

Culled from the headlines of the TV Industry's Trade Press, **CONTENT MATTERS** is a Bi-Monthly Newsletter curated and contextualized by **KATZ Content Strategy's Bill Carroll**.

# 5

## INSIGHTS TO KNOW

### **1. Just how many viewers does seasonal programming reach over the holidays?**

A Nielsen study examines when the mercury drops and the holiday season arrives, that consumers huddle indoors and enjoy a bevy of seasonal programming that speaks to this “most wonderful time of the year.”

### **2. TV viewing patterns intensify, ratings erode.**

Major current TV viewing trends are not only about ratings erosion -- but about diverging viewer groups. The heaviest viewers of broadcast network TV are watching even more TV now --- and the lightest TV viewers are watching less.

### **3. Agencies are telling their clients that it's time they start treating Facebook like a grown-up.**

Some are saying that it is being “grandma-fied,”— that Facebook audiences are perceived as older when everybody's on the hunt for millennials and Gen Z. They are stating with its sheer scale—like TV used to be—plus a massive push into video, Facebook simply is the largest, most powerful marketing platform in the history of the world.

### **4. African-American Millennials are using technology and social media to amplify their voices about how they consume information and entertainment.**

As detailed in Nielsen's Young, Connected and Black report, there are more than 83 million Millennials in the U.S., according to the U.S. Census Bureau, of which African-Americans comprise 14% (about 11.5 million).

### **5. What's a local broadcaster to do? How To Get Your News To Millennials**

Millennials love video, but they're not interested in engaging with traditional linear content. They appreciate breaking news, but won't turn into a local news broadcast. And they crave authenticity, yet don't trust much of the media.



**According to an item excerpted and summarized from the Nielsen Newswire, throughout the year, Americans tune into their teams doing battle on the gridiron and happily queue up missed episodes of new drama series on their DVRs. Consider this: Amid the mad dash for the perfect gift, a special Nielsen study found that last year’s holiday season saw primetime holiday-themed programming reach more than 217 million viewers. Put another way, over 85% of all U.S. TV households watched at least a minute of this type of content between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Eve.**

Holiday programs with the largest unique audiences took on a variety of forms: from quintessential holiday film classics to special episodes of TV shows. Regardless of the type of programming, viewers of all ages indulged in their fair share of holiday-themed viewing. In fact, holiday programming reached nearly 60% of all age groups and up to 85% in some demographics.

Older adults contributed the most. While this type of content reached nearly 28 million children between the ages of 2 and 11 in 2015; it also reached more than 73 million people 55 year old or older. Additionally, 77% of adults between the ages of 35 and 54 (about 61 million people) tuned in to watch similar programming during the same time span. When looking at gender, both men and women over the age of 55 held the lion’s share in regard to holiday program reach, compared to other generations in their

respective genders.

The most enigmatic generation in terms of content consumption—Millennials—even partake in the festivities. The study found that holiday-themed programming was viewed by just shy of 40 million adults ages 18 to 34, giving this oft-media fickle demographic group the third-highest audience size among the other age groups.

However, older generations are still more likely to seek holiday nostalgia through the TV screen. Adults ages 55 and up account for about one-third of the total holiday programming reach, compared to the 18% from Millennials. Adults 35-54 are not far behind adults 55+, who account for 28% of the total holiday program reach. Beyond the boundaries of age and gender, holiday programs found their way into distinct types of households. Reach tended to be greatest among homes with multiple family members—be it children or pets. About 87% of all homes with kids watched holiday programs, while a similar percentage of homes that owned a pet did the same. High-income earning homes also spent time watching holiday programs. Roughly 88% of viewers who earn between \$75,000 and \$99,999 and 88% of those who earn over \$125,000 watched some form of holiday program during last year’s holiday season.

## CONTENT IN CONTEXT

According to Nielsen, from Thanksgiving to New Years, consumers immerse themselves in the holidays, making the power of holiday programming extensive and undeniable. We believe that savvy broadcasters should take note in order

to not just reach, but capitalize on what could be positive consumer sentiment as the spirit of the holidays influences viewing decisions, especially in homes with kids and who would have guessed, pets.

**In a study by programmatic TV ad tech company TubeMogul reported by MEDIA POST, research shows that heaviest viewers of broadcast network TV in 2007 are watching even more TV now --- and the lightest TV viewers are watching less. The study says the average program rating of the heaviest TV viewers was a 1.5 Nielsen 18+ rating in 2015 versus 1.2% in 2007 -- a 26% increase. For those "light TV viewers," the average rating is now a Nielsen 0.08, down from a 0.2 in 2007.**

Three out of four weekly broadcast shows lost up to 1% of their audience between seasons last year. In 2015, 74% of weekly broadcast shows saw their average rating drop by up to 1 point from the prior season. In 2008, that number was 47%. The data comes from ABC, CBS, CW, FOX and NBC programs across genres including drama, sports, comedy, reality and news/talk. The average 2007 and 2015 ratings are among adults 18 years and older in the top TV quintile for consecutive broadcast network programs across all genres.

Looking at specific linear TV ratings per program, erosion continues at a faster pace. For the 2014-2015 TV season, 74% of weekly broadcast shows saw their average rating drop by up to 1 point from the prior season. In the 2007-2008 TV season, that number was 47%. The research

also indicates that high concentrations of the audience exist across programs and dayparts. Viewers in the bottom TV quintile are increasingly difficult to routinely reach through broadcast TV, with ratings down 57% since 2007.

Millennials still watch a lot of TV -- as well as using other devices. But TubeMogul says they shouldn't be put into one group. It says younger Millennials -- those 18-24s -- watch 16 hours and 18 minutes (16:18) a week of traditional TV, less than 25-34 year olds, who watch 23:26 a week. The Millennials disparate digital habits within the generation complicate media planning. For example, 25-34 year olds spend 65% more time with computers than their younger counterparts -- and that's just a device-level distinction. The combination of devices, platforms, and content at Millennials' disposal means marketers must navigate a multitude of paths to find the right ad opportunity.

Millennials are accustomed to choice and convenience in their media consumption, and there's no indication that will change as they get older. Younger Millennials, however, watch more connected TV than older Millennials -- 6:12 to 5:56. Older Millennials spend more time with computers -- 10:50 a week versus those 18-24 who tally 6:33.

## CONTENT IN CONTEXT

In a potential positive for broadcasters, ratings among the top TV quintile are even higher now than they were in the mid-2000s, indicating that this dedicated group of viewers watches a greater variety of shows than it used to. But, the reality is

that light TV viewers are beginning to closely resemble non-TV viewers. Since the research gives some insights, it also has to give broadcasters concern about the recruiting and maintaining of our millennial.

**In this commentary, excerpted and summarized from CAMPAIGN USA, it recounts the oft-reported story that goes something like this: on Feb. 25, 1983, 125 million viewers tuned in to watch the "MASH" finale on CBS, a ratings and advertising bonanza. Today, except for the Super Bowl, and debates that featured Trump vs. Clinton, brands can't find mass audiences like that anymore. Oh, the good old days. But some like to add the phrase "... on TV."**

Because it's 2017, and we think the good old days for mass audiences are right now. We don't worry about declining TV-watching audiences. We believe brands have digital aces up their sleeves, and they need to adjust their strategies, planning and thinking in order to take advantage of the world in which we actually live, where "MASH" is in perpetual syndication somewhere, but we're too busy streaming "Stranger Things" to know.

And the biggest ace of them all? Facebook. It's not news that Facebook is big: 1.79 billion monthly active users around the globe. It's also not news that Facebook is so much more than a social network: it's also a top news source, it's our events, it's how we keep up with celebs, it's where we watch live video, it's Whatsapp and Instagram. Facebook, like the internet and smartphones, is now part of our lives, despite its recent video reporting challenges.

TV is scale. So is Facebook. With TV, marketers plan based on reach, frequency and GRPs against key audience segments. On Facebook, even if the tools have different names, the strategies are the same—brands need to reach large-scale audiences with a message. Facebook is robust: you can target millions by geo (e.g. Los Angeles + 25 miles), age, gender, demo (e.g. education, financial), interests (e.g. entertainment, food and drink), behaviors and more. Marketing and business goals are not forgotten on Facebook—13 different objectives to choose from, across audience development, lead-generation, video views and more. Brands must allocate budgets based on which medium will best achieve goals, not just because TV has always come first.

Before DVRs, before second-screening, viewers were captive audiences. Not so today. In an era of ad-free Netflix, ad-blocking software and skippable pre-roll, brands have a much bigger task: to inspire people to choose to receive their message. Viewers don't have to watch your video on Facebook, even if their friend shares it. But giving them a reason to watch—whether that's info, humor or heart—is the key to social success. Recognizing this dynamic flips the concept of a TV spot on its head, to focus instead on a watchable value proposition.

## CONTENT IN CONTEXT

Agencies are telling our advertisers that they will always have the Super Bowl, but for the other 364 days of the year, they can no longer forget we have Facebook, plus YouTube, Snapchat and the rest of new mass media, finding creative ways to reach

large-scale audiences in our modern media culture, one million millennial moms at a time. We as broadcasters need to make our compelling case and also be part of reaching those millennials on Facebook.

**This item, excerpted and summarized from the Nielsen Newswire, tells us that African-American Millennials are early adopters when it comes to trying new electronic gadgets. In fact, 70% are fascinated by new technology, and they're more likely than total U.S. Millennials to say they're among the first of their friends and colleagues to try new technology products. [Broadcasters] trying to establish meaningful connections with African-Americans, leveraging their passions and usage of today's latest technology should be a central focus in strategic goals.**

The digital divide or lack of access to technology with regard to mobile internet access, among multicultural consumers has been closing rapidly in recent years. Technology and the use of digital platforms such as social media has become an integral part of the everyday fabric of most African-Americans' lives, led by tech-savvy Millennials, who regard and use technology and social media almost as extensions of their personal identity.

In fact, 91% of African-Americans own smartphones, and they are the second-largest multicultural group for ownership behind Asian-Americans (94%). Ninety-one percent of African-Americans had internet access via a smartphone or broadband in 2016, up from 86% in 2015, a growth rate of 6%, outpacing all other racial/ethnic groups. Usage of mobile devices (particularly smartphones) among African-Americans, especially African-American Millennials, is

bringing a heightened awareness to social issues, brand affinity and even pop culture commentary via social media. And African-Americans have elevated the platform to a usage level far beyond just communicating, entertainment and shopping. They are using social media to raise awareness of issues affecting the Black community in American society.

Fifty-five percent of black Millennials say they spend an hour or more daily on social networking sites, which is 11% higher than the total millennial population. Additionally, 29% of black Millennials say they spend three or more hours daily on social networking sites, an amount that is 44% higher than that of the total Millennial population. Sixty-four percent of black Millennials agree they like to keep their personal internet pages updated. Facebook (84%), YouTube (56%) and Twitter (48%) are the most common social networking sites with strong membership among black Millennials. Black Millennials are more likely than their total population counterparts to have memberships with Twitter (48% versus 46%), Google+ (55% versus 41%) and WhatsApp (21% versus 14%). African-Americans, particularly younger Millennials, continue to develop and expand their influence on mainstream America, companies are making changes to reach this culture-rich group with unique, captivating campaigns, as well as products and services that meet their needs.

## CONTENT IN CONTEXT

Not only do African-American Millennials interact with social media, they spend more time watching live and time-shifted TV (DVR) than total U.S. Millennials on a weekly basis by 61%, but they also spend more time on a weekly basis consuming video content on other

devices. African-Americans ages 35-49 watch at rates 45% and 32% higher, respectively, than their total market counterparts. Broadcasters need to be available to this growing African-American Millennial audience on social and mobile platforms.

**This item recounts a panel discussion on “How to Get Your News to Millennials” at TV Newscheck’s annual NewsTECHForum, four panelists — two from legacy companies, two from new media organizations — discussed strategies for producing and delivering news to this social-first demographic.**

“From a local news perspective, it’s really important to make sure you’re listening,” said Emily Stone, digital content manager at Fox O&O WTTG Washington. Stone discussed how, after noticing an uptick in online bickering following the election, the station worked with on-air talent to create videos on the theme of unity, then posted the videos to their social pages, app, and website. “The response was tremendous,” she said, “because the community locally knows them.”

While that initiative was largely successful, Stone conceded that the process of consistently creating engaging video content for social is something that many local broadcasters struggle with. “We, as a newsroom and as a station group, have tried to come up with ways in which we can make this part of the workflow,” she said, noting that WTTG relies heavily on two social media-savvy producers.

On the new media side, Verhsa Sharma, managing editor at NowThis News, offered an inside look at how the distributed content company has earned

more than 17 million followers across multiple social media sites. “We broke our newsroom down by platform, so we have a Snapchat team, a Facebook team, a Twitter breaking news team,” Sharma said. “Actually building content with a platform’s specific use in mind really paid off for us in terms of growing our audiences.”

While clearly an effective strategy, most legacy companies don’t have the resources to devote staffers to specific social channels. But acknowledging those limitations is a key part of overcoming them, according to Dhiya Kuriakose, head of syndication at Conde Nast. For Conde Nast properties like Vanity Fair, sometimes the benefit of social is just familiarizing a younger demographic with the brand. “If some 17-year-old doesn’t know what Vanity Fair is, no advertiser is going to buy with us,” Kuriakose said. “If we’re using social pages to really build recognition for our brands, that’s good enough.

“What works for one newsroom doesn’t necessarily work for another,” added Kuriakose. “I’ve realized that we’re not going to win the scale game, but what’s really standing out is quality content.” Panelists believe that millennials have been largely misunderstood. “This is the most educated, informed generation that has ever lived,” said Blake Sabatinelli, general manager of Newsy.

## CONTENT IN CONTEXT

“To think that young people have no interest in quality news is the stupidest thing I hear on a daily basis.” “I think an overarching theme of this panel is the fact that millennials are interested in hard news and breaking news,” agreed Emily Stone.

“You just have to deliver it to where they are — social feeds.” The consensus, it would seem, is that for local news to be successful in the future, broadcasters have to embrace social media as part of their on-going news delivery strategy.