means for decision-makers in the television industry.

"You know, the loss of accreditation isn't saying that the product is broken. It's essentially saying, it's in need of some repair...particularly as we're looking at this pivot to audience-based buying, it really needs a second data set as our real co-primary data set," *Sean Cunningham*, CEO of the **Video Advertising Bureau**, told **Cablefax**. He also explained that the upfront dialogue will include how to adjust the numbers, since now it is clear that the numbers need tweaking.

Gabe Greenberg, CEO of **Octillion Media** and CEO of **GABB-CON**, believes that overall, the suspension shouldn't impact buying in the material sense, but some Nielsen clients will have to wake up and smell the coffee.

"Many in the industry have been testing alternatives for years, and this suspension is overdue. I do think, however, that clients who rely/relied on this antiquated approach need to bring themselves up to date and look at alternatives. This panel approach is older than some who buy media at agencies. What is wrong with that picture?" Greenberg said.

Both Greenberg and Cunningham said that the accreditation suspension was a long time coming, but the undercounting that

occurred during COVID-19 set off a sense of urgency, alerting the industry and the MRC that neither could wait any longer to officially call for a resolution.

"I think that there's been an overdue need for real overhaul in innovation in measurement and currency in the TV and premium video space...I think that the defects that came out of Nielsen's COVID data really needed a 911 alarm, in terms of urgency, to really not only hasten a fix for that data set, but to really set in motion, multiple entities to get innovating on a 'get it done yesterday' time frame," Cunningham said.

The VAB is rooting for Nielsen to improve and succeed, for the industry's sake, but it was not about to waste any time waiting. On Thursday the Bureau announced a collaborative Measurement Innovation Task Force with **ANA**, **OpenAP** and **NBCUniversal** to work on solutions in the meantime built by, and for, the industry. The member companies and VAB leadership will use the task force to create centralized best practices and standards for the TV ad industry. The task force will use cross-industry initiatives like OpenAP's Open ID, NBCU's cross-industry Measurement Innovation Forum and ANA's Cross-Media Measurement Initiative.

The announcement of the task force comes after industry organizations including VAB took a saga of actions to hold Nielsen accountable. Cunningham asked the Media Rating Council to suspend Nielsen's accreditation in late July, prompting Nielsen to proactively ask for an accreditation hiatus from the Council in early August. Also in early August, NBCU sent

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DEADLINE: FRIDAY, SEPT. 10

www.CablefaxWomen.com



RFPs to 50 measurement companies including Nielsen for an industry-wide shift in ad measurement via comprehensive, interoperable measurements of the consumer experience. This all came after a May report from an MRC audit that found Nielsen undercounted viewership during the COVID-19 pandemic's start in 2020.

Right now, NBCU is reviewing 80+ RFPs, up from the original 50 invited. The measurement groups that are part of its Certified Measurement Program are expected to be announced by early October. NBCU plans to announce all of the companies that are part of its Measurement Innovation Forum at next week's Advertising Research Foundation conference.

According to Cunningham, the VAB task force isn't built to replace any measurement solutions, but to drive the urgency of alternatives and additional data sets home. "It's about accelerating every measurement company's path towards fulfilling goals that are required by marketers for great currency and great measurement. It's about having wide urgency for all major players to innovate quickly and, frankly, battle for share," Cunningham said.

Greenberg also emphasized the need for a wider array of data sets from multiple sources. "What's best for the industry is an MRC/VAB framework that the industry can accept and deploy at any scale with many providers, not a monopoly with one or two. Having one company rule the currency is a big mistake," said Greenberg.

COX CONTINUES IDA RESTORATION WORK

Cox Communications said it has restored service to more than half of its Greater New Orleans customers in the wake of Hurricane Ida. "We would like to thank Entergy for the considerable progress they have made in repairing the nearly 30,000 utility poles damaged across their Louisiana footprint," said *Anthony Pope*, svp and region manager of the Cox Southeast Region. "Our accelerated pace of restoring services to 60% of Cox customers is due to the steady restoration of power coupled with the hundreds of personnel we have deployed on the ground to restore services to our customers as quickly as possible." Work will continue through the weekend, though Cox warns that areas with significant pole and fiber damage may take longer to restore. Jean Lafitte in Jefferson Parish and Destrehan and Luling in St. Charles Parish are among the hardest hit areas.

VERIZON, NFL SIGN 10-YEAR DEAL

Verizon and the **NFL** extended their longstanding relationship, but dropped the pact for streaming games to Verizon mobile devices. The 10-year deal is focused on 5G, with *Sports Business Journal* pegging the value at more than \$1 billion. Under the agreement, Verizon serves as the League's official 5G network and technology partner, with Verizon 5G

Ultra Wideband now live in select parts of 25 stadiums. Entertainment brands continue to look for ways to take advantage of the latest wireless technology. Verizon has already rolled out "5G Multi-View," which lets fans to view up to seven simultaneous camera angles and AR overlays of the NFL's Next Gen Stats on select 5G-enabled phones. The future could see 5G-enabled NFL venues turned into digital arenas that can host mobile-gaming events with real-time, on-site multiplayer action.

Cablefax Executive Round Up

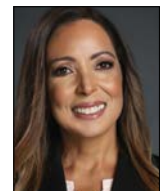
Given the renewed focus on DEI, is there a shift in how people recognize Hispanic Heritage Month?



Leandro Briatore
Head of Finance & Advertising Sales
beIN SPORTS

"The Latinx community has always been a cornerstone of beIN SPORTS' audience. Because of this, we have superserved our Hispanic audience by speaking their language and delivering content they want. What we learned is that

language is more than just spoken word— for us and our audience, it's our shared passion for fútbol. For this reason, our English-language channel, beIN SPORTS XTRA, will celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month by allowing fans to relive the best of South America's most exciting tournaments, Copa Libertadores and Copa Sudamericana. Our advertisers recognize this and in turn we continue to receive their interest and support."



Christina Kolbjornsen
SVP, Corporate and External Affairs
NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises

"We see a new awakening in the passion and interest around Hispanic Heritage Month this year, especially given all we've been through in the past 18 months, with the COVID-19 pandemic and the events of last summer. As

the leading Spanish language media company in the country, we work hard all year to ensure we are the choice and voice of U.S. Hispanics. We proudly celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, by sharing and expanding on what it is to be Hispanic and celebrating our contributions to the fabric of America. Advertisers see that as well, and they lean on us and the larger NBCUniversal portfolio when it comes to reaching the ever expanding and incredibly influential Hispanic demographic."



Judi Lopez
Head of Content Distribution
Fuse Media

"As a Latino-owned entertainment company dedicated to serving the Latinx audience with storytelling that genuinely reflects their lives and culture, Hispanic Heritage Month is every day at Fuse. We are committed to authentic, inclusive content year-round, and our partners recognize the importance of reaching this historically underserved audience, and find value in Fuse's expertise to provide them partnership opportunities during Hispanic Heritage Month and beyond."

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PTC ISSUES VMA WARNING

MTV will televise the VMAs on Sunday, and you can bet the **Parents Television and Media Council** will be watching. The organization warned MTV Thursday to keep the annual awards show free of indecent content, noting that its simulcast on broadcast network **The CW** makes it subject to the broadcast indecency law. “Ostensibly a celebration for the music industry, in reality MTV’s VMA broadcast has been an annual epicenter for profane, sexually-charged, drug-infused entertainment,” PTC President *Tim Winter* said in a statement. The VMAs will be hosted by *Doja Cat* live from the Barclays Center at 8pm ET Sunday. The lineup of performers includes *Justin Bieber*, *Lil Nas X*, *Twenty One Pilots* and *Normani*.

WICT LUNCH STILL IN-PERSON

While **T. Howard** made the decision to cancel its in-person dinner in NYC set for later this month, **WICT** still plans to keep its Oct 20 Signature Touchstones Luncheon as a live, in-person event at the NY Marriott Marquis. It’s also offering a live-streamed format and requiring all attendees to show proof of vaccination. So far, more than 40 tables are reserved, with organizers telling us more reservations are coming every day. Of course, WICT will continue to monitor things closely and will adhere to all state and local rules and guidelines. WICT will recognize its Women of the Year and Women to Watch honorees at the event.

MORE 5G ROLLOUTS FOR VERIZON

Verizon launched 5G Home Internet in five new cities in Fremont, California; Orlando, Florida; Pensacola, Florida; Sarasota, Florida; and Niagara Falls, New York. That brings the home internet offering, which starts at \$50 a month for Verizon customers with a qualifying mobile plan, to parts of 57 cities. It’s also adding mobility service 5G Ultra Wideband in Fremont, Harrisburg, PA; Athens, GA; and Orlando. Markets across 82 cities have access to Verizon’s 5G Ultra Wideband.

GROUPS BACK MVPD TAX CREDIT BILL

A coalition of diversity groups are giving support to a bill introduced by Rep *Yvette Clarke* (D-NY) that would provide tax credits for carriage of independent programmers by qualified distributors and multichannel video programming distributors. **The National Diversity Coalition**, the **National Asian American Coalition**, the **League of United Latin American Citizens**, the **National Urban League** and **MMTC** sent a joint letter this week to House Speaker *Nancy Pelosi*, Majority Leader *Steny Hoyer* and Ways and Means Chairman *Richard Neal* expressing their support of HR 5056. “The MVPD Tax Credit Bill will encourage pay TV distributors to open up their channel line ups and platforms to competition, to new ideas and to socially disadvantaged entrepreneurs and will help nurture a vibrant, competitive pay TV industry,” the groups wrote. “This legislation would open the door for social disadvantaged entities to compete and thrive in the pay TV industry. These new entities will be able to create new content that will serve historically underserved communities.”

IOT, PUBLIC SAFETY SPECTRUM ON FCC DOCKET

The **FCC**’s tentative agenda for the agency’s September 30 open meeting includes an order on reconsideration that would

vacate the 2020 Sixth Report and Order, which adopted a state-by-state leasing framework for the 4.9 GHz (4940-4900 MHz) band. It plans to seek comment on a nationwide framework for the 4.9 GHz band, ways to foster greater public safety use, and ways to facilitate compatible non-public safety access to the band. Other items to be considered are a Notice of Inquiry seeking comment on current and future spectrum needs to enable better connectivity relating to the Internet of Things and a further NPRM that proposes to impose obligations on gateway providers to help stop illegal robocalls originating abroad from reaching U.S. consumers and businesses.

NCTC SENIOR LEADERSHIP SHUFFLE

NCTC reorganized its senior leadership, naming *Lisa Hood* as COO. She’ll maintain her current role as CFO. *Jared Baumann* will assume a new role as vp, technology innovation, leading the technology roadmap for NCTC. *Rob Smith* will lead an expanded group purchasing and procurement department as vp, group purchasing. *Steve Beardslee* will lead the broadband and video solutions team as vp, broadband and video services.

TEGNA LAUNCHES QUEST AVOD

TEGNA-owned adventure and exploration multicast network **Quest** has launched an AVOD service. The Quest On Demand app will give users access to series like “The Aviators,” “Scrap Kings,” “Mayday,” “Huge Moves,” “Monster Moves,” “Giant Lobster Hunters,” “Chasing Monsters” and “Aussie Gold Hunters.” It will also feature series “Ice Vikings,” premiering its second season in October on Quest. More series will be added in upcoming months. The app is available on **Roku**, **Fire TV**, **Apple TV**, **Android** and **iOS**.

CARRIAGE

Sports-first live TV streaming platform **fuboTV** is now available on **VIZIO SmartCast** TVs. It joins VIZIO SmartCast apps for **Apple TV+**, **BET+**, **Disney+**, **HBO Max**, **Hulu**, **Netflix**, **Paramount+**, **Peacock**, **Prime Video** and **YouTube TV**.

PROGRAMMING

HBO Max renewed its “Gossip Girl” reboot for a sophomore season. The remaining six episodes of Season 1 will debut in November. – **Telemundo Deportes** presents exclusive coverage of the FIFA Futsal World Cup Lithuania 2021, with by Kazakhstan vs. Costa Rica at 10:55 am ET Sunday. – **AMC Networks’ AMC+** and **RLJE Films** announced the acquisition of and a day-and-date release for the darkly comedic drama “Silent Night” ahead of the film’s world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival. It follows a group of old friends who celebrate Christmas in the comfort of an idyllic country home as the world is coming to an end. – **ViacomCBS** and **MTV Entertainment Studios** inked an exclusive overall deal *David Oyelowo* and *Jessica Oyelowo* for original scripted and unscripted series through their production company **Yoruba Saxon**. **101 Studios** will serve as production partner on all projects. First in development is a limited series about wild west lawman *Bass Reeves*, believed to be the inspiration for The Lone Ranger.

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

It's All in the Family

No family is perfect, and the Kinsellas certainly have their fair share of drama. "Kin," premiering on **AMC+** Thursday, centers on the Irish crime family as they struggle to maintain their position of power in Dublin through conflict and tragedy. Fans of "The Sopranos" or "Gangs of London" will find plenty to love about the drama, but there are distinct differences in how crime organizations operate in Ireland. Alliances between the families are forged, broken and re-forged all the time. "Some of them work together, some of them work against each other. So it would be based more on like a Dublin model of a family who were involved in crime who have an area within Dublin that's theirs," creator/showrunner *Peter McKenna* said during a **TCA** summer tour panel. "But by and large, until they're actually fighting with each other, a lot of these gangs work together." He also wanted to highlight Ireland's unique relationship with gangland. It's not uncommon to find pictures of known criminals on the front pages of newspapers, grabbing coffee or wandering to the shops. "I suppose that's what really interested me in this world. What's it like to be in this family in this world where you're almost like mini-celebrities, but you're also criminals, and you have all the dynamics of a family?" McKenna said. Keeping the family together is a task in itself. Actor *Aiden Gillen*, who plays family patriarch Frank Kinsella, said that because of each member's involvement in the crime world, there's always an undercurrent of violence in everything they do. Each of them are trying to make the best decisions for themselves and for each other, but there is inevitably going to be conflict. "I have the wisdom of experience and ago, and it's not unexpected that the younger, hotheaded members of the crew would be the ones who are getting out of hand sometimes," Gillen said. "It's all pretty realistic in terms of the structure of an organization and that dynamic of temper and experience." – *Sara Winegardner*

REVIEWS

"American Crime Story: Impeachment," 10pm, Tuesdays, **FX**. Since this week's reviews ladder to history, we ask whether or not these productions teach viewers anything new about the events or help them to look at them differently. "ACS" may begin with an advantage. The *Monica Lewinsky* saga occurred before many of today's TV viewers came of age. For them, this series is largely new material. Even for older viewers, the stories of Lewinsky, *Linda Tripp* and *Paula Jones* may be foggy. Beyond that, there are the costumes (not bad), details (you have to assume they're accurate considering Lewinsky is a series producer) and performances, of *Sarah Paulson* as Tripp and *Beanie Feldstein* as Lewinsky. In the end, it's not *Ryan Murphy's* best (it's hard to top his *O.J. Simpson* series), but he's done a good job weaving several plots into a watchable, 10-ep series. – "9/11: Inside the President's War Room," streaming on **Apple TV+** (and free on Sept. 11). There are myriad docs, films and books about 9/11. Yet, this new entry deserves a spot in the canon. True, its title is off (the president's war room was in Air Force 1, and communication was balky at best). And it skips over how 9/11 could occur. Still, hearing the former president, VP and others recount that day is gripping. – *Seth Arenstein*

BASIC CABLE		
P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*		
(08/30/21-09/05/21)		
MON-SUN	MC	MC
	US	US AA
	AA%	(000)
FNC	0.830	2,585
MSNBC	0.391	1,218
ESPN	0.357	1,111
HGTV	0.338	1,054
TLC	0.296	922
INSP	0.288	897
CNN	0.277	861
HALL	0.268	836
USA	0.234	728
TBSC	0.217	676
DISC	0.211	657
FOOD	0.210	654
ID	0.190	591
HIST	0.189	589
AMC	0.180	560
TNT	0.173	540
TVLAND	0.169	525
LIFE	0.167	519
ESPN2	0.163	508
WETV	0.155	481
GSN	0.142	443
HMM	0.140	435
ADSM	0.138	430
BRAVO	0.134	419
A&E	0.133	415
FX	0.132	412
PARA	0.126	393
NATGEO	0.116	362
NAN	0.110	341
TRAVEL	0.109	341
NICK	0.108	337
SYFY	0.106	331
APL	0.106	331
BET	0.101	314

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



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