



NABSHOW
Where Content Comes to Life

NAB 2016

– A perspective

The NAB Show 2016 tag line was “Ready, Set, Unleash”, telling of barriers coming down across media and entertainment as content is available on more platforms and devices with less constraints. The unleashing is opportunity via industry transformation.

By Laurie Kennedy

The official report is 103,000 registered attendees though some on the trade floor felt attendance was down. My focus was the conference and it certainly was a challenge deciding, of the 760 sessions, which ones to attend. The NAB Show (National Association of Broadcasters) now represents all aspects of the media and entertainment industries.

Though there were many of interest, including, Digital Futures, Radio, Cloud/IP, Virtual/Augmented Reality, Multi-cultural/Niche TV, and Drones, this article provides highlights from a business perspective on:

- What’s New in OTT
- Advanced Advertising
- The Future of Video—4K, UHD, HDR
- Next Gen TV—ATSC 3.0.

What's New in OTT

OTT (Over the Top TV) continues to be a disruptor with content providers, traditional and new, straddling a range of models from ad-supported and subscription services in local and global markets. Many are navigating around existing content agreements as they try new things. Succeeding in OTT doesn't lend itself to a one-size-fits-all approach; rather, it involves creating a service that meets the needs of the consumer, showcasing content, and allowing you to scale quickly.

Platform

David Simon, VP Inventory Acquisition at AOL, said as a media technology company, it continually tries new things; failing and trying again is part of today's world.

Braxton Jarratt, GM, IBM Cloud Video Services Unit and CEO Clearleap, said you need to focus on the business and not as much on a custom OTT/IP infrastructure. To be agile and flexible, you should select a proven platform. He says content owners have always had multiple revenue streams with existing licence agreements and distribution channels. OTT is a new distribution channel and will continue to evolve with multiple options (subscription, ad supported, buy, rent). Braxton believes you will see successes with live events which will bring a broader perspective and value proposition to the consumer.

Andy Shenkler, Chief Solutions and Technology Officer at Sony DADC, says don't overlook the competition with piracy. According to Variety, the top 10 movies have had 465 million piracy downloads. Many of these sites are easy to use, good quality video, rich in metadata with a nicely built hierarchy. Much of the metadata is available via TVDB, the Wikipedia of TV series info. It is important to have a strategy, look at the big picture, keep it simple, and don't let the technology alone be your point of differentiation.

Channel Aggregators

Traditional BDUs and MVPDs provide aggregation of conventional and speciality channels. Several new OTT services like Sling TV and HULU are similar. Keep your eye on YouTube Red, Amazon Prime and ROKU. What is key about them is the size of their existing customer base and ability to scale quickly.

ROKU provides a user interface and streaming device. The first ROKU-enabled TV was available in 2015. This suggests it is evolving as a "smart" standard among TV manufacturers. Andrew Ferrone, VP, Pay TV at ROKU, said they have over 500 apps and 2,000 content channels with a variety of models (SVOD, AVOD, rent, buy, free). In 2015, 5.5 billion hours streamed through ROKU, available in Canada.



any... and creators all aim to bring the professional level synonymous with workstations to market that's... new content

There are many OTT providers popping up. In a stand-alone mode, SVOD providers require a large funnel of content to sustain a monthly subscription fee. AVOD (Ad Supported Video on Demand), free for the consumer, allows a varied library size, perhaps better for niche content or smaller libraries.

Michael Paull, VP of Digital Video at Amazon, said Amazon Prime now includes Prime Video and Prime Music, available in the US. Newly added, Dec. 2015, is a Streaming Partners Program which opens up the opportunity to have third party channels on Prime with an integrated subscription (SVOD). This allows Partners to access the Amazon customer base, maintaining a quality and reliable streaming service, as well as managing the billing and credit card payment services. Paull said they have 30 services within PRIME, including Showcase. Amazon is doing cross promotions to their customer base in addition to their Partner promos (e.g. Starz/Outlander). Paull believes AVOD and SVOD will co-exist giving consumers choice.

NAB Show TV was produced by Broadcast Beat providing live streaming of select conference sessions as well as interviews with leading industry experts and vendors. Available at nabshow.com and broadcastbeat.com.

Advanced Advertising

With new terms popping up, advertising has never been more diverse. audience of one, mobile advertising, native advertising, programmatic, ad blocking, standard currency, etc.

Dan Ackerman, SVP Programmatic TV at AOL Platforms/Adapt.tv, said you need to have a holistic view of who to target when planning; you cannot do it in silos anymore (e.g. linear, VOD, social, device). Also needed is one standard currency to measure across all the platforms.

Jason Schragger, Chief Creative Officer at Saatchi & Saatchi LA, says we need to evolve to “Audience of One” advertising. He described an example of harnessing Facebook data to create 100,000 customized videos to reach individuals with a wide range of personal interests. They did this by making the beginning, middle and end of the ads interchangeable.

Ad blocking means they need to be more effective targeting with native ads. The term “native ad” means ads relevant to the device and location it is being consumed, ads deemed effective and non-intrusive. For example, video pre-rolls are accepted on an in-home TV but not on a mobile device. Content production should now consider advertisers and include ad inserts/overlays within the content itself.

Zachary Soreff, President at Sawyer Studios, agrees there is a trend now to fuse the ad with the content; it is harder to block. He also mentioned you need to consider whether the audio is on or off and still be able to deliver a message. He believes it will take three to five years for TV to have effective and mainstream consumer targeted ad insertion.

Research company BIA/Kelsey forecasts mobile advertising within a three-block radius is expected to grow 25% per year over the next five years. This is GEO targeting based on the location of the consumer (and smartphone).

The Future of Video - 4K, UHD, HDR

Robert Seidel, SMPTE President and VP Engineering and Advanced Technology at CBS; Mark Schubin, Chief Information Server at Schubin.Cafe; James DeFilippis, CGO at TMS Consulting; and Matthew Goldman, SVP Technology & Media Strategy at Ericsson came together in a panel to discuss what these numbers and letters mean to a producer and how they are affecting consumers.

Resolution Names	Horizontal Pixel Resolution	Devices	Names used
720p	1,280	TVs	HD, High Definition
1080p	1,920	TVs, monitors	HD, High Definition
2K	2,048	Projectors	2K, Ultra HD
UHD	3,840	TVs	4K, Ultra HD
Cinema 4K	4,096	Projectors	4K, Ultra HD
8K (SHV)	7,680	Concept TVs	8K, Super HiVision
HDR	High Dynamic Range (colour)		
HFR	High Frame Rate (refresh)		

Source: CNET.com

All agreed they would like 4K and HDR but don't have the funding for everything. What would provide the best bang for their buck? Answers varied depending on content and target distribution platform. There are also variations of 4K.



Seidel believes 4K is the best base quality for sports. There are also shifts to 4K for nature and space. Seidel has had a 3D 4K HDR, 120 HFR experience and thought it was impressive. However he said some thought it was a little too real. Goldman believes the biggest bang would be HDR (high dynamic range). In his experience HDR 1080p (Ericsson calls HDR+), has a WOW! factor for the consumer.

HDR is not about brightness, it is about the brightest whites being more real. You need to study balancing “video loudness” so you don’t over saturate; similar to the problem with audio levels. HDR can also make motion artifacts more visible and to compensate you would need HFR (high frame rate). DeFilippis says you can see the difference of HFR on a big screen but not on a laptop. Ambient light in the room where the viewing monitor is affects HDR making it tough to tune for a specific scenario when editing.

The general message was to tread carefully when introducing 4K and HDR; consider the viewer experience. You need to engage the creative folks to better understand the use/benefits. It can become uncomfortable for the viewer and create eye fatigue. Also, higher resolution requires larger TVs for optimal viewing.

Next Gen TV – ATSC 3.0

ATSC 3.0 is a new IP-based standard for OTA broadcast delivery of content. It is expected to replace the existing ATSC 1.0 standard. Centralized software configuration and control will be essential to maintain broadcast efficiency.

More Than Just TV

ATSC 3.0 provides an opportunity to change the broadcasting business model. Still a one to many broadcast feed, however now via an IP pipe able to target a wide range of applications on any IP device in or out of the home (public transit, car, smartphone, tablet, digital signage, home TV; with an ATSC 3.0 receiver).

In addition to supporting 4K UHD and HDR, a connected ATSC 3.0 device will allow two-way communication. The device will receive a broadcast one-way signal while also able to communicate two-way via a wireless or WIFI network. This allows for new applications not available on traditional OTA, including, targeted ad insertion based on GEO location and consumer profiling, advanced emergency alerting, GEO targeted traffic and weather reports, data collection and more.

It is expected with ATSC 3.0, broadcast Digital Signage DOOH (digital out of the home) ad revenues will significantly increase. Advanced Emergency Alerting will take advantage of the GEO location in providing XML alert messages, first responder data, evacuation route, maps and specific info.

A new ATSC 3.0 antenna is expected to be a wireless network antenna (smart antenna) which could be the home gateway with a WIFI output.

Testing/Roll-out

Testing is in progress, including WJW on Channel 9 in Cleveland, Ohio. They have done urban and rural tests (29 grid clusters). The focus was outdoor though some indoor testing was done at four sites. The conclusion was that the prototype does work in the real world with some learnings and no red flags for VHF operation.

On May 10-11 there will be an ATSC Broadcast Television Conference in Washington, D.C. to begin planning the U.S. roll-out.

Korea is a bit further ahead, targeting ATSC 3.0 UHD rollout in 2017 (regular terrestrial UHD TV). They also expect to use it to broadcast the Winter Olympics in Korea, in Feb. 2018.

In Canada, the CRTC has requested broadcasters who have conventional licence renewals coming up in August 2017 to share what plans they have re: ATSC 3.0 as part of the renewal process.

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