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WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Sign of the Times: Data, Social Pressures Changing HR Practices

HR professionals have more tools to address employee and talent challenges than ever before, but that doesn't mean their jobs have become easier. They're able to collect mountains of data and trend reports on everything from benefits to employee satisfaction, but it all means nothing if they can't put that data into action.

"We're given all kinds of lengthy reports and dashboards, but we're still not at the point yet where we're able to quickly deliver the insight," **Hearst** VP Talent & Strategic Development *Rachel Kay* said during a panel at **C2HR Con** Thursday. "We've been tracking overall attrition, but where the insights have really come from are when you actually dive deep... I think if we can get sophisticated about how we move from data to insights quickly and can do that better, it will make not only our lives easier, but I think it'll make us more effective counselors to our colleagues."

Panel members right now are tracking the Great Resignation, which they all agreed is real and hasn't been blown out of proportion. "You just saw some things happening in the marketplace that you never saw before, but at some point, things are just cyclical in economies. I don't know how much of that is sustainable because of how things tend to shift and move," **Cox Communications** SVP, HR *Kia Painter* said. "Our team has felt every bit of that as they've worked the last year, but I don't know that we will carry that fully into the future."

As companies are searching for new talent and looking to retain what they have, they're also trying to satisfy the desires of employees who want flexibility in their schedules and expectations of when they'll come to a physical office. **A+E Networks** SVP, People Partner Team *Ravena Valentine* said the programmer has entirely embraced flexible working and hasn't mandated that anyone aside from essential staff return to the office in any capacity. "I think what we're finding is it has been a little bit of a competitive differentiator for us. Where we might lack on some things, we win on that," she said.

But beyond the logistical challenges of determining who should come into the office and how often, HR professionals are starting to have to problem solve for how to ensure that employees who work virtually can get the same amount of recognition with upper management as those who do decide to come to a physical space.

"If you're the person who opts to be remote all the time, how do we ensure that you're not at a disadvantage because of that flexibility choice that doesn't afford you the same kind of exposure," *Painter* said. "It's really tough to solve for, but I think a lot of organizations are going to be facing ... particularly as it relates to career equity and advancement as people make these different choices about when and how they work." **Paramount Global** SVP, People Development *Nicole Helprin* added that remote employees should be coached to show their wins more than their in-person counterparts.

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"When you are in a remote situation, it goes a huge way to be able to show this is what I've been working on and where I'm making progress, and it feels good to," she said.

Another challenge Valentine voiced is that now more than ever, her company's employees want to see it and others in the media landscape voice their opinions on major political or social issues. "In the wake of things as controversial as Roe v. Wade, our employees are like 'I want you to take a stance on this as well.' I want to support you in having your voice, but we still have work to do," she said. "It's an interesting, blended line, but I feel like we have a growing responsibility more than we ever had to sort of be in that space with our employees."

Comcast VP, EffectTV Tech Platform Sissy Rajan Abraham believes there will always be a conflict that comes with companies taking stands on issues as you're dealing with an employee population that may have differing points of views. But this has also created an opportunity for companies to have active discussions with their employees about hot topics. "Some of the sessions that we had in the wake of the social awakening ... I benefited as a person just as much as a leader sitting in those sessions, hearing people's stories," she said. "I think there's a tremendous opportunity within that for all of us to help do some healing and maybe leave in a new way."

GROUP URGES VERIZON TO REINSTATE OAN

An organization of African-American conservatives called **Project 21** is asking **Verizon** to reinstate **One America News** to its Fios lineup. In a letter signed by 37 members, the group claimed Verizon submitted to political pressure when it stopped carrying OAN. "Allowing a political pressure campaign to decide which news and information programs Americans have access to undermines free speech and sets a precedent that will only encourage further demands," the letter to Verizon CEO **Hans Vestberg** states. Verizon stopped carrying OAN on July 31 after it [couldn't agree to contract terms](#) with **Herring Networks**, but it recently signed a [multi-year deal](#) with **Newsmax**. While its distribution in the U.S. is taking a hit, OAN is looking to expand across the Atlantic. It partnered with streaming platform **Tivify** to bring the network to Spain. The network now reaches more than 30 countries through its primary and FAST channel feeds.

CHICKEN SOUP FOR REDBOX

Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment completed its acquisition of **Redbox** on Thursday. The combined company will have a portfolio that includes an AVOD streaming service, more than 145 FAST channels, an

on-demand service and a network of more than 36,000 kiosks. It expects revenue to more than triple through this acquisition to over \$500 million annually. As part of the deal's completion, former Redbox CEO **Galen Smith** has been named Executive Vice Chairman of both Redbox and Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment. **Jonathan Katz** is also joining the company as President of Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment. Katz, who previously held senior roles at **Scripps Networks, Katz Network** and **Turner Broadcasting**, will oversee the operating businesses. He and Smith will report to Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment Chairman/CEO **William Rouhana**.

NAD ASKS VERIZON FOR 5G MODIFICATIONS

The **National Advertising Division** recommended that **Verizon** discontinue the "most reliable" claim it has been using when referring to the 5G Ultra Wideband network. The claim was made based on a **RootMetrics** report that analyzed the entire Verizon network, but NAD concluded that consumers could reasonably understand the messaging to apply to the 5G Ultra Wideband network alone. That was not substantiated by the RootMetrics report. NAD did find that Verizon offered reasonable basis for its claims that 5G Ultra Wideband is available in over 50% of U.S. cities, but some consumers may believe it to be more widely available than

Cablefax Executive Round Up

Why are TCA press tours still valuable even in the digital age?



Reemah Sakaan

CEO
BritBox

"TCA is much more than the network and streamer showcase it seems to be on the surface. It's at TCA that industry insiders and journalists can see what macro trends are emerging in the entertainment landscape and where things are likely to evolve next- it both reflects and sets the agenda. When we do return to 'in-person,' the fortuitous hallway meetups, and opportunity to dialogue face-to-face with individuals, you have only connected with virtually, will also be priceless."



Amy Winter

EVP, Head of Programming
Lifetime

"The Covid pandemic may have altered the format of the TCA Press Tour, but the semiannual event is still a valuable forum for networks and streamers to highlight their top tier programming. While digital press events do occur outside of TCA, the sheer size and scope of TCA keeps it relevant because it ensures a large number of valued critics and reporters who are interested in your projects, and the talent and creatives behind them."

it is based on a reference of availability in "1700+ cities." Therefore, NAD recommended Verizon modify its advertising to more clearly define the term "cities" for consumers. The claims at issue were challenged by AT&T. Verizon said that while it does not agree with the determination, it will comply and appreciates that this decision does not prevent it from making the claim in the future should it be able to provide new test results.

TUBI GROWS IN LATIN AMERICA

Tubi is launching in Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala and Panama this month. The streamer's library will be localized in Spanish and comes with movies such as "The Green Hornet," "American Psycho" and "The Social Network." The five countries join Mexico as part of Tubi's Latin footprint, where total viewing time has grown 60% and total viewers 40% YOY.

XUMO, MAGNOLIA PICTURES INK DEAL

Xumo signed a two-year distribution agreement with Magnolia Pictures, bringing its content to the FAST market for the first time. A new title will launch almost every month and be available during a three-month window. New movies on the platform include "Dogman," "Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am" and "Once Were Brothers: Robbie Robertson and The Band."

WEATHER CHANNEL PARTNERS WITH AMOBBEE

The Weather Channel is teaming up with ad-tech company Amobee to create data-driven plans for optimized linear TV ad campaigns through OpenAP. The Weather Channel is licensing Amobee's platform Amobee's solution to give advertisers the data needed to more effectively target The Weather Channel's audience segments and improve ad effectiveness.

CARRIAGE

The 24-hour sports wagering streaming network SportsGrid is now available on FuboTV. SportsGrid broadcasts 18 hours of original programming featuring betting experts who analyze real-time statistics and discuss odds on various games across professional leagues. - Hallmark Media's Hallmark Movies Now launched on LG Smart TVs. The SVOD is available for \$5.99/month or \$59.99/year and can be found in the LG Content Store.

AT THE COMMISSION

The FCC is committing nearly \$68 million in two more funding rounds through the Emergency Connectivity Program. These will support applications from all three windows and benefit

more than 100,000 students from California, Florida, North Carolina, Nebraska, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Awardees include over 200 schools, 10 libraries and two consortiums. To date, the Commission has committed more than \$5.7 billion as part of the ECF.

PROGRAMMING

National Geographic's five-part series "America's National Parks" will premiere Aug. 29 at 9pm, with each episode being released in the subsequent nights. The docuseries—which features the Grand Canyon, Yosemite, Big Bend, Badlands and Hawai'i Volcanoes National Parks—will also be available to stream Aug. 31 on Disney+. - Season 2 of "NYC Revealed" will premiere Sunday at 9pm on Cheddar News. - HBO original "Escape from Kabul" will debut Sept. 21 at 9pm on HBO and be available to stream on HBO Max. The documentary chronicles the U.S.' withdrawal from Afghanistan and the evacuation of many from the capital city. - Shudder unveiled the slate of content for its Halloween Celebration from Sept. 1-Oct. 31. The new film "Who Invited Them" will kick the event off followed by "Saloom" on Sept. 8 and "Flux Gourmet" and "Speak No Evil" on Sept. 15. Other movies include "Raven's Hollow" on Sept. 22, "She Will" on Oct. 13 and "V/H/S/99" on Oct. 20. New original series "101 Scariest Horror Movie Moments of All Time" and "Queer for Fear: A History of Queer Horror" debut Sept. 7 and 30, respectively, with episodes releasing weekly for both. Shudder is also adding "31," "The Devil's Rejects" and others to its movie library. - New home renovation series "Renovation Impossible" will premiere Sept. 8 at 9pm on HGTV.

PEOPLE

Metronet named Bill Gilliam VP/GM of its Florida market. The former Director of Operations/GM of Shentel will manage Metronet's current and future markets in the Sunshine State, as well as field operations, community development, residential and commercial special project technicians and government affairs. - Allen Media Group promoted Christopher Malone from EVP/Head of Corporate Development to CFO. He steps in for Bill Higgs, who held the role on an interim basis and will now serve as CFO of AMG's Weather Group. In his new role, Malone will oversee AMG senior management in M&A efforts and other strategic initiatives.

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PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

Menendez Brothers Take TikTok by Storm


In the modern world where social media spreads word faster than ever, raising awareness of topics has become easier. One that saw revitalized interest was the case of the Menendez brothers, who in 1989 murdered their parents. In “Menendez Brothers: Misjudged?” which premiered Sunday on **ID** and **discovery+**, Erik and Lyle Menendez lived what was thought to be a comfortable life in Beverly Hills. Months after their parents’ murder, the two were arrested, eventually claiming a lifetime of sexual and emotional abuse drove them to that point. The brothers were sentenced to life in prison without parole, but over three decades later, the case has been revisited by many on social media. “What was central to us when we began working on this documentary was the fact that a new generation had a completely different perception of what was thought to be a pretty black and white case to many,” ID Group SVP Production & Development *Winona Meringolo* told **CFX**. “Gen Z influencers took to TikTok to not only talk about a case that happened before they were born, but advocate for Erik and Lyle Menendez who for decades had been thought of as just murderers, nothing more.” The documentary focuses on the nuance of the case, highlighting how different generations view certain situations—especially one as charged as the Menendez brothers. But the new sets of perspectives are what prompt legal experts to ask if the case was looked at with a fair and complete view. “This case is so much more than just two wealthy boys who murdered their parents. It speaks to a larger conversation, or lack thereof, around sexual abuse at the time,” Meringolo said. “When the Menendez Brothers’ trial was unfolding in the 1990s, conversations around the sexual abuse of boys and men were not only non-existent, in many ways it was discouraged.” While the case could be reopened and a path made for Erik and Lyle to be released, they currently remain serving their life sentences. That won’t stop dedicated followers from voicing their support and fighting what they believe to be an injustice. – *Noah Ziegler*


REVIEWS

“Pretty Little Liars: Original Sin,” streaming, **HBO Max**. It’s not necessary to know the backstory of “Pretty Little Liars,” which began life in 2007, on the old **ABC Family** channel. Adapted from Sara Shepard’s novels, this spinoff works well, especially if you’re in a mood for the redoubtable mix of blood, teens and a slasher or two. And since we’re in the digital age, our axe-wielding fiend puts aside his tool long enough to text his victims. Of course, making things interesting, our slasher appears in the flesh briefly, too. If teen horror films of the 80s and 90s float your boat, Original Sin is worth watching. And while the characters are only slightly more than the somewhat wooden teen stereotypes we’ve seen often, props to several cast members, including *Bailee Madison, Zaria* and *Maia Reficco*. – “The Sandman,” streaming, **Netflix**. Sometimes getting a story on screen is a triumph. That’s so with The Sandman, the dreamy, dark comic book creation of *Neal Gaiman*. For this story to have any chance to work with comic book fans, the sets, effects, costumes and make-up have to be to par. Check. For those unfamiliar, explaining the plot is pointless. Instead, relax and enjoy the story of Morpheus, as he oversees our dreams. *Tom Sturridge* inhabits the lead role beautifully, creating a nuanced character. – *Seth Arenstein*

BASIC CABLE P2+ PRIME RANKINGS* (08/01/22-08/07/22)		
MON-SUN	MC US AA%	MC US AA (000)
FNC	0.667	2078
MSNBC	0.314	978
HGTV	0.298	927
INSP	0.259	807
TLC	0.250	780
HALL	0.245	765
TBSC	0.211	658
CNN	0.210	655
FOOD	0.209	652
DISC	0.204	635
ESPN	0.198	616
HIST	0.186	580
USA	0.184	572
TVLAND	0.169	527
ID	0.164	512
LIFE	0.143	445
HMM	0.137	426
REELZ	0.137	425
A&E	0.136	422
WETV	0.135	422
BRAVO	0.133	415
TNT	0.123	384
BET	0.122	381
GSN	0.120	373
SYFY	0.118	368
FX	0.118	368
AMC	0.116	360
TRAVEL	0.103	319
OXY	0.098	304
NATGEO	0.087	271
FETV	0.086	267
APL	0.083	259
COM	0.083	259
PRMNT	0.083	258
NAN	0.081	254

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





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