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A MONTH IN MEDIA

MARCH 2017

VIEW FROM THE TOP

DIVERSE CONTENT FOR DIVERSITY AWARENESS

A cursory look at your social feeds and other media makes it clear that consumer sentiment is rapidly becoming more socially active, culturally aware and politically engaged. [Research by The Ad Council & Crowdtap](#) states that 45% of Millennials shared information about a social cause or issue, while [YouGov Data](#) shows that the majority of U.S. adults (67%) support boycotting a brand due to political views. Savvy brands who understand this new norm are adapting their positioning, the stories they tell and even those characters that comprise the stories. For example, Sesame Street recently introduced a new character with Autism—a move strongly aligned with their



global positioning around diversity and inclusion. They're not the only brand—other brands, like Target are drawing a line in the sand and taking stances based on their views, like removing gender-based signage from their toy aisle to shed light on gender equality. **If a brand has a strong point-of-view on a topic, taking a stand can be a polarizing yet proactive move. It's critical to take the time to understand where your brand's consumers stand, including what they may be sensitive to and passionate about, ensuring all aspects of your brand's story align with their beliefs.** ►

INNOVATION OF THE MONTH

CASHLESS PAYMENTS BRINGS CHEAP HEALTHCARE

Africa provides unique challenges to both businesses and humanitarian efforts, with many countries home to high levels of low-income families, often in hard-to-access communities. Jamii is a disruptive financial service that is bringing affordable health insurance across Africa, to fight the health insurance crisis. The company has created a cashless platform that manages all of the



activities of the health insurance process. Users sign up and pay through the mobile banking platform, providing users access to inexpensive insurance for a monthly rate of about one U.S. dollar. **New technologies and the advancement of mobile payments enable the accessibility and affordability of important and necessary services. Whether it is the creative application of technology or the integration of digital payments, marketers can replicate the disruptive nature of Jamii to strategically solve real problems and provide frictionless paths to purchase for consumers.** ►

TOP HEADLINES & WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

TURNER, FOX & VIACOM: ALLIES FOR AUDIENCE

Viacom, Fox and Turner have teamed up to facilitate an audience-based buying model across the networks that would allow advertisers to granularly target consumers, based on behaviors or consumer segments, rather than age and gender. All three entities, which account for 93% of TV viewers across their properties, are agreeing to do business based on the same audience-based buying standard. They expect other networks to eventually take the same approach. **With the world becoming more and more digital, which means hyper-focused targeting for advertisers, it is time that TV advertisers had the same option to buy granularly. With the Upfronts around the corner, this announcement may have an affect on the market, but regardless this is still great news for advertisers who will have more buying options than ever.** ►

BYE SIRI, HELLO ALEXA?

Amazon is officially bringing Alexa to the iPhone through the Amazon app. The integration enables people to use Alexa through their device in the same way that it is being used on the Echo, like making purchases, looking up facts and even controlling smart home products. Alexa continues to grow and with that growth, the future of complete device connection and control is closer than ever. **For advertisers, Alexa integrations are even more viable now as the technology's scale continues to expand. While this is great for Amazon, Apple surely cannot be as excited as this can lead to lower usage of Siri. It would not be surprising if we continue to see even greater growth with Alexa since Amazon has a done a great job cornering the home assistant market.** ►

TAP TAGS TO SHOP ON INSTAGRAM

After “encouraging early results,” Instagram is expanding their rollout of Shopping Tags to more businesses. Shopping Tags are photo tags on specific products that display product names and prices. Users can tap tags to get to specific product pages to purchase items. Additionally, for brands with product catalogs uploaded into Facebook, they can easily tag products themselves with a companion self-serve option. **The move provides a path to purchase to consumers for the products found in their Instagram Feed. It also pushes Instagram beyond just inspiration and discovery into search and purchase, positioning Instagram in direct competition with apps like Pinterest. Since Shopping Tags are a natural extension of current audience behaviors and interests on the platform, it is likely that this will be a meaningful solution in support of sales-based objectives on the platform.** ►

FACEBOOK COMBINES VR & LIVESTREAM

With the continuing trend of virtual reality (VR) technology becoming more ubiquitous in our day-to-day lives, Facebook and Oculus are looking to accelerate this progression by allowing users to directly share their VR experiences like gameplay, on Facebook Live and Facebook 360. **To truly showcase the advantages of VR, this feature will help improve familiarity with VR-experiences by putting them in front of more eyeballs. Brands can leverage a more curated-environment through Facebook 360 and Facebook Live which further enables content creators the ability to share engaging VR experiences to a wider audience.** ►

CONNECTED HOMES: AN EARLY ADOPTER PRODUCT?

A recent survey by Gartner, Inc. claims that only 10% of households currently have connected home solutions (e.g. Nest learning thermostat, Phillip Hue personal wireless LED lighting), signaling it is still in the early adopter phase. Despite these early numbers, [Research and Markets](#) has forecasted major growth for both connected home and IoT in the coming years, stating that it will reach \$166.5M globally by 2022 as consumers adopt them into their lives. **Despite initial slow adoption, there is forecasted growth for the connected home market. Marketers should continue to consider how their products and services will be impacted by connected technology as adoption increases, while home retailers and providers should consider how to provide synergistic products that can work with connected solutions to go beyond being novelty devices and apps to truly hone in on how they provide utility to consumers' daily activities.** ►

STORIES BY FACEBOOK

Facebook launched Messenger Day, a Snapchat Stories clone for Facebook Messenger, slanted towards helping you find friends to meetup with. Similar to Snapchat, users can post a series of photos and videos that live for 24 hours. However, posts will be shown in reverse chronology to help you make plans with people at that moment. There are also more than 5,000 creative filters to choose from. **The plan-making twist is a sensible focus for Messenger Day, as users can seamlessly toggle between broadcasting their interest in making plans to private messaging. Also, this feature creates a future revenue stream that is less interruptive than ads in private messages. This depends on whether Day is embraced by users, which still remains to be seen.** ►

EMAIL ENTERS THE PAYMENTS SPACE

You can now send or request money from friends and family directly through the Gmail app, even if you do not have a Gmail account or Google Wallet—users just need to link the Gmail app to their bank accounts and can easily transfer money, without any fees. **The extension of capabilities allows Gmail to compete with standalone and dedicated payment apps such as Venmo. Although Gmail is not the first to venture into the mobile payments arena, with Facebook Messenger and Snapchat previously enabling this functionality through their apps, the accessibility provides a glimpse into the future of digital payments.** ►

MORE INDUSTRY BUZZ

INSTAGRAM GROWS TO 1M USERS, PLANS TO ADD INSIGHTS DATA & BUSINESS FEATURES ►

FACEBOOK IS OFFERING HEADER BIDDING ON A BROADER SCALE ►

SPOTIFY PLANS TO EXPAND PROGRAMMATIC AFTER MIGHTY TV ACQUISITION ►

FOURSQUARE ANALYTICS IS A FOOT TRAFFIC DASHBOARD FOR BRANDS ►

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