

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Come Together: Connecting the Dots for National Addressable Ads

2022 has all the earmarks for being a big year for national addressable advertising, but it's going to take some serious collaboration between MVPDs and programmers to get there.

"It's a wildly complex solution to build out because each network has to negotiate and enter into contracts with each MVPD, each OEM that was going to be enabling this capability," Brett Hurwitz, **Yahoo!'s** Business Lead for Addressable TV, said during a Monday panel at TVOT Live. "Networks need to dig in and get all those agreements in place."

Companies like **Canoe** are trying to simplify that process. "We're representing three different MVPD footprints right now, so programmers have one contract with us. That's one execution path, one workflow, and really, one throat to choke if something does go wrong," said Canoe's *David Porter*, SVP/GM of Addressable Advertising. "Things are going to go wrong. You need somebody to look across multiple footprints and solve the problem."

ViacomCBS has been working for several years to establish those relationships across multiple distribution partners. A successful partnership doesn't necessarily mean winning a deal, but doing a deal that everyone benefits from, *Julian Zilberbrand*, EVP, Advanced Media, told the TVOT crowd. "That's about creating and spending time with clients, educating them on all the capabilities and how addressable fits into the great picture," he said. "A lot of times we try to make addressable

kind of in its own little world. I think it has to be part of the entire investment picture in the linear landscape or in the general targeted landscape."

With more than half of US TV households now capable of receiving addressable ads, the space is evolving rapidly. **New York Interconnect**, a JV between **Altice USA**, **Charter** and **Comcast**, is working to transition clients from gross ratings points to impressions. "We've been out there for about a year now selling even traditional linear as an impressions-based model, so addressable lends itself very easily to that," said *Sona Mirakian-Pehlivanian*, VP of Operations & Campaign Management for NY Interconnect. "We're working on extending that to all media that we're selling so that when we are all in a true cross-platform world, you can have a CPM and you're buying all of your platforms on that CPM, you can shift your impressions from all the different platforms from where you need it, so addressable is leading the way there and we're tying that to all the media that we're all trying to sell."

A few years ago, scale was a challenge for addressable. But Monday's panel agreed that has changed. ViacomCBS has roughly 50 million homes enabled for addressable today. "I think scale is there holistically in the marketplace, but there are a couple of things we need to work toward. There's speed to entry... Because that's an enemy of scale if it takes you three weeks to get a campaign up," said Zilberbrand.

Two-minute addressable inventory and CTV addressable inventory are further along than national addressable. "Our

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Cablefax 100 Nominations

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The FAXIES Awards

Deadline: March 11

Final Deadline: March 28

Top Ops Nominations

Deadline: April 1

The Diversity List Nominations

Deadline: June 3

Final Deadline: June 10

Most Powerful Women Nominations

Deadline: August 12

Final Deadline: August 19

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percent of the inventory that will be impressions-based this year will definitely be higher than last year and higher than the year before, so it's moving in the right direction, but it's still a bit of a patchwork," said **DISH Media** SVP Kevin Arrix. "For me, scale comes from when we aren't walled gardens, when we're trying to operate in this open, interoperable manner. There are still some barriers, but those barriers can get eliminated through technology."

Measurement gaps continue to exist, but Zilberbrand sees that needle moving through multiple initiatives with programmers and distributors. *Gina Mingjoni*, **Comcast Advertising's** SVP, Strategy and Operations, added that the buy-side, which has gotten used to transacting the same way for a long time, needs to be part of those initiatives. "I think we have a lot of momentum here. We just need to see that turn into delivery in 2022," she said.

DISH's Arrix said that addressable TV measurement as a standalone offering is excellent: "I think it's up there with any digital measurement, closed-loop system. What I think needs to improve on that front is compression so that we aren't going back to an auto manufacturer three months after the campaign ends and saying, 'look what this did.' We have to compress the timelines."

ATLANTIC BROADBAND TURNS INTO BREEZELINE

New year, new **Atlantic Broadband**. The operator is kicking off 2022 with a major rebrand that will see the company's name transition to Breezeline. The idea of a rebrand was introduced by President *Frank van der Post* when he joined the company in 2019, but was fueled by Atlantic Broadband's acquisition of broad-

band systems in Columbus and Cleveland, Ohio, from **WOW!** last year. Those markets, which are still operating under the WOW! brand name, will transition to Breezeline by this summer. The goal with the new name was to introduce something that was more inclusive of the company's growing footprint and product portfolios. The company said the name change is only one part of an ongoing transformation that will continue into the future with the launch of new products, a revamped customer app and the ongoing deployment of a corporate-wide customer service training program, among other things. It is launching Breezeline Stream TV, a cloud-based video experience that will give customers access to live and recorded programs on compatible devices in and out of the home. The product will launch in select markets early this year with more being added through 2022. Atlantic Broadband has also put a major focus on expanding its fiber footprint with plans to bring its FTTH network to more than 70,000 additional homes and businesses in New Hampshire and West Virginia.

BIG SPORTS MOVES

A major shakeup could be in the cards for sports rights. **Apple** has been in major talks with the MLB about acquiring sports rights deals for next season, according to a *New York Post* report. MLB has reportedly also been a part of conversations with **Barstool Sports** and **Amazon** for the rights, but none of those resulted in an agreement. Amazon has already carved out its place in the sports ecosystem, scoring the exclusive rights to the NFL's "Thursday Night Football." - **Sinclair** has had its fair share of skepticism when it comes to the launch of its sports-focused streaming service. But the broadcaster is reportedly close to signing a deal with the **NBA** that would give it regional digital rights to games and

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The advertisement also features a smaller image of the Cablefax Daily magazine cover, dated Monday, November 2, 2020. The cover includes headlines such as "Deal Talk: RCN/Alto/Grande CEO Discusses \$6.1bn Strategic Deal", "Purposes: New and Improved", "What the Industry Reads First", and "Most Powerful Women".

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\$600 million in financing to support the service's launch. That's according to a *Bloomberg* report. The deal could be announced as soon as this week, according to Bloomberg's sources. Sinclair plans to launch the streamer within the first half of 2022.

RETRANS DEAL WEEKEND

It was a good weekend for completing retransmission consent renewals. **Nexstar/Mission Broadcasting** had started warning **Optimum** subs of a possible disruption of WPIX, but a comprehensive, multi-year deal was reached over the weekend with no interruption to viewers. **Verizon** and **TEGNA** ended their blackout Saturday morning, in plenty of time for DC Fios customers to catch **NFL** action on **CBS** affiliate WUSA Sunday. TEGNA stations in DC; Norfolk, VA; Buffalo, NY; and Harrisburg, PA, went dark on Verizon just after 8pm ET on Jan. 4.

NATPE MIAMI NIXED

NATPE Miami is the latest event to be affected by the Omicron variant with officials announcing its cancellation over the weekend. "Although this decision from a financial point of view will cost the organization a great deal of money, that was secondary to our primary concern, which is to put the welfare of our members first," NATPE President/CEO *JP Bommel* said in a statement. "We put a great deal of safety protocols in place, but it is just not enough given the intensity of this virus which is spreading at an enormous rate all over the world." NATPE is now creating plans to host both virtual and in-person events, when appropriate, throughout the year with either no fees or limited ones as a show of appreciation for the organization's supporters. Time will tell how many other in-person events are impacted by the latest surge. **GSMA** CEO *John Hoffman* published an enthusiastic letter Monday ahead of **Mobile World Congress Barcelona**, scheduled for Feb. 28-March 3. He recounted that the organization hosted three MWC events in 2021, and said that experience combined with advances in healthcare since the start of the pandemic has him confident that attendees can convene safely again in 2022. "We expect over 1,500 exhibitors in February, with attendees registered from 150 countries," he said. "A lot has changed in the past two years but our resolve to reconvene the industry is unwavering, and I encourage every member of this community to support one another."

FCC AVOIDS MINIMUM SERVICE STANDARDS

The **FCC** will not apply minimum service standards to covered services for the Affordable Connectivity Program. That's according to draft rules released Friday by FCC Chair *Jessica Rosenworcel*. "Congress intended that 'any internet service offering' be eligible for support in the Affordable Connectivity Program, and we find that imposing minimum service standards would contradict the Infrastructure Act and is not statutorily supported," the Commission said in the rules. Instead, it will stick with standards implemented with the Emergency Broadband Benefit program—that internet service offerings must include either a fixed or mobile broadband connection that allows households to rely on those connections for the purposes essential to telework, remote learning and telehealth. To meet the deadline set by Congress for the adoption of the ACP rules, the Commission

will need to vote to approve them by January 14.

A VERY QUIET GOLDEN GLOBES

HBO had a good night at the **Golden Globes** Sunday, taking home Best Drama for "Succession" and Best Comedy for "Hacks." But does it matter? **Cablefax's** inbox was empty of the usual award show brag emails following Sunday night's Globes. The Globe wins were announced via Twitter after **NBC** nixed televising the event following a backlash over organizer **Hollywood Foreign Press Association's** diversity and other practices. HFFPA has pledged to make changes, recently adding more diverse voices to its board and securing a five-year partnership with the **NAACP**. HBO's *Succession* also notched Best Actor, Drama Series (*Jeremy Strong*), and Supporting Actress (*Sarah Snook*), while *Hacks'* *Jean Smart* took home Best Actress, Comedy. *Mj Rodriguez* made history as the first trans actress to win a Globe for her role in **FX's** "Pose." Other wins included **Amazon Prime's** "The Underground Railroad" (Best TV Limited Series or Motion Picture Made for TV) and *Jason Sudeikis* nabbed Best Actor for **Apple TV's** "Ted Lasso." *O Yeong-su* was awarded the Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role on TV for **Netflix's** "Squid Game," making him the first Korean actor to win a Globe.

FUBOTV SCORES IN EARLY 4Q21 RESULTS

fuboTV released preliminary 4Q21 results Monday, and revenue and subscriber metrics are expected to beat company guidance. Total rev for the quarter is expected to fall between \$215-220 million, an increase of 105-109% YOY. Advertising revenue alone is expected to fly past \$25 million, up 90% YOY. The number of paid subs are expected to exceed 1.1 million subscribers thanks to a major improvement in churn. fuboTV is estimating that churn has improved by more than 200 basis points YOY.

FCC GRANTS MORE ECF SUPPORT

The **FCC** is committing more than \$361 million in its latest wave of Emergency Connectivity Fund support. The funding will support 802 schools, 49 libraries and 8 consortia, which are approved to receive nearly 654,000 connected devices and more than 313,000 broadband connections. The Commission has committed a total of close to \$4.2 billion since the program was launched on June 29.

DISCOVERY JOINS OPENAP OWNERSHIP TEAM

Discovery has made an investment in advanced advertising company **OpenAP** and will become a minority owner alongside **Fox**, **NBCU** and **ViacomCBS**. As part of the deal, Discovery Chief U.S. Advertising Sales Officer *Jon Steinlauf* and EVP, Digital Ad Sales *Jim Keller* will join OpenAP's board.

PEOPLE

Carolyn McIntyre, President of the **California Cable & Telecommunications Association**, resigned at the end of 2021 when her current contract expired. CCTA's board has initiated a nationwide search for her successor and has tapped executive search firm **Wilcox Miller & Nelson** to assist with the hunt. McIntyre spent nearly 14 years at the association. – **Altice USA** named *Shuvankar Roy* as SVP, Customer Experience. He joins from **Comcast**, where he served as VP, Connectivity Operations. Roy also held executive positions at **Cogeco** and tech solutions provider **Radialpoint**.