
Moderator: Anna Everett, Professor, Film & Media Studies. Digitization is a double-edged sword for distributors, offering new delivery platforms and creative opportunities but also inspiring unforeseen attitudes and practices among consumers. It opens the door to new commercial services, creating novel and sometimes uneasy relationships between Hollywood and Silicon Valley.

Digital platforms pose other challenges as well. They free up physical shelf space and speed product delivery, but they also create complications for storage and archiving. They raise significant questions about consumer rights to resell, remix, and transfer content. This panel explores the social, industrial, and economic implications of recent technological innovations in media distribution: Horst Stipp, Executive VP, Global Business Strategy, The Advertising Research Foundation; Kelly Summers, VP, Business Development and New Media Strategy, Walt Disney Studios; Randy Shaffer, Western Regional Sales Manager, Advertising Business Group, Interactive Advertising Business, Microsoft Corp; Joseph Turow, Robert Lewis Shayon Prof., Communication, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania; Philip Napoli, Prof., Communication & Media Management, Director, Donald McGannon Communication Research Center, Fordham University; Max Dawson, Assist. Prof., Radio, Television, Film, Northwestern University.

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Moderator: Jennifer Holt, Assist. Prof., Film & Media Studies. Not all media conglomerates are created equal, and not all have managed digital pipelines and properties in the same manner or to the same effect. The various holdings, target demographics, corporate identities, and content franchises of the Big Six have created a fascinating array of blueprints for business in the digital era. Disney is developing properties for tween boys with the creation of Disney XD and its purchase of Marvel Entertainment. News Corporation is reaping a digital bounty from the online services of The Wall Street Journal. Time Warner
is focusing on the multimedia exploitation of core content. And NBC executives boast about cable and online properties. Digital strategies are central to the ambitions of today’s media conglomerates, yet little consensus exists regarding best practices.

Panelists compare and contrast digital strategies of the major conglomerates, assessing how each has responded to the imperatives and challenges of delivering content in the current media landscape: Thomas Gewecke, Pres., Warner Bros. Digital Distribution; Richard Berger, Senior VP, Global Digital Strategy & Operations, Sony Home Entertainment; Aaron Dignan, Founding Partner, Undercurrent; Thomas Schatz, Mrs. Mary Gibbs Jones Centennial Chair in Communication, UT at Austin; Eli Noam, Director of Columbia Institute for Tele-Information and Professor of Finance & Economics, Columbia Business School; Alisa Perren, Assist. Prof., Communication, Georgia State University.

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Moderator: Linda Putnam, Professor of Communications
The Writers Strike and Guild Negotiations of 2007 revealed the range of contradictory views on compensation for creative labor. Many media consumers supported the strikers, but they were quietly delighted about the cheap and accessible content they enjoyed via digital delivery systems. Guild members welcomed public support, yet some expressed frustration about the growing disrespect for intellectual property among many of their fans.

Thus, consumer enthusiasm for the liberties of the digital era was curiously juxtaposed against the anxieties of media personnel at all levels of the industry. Resolving these tensions could prove difficult as a younger generation matures with little regard for the business models that governed film and television for much of the twentieth century. Panelists reflect on the changing ways creative labor is commercialized, categorized, and compensated in the digital distribution era: Jonathan Handel, Attorney, TroyGould & Contributing Editor, The Hollywood Reporter; Jay Roth, National Executive Director, Director’s Guild of America; Felicia Henderson, TV Writer/Producer, Zakin-Hunter Chairholder of Screenwriting, Film, Television & Digital Media, UCLA; Denise Mann, Head, UCLA Producers Program & Assoc. Prof., Film, TV, Digital Media, UCLA; Serra Tinic, Assoc. Prof., Sociology, University of Alberta; Miranda J Banks, Assist. Prof., Visual & Media Arts, Emerson College.

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