

MIPTV

KEYNOTE

**IVANA KIRKBRIDE, CHIEF
CONTENT OFFICER, go90**

FAST – ACCURATE – AFFORDABLE



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Laurine Garaude

Good morning. I'm Laurine Garaude, director of the MIP markets at Reed MIDEM. Welcome to MIPTV 2017. We have quite an amazing programme and lineup of speakers this year reflecting MIPTV's overriding theme, which is the new frontiers of storytelling. For the next four days, we'll be talking about how storytelling is changing through mobile, VR, streaming services and everywhere. It's my pleasure to introduce today's first media mastermind keynote, Ivana Kirkbride, chief content officer of go90. go90 is a new mobile focused channel in the Verizon communications family which is programming more than 500 channels of exclusive original content from some of the industry's most creative and accomplished producers.

You may not yet all be familiar with go90 because today it's only available in the US, but you're sure to be impressed by the work Ivana and her team are creating. Ivana's the former head of content at Vessel and prior to that was a key executive involved in launching YouTube's original programming. She will discuss what it takes to create original content for global millennial audiences who look to digital channels first. After her remarks, she will sit down for a chat with two of go90's content partners. They are Hannah Macpherson, creator of the AwesomenessTV thriller series, T@gged, and Beatriz Acevedo, President and co-founder of Mitú, a digital media channel that brings Latino perspectives to multiplatform entertainment. So let's get started. Please join me in welcoming Ivana Kirkbride and go90 and we'll begin with a short video. Thank you.

VIDEO CLIP

Ivana Kirkbride

Good morning. Thank you, Laurine, for the warm introduction and thank you all for having me here today. I hope that that gave you a good sense of what go90 is all about and you just got a sneak peek into the new catalogue of exclusive Warner Bros. content that we'll be announcing in just a few hours, so you saw it here first. Hi, I'm Ivana Kirkbride, chief content officer for go90, Verizon's video service that programs for the mobile first generation. How do we do that, you might ask? Well, we've been spending the last year and a half figuring that out and I'm going to share with you today our key learnings in the next 15 minutes. Ready? All right, buckle in. We all create and share stories.

It's no secret that technology impacts how we do that. Storytelling evolves to match the expectations of each generation. Digital is not disrupting traditional. It is actually this explosion of new that is expanding it. Today I want to talk about how the mobile first generation is changing content across three areas - new formats, new talent, data-driven development - and its impact on how we define, program and distribute premium content in this dynamic landscape. We know that art thrives in the face of new technology. Today anyone can create content with the swipe of a fingertip. As a result, a whole new universe of formats is emerging. Think reality, thrillers, scripted dramas but tailored for the mobile first generation. Quick poll. Who here knows what unboxing is? Anyone?

Oh, great, fantastic. So you know that it's an unscripted format that makes you feel like it's Christmas morning all year long, opening gift after gift, surprise after delightful surprise. My kids do it. My kids watch these videos all the time. How about Creepypasta? Anyone familiar? Anyone? Oh. Well, despite its name we're not talking scary spaghetti. It's a brand new way to share fireside ghost stories around the world; and what about Mud-Bang? Anyone? No? Oh, a couple, ok, great. Maybe from Asia, maybe not, ok. I know, it sounds completely absurd, but creators literally sit in front of a camera while gorging on thousands of calories and people all over the world will watch it for hours, so what sounds like niche is actually mass. A great example of this is eSports. Twitch catapulted gameplay formats onto a worldwide stage, making eSports one of the fastest growing leagues. More people bought tickets to last year's League of Legends Championship at Madison Square Garden than the average English Football League Championship. It sold out 20,000 tickets in mere minutes. Niche content is no longer niche, it's just pop culture, and we're starting to see this give rise to a whole new category of new formats, what we like to call premium midform.

Netflix and Hulu are dominating binge watch of content that is 30 minutes or more and TV is doing the same for appointment based viewing. Meanwhile, social media portals and YouTube are dominating the ten minute and under space. There's a gap in what we at go90 are calling premium midform, or the ten to 30 minute format, and we are finding this to be our sweet spot. Our research shows that the mobile first audience is spending more time watching videos all throughout the day and on the go during the week. The premium midform format is the perfect link for these regular downtime watch time periods. Our hit shows such as Guidance, T@gged and

QB1 are anywhere from eight to 18 to 30 minutes in length and our audience is watching multiple episodes at a time. Sometimes they come in for content but sometimes they come in for this – talent - but how the mobile first generation defines talent or celebrity can vastly vary. Influencers such as Amanda Steele, Hayes Grier and Awkwafina behind me emerged from publicly available metrics such as views, wipes, fans and subscribers, and today's audiences expect them to be accessible and always on. They'll pay thousands of dollars to see, meet or support them. That's the audience we're programming for and that's why when casting one of our hit shows, T@gged, our partner, AwesomenessTV strategically balanced digital influencers with traditional talent to build an audience that would love the show, so much so that they would download an app on their cell phones.

And you know what? It absolutely worked. Today's young stars act, sing, shoot, edit, promote. They're the ultimate multi hyphenate. They do it all. They have strong opinions on what they make and how they make it because they intimately know their audience. How? Great question. Data. But actually, let's talk about bacon. When I was at YouTube, we saw some extraordinary examples of how talent used data to shape their content. For example, Epic Meal Time, an extreme short form cooking show from Canada, heavily relied on YouTube analytics. They noticed viewership spikes every time they said the word bacon, so what did they do? Naturally, they made an entire episode of it. Let's take a look.

VIDEO CLIP

Ivana Kirkbride

That's a lot of bacon. Pretty epic, right? Well, by leaning into what the audience wanted more of, Epic Meal Time built a bacon empire that propelled them into one of the top channels on YouTube, television deals and a four mil sponsorship in record time. So not that it replaces the art or craft of it, but leveraging data to inform development is key for the mobile first generation. By doing so, you can serve the audience exactly what they want, when they want and how they want it. At go90, we built a platform that serves our viewers more of what they love. A few days ago, we launched a brand new 3.0 version of go90 with algorithmic programming.

Every time you watch a video, our platform learns what you like. If all the content on go90 was a

delicious ice cream sundae, think of this future as that sensational hot fudge ripple that ties it all together. Think back to your first experience on Netflix. For me, it was The Ring. After watching I got served, "Because you watched The Ring, here are 100 Japanese movies you've never heard of before but we think you're going to love," and you know what? They were right. I binged those horror movies for hours. That's the type of discovery and personalisation we're striving for and these insights will inform what we do next, from development and greenlighting to programming and marketing. Turning data into action is key. So let's recap. We now have a generation of media consumers and creators relying on new formats, new talent and data-driven development, so what does that impact? It expands how we think about premium content and how we program and distribute it. The concept of quality or premium programming is completely fluid now. It's not always equivalent to production value. So what does premium even mean? I actually decided to take a poll among a small but cute, if I don't mind saying so myself, focus group - my kids - to see what they watch and how they watch it. Let's take a look.

VIDEO CLIP

Ivana Kirkbride

Thanks for the fun fact, Olivia. Yes, ok, let's give a round of applause to my kids. I miss them. As you saw, my son Tyler watches the Wiggles, an Australian TV show from 26 years ago that he's actually discovering for the very first time on streaming platforms, and most of the time my daughters stream FUNnel Vision, a YouTube channel. But when asked what their favourites are, they say Harry Potter, Moana, Trolls and other blockbuster hits. The kicker? Premium is fluid. Variety, choice and availability rule. They don't want less, they actually want more and as you heard my daughter [INAUDIBLE] describe it, they watch it on any screen and often simultaneously. YouTube on iPad, TV in the background, music on the phone. Nielsen's Total Audience Report tells us that the average person spends nine hours a day consuming media on a range of screens. They're spending more time consuming media than they are sleeping and eating combined. So how does this impact how we program for this new generation of media consumer like my kids? Well, context matters.

At YouTube, unscripted formats are what works because that entire ecosystem is built on UGC, personalities and bloggers. At Vessel, we found a deeply engaged audience around tech

unboxing videos and IT culture, of all things, because we had a large community of tech savants. At go90, we find that it's live sports and scripted dramas that perform the best because we have sports fans who love football, American football, excuse me, basketball and soccer and millennials who love scripted originals. Each platform and its audience is completely unique. You must cater to what works best for each community. Content within context matters and what that means is what works on TV won't necessarily work on digital and vice versa. To take it one step further, what works on Facebook or Snapchat doesn't necessarily work on Hulu, Netflix or go90. You need to create content with specificity and authenticity to each platform, which brings us to distribution. Taxi cabs. The industry is more open than ever before. The currency for attention is higher than ever. We now live in a world where algorithms, influencers and social media are setting the tempo and we have to keep up. It's time to lean in to new distribution models that reach more audience and increase revenue. Our friends at Gunpowder & Sky took traditional distribution and turned it on its head with the film ... They distributed the film across 30 micro windows, a mix of digital and traditional, free and pay, and often AVOD before SVOD. I know, I just blew your mind, right? With this micro windowing model and by going to the audience, they earned ten times more revenue and a thousand times more views than they would have had with a traditional distribution plan. They found places where the target audience existed naturally and put the film there. By understanding their audience, what they want and where they want it, they learned how to super serve them effectively.

At go90, we saw that our initial generic eight channel approach to programming was not working, I'll be honest. We have over 30,000 hours of live TV and sports a year and we have 1400 hours of exclusive originals only on go90, but found that our content wasn't reaching the right audience. We took a closer look at the data and saw cohorts of users forming around demo and passion areas. We decided to double down on what was working and really super serve those audiences, which prompted us to think about programming and distribution in a new, targeted and curated way. I'm pleased to share with all of you today the launch of four brand new go90 networks - go90 Saga, go90 Zone, go90 XO and go90 Session. Let's take a closer look. go90 Saga celebrates the cutting edge of sci-fi culture and will be the home to go90 thrillers, action, animation and horror - Binge on Fringe, Babylon 5, Almost Human - while enjoying go90 originals such as Transformers, Rush and MISS 2059. go90 Zone takes sports fans inside the world of their favourite athletes, comedians, celebrities and more. Live NFL, NBA, La Liga and ... games meet the best in sports

entertainment and originals such as Now We're Talking, the Fifth Quarter and QB1. go90 XO harnesses the power of pop culture to entertain young trendsetters everywhere. It's where our young adult dramas such as T@gged and unscripted comedies such as Mr Student Body President live among millennial reality shows like Chachi's World and LA Story. go90 Session explores counter culture, sneakerheads, music, art, design and more. We'll lean into our partnerships with complex invites here.

Combined with a personalised recommendation engine and algorithmic programming, we think that our audience will be able to discover more of what they love. I leave you with this. Digital innovation in a mobile first generation is expanding how we tell stories through new formats, new talent and data-driven development. There's a new hybrid model - Part art, part science, and what remains the same, just a little bit of magic. It's creating more opportunity and content programming and distribution for all of us in this room, every single one. We all know we are in the golden age of television, but we're about to embark upon the golden age of content. We can shape the opportunity beyond that first screen by coming together, country by country, screen by screen, to tell the absolute best stories on the planet. Thank you.

Ivana Kirkbride

And so in the spirit of brand new storytelling, please welcome to the stage Hannah Macpherson, creator of T@gged, and Beatriz Acevedo, President and Founder of Mitú Networks, a Verizon Ventures investment.

Ivana Kirkbride

Thank you so much for coming.

Beatriz Acevedo

Thank you for having us. Hello, everybody.

Hannah Macpherson

Hello.

Ivana Kirkbride

It's amazing. Thank you for joining us in Cannes, France, at MIP. Beatriz, I love that you're joining us today because I feel like you can give us a sense of storytelling in this new frontier from the point of view of a network, and Hannah, you as a creator in this new landscape are giving us a sense of how you see the space and how it's evolving; and so with that I wanted to kick it off with Hannah. As the creator of T@gged which started out as a one hour television pilot, what's your approach to storytelling in this new frontier?

Hannah Macpherson

Well, I'm a teenager at heart which I think gives me a unique understanding of this demo. I really have my finger on the pulse of what they want and they want authentic, mature content and they don't like to be condescended to. I think there's this misconception that millennials have zero attention span and can barely make it through a 30 second viral video, and it's just not true. They're bingeing hours and hours of content on their phones. They have their phones glued to their hand. They might have the TV on in the background and their iPad is playing YouTube clips but they're bingeing three seasons of Pretty Little Liars a night on their cellphones.

Beatriz Acevedo

That's my daughter, by the way.

Hannah Macpherson

Yes, so we're exploring this world and I think season one of T@gged, which was 11 roughly 15 to 18 minute episodes, we were worried - are they going to hang in there for the 15 minutes? And we found out they wanted more. They were frustrated by the episodes that were under 12 and, after watching weekly the episodes, they still binged this show, season one, in three to four hour chunks on a Saturday night and tweet about it. It's amazing. The appetite seems unending so I think with season two - my show is produced by AwesomenessTV and is on go90 - we've discovered together that season two should be a little longer. They are all episodes 22 to 25 minutes, which is a sweet spot, it's this premium midform, and it's snackable and yet stackable, which I feel like I should get a patent on that saying or something.

Beatriz Acevedo

It's like an Oreo commercial.

Hannah Macpherson

Yes.

Ivana Kirkbride

What was also interesting is just that it was like real-time feedback because every episode that was released, you could see how the audience was reacting to it through social, through Twitter, through the comments on go90 etcetera which helped us shape at least the upselling for season two.

Hannah Macpherson

Absolutely, and it's wonderful as a creator to realise I have longer episodes, I can take a little more time to tell a story.

Ivana Kirkbride

And then so, Bea, tell us about what's unique about the audience on Mitú and how you develop story for your fans.

Beatriz Acevedo

Well, there are a lot of similarities, from what Hannah was saying. Our demo also is glued to their phones and actually they're glued a little bit longer than anybody else because they consume about an hour extra than any other demo a day, so 30 extra hours of video digitally. Our audience is really, really mobile, about 90 per cent watches it on their phone. Authentic stories are the same as any other millennial, bingeing, watching everything, but for our demo there was a bigger challenge and it was just not to see themselves...

Ivana Kirkbride

Describe to us specifically your demo.

Beatriz Acevedo

Our demo is US Hispanic millennials who are US born, English dominant, who did not see themselves represented on the screen. If you go to traditional media for Latinos, it tends to be in

Spanish and it tends to be stories that cater much more to their parents or grandparents, so there was definitely not a true connection there. Some of the culture was there, but not a true connection; and then when you go to mainstream US broadcasters it's sadly a caricature of the stereotype of who they think Latinos are, so there was no other media brand that really would talk to them in a very authentic way which is what everybody wants, right?

And although they are the demo that is growing the fastest and consuming the most digital content, there was still nobody thinking, "Oh, we should pay attention to this growing demographic." For us, what we do differently than everybody else for this young demo is that we produce something that we call in-culture content. People are very focused on language, right? Oh, is it English? Is it Spanish? Is it Spanglish? For us, as long as it's in-culture, which really has those strong insights about who they are in an authentic way, it doesn't matter. If a character is older and you would associate somebody speaking Spanish, by all means go ahead and do that and it'll feel authentic to them, but if it's somebody that's their peer and who is younger, it probably would be in English because that's just how they relate to each other.

Ivana Kirkbride

I think it's interesting that you found this white space that neither linear nor digital was really super serving and it was truly an underserved audience that didn't have a whole lot of options; and so are there certain formats that you see resonating with this younger English-speaking Hispanic audience?

Beatriz Acevedo

Well, listen, what was really interesting for us was, being a digital media company, a little bit of what you talked about already, right? You want to use the data just in the right way because I think when you overuse it, when it comes to...

Ivana Kirkbride

It leads to problems.

Hannah Macpherson

... storytelling or production, it's like, "No." People in the room will roll their eyes if they're

creatives. But what was really interesting, at least to me as a woman, as a Latina, I think that digital is the best thing that ever happened to underserved demographics, certainly to our demographic, because there was always this broken bridge between the creators and the buyers. I would constantly hear presidents of networks and studios telling me, "We can't find the diverse talent," and they can't find the women to write or direct, like yourself, so they couldn't find the Latinos anywhere - very hard to believe in Los Angeles - but still they cannot find them. And then you meet with all these fantastic creators and they say, "Nobody takes our phone calls. We can't get an agent, nobody will take a meeting with us," and that broken bridge was a little ridiculous in a way. So digital comes to change all of that. If you have a phone, you have an opportunity and no longer do you need to be waiting for somebody to validate that what you do is important or it's going to be connecting with a global audience. You have a phone and immediately you're able to connect to the world and there you're able to get so much insight and so much data and that's what's really exciting to us in the way we create content, specifically when we're licensing it to third parties. We do short form incubation of our digital platforms on every social feed - Snapchat, YouTube, Facebook - but then we're also licensing to other OTT platforms and what's really important for us is when we go with this data and we say, "This is what the audience wants," we're able to prove to them that maybe those stereotypes that they had in their head of who our audience is or they'd like are not true, so that's very powerful.

Ivana Kirkbride

And the language point, I think when you started out in the early days, Mitú was very much Spanish dominant and I think through some of the insights that you were able to see from the data and the content you were producing, that your audience was actually asking for English based programming, is that right?

Beatriz Acevedo

Yes, absolutely. If you're building a business in Latin America, there's a huge opportunity for any Latino Americanos aqui, there's definitely a big white space also there because those young audiences, in the same way that in the US just don't really identify with so much of what broadcast has today, they're very digital, they're very mobile. But we are building a US brand, so for us to do Spanish language hoping that it's going to be a young demo, it was a mistake. Barely ten percent of the audience was in the US, it was much older, 50 plus - although it was digital, it was older -

and then we had 90 per cent of a very young audience in Latin America, so that was the first big a-ha moment for us when we were like, "If we are building a brand for this new underserved demographic which are US born Latino,s we absolutely need to do it in English and we need to do it in-culture." That, I think, I cannot stress more, that in-culture is a key.

Ivana Kirkbride

Yes, and then again, leveraging data too much can put you on the wrong end of the scale and so, Hannah, talk to us a little bit about how you struck the balance with T@gged.

Hannah Macpherson

I appreciate AwesomenessTV and go90 are both teammates in terms of not having what sounds like a science take over the art and I just want to tell stories, so I think a good example is casting. AwesomenessTV basically has an equation for my cast which has to be a mix of traditional actors and social media influencers and at first I was resistant. As a director, I want to work with the best cast because they make me look good and I was concerned. Basically, three of my cast in season one of T@gged had never been on a set before and were very green, but I drank the Kool-Aid. You must in this space have people with large social media numbers in your show because they have a portable audience and that audience follows the show. We're living in a landscape where the platforms are so many but if you cast correctly... you know, it's my job to make the show still sing and these people have to not stick out as sore thumbs and it's all about casting. You find the right ones. I enjoyed working with these social media stars who are now actors very much and I pushed them very hard, but they brought the audience to the show. There are eyeballs on the show because I listened to AwesomenessTV and go90's mandate about this.

Beatriz Acevedo

But, Hannah, you're also an excellent writer and director. You have to give yourself credit for that because even if they have big audiences, if you don't have a fantastic script...

Ivana Kirkbride

What's the intersection of traditional talent like yourself and digital? And with that in our last 30 seconds, Hannah, I think you have some news about T@gged that will be released to fans in the US today. Do you want to share it with everyone in France here first?

Hannah Macpherson

Yes. I'm very excited to announce that T@gged season two will officially premier on go90 on May 9th and I brought a sneak peek with me to share with you guys today, so let's check it out.

VIDEO CLIP

Ivana Kirkbride

Well, unfortunately that's all the time that we have so, again, please help me in giving a big round of applause to Hannah Macpherson and Beatriz Acevedo.

Beatriz Acevedo

And to Ivana too.

Hannah Macpherson

Yes.

Ivana Kirkbride

Thank you everyone. Have a great MIP.