



# Branding Iron

► by **Eric Grant**, general manager

## Streaming goes mainstream

*It wasn't so long ago that families would gather in their living rooms to watch their favorite TV shows offered up by a handful of networks like ABC, CBS or NBC. Nearly every home had an issue of TV Guide resting next to the remote control on the coffee table, and folks built their evenings around broadcast times for programs like Dallas, All in the Family and MASH. It was the apex of network power and influence.*

### Changed paradigm

Then along came cable, satellite and the Internet, and the informational and entertainment landscape fragmented forever. A multitude of new networks populated the airwaves, and websites like YouTube began changing viewership patterns for good.

Now, audiences can watch pretty much what they want to watch, when they want to watch it, and ignore everything else that doesn't interest them. On-demand TV means our kids can have their smartphones in one room, watching programs from the Disney Channel, while their parents can be watching *Fox News* in the kitchen or *Downton Abbey* on the back deck with their tablets.

No one is glued to the TV set in the living room anymore. Gone are the days of shared, collective experiences brought to us each evening by the likes of Peter Jennings, David Brinkley and Walter Cronkite.

That's the way it is.

A recent article in *The Washington Post* underscores how far and fast we've come in just the last couple of years. According to the newspaper, 40% of U.S. homes now subscribe to a streaming service such as Netflix, Amazon Instant Video or Hulu, compared with 36% in 2013, according to Nielsen. It was less than 5% just a few years ago.

"In response, companies such as HBO, NBC and CBS are launching their own streaming services. These moves could

unleash a fast demise of the cable and satellite industries that have fed TV networks with licensing fees," *The Post* concluded.

### Advertising shifts

The reality is that streaming technology could have much of the same impact on conventional TV networks that the rise of the Internet had on print publishers in the early 2000s. Advertisers will shift dollars to where the audience is, and have already begun rethinking their approaches to promoting products to consumers who are only watching programs that interest them. Traditional revenue models for media companies are being challenged to the core.

Advancements in these technologies — and changes in the ways we watch TV — will also have profound effects on how we promote and sell registered-Angus seedstock in the coming years.

As streaming continues to improve, especially in rural areas, we will see more innovative producers making streaming video available to their customers. This will change long-held approaches to website design to accommodate market demands for more video and streaming usage.

At the same time, as technology advances, video production and video sharing will become more affordable and accessible to everyone in the marketplace. Just a few years ago, access to wide audiences was limited to networks.

Back in 2011, the American Angus Association began producing *The Angus Report*, a weekly television news program for cattle producers. The show airs four times a week on RFD-TV, reaching hundreds of thousands of producers each month.

Though the audience has grown exponentially since its initial launch, viewership data indicates that more viewers are using DVR and watching the program at their leisure — not just when we want them to watch it.

At some point in the near future, as more cattle producers adopt streaming services for their homes and offices, the Association could simply send out a push notification to its members and commercial customers when a program is ready for viewing, and Angus breeders across the land will reach for their remotes, tablets or mobile devices and press play to access the streaming video — all of it in broadcast-quality HD, and all of it when they choose to watch it.



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