

# Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

## Limit Break: Linear Still Best Destination for Midterm Ad Buys

There's a lot of talk about the advertising industry moving away from the linear business and going toward connected TV platforms and the like, but the inventory isn't quite there yet to support pivotal moments like the 2022 midterm elections.

This year's midterms saw OTT and CTV platforms make a major mark on advertising strategies, which raised questions on how to be efficient when viewers are watching on different services and screens. However, **Effectv** VP, Political Advertising **Dan Sinagoga** told **CFX** that those platforms simply didn't have enough inventory to match what campaigns wanted to accomplish with the budgets they set.

"They found once we got inside the general election window, where the majority of money is spent, that those OTT and CTV resources just didn't have enough inventory across all of the players to tackle 30 to 40% of close to \$9 billion [total] that gets spent during the general election window," Sinagoga said. "We saw a lot of that money that couldn't clear in OTT, CTV resources come back to traditional linear and digital platforms."

As more eyeballs move to OTT platforms, so are advertisers. It was in 2012 when the Obama administration's "Optimizer" software began analyzing viewing habits and personal information to help reach undecided voters, sparking a trend for campaigns to dive deep into data from multiple sources and hone in on targeting at the household level. Putting that insight into action, however, is difficult when the platform doesn't have the capacity to meet what campaigns yearn for when looking at effectiveness.

Inflation, supply chain disruptions and a potential looming recession continue to cast worry for those deciding how to best utilize campaign funds. Despite those factors, the cash continued to flow in 2022. Campaigns were on pace to eclipse previous totals, [spending](#) \$6.4 billion in TV, radio and digital ads for the House, Senate, gubernatorial and local elections as

of late September. That's part of the more than \$16.7 billion total spent [this election window](#), breaking the previous \$13.7 billion record set in 2018.

"What will come out of this year that will carry forward is the demand and penchant for OTT and CTV. That will continue to be strong, just like addressable was coming in the [2018] and 2020 cycles," Sinagoga said.

The biggest spending race of this year's midterms was Georgia's Senate [election](#), which saw over \$376 million spent—\$65 million more than the second-highest spending race. As of Tuesday, the runoff between Republican challenger *Herschel Walker* and Democratic incumbent *Raphael Warnock* spent more than \$84.5 million. The 2020 Senate runoff had \$262 million in ad spending, with the general election accumulating \$412 million.

Early [data](#) estimates 27% of those aged 18-29 cast a ballot in 2022, which is the second-highest turnout of that group in nearly 30 years. With campaigns targeting that demographic on social platforms like Facebook and Twitter, it draws questions when one (or both) are under controversy. Both have received heavy scrutiny for the spread of misinformation around elections, and **Twitter** is seeing an exodus of advertisers following the acquisition by *Elon Musk*. However, **Canoe Ventures** SVP, Global Sales & Marketing *Chris Pizzurro* said those dollars are simply shifted elsewhere.

"Not often do budgets go down dramatically because of underperformance in any one place or platform. The money's allocated, people need to do that spending. If money pulls out of Twitter, it's just going to find another place to go," Pizzurro said.

Pizzurro lumps Gen Z with social media and streaming services since the majority of the initial cord-cutters fall in that demographic. Because of that, campaigns know where to find that group of voters, meaning they have to get creative in how much they invest in advertising on social media or services like **Hulu** or **Paramount+**.

"On the streaming side is where we've seen both so much growth and so much ad dollars now being allocated there,



Congratulations to **Cablefax's 2022 Most Powerful Women**.  
And to our very own, **Amy Leifer**.  
Thank you for your inspiring leadership!

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whether that's coming from TV dollars or coming from Twitter dollars, whatever that may be," Pizzurro said. "There's absolutely viewing and dollars that are flowing to streaming."

The rise in streaming has implications for campaign budgets for 2024, which is anticipated to see ad spend reach or surpass record numbers. The Senate and House are going to be contentious in 2024 on top of a Presidential election, and that means lots of spending from campaigns on advertisements.

"With the Senate being in a virtual tie, as well as the House not being the red wave that everybody expected, there will be many seats in play that could decide to power in the country for 2024," Sinagoga said. "There's not a huge win-back needed on either side. That's going to lead to a lot of competitive seats, and that usually leads to a lot of competitive spending."

**WICKER WANTS BIG TECH HEARING THIS YEAR**

Sen. *Roger Wicker* (R-MS) is asking **Senate Commerce** Chair *Maria Cantwell* (D-WA) to hold a hearing on the state of free speech on social media before the end of this Congress. In a letter, he said the release of internal communications from **Twitter's** content moderation team signaled a need for the hearing. Those documents indicated that Twitter was working with the Biden campaign to take down posts. "After the release of the [Twitter Files](#), we now know Twitter was removing content at the request of the Biden campaign and that the process for deciding to censor the New York Post story was haphazard at best," Wicker said in the letter. "It is no secret that some members of the Committee are unwilling to take any action to combat censorship online, but I urge you to consider whether it is truly in the national interest for tech giants to skirt public accountability for the impacts their own decisions have had on our political process." Wicker will not be on Senate Commerce in the next Congress, instead moving over to serve as the chair of Senate Armed Services.

**DISNEY+ INTRODUCES AVOD TIER IN U.S.**

**Disney+** launched its ad-supported tier Thursday in the U.S. with more than 100 advertisers across all major categories participat-

ing in the debut. For the price of \$7.99/month, Disney+ Basic subs will have access to the streamer's full content catalog and be allowed to stream on up to four supported devices simultaneously. All high-quality video formats including 4K Ultra HD, Dolby Vision and Expanded Aspect Ratio with IMAX Enhanced will also be supported. However, they won't have access to Dolby Atmos settings nor features like Downloads, GroupWatch and SharePlay.

**CABLEFAX RECOGNIZES MOST POWERFUL WOMEN**

It's the most wonderful and powerful time of the year, and many in the cable industry descended to New York City to honor this year's **Cablefax: The Magazine's** Most Powerful Women. The crowded Edison Ballroom showed that in-person events are back with a bang. As attendees filled out a questionnaire—which included questions like "Taylor Swift or Lizzo" and "Which Most Powerful Woman should start a podcast"—**Cable One** CEO *Julie Laulis* and **The WICT Network** CEO *Maria Brennan* were honored as this year's Women's Advancement champions. While Laulis couldn't attend due to a board meeting, Brennan took the stage to laud fellow honorees on their commitment to breaking the glass ceiling. "We take tragedy and turn it into opportunity. We flex our ability to innovate solutions and stay connected. We use our platforms to educate and inform no matter how far the chips are down," Brennan said. "I know we talked about the greatest generation, but guess what: The next generation kicks ass too." Brennan has helped The WICT Network bring representation of women in the industry up 5% since 2019 as she's dedicated over 25 years to bridging the gender equality gap. The 2022 Mentor of the Year was **CNN Worldwide** SVP of News Standards & Practices *Veronica Molina*, who echoed Brennan's excitement for the next generation of women in cable. "Mentorship is a two-way street," she said on stage. "I have learned as much from someone who is 20 years younger and less experienced than I am because they come with a fresh perspective and new ideas. It's all about having an open mind and an open heart." Speaking of that next generation, six women were honored as the up-and-coming leaders who will make impacts for many years to come. The event wrapped up with the traditional group photo as well as the results of the afternoon's



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anticipated questionnaire (Lizzo took home the crown). You can read the full issue and Q&As [here](#).

### CARRIAGE

**DirectTV Stream** customers can now add a **Peacock** Premium subscription directly to their bill for a discounted price of \$2.99/month down from the retail value of \$4.99/month. When customers opt-in, the subscription will be integrated directly into their **DirectTV** monthly bills. The benefit will be extended to additional select DirectTV customers in the coming weeks. – The **Bally Sports** app is now available on **Samsung's** suite of smart TVs. The app includes the company's TV Everywhere content and **Bally Sports+** DTC services. App users will have the option to authenticate the service using their pay TV provider credentials. – **Cinedigm** launched two linear channels on **Amazon Freevee** Thursday—LatinX-focused **El Rey Network** and sports-centric **RealMadrid TV**.

### PARAMOUNT+ EXTENDS GLOBAL REACH

**Paramount+** launched Thursday in Germany, Switzerland and Austria, bringing the streamer's reach to 45 global markets. These launches follow the Dec. 1 debut of the service in France.

### AT THE COMMISSION

The **FCC's** Enforcement Bureau has ordered telecom companies to stop carrying robocall traffic from a provider believed to be behind known student loan scams. Voice service providers must stop accepting robocall traffic from **Urth Access, LLC**, which is believed to be, along with associated entities, behind upwards of 40% of student loan debt robocalls made in December.

### PROGRAMMING

**Apple TV+** is bringing back "Carpool Karaoke: The Series" on Dec. 9. This season's featured stars include *Kevin Bacon*, *Ciara*, *Sandra Oh* and *Russell Wilson*. – **HGTV's** "White House Christmas 2022" will showcase the decor of the historic house during the holiday season on the linear network on Dec. 11 at 6pm. It will stream the same day on **discovery+**. – "Glee" took over the country after its 2009 debut, but **ID** is unpacking the cast members' lives on and off the set in its new series. "The Price of Glee" premieres Jan. 16 at 9pm on the linear network and will stream on discovery+ on the same day.

### PEOPLE

**ACA Connects** upped *Brian Hurley* to Chief Regulatory Counsel, giving him responsibility for directing and supervising the association's regulatory efforts in Washington, D.C. Hurley joined ACA Connects in 2018 as VP, Regulatory Affairs after more than 11 years at the **FCC**. His final position at the agency was Special Counsel in the Wireline Competition Bureau's Competition Policy Division. – **Fox Entertainment** promoted *Allison Wallach* to President, Unscripted Programming. She fills the spot vacated by *Rob Wade*, who was appointed CEO in October after *Charlie Collier's* exit. Wallach most recently served as EVP and Head of FOX Entertainment's unscripted studio FOX Alternative Entertainment. – Long-time **C-SPAN** VP of Programming *Terry Murphy* is set to retire on Jan. 6. Hired as a field tech in 1981, he served

as head of programming for several decades. *Richard Weinstein*, currently VP, Digital Media, will serve as the new head of programming and VP, Content. As a result of Murphy's retirement, Chief Digital Officer *Michael Piccorossi's* title will shift to VP and Chief Digital Officer with oversight of C-SPAN.org, the Video Library and C-SPAN Now. Managing Editor *Ben O'Connell* is being promoted to Director of Editorial Operations and Coordinating Producer *Paul Brown* is being upped to Executive Producer, C-SPAN Television Networks. Host and Managing Producer *Greta Brawner* is being promoted to Executive Producer, Public Affairs Programming, while *Paul Orgel* is named Senior Producer, Special History Series. Those changes take effect Jan. 9.

## Cablefax Executive Round Up

We asked our **Most Powerful Women** about a takeaway from a time when they were the only woman in the room.



### Channing Dungey

Chairman

#### Warner Bros. Television Group

"I realized I was there for a reason. I was hired for my opinion—and if I didn't share it, I wasn't making a meaningful contribution to the team. If I didn't make my voice heard, everyone in that room, no matter how noble their intentions, would leave with a limited perspective. An opportunity to educate and expand some minds will have been missed. No matter how scary it was to speak up, that's what I was there to do."



### Kathleen Finch

Chairman & Chief Content Officer,  
U.S. Networks Group

#### Warner Bros. Discovery

"I spent many years in network news at a time when female field producers were not the norm. And I was a new mom, which definitely set me apart. A number of news directors said they often didn't consider sending me on big assignments because 'they assumed I wouldn't want to be away from my kids'—something my male counterparts never heard. That's much of why I left news."



### Loren Hudson

SVP & Chief Diversity Officer

#### Comcast Cable

"For years I was the only woman in the room as the business partner to technical operations. I realized some of my male colleagues would repeat something I said as their own. It was like they didn't see me, and more importantly, didn't hear me. It was important for me to call that out. After I did, it truly reshaped our relationship and their actions of listening and acknowledging my ideas."



### Yvette Kanouff

Partner & Chief Technical Officer

#### JC2 Ventures

"Well, my favorite story will always be my baby shower. I worked only with men, and they didn't want me to be left out of the experience I would've had if women had been in our work environment. So, they threw me what was possibly the world's best baby shower. Pizza and beer – I couldn't drink the beer – but they happily could and did – and the gift creativity... every single gift was a pack of diapers. We had so much fun, and I have a life memory. To me, this is a wonderful example of inclusion and allyship."



# PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

## It Doesn't Add Up in 'Tetris Murders'


In the 1980s, Alexey Pajitnov developed the global hit video game Tetris. His good friend, Vladimir Pokhilko, originally used the game to conduct psychological experiments before realizing the game could be turned into something big. Pokhilko was vital in the marketing and subsequent development of Tetris, and the pieces seemed to fall perfectly for his life. That all changed in 1998 in what was originally ruled a murder-suicide involving him and his family. In "Tetris Murders," a three-part docuseries which premiered Monday on **ID** and is available to stream on **discovery+**, new information is uncovered in the case that saw the deaths of Pokhilko, his wife and their son. A suicide note from Pokhilko was left at the scene, but other pieces of evidence weren't fitting together. "There were others [involved in the investigation] that we were like, 'Wait a minute, this doesn't add up,'" Sandra Brown, former Palo Alto CSI Tech Investigator, told **CFX**. "The blood spatter is in the wrong location. For a person who committed suicide—and all the suicides that we've been involved in—nobody's laid down on the ground and cut their throat, it's impossible." Brown was surprised at how involved the FBI was, which gave her an inkling that there was more to an already loaded investigation. When filming, she was handed documents that revealed a subpoena from the FBI in regard to Russian racketeering. "That led me right then to say, 'The FBI is in here for a reason, and it's not because they want to help us with translation,'" Brown said. "I felt like they already had an ongoing investigation because they showed up with this subpoena, maybe they knew something was going on in the background." The docuseries gave those who were closest to the case a chance to look back 24 years ago, knowing there might've been more to the story. — Noah Ziegler

### REVIEW

"In a Different Key," premiere, 9pm, Tuesday, **PBS**. In many ways, this is a beautiful film about a not-so-beautiful topic, autism and neurodiversity. Filmmakers Caren Zucker and John Donvan, the former **ABC News** reporter, wrote a book of the same name. Their autism connection is personal. Zucker was Donvan's producer and she has a 20-something son with autism. Zucker and Donvan collaborated on stories about autism. As such, some viewers will argue Zucker and Donvan have abandoned their roles as unbiased journalists for this project. Perhaps. On the other hand, the film is top-rate storytelling. Zucker and Donvan weave the experience of Zucker's son with the story of Donald Triplett, the first autism patient. A bit of background: Triplett, 89, was the first person diagnosed with autism. As a child, Donald displayed tremendous talents, but also misbehaved. Raised in a rural MS town, Triplett graduated from college and worked in his family's bank. In short, Donald led and leads a routine life. Naturally, Zucker wonders if her son's story will mimic Donald's. This is the film offers something incredible. Via body cam, we see an adult with autism arrested mistakenly, yet brutally. Indeed, this doc includes a host of content about mistreatment of those with autism. Softening this theme, however, is one of hope and the music of Wynton Marsalis. — Seth Arenstein

BASIC CABLE P2+ PRIME RANKINGS* (11/28/22-12/04/22)		
MON-SUN	MC US AA%	MC US AA (000)
<b>ESPN</b>	<b>0.887</b>	<b>2770</b>
<b>FNC</b>	<b>0.618</b>	<b>1929</b>
<b>HALL</b>	<b>0.394</b>	<b>1230</b>
<b>MSNBC</b>	<b>0.372</b>	<b>1163</b>
<b>HGTV</b>	<b>0.255</b>	<b>795</b>
<b>TLC</b>	<b>0.248</b>	<b>773</b>
<b>PRMNT</b>	<b>0.229</b>	<b>715</b>
<b>HIST</b>	<b>0.226</b>	<b>706</b>
<b>FOOD</b>	<b>0.215</b>	<b>671</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>0.211</b>	<b>659</b>
<b>TBSC</b>	<b>0.195</b>	<b>608</b>
<b>INSP</b>	<b>0.191</b>	<b>597</b>
<b>HMM</b>	<b>0.182</b>	<b>567</b>
<b>CNN</b>	<b>0.176</b>	<b>550</b>
<b>FRFM</b>	<b>0.164</b>	<b>511</b>
<b>DISC</b>	<b>0.162</b>	<b>504</b>
<b>A&amp;E</b>	<b>0.156</b>	<b>488</b>
<b>TNT</b>	<b>0.155</b>	<b>484</b>
<b>TVLAND</b>	<b>0.155</b>	<b>483</b>
<b>ID</b>	<b>0.154</b>	<b>482</b>
<b>AMC</b>	<b>0.136</b>	<b>423</b>
<b>BET</b>	<b>0.117</b>	<b>364</b>
<b>GSN</b>	<b>0.113</b>	<b>354</b>
<b>FX</b>	<b>0.111</b>	<b>346</b>
<b>REELZ</b>	<b>0.110</b>	<b>342</b>
<b>LIFE</b>	<b>0.109</b>	<b>340</b>
<b>WETV</b>	<b>0.097</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>BRAVO</b>	<b>0.093</b>	<b>290</b>
<b>OXY</b>	<b>0.092</b>	<b>288</b>
<b>NATGEO</b>	<b>0.082</b>	<b>257</b>
<b>SYFY</b>	<b>0.082</b>	<b>255</b>
<b>TRAVEL</b>	<b>0.075</b>	<b>233</b>
<b>FXX</b>	<b>0.072</b>	<b>225</b>
<b>FETV</b>	<b>0.070</b>	<b>219</b>
<b>ADSM</b>	<b>0.068</b>	<b>213</b>

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



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