

Tomorrow's TV, created today

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Discussion moderated by
Sean Cunningham,
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Introduction - TV industry leaders on how TV drives brands

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of World Television Day, celebrated each year on 21 November, egta asked TV industry leaders around the world to share how TV has evolved to become much more than it used to be and how it drives brands' success. The compilation video with the over 20 TV company CEOs and Presidents, as well as all the individual statements, can be watched [here](#). The compilation video was premiered before the panel discussion during the event on 18 November.

The Global TV Group Online Talk – Tomorrow's TV Created Today

Laura Molen (President, Advertising and Partnerships, NBCUniversal), Matthias Dang (Co-CEO RTL Germany) and Jonathan Allan (COO Channel 4) share with you why TV is the medium that sits at the crossroad between viewers' expectations, advertisers' needs and broadcasters' ambition and excellence.

The event was moderated by Sean Cunningham (President, The Global TV Group; President & CEO, VAB).

Sean Cunningham - TV's top 5 key strengths today

1. TV is digital – the debate around TV versus digital is no longer relevant as TV today is a fully digital medium
2. TV works the full purchase funnel – from awareness to sales, TV has a huge and significant impact across the whole purchase journey
3. TV drives business outcomes – TV is key in helping brands to grow, drive traffic and boost sales
4. TV has a halo effect – TV lifts the ROI across other medium within an advertising campaign
5. TV is brand safe – the content and ad environment on TV are both offer complete brand safety.

Opening remarks on the medium of TV

Laura Molen [LM]:

Covid proved that TV is a window to the world for the global community, as people turned to TV for their news, entertainment and information. The medium of TV is unique as it cuts across so

many sectors, countries and people. **Now is an incredibly exciting time for our industry, for content, for technology and for marketers as new technological opportunities allow us to reach consumers through TV in new ways. We are truly on the cusp of a renaissance in television content and advertising.**

Matthias Dang [MD]:

Today we are seeing incredible changes but also incredible opportunities. 30 years ago, we were pioneers and once again we are pioneers today. If TV broadcasters want to grow and succeed in this business in the future, **we will have to put content, technology and data at the heart of what we do.**

Jonathan Allan [JA] - Channel 4:

Some things never change - TV will always be able to deliver the best creative product; high-quality, highly-trusted and locally-produced content, even in a globalised world. Whatever way you see the future of TV, what is clear is that TV will become fully IP delivered, and we will have to embrace these technological changes and prepare for them now. It is not enough to simply keep up with the changes, we have to play an active role in being a part of that change. It is about being brave, taking risks and testing new models. At Channel 4, we are already putting digital on-demand viewing front and centre of what we do and we are looking to grow digital audiences and revenues as fast as we can. We are embracing social platforms where the younger audiences are, which is key to staying relevant in the future.

What does TV stand for today? What is TV?

JA: **TV means different things to different people, so let's let the audiences decide what TV is. There is a danger in our industry of over-defining TV based on what broadcasters are doing. TV can be anything, it is a world of entertainment on whatever device you watch it on – let's embrace that.**

MD: Consumers are looking for quality content and broadcasters' need to produce relevant content for these viewers, regardless of the device or platforms. For this reason, in Germany, we refer to TV as Total Video.

LM: At NBC Universal, TV means premium video, authentic storytelling, brand safe environments and delivering powerful impact for both consumers and marketers. TV is sitting at the intersection of both media and technology. TV is everything from broadband (connecting people to the world), to aggregation (unifying content in one place) and streaming (giving viewers content whenever they want it). TV offers more than it ever did before, and consumers know that.

How do you respond to those who say that TV viewing is increasingly fragmented?

LM: While fragmentation is a challenge, it also gives us the opportunity to re-strategize. We firmly believe in giving consumers the content they want wherever and whenever they want it. We work with marketers individually to develop a unique plan for them to reach consumers where they are watching, and when this is done within a great ad environment, the impact and results are impressive. **Fragmentation is essentially giving marketers new opportunities to reach consumers in different ways and we are building a one-platform system to help them do that.**

What does the shift away from linear and synchronised viewing mean for TV?

JA: Our job is to maximise audiences, and to do that you need to make it as easy as possible for viewers to find you and to watch you. Once you have built up audiences, you can then re-

aggregate them so that they are reachable to advertisers, perhaps even more efficiently than before. Marketers know who their consumers are and new capabilities and targeting solutions are allowing us to reach them.

What you have with TV is a powerful mass-reach audio-visual platform with all of the traditional advantages of TV, but with the extra benefit of overlaying data capabilities, which is what advertisers want. This is what is driving TV's renaissance.

With so much user-generated content out there, how important is professionally-produced content in today's world?

MD: In the face of so much fake news and dangerous content, it will become more and more important to have the trusted medium of TV - this is where professional content comes in. From an advertiser's perspective, it's about high-quality content that drives impact.

LM: Professionally-produced content is king and remains a big part of the social conversation. Let's not forget professionally-produced sports content too - the Super Bowl and World Cup are some of the biggest TV shows in the world. Whether it is to be entertained, informed, inspired to simply to escape, premium content is what consumer want. **We know that top-quality content not only engages consumers in deep and meaningful ways through their purchase journey but it also offers a truly brand-safe environment.**

How have the changes in viewing behaviour changed your approach to content?

JA: A great TV programme will always be a great programme, wherever it is delivered, but you do have to think differently - shows designed for binge-watching are certainly designed differently even at a script level. Ultimately, however, **getting audiences to watch VOD content is more similar to getting people to watch linear content, compared to content on social platforms for example, where expectations are entirely different.**

How do you see the mix between AVOD and SVOD going forward? Can they coexist?

MD: If we look to the future, we will certainly have a mix of the two. We have to offer consumers what they want, an SVOD model, an AVOD model and a mix of the two. We aim to see what is most successful amongst viewers going forward.

LM: It's about giving consumers choice, but we are finding that with Peacock if you create the right kind of ad environment, consumers will choose to opt in. Peacock is a window into the future of our company as it is meeting consumers' needs, giving them great content at a great price, with low ad-loads of 5 minutes or less, with many innovative ad formats that surprise or even delight viewers.

How do you talk to advertisers when it comes to BVOD?

JA: There is generally a more valuable audience in the streaming world, in terms of viewer profile and higher levels of attention, as programmes have been selected by viewers. Then you have the extra benefit of data overlays thanks to user log ins. These datasets can then be converted through programmatic technology, which makes TV easy to buy from an agency and advertiser perspective. **BVOD truly is the best of both worlds – you have the trusted content of TV with the powerful data platforms of online.**

What learnings can we take away from ad-funded VOD? What works best?

LM: With Peacock, we tested many different types of ad formats, such as pause-screen ads and full-screen billboard ads. What we saw is that if you give consumers marketing in the way that they want it, they engage in really meaningful ways. We found that purchase intent was much more favourable in the Peacock ad environment than in other ad environments.

What elements of TV do we need to preserve as TV become even more digital?

JA: TV remains a mass-reach medium that appeals to the whole of society and we need to be careful **not to divide users into too narrow target groups if we want to avoid creating the echo chambers that we see on social platforms**. We still need to focus on the broad-appeal shared moments that TV is able to create – the moments that bring a nation together.

How can linear TV keep up with streaming and on-demand viewing?

JA: The distinction between linear and online viewing, delivered via IP, will become redundant. We can still achieve live scheduled viewing even if delivered through a non-linear distribution model. It is about creating the content that brings people together – content that they want to watch together and at the same time.

How do you see the conversation around TV one year from now – and five years from now?

JA: Measuring audiences across platforms and having single source data is a key issue in the UK and elsewhere, we may be closer to solving that problem one year from now. So, the conversation will be about how users watch all of our content across all of our platforms. In 5 years, it would be great to be able to prove the efficacy of TV advertising on direct sales - we need to be able to demonstrate that to advertisers more clearly.

LM: The conversation around measurement is going to be very different one year from now. **We need to be able to give advertisers measurement across all platforms and demonstrate the engagement and effectiveness of TV**. In 5 years, we want to be able to measure business outcomes which will be a much more accepted part of our business and the way we measure results. People will also stop referring to linear, cable or broadcasters as consumers no longer think about TV in such terms. We will need to change our own way of thinking to see things through the-eyes of the consumer.

MD: Over the next year, we can expect to see even more fragmentation so we have to focus on the question - what is the real value of TV today and tomorrow? **TV five years from now will revolve around three things: content, technology and data. These have to be at core of what we do and we also have, as TV companies, to own both the technology and the data.**