



Go Big Or Don't Go Into Homes - The BIG TV Executive Summary

By E.B. Moss

City Winery buzzed with energy during the Cynopsis Big TV Summit, where Future Today cleverly branded coffee sleeves with topics like 'Measurement' and 'Buying Strategies' to fuel conversation—but no caffeine was needed to keep the audience alert. From the kickoff keynote by UM's CIO, Marcy Greenberger, to the final session on the current buzz around Retail Media, the day was a rapid-fire exchange of actionable takeaways.

A big thank you to sponsors Comscore, Kargo, New York Interconnect, Nielsen, Premion, Optimum. Media, Stirista, and VAB, who provided not only insights but fantastic sweepstakes prizes. XACTV ensured we had wifi, Future Today entertained with lively video in addition to that coffee, and a trivia quiz with NYI had us nostalgic for TV ads of yesteryear.

But let's get down to business.

A Chief Investment Officer's POV

As Greenberger told William Carmichael of American Express, there are complexities in the streaming landscape around media planning (especially given the lack of a single measure solution) – from balancing automation and data-driven targeting to acknowledging the importance of live events, like sports, to the impact of consolidation. Specifically:

- Automation and data help in targeting niche audiences, but mass-market brands often benefit from broader reach akin to traditional TV. Greenberger emphasized: "You have to do that cost benefit analysis ... It can become very expensive. But if that's outweighed by the improved performance and reaching a relevant audience, it's worth it."
- Consolidation in the TV landscape is simplifying the buying process for media buyers, but "with consumers subscribing to an average of 9-11 streaming services and constant churn, it's crucial to run campaigns across a wide range of platforms to ensure scale and unduplicated reach."
- As more sports rights shift to digital and its tonnage of live events, brands must approach sports
 with "more than just a screen strategy." UM sees it as a vital piece of a broader, integrated plan
 with more potential for interactive and creative brand integrations in digital spaces, particularly
 with sports new features like multi-view.



Sean Cunningham, President & CEO, VAB, and Brian Danzis, President, North America, Seedtag NA, delivered on "The Promise of Contextual TV."

Danzis, who believes "contextual is privacy proof," said Seedtag approaches it without any PII, instead "creating inclusive categories that go beyond the individual" for a cookieless solution. Addressing the issue that "the contextualization of CTV is only happening now through closed caption needs" Seedtag's secret sauce is image detection AI, then "finding someone in that moment when they are really engaged with the particular topic, then aligning that message, even evolving the creative in real time," resulting in significant brand lift and other improved metrics.

Moving from Screen to Store, according to JCPenney, KERV Interactive and dentsu, also takes some AI-powered messaging, especially to hyper-target and maximize ROI.

The trio of panelists told moderator David Berkowitz how they married traditional retail advertising with immersive, shoppable experiences and multimedia ads to really sell consumers.

- Bill Cunningham, VP, Marketing at JCPenney stated the obvious but important point, especially for
 a heritage brand, that "repeating the media plan or strategies of the prior year is more dangerous
 than investing in new, innovative trial areas." However, they also had to be efficient given a lot of
 KPIs for the varied consumers of broad department store offerings so partnered with KERV to
 "punch above our weight to get our advertising to the right customer in a more effective way."
- As Lacey Tompkins, Group Director, Digital & Programmatic at dentsu pointed out, it paid off, thanks to geo-targeting and sequential messaging, and adding value via creative based on each individual's consumer journey: "not personalizing for personalization's sake... but depending on how they engaged with CTV, then hitting them with online video and display with a really tailored message."

"Video is video, no matter where the audiences are consuming it."

Thus went the Best Practices for Unified Measurement conversation with Deirdre Thomas, Chief Product Officer at Nielsen Audience Measurement, Molly Finnerty, Chief Investment Officer at Zenith Media, and Roseann Montenes, Head of Audience Innovation at A+E Networks.

- Thomas emphasized the importance of measuring time spent across platforms, noting the divide between streaming and digital is becoming irrelevant from a measurement standpoint.
- For telling clients where to invest their dollars, Finnerty wants to accurately measure holistically across different campaigns "so you want everything included, TikTok, YouTube, National local," regardless of point of origin or delivery." The measurement challenge, though is that "we're still looking at everything in silo. But I do love the progress we're making and the partners we're working with from an alternate currency and measurement perspective are all putting in the time and the resources behind MRC accreditation."
- Montenes adds, "Once we all understand the nuances of demo versus audiences and then bringing in first party data into the conversation, that's where we'll all be able to move forward in the same direction."

Andrew Kandel, CEO of New York Interconnect, was emblematic of the experts on the "Advertise Nationally but Optimize Locally" panel.



Kandel makes the point that "you don't want to miss the New York market because you're worried about your GRPs going down a little bit on the near and you're not accepting accessing passion by just buying national, that doesn't work. You need to think about this market: it's the biggest in the world and you need to understand how it moves and our job is to make it accessible."

- Chiming in as a national advertiser with hyper-local focused efforts, Taylor Byrnes, VP, Media and MarTech for Liberty Mutual Insurance noted: "if we could and we had endless resources and endless capabilities, we would hyper target everything." So, they do balance national, looking for scale of activation, relevant content and ways to "build a customized semi-national footprint...to heavy up our presence but also have a story with that customer and be in front of it on a frequent basis ...to really strengthen that connection and be top of mind."
- Steve Bagdasarian, Chief Commercial Officer of Comscore who told moderator Tim Hanlon that Comscore has a new product coming in October, acknowledges that "Local is obviously a big part of our business if you want to talk about performance and ... it's also part of a very large changing narrative." Certainly, news and sports help keep the local value proposition alive, he acknowledges, "but there are other dynamics ...So it's not either/or, but the reality right now especially at the local market level is that these will continue to dominate customer retention." For example, he adds that "as a consumer, I might make choices where I buy certain things online, but the vast majority of my consumer purchase decisions happen at the local market level."

Effective Buying Strategies for Navigating a Fragmented CTV Ecosystem mean identifying the right platforms, crafting compelling creative, and leveraging data-driven insights and brand safety.

Panelist highlights include:

- Peter Jones, Head of Sales for Premion: "Advertisers really need to look at the whole audience, especially as we're seeing the shift towards combining linear TV and CTV buys, with over half of CTV budgets now managed by hybrid or integrated teams. If you're leaving CTV out, you're essentially shortchanging your media plan and missing a huge part of your audience."
- Bill Chambers, Sr Dir., Business Strategy and Insights, Optimum.Media: "You find those audiences and come up with a well-rounded strategy of creative that's going to resonate. Our job is to then hit those eyeballs in those zip codes on any screen possible thru our pipeline." Giving Political as an example, he emphasizes the importance of data partnerships: "If you want to get that vote, you want to make sure you're saturating that message to that constituent accurately, whether it's via streaming news or traditional news, to hit them with that pinpoint precision thanks to the technology and the ID and marrying those data sets together."

Really addressing "What's New and Happening Now in Addressable TV" Spectrum Reach SVP/Chief Revenue Officer, Jason Brown, scooped news of an alignment with Amazon.

Their latest advancement, he promised, enables small business to access their 91 markets more easily and efficiently to even the advertising playing field thanks to access to Amazon inventory.

 As Moderator, Danielle DeLauro, EVP at VAB led the other panelists into revealing how savvy advertisers should use addressable, what's driving the current surge in adoption, why it's important to balance the desire for scale with the quality of the data and debate whether addressable should be included in every campaign.



• For the latter point, echoing much of the rest of the conference, Bruce Anderson, CEO and Global CTO, INVIDI Technologies, made it clear, saying, "A lot of people would try to tie addressability to a specific distribution technology, like if it's a cable or a satellite thing. In my mind, how the bits get from the transmission point to how you consume them is really immaterial for discussion. It's the content you're consuming that's curated for you, based on whatever data sets we're able to leverage" for the right audience segments. No question.

How does Artificial Intelligence Transform Media Buying and Measurement?

- Harry Kargman, Founder & CEO of Kargo, said AI is transforming media buying by leveraging digital
 assets from platforms like Instagram and TikTok to create more dynamic and personalized CTV
 campaigns. "With AI, we can now build creative in real time, delivering professional-quality assets
 at almost zero production cost. This allows for personalized ads tailored to households or
 individuals, making campaigns more efficient and cost-effective." But he cautioned those who
 just throw their linear assets into the hopper.
- Maggie Zhang, SVP at NBCUniversal, highlighted NBCU's AI-driven platform, Alta, which uses
 predictive analytics to optimize media plans across their entire portfolio: "AI helps us redefine
 success for advertisers by finding the right audience and delivering the right message at the right
 time. Early tests have shown improvements in efficiency, reach, and even conversions."

Discussing "Innovations for Reaching the Right Consumer", Will Kunkel from Stirista highlighted the value of personalization, "IF you have a strong strategy for it."

But personalization has to take privacy into consideration. Stirista avoids invasive "icky" practices like location-based data, relying on their identity graph to ensure compliance.

- Evan Adlman EVP, Commercial Sales & Revenue Operations at Warner Bros. Discovery discussed minimizing ad loads to improve the viewing experience, proud that MAX keeps theirs at under five minutes per hour. He emphasized integrating commerce without disrupting content, such as using pause ads to showcase products from a scene. However, he admitted the industry is still finding the right balance, saying, "We want to inspire trends, but forcing commerce too soon doesn't work."
- Kunkel quipped back about the tonnage of targeted ads though, he quipped, "I keep getting drug
 ads and wonder if I should take them prophylactically. Given AI, it must know something I don't!"

To "Get Creative in Ad Formats," Rob Master, Global SVP Media and Communications from SharkNinja and Jenny Burke, Amazon Advertising's Director, Global Video Strategy & GTM, discussed how streaming allows for more tailored, consumer-centric ad experiences, powered by data.

Rob highlighted the potential of streaming to improve ad relevance: "When I'm watching football, I get ads for cat food—I don't have a cat! Streaming lets us make ads more relevant, enhancing both the consumer experience and ad effectiveness." He emphasized that matching the right creative with the right audience across platforms is key to success.

• Jenny shared Amazon's approach to balancing innovation and user experience: "We're obsessed with user experience. We start with the customer and work backwards. Formats like shoppable carousels allow viewers to add products directly to their cart without interrupting their experience." She also emphasized Amazon's commitment to testing new formats that enhance rather than disrupt the viewing experience.



Rob added that while early streaming ads required self-selection, today's platforms can
intelligently serve relevant ads without user input: "Streaming now knows who the viewer is and
delivers ads that feel personal, without needing interaction."

Finally, but perhaps one of the hottest topics, the panel on Retail Media brought us to the Intersection of Commerce and Content.

Retail media is the darling of advertising or at least many headlines, using data and smart targeting to engage consumers throughout their purchasing journey.

- Sean McCaffrey, CEO, GSTV highlighted the unique moment retail media captures: "Fuel days are a time when people are in a buying mindset. We can connect those moments—whether it's adding items to their digital cart later or stocking up at a grocery store."
- Mike Brunick, SVP, Head of Commerce Media at Yahoo!, emphasized the value of long-term customer relationships: "The goal is to keep customers engaged over time, not just once. It's about sustaining trust and building a relationship that lasts."
- Wavemaker's Briana Finelli, Head of Commerce, US, pointed out the opportunity for efficiency: "We don't need to reinvent the wheel. We can leverage existing audience insights and media strategies to enhance retail media efforts and drive results faster."
- Christi Lazar, Marketing Director, The Lab at Blue Triton shared the impact of targeting with precision, noting that a recent campaign with GSTV showed a 1.4X lift in purchases by hitting consumers at the right time with relevant messaging.

The power of retail media – but the bigness of all things TV, are showing us that media is not just for driving sales but for building lasting brand connections by tapping into real-time consumer behaviors.







