

<http://lamac.org/en/news/news-about-pay-tv/nbcuniversal-announces-direct-to-consumer-streaming-service-and-new-leadership-structure>



News about Pay TV

NBCUniversal announces direct-to-consumer streaming service and new leadership structure

New Ad-supported Streaming Service to be Led by Bonnie Hammer

14/01/2019

January 14, 2019 - New York, NY - NBCUniversal announced today the planned launch of a new streaming service providing consumers access to world-class premium content for free, with valuable partnership opportunities for advertisers and distributors. The service, which will launch in early 2020, will be led by Bonnie Hammer, who has been promoted to Chairman, Direct-to-Consumer and Digital Enterprises for NBCUniversal.

This innovative new service will draw on NBCUniversal's large content library, as well as its broad reach of over 90 million U.S. households, plus Comcast and Sky's leading technology platforms. It will feature some of the world's most popular television and film franchises, including homegrown original programming as well as content from outside partners.

The ad-supported service will be available at no cost to NBCUniversal's pay TV subscribers in the U.S. and major international markets. Comcast Cable and Sky will provide the service to their 52 million subscribers. An ad-free version will also be available for a fee. Additionally, non-pay TV customers can purchase a subscription to the service. Consistent with the company's long-standing strategy to distribute its content broadly, NBCUniversal will continue to license content to other studios and platforms, while retaining rights to certain titles for its new service.

Hammer will build a team that will include key executives from Sky's OTT offering, NOW TV, and throughout NBCUniversal. In addition, NBCUniversal's Digital Enterprises group, led by Maggie Suniewick, will move into Hammer's consolidated digital group.

"NBCUniversal has some of the world's most valuable intellectual property and top talent, both in front of and behind the camera. Many of the most-watched shows on today's popular streaming platforms come from NBCUniversal. Our new service will be different than those presently in the market and it will be built on the company's strengths, with NBCUniversal's great content and the technology expertise, broad scale and the wide distribution of Comcast Cable and Sky," said Steve Burke, CEO, NBCUniversal.

He added, *"People are watching premium content more than ever, but they want more flexibility and value. NBCUniversal is perfectly positioned to offer a variety of choices, due to our deep*

relationships with advertisers and distribution partners, as well as our data-targeting capabilities. Advertising continues to be a major part of the entertainment ecosystem and we believe that a streaming service, with limited and personalized ads, will provide a great consumer experience.”

As Chairman, NBCUniversal Cable Entertainment and Cable Studios, Hammer has had executive oversight of leading media brands USA Network, SYFY, Bravo, Oxygen, E! Entertainment and Universal Kids. She oversaw two Hollywood studios, UCP and Wilshire Studios. UCP is one of the industry’s fastest-growing studios, working with top Hollywood creative talent to develop and produce content for linear channels and digital streaming services including Netflix, Amazon and Hulu. In 2018, Hammer led her portfolio to its 15th consecutive year of growth in both profit and revenue. Hammer serves on the Board of Directors of eBay and IAC/InteractiveCorp.

Separately, Burke announced a reorganization of his senior leadership team, which will align its content businesses under two executives, Mark Lazarus and Jeff Shell.

Lazarus has been named Chairman, NBCUniversal Broadcast, Cable, Sports and News, and will assume responsibility for most of the company’s East Coast-based content businesses, including the cable entertainment portfolio, NBC News, MSNBC and CNBC. In addition, Lazarus will continue to oversee the NBC Sports Group, NBCUniversal Owned Television Stations and NBC Affiliate Relations.

Since joining the Company in 2011, Lazarus has overseen NBC Sports and added oversight of Broadcast for NBC in 2016. Under his leadership, the company has forged new deals with the Olympics, NFL, NASCAR, the Premier League and the NHL, among many other partnerships. In addition, Sunday Night Football has been primetime’s number one show for a record of eight consecutive years. Prior to joining NBCUniversal, Lazarus was President of Media and Marketing at CSE and President of Turner Entertainment Group.

Shell has been named Chairman, NBCUniversal Film and Entertainment, adding NBC Entertainment to his purview. He will continue to oversee film and will also now be responsible for NBCUniversal’s international division and Telemundo.

Shell most recently served as Chairman of Universal Filmed Entertainment Group (UFEG), overseeing all divisions of the global film operations, as well as DreamWorks Animation, Fandango and Brand Development. He was previously Chairman of NBCUniversal International and President of Comcast Programming Group. Since Shell joined UFEG in 2013, the studio celebrated four years of record profit — and the two most profitable years in the studio’s 107-year history.

As part of the reorganization, Donna Langley has been promoted to become sole Chairman, Universal Filmed Entertainment Group, including the addition of Global Theatrical Distribution and Home Entertainment. As Chairman of Universal Pictures since 2013, Langley oversaw all aspects of the studio’s production and marketing operations worldwide, including Focus Features and DreamWorks Animation. Under her leadership, Universal has expanded and reinvigorated some of its biggest and most profitable homegrown franchises including Fast & Furious, Jurassic World, Pitch Perfect, Illumination’s Despicable Me as well as Fifty Shades, Ride Along and The Purge.

Hammer, Lazarus and Shell will continue to report directly to Burke. Langley continues to report to Shell.

Burke's direct reports will continue to include Vice Chairman Ron Meyer, Tom Williams (Parks), Anand Kini (CFO), Linda Yaccarino (Ad Sales), Matt Bond (Content Distribution), Kimberley Harris (General Counsel), Adam Miller (Communications and HR), Craig Robinson (Diversity) and Kathy Kelly-Brown (Symphony).

"We are very fortunate to have great executives who are ready to do more. Bonnie, Mark, Jeff and Donna have proven track records that speak for themselves. As importantly, they embody the team-oriented culture that has become a hallmark of NBCUniversal," said Burke.