HOLLYWOOD INNOVATION & TRANSFORMATION SUMMIT

MAY 12, 2021  8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. PST

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8:45 – 8:55 a.m. Opening Remarks
Guy Finley, President & Chief Executive Officer, MESA

8:55 – 9 a.m. Conference Welcome Remarks
Chinar Patel, Director, IBM Security

9 – 9:15 a.m. Securing Everything – An Introduction to Zero Trust
Who can you trust? If you are following a strict zero trust philosophy, the answer is no one and nothing. Is this achievable? Is it practical? Does it even make business sense? This session will discuss the principles that underlie the zero trust philosophy along with providing some context of the origins of this approach and how it has evolved to become a top concern for organizations today.
Jeff Crume, Distinguished Engineer, Chief Technology Officer Americas Security Technical Sales, IBM Master Inventor

MAINSTAGE 1: INNOVATION

9:15 – 9:45 a.m. “Where’s the Beef?” ETC Digs Deep into the Meat of Virtual Production
Are you fluent with the key aspects and considerations around Virtual Production and Cloud workflows? The Entertainment Technology Center at the University of Southern California (ETC) produced a bespoke R&D short film testing virtual and remote production. In conjunction with USC School of Cinematic Arts grad students and alumni, this initiative provided a real-world pressure-test of the critical steps required in restarting and continuing film productions in a new world due to the COVID shelter in place orders and social distancing. How do we get back to work with the majority of work now being conducted remotely? Which are the best solutions for studios to continue production during these times? This high-level discussion will explore and unpack the plan and process behind the “Ripple Effect” project and share the wealth of data learned during the production and delivery.
Kathryn Brillhart, Executive Producer & Director of Virtual Production, The Entertainment Technology Center at the University of Southern California (ETC@USC)
Greg Ciaccio, Production & Post Technology Design, The Entertainment Technology Center at the University of Southern California (ETC@USC)
Erik Weaver, Director of Adaptive Production and Special Projects, Entertainment Technology Center at USC (ETC)

9:45 – 10:15 a.m. KEYNOTE: Writing the Playbook on Virtual Production
Our keynote presenter authored the Virtual Production Field Guide for Epic Games in 2019 and has just released Volume 2 in early April. This compendium of creatives, technologies and information has quickly become the Bible for Hollywood and is quickly becoming essential reading for any content creator. This session digs deeper into the evolution of virtual production workflows and how these techniques have moved from stealthy POCs to standard operating procedure for many streaming feature and episodic content currently in production. Drawing from interviews of dozens of directors, cinematographers, producers, visual effects supervisors, animators, compositors, Unreal Engine artists, systems integration specialists, and more, you’ll hear from many of these individuals expressing their unbridled enthusiasm for how positively “real-time” technology impacts their workflow.
Noah Kadner, Senior Writer, Epic Games/Unreal Engine

10:15 – 10:45 Wrangling Ones and Zeros: The Wild Wild West of Virtualized Production
A streaming original’s camera operator uploads his footage to his personal cloud for “personal backup.” A network show’s music editor posts a “really cool” music cue to SoundCloud. A toy manufacturer machinist snaps and shares a candid photo of an action figure well before the parent film is destined for public eyes! All these incidents have happened, and will continue to happen, as opportunities for crucial IP leakage have never been more pervasive across the supply chain. This mission-critical discussion dives into the latest innovations in secure, remote, cloud-based environments and how they integrate into the enterprise and broader supply chain. Whether you are onboarding, cutting, visualizing, creating music or rendering VFX, this session highlights emerging technologies and solutions that are virtualizing critical workflows across production.
Joachim “JZ” Zell, Hollywood Professional Association (HPA)
9:15 – 9:45 a.m. How Transparency Ensures DEI, Accessibility & Belonging in Leadership
Ongoing research tells the story clearly: companies which make an unwavering commitment to diverse leadership are able to engage and keep top talent, improve clarity in decision-making, and improve customer experiences. (McKinsey – “Why Diversity Matters”.) In a period of unprecedented cultural movement, is our industry riding the wave or just staying afloat? Which companies and individuals are setting the bar as high as possible and leveraging opportunities for necessary change? The ability to truly understand and trust a company’s actions requires a fully open-book posture. Hear the POV of those leading the charge for change in diversity, equity and inclusion – and how they are making positive things happen.

Moderator: Jeanette DePatie, Owner, Propellerhead
Panelists: Ana Achaval, Tri-Chair, WITH DEIAB Committee and Global Execution for Brand, Creative, & Media, Intel
        Uasia Brown, Tri-Chair, WITH DEIAB Committee and Data & AI Specialist, Microsoft
        Gina Cavalier, Tri-Chair, WITH DEIAB Committee and Founder & Teacher, The Liberated Healer
        Lydia Elle, Chief Executive Officer, Supplies For Allies
        Dr. Michael V. Nguyen, Ph.D., Founder, Chief Innovation and Inclusion Officer, Inclusive Insights, LLC
        Michele Spitz, Woman of Her Word

9:45 – 10 a.m. Driving Operational Agility with a Virtual Workforce
The media and entertainment industry has undergone a tectonic shift in the past year as consumers have sought to replace physical experiences with digital ones. Companies have had to transform on the fly to stay ahead of rapidly evolving revenue generation models. And they’ve had to find ways to release capital trapped within archaic organizational structures and sub-optimal processes to fund growth. Empowering their distributed workforce with digital solutions is at the heart of this winning transformation strategy. Join this session to learn how augmented intelligence can enable your media company to keep up with changing customer behavior, transform the employee experience, and boost revenue and growth. Discover how having the right operating model with a mature data ecosystem is becoming central to delivering on businesses’ information needs and to drive operational agility.

Brajesh Jha, Global Head, Media & Entertainment, Genpact

10 – 10:30 a.m. KEYNOTE: Developing Teams, Services and Customers at Scale
As our industry emerges from the chaos of the past year, our Opening Keynote addresses the environment that IT leaders need to create in order to recruit, foster, and grow the leaders of tomorrow. Moving beyond the mission statement mentality and conference table directed strategy of conventional IT, this presentation helps create a new direction for your team to become ambassadors, advocates, and stewards of customer satisfaction that evolves from the voices, demands, and wishes of the consumer. We’ll address people and process as a leadership strategy that unfolds as a way of directed action that keeps pace with technology disruption to create profit and generate product perpetuation. Growth is the outcome of an environment (home or office) where the willing and able are encouraged to attempt and perform. Learn how to create an environment that treats failure as an indispensable teacher in developing the people who create your culture that encourages teams to think and act. This is the marriage of anticipation and action where delivering value is a product of cooperation and collaboration. You’ll learn how to attract and engage customers by “closing the circle” in all aspects of communication, a critical tactic for five-star reviews and performance testimonials.

Bill Wooditch, Speaker, Chief Executive Officer, Entrepreneur, Sales and Leadership Coach, Author

10:30 – 10:45 a.m. Breaking (Down) the News: A New Evolution in Real-Time Data Empowerment
In this unique “inside look” session, learn how Microstrategy and ABC Local News are innovating how data drives real-time empowerment in broadcasting. Utilizing a new methodology for the automation of insights, news management teams are able to deploy resources timely, track viewership-goals and merge both incoming and historical data. Join us to discover how this strategy is streamlining decision-making and deepening user engagement across today’s increasingly dense news cycles.

Sahand Sepahinia, Executive Director, Content Strategy & Analysis, The Walt Disney Company
Jim Whelehan, Senior Account Executive, M&E, MicroStrategy
10:45 – 11:15 a.m. Reimagining the Moviegoing Experience

During this special interactive unveiling, Mandel will utilize Magic Screen to reintroduce Bobby, his iconic character from the Emmy Award-nominated animated series Bobby’s World, and engage with the HITS crowd. Magic Screen is a joint venture between Mandel’s production company Alevy Productions and Los Angeles-based Super 78 Studios. Technology partners Microsoft and NVIDIA supply the hardware and software to power Geppetto, a proprietary real-time animation system built by Super 78 that renders the 3D version of Bobby.

Howie Mandel, Producer, Alevy Productions
Joel Sloss, Senior Program Manager, Microsoft
Brent Young, President & Creative Director, Super78

11:15 – 11:20 a.m. Innovation & Transformation Showcase Introductions

Guy Finley, President & Chief Executive Officer, MESA
Caroline Baines, Member Services Director, MESA
Dann Novak, Chief of Staff, MESA
David Millar, Business Development Director, Europe, MESA
Evie Silvers, Director of Business Development, MESA
Mary Yurkovic, Director, Smart Content

Times Have Changed...

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10:11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Securing your Journey to Hybrid Multicloud
From misaligned business strategies to shared security responsibility models in the cloud, to the growing tools and technologies available, security in the cloud can appear daunting, especially when just adopting traditional security controls in the cloud may not always be the best approach. Yet, the future of modern business depends on secure hybrid cloud and multicloud solutions. IBM Security will discuss how the company can help clients protect and manage modern hybrid cloud programs so they can securely innovate, migrate, build, compete and grow at cloud speed.

Amanda Sherman, Offering Manager, Cloud Security Services, IBM Security

11:30 A.M. – 1:15 P.M.
HITS Innovation and Transformation Showcases (MULTI-TRACK, BREAKOUT SESSIONS)
Industry experts share innovative ideas, processes and perspectives in an interactive and intimate way with the audience who are free to choose which topic/area they find most interesting. Sessions will address key areas on SIX separate tracks:

**TRACK 1: SECURITY & WFH**

11:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. Securing your Journey to Hybrid Multicloud
From misaligned business strategies to shared security responsibility models in the cloud, to the growing tools and technologies available, security in the cloud can appear daunting, especially when just adopting traditional security controls in the cloud may not always be the best approach. Yet, the future of modern business depends on secure hybrid cloud and multicloud solutions. IBM Security will discuss how the company can help clients protect and manage modern hybrid cloud programs so they can securely innovate, migrate, build, compete and grow at cloud speed.

Amanda Sherman, Offering Manager, Cloud Security Services, IBM Security

12:05 – 12:20 p.m. Oracle + Richey May: The Year Hollywood Got Back to Work
This session discusses what companies are doing as Hollywood continues to “unthaw” and get back into the business of developing content for the world. As part of that journey Olivier and JT will discuss trends and considerations that companies should keep in mind as they work on opening their offices and productions back up.

JT Gaietto, Executive Director Cybersecurity Advisory, Richey May Technology Solutions
Olivier Jorda, Global Senior Director, M&E Strategy, Oracle

12:45 – 1:15 p.m.
Don’t Let a Crisis Spoil Your Drama – Experience an Incident Response App at Work
It’s 8pm on a Friday, the CTO of a global creative services provider is notified of a significant security breach involving a premium episodic title. Unfinished content has been leaked and its office has been told that, unless a significant ransom is paid, further material will be released revealing the plot line, together with sensitive contractual cast information. See Convergent’s incident response App at work in a 30-minute exercise and get a taste of what it is like to get that call, how to kick start the response and manage communications to staff and external stakeholders.

Mathew Gilliat-Smith, Executive Vice President, Convergent Risks
Chris Johnson, Chief Executive Officer & President, Convergent Risks
Matt Lody, CTO, Convergent Risks

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We believe collaboration enriches lives and inspires living.
We believe empowerment builds the future of your choice.
We believe in ecosystems that empower sustainable choices.

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11:30 – 12 p.m. Use Consumer Data to Predict Content Success: What’s Your Demand Score?
The pandemic has accelerated the distribution of content and has increased global viewing, creating a high
demand for both original and library content. With the increase of content, rights, platforms and pricing, the process
of buying and selling content has become difficult and the need to identify the right licensing opportunities is
critical. See how a Demand Score can help organizations stay ahead of the competition by predicting how a TV
or movie title will perform among a target audience on a specific platform or within a specific country or region,
enabling buyers and sellers to make real-time content licensing decisions that drive audience viewership
and engagement, maximize revenue, and make the global film and TV content licensing process faster and more
efficient. Join our conversation on the details of a Demand Score and how predictive analytics and consumer senti-
ment and engagement data are paired together to take the guesswork out of content licensing.

Eric Steinberg, Media Research & Insights Lead, Whip Media

12:05 – 12:20 p.m. As The World Churns: Best Practices in Subscriber Retention
With more content owners launching their own direct to consumer services, the market is becoming highly com-
petitive. Learn the best practices in subscriber lifecycle management and retention. How do providers keep their
subscribers for the long haul?

Siva Natarajan, Global Head for Strategy, Media and Entertainment, Salesforce

12:25 – 12:40 p.m. Engaging Your Consumers & Users in a Crowded Communication Landscape
Consumers in today’s digital media landscape increasingly expect consistent experiences across all channels
and for their favorite brands to engage with them on whatever channel they prefer. One of the key CX trends of
2021 that companies are adopting to engage with users and relying on for their digital transformation strategy is
Messaging. Messaging of all flavors makes it easy to stay in touch with convenient and engaging interactions.
Popular messaging platforms such as Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp for your web, mobile, social channels or
integrate into Discord so customers can reach you instantly. In this session, viewers will learn more about leverag-
ing Messaging tools for media & entertainment companies to provide faster, more personalized experiences that
allow brands to stay ahead of the competition.

Joe Jorczak, Enterprise Account Executive & Industry Lead, Zendesk

12:45 – 1:15 p.m. Unlocking the Power of Real-Time Data in Today’s News Environment
Get “under the hood” with ABC Owned TV Stations and Microstrategy as they reveal their innovations in the
measurement of instant viewer-engagement data. Learn how mission-critical KPI goals are made more under-
standable, and how a streamlined reporting system is driving “sticky stories” and precise deployment of production
efforts. See how bespoke dashboards clarify information across all levels of ABC Local News operations. How did
this unique and forward-facing project come together…and how will it benefit our industry in broader ways in the
future? Be part of a deep dive discussion with the people making the 1s and 0s representing their audience ever
more valuable.

Michael Stirk, Senior Manager, Data Architecture & Business Intelligence, ABC Owned TV Stations
Jim Whelehan, Senior Account Executive, M&E, MicroStrategy

INNOVATION AND TRANSFORMATION SHOWCASES

TRACK 2: CONSUMERS & DATA

11:30 – 12 p.m. Use Consumer Data to Predict Content Success: What’s Your Demand Score?

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Jim Whelehan, Senior Account Executive, M&E, MicroStrategy

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The events of the past year accelerated enterprise-wide digitization in media and entertainment companies, leaving many struggling to integrate disparate legacy systems and workflows. Companies have been trying to meet the challenge by either redoing their systems or replacing them altogether. There is a simpler, faster, and better way to bring all your essential data elements into a single pane. This approach uses machine learning and AI to automate routine workflow and decision-making processes, enabling virtualized production and smarter operations. Join us to discuss how to: Leverage process and functional expertise to fast-track deployment of a flexible systems of engagement and deliver personalized user experiences; Drive meaningful insights for business users to enable faster decision making without having to jump across siloed systems; and Harness emerging technologies to deliver to oscillating demand and consumption patterns and improve employee and customer experience.

Rachel Thomas, Vice President, Transformation Partner, Genpact
Ani Sarkar, Vice President – Media and Entertainment, Genpact

Are you struggling with remote productions and your distributed team? New remote work responsibilities have turned many M&E projects on their head. Remote video editing, file access, and collaboration doesn’t have to be challenging, not when there’s a solution that is infinitely scalable and accessible no matter the location. Join us in discussing a cloud-first approach and demonstrate how global broadcast companies and post-production teams are seamlessly working together from any location, accessing files and projects, directly from the cloud using LucidLink. We’ll be hearing renowned colorist Jeff Om talks about being on-location while editing and collaborating on feature films – in real-time – using LucidLink, Adobe Premiere Pro, and cloud storage. Production teams can use any NLE tools, any operating systems and collaborate on media projects from anywhere in the world.

Richie Murray, Media Workflow and Cloud Technologist, LucidLink
Dennis Radeke, Director of Sales, LucidLink
Jeff Olm, Colorist and Director of Cloud Service, Eclipse Tech

Explore the challenges faced by live events and remote production executives and factors that affect their decisions around people, processes, and tools in today’s environment.

Moderator: Don Terry, Chief Revenue Officer, 5th Kind
Panelists: Scott Cler, Global Alliance Manager, M&E, Amazon Web Services
Sandra De Silva De La Torre, Cinematographer & Producer
Matthew Herson, Principal Solutions Architect, Amazon Web Services

Super League was looking for a way to maximize performance per server for their streaming toolset. Partnering with Equinix Metal has enabled Super League to manage hypergrowth while actually improving their already premium content experience. Metal was able to help improve performance and lower costs by offering a true bare metal server experience in exactly the right location connected to exactly the right networks at exactly the right time. After testing multiple options Super League discovered Metal could do everything they needed and scale on demand while consistently offering the performance needed to deliver the best experience to the broadcast crew in real time.

Brian Gnamo, Vice President of Video Production, Head of Virtualis Studios
Benjamin Jenkins, Senior Principal Solutions Architect, Equinix
11:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. Digital Twin-based Experimentation in the Media & Entertainment Industry

Best friendships, which is the case between audiences and platforms, need to be unique, personal, and effortless. The audience will choose the platform that anticipates their need and knows exactly what to offer. Employing a direct-to-consumer (D2C) operating model opens a window directly into the hearts of audiences. It creates a direct relationship with consumers, and their data. D2C initiative success hinges on companies which effectively leverage their available data to create unparalleled experiences for the audience, and impactful revenue streams for the business. This discussion will focus on how the entertainment industry can move beyond using historical events to plan and recommend media using the behavioral nuances of their audiences (preference changes by mood, season, time of day, etc.) and also on how the entertainment industry can embrace a risk-free, data-driven, business experimentation which allows decision makers to measure the effectiveness of new business initiatives, content and Experiences on digital twin of audiences. Understanding the traits and experiences of Digital Twin of audiences can reveal relationships, behavioral traits, interests, preferences, availability of time and money, and many other data points across different stages of the content lifecycle.

Narendran Sivakumar (Naren), AI Advisory, Products and Platforms, Communications, Media and Information Services Business Unit, Tata Consultancy Services

12:05 – 12:20 p.m. EluvioLIVE: A Novel Streaming & Ticketing Platform Distributed Directly from Artists & Publishers

Join Emmy award-winning technologist Michelle Munson during this live Q&A session to discuss a new approach to help tackle some of the biggest challenges in online ticketed performances, including artist control, monetization, and streaming quality. The discussion will explore EluvioLIVE, unveiled at SXSW, which provides artists with a novel blockchain-based streaming and ticketing platform for concerts and more, distributed directly from artists to their global audiences. EluvioLIVE is built upon the award-winning Eluvio Content Fabric, used by Tier 1 media companies including MGM Studios, FOX Networks, and others.

Michelle Munson, Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder, Eluvio

12:25 – 12:40 p.m. ROOM DARK

12:45 – 1:15 p.m. AI Ethics in Media: Where We Are, and... Where We're Going

A check in on the work of the ETC-SMPTE Joint Task Force on AI in Media, as the ethical implications of AI systems have taken center stage in the debate over deployment of machine intelligence pipelines. This is an overview of what ethical issues are relevant to the media industry, and how ETC and SMPTE are thinking about handling them.

Yves Berquist, Director, AI & Neuroscience in Media Project, Entertainment Technology Center at USC (ETC)
11:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. Smarter Workflow to Reduce Catch-Up Costs

With streaming on the rise, the costs associated with running OTT services are increasingly appearing on the radar of CFOs. Facing fierce competition from the multitude of players in the field, service providers need to be more efficient to be able to invest in content and improve the customer experience. CFOs are especially concerned that as the number of streams and viewer hours increase, the expansion, replacement, and maintenance costs will outpace the revenue growth. Most streaming platforms address live TV and catch-up TV services with two separate, independent workflows. If you are adding more live TV channels and offering more catch-up, not only do storage costs increase, but perhaps more significantly, the infrastructure and operational cost induced by the parallel packaging workflows will soar. In this session, we will discuss how to reduce catch-up TV costs as well as any potential challenges to streamlining workflows.

Maxim Shevchenko, Senior Product Manager, Irdeto

12:05 – 12:20 p.m. Turbocharging EIDR Workflows, Today and into the Future

This session covers how the Meta EIDR matching and registration module turbocharges the EIDR workflows of some of the world’s largest studios and broadcasters. There will also be a look forwards to upcoming advancements that will enable matching of entire shows, seasons and episodes – with simple tools to reconcile where sequencing may vary between the source and destination catalogues.

Introduction by: Richard Kroon, Technical Director, Entertainment ID Registry (EIDR)
Robin Tucker, Chief Executive Officer, Meta Data Systems

12:25 – 12:40 p.m. High Latency Streaming: Do Viewers Care?

Leading video tech analyst Brian Ring will reveal the results of his Spring survey on the topic of latency in live sports streaming. Other exclusive data points on QR Codes, Social TV, and News viewing during Covid will be shared. Brian will also debut his new segment, “Top 5 Tells,” from this past quarter’s most important video tech & streaming news events.

Brian Ring, Host, FutureOfTV.Live

12:45 – 1:15 p.m. How Screenrights Supports Content Creators by Scaling to Accurately Match Usage Records

Screenrights manages royalty licensing for educational broadcast content in Australia and NZ, supporting learning & creativity throughout the region. As the amount of educational video content grows, the team realized that manual record matching could no longer scale to address the millions of usage records across television, mobile, IPTV and other over the air broadcasts. Screenrights needed a better way to scale their efforts and accurately attribute usage records. Hear first-hand why machine learning-first data mastering is critical to achieving Screenrights goals of making sure content creators are paid and continue to make new educational videos. Hear from Emma Madison, Head of New Business & Technology, about how she builds the business case to adopt new technologies for the organization’s board of directors. Learn more about why Screenrights values data mastering at scale and how it allows them to accomplish their goals.

Emma Madison, Head of New Business & Technology, Screenrights
Nicole Wong, Sales Engineer, Tamr

Get the Guide: Five Pitfalls of Cloud and SaaS Economics in Media

Explore the Five Pitfalls of Cloud and SaaS Economics in Media outlined in this guide to learn how media companies can avoid common mistakes and more readily reap the full benefits of the cloud.

- Pitfall 1: Buying Process Overkill
- Pitfall 2: Underestimating Roll-Your-Own Cost
- Pitfall 3: Over-bundled Cloud Services
- Pitfall 4: Choosing On-Demand Over Subscription
- Pitfall 5: Overestimating Utilization
11:30 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.  Gettin' Sassy about SASE!
Gartner’s “The Future of Network Security is in the Cloud” report spells out the potential for the transformation of networking and security in the cloud, built upon a new networking and security model. That model is called Secure Access Service Edge (SASE), a term coined by Gartner’s leading security analysts. This architecture improves cloud security, reduces costs and increases network performance. Join this session to learn more!
Moderator: Adam Slohn, Chief Executive Officer, Dark Fiber Production Technology
Mark Peay, Channel Director, West Region, SASE (Converged SD-WAN + Security-as-a-Service) Evangelist, Cato Networks
Michael McGrory, Senior Solutions Engineer, Cloudflare
David Nuti, Head of Channel & Alliances, Open Systems

12:25 – 1:15 p.m.  Optimizing Capabilities & Costs Thru Hybrid Cloud Architectures
The cloud offers a significant portfolio of new capabilities, enhanced workflows, creative options and access to new remote talent. However, no one cloud service has all of the “best of breed” media workflow solution components and some things still perform better creatively on premise or in a private cloud datacenter. But then how does one stitch all of this together in a way that it operates fluidly from end to end and the content producers aren’t hit with a bunch of unpredictable cost overruns due to egress and other hidden fees.
Moderator: Adam Slohn, Chief Executive Officer, Dark Fiber Production Technology
Scott Johnson, Head of North America, SimpleCloud
David Ward, Chief Executive Officer, PacketFabric
Rob Zimmerman, Databank

1:15 – 1:25 p.m.  NETWORKING BREAK Featuring a Guided Meditation with Gina Cavalier
This networking break is all about you, the individual who has come to realize that you hold the power to heal yourself in a variety of ways. The online meditation is offered via Zoom, with attendees encouraged to wear whatever they feel comfortable in, with lighting, blankets and water in their personal space recommended. Attendees can leave their cameras on or off for the entire period and a chair with a strong back is recommended during the meditation.

1:25 – 1:30 p.m.  WELCOME BACK REMARKS
Guy Finley, President, MESA

CONNECT YOUR WORKFLOWS FROM SCRIPT TO SCREEN
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MESA members make everything our communities do possible - news, events, meetings, committees and industry initiatives.
1:25 – 1:30 p.m. Welcome Back Remarks
Guy Finley, President & Chief Executive Officer, MESA

1:30 – 1:45 p.m. Virtuous Innovation: How Innovation Ecosystems Enhance Corporate Outcomes
Award-winning executive, entrepreneur and philanthropist, Shelton Mercer has founded, led and exited venture-backed companies in tech, media, entertainment sports and social impact. Mercer has created a global, gravitational pull through his Virtuous Innovation™ methodology and MiOS™ — Mercer Innovation Outcomes System which merge invention, equity, incubation and commercialization to launch and scale new companies and collaborations. Mercer has taken entrepreneurial x educational x enterprise x economic ecosystems to new heights through the creation of multiple innovation districts, hubs and initiatives and a global network. At HTS Spring event Mercer will give attendees a front row view into some of the principles and key initiatives that illustrate Virtuous Innovation™ and MiOS™ in action and enhance corporate innovation outcomes.
Shelton Mercer, Founder & Chairman, Mercer Innovation

1:45 – 2:15 p.m. The New Normal: A Post Covid Content Ecosystem Today, Tomorrow, Forever
Covid-19 has been and continues to be, one of the greatest global disruptions of our lifetime. Within the media and entertainment industry, the changes that have come from TV and movie viewing over the past year are positioned to remain that way for years to come. Billion-dollar blockbusters were challenged by a shrinking theatrical window and an increasingly competitive streaming environment. Now, SVODs have normalized direct-to-consumer releases, and with the acceleration of AVOD, consumers are finding alternative ways to consume content. The ever-changing content climate only continues to transform itself as media companies struggle to optimize releases for fixed schedules, primetime TV slots or popular holiday milestones. In order to tackle this new world of what to watch, you must be able to identify the demand for content, understand consumer data and leverage audience engagement metrics to predict title success. Born from the pandemic were new strategic workflows along with a new way of conducting business, which have altered the way the industry operates. Join our panel to hear from industry experts on adapting to today’s new normal and how to prepare for the future with an advantageous content strategy plan; turning the Covid chaos into a change for the better.
Moderator: Carol Hanley, Co-President, Whip Media
Panelists: Richard Brookbanks, Vice President Financial Controller, The Walt Disney Company
Will Gurman, Vice President, Global Content Partnerships, PlutoTV
Celebrity Introduction by: Anthony Anderson, Executive Producer/Actor

2:15 – 2:30 p.m. Navigating the New Norm of Box Office & Engagement
As we move beyond isolation and back to our “normal” we have a unique opportunity to analyze changes in viewing behavior, sentiment and the associated implications on programming choices, theatrical attendance, release windows and streaming services. Measurement and reporting in a rapidly changing environment requires new approaches to quickly understand why viewers are engaging in content, beyond just traditional viewership metrics, and how to interpret and adjust to those patterns in real-time, whether that be data-driven or new workflow automation processes. ETC is developing next-generation applications drawn from AI and neuroscience for the media and entertainment industry. This session looks at building a comprehensive knowledge engine to help media and entertainment companies develop deep, “genomics-type insights into how their content resonates with audiences.
Yves Benquet, Director, AI & Neuroscience in Media Project, Entertainment Technology Center at USC (ETC)

2:30 – 3 p.m. Driving Delivery of Global OTT
Driving opportunities in global end-to-end efficiencies throughout our distribution supply chain is essential to our evolution out of the pandemic. The pressure felt across multiple business units within content companies to build out their global digital supply chain is immense. With the increase in volume and the demands of global scale, there is a growing expectation from every link in the chain which culminates in the end-user experience and subscriber growth. As data and processes become more efficient, more reliable, and more transparent, our supply chain grows exponentially along with the content being delivered through it. What are the strategies and methodologies OTT organizations are using when they bottleneck? What’s working and what isn’t? Experts in this session provide insights into how we can work the chain more effectively towards our industry’s direct to consumer future.
MODERATORS: Matt Turner, Chair, Applied Data Working Group and Mary Yurkovic, Director, Smart Content
PANELISTS: Sharon Elliott, Head of Global Operations Development, Amazon Studios
David Klee, Vice President, Strategic Media Solutions, A+E Networks
MAINSTAGE 2: TRANSFORMATION

1:30 – 2 p.m. Transforming Our Industry Through Community & Volunteerism
Our afternoon panel discussion kicks off the Transformation Stage by highlighting the prolific work being done across Women in Technology: Hollywood. Through our engaged Board and Committees we’ve produced over 20 virtual events and transformed our engaged community through our committee based activities around community building, professional development, mentoring & networking and more. By moving our ‘tent-pole’ events to single-day, stand-alone community engagement activities, WiTH has truly transformed over the past year both retrospectively and prospectively as we look to the rest of 2021!

MODERATOR: Nina Skorus-Neely, WiTH Foundation Secretary, Women in Technology Hollywood
PANELISTS: Christina Aguiler, WiTH Foundation President and Head of Technology Workforce & Strategy, Amazon Studios
Nadya Ichinomiya, WiTH Foundation Chair and Executive Director, Head of Agile Center of Excellence, Iseabail Lane, Co-Chair, WiTH Professional Development Committee
Cybill Miklaszewski, Co-Chair, WiTH Mentoring & Networking Committee
April Schneider, Chair, WiTH Community Engagement Committee

2 – 2:15 p.m. Securing Artificial Intelligence
Artificial intelligence (AI) is utilized across a wide variety of industries to automate human capabilities and streamline workflows, increase productivity and efficiencies, lower costs, and solve complex problems. From Siri suggestions, to smart cars, to box office prediction models, the applications of AI are seemingly limitless. However, just as AI can be used to make our lives easier, these algorithms can be stolen and leveraged for nefarious purposes. AI models are expensive and time-consuming to build, and as such are extremely valuable intellectual property to protect. Just as we protect our data and computer networks from hacking, securing AI solutions is critical to prevent misuse or interference. Here we will discuss current developments in securing AI from existing attacks (including data poisoning, network copying/cloning, privacy issues etc.) such as model obfuscation, watermarking, and incremental learning.

Will Hickie, Data Science Architect, Irdeto

2:15 – 2:30 p.m. Experience Ecosystem – Where Virtual breathes Life into Real(ity)
Humans are all about creating stories from experiences. In today’s hyperconnected, personalized and boundaryless world, lines have disappeared between real and virtual. At TCS, we believe Virtual breathes Life in Real world and Real life experiences help enhance the Virtual world. The key challenge however, currently there are a disparate number of companies trying to address our needs and wants without really tapping into a holistic ecosystem for experiences. This is the next frontier to explore.

Sabyasachi “Saby” Mitra, Global Head – Operating Model Transformation Industry Advisor & Lead – Strategic Accounts Communications, Media & Information Services Business Group, Tata Consultancy Services

2:30 – 3 p.m. Wide, Wide World of Content: Scaling to Ubiquity
Media companies are transforming their people, processes, and technologies. Today’s digital opportunities allow faster content distribution and business model experimentation. The discussion is targeted to media company business-and-technology leaders who seek bleeding-edge strategies and fast technologies. This audience interactive conversation will explore: Why ubiquitous access to content is critical for brands? The challenges of launching a new channel versus being included on an existing channel. Is there still room for long tail programming on highly differentiated channels? The content technology stack – build? Buy? or license? And much more.

Moderator: Bob Gold, CEO & Founder, Bob Gold & Associates
Panelists: Max Einhorn, Senior Vice President, Acquisitions & Co-Productions, FilmRise
Vikrant Mathur, Chief Executive Officer & Founder, Future Today
Gary Rosenson, Chief Executive Officer, Principle Media

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3 – 3:30 p.m. CLOSING KEYNOTE: Disruptive by Design – Design Thinking’s Approach to Global Problem-Solving

Our Innovation Keynote speaker is at the forefront of the next generation of design thinking. He has worked with many of Hollywood’s ‘A-list’ directors, including Steven Spielberg, Ridley Scott, David Fincher, to name a few. As well as top brands ranging from Apple, to RED/cameras, Samsung, BMW, and more. Highly regarded in the film, game, advertising, and design industries, with multiple awards and patents, he’s worked on a diverse portfolio of projects ranging from entertainment, to medical, tech, and sustainability. This broad experience drives the core strategic ideas he uses when working with global leaders, international researchers, innovators, and educational institutions. Nurturing creativity to overcome global problems in order to effect change in a real way, he addresses a wide range of topics from current water shortage crises to the revolution of our educational systems through implementing already existing tech. His HITS:Spring presentation will address how creative strategies can impact organizational breakdowns and provide insights to overcome communication barriers and cross-platform integration. He’ll revisit the ever-growing disconnect between creative lateral thinking and the deep dive of basic research by discussing future design thinking and how to best prepare for the exponential acceleration of a t-shaped world in a future dominated by Artificial Intelligence.

Jeff Julian, Founder, Lab5

3:30 p.m. CLOSING REMARKS/NETWORKING RECEPTION

Guy Finley, President, MESA

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