



TBS Hub Debuts at New York Comedy Festival

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"Original and sophisticated content that is accessible to everyone" is how Michael Engleman, executive vice president of entertainment marketing and brand innovation for TBS and TNT describes TBS' current programming philosophy.

The cable network, which began as a platform for off-network comedies like *I Love Lucy*, *Father Knows Best* and *Green Acres* to *The Andy Griffith Show* and, ultimately, more current entries like *Seinfeld* and *Friends*, has amplified its original programming content targeted to more of the younger generation.

With more buzz-worthy and higher-profile projects the goal, police spoof *Angie Tribeca* was the first scripted sitcom under TBS' new regime headed by Kevin Reilly, which debuted in January 2016.

Weekly *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee* launched one month later and exemplified what Reilly referred to as "big unscripted ideas with attitude" at the Turner upfront two years ago.

More recent non-scripted entries were *Snoop Dogg Presents The Joker's Wild* and *Drop the Mic*, which both opened on October 24. And now there is the TBS Hub at the Comedy Festival, which will give the millennial audience the network

covets direct access to the shows and performers.

Presented from November 7 through 12, the goal of The Hub, which formerly partnered with Comedy Central, is to offer a single place where fans of the TBS brand can experience the spirit of the festival and interact with the talent and writers behind the shows. Fans can also see exclusive content from the TBS Comedy Hub via the TBS digital app and social platforms, and added exhibits will include a celebration of stand-up comedians and a photo exhibit.

The TBS programming represented at The Hub will include the aforementioned Full Frontal with Samantha Bee (hosted by SNL's Ana Gasteyer), Conan Presents: The Writers of Conan Live, Search Party, The Detour season-three premiere screening, and upcoming animated sci-fi comedy Final Space.

"Viewers today, particularly 20somethings and 30somethings, expect to connect with brands in ways that are completely personal and custom to them," said Engleman. "Our fans get to know us more deeply, and we also get to know them. As they RSVP through our apps and connect with our content through our social platforms, each one of those instances is an opportunity for us to learn more about our fans-what they like and what is engaging them."

"As we learn more we can create more personal and more custom experiences for them," he added. "And this interaction is really key for the future programming brands at TBS."

While principally a TBS event, "comedy is something that also runs through the bloodlines of many of the Turner brands," said Engleman. Also participating is truTV, and The Bleacher Report, a programming component of CNN, with the goal to evolve the individual brands across a growing ecosystem of screens and platforms via The TBS Comedy Hub.

"This event is an instance for us to learn and to reshape not only how we go to market but how we create content," said Engleman. "And we are using all this to make sure we become a smarter partner in our relationship with our fans."

Said Caroline Hirsch, founder and owner of the New York Comedy Festival and Carolines on Broadway: "The addition of the TBS Comedy Hub at the festival adds a large showcase for some of the biggest names in comedy today. It offers a great marketing and promotional platform for TBS and a unique experience for the fans of the network. And, for TBS, this is a logical extension."

"We will be radically different in two years than we are, sitting here today, which was pretty different than we were two years ago," said Reilly, president of TBS and TNT and chief creative officer for Turner Entertainment Networks at the most recent Television Critics Association summer press tour in Los Angeles. "These shows, I think, are a statement of a certain quality and tonal shift we've

taken."