

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Go Time: Addressable Ad Guidelines Help Streamline Process

Since its launch in 2021, the industry's "Go Addressable" initiative has sought to fully utilize television as a marketing platform. The effort from major pay TV distributors took a big leap forward Wednesday with the publication of a set of industry guidelines to facilitate addressable advertising's scale, enablement and adoption across different platforms.

"One of the things that we're trying to accomplish with go addressable is harmonizing the implementation and workflow for both addressable TV, but also connected TV," **Larry Allen, Comcast Advertising** VP and GM, Addressable Enablement, told **CFX**. "So that when that advertiser is coming to market, regardless of the device that the consumer is viewing on, they're able to reach those audiences and manage, you know, reach and frequency, and measure accordingly across all of those device types."

That's why it's important that a range of companies, including **Altice USA, Charter, Comcast, Cox, DirectTV Advertising, DISH Media, Frontier** and smart TV maker **Vizio**, are part of Go Addressable. Initially, these companies came in with slightly different thoughts on how far the initiative needed to go, Allen said. Before these guidelines were agreed upon, distributors had their own solution for their respective inventory, leading to fragmentation in the industry. Ultimately, Allen said the Go Addressable consortium saw the value of simplified parameters for addressable advertising.

The guidelines allow advertising inventory owners to work with clients to better identify an audience within a specific footprint. There are two sections of addressable advertising: First is creative versioning, where a company with multiple products can buy a national ad spot and deliver different ads based on the audience segmentation. The second is audience addressable, where advertisers are picked and placed into a spot based on the segments they want to reach. The guidelines—which cover addressable types, creative format and length, cap and edit, data match and attribution vendors and campaign execution timeline—helps Go Addressable companies streamline the process for buyers to bring maximum demand.

If the response from this season's upfronts are good and addressable budgets are committed for the fall schedule, Allen said the fruits of the guidelines could take action in 4Q22. A **Deloitte study** predicts addressable TV advertising will generate about \$7.5 billion globally this year.

In terms of what's next, Go Addressable is planning an event for November and will host two panels at Cannes. The goal of these is to engage with distributors, programmers and agency execs to get a full grasp of what the collective needs to focus on.

"We get a full complement of perspective to basically share with the industry, and a big chunk of what we're really pushing on is industry learnings and education," Allen said. "I think the next thing that you're going to see from us is some additional research that we did as a group to basically highlight some of the areas of focus that are going to be key topics for us over



Nominate for The Diversity List.

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Other nomination categories include D&I Mentor of the Year, Public Affairs Campaign and Thrivers Under 30, the industry's rising stars under 30.

Deadline: Friday, June 3 to submit three entries for free.

www.CablefaxDiversity.com

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the next 12 months.”

The Go Addressable initiative is working to propel the industry forward by shifting from solely focusing on the pain points from the distributor side of things to engaging with programmers and advertisers to see how their needs should be addressed.

“This is about simple simplification and scale, and so these were basically us cueing the market to say, ‘If you want to run in maximum number of devices and environments with an addressable campaign, these are the vendors you should start with,’” Allen said. “Not to say you couldn’t work with another vendor that’s used by a subset ... We don’t want to lead the market necessarily—because there’s antitrust things that we need to be worried about—but as the market comes to us with vendors, then each of us will take our own time to evaluate them and execute.”

Allen noted that despite competition, each distributor came to the table with a similar mindset to accomplish accelerating addressable adoption. Go Addressable’s monthly meetings will help adjust to the ever-changing market, but the guidelines are a continuation of the initiative’s momentum that it’s built since its creation.

NESN LAUNCHES \$30/MONTH DTC APP

While we wait for the **Bally Sports** DTC app to launch, Red Sox RSN **NESN** is out of the gate with the first RSN streaming app that doesn’t require a pay TV subscription. **NESN 360**, launched Wednesday in partnership with the Boston Red Sox, the Boston Bruins and MLB, retails for \$29.99/month or \$329.99/year. It’s kicking off with a promo for the first month for \$1. Pay TV customers who receive NESN through a provider can authenticate to access the NESN 360 app for no charge.

Of course, consumers must be in the Red Sox/Bruins DMA to view the channel. If you try to subscribe outside the New England area, a message will appear warning that you’ll only receive access to the service when in the area (which doesn’t include Fairfield County, Connecticut—the only New England county that doesn’t get NESN). NESN 360 subs can stream the RSN’s live feeds, including Sox and Bruins games, as well as hundreds of hours of VOD content. New features are planned for the coming months, including 4K HDR and cloud DVR. The app also expects to launch on **Amazon Fire** and **Google TV** apps in the near future. “We are creating a full, 360 fan experience, combining a premium digital offering with the excitement of the venues and teams,” said *Ahmed Darwish*, NESN’s Chief Marketing Officer who joined NESN earlier this year from **Starz** to lead the effort.

METRONET, VEXUS FIBER COMBINE

Indiana-based **Metronet** completed its previously announced merger with Lubbock, Texas-based **Vexus Fiber**. Both companies are part of **Oak Hill Capital**’s investment portfolio, with the transaction billed as a way to speed fiber builds. The combined companies will continue to operate their current brands with their existing leadership teams. The terms of the merger weren’t disclosed. Together, the companies serve 15 states and more than 150 communities.

CHANGES AFOOT AT WARNER BROS. STUDIOS

Toby Emmerich is exiting as Chairman of **Warner Bros. Pictures Group** to launch his own production company at the studio, focused on film, television and streaming. As part of an exclusive 5-year agreement, WBD will finance Emmerich’s





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venture and have distribution rights to films and series. The 30-year Warner Bros. vet has led Warner Bros. Pictures since 2017. Former **MGM** film executives *Michael De Luca* and *Pam Abdy* have been appointed co-chairpersons and CEOs of Warner Bros. Pictures Group, which currently includes Warner Bros. Pictures, **New Line Cinema**, DC-Based Film Production, and **Warner Bros. Feature Animation**. As part of a new long-range strategy, Warner Bros. Pictures Group will be broken out into three distinct business segments with Warner Bros. Pictures/New Line Cinema, Warner Bros. Feature Animation, and DC-Based Film Production each under separate leadership. In the interim, these segments will remain under the film group with day-to-day oversight by De Luca and Abdy. The two will join WBD this summer after a period of transition following **Amazon's** \$8.5 deal to acquire MGM.

FIBER FRENZY

TDS Telecom is bringing its high-speed fiber internet network to New Berlin, Wisconsin. It will reach about 17,000 addresses and include up to 2-Gig home internet and up to 10-gig fiber connections for businesses. Residents will also have access to TDS' TV and phone offerings. Construction is set to begin in late summer or early fall. – **Great Plains Communications** (GPC) completed the build of a high-capacity 400 Gbps-capable route between Omaha, Nebraska, and Kansas City, Kansas. The route uses Ciena 6500 optical dense wavelength-division multiplexing with flex grid technology, allowing it to provide multi-Gbps service to large enterprise, hyperscalers and FTTT customers.

WIT AWARD CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The **WICT Network**, **SCTE**, a subsidiary of **CableLabs**, and **Cablefax** jointly announced the call for nominations for the Women in Technology Award. Launched in 1995, the annual honor recognizes the achievements of one outstanding woman who has contributed to the advancement of technology in the cable and media industry and demonstrates significant professional success. Nominations are due July 8. Last year's winner was **Cox Communications** SVP, Integration Management Office *Patricia Martin*. Other recipients include *Kim Keever*, *Zenita Henderson*, *Noopur Davis* and *Deborah Picciolo*. This year's award will be presented during SCTE Cable-Tec Expo in Philly, Sept 19-22. Nominations can be submitted [here](#).

RATINGS

Game 7 of the Boston Celtics and Miami Heat averaged 9.88 million viewers, making it the most-watched conference finals game on **ESPN** in four years. The telecast peaked at 12.17 million viewers at 11pm, capping what was the most-watched Eastern Conference Finals since 2018. The Game 7 matchup was the most-watched program of the day across all of television. – Season 9 of **Hallmark Channel's** "When Calls the Heart" holds the top spot among original scripted series on entertainment cable while on air year-to-date. It averaged 2.9 million total viewers L+3, 291,000 W25-54 and had more than 8.6 million unduplicated total viewers.

PROGRAMMING

HBO renewed comedy series "Our Flag Means Death" for a second season. The series debuted in March, ranking among

The WHO and the WHY

CFX's spotlight on recent new hires & promotions



MATTHEW Lipson
EVP OF MARKETING FOR DIGITAL PLATFORMS AND CONTENT
ALLEN MEDIA GROUP

3 THINGS TO KNOW

- Matthew was selected for the new position of EVP of Marketing for Digital Platforms and Content for Allen Media Group in May. He'll oversee marketing strategies, creative development, social media, paid media and optimization for AMG digital TV networks, films, content and digital streaming platforms. He's working from the AMG HQ in Los Angeles.
- He's had a history of working in marketing for various forms of content. He was EVP, Marketing and Digital at 101 Sports and Sports Illustrated Studios, where he led marketing and digital strategy for all film, TV and podcast releases. Prior to that, he made stops at Open Road Films, NBCU's specialty-film division Focus and Big Spaceship, giving him experience in the two largest cities in the U.S.
- While overseeing award-winning marketing campaigns for various brands, AMG CEO Byron Allen noted how Matthew will help the network maximize its global partnership with Google. Google Cloud is providing its scalable cloud infrastructure to power AMG's digital content. He has a degree in Political Science and History from Colgate University.

the top five Max Original comedy series launches. – **Ovation TV** has produced "Cheech Marin's Chicano Art Tour," a 30-minute documentary about Cheech Marin's immense art collection. It'll debut on the net June 15 at 11pm and will also be available to stream for free in the Art House programming destination on the **Ovation NOW** app. Ovation is also airing a PSA promoting The Cheech Center for Chicano Art & Culture of the Riverside Art Museum ahead of its June 18 launch.

PEOPLE

FuboTV is sliding *Ben Grad* into the newly created role of SVP, Head of Strategic Partnerships and Operations. He'll be responsible for developing and leading external partnerships and internal cross-functional initiatives. *Todd Mathers* was chosen to fill Grad's former role of SVP, Content Strategy and Acquisition. Lastly, *Andrew Steinberg* was picked as VP, Business Development, where he'll grow and manage the distribution of FuboTV's networks and seek business opportunities with current platform partners. – **Viamedia** promoted *Jim Loughran* to SVP of Convergent Video Partnerships. He'll oversee the company's cloud-based ad solution that brings digital and linear TV together. Loughran, who joined Viamedia in 2020 as SVP of Digital, will report to CEO *David Solomon*. – **Allen Media Group** elevated *Michael Senzon* to President of Digital from SVP, Digital and GM of **Local Now**. In this expanded role, he is responsible for developing the AMG worldwide direct-to-consumer and streaming portfolio.

Think about that for a minute...

The Cable Guy

Commentary by Steve Effros

It used to be a lot easier to define our industry. We were “CATV,” the community antenna television provider. Simple. Clean. Folks weren’t able to get this new fangled thing, television, very easily at their homes. The people with the most difficulties were those far away from the “big city” where the television station had just fired up. The signal just didn’t reach.

It just didn’t work to put a taller and taller pole on the side of the house to get an antenna high enough to solve the problem. So clever entrepreneurs, usually those with the ulterior motive of selling television sets in the local community, set up a big antenna on the top of the highest hill, ran a wire down to town and started hooking people up. Thus, the “community antenna.”

The association I headed for many years started out calling itself the “Community Antenna Television Association” or “CATA.” The bigger companies, wanting to wire the cities, called their association the “National Cable Television Association,” or “NCTA.” It was originally, in 1951, the “National Community Television Council.” All those names had to change. I recognized in the 1980s that we were no longer just a “community antenna,” that the infrastructure we were building was going to be used for a whole lot of things. Thus we changed our name to the “Cable Telecommunications Association.” Still “CATA”. There was going to be a lot of change in the coming years, but the key was our infrastructure of cable.

The NCTA followed suit years later renaming itself the “National Cable & Telecommunications Association,” keeping “NCTA”. They then changed again, this time to the “Internet and Television Association” but they kept the acronym because everyone in DC knows “NCTA” is the “cable guys.”

CATA merged with NCTA when a majority of our independent systems consolidated with the “big” multiple system operators. A new “small” association formed, first called the “Small Cable Business Association” and then the “American Cable Association.” It’s now called “America’s Communications Association” ACA.

The point behind all this history is to show how difficult it has been to adequately define what we are and what we do. Of course,

while all this was going on a whole slew of other associations developed representing the telcos, the wireless folks, the “internet” crowd and the like.

Now what? Some of the largest “cable” companies say that their most popular package being bought is of “broadband” service and cellular telephone service! “Cable” subscriptions are declining but the systems are even more successful today because the television “cable” program packages are now “streaming” and being sold directly to customers, provided by the same video creators, but this time the subscriber pays to get their own delivery with a broadband subscription.

The analysts are noting that the “cell phone” service now being offered by “cable” operators such as Comcast and Charter are proving to be substantial competition to the traditional wireless companies, and those companies are now trying to get into the video delivery business with 5G and so-called “fixed wireless” service. Of course, there’s also satellite provision of video as well.

But, but...the “cable guys” are providing cellular service, and their infrastructure is being used as the “backhaul” for “fixed wireless” service! So what does all this mean? Should we change our name again? Does it matter?

I don’t think so. We will always be “the cable guys” for better or worse, even though we now are the primary providers of highly reliable broadband “streaming” services. We deliver data. We could try to pivot to that word, since it includes video, computer, phone and everything else, or we could just stick with the reality that our infrastructure is the key to it all. I’m fine being a “cable guy.”



Steve

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(Steve Effros was President of CATA for 23 years and is now an advisor and consultant to the cable industry. His views do not necessarily reflect the views of Cablefax.)



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