

Cannes recap: Expanding what's possible in TV streaming

Cannes Lions is all about creativity and advertising innovation, and this year's festival did not disappoint. As we do every year, the Roku team participated in panel discussions, met with press and showcased Roku's role as the lead-in to all television.

Here are some highlights from the week.

Women's sports continue to gain steam

Roku announced a new documentary with Renee Montgomery, highlighting the WNBA All-Star's transition from player to owner of the Atlanta Dream amid the 2020 Black Lives Matter movement. The feature is produced by UNINTERRUPTED (from LeBron James and Maverick Carter) and P&G Studios from Procter & Gamble.

At the Female Quotient Equality Lounge, Roku's Kristina Shepard, VP of global advertising sales and partnerships, discussed Roku's commitment to gender equality in sports alongside executives from The North Face, Procter & Gamble, and MassMutual.



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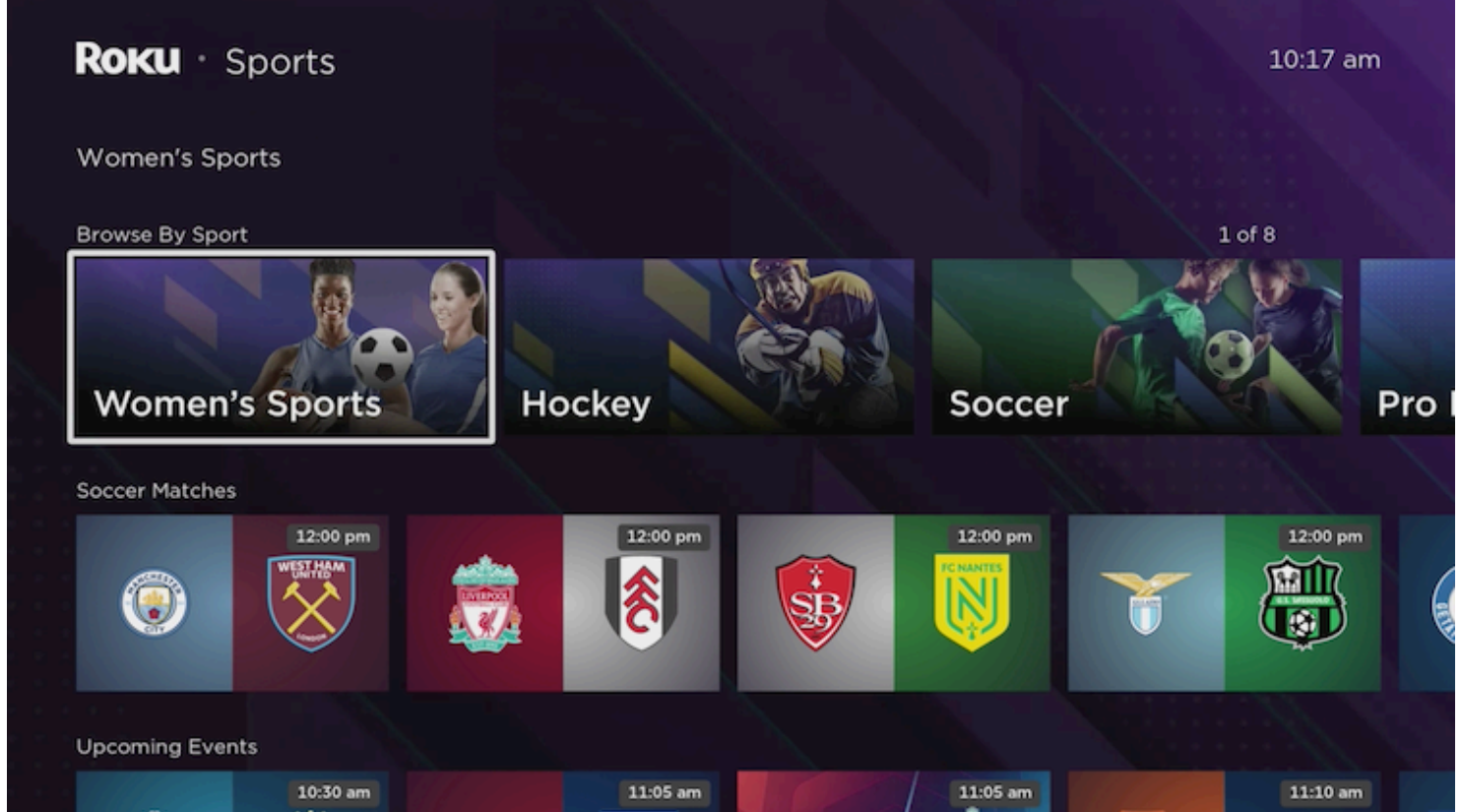
*“There are so many ways for brands to lean in that go well beyond a traditional advertising spot,” **said Shepard.** “Sharing stories of athletes off the court or field helps viewers see them as real people. That’s when brands can really share powerful stories that resonate.”*

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Women’s sports viewership is rising. Searches for women’s basketball are up 754% on Roku compared to last year.¹ Furthermore, viewing hours on Roku for the 2024 NCAA Women’s College Basketball tournament increased more than 80% compared to men’s, which remained flat.² On Roku Sports Zone and Women’s Sports Zone, brands like Comcast and Sparkling Ice have already sponsored the experience.

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*“They were able to capitalize on that pop culture moment,” **said Shepard.** “We’re seeing brands want to react in real-time to these really big moments.”*



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Roku's Side Hustlers: Pioneering representation of women in business

Entrepreneurship is the backbone of American business and women play a critical role. There are over 14 million [women-owned small businesses](#) in the U.S. generating \$2.7 trillion annually, but [women represent](#) only about 11% of investing partners at venture capital firms, and a mere 13% of VC funds are allocated to startups with at least one female founder.

To change the narrative, Roku collaborated with Hello Sunshine and Ally to create Side Hustlers, a hit series on The Roku Channel that follows ambitious female entrepreneurs balancing their day jobs, personal lives, and aspirations of entrepreneurship.

During a panel discussion in the Female Quotient Equality Lounge, Rachel Helfman, director of ad marketing and creative solutions at Roku, joined executives from Ally and Hello Sunshine to share insights from the project.



While typical ads only show women in leadership roles [3.4% of the time](#) and professional roles [8.5% of the time](#), *Side Hustlers* depicted women as strong business leaders. It scored in the top 20% of all creative tested by SeeHer's GEM metric (measuring gender bias in ads and programming).³

Ally offered financial expertise to the entrepreneurs — partnering as a co-executive producer rather than simply a brand sponsor. The exposure led to spikes in internet searches, awareness, likeability, and people recommending the brand to others, according to Bridget Sponsky, Ally's executive director, brand marketing.

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“The ability to have input into the content was so important for us because we have been challenged by that along the way with content projects that end up being more of a brand integration instead of a true partner,” **said Sponsky.** *“But for Side Hustlers, we crafted the vision together.”*

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TV and media have a big influence on who we think we can become, and seeing women represented so authentically may help budding female entrepreneurs envision themselves as business leaders.

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“Women are raised not to talk about money, so showing real women talking about it and uplifting their dreams of making their side hustle their real hustle — there’s power in that,” **said Helfman.** *“I think we are genuinely changing the conversation and teaching women everywhere that it’s good to talk about this stuff and if we join forces and support one another, anything can happen.”*

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Introducing Roku Exchange and other platform announcements

Roku made several announcements ahead of Cannes Lions that center on data, transparency and measurement:

Roku Exchange. We announced [Roku Exchange](#), enabling advertisers to tap into a wide array of Roku ad inventory through their preferred buying platforms. Combining Roku’s premium ad supply with identity data and AI-driven optimization, Roku Exchange gives a larger pool of buyers with robust programmatic access to our media.

For more on Roku Exchange, watch Louqman Parampath, VP of product management-advertising at Roku, in conversation with Magnite SVP Charlstie Veith, at the SPORT BEACH Content Studio. [Check out the video.](#)

[iframe src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/whsYKUnvDSw?si=L7CfstdHWV9_EU1d" width="100%" height="500"]

Comscore + The Roku Channel: [Comscore](#) has expanded its existing coverage of Roku by including The Roku Channel in its Connected TV Intelligence (CTVi) planning tool. CTVi shows that Roku is the most popular CTV

operating system by time spent in the U.S., representing 49% of CTV viewing. It also found that The Roku Channel is the No. 1 FAST channel by total hours.

Attributing movie ticket sales with Fandango. Roku and Fandango [have partnered](#) help theatrical advertisers measure the impact of their streaming ads on online movie ticket sales. Nine in 10 Roku users have seen a film in the theater in the last 12 months, and this tie-up will help studios know how Roku campaigns impact movie choices both in theaters and at home.⁴

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¹ Roku Internal Data, 2024 | Compared to January-April 2023

² Roku Internal Data, 2024

³ SeeHer GEM® Lift Study, IRI, ABX 2021, U.S. only

⁴ NRG + Roku Theatrical Survey, 2024

Written by:

Roku Advertising

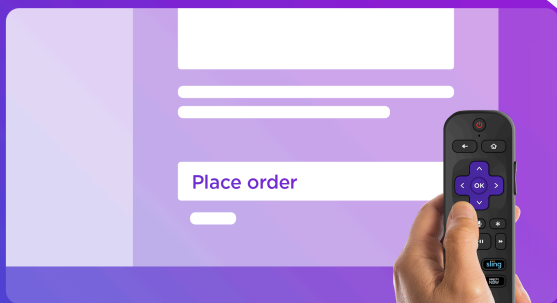
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