

Equity Upfront Recap: Day Two

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Following each day of presentations during the Equity Upfront this week, the MAGNA Intelligence team will provide key highlights and outline the opportunities for brands.

AspireTV

Primary Target: Black Culture and Lifestyle Enthusiasts

Platforms and Properties: Aspire TV network (32MM homes and top 50 Black DMAs), Aspire.tv, social media channels across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Pinterest. Content is organized around five categories: Eat, Live, Shop, Play, and Dream.

Recent/Upcoming Content Launches:

- ***Just Angela*** - follows actress and entrepreneur Angela Simmons, daughter of rap pioneer Rev. Run and niece of Russell Simmons, and her life as a #girlboss. The new show will also feature a recurring segment highlighting Black-owned businesses.
- ***Side by Side with Malika & Khadijah*** - Actresses, reality stars, and identical twins Malika & Khadijah Haqq talk all things family, love, and beauty.
- ***Chef G Live*** - Acclaimed Chef Gerry Garvin--known as G. Garvin--executive producer of Aspire's cooking series *Butter & Brown*, will take center stage in his own series.
- **HBCU programming** - the network's partnership with historically Black colleges and universities will produce new seasons of *HBCU 101* and the sports-focused *No Huddle* and *Fastbreak*.

Opportunities for Brands:

- **Support Black-Owned Businesses** - Through the network's Mktplc initiative, which includes on-air segments highlighting Black-owned companies as well as an ecommerce site, brands can support these businesses and foster a connection with a valuable Black audience.
- **Support Emerging Black Writers and Filmmakers** - brands can be integrated into Aspire's short films, which are produced by emerging talents from the Damn Write Originals screenwriting label out of Atlanta.
- **Custom Integrations and Content** - the network's programs and specials are very brand-friendly and will work with brands to create authentic experiences for viewers.

Twitch

Primary Target: Millennial and Gen Z Gamers

Platforms and Properties: Twitch.tv, Twitch mobile and CTV apps, accounts on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

Recent/Upcoming Content Launches:

Recognizing how underrepresented Black players were in the gaming world, Twitch has been making investments to support its Black creators, including more social posts, front page posts, and marketing around them. It has also created community development programs to help them build their brands.

Additionally, the company is partnering with HBCUs to create programs for students interested in working in the gaming industry and an esports league comprised of players from those schools.

Opportunities for Brands:

- **Get in on the Ground Floor** - while data shows that Black audiences have a strong interest in gaming, the lack of representation has likely held back the category's true potential to this point. Aligning with Twitch's efforts to boost its Black creators now could pay big dividends in the future.
- **Create Cultural Moments** - We know Black audiences value brands who are invested in culture and social issues, and we see how the gaming world is increasingly influencing mainstream trends. By aligning with these emerging voices, brands have an opportunity to build a connection. Twitch did offer four key best practices to bear in mind when working with their creators:
 - Communicate commitment
 - Highlight the creator, not the identity
 - Let creators speak for themselves
 - Celebrate, not combat

Black Information Network and Black Effect Podcast Network (iHeart Media)

Primary Target: Black Adults

Platforms and Properties: 31 24-hour news radio stations across the country (BIN), news source for all 92 hip hop, R&B, and Gospel iHeart O&Os, binnews.com, iheart.com, iHeart Radio app, accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

Recent/Upcoming Content Launches:

Since launching last year, BIN has nearly doubled the number of news stations it is carried on and established itself as an important source of information for Black listeners during the COVID-19 pandemic, the election, and the continuing fight for racial justice.

At the same time, the Black Effect Podcast Network, which is 50 percent owned by radio personality and actor Charlamagne Tha God, has been rolling out an increasing number of series on a wide range of topics including social justice, pop culture, sports, mental health, news, and comedy.

Opportunities for Brands:

- **Reach and Connection** - radio remains a medium with very strong reach and efficient pricing. We know that Black listeners tend to spend a bit more time listening than the general population, and iHeart's research shows that the Black community has a particular connection to the on-air personalities they listen to regularly.
- **News/Founding Partnership** - BIN still has two founding partner slots available for advertisers that want to be part of a critical resource for Black listeners.
- **Podcasting** - we've noted previously how Black listeners are at the forefront of podcast growth, and with Black Effect offers a network solely focused on Black talent and Black perspectives.
- **One Stop Shop** - with traditional radio, streaming, and podcasting all under one roof, iHeart offers an opportunity to reach Black listeners through a variety of audio channels.

Complex Networks

Primary Target: Diverse and Influential Millennials and Gen Z

Platforms and Properties: Aside from the original Complex magazine (launched in 2002), Complex's video content can be found across a wide array of channels and platforms, including TV networks (TBS, BET), AVOD services (Pluto and XUMO), SVOD (Netflix, Hulu), YouTube, and social media. They also host events, like Complexcon (which they call the "cultural Super Bowl") and the virtual Complexland, have an ecommerce business with The Complex Shop, and a podcast network.

Recent/Upcoming Content Launches:

Complex has a wide variety of shows, with many focused on food, sneakers, fashion, sports, and entertainment news, with topics overlapping. The company specializes in what it call "convergence culture." Some of its more popular series include interview show *Hot Ones*, *Sneaker Shopping*, *The Burger Show*, and *Full Size Run* (an interview show about the latest in sneakers).

Podcast series include *The Complex Sports Show*, *The Complex Sneakers Podcast*, and entertainment news show *Watch Less*.

A big part of Complex's offering are its events, which offer brands the opportunity to have a presence and interact with its fanbase, whether it's virtually (Complexland) or in real life (Complexcon).

Opportunities for Brands:

- **Tentpoles and Brand Moments** - Complex's own "brand moments" on tap for 2021 include the aforementioned events (Complexland and Complexcon), a program focused on financial literacy and entrepreneurship for its diverse fans, and its magazine covers. For tentpoles, Complex will approach the Summer Games in Tokyo by focusing on Japanese culture and how it intersects with the Olympics.
- **Aligning with Culture** - with video series focused on the very latest in style and culture, there is an opportunity to connect with young Black influencers and other diverse audiences.

- **Direct Feedback from Potential Customers** - Complex Collective, the company's research platform with a panel of 30,000 diverse participants, offers a chance for brands to get unfiltered feedback on what resonates with them and what doesn't.

Mirror Digital

Primary Target: Diverse, Multicultural Millennials and Gen Z

Platforms and Properties: a digital publishing network with over 850 content creators, a social influencer network, and a programmatic ad marketplace.

Recent/Upcoming Content Launches:

Mirror's content creators cover key cultural touchpoints like music, entertainment, sports, style, and young, college-age trendsetters.

Opportunities for Brands:

- **Sophisticated Targeting for Black and Multicultural Audiences** - targets can be built based on demographics, life stages, passion points, and other characteristics.
- **Influencer Marketing** - for brands looking to dip their toes in the water of this still-growing channel, this would be a way to do so while reaching valuable Black consumers.
- **Custom Solutions** - campaigns and ad units themselves can be built and optimized around brand goals, using both direct and programmatic elements.

Black Enterprise

Primary Target: Black Adults 25-54

Platforms and Properties: Black Enterprise print magazine, digital sites/app, social, and live events.

Recent/Upcoming Content Launches:

- The print edition of Black Enterprise will shift from bi-monthly to bi-annually to help keep the company more in touch with their audience on a daily basis through digital and social.
- The flagship live events have been shifted to virtual for 2021 and will include an expanded calendar to offer virtual experiences for their audience monthly. Events include:
 - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summit (February 2021)
 - Health & Wellness Summit (March 2021)
 - Wealth Building & Real Estate Summit (April 2021)
 - Small Business Summit (May 2021)
 - 40 Under 40 Summit (May 2021)
 - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summit 2 (June 2021)
 - Corporate/C-Suite Summit (July 2021)
 - Entrepreneurs Summit (September 2021)
 - Women of Power Tech Summit (October 2021)
 - Black Men Xcel Summit (November 2021)
 - Sistas Inc. Summit (December 2021/podcast)

Opportunities for Brands:

- **Cross-Platform Activations** - Brands are encouraged to engage with consumers across all facets of media including cultural content, digital/social and experiential in order to form connections and loyalty.
- **Branded Content** - Customized content is available throughout the media assets including articles, interviews, podcasts, social series, and live broadcasts.

Ebony & Jet

Primary Target: Black Women

Platforms and Properties: Ebony re-launched this month as a digital only entity; Jet is planned to re-launch this summer.

Recent/Upcoming Content Launches:

- The brand re-launched after more than a one-year hiatus with a monthly digital only issue, an e-newsletter with 750,000 subscribers.
- Live and virtual event series will be held throughout the year including the flagship Ebony Power 100, which will be expanded into a full weekend in the fall of 2021.
- Other events will include Black Music Month and Juneteenth Celebration in June, a family-friendly event called Ebony Block Party and an Ebony Speaks, a virtual education course around leadership, wealth-building, and financial literacy, which will launch in September.

Opportunities for Brands:

- **Sponsorships** - Brands will have opportunities for exclusive sponsorships in the e-newsletter including a banner ad as well as being featured in top stories.
- **Mobile Exclusives** - Ebony offers many mobile formats such as high impact units, home page takeovers, and a unique opportunity for an interactive video game unit.
- **Social Amplification** - Elevate a digital message with over one million Facebook and Instagram followers as well as over 400K Twitter followers.
- **Text Message Education Courses** - Brands can be featured in editorial content created by Ebony and available exclusively to text subscribers.

XXL

Primary Target: Men 18-34

Platforms and Properties: Quarterly print magazine, digital website, and 10 radio stations.

Recent/Upcoming Content Launches:

- **Annual XXL Freshman Class Program** - featuring XXL-chosen artists to watch early in their careers.
- **Original Video Content** - 10+ episodic programs featuring hip hop artists.
- **Women in Hip-Hop Celebration** with Cardi-B.
- **Black Music Month** featuring six editorial opportunities for brands.
- **Moments in Clarity podcast** featuring artists, industry executives, and potential talent.
- **New Music Fridays** - new albums, projects, songs, and branded playlists.
- **XXL Awards** set to take place in December.

Opportunities for Brands:

- **Branded Content** - Brands can create custom content with wide digital distribution, including sponsorships focused around major music events like the BET Awards and XXL-specific events such as Black Music Month or Women in Hip Hop.
- **Standard ad formats** - including pre-roll and programmatic, as well brand-safe video.
- **Social and Social Influencers** - utilize the company's ties with artists and influencers to amplify a brand's message.
- **Custom Playlists** - allow brands to engage with consumers through curated music playlists.

Bounce

Primary Target: Black Adults 29-50 (or 25-54 for a Nielsen standard demo)

Platforms and Properties: Bounce broadcast affiliates across the US

Recent/Upcoming Content Launches:

- Returning series include the final season of *In the Cut* and *Saints and Sinners* will return for season five in April 2021
- A new sitcom, *Johnson*, which follows life-long best friends — all with the same last name of Johnson — as they navigate love, friendship, heartbreak and personal growth.
- 30th annual *Bounce Trumpet Awards*
- Eight original movies, including the first title *Faith Heist* premiering in April 2021.
- *Black and Blue: Protect or Neglect*, a special that focuses on the evolution of racial inequality within the police culture of the US. This is a follow-up to the *Black and Blue* special that aired previously.

Opportunities for Brands:

- **Custom Branded Content** - The network can work with brands to create live in- studio shoots for branded content, which can be centered around tentpole events such as Black History Month, Black Women's History Month, Black Music Month, and Juneteenth.
- **Product Integrations** - While the network boasts 100 percent commercial viewing retention, product integrations within original programs offer an additional avenue beyond traditional linear ads.

Blavity, Inc.

Primary Target: Black Millennials and Gen Z are their general target while they also have 21 Ninety, which focuses on multicultural women 22-35.

Platforms and Properties:

Blavity News – The original brand from Blavity that features news surrounding culture, media, politics & business.

AfroTech – This started as a conference and is now the largest online Black tech platform providing opportunities, events, and workshops to expand and enhance the knowledge in the Black tech space. The AfroTech Conference was able to become digital through the Lunch

Hour platform, connecting brands with attendees in the age of COVID.

21 Ninety – Blavity’s platform for women’s empowerment through lifestyle, health, and idea sharing. Summit21 is its one-day event that ties in all these themes and connects the female Blavity community through workshops and conversations.

Travel Noire – Acquired in 2017, this brand that appeals to travelistas and skews 70% female. Content covered includes news on global events, travel tips, and resources.

Shadow and Act – Also acquired in 2017, this brand highlights the best of Black Hollywood, TV, and the industry in general. Through a newsletter, reviews, and exclusives, this platform focuses on the important news and happenings in film today.

Recent/Upcoming Content Launches:

- **Opening Act** – A new Shadow and Act podcast that discusses guest’s career paths in Hollywood, hosted by Trey Mangum, Shadow, and Act’s Deputy Editor.
- **Black Tech Green Money** - An AfroTech podcast started in 2020 that celebrates the success stories of Black businesses and the people that started them, hosted by Will Lucas, CEO and founder of Blavity.
- **Blavity.org** - Blavity’s recommitment to Black talent, creatives, and creators through a nonprofit that will fund grants, fellowships, and educational programs.

Opportunities for Brands:

- **Cross-Channel Activations** - Across Blavity’s five brands and events, teams can activate through branded digital, video, and audio campaigns. By aligning with Blavity’s established IP, brands can become involved in organic and continuous conversations and gain credibility through syndication and sponsorships. The 360 Blavity take to partnerships includes everything from newsletters and social campaigns to entire digital events like *AfroTech* and *Summit21*.
- **Events** - Blavity’s *AfroTech* conference is scheduled for November 8-13th, which teams can activate on through Blavity’s 360 approach to campaigns through sponsorships. *Summit21*, 21Ninety’s one day conference will be held in 2021, after a break in 2020. Teams can activate on the 21 Ninety Daily Newsletter, Custom Videos, Summit21 Influencer Events, and Master Classes.