YOU CAN’T MEASURE WHAT YOU CAN’T SEE.
If your job depends on investing your marketing spend for growth, you want a model that connects online and offline impressions and purchases, and also includes every single channel and touchpoint. You need a model that understands the difference between impressions and identity. One that incorporates external factors and walled garden data to see how they impact sales. And helps you predict the future, not just interpret the past.

neustar.biz/marketing/marketing-analytics
American Success Story

Sarah Paulson has taken FX, Emmy voters and now movie studios by storm. Next up: Netflix.

BY JASON LYNCH
IT'S ALL ABOUT THE STORY
HONORING THE FINEST BRANDED STORYTELLING OF THE YEAR
ENTRIES CLOSE OCT. 16

FIND YOUR CATEGORY ENTER TODAY

Short-Form
Best Use of Short-Form Fiction
Best Use of Short-Form Nonfiction
Best Use of Short-Form Fiction Serial/Series
Best Use of Short-Form Nonfiction Serial/Series
Best Use of Short-Form Film

Other
Best Use of Influencer/Creator Marketing
Best Charity/Pro Bono/Pro-Social Effort
Best Sponsored Content
Best Use of Social
Best Use of Animation
Best Use of Live Experience/Events
Best Use of Viral
Best Use of Virtual Reality
Best Live Broadcast/Livestreaming
Best Use of Brand/Product Integration Into Existing IP
Best Music Video

Long-Form
Best Use of Long-Form Fiction
Best Use of Long-Form Nonfiction
Best Use of Long-Form Fiction Serial/Series
Best Use of Long-Form Nonfiction Serial/Series
Best Use of Long-Form Film

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DOUBLE THE FUN?

SOME MARKETERS HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT LONGER TWEETS. BY LAUREN JOHNSON

On Tuesday, Twitter announced that it is beginning to test longer tweets, doubling the site's signature pithy 140-character missives to 280 characters. The company is testing the new format, it said, because 140 characters can be limiting and may keep people from using the site altogether. With more characters, ideally Twitter can lure in new users to keep the company growing amid years of missed expectations from Wall Street. Not everyone welcomed the news, though: Some marketers said that they were afraid longer tweets wouldn't be authentic to the platform and may make it harder for users to navigate the site, while others worried that the change may make it harder for brands to organically pop up in the newsfeed, especially as Twitter tests non-chronological tweets in its algorithm.

Audi

A lot of car advertising treats the obstacles that drivers face on the road as literally faceless threats—an avalanche of rocks, or a piece of cargo falling blamelessly off a pickup truck. But let’s face it: The real problem on the roads is the other drivers—or, if you like, the clowns who share the streets with us. Audi and BBH London take that playful epithet and run with it in an entertaining 90-second spot directed by Ringan Ledwidge (who famously teamed up with BBH London in 2012 for The Guardian's “Three Little Pigs” spot). The whole production has an inspired lunacy to it—and almost every scene delivers chuckles. —Tim Nudd

80% OF INSTAGRAM USERS VOLUNTARILY CONNECT WITH A BRAND ON THE PLATFORM, COO MARNE LEVINE SAID AT AN ADVERTISING WEEK EVENT IN NEW YORK.

“[He] had some positive impact on changing the sexual and social values of his time—and had a lot of fun in the process.”

HUGH HEFNER, ASKED BY THE NEW YORK OBSERVER IN 2003 WHAT HIS EPITAPH WOULD BE. THE PLAYBOY FOUNDER PASSED AWAY LAST WEEK AT AGE 91.

THE WEEK IN MEDIA AND MARKETING

The Week in Emojis

Snapchat opens up 3-D AR filters to advertisers.

Ikea acquires on-demand services company TaskRabbit.

Dyson invests $2.6 billion to develop electric car, due in 2020.

MTA to roll out 50,000 video displays in NYC subway cars.
Just four years ago, Marvel debuted its first live-action TV series, Marvel’s Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. Its TV empire has exploded since then, and the Disney-owned company now has 13 different series currently airing or preparing to debut in the next year, across six broadcast, cable and streaming outlets (see sidebar).

As two new Marvel shows premiere—Marvel’s Inhumans last Friday on ABC; Fox’s The Gifted on Monday night—buyers are worrying about how the influx will affect the already overstuffed superhero genre, which includes six series produced by Marvel’s rival, DC. “Whenever something is overplayed, it dilutes that franchise or could dilute the whole genre,” said Maureen Bosetti, chief investment officer at Initiative. “Marvel has been very successful in the movies and on television, so there’s a good opportunity, but I’m always concerned about oversaturating any genre, no matter how successful it has been historically. When there’s too much, things start to look the same and audiences start to get fragmented.”

At first, Marvel concentrated its TV shows on ABC and Netflix (which now airs six separate series), but expanded its output this year to include programs on FX, Fox and Hulu, with a pair of Freeform series set for 2018. “It’s everywhere now,” said another buyer of Marvel’s slate. “There’s so many places that you can get it, it’s not sustainable.”

The company, however, counters that its series are diverse and distinctive enough to support such a robust slate. “One of the things we’re very proud of is each of the shows has a different feel, metaphor, cast and tone,” said Jeph Loeb, evp, head of Marvel Television. “I’m not sure you would be asking that question if we were making police shows, medical shows or lawyer shows.”

Loeb said while the Marvel brand might initially draw in audiences, his shows at their core aren’t about which character has which superpower. “The Gifted, to us, is a family drama. Are their super-cool powers and X-Men elements in there? Absolutely. If that’s the reason to watch the show, awesome. But if you want to watch a show about people who have real problems in a real, grounded world, hopefully you’ll get caught up in the story, and not so much in the powers,” said Loeb.

Gary Newman, Fox Television Group CEO and chairman, said he isn’t worried either about potential oversaturation as his network launches The Gifted. “Our show is unique and specific,” Newman said. “It lays itself out well for thematic storytelling, and what does it mean to be a family? It’s not going to have as heavy a mythology as some of the other Marvel shows, so there’s a great opportunity for it.”

Still, as the superhero genre has snowballed, at least one network is taking precautions. While The CW is adding a fifth DC superhero series, Black Lightning, at midseason, network president Mark Pedowitz said he won’t put more than four genre shows on the air simultaneously. “When we first got into the superhero world, we were pretty much by ourselves,” said Pedowitz. “We recognize that, so we’re going to be ultra-selective about what happens next.”

But for Marvel, it’s business as usual as long as viewers continue tuning in. Said Loeb, “Whether or not there are too many genre shows is going to be something that the audience tells us.”

TELEVISION
CAN MARVEL DEFEAT SUPERHERO FATIGUE?
THE COMPANY HAS 13 TV SERIES ACROSS SIX NETWORKS, AS BUYERS WORRY ABOUT GENRE OVERSATURATION. BY JASON LYNCH

MARVEL’S LUCKY 13
These are all the live-action Marvel series that are currently airing or scheduled to debut within the next year.

ABC
Marvel’s Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.
Marvel’s Inhumans

Fox
The Gifted

Freeform
Marvel’s Cloak & Dagger (2018)
Marvel’s New Warriors (2018)

Hulu
Marvel’s Runaways (Nov. 21)

FX
Legion

Netflix
Marvel’s Daredevil
Marvel’s The Defenders
Marvel’s Iron Fist
Marvel’s Jessica Jones
Marvel’s Luke Cage
Marvel’s The Punisher (this fall)
Ecommerce Is the New Box to Check

AMAZON HAS LED THE WAY IN TURNING WEB COMMERCE INTO AD SALES. CAN A BULK-GOODS STARTUP BE THE NEXT BIG THING? BY CHRISTOPHER HEINE

This month, shoppers looking to stock up on Halloween candy can buy 160 mini chocolate bars for a mere $16 on ecommerce site Boxed. And starting this week, the confectionery marketers looking to target them with ads can virtually jostle for position like trick-or-treaters searching for the last Snickers in a plastic cauldron.

That’s because Boxed, a 4-year-old digital wholesaler with a few million monthly customers, is introducing a real-time auction platform for its top-of-the-page, sponsored search results. The New York-based company has offered ads for a few years through its six-person sales team, but is now aiming to ramp up revenue from its ad inventory by pitting bidder versus bidder—and in the process, take away a chunk of business from ecommerce powerhouses Amazon and Walmart, each of which has been in the real-time-bidding game for a few years. Boxed will also be going up against the formidable Jet.com, the Walmart-owned ecommerce site that debuted its initial ad offering in August.

Ecommerce advertising is heating up to seize the huge opportunity provided by the digital retail market, estimated to exceed $400 billion in the U.S. this year, according to the National Retail Federation. But even with stakes that high, what makes Boxed think it can compete with retail titans, chiefly Amazon?

“It’s a little bit of a different mindset—we are a virtual warehouse,” noted Jackson Jeyanayagam, CMO, Boxed. “Amazon shoppers spend 1 to 2 minutes there because they already know what they want. People spend 15 to 20 minutes on our platform”—which, in theory, means more time to target them with relevant ads.

Michael Duda, managing partner at agency Bullish (which has advertised on Amazon in recent months for clients such as Balance Bar, GNC and GoDaddy), thinks that Jeyanayagam’s company has at least a puncher’s chance to take on heavy ecommerce hitters for ad dollars.

“What’s great is that Boxed gets the breadbasket crowd in the middle of the country, and not just the cool kids on the coasts,” Duda said.

But Amazon is far more sophisticated, offering ads via search, display, regular video and NFL Thursday Night Football live video. Morgan Stanley analysts recently predicted that Amazon’s ad business will grow to $5 billion next year and $7 billion in 2020.

The Seattle-based tech behemoth, which leverages troves of shopping data, often sells ads to CPGs that move droves of toothbrushes, lightbulbs, snacks and more. Its ads also attract telecoms, restaurants, airlines, fundraisers and automotive brands because Amazon’s data targeting and campaign measurement can apparently provide them with unusual stats.

Saurabh Sharma, director, ad platform at Amazon, described a discovery made by his team and an auto brand: “People who were buying paper towels were more likely to be pickup truck owners,” he said. “And though we don’t sell [vehicles] on Amazon, the fact that we could provide those shopping signals was powerful.”

On the measurement side, to say, “Here are your customers, here’s what they do from a lifestyle perspective in the aggregate”—it was very valuable and helped the company craft better campaigns across all of their channels.

Oscar Peña, digital marketing director at Hispanic-focused agency Chamoy Creative, just spent three months testing a blend of Amazon, Facebook and Google ads for an undisclosed clothier. Now, after analyzing the trial phase’s results, the fashion client is ready to embark on a full-throttle campaign for the holiday season.

“We still believe in a mix, but we are going to be spending more on Amazon than before,” Peña said. “People were four times as likely to buy the product after seeing it on Amazon. We also got a 50 percent for brand recognition.”

Bruce Kiernan, practice lead of performance marketing at digital agency MEC, said that while client budgets have only been “moderately” shifting more spend toward ads on ecommerce sites, “we do expect to see this number increase.”

Indeed, it’s not hard to understand the allure of targeting folks while they’re actually shopping instead of only thinking about it on a search engine. “People on Amazon and Boxed demonstrate purchase intent,” said marketing consultant David Deal. “Why not make your product visible to them?”

Not everyone is enamored with ads on ecommerce platforms, though. Justin Warshavsky, a media planner with CTP, said that Amazon ads for his nonprofit client Save the Children were outdone by campaigns on OwnerIQ and Distillery’s programmatic systems.

“Amazon was not a top performer,” Warshavsky said. “We didn’t consider trying it again.”

Perhaps that could provide an opening for an upstart like Boxed. But ultimately Boxed—and competitors like Amazon and Jet.com—are just trying to go up against Google, which, per eMarketer, will sell $35 billion in ads this year.

Interestingly, Jeyanayagam mentioned the digital mammoth as one of the reasons his real-time bidding will succeed. “Ad buyers are used to it thanks to Google,” he said.
Harley Hits the Road With Millennials

THE ICONIC MOTORCYCLE BRAND TAKES AIM AT A NEW GENERATION OF RIDERS VIA GAMING.

BY T.L. STANLEY

Ever wanted to hop on a Harley-Davidson Iron 883 motorcycle and weave through gridlocked Manhattan streets? How about hitting the expanse of historic Route 66 while feeling your tires on the asphalt and the wind against your skin? Turns out you can—at least virtually.

Those scenarios are just two of the many available to players of the upcoming Ubisoft video game The Crew 2, an open-road racing adventure set to debut in March 2018. The game is one of the unconventional ways that Harley-Davidson, a 114-year-old legacy brand, is reaching out to millennials and women as it looks to broaden its consumer base beyond its core baby boomers.

The Crew 2 is “gender agnostic,” and like its hit predecessor, The Crew—which has amassed 12 million players—is expected to appeal to young male and female gamers and potentially anyone with a passion for motor sports, said Stephane Jankowski, producer at Ubisoft’s Ivory Tower Studio, which created the franchise.

“We used a lot of feedback from the community in developing the new game,” Jankowski said. “We’ve taken a sandbox approach where players can create their own stories and ask themselves, ‘What do I want to do today?’”

That tactic could help expand the global player pool for Ubisoft and increase the exposure and age range for Harley, which plans to integrate more models into the game’s upgrades next year. And since the franchise earned a PG-13 rating for its first installment, on par with Disney’s live-action flicks, it provides a kid-friendly antidote to the hyper-violent Grand Theft Autos of the world. (The Crew 2 hasn’t been rated yet.)

Many children, by the time they’re 8 or 9 years old, have had “a motorcycle moment,” according to Harley’s research, meaning that they’ve been exposed to riding through someone they know or via a piece of pop culture and want to experience it for themselves, said Heather Malenshek, the brand’s vp, global marketing.

“This is a no-risk environment for them to try out riding and have fun with it,” she said of The Crew 2, which offers a realistic virtual jaunt with no road rash. “And it links to our long-term goals of planting the seed with kids and young adults who can become the next generation of riders.”

The game is a solid marketing match for Harley because it allows for customization and embraces a “thrill-seeking, adventure-loving” psychographic looking for “freedom on two wheels,” execs said.

Developers completely remodeled the U.S. cities and highways in The Crew 2 which, for the first time, lets players switch from road vehicles like Harleys, Ferraris and Porsches to boats and planes to amp up the stakes and challenge gamers’ skills.

This isn’t the iconic brand’s first link to video games, having embedded its motorcycles in Atari’s Test Drive Unlimited 2 and Sega’s King of the Road. Two Harley-branded games of its own, Race Around the World and Race Across America, came from Wizard Works.

In another millennial-skewing move, Harley also re-signed a deal with the Ultimate Fighting Championship last year. The partnership, which began in 2007, includes viewing parties at local dealerships, “UFC Fight for the Troops” events on U.S. military bases and hiring MMA talent like Cain Velasquez and Paige VanZant as spokespeople for the brand.

Much of Harley’s recent outreach has happened on digital and mobile, with live video and branded content, contributing to a 6 percent sales bump between 2010 and 2016 among young demos, women, Latinos and African Americans, accounting for 40 percent of the company’s U.S. sales, execs said.

Digging in further, Harley recently rolled out its 2018 model year products with a group of social influencers, including actor Jason Momoa, who posted a hero shot on Instagram.

With its goal of 2 million U.S. riders by 2027, Harley is also focused on understanding “consumer life stages, cultural shifts and where people are in their riding journey, despite age or gender,” Malenshek said.

A new TV ad campaign with the tagline “All for freedom, freedom for all” aims to cultivate new audiences while still catering to the loyalists. The spots come from Team Ignite, a new IPG division that won the Harley creative, media and digital business last year after a global review.

The work, using Primal Scream’s Movin’ on Up as a soundtrack, features riders of all stripes, including women, youngsters, weekend warriors, professional racers and a pug wearing goggles and a Harley hoodie. The goal, Malenshek said, is inviting “riders and nonriders across the globe to embrace their individuality.”

“We’ve taken a sandbox approach where players can create their own stories.’

Stephane Jankowski, producer at Ubisoft’s Ivory Tower Studio, which created The Crew franchise.

THE ICONIC MOTORCYCLE BRAND TAKES AIM AT A NEW GENERATION OF RIDERS VIA GAMING.
For harnessing the generosity that makes Americans good and supporting the institution that makes Americans great—the classroom.
No Substitute for Experience

REFINERY29’S LIVE EVENT FRANCHISE 29ROOMS PUTS ATTENDEES AND BRANDS AT THE CENTER OF CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT. BY ALBIE HUESTON

When Refinery29 launched 29Rooms in 2015, we set out to create a physical manifestation of our brand — reflecting the topics our audience cares about most, our commitment to celebrating diverse creative voices, and the engagement we strive to ignite with brands and our audience. We wanted to turn the ultra-exclusive New York Fashion Week experience on its head with an event that was open to all and encouraged participation in a new type of space that sparked imagination and content creation.

Since then, 29Rooms has inspired thousands of people in real life (IRL) and millions more online by giving them the ability to immerse themselves in creativity and engage with artists, causes and brands in ways that, before the experience of 29Rooms, were rarely seen.

As a concept, 29Rooms was a tough sell at first (as new, untested things often are), and we were lucky to have partners that believed in our vision and were willing to experiment with experiential marketing.

By putting our audience center stage, sparking conversation and encouraging play, we have inspired a new world of opportunity. For brands and collaborators, we have created a different type of marketing and advertising format in a time when more and more consumers are avoiding traditional interruptive messaging in favor of experiences along the new customer journey. This is a pathway to real exposure: people-powered marketing rooted in authentic real-world settings.

Creating 29Rooms was — and sometimes still feels like — uncharted territory. We took a lot of risks and learned tons along the way in order to elevate the experience each year to fuel positive change, cut through social noise and push boundaries.

Three things that have remained constant since day one are the value of our audience, the importance of telling stories that matter and the opportunity for self-expression in igniting positive change.

Put the Audience Center Stage

At 29Rooms, we build the space, but it is our visitors who power it. We always hoped the audience would respond, but it wasn’t until opening night in 2015 that we truly saw the magic come to life. One of our branded rooms was created in partnership with Disney, celebrating the launch of @MinnieStyle on Instagram during New York Fashion Week. We designed the room in collaboration with the artists, Confetti Systems, and it featured a tinsel maze that wound into a stage area where guests could create stop-motion videos and flip books using Minnie-inspired props.

A line formed, and people began choreographing their dance moves while they waited. When they reached the stage and performed for the camera, everyone in line cheered. In that moment, they were the stars of the show and, at the same time, had become brand advocates for Disney. With every performance and social interaction, we injected a sense of pure fun into the brand.

Meaningful IRL Moments

This year, our Gender Neutral room, created in collaboration with Jill Soloway’s Topple and artist Xavier Schipani, took guests back to the familiar sanctity of a high school bathroom, where they were able to listen to first-person stories about gender identity from artists, filmmakers, actors, musicians and influencers like Roberta Colindrez, Rhys Ernst, Alexandra Grey, Amos Mac, Bashir Naim and Pidgeon Pagonis. Through intimate spaces like this, we were able to bring important issues to the surface in a way that created empathy and understanding. We were also able to tap into multiple senses and emotions, and create a dialogue and sense of community around highly personal moments of self-discovery.

Fuel Creativity

At the core of 29Rooms is creating an environment where attendees can express themselves and challenge conventions. We bring together culturally credible artists, brands, causes and our audience to play alongside each other in the space.

These unique combinations of talent spark passions, inspire possibility and fuel creation of all kinds. In 29Rooms, guests have made music videos, held fashion shoots, shot art films, taken wedding and engagement photos, and so much more. All of this has created the ultimate canvas for creation, a level of connection that breeds engagement, and the permission they feel to play creates a lasting connection long after they’ve left.

I talk a lot about risk-taking and pushing yourself outside of your comfort zone, both in my personal life and at work. 29Rooms was one of those risks, and watching it grow over the last three years is proof that risk-taking is worth it.

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COMING SOON
2017 BRAND SAVE

PRESENTED BY
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Why the inimitable Sarah Paulson is the future of TV.

BY JASON LYNCH
She won an Emmy, SAG Award and Golden Globe for her bravura performance as Marcia Clark in last year’s FX miniseries, The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story, but it took Sarah Paulson almost another year to confirm what the TV industry really thinks about her acting chops. Earlier this year, her longtime collaborator and O.J. executive producer Ryan Murphy offered the actress the lead in Ratched, an origin story he is executive producing that focuses on Nurse Ratched, the iconic, sadistic nurse from the 1975 film One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest. Murphy shopped the project around to networks, offering a package for the first time that included his frequent muse Paulson attached as star and producer. “That was very exciting and also very scary, because I thought, oh God, what if they take this out, and people are like, ‘No thanks, we’re good. We don’t need a Sarah Paulson show,’” says Paulson. “Thankfully, it all worked out very well.”

In the wake of last year’s most acclaimed TV performance, everyone—TV networks and movie studios alike—wants to be in business with Paulson. Ratched sparked a high-stakes bidding war, with Netflix ultimately fending off suitors like Hulu and Apple (which is developing an original TV series strategy) for the project last month, giving the drama a hefty two-season commitment. And that is only one of three high-profile TV series that Paulson will film over the next year. In 2018, she’ll begin production on Katrina, the third installment in Murphy’s American Crime Story anthology series for FX, and continue on the other Murphy FX anthology hit that started her meteoric rise, American Horror Story.

This year’s AHS installment, Cult, debuted last month to an audience of 6.9 million viewers, and ranks as the year’s No. 3 most-watched scripted cable series in total viewers and the 18-49 and 18-34 demos, behind only The Walking Dead and Game of Thrones. She’ll be back for Season 8 next year, while also appearing in a trio of major movies: Ocean’s Eight (an all-female spinoff to the Ocean’s Eleven trilogy due out next June, co-starring Sandra Bullock and Anne Hathaway), The Post (a Steven Spielberg-directed drama due out in December, about the Washington Post’s decision to publish the Pentagon Papers in 1971) and Glass (M. Night Shyamalan’s sequel to both Split and 2000’s Unbreakable). It’s a slate of meaty TV and film projects that any actor would envy. “Feeling a little bit of the incredible excitement and joy she’s experienced—having her artistry and talent recognized—has been really wonderful,” says FX Networks CEO John Landgraf of Paulson, who has become one of his network’s MVPs. “It’s been fun watching her dreams come true.”
When Paulson first crossed paths with Murphy in 2004, guest-starring on a Season 2 episode of his plastic surgery drama Nip/Tuck as a woman who claimed to have stigmata, “I didn’t know that was going to lead to my world spinning on the Ryan Murphy axis,” she says. Neither did the prolific creator. He later cast the actress in a 2008 FX pilot that didn’t get picked up, but then lost touch with her, until Jessica Lange intervened on her behalf while filming American Horror Story’s first season in 2011. Lange, who starred in The Glass Menagerie on Broadway with Paulson in 2005, had been spending time with her former co-star after she moved to Los Angeles during filming.

“L.A. is really not her town, so she was glad I was there,” recalls Paulson, who tagged along with Lange to an event honoring one of Murphy’s employees. “It was the first time I had seen Ryan in many years. Jessica threw her arm around me, looked at Ryan and said, ‘Can’t you find something for Sarah to do on the show? It would be so great. I just like having her around.’” Murphy, who was writing an episode featuring psychic Billie Dean Howard, obliged and gave Paulson the part. After her three-episode arc, Murphy took her out to dinner and offered her a long-term deal to continue with the show. “I was like, ‘Based on what?’” says Paulson. “I didn’t know why he was motivated to do that, but he did. Then I played Lana Winters, and the rest is history.”

Her turn in Asylum the following year as Winters, a lesbian journalist institutionalized in 1964 for being gay, is what first caused Landgraf to take notice of Paulson’s star power. “She was the most important character in the piece. It took her from a young woman to an older woman, and she was unbelievable,” he says. “We always knew she was great, but her ability to carry things and put them on her shoulder became evident. And she’s knocked it out of the park over and over again. She’s become a major star.”

Murphy kept presenting Paulson with new challenges each year, as American Horror Story rebooted annually with a new premise and characters. The actress played a blind witch in Coven, conjoined twins in Freak Show and a drug addict in Hotel. “There is something so incredibly potent about knowing that every year, you have no idea what you’re going to get to do,” Paulson says.

That’s the case again with her Cult character, Ally, who hits uncomfortably close to home. She has become unmoored by the results of November’s presidential election, which triggers several of her phobias—many of them shared by Paulson in real life, including tryphophobia, the fear of hole clusters in things like sponges and coral reefs. “I can’t even talk about it, it makes me so upset. I have a terrible fear of bees and honeycombs, natural sponges, all that stuff I don’t like,” she says. “I can’t even look at the marketing campaign for the show”—which features an oozing brain shaped like a honeycomb—“My throat starts closing up.”

In the uncertainty of each new TV season, buyers hail Paulson’s...
The Emmy memories may be fleeting, but that role’s impact on her career has been indelible. “A lot of people watch Horror Story, but it’s more of a niche show. I’d been on Horror Story for five or six years, and Steven Spielberg wasn’t calling then, because I don’t think Steven Spielberg watches American Horror Story,” says Paulson. But the director saw the entire season of People v. O.J., and offered her The Post, with no audition required (as was also the case with her film roles in Ocean’s Eight and Glass).

Of all the acting curveballs Murphy has thrown Paulson’s way, no role has had a higher degree of difficulty than that of Marcia Clark in The People v. O.J Simpson. “If you were going to take a face plant, you were going to take a big face plant in front of a lot of people, the biggest one being Marcia Clark,” says Paulson of playing Simpson’s lead prosecutor. “I felt an enormous weight to get it right for her. But at the same time, it was the most exhilarating thing I ever did.” Langraf concurs, noting that Paulson’s masterpiece People v. O.J. episode, “Marcia, Marcia, Marcia,” which delved into her ill-advised courtroom makeover, “is one of my favorite episodes of television that we’ve ever made.”

The People v. O.J. averaged 12.6 million viewers each week for FX and won nine Emmys, including Paulson’s first victory after five previous nominations. “It was incredible,” Murphy told Adweek earlier this year of the show’s and Paulson’s Emmy wins. “I had been very close to Sarah for years and years, and that I could give her that moment and help her have that recognition was amazing.”

Her awards shows sweep is “the most extraordinary thing I don’t remember happening,” says Paulson, looking back a year later. “As a young actress, you dream of being validated or recognized in that way. That being said, I don’t remember having enough joy about the whole thing. I feel that the experience has been a bit outside me.”

She filmed Cult in L.A. while simultaneously flying out to New York for The Post, in which she portrays Tony Bradlee, second wife of Washington Post editor Ben Bradlee, played by Tom Hanks. Paulson is now in rehearsals for Glass, where she has “a great part. I’m not just in a big Hollywood movie with nothing to do.”

Next spring, Paulson will return to FX to start Katrina: American Crime Story, which is based on the book Five Days at Memorial and is expected to air in 2019. She will play Anna Pou, a doctor at New Orleans’ Memorial Medical Center, who was later charged with euthanizing patients during the disaster. “It’s a great character and a very compelling story of a very harrowing situation for a lot of people,” she says.

She’ll also shoot another season of American Horror Story next year for FX. And while “I love working at that network more than I can say,” Paulson will transition from making hit season after hit season for FX to hopefully doing the same for Netflix with Ratched, as she steps into the character that won Louise Fletcher an Oscar. Six months ago, Murphy sent her the Ratched script and urged her to think long and hard about whether she’d be up for playing the same character for multiple seasons. “I thought about it for about five minutes,” Paulson says, laughing. “The character was so interesting, and of course Louise Fletcher is extraordinary in that movie. I thought, what an interesting thing to explore how that human being became the human being in the movie.” Signing on as a producer too was “the next logical step for me, that my voice be allowed at the table in a more official way,” she says.

Paulson is trying not to think about how she’ll actually juggle all of the film and TV projects she has committed to. “This is a new world for me, but the best way for me to get through it is put my head down and focus on the task just in front of me,” she says. “I can’t look to the left or right, or I’ll be too paralyzed to do anything.”

Her overloaded calendar means a role in the next installment of Murphy’s other anthology series Feud, which will focus on Prince Charles and Princess Diana, is
“probably” off the table. She’s also absent from Versace—the Season 2 installment of American Crime Story, which will air early next year—but makes it clear she’s not interested in any TV shows that Murphy isn’t involved with. “There are great creators out there, absolutely, but I have found a home in the sense that I work for a person who sees me completely, knows my strengths and weaknesses, knows how to push me and keeps throwing me the ball,” she says. “Why would you leave something that works? This idea of jumping off one thing just to be available in case something great comes by, that’s like leaving your wonderful mate because you think maybe someone more interesting is out there.”

Besides, Paulson knows from experience that seemingly can’t-miss TV projects can still end up crashing and burning. In 2006, she starred in Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip, Aaron Sorkin’s ravenously anticipated West Wing follow-up for NBC that was “as surefire a thing as anything,” but ended up “a big bomb,” she recalls. “I didn’t work for awhile after that. You go from having Aaron Sorkin’s dialogue and this caliber of actors and production, to hitting the audition circuit again trying to get a pilot at pilot season.”

Another opportunity that could come her way from her higher post-Emmys profile is an advertising campaign, which Paulson says she is open to for the first time. “I would absolutely do it, certainly for products I actually use. I’m a Neutrogena makeup wipes gal, and every time I use them I go, ‘Do I need to call someone and tell them? Because this is something I use every day. I’m always taking off all kinds of things you can’t even imagine on American Horror Story!’” she says. “I wouldn’t want to become the face of something that would then get in the way of my being able to play a part that didn’t jive with the company. But if there was a wonderful coming together of a company and myself, that’s something I would not shy away from at all.”

Beyond working with brands, the actress is also eager to shoehorn a play into her insane schedule. “I haven’t been onstage in about five years,” she says, “and that’s too long for me.” And as she’s getting a taste of producing for the first time on Ratched, Paulson is “desperate” to try her hand at directing. Murphy is “totally game” to have her helm one of his shows, and even offered her a chance to direct an episode of Feud: Bette and Joan, but she wasn’t able to carve out space in her schedule.

But she knows that before long, that too is another career dream that she’ll be able to realize, thanks to the embarrassment of acting riches that have come her way in the past few years. “That’s really exciting,” she says, “and another reason to thank Ryan Murphy—and Marcia Clark, too.”
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Are You Ex

Agencies want to drag you off the couch and put you in the driver’s seat for an immersive experience.

BY PATRICK COFFEE

Advertisers haven’t had to look too far for negative news lately. But as broadcast spending dips and clients question the safety and effectiveness of digital buys, more and more agencies are turning toward a rare bright spot in the ad world: experiential marketing.

“Experiential work is where the rubber hits the road—where advertising meets the Amazon review, quote unquote,” says Denise Wong, president of George P. Johnson Experiential Marketing. “We can not only go out with a brand’s message and promise, but give consumers a chance to try it.”

This sort of work sells both products surrounded by experiences and experiences doubling as products. And brands want in on it.

“Yes, brands are definitely starting to invest more in experiential projects, and you’re seeing more competition from highly creative smaller agencies,” says Debbie Kaplan, evp of experiential marketing at WPP’s Geometry Global. “Ad and
As brands see more and more people use ad blockers, tune out TV spots or cut the cord altogether, it’s easy to see why Jaguar, Absolut, Mastercard and more are turning to experiential marketing, which they say has the potential to create direct connections and more meaningful relationships with consumers.

“It’s more and more difficult to succeed through traditional advertising,” says Raja Rajamannar, chief marketing officer for Mastercard, which revamped its marketing strategy a few years ago to focus on experiences. “With the amount of clutter you’ve got to cut through, the attention span of the consumer going down—six seconds is what they say the attention span of a human being is, less than a goldfish—so how do you get past that hurdle and then inspire consumers?”

Enter experiential. In a perfect world, here’s how an experiential marketing effort would play out for consumers: You’d encounter a brand experience, find it so awesome that you’d post about it on your social channels (where more people...
PR agencies are all jumping on the bandwagon.”
“Two or three years ago, clients saw it as an incremental spend,” Wong reveals. “Now they’re moving dollars previously slated for media or broadcast into experiential.”

One might attribute this change to basic human nature. Consumers can easily skip, mute or block TV and digital ads, but attending an event or absorbing an experience is a decision. In many cases, it also constitutes a purchase—even if the currency is time or the sort of behavioral and demographic data marketers crave.

“T’m not here to say that traditional channels are dead, but 89 percent of ad content is ignored by the consumer,” says AgencyEA co-founder Fergus Rooney, whose Chicago firm has seen clients increase their experiential spend by 10 to 14 percent year over year. Wong attributes much of this change to the “value of sharing an experience with somebody, which you can’t really do when you’re watching an ad,” as well as the wide range of content that springs from each event.

Giant Spoon project manager Patrick Jong puts things a bit more succinctly: “No one is tweeting or posting about a billboard.”

In almost every case, that’s true—but MullenLowe Open global CEO Anthony Hopper also sees experiential complementing conventional creative rather than displacing it. “The line between traditional and experiential is becoming blurred,” he notes. “More often than not, our events can be turned into ads and broadcast through either digital platforms or TV.”

Rooney, who got his start in catering, now handles projects that range from planning the annual MillerCoors Distributor Convention to setting up a temporary tattoo booth for Clif Bar at the Pitchfork Music Festival. Hopper’s team at MullenLowe Open recently livestreamed a five-man Royal Caribbean cruise to Times Square tourists via Periscope. And for the past eight years, George P. Johnson has managed Dreamforce, a three-day tech spree in which 175,000 would-be thought leaders descend on San Francisco, bringing traffic to a halt while boarding over the not-so-dark arts of IT and email marketing. Past attractions have ranged from a Tesla raffle and a street covered in astroturf to a life-sized bust of Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff made of Legos.

YOU’RE INVITED TO A VIP-ONLY PRIVATE PARTY

The pivot from party planning to brand experience design didn’t happen overnight.

Los Angeles-based lifestyle marketing agency Cashmere organizes star-studded activations for brands like Adidas, Universal Pictures and Uber Eats,

“When I first worked on experiential, it was immersive brand events without the ability to connect to a broader audience,” says Hopper. Then Red Bull blazed a trail in sponsoring motocross and cliff-diving stunts rather than blanketing the airwaves with ads. “Now it has trickled down,” says Ford. “You’d better include an experiential element in your marketing or it won’t have that 360-degree effect.”

Jong compares this evolution to the music industry, where streaming has forced artists to double down on concerts and merchandise to make up for steep drops in record sales and paid downloads.

THAT LOOKS GREAT, BUT HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Experiences may draw more dedicated eyeballs than most TV spots or banner ads. But CMOs feeling the budget crunch want more proof that their millions are paying off.

The need for numbers is nothing new, and Rooney cites old-school offerings like AmEx points and hotel loyalty programs, saying, “A customer who spends $1 outside the loyalty program will usually spend $9 within the program. That is experiential at work—the measurement of that experience and the conviction of the customer saying, ‘I want more.’”

Measurement remains more art than science, but nothing speaks louder than statistics, and simply listing shares and hashtags or basic attendance totals isn’t going to cut it for a major brand.

Speed is also an issue. “The difficulty for us is just how quickly the client expects the activity to pay back,” Hopper notes. “Now we have more agile or popup activations, because they deliver the numbers more quickly.”

George P. Johnson recently went so far as to create its own data aggregation platform in collaboration with RainFocus. The goal was to draw a clearer line between the moment a person responds to that RSVP email and his or her eventual purchase. Data-driven experiential marketing, or DDEM, can also help personalize the experience. Would you rather see a promo for sports cars or diapers? Demographics make the difference, and attendees are surprisingly happy to provide their personal info as the price of admission.

At this year’s Comic-Con in San Diego, Giant Spoon helped stage a 12,800-square-foot Blade Runner 2049 Experience. Every guest was required to wear a wristband that could be scanned to activate different experiences or win prizes. “At each touchpoint, we then knew who they were and the actions they were taking inside the space,” says co-founder Marc Simons.

The old-school method still works, too: Surveying fans that waited four hours to walk through a film-like environment can give clients a pretty good idea about whether they plan to buy tickets to the movie itself.

Rooney calls measurement “our next frontier,” adding, “In five years when we speak about this topic, everyone will be doing it.”

“The bigger, better activation agencies have seen that data is becoming more important,” ventures Simons. “I don’t think it will be a differentiator for long. It will be a requirement.”

And what about the smaller shops? “There is increasing competition. However, a rise in quantity does not equate to a rise in quality,” says Jack Morton Worldwide chairman and CEO Josh McCall. “People’s expectations are incredibly high and it takes expertise to link powerful ideas, design and technology to create an extraordinary experience that is moving and original.”

along with promos for longtime client Snoop Dogg. But the group started with what evp and chief creative officer Ryan Ford calls “street teams” hired to design and distribute flyers promoting area hip-hop shows.

“It’s experiential marketing on a very small level,” Ford says. “You have to know where these people you’re trying to target are hanging out, and you can design the flyer in a way so that they will still look at it even when it’s on the sidewalk.”

All marketers can relate to this endless search for impressions.

“For a long time it was seen as ‘we’re gonna set up a booth in the mall with a Toyota Camry and let people experience that,’” says Ford, who ties the rise of experiential marketing to festival culture and, of course, the internet as a great equalizer. Today, an agency like GPJ can drive a brand-new Dodge Demon from a flaming cage onto a drag strip in the middle of the Hudson River as Vin Diesel, Wiz Khalifa and 55,000 remote viewers look on.
“There’s a consensus among marketers that brand experience builds loyalty,” explains Freeman CMO Chris Cavanaugh. “We found that almost 60 percent of CMOs said they valued brand experience for its ability to create ongoing relationships with key audiences. Nine out of 10 respondents said they felt that brand experience delivers strong face-to-face interaction and more compelling brand engagement. And more than two-thirds of them agree that this medium is an effective way to achieve their business objectives.”

“By augmenting digital marketing,” he adds, “brand experience has the potential to increase lead generation, brand advocacy, and sales, and can even make customers feel more valued.”

Just last week at Advertising Week in New York, Mastercard showed off proof of its belief that experiential can drive sales, unveiling a new virtual reality e-commerce experience with Swarovski. Using a VR headset, consumers can see what Swarovski chandeliers look like in various spaces, and if they decide to purchase one, can do so directly through the headset using Mastercard’s Masterpass.

“We’ve found that the consumer experience is so seamless and that we’re giving the merchant the opportunity to close the sale in that moment of excitement, that moment of truth,” says Rajamannar.

DATA BAKED IN
How marketers measure experiential varies widely from brand to brand. Some, like Mastercard and American Express, have access to more consumer data (i.e. purchasing habits), which allows them to get more granular with their measurements. But all agree that measuring experiential has become easier, making it more attractive to marketers.

Michael Curmi, brand experience director for Jaguar Land Rover North America, says both the Land Rover and Jaguar brands are looking to expand their experiential efforts this year. “Part of that is due to better data and having the value of experiential be a bit more provable than it has been in the past,” he explains.

When planning an experiential effort, Curmi’s team makes sure to include a social element so that they can track the event’s social reach in addition to how many people showed up, asked for a future retail contact or ultimately purchased a vehicle.

One recent experiential effort for Jaguar involved creating a VR high-speed car chase—but instead of a stunt driver, the consumer is the star. That type of interaction makes people likelier to share branded experiences, says Curmi. “[Experiential is] the only place you can have a physical interaction with the product directly from the corporation, and it’s also one of the few places where you can have an open-ended dialogue,” says Curmi. “So much of what we would hear about it, give the brand your contact information (so that they could send you emails and offers and put you in touch with a local retailer), and become more likely to purchase something from said brand.

“I like to say, ‘What takes traditional advertising weeks, months or years to do, we can do in a moment,’” says Bryan Icenhower, president of WME’s experiential agency IMG Live, which works with brands like Marriott, Subway and Budweiser. “Experiential is a uniquely fast and effective way to build brand awareness through one-to-one connections with consumers. It engages all five senses, sparking emotions that form lasting memories which have been shown to drive brand loyalty.”

With a promise like that, it’s easy to see why marketers are shifting dollars into experiential marketing. According to the Freeman Global Brand Experience Study, which was released in May by brand experience agency Freeman and data company SSI, one in three CMOs is expected to allocate between 21 and 50 percent of their budget to brand experience marketing over the next three to five years.

Brands say that when it comes to data and measurement, they have moved from being passive (hoping that an experience is so impressive that people post about it on social media) to being active (including data points and tracking as part of the experience or integrating social efforts that make people use the brands’ hashtags or geofilters) to guarantee that they will have the analytics they need to justify the expense of experiential.

But even as brands determine with greater certainty exactly which metrics are important, experiential measurement remains a relatively new space, says IMG Live's Icenhower. “There are no industry standards like Nielsen or Arbitron for experiential,” he explains. “We actually see that gap in the market as a huge opportunity, so we continue to invest in strategy, statistics and technology to build models that can be adapted to clients across industries. The whole experiential discipline would be best served by having a universally accepted methodology, and we hope we can be at the forefront of pushing that.”

HARD VERSUS SOFT METRICS
Even with all the back-and-forth about measurement, some marketers believe that figuring out if experiential efforts are working doesn’t have to be so complicated: with an experience, you can simply scan the crowd to get a fairly clear picture of whether or not you’ve created something that will reflect well for your brand.

“The data piece is becoming more central, and for experiential marketers, it’s fantastic to have more and more data,” says Deb Curtis, vp of global partnerships and experiential marketing for American Express. “But an experience is also about an emotional connection and there’s an intangibility. Sometimes the best research of all is looking at people’s faces and seeing how they’re responding. It’s a tried-and-true way to see what’s working.”

“IT’s really difficult to have a high conversion to sales if you don’t have any people who show up,” adds Curmi, who believes that soft metrics—how excited are people who are spending time on site? How much energy do they have? Are they walking away with a smile? Are they chatting with their friends and family in an animated way?—are just as important as hard metrics.

Rajamannar echoes the sentiment. “Marketing is still not an exact science,” he says. “Not everything can be 100 percent quantified. The small smile you bring to someone’s face, that is something.”
THE TALISMAN
Queen Victoria (along with a famous Raj-era gemstone) conjures an imperial mystique for Bombay Sapphire, a brand that’s actually only 30 years old.

THE GLASS
Some drinkers thought the gin itself was blue, but it’s just the bottle—a brilliant packaging move that’s harnessed the allure of a color in service of a liquor.

THE TECHNIQUE
Forcing the spirit vapors through copper baskets holding the botanicals makes for crisper and clearer flavors than the more common steeping method.

BRAND NAME
Bombay Sapphire
HOW A NEW YORK ADMAN AND A FRENCH EXECUTIVE MADE AN ENGLISHMAN’S GIN RECIPE INTO A LEGEND.
BY ROBERT KLARA
A proper English dry gin comes from the balancing of exotic ingredients. Bombay Sapphire is no exception, but in the case of this storied brand, there’s another key ingredient in the mix: The work of two exceptional marketers.

But first, the gin. Though the premium gin in the famous blue bottle is a product of the go-go 1980s, the story actually begins in 1761, when a 25-year-old distiller named Thomas Dakin assembled choice botanicals and began making Bombay Dry Gin—what many later considered the first quality gin in the country. Dakin’s proprietary recipe found its way down through his heirs and, come the mid-20th century, was the one being used to make G&J Greenall’s Warrington’s Gin.

Enter marketer No. 1. In 1960, Allan Subin was a Madison Avenue heavyweight who, seeing the popularity of the dry gin martini, decided to bring Greenall’s to America—but not without a brand makeover. Subin “was the real man’s man of that era—post WWII, [when] Americans loved everything about Britain,” said Bombay Sapphire’s global brand ambassador Raj Nagra. “Subin wanted to go back to a romantic time in gin’s history, and what better time than the British Raj?” So the adman developed an exotic, old-world label prominently featuring Queen Victoria and the founding year of 1761, just below the gin’s new name: Bombay Dry.

Bombay Dry was successful, but by the mid-1980s vodka was king and gin was in free fall. Enter marketer No. 2. French-born Michel Roux was a nightclub manager turned spirits visionary who by 1981 had taken the helm of a company called Carillon, the House of Bombay’s American importers. Using his proven feel for the American market (this was, incidentally, the man who’d introduced Absolut Vodka in 1979), Roux rolled up his sleeves on Bombay.

As Subin had done, Roux borrowed from the mystique of imperial India—specifically, its famous gemstones—and added a huge sapphire to the label. To the gin itself, he added grains of paradise and cubeb berries, which balanced out Dakin’s 226-year-old recipe, already rich with exotic botanicals like Italian juniper berries and licorice from China. But what got the most attention was the blue-glass bottle into which Roux poured his Bombay Sapphire.

That was 1987. Today, Bombay Sapphire is the second-largest gin brand in the world, and though its innovative marketing hasn’t ceased (the brand has long championed the world’s emerging artists), it has the added advantage of simply being an excellent gin. Its vapor-infusion distillation and 10 botanicals—listed right on the side of the bottle—encouraged drinkers to talk about ingredients, and pioneered the artisanal gin movement. “During the 1980s, gin was in massive decline,” Nagra said, but “Bombay [Sapphire] is largely responsible for gin’s modern renaissance. I don’t think anyone would argue with that.”

Still and all Bombay Sapphire is distilled at the historic Laverstoke Mill, 60 miles west of London, using Thomas Dakin’s 1761 recipe. Using the likeness of Queen Victoria, visionary adman Allan Subin introduced Bombay Dry Gin to America in 1960. Bombay Sapphire is actually just one brand in a long line of premium Bombay gins, culminating with the super-premium Star of Bombay, launched in 2015.
Q&A

John DeVine

AS A FORMER NAVY SUBMARINE OFFICER, OATH’S CRO KNOWS A THING OR TWO ABOUT A COMMITMENT TO SERVICE. BY LAUREN JOHNSON

You’re joining Oath from the acquisition of Yahoo. What’s job No. 1 for you in building out the new Oath brand? I’d say that there’s three things. One is bringing the gears of the team together and making the narrative about Oath super clear so that our sellers and internal teams really understand it. No. 2 has been to take that same narrative and translate it for the marketplace. We’re building a new brand and [when we] start talking about brand awareness, we need to make sure that the marketplace understands what Oath is, why it is important and understands the value proposition to the marketplace. No. 3 is that Oath is going to be a growth company. We’re committed as a leadership team to serving an unmet marketplace and growing the company in long dimensions of consumer business and also all the international marketplaces.

What is Oath’s pitch to marketers? Oath is a valued brand—we chose that name for a reason because of a commitment around trust, transparency and a level of human support. More practically speaking, we bring an incredible portfolio of consumer brands and along with that, audiences. If you’re a brand builder, an advertiser or an agency, you’re getting three things: content, data and distribution. We receive a trillion signals from our consumers over the course of a month. But more than the volume, it’s the quality and diversity of data signals that we’re receiving. We’re getting data from content consumption, from mobile handsets—a million apps, 2 billion handsets worldwide—search data, mail data. And then with Verizon, there are opportunities to blend carrier data into the mix.

From the data side, are all of the content assets linked up for advertisers today? All of that data is linked [and] allows advertisers to find audiences in context. We’re continuing to innovate. I was just on a call this morning, for example, about our use of location data, and with Verizon that becomes an incredibly powerful force of innovation.

In terms of the tie-in with Verizon, what’s a common misconception for what they bring to the table with data? The power of the Verizon data is very high and immediately exciting for advertisers. If there’s anything I would make super clear, it’s the commitment to trust and transparency, not only with our advertisers but consumers as well.

How much of Oath is going to be focused on your own properties versus external properties? We believe that we have some critically important brands with deep, embedded user bases, and we’re going to see those grow significantly—Yahoo News, HuffPost, Engadget, TechCrunch, Yahoo Finance, Yahoo Sports, Tumblr, etc. In addition, we work with brands like Microsoft and all of its properties from a display and video standpoint. We’re going to continue organically to think about brands that could be a good fit in that portfolio.

You were a Navy submarine officer before getting into advertising. What did you learn from that experience? The Navy gave me an incredible experience as a commitment to service but also just learning operations in a very real sense and a way to work with teams. So, all of that was foundational and I rely on those experiences in what I’m doing today. When I joined Yahoo five years ago, I saw the opportunity to do something special in the industry and to compete, and I felt like if you were to think about the things that I experienced in terms of leadership, service, operations and prioritization, there was just a really great personal opportunity to apply all those things.
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Look Back

Britney Spears stops by the Times Square set of MTV's Total Request Live to chat with host Carson Daly. During its 1998 to 2008 run, the show was an after-school must-watch. A new TRL reboot featuring a rotating cast of hosts premieres Oct. 2 on MTV.

Photo: Frank Micelotta/Imagedirect/Getty Images

2002

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