
Cynopsis: **DIGITAL**

11/04/08

Good morning, it's **Tuesday, November 4, 2008**, and this is your first early morning digital briefing. Don't forget to vote!

There's a new way for video portals to benefit from user submissions of copyright protected clips on the fly. **MySpace** and online ad technology provider **Auditude** have signed a deal with **MTV Networks** to dynamically place pre and post-roll ads within clips of its shows such as Comedy Central's The Daily Show and MTV's The Hills uploaded to social networking site by fans. The agreement even gives MySpace users the right to upload full episodes to the portal. Auditude's system also tags videos with an attribution overlay informing viewers of the show's original airdate and a link back to where they can purchase a digital copy of the episode.

~ **MULTIPLATFORM CONTENT NEWS** ~

The New York Times announced an ambitious selection of multiplatform content covering the election. Times' political correspondents will deliver video reports on *nytimes.com* at 30-minute intervals throughout the night beginning at 7 pm ET. A pop-up dashboard sponsored by Areva will provide an up-to-the-minute tally of electoral votes, breaking news updates and state-by-state results. The Times' [mobile site](#) will offer video updates and breaking news alerts when key races are decided. The paper will also publish two special print supplements on Nov. 5 and 6 detailing the results of the presidential, Congressional and gubernatorial races.

Expanding on an initial offering of Peanuts classic specials, **Warner Bros. Digital Distribution** is launching a brand new animated series based on the Charlie Brown, Snoopy and the rest of the Charles Schultz gang, available exclusively on **iTunes**. The 4-minute Peanuts Motion Comics webisodes are produced by Studio B and culled from comic strips originally created in 1964. The first two selections, in which Linus runs for class president with Charlie Brown as his running mate, will offered for free. Subsequent shorts will sell for 99 cents for a bundle of two. A season pass of all 20 will go for \$7.99.

Following its mission to bring power to the people, **Current TV** will cover today's election integrating a full selection of user generated and user-edited content. Current's on air Election All-nighter Live will feature real-time Digg headlines, tweets from Twitter and video commentary from [12seconds.tv](#) and [Current.com](#). The site will provide breaking news and data including state-by-state projections and Electoral College and popular vote scoreboards.

Call for Content: To promote its new Motherhood-themed channel [Wetv.com](#) is looking for pictures of tikes and toddlers for a new Cutest Baby Contest. The parents of the most popular bundle of joy will win \$5,000 based on user votes and We.com judges' findings.

~ **INNOVATORS & START-UPS** ~

Social Media widget and app creator [RockYou](#) secured an additional \$17 million in C Round financing from Softbank (leading shareholder of Yahoo! Japan) and SK Telecom Ventures. When added to its initial \$35 million C Round led by DCM, the investment round totals \$52 million - bringing the company's overall funding total to \$67 million. As part of the deal RockYou and Softbank will launch a joint venture to create apps for the Asian PC and mobile markets. The company also plans to open new offices in New York, Los Angeles and Detroit.

Three was the magic number for two popular web services yesterday. Yahoo's photo sharing site [Flickr](#) registered its 3 billionth photo, almost exactly a year after reaching its 2 billionth photo. Meanwhile online ad supported music streaming service [SpiralFrog](#) added its 3 millionth song to its catalog. Spiral Frog says it now has more than 2.3 million registered users.

HD stock footage specialist **FootageBank HD** launched [footagehead.com](#), a new royalty-free division offering publishers access to more than 10,000 new clips for distribution via online and mobile platforms. Each clip is offered in 16x9 format for a flat rate of \$300 each.

~ GADGETS & APPS ~

Speaking avatar creator **Oddcast** has come up with a [creepy app](#) enabling film lovers to insert their image into scenes from classic movies. An initial Halloween-themed licensing agreement with **Twentieth Century Fox** and **MGM Home Entertainment** utilizes Oddcast's 3D VideoStar technology to integrate user submitted photos into clips from 6 horror flicks including The Omen, Child's Play and David Cronenberg's The Fly as a viral way to promote DVD sales. Fox/MGM have signed on to run a similar promotion for a selection of holiday films.

Online music licensing platform [YouLicense.com](#) announced a new widget allowing music artists to offer licensing of their work via MySpace, Facebook, Bebo, blogger and wordpress.

CBS Interactive's [Last.fm](#) launched a new application on Billboard.com allowing users to access the site's ad supported streaming music service. The app highlights tracks of artists who have landed on Billboard's special "All-Time Hot 100" chart including Mariah Carey, Chubby Checker, Usher, Santana and The Police.

~ TECHNOLOGY DEALS, MERGERS AND SKIRMISHES ~

The **Screen Actors Guild** is planning a major crack down on web shows beginning next year who employ SAG actors in front of the camera without an agreement in place with the union, per *TV Week*. For this reason web producers such as For Your Imagination are already beginning to refuse to work with SAG members because the economics of web video don't yet support the extra costs involved. According to SAG, the signatory must pay about 6% of ad and subscription revenue earned to the union once a show is up online for 6 months or more. In addition, the producer must contribute 14.8% of all gross compensation to the SAG Producers Pension and Health Plans.

The **French Senate** voted overwhelmingly in favor of a new "three strikes" system that would require ISPs to disconnect users from the internet who share copyright protected files upon a third offense, reports *ArsTechnica*. The measure runs counter to a vote taken earlier this year by the European Parliament, which rejected the idea of cutting off users' connections. The French Assembly has yet to vote on the matter.

Lifetime Networks has selected Burlington, MA-based **Signiant** as its primary provider of digital media

distribution technology. Signiant will manage and accelerate SD and HD content between the network's East and West coast post production facilities.

~ DIGITAL ADVERTISING ~

In an effort to appease regulators **Yahoo** and **Google** have revised their search agreement adding new provisions to limit the scope of the deal, reports *the WSJ*.

Mobile services provider **3rd Dimension** unveiled a new national mobile ad network in conjunction with **NBC**, which agreed to act as exclusive national ad sales partner. The Mobileyes Advertising Network will serve up ads in conjunction with the company's live mobile video traffic feed currently up and running in 9 U.S. markets. Interactive ads appear during six to ten second intervals preceding the display of live traffic video. The ads are served in rotation and can be purchased for both specific day parts and locations.

~ TRENDS, RESEARCH, ETC. ~

Oprah's endorsement of Amazon's e-reader **Kindle** on Oct. 24 had a palpable effect on interest in the device, according to a number of search, web and blog buzz measurements compiled by *AdAge*:

- Visits to Amazon.com were up 6% on Oct. 24 from the previous Friday and up over 4% during the weekend, per Hitwise
- Traffic to Oprah.com spiked by more than 5 times on Oct. 24 according to Compete
- 80% of blog posts about the Kindle mentioned the Oprah endorsement, per BuzzLogic
- Search traffic for the word "kindle" increased 479% on Oct. 24, per Google Insights

~ EXECUTIVE MOVES ~

George Kliavkoff, **NBC Universal's** first **Chief Digital Officer** and one of the leaders behind the Hulu launch, is leaving the company at the end of the year to pursue other interests, reports *CNET*.

Former MSN Media Network GM **Jeff Dossett** has joined **Yahoo** as **SVP/U.S. Audience** replacing former head of media operations Scott Moore who is leaving the company. Jeff will report to Hilary Schneider, EVP of Yahoo U.S.

Online video product tour creator **SellPoint** has tapped **George Giatzis** as its new **VP of Sales**. George will be responsible for overseeing sales the company's video product tours with a particular focus on the advertising and marketing communities. He comes to SellPoint from Ecast and also held senior-level sales positions with Discovery, Oxygen and Premier Retail Networks.

~ WEBSITE OF THE DAY ~

The first web 2.0-powered election is upon us and it's worth a look back at some trends in the space. Politics was the leading category gainer in August according to comScore, responsible for 14 million+ uniques during the month - a third more traffic than in Aug. 2007. Politically-themed sites such as Huffingtonpost.com, realclearpolitics.com and politico.com exploded onto the scene, establishing

themselves as important resources users and established media brands have come to rely on. Mostly terrific online efforts by CNN, MTV, YouTube and other outlets have increased awareness immensely and are expected to help drive the best voter turn-out we've seen since the 1960's. And, of course, the candidates themselves have relied on their perspective web sites to reach voters. If web traffic equates to votes then Obama would seem to be riding a wave. Unique visitors to BarackObama.com outpaced those to JohnMcCain.com nearly 2 to 1 in September, according to Nielsen Online. The unique audience at BarackObama.com went from 6.1 million in August to 7.9 million in September, almost double the 4.2 million visits to JohnMcCain.com. Finally some excellent resources have emerged to provide unbiased data to voters who still may not have made up their minds. Check out VoteSmart.com for a comprehensive database of information on candidates' voting records, issue positions and public statements. OpenSecrets.com is a good a place to, in the words of Lester in The Wire, to "follow the money."

Later -- Wayne

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