



## 'New' Discovery Touts Scripps Networks Expansion at Upfronts

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"Content that is trusted and authentic, that inspires and informs, and entertains" were the opening words spoken by Oprah Winfrey via a taped appearance for the upfront presentation for the self-proclaimed "new" Discovery.

Following its acquisition of Scripps Networks Interactive for a reported \$14.6 billion, this "coming out party," according to Discovery President and CEO David Zaslav, was an "Advertising Works Here"-themed presentation in New York City for all platforms-TV, digital and mobile - for 12 of the networks now under the Discovery umbrella. Combined, Discovery now controls approximately 20 percent of the ad-supported pay-television audience in the United States.

In addition to the traditional Discovery Networks (Discovery Channel, TLC, Investigation Discovery, OWN, Animal Planet, Science and the re-branded Motor Trend Group), represented at Alice Tully Hall were the former outlets from Scripps - HGTV, Food Network, Travel Channel, DIY and Cooking Channel.

What was previously called The Enthusiast Network has now morphed into Motor Trend Group, which includes automotive-themed Velocity. And Discovery also has a stake in digital content provider Group Nine Media, which includes Thrillist, NowThis, The Dodo and Seeker.

"If you put all these networks together we are a different kind of media company," said Zaslav. "We don't have viewers; we have fans—passionate fans that love our characters, love our brands, and they don't tune in for shows. They tune in for a brand that gets them."

Differentiating this "new" Discovery from the scripted clutter in this current era of "Peak TV," Zaslav touted this combined platform as an alternative to the plethora of scripted options, some of which - such as HBO and Netflix-do not have advertisers.

"We don't do red carpet, we don't do Hollywood stars," he said. "We pretty much don't have actors, we have authentic talent and we focus on strong brands, passionate audiences and real life entertainment."

"There are two worlds, one where it is difficult to get your ads seen and another where it is not," added Jon Steinlauf, Discovery's Chief U.S. Advertising Sales Officer. "97% of our ads are viewed live. People watch us the same way they watch news or sports or special events. They watch us live, ads and all."

#### New Non-Scripted Programming Initiatives

Hawking 448 primetime hours of original programming for 2018, Discovery Channel will feature seven series. The first, docuseries *Why We Hate* (working title) from Steven Spielberg and Alex Gibney, traces the evolutionary basis of this emotion.

Next is *Book of Hines*, which follows former covert military man and intelligence officer Brett Hines and his family as they transition to living off-grid using survival and security techniques. *Valley of the Kings*, slated for both Discovery and Science Channel, is a documentary series set in Egypt's famed burial ground of the pharaohs. And *Undercover Billionaire* taps the expertise of a self-made mogul to attempt to create a million-dollar company in just 90 days.

Rounding out the coming attractions at Discovery Channel list (all working titles) is *Taken by the Tiger*, set in Asia where tigers still roam freely; *Master of Arms*, which is focused on modern master smiths; and *Hard to Kill*, which follows Special Forces Sniper and Green Beret Tim Kennedy as he attempts some of America's most dangerous jobs.

New offerings at HGTV, which boasts 766 hours of original programming, include *Home Suite Home*, featuring teams of renovation experts around the country; and *Mom and Me*, featuring Bend, Oregon, designer Karrie Trowbridge and her son, Tristan. Recent entry, *Good Bones*, additionally, has been renewed for a second season.

Food Network, meanwhile, highlighted new seasons of *Worst Cooks in America: Celebrity Edition*, *Iron Chef America*, *Food Network Star* and

Chopped, which will feature the addition of Martha Stewart as a judge.

And the new roster on TLC includes Drew and Linda Say I Do, documenting the planning of the wedding of Property Brothers star Drew Scott and Linda Phan; Kate Plus Date, which follows reality Mom Kate Gosselin's return to the dating world; Mama Medium, the docuseries tale of medium Jennie Marie; and JFK Jr. & Carolyn: A Camelot Wedding, a special showcasing never-before-seen footage from the wedding of John F. Kennedy Jr. and Carolyn Bessette two decades after the young couple were killed in an airplane crash.

Returning to television, meanwhile, is the former host of America's Most Wanted on Investigation Discovery on In Pursuit with John Walsh, which tracks down fugitives from justice. The Irwins on Animal Planet will focus on Terri, Bindi and Robert Irwin Jr.'s attempt to keep the legacy of Robert Irwin alive through new wildlife stories. And Khloe Kardashian shifts from her family's perennial docuseries showcase on E! to Twisted Sisters, which follows crimes committed by so-called seriously sinister siblings.