OUTPERFORMS EVERY OTHER MEDIA PLATFORM

TVB released the results of its 2020 American Conversation Study in partnership with Engagement Labs earlier this week, and the results make a strong case for the power of local broadcast television.

The not-for-profit trade association, which represents America’s local broadcast television industry and is also the organization behind local TV’s shift to impressions-based buying, set out to answer a simple question: If word of mouth is the most powerful form of marketing (driving up to half of consumer sales), can it be influenced by media platforms?

TVB says in a news release that it commissioned Engagement Labs, a word-of-mouth specialist, to assess and quantify the role media platforms have in driving Americans’ conversations. The top media influencer was television (59%), particularly for daily news, entertainment and political conversations. Six of ten respondents said their political conversations were affected by TV.

From there, the dropoff was substantial. The survey revealed that in terms of driving political conversations, online (29%) was next, followed by social media (22%), print (18%) and radio (9%).

Out of the 2,000 adults 18+ sampled, 68 percent reported being somewhat to very likely to share news from their local TV station. Fifty-eight percent of all respondents said they reference stories heard on local news in daily conversations; for home improvement and furniture opinion leaders this number rises to 72 percent.

Seventy-one percent of financial and automotive opinion leaders said they refer to local news stories in daily conversations.

The 2020 American Conversation Study also revealed interesting data when it comes to believability and trust. Local broadcast TV news was No. 1 for both believability and trust, cited by 81 percent of respondents.

Local TV websites (77%) is also seen as largely credible, but the trust factor drops off considerably from there. Just 59 percent said they trust cable news, followed by online at 45 percent.

Of all media, Americans trust social content the least (31%), with three out of five respondents reporting that “fake news” is the most prevalent on social media.

"Television has great impact on American conversations," said Hadassa Gerber, chief research officer at TVB. "In a world dominated by ‘fake news,’ it’s imperative that advertisers associate with a believable and trusted platform — local broadcast TV, the trust medium."

ADVERTISER NEWS

The chicken sandwich might be the best thing to ever happen to Popeyes, Business Insider reports. Restaurant Brands International, which owns Tim Hortons, Burger King and Popeyes, reported full-year and fourth-quarter results for 2019 yesterday — and Popeyes was a major highlight. The fast-food chain saw massive growth in the fourth quarter, with systemwide sales growth of more than 42 percent and U.S. comparable sales growth of 37.9 percent. This increase represents the biggest bump in comparable U.S. sales growth for Popeyes stores in the last five years by a long shot. “Popeyes launched an iconic Chicken Sandwich [in August] that has proven to be a game changer for the brand in every way,” RBI CEO José Cil said in a statement in the quarterly earnings release... Virtual meal-planning company eMeals now allows subscribers to send weekly food and beverage orders to Walmart, Kroger, Shipt, Amazon or Instacart for fulfillment. Winsight Grocery Business says the service has also signed deals with Bacardi, Jackson Family Wines and Francis Ford Coppola Winery to provide wine, beer and spirits recommendations as part of menu pairings... Growing e-commerce demands led delivery and warehouse firms to add 20,000 jobs in January, The Wall Street Journal reports. UPS and FedEx are beefing up staff for weekend delivery, and Satish Jindel, president of ShipMatrix, estimates Amazon has tripled the number of employees delivering its goods during the past year... Sycamore Partners is closing in on a deal to acquire lingerie brand Victoria's Secret from parent L Brands, sources said. It's not clear what role, if any, L Brands CEO Les Wexner would play under a new owner, the sources said... Amazon's U.S. workforce has topped 500,000 for the first time, up 43 percent from the year before and more than triple what it was five years ago, the company said last week. It gained 150,000 workers last year, more than the size of Apple's entire workforce. When it reported quarterly earnings, Amazon revealed that 150 million people were paying to be members of its Prime service.
IT’S AN ALL-TIME RATINGS LOW FOR THE OSCARS

A dearth of eligible blockbusters and a significant decline in the number of homes with access to over-the-air signals conspired to put the squeeze on TV’s most formidable awards show, as ratings for ABC’s broadcast of the 92nd Academy Awards slumped to an all-time low Sunday night, Ad Age reports.

According to Nielsen live-plus-same-day data, the latest Oscars averaged 23.6 million viewers, making it the least-watched Academy Awards ceremony in TV history. The previous low-water-mark was two years ago, when ABC’s Oscarscast averaged 26.5 million viewers.

Sunday night’s turnout marked a 20 percent decline compared to the 2019 broadcast, which averaged 29.6 million viewers. As one might expect, ABC’s numbers were down across all conceivable metrics. With an average draw of a 5.3 rating (approximately 6.9 million adults 18-49), the network’s demo deliveries plummeted 30 percent versus the year-ago 7.7 rating (9.9 million).

Among the biggest spenders in the broadcast, according to iSpot.tv data, were Cadillac, Verizon, Rolex, Hulu, M&Ms, Quibi, Adobe, Google, McDonald’s and Samsung Mobile. Estimates from SQAD MedCosts: National put the cost of the most expensive Oscars inventory at around $2.3 million per 30-second spot, while the average rate was more or less flat at $1.9 million a throw.

NETWORK NEWS

During tonight’s New Hampshire primary, ABC will be airing a live episode of blue-collar comedy The Conners in its regular 8 PM time slot. It’s part of the network’s push into live and event programming. The live episode will find Mark (Ames McNamara) watching the results of the primary for a school report with Harris (Emma Kenney), who is disillusioned by the electoral process and believes money’s influence in politics means real change is impossible... Jessica (Bellamy Young) will be reuniting with an old friend in the final episodes of the first season of Fox’s Prodigal Son. Dermot Mulroney (The Righteous Gemstones) will recur in the final five episodes of Season 1... One of television’s biggest drama series franchises is plotting a comeback. Deadline reports CBS is mulling a CSI event series to mark the 20th anniversary of the original series’ October 2000 premiere. The idea is for the new installment to be set in Las Vegas and be a sequel to the mothership CSI: Crime Scene Investigation, sources say. The hope is that the new incarnation would feature original cast members. William Petersen, who headlined CSI for its first nine seasons, and fellow original star Jorja Fox have reportedly been approached... ABC has given an early Season 4 renewal to hit drama series The Good Doctor. The pickup secures the network’s two most watched series for the 2020-2021 season, as fellow popular ABC medical drama Grey’s Anatomy is in the first year of a two-year renewal. The Good Doctor marks the first ABC scripted series renewal this season. The Good Doctor is ABC’s most-watched show this season after 35 days of delayed viewing across all linear and digital platforms, averaging 15.6 million total viewers with multi-platform playback.
TRUMP BUDGET THREATENS CPB FUNDING, AGAIN

In what’s become a predictable ritual, President Trump has proposed ending federal funding to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting over a two-year period, Inside Radio reports.

Trump’s proposed budget calls for CPB to receive just $30 million in fiscal year 2021 for “agency close-out costs,” which would help fund facilities costs, personal liabilities and existing contracts. The White House pegs the total close-out costs will be $58 million over the proposed two-year close out period.

The $30 million would be less than 7 percent of the $435 million CPB received in federal funding for noncommercial radio and television for 2020.

The administration contends that NPR and PBS, which both receive support from CPB, could make up any funding shortfalls by upping revenue from corporate sponsors, members and contributing foundations.

While the president has proposed phasing out CPB funding in the past, Congress has traditionally come to public media’s aid. In late December 2019, Congress approved and Trump signed a pair of federal spending bills under which CPB will get $465 million in its fiscal 2022 advance appropriation, a $20 million boost over what it received in the previous federal budget.

HEARST TAKES STAKE IN N.Y. MARKETING FIRM

Hearst Newspapers has made a “strategic investment” in The Martin Group, the largest marketing agency in the Western and Central New York area, MediaPost reports.

Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

The agency plans to use the funds to grow within the region and beyond.

Martin Group executives Lisa Strock and Matt Davison have become investors and equity-holders. Strock will be COO and Davison will be Chief Business Officer.

“The reach of Hearst is unique. It just gives us that pipeline to the whole world,” Davison told The Buffalo News. “Not a lot of agencies are able to get that without getting bought out.”

The Martin Group is the first traditional advertising, marketing and branding firm to be added to Hearst Newspapers’ wide range of businesses.

Hearst Newspapers has ownership interests in more than 360 companies, including cable television networks and stations, magazines, newspapers and other businesses.

A GRIM CORONAVIRUS MILESTONE: 1,000 DEAD

China’s daily death toll from the coronavirus topped 100 for the first time and pushed the total past 1,000 dead, authorities said yesterday after leader Xi Jinping visited a health center to rally public morale amid little sign the contagion is abating.

According to The Associated Press, though more offices and stores in China were reopening after the extended Lunar New Year break, many people appear to be staying home. Public health authorities are closely monitoring whether workers’ returning to cities and businesses resuming worsens the spread of the virus.

DO GROCERY STORES COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE?

Boosting the number of grocery stores in a city could help cut down on food waste and mitigate the harmful effects of climate change, a new study suggests — all while reducing households’ grocery expenses.

The study, published in the journal Manufacturing & Service Operations Management, developed a model using U.S. Census Bureau, grocery industry and academic study data. Author Elena Belavina, an associate professor at Cornell University’s S.C. Johnson College of Business, found that increasing grocery-store density reduces consumer waste by improving grocery access, the New York Post reports.

When grocery stores are more abundant, they’re closer to you and you end up visiting the store more frequently, Belavina said in a video explaining her research — “and as a result, you buy less.” “Very small increases in store density can have a very high impact,” she said.

SUNDAY NIELSEN RATINGS - LIVE + SAME DAY

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