

MEDIA RELEASE

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TELEVISION INDUSTRY UNITES TO LAUNCH THINK TV

Free-To-Air and Subscription TV broadcasters unveil groundbreaking industry research and marketing group

An unprecedented agreement between Australian free-to-air and subscription television broadcasters was officially announced today, with the formation of a new independent industry research and marketing group, Think TV.

For the first time the two television sectors will align under a new industry body to promote television's scale and effectiveness for advertisers across all screens.

Think TV, will lead a collective effort from television broadcasters to demonstrate how television advertising in broadcast quality content environments remains profoundly effective and the clear leader among all media channels in terms of advertising impact and return-on-investment.

Think TV will also spearhead innovative research programs that will underpin the effectiveness of broadcast television for advertisers across linear and digital channels.

"Think TV is without doubt the most potent and collaborative initiative that television broadcasters have developed in 20 years," said Think TV's inaugural Chairman, Russel Howcroft.

"Much industry debate follows the 'ping pong' shifts in digital media with many assumptions then linked to television's impending doom, assumptions which are fundamentally flawed. There is an urgent need to clarify for advertisers conflicting and confusing digital measurement claims and misinformation about the impact of advertising in many digital channels," he said. "It's hardly new news but advertising in broadcast viewing environments - linear and digital television - remains amazingly resilient, effective and brand safe. Television is not going anywhere, it's broadcasting everywhere."

Internationally prominent media academic and commentator, The University of Adelaide's Professor Karen Nelson-Field, endorsed the formation of Think TV.

"The television sector needs an industry body like this to re-establish its baseline. A baseline that has shifted largely due to the falsely generalised sound bytes from digital case studies that are quickly turned into 'best practice' – often by those who stand to gain the most from their acceptance," Professor Nelson-Field said.

"Despite the sensationalised claims that television has lost its sparkle, at the end of the day when buying media for the purpose of growing a brand, the two most important considerations are cumulative unduplicated reach potential and audience quality in terms of reaching more light buyers – television ticks both of these boxes.

“Have I become a television-only evangelist? No. I consider myself media-agnostic and think all media have a role to play. But I do think the pendulum has swung too far and each medium should be considered on its real merits,” she said.

Think TV’s marketing and research programs will bring a material contribution to advertisers striving to build robust and real ROI-based approaches to their media planning.

“It’s incredibly cluttered out there for people and advertisers,” Mr Howcroft said. “But television, contrary to popular commentary, remains unrivalled when you look at the amount of time people choose to spend with any content on any screen. Broadcast quality content is also a proven advertiser-friendly environment, which will increasingly become a rare concept.”

An international search has commenced for Think TV’s Chief Executive Officer, who will drive the new group’s agenda. An appointment is expected in June.

Think TV in Brief:

+ Think TV’s founding stakeholders:

Multi Channel Network / Foxtel
Nine Network
Seven West Media
Network Ten

+ Think TV’s inaugural Board of Directors:

Kurt Burnette, Chief Revenue Officer, Seven West Media
Anthony Fitzgerald, CEO, Multi Channel Network / Foxtel
Russel Howcroft (Chairman), Executive General Manager, Network Ten
Michael Stephenson, Chief Sales Officer, Nine Network

+ Free TV Australia’s marketing team and assets will transfer to Think TV from July 1, 2016.

+ Free TV Australia will remain the lobbying and policy development body of free-to-air broadcasters, as will ASTRA for subscription television. Freeview remains a separate consumer marketing arm of the free-to-air industry.

+ Expansion of Think TV’s industry stakeholders is made through Associate Membership if they are an established, advertising-funded free-to-air or subscription television service provider but not exclusively in IPTV or SVOD.

Statements:**Harold Mitchell, Chairman, Free TV**

“This is an outstanding initiative by all television broadcasters. I’ve been a huge believer for 40 years in the real business results which television advertising delivers. While much has changed in media, television advertising remains the unrivalled leader for impact and effectiveness. Think TV as an independent industry body representing free-to-air and subscription broadcasters will make a definitive contribution to the business case for advertisers.”

Tony Shepherd, Chairman, ASTRA

“Think TV is a timely and powerful initiative from subscription and free-to-air broadcasters to cut through many market misconceptions about television viewing and the unquestionable effectiveness to business results that broadcast television advertising delivers. The subscription and free-to-air television sectors are all in on Think TV.”

For more information and media interviews, please contact:

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Background Briefing:

Below is a series of Australian and international statistics and stories which highlight some of the key trends in broadcast television, digital audience measurement and advertising.

1. Internet Video Views is a 100 percent Bullshit Metric
Gawker 10/5/16
<http://gawker.com/internet-video-views-is-a-100-percent-bullshit-metric-1774349561>
2. TV Business Targets Digital Viewership Claims with Proposed Measurement Standard
AdAge, 26/4/16
http://adage.com/article/media/tv-industry-bust-digital-viewership-claims-measurement-standard/303721/?utm_source=digital_email&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=adage&tll=1462289879
3. Snapchat: 4 billion views. So they are all equal now?
Rob Norman, Global Chief Digital Officer, GroupM, LinkedIn Pulse, 10/10/15
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/whats-truth-online-video-rob-norman>