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Variety's Massive Insight on Marketing

Catherine · Wednesday, April 15th, 2015

Will Palmer, CEO Movio

The Variety Massive Marketing Conference 2015 started with a bang and kept topping itself throughout the day. In an astute move, the opening panel – KEEPING UP WITH THE AUDIENCE: MARKETING ACROSS ALL PLATFORMS – set the tone of the day by focusing on non-traditional media outlets that have revolutionized the ways that entertainment brands reach their consumers.

Stephanie Gaines, VP Corporate Marketing at Yume explained that her company looks at audiences in a different way. "It's no longer about demographics, but about Tribes of Interest." Global Head of Entertainment and Strategy at Facebook, Jim Underwood, explained that the entire experience of consumption is evolving. "All the new forms of consumption are additive. What matters most [to Facebook] is discovery." Underwood acknowledges that the only way to grab the audience attention is to be "personal and relevant" to them. Yosi Glick, Co-Founder and CEO of Jinni was one of the more compelling speakers of the day. He suggests that "the only way to improve search is to classify it better." His company has built a system he calls "the taste model" which includes more listings under theme and tone.

Ironically, old school DVDs are making huge inroads when it comes to discovery. According to Mike Saska, SVP of Content and Marketing for Redbox, there are 42,000 kiosks with 40 million credit cards that they talk to weekly. "You want to be right there with them when they're at the kiosk." Redbox uses the information gathered at the point of purchase to make recommendations to consumers for the coming week. They are currently testing beacon technology on the kiosks, although some question whether this concept will be perceived as annoying or just downright creepy.

Will Palmer, CEO of Movio believes that if you focus more on the content and less on the demographic you will get a much more accurate measurement of engagement. But, given the fact that research data can be so granular, how do you dance on the fine line between total accuracy and creepiness? Palmer believes that it's best to allow people to opt into the process. "When you ask the consumer's opinion, you gives something to them. This encourages them to complete a very comprehensive survey. People like to have their opinion heard."

Loren Angelo, Head of Marketing, Audi of America

Loren Angelo, Head of Marketing for Audi of America, explained that his team measures their success by awareness. They seek partners like Marvel that "engage the cultural disposition." Angelo was especially excited about being able to connect the Audi brand with the character of *Iron Man*'s Tony Stark – a witty, smart, self-made millionaire who uses technology to do amazing things. Angelo believes that you have to be a provocateur – but with charm.

In a discussion about the relationship between brands and talent, digital influencer Bethany Mota explained that YouTube stars "feel more real and organic" to their fans. Everything she talks about is part of her real experience – which is what people look for in friends. Naturally, a number of brands want to harness this intense fan loyalty through sponsorship so they can ride the waves of Bethany's support to success. But Mota is quick to point out that she also talks about products and brands she genuinely likes but is NOT being paid to talk about. She believes that this honesty and truthfulness is what makes her relationship with her fans so strong. It is interesting to note that Aeropostale has backed a clothing line with Bethany's eponymous label – designed with the full input of her devoted fan base. Pleased with the outcome of this relationships, Bethany's next steps will include a foray into home décor.

Bethany Mota, Digital Influencer

There are some interesting lessons to be learned from The CW Television Network. Caty Burgess, VP of Media Strategies, claims that 23% of their overall viewing comes from digital and is thankful that the network embraced it – in both promotion and viewing – from the beginning. The CW has a strong social team to back its commitment to reaching different consumer groups across different platforms. Still, their primary focus is on the millennials. "If you try to sell the 18-24 audience in a traditional way, you're going to have problems."

At the same time, Jill Hotchkiss, VP of Marketing and Creative at Disney XD, has to take a step back to Gen Z, where she faces the challenge of maneuvering digital content through the kid's space. There is a further challenge thrown into the mix because Disney XD's on-air audience is 6-11, but their online audience is 13+. Their mandate is to innovate by trying as many new and different things as possible. "Fail, fail fast and move on" is the mantra that guides her team.

Perhaps the most interesting panel of the day was wrapped around the topic of how marketers are making viral happen. Jonathan Perelman, VP of Marketing at BuzzFeed Motion Pictures – a company that may be the most reliable source of viral videos – advised that "you shouldn't think about viral-ity. You should think about something that is sharable because it has impacted you and you think it will impact others, too." He acknowledges that sharing something is a very personal act because "you're putting yourself on the line when you start doing that." BuzzFeed believes that all social video starts a conversation, but that "there is a lot more nuance in creating something that will work with a certain audience." At the same time, editorial or branded content requires that you simultaneously service two brands – the brand that is sponsoring the content and the brand that is

making the content. Ultimately, it's more about the idea than the brand. The idea is what really excites him. Perelman points to the bottom line: "It's more important to hit 100 of the right people than 1 million of the wrong people."

Variety's ongoing conference series includes the upcoming Power Of Women Summit on April 24th and the Entertainment & Technology Summit on April 30th – both in New York City. Variety will return to Los Angeles with the Purpose: Family Entertainment & Faith-Based Summit on June 25th.

Top image: Ironman and Audi share the marketing spotlight.

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