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How to cite this publication

Please cite the final published version:

Bruun, H. (2018). Producing the On-air Schedule in Public Service Television in the Digital Era. *Critical Studies in Television*, 13(2), 137-152. [10.1177/1749602018763700](https://doi.org/10.1177/1749602018763700)

Publication metadata

Title:	Producing the On-air Schedule in Public Service Television in the Digital Era
Author(s):	Hanne Bruun
Journal:	Critical Studies in Television
DOI/Link:	https://doi.org/10.1177/1749602018763700
Document version:	Accepted manuscript (post-print)

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Producing the on-air schedule in Danish public service television in the digital era

Hanne Bruun

Abstract

This article presents results from a production study on how the on-air-schedule is changing in the digital era at the Danish public service broadcaster, TV 2. TV 2's multi-channel and increasingly non-linear television portfolio has a profound impact on the production practices involved in order to meet the public service obligations. The analysis shows that the producers develop new ways to secure an audience of scale under these conditions. So far three lessons are learned: First, the work flow of promoting content and the demands on the qualities of the promotional material has changed. Second, an understanding of the interplay between flow and SVOD scheduling is emerging. And third, a renewed focus is put on branding the viewer-provider relationship. The article concludes that the production of on-air scheduling makes the contours of what can be termed 'a third television paradigm' visible in which a distinction between linear and non-linear television does not apply.

Keywords:

Scheduling; on-air-schedule; production culture; production study; digital television; non-linear television

Introduction

The funny thing, comparing the present to the 'old days' [2004], is in fact that all the production processes and promotional processes involved have become *far* more complicated [...] In fact on-air television scheduling was a rather simple matter back then (laughs).

(Head of Scheduling TV 2 and TV 2 News, Mette Rysø Johansen, 7.3.2016, personal interview)¹

This is a quote from one of the many interviews conducted in my study of the changes in the production of the on-air schedule in Danish public service television. It expresses a general notion held by the producers: the practices of on-air-scheduling are changing and getting much more complicated in the digital era. The traditional linear television environment that constituted the basis for this kind of production in television is gone, and a linear as well as non-linear television environment has taken over. Among the schedulers and continuity producers there is a sense of insecurity regarding what the future might bring, but also a very strong will to understand and to adapt to changes, and to the new terms of competition for the attention of the audience on the media market for audio-visual content.

¹ All quotes are translated from Danish by the author.

The aim in my study is to shed some light on these changes in the *production culture* (Caldwell 2008) of the producers: how do these professionals interpret the tensions between a well-known linear television environment and the non-linear services included in the portfolio of the provider, and do they have an impact on the practices and value systems guiding this kind of textual production? The article presents main findings from the study at the Danish commercially funded public service television company TV 2. The tensions between traditional linear television and the non-linear television services have a strong influence on the production culture among the producers, and three lessons have been learned so far. First, these tensions have an impact on the ways the work of the producers aim to support and secure the position of the main channel in TV 2's portfolio of channels and online services in order to hold on to and guide the viewers towards profitable user flows. As a consequence, the work flow of promoting content and the demands on the qualities of the promotional material have changed. Secondly, an understanding of the interplay between flow and SVOD scheduling is slowly emerging. And third, a renewed focus is put on branding the viewer-provider relationship. Based on these findings the article finally suggests that the contours of what might be termed a 'third television paradigm' are being produced. This paradigm is marked by the interplay between the traditional linear television paradigm, and an emerging non-linear television paradigm that is integrated into the work practices.

Back in style – or on the edge of extinction?

The product produced (the on-air schedule) is a kind of televisual text that has been produced throughout the history of television in different configurations. It bridges what is regarded as the programmes proper and reflects the television market in different regions. The on-air schedule is the top level of television's textual hierarchy – the “supertext” (Brown 1984) – and the kind of organisational identity that the viewers meet when they watch several programmes across linear television. The on-air schedule is described as “the architecture that combines them [the programme genres of television]” (Ellis, 2000a, 131), as a junction using a montage of “interstitials” (Johnson, 2013; Ellis, 2011) and as a montage of “paratexts” (Gray, 2010). Ellis describes the work of the producers of this text as “editing on an Olympian scale” (2000b, 25), defining a specific broadcast television service and making it distinguishable from other services.

According to Søndergaard (1994, 41), the schedule can even be regarded as a special genre of television, and it has an autonomous potential in the sense-making process of what ‘television’ is among the producers. It is traditionally associated with the basic theoretical understanding of television as a textual phenomenon and a cultural form that has been conceptualised by Raymond Williams (1974), and in more detail by Ellis (1982) using the term ‘flow’. Constructing a textual ‘flow’ that holds on to the viewers who are already watching, as well as attracting new viewers, is the fundamental communicative function of the schedule in a competitive media landscape (Bruun 2016; Johnson and Weissmann 2017). The production of the on-air schedule sits right in the middle of the heritage of linear television and the present challenges that non-linear television represents, and a renewed scholarly interest is emerging in

television studies. Important contributions question the theoretical understanding (developed in the pre-digital era) of television as a time-structured textual phenomenon. Using branding theory, Johnson (2012) provides us with a comprehensive analysis of the efforts made to work the identity of the provider into a single brand with distinctive values in the eyes of the viewers. This is done in the context of intensified competition for attention in the economic and emotional markets. Johnson's study compares the channel branding strategies and campaigns of the BBC, ITV1 and Channel 4 with the American networks ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox over a thirty-year period. As Johnson's findings suggest, it has become increasingly difficult to predict linear viewing patterns. Nevertheless, efforts to attract and hold the attention of the viewers are still paramount, and they have become more important than ever. Caldwell terms the providers' new strategies and tactics to hold on to their audiences in a non-linear multi-platform environment 'second-shift media aesthetics' (2003, 127). Identity branding becomes essential, as does thinking in spatial metaphors, such as giving the viewers the opportunity to 'graze' on content outside the boundaries of the individual channel. However, Caldwell emphasises the ways in which the providers try to guide the viewers towards profitable user flows.

In line with Caldwell's interest in how the American television industry adapts its industrial logic and business models, Ihlebæk, Syvertsen and Ytreberg (2014) compare how schedulers and promoters of public service and commercial channels in the Norwegian television market revise and renew their "toolkit" (2014, 14) to face these scheduling challenges. Special attention is given to building so-called 'junctions' (ibid., 9), where the multi-platform provider uses

different forms of cross-promotion in order to guide the viewers to stay tuned within its environment of streaming services, websites and main and niche channels. These findings are largely supported by Doyle's analysis of the work of schedulers at MTV UK (2013). These new tools, which aim to support continued viewing but on a different platform, and the need for spatial metaphors is underpinned by the effort to describe the new temporal structures and the generic changes in the providers' communicative behaviour.

The findings in these research contributions underline that on-air scheduling has become an increasingly difficult task. On the one hand, it is more important than ever; on the other hand, it may be a task that loses its importance in the shift towards a more non-linear use of television content. It is safe to say that the on-air schedule needs to allow for the enhanced choice and content control of contemporary audiences (Van Den Bulck and Enli, 2014a, 2014b). This means that the on-air schedule has to be constructed in new ways.

In order to understand how this plays out in the production culture, the professional producers are regarded as powerful *interpreters* working in specific media systemic contexts, and in specific cultural and historic contexts. Therefore, different versions of the on-air schedule are to be found between television providers all performing the same fundamental communicative functions but weighting them in different ways. In the Danish context, the on-air schedule became a very important during the 1990s because of an increasingly competitive television environment in Europe (Søndergaard 2003). This development meant that instead of regarding programmes and programme genres as the only core product, the companies became much more aware of the on-air schedule as a communicative phenomenon and a competitive resource.

These changes entailed an organisational development especially in the television companies dominated by in-house production, like the old PSBs, towards on-demand led production processes as described by Ellis (2000a). In the Nordic countries, the power hierarchy inside these organisations also changed towards a much stronger focus on the preproduction phase of the on-air schedule. This shifted the power balance between the producers of individual programmes and strategic management, putting editorial management on the level of channels and placing top-down commissioning processes above programme production (Ytreberg 2000, 2002; Søndergaard 2003). At TV 2 this development was (and still is) heavily supported by the organisational structure: TV 2 is a so-called desktop organisation (much like Channel 4 in the UK) which only produces news and sports in-house. The rest of the content is either commissioned in the television production industry in Denmark, or acquired programmes.

The production study at TV 2

TV 2/Danmark has a share of viewing of 37,9 per cent across its six channels and 26 per cent for its main channel, called TV 2, which make TV 2/Danmark the largest provider of content on the small Danish market of 5.6 million inhabitants. A mixture of subscriptions and advertising revenue funds TV 2/Danmark. Danish law allows commercial breaks only *between* what are considered programmes, or in 'natural breaks' within programmes, for example at half time in a football match. This legislation applies to linear as well as on-demand audio-visual content. Furthermore, TV 2/Danmark is a limited company, entirely owned by

the Danish state. It has two divisions, and they have to be kept separate financially. The first is a *public service division* that includes the main channel TV 2, which has scheduled 'windows' for the eight regional news providers that are supported by a licence fee. Second, TV 2/Danmark has a large purely commercial division, TV 2 Networks, which *has no public service obligations*. This division includes the tv2.dk website, five niche channels, and the TV 2 Play streaming service. The five niche channels have a share of between two and four per cent, and on a weekly basis TV 2 Play is used by eight per cent of Danes. All in all, TV 2/Danmark is very dependent on its main channel in order to maintain the company's political importance as a public service television provider.

Furthermore, the main channel is crucial to the financial survival of the company, and this survival is dependent on the viability of the inherited business model of linear television. The Danes are, however, slowly moving towards a much more on-demand based use of television, with young people and young adults being the avant-gardes of this trend. This means that all television companies on the Danish market offer streaming services and OTTs are also popular. 38 per cent of the Danes use Netflix weekly. The providers of cable and DTT linear television in big packages have also been met with new political regulations, and it is predicted that the number of 'cable shavers' and perhaps even 'cable cutters' will grow in the coming years. The main reason for this is that household media budgets have grown and people are not willing to pay any more than they do at present. This has put a stop to TV 2's strategy during the early 2000s of launching new niche channels in order to offer more advertising time and get more subscriptions from a hugely segmented small Danish audience.

TV 2 was established in 1988, and from its infancy had to operate in competition with the licence-fee-funded DR on the one hand, and a privately owned and commercial television sector on the other. TV 2 needed to adjust to the needs of the audience and advertisers within the liberal parameters of public service obligations. These basic obligations involved (and still involve) offering a mixed schedule of genres and subjects translated into the ideal of a versatile viewer, as well as a comprehensive national and regional news service. More than 50 per cent of the content commissioned must be European, with an emphasis on the Danish language and Danish culture; and in 2015 and 2016 70 per cent of the main channel's content was in Danish. In many ways, TV 2 spearheaded the development towards a viewer-oriented and the more commercially-oriented version of public service television scheduling in Denmark (Stigel 2004). The basic question is therefore to understand *how* the producers of the on-air schedule at TV 2 interpret the present tensions between a traditionally linear and an increasingly non-linear television based on the company's history and present position in the market.

The three lessons learned, briefly outlined in the introduction, will be elaborated in the following section of the article. They all suggest that the professional practices in a production culture are being adapted in order to secure the position of the main linear channel. This analysis is based on 14 face-to-face 1-2 hours interviews with the producers; and in situ observations of the final stage of production done by the flow-planners and the on-air execution of the live production in prime time by the continuity producers. The collection of data took place from November 2015 to June 2016, mainly at the TV 2 headquarters in Odense on the island of Funen in Denmark. The following

section of the article will start with a short introduction to on-air scheduling at TV 2 in order to provide a context for the three lessons learned.

On-air scheduling and the “ecosystem”

The production of the on-air schedule for the main channel takes place in specialised divisions of the company: the scheduling division for the main channel work in close daily cooperation with the on-air promotion division, which is part of the marketing division at TV 2. The marketing division works like an in-house PR agency for the different channels and online services in the TV 2 portfolio, called the “ecosystem” by the producers (Head of Media and Development, Maria Gry Henriksen, 31.5.2016, personal interview). The cooperation between the scheduling division for the main channel and the scheduling division for the streaming service is intense, as is cooperation with the head of TV 2’s main channel and the head of TV 2 News.

The production process behind the on-air schedule that hits the screen can be broken down into the same stages that structure a live television production genre like the news, but with a very different time frame. The daily broadcast of the on-air schedule is the result of a preproduction process extending up to three years into the future. The production of the interstitials mainly takes place in-house at TV 2, and to a limited degree in special task companies and in the production companies producing commissioned programmes for TV 2. This preproduction process involves constant adjustments and re-editing of the planned production, which is optimised until it is broadcast. This process involves a number of computer systems in which adjustments are

implemented. The main content management system is called *What's On*. The final product is called a “playlist” for the daily broadcast. The playlist contains all the programmes and interstitials produced in a time schedule and must be followed by the live broadcast producer during transmission. This phase of the preproduction process involves monitoring audience ratings and competitors closely as well as events in the outside world. An unexpected event can be a total game changer, and the playlist orchestrating the on-air schedule has to be profoundly re-edited, with all the promotional work already done being, at worst, wasted. An example of this happened during my stay at TV 2 in the early spring of 2016, when a political crisis almost caused a call for a general election. This was going on during the broadcasting of a high-priority promotional campaign in the on-air schedule, and on other platforms, for a broadcast of a prime-time documentary serial that exposed the influence the imams have in the Muslim community in Denmark. If the crisis had resulted in a call for a general election, the promotional campaign would have been wasted, and for political reasons the serial had to be rescheduled.

First lesson: new promotional workflows and increased quality demands

The preproduction process described above, and the work done is described as “the engine room of television” (Head of logistics Jørgen Badstue, 8.6.2016, personal interview): without it the ship is not able to sail, so to speak. The core challenge in the production culture is to produce an audience of scale and commercial value for the linear main channel by learning how to harness the promotional advantages in the TV 2 ecosystem. The head of scheduling at the

streaming service TV 2 Play, Kurt Holm Jensen, describes the relationship as follows:

The way it looks at the moment, TV 2 Play is what you might call a shadow service for TV 2's main channel. But Play also supports TV 2 Zulu because the young people do stream a lot. (7.3.2016, personal interview).

The head of scheduling at the main channel, Mette Rysø Johansen, strongly supports this understanding of the relationship (23.2.2016, personal interview). The main goal is to ensure that the flow of the audience's attention is directed towards using the content at the main channel. The interplay between the social media, the TV 2 Play streaming service, the tv2.dk website and the new media at large is paramount in order to achieve this goal. The strategy is conceptualised as a "food chain" in the organisation (Mette Rysø Johansen 7.3.2016, personal interview) that aims to feed the top animal. Instead of just using trailers in the linear flow of the mainstream channel, the promotional strategy appropriates social media together with the streaming service. One example of this strategy is the promotion of the documentary serial on poverty in Denmark: *På Røven i Nakskov* [*Broke in Nakskov*; Nakskov is a small town on the Danish island of Lolland] in April 2015. The first episode of the series was broadcast on the main channel on 23 April. Two weeks ahead of the premiere, trailers for the series had been shown on the main channel and the TV 2 website, after which they were picked up by a Facebook group of inhabitants and politicians from Lolland who began discussing the way their hometown was portrayed by TV 2. In the week before the premiere the first episode was given a sneak preview on TV 2 Play.

This generated a good deal of debate on the programme in the news media leading up to the premiere. After the broadcast, TV 2 mentioned the programme in the news and on the website, and the second episode was given a sneak preview on TV 2 Play while the first was still available.

The reasons for this new ecosystem approach to the TV 2 portfolio, the use of social media as promotional tools and the rather traditional focus on the linear main channel are firstly financial, and secondly political. The audience for the main channel has been dwindling since 2007 but seems to have stabilised around a share of 24 per cent. Thus, securing this position has become the important focus of the producers. The commercial and political value of the market share has, however, become a weaker currency in the television industry because of the general decline in linear television use in prime time, especially among the commercially important target group: 20-40 year olds. Increasingly, the harder currency for the main channel is the extent of its reach: it is able to reach 85-90 per cent of Danes within a week. At the same time, securing this position of the main channel has become much more demanding and complicated in the present television market.

The first lesson learned and added to the toolbox of the producers is that the workflow of promoting content has changed and is changing in new and still unpredictable ways. According to Mette Rysø Johansen, the producers are still in the process of understanding what the new logics of the promotional tactics they need to use are in order to 'find' the audience and guide them towards the main channel. In order to promote content, as the *På Røven i Nakskov* example above indicates, the emphasis on extensive coordination, cooperation and communication between the different divisions at TV 2 has increased. This work

is dependent on extensive audience and user data analysis, and the interstitials have become promotional texts on other media. This means that a new kind of quality demand has been added: the interstitials for high profile programmes need to be able to offer stand-alone entertainment value on e.g. YouTube and Facebook, as well as promoting the programmes on the main channel, and secondly on the streaming service. An example is the promotional campaign for the Tour de France 2015. The campaign consisted of four videos featuring situations from everyday life in Danish gardens in the summertime: a father and a son barbecuing sausages; a man watering flowers, and on purpose his wife gets a bit of water too; a man sleeping in a deck chair and a pregnant woman moving a parasol. The sound track in these rather uneventful videos was taken from the coverage of the Tour de France featuring TV 2's very famous team (in Denmark) of commentators evaluating the riders' performances.² The clash between what was seen and heard gave these trailers a sweet humorous quality.

In line with the need for stand-alone entertaining qualities the creative demands on the in-house production of promotional material and on the television production companies delivering parts of the material for this promotional ecosystem are increasing. At the same time the top-down management of the preproduction process of the on-air schedule has an increased influence on the editorial processes in the production of the different programmes. These production processes need to be managed much closer in order to deliver promotional material which is *usable* for this cross-media promotional system supporting the main channel. The on-air-scheduling and

² The videos are available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJcoY5C1ihA>

marketing have to be included in the programme production process on a much earlier stage compared to the time when television was a stand-alone platform. It limits the autonomy of the commissioning editors and production companies a bit, and shifts the balance of power inside TV 2 as an organization towards increased desktop management of the creative processes. An example of this trend is the promotion of the fourth season of the very popular Danish dramedy serial *Badehotellet* (2013+) [The Seaside Hotel]. The production company (SF Film Production) had to produce special segments to be used for promotional purposes on social media, tv2.dk and linear television long before the editing process of the latest season was finished (Head of Scheduling Mette Rysø Johansen, 7.3.2016, personal interview).

A second development that makes scheduling even more important according to the producers has to do with the increasing promotional needs at TV 2 because of the non-linear use of television and the large portfolio of channels and services. According to Maria Gry Henriksen, Head of Media and Development, it is no longer enough for a trailer to generate viewers for the first episode of a show. The viewers have to be guided much harder in order to return to watch the second episode of a show, and so forth. At the same time, the room for trailers on the main channel is very limited because the time available for promotion in the on-air schedule is taken up by the commercial breaks and an increasing number of sponsorship announcements. In short, *time scarcity* is a huge problem on the linear main channel. This means that the promotional campaigns have to be carefully selected and planned. The ability of a promotional campaign to generate viewers for the channels is measured by audience ratings, just like the programmes proper and the commercials. For

instance, interstitials (such as trailers) have to meet estimated forecasts (for instance their reach in relation to the target group in question), and the flow planners do the daily editing of the schedule in *What's On* in order to meet these forecasts. There are also measurements of whether trailers actually result in viewers watching shows. According to Head of Content Anne Engdal Stig Christensen, the use of on-screen promotion tools like pop-up banners referring to other programmes in the TV 2 portfolio is on the increase because of the time scarcity (26.11.2015, personal interview). These pop-ups are placed in the programmes and during the credits, and the distinction between promotion and programmes becomes far more intertwined.

The second lesson: Understanding the interplay of broadcasts and streaming

As described above, the role of the streaming service is primarily, and for the moment, to help secure the position of the 'top animal' in the ecosystem because of the traditional business model of commercially funded television. This is undoubtedly where the big money in the television industry still is, and the challenge facing producers involves protecting and supporting the financial flow as well as following the new habits of viewers. TV 2 Play is regarded as important in its own right in order to meet the increased non-linear use of television; but the revenue from this service is still very small compared with the revenue from the six linear channels. Furthermore, TV 2 does not have the amount of content and the financial muscle to produce new content to support a stand-alone streaming service like Netflix. The focus at TV 2 is therefore to deduce the logics of the interplay between broadcasts and streaming in order to

stop the decline in linear viewing, particularly among the 20-40-year-olds in prime time. Holding on to this commercially and politically important viewer segment is becoming a problem. So far five sub-lessons have been learned about this interplay, based on ratings and user data from TV 2 Play:

1. Specific genres do well in this interplay and lead to better ratings and more users and time spent on both platforms: documentaries (series and serials) and Danish language TV drama are at the top of the pile. The hypothesis is that both profit from a 'water cooler' effect among the audience and catch-ups and previews available on TV 2 Play stimulate this co-operation. The viewers are able to access the shows in many different ways, and being part of the public nature of television as a cultural forum is still very important.
2. Short series of around six episodes, factual as well as fiction, support ratings on both platforms as well, and are able to attract subscribers to TV 2 Play. Very long series do not.
3. Placing entire drama series that stimulate bingeing behaviour among the viewers is not good for the linear ratings and user ratings at TV 2 Play. The hypothesis is that such drama series block the qualities described above, and do not encourage continued subscription to the streaming service.
4. Stacking – which is needed to support binge viewing across genres – is not a profitable scheduling tactic for a broadcaster with limits to new content as opposed to a global streaming service like Netflix. The library is too small, and the content also has to feed the six linear channels.

5. Programme titles become more important as a promotional para-textual tool for the streaming service as well as on the linear platform. This is part of the overall drive towards the importance of the promotional material produced for the on-air schedule. The hypothesis is that it is becoming harder to capture the attention of the audience, and the way programmes are chosen is dependent on their ability to stand out on the linear and non-linear platforms among competing products. An example is the documentary *På Røven i Nakskov* described above. According to the producers the title was provocative yet effective.

These sub-lessons are new tools which could be included in the schedulers' toolbox along with the existing tactics already in use (Eastman and Ferguson 2009) The aim at TV 2 is to understand this interplay in much more detail.

The third lesson: Branding the provider-viewer relationship

The third lesson regarding how to support the main channel centres on the stylistic and emotional dimension of the on-air schedule. The overall task involves working the identities of the different channels and platforms into a single 'brand' with the main channel as the 'mother ship'. At TV 2 the audio-visual design template for this work on a daily basis is the digital channel branding system *Miranda*. However, as mentioned above, the time available in the on-air schedule to promote this provider identity is scarce. This means that the tools in the toolbox of the producers at TV 2 are being cultivated and old ones even dusted off. In this process, the identity profile and fundamental values

associated with TV 2 as a provider of public service television in Denmark play an important role for the producers, and especially the inherited *egalitarian values* associated with the TV 2 brand. In the following section the two major ways in which the producers interpret this legacy are presented.

The mirroring of identities – cultivating brand values

As mentioned above, TV 2/Danmark's headquarters are not in the capital city of Copenhagen, but in the city of Odense, and TV 2/Danmark has a network of eight regionally based news providers affiliated. All of these providers have 'windows' in the schedule of the main channel twice a day, as well as their own 24/7 digital channels. An important part of the provider's brand and heritage compared with DR and the commercial providers MTG and Discovery is the notion that the viewers are heterogeneous, with regional and local cultural identities, in line with the provincial identity of the provider. This effort to mirror provincial identity taps into an important cultural-political tension between the capital and provinces, and between urban and more rural life in Denmark. Moreover, the provider's brand identity has also supported the notion that the viewers share a homogeneous socio-cultural identity: we are all Danes, and this is in line with the mainstream channel identity of TV 2, where national and cultural cohesion is underscored. The promotion of these inherited brand values of TV 2 as a public service provider, "its DNA" (Head of TV 2, Lotte Lindegaard, at *Copenhagen Television Festival* on 18-19 August 2016), has become more important. The stylistic/aesthetic dimension of the on-air schedule is perceived as being increasingly important in order to enhance of the provider-viewer relationship.

In order to meet this ambition, the producers are experimenting with user-generated content in the on-air schedule (promotion producer Ole Sort, 31.5. 2016, personal interview). One very successful tool is the snippets of user-generated content from the tv2.mindag site ['tv2 my day'] on the tv2.dk website:

Figure 1: tv2.mindag website

The viewers upload videos of their daily lives, and on the site, it is possible to view the video clips uploaded by others. Some of these videos will be used as interstitials leading into and out of the commercial breaks in the on-air schedule. These snippets show real situations from the everyday lives of ordinary Danes, and contain cute emotional situations such as children having fun or family pets performing tricks. Each snippet is provided with information on the identity of the people in the videos, and where in Denmark they live. A similar version of this is used in connection with holidays. One example of this is the snippets used on Monday 8 February 2016, the day after Shrovetide Sunday (carneval), that marks the beginning of Lent. These snippets show the Danish tradition of children dressing up in fancy costumes on that particular day.

Figure 2: TV 2 snippets

The aesthetic qualities looked for in these snippets are what the promotion producer Ole Sort describes as “something Granny could have filmed with her smartphone” (31.5. 2016, personal interview). Presently, this kind of “instant aesthetics” (Head of on-air Promotion Henrik Sand, 31.5. 2016, personal interview), and the authenticity it might produce, is considered important to the brand identity of TV 2 because of the existence of social media, smartphone cameras and the huge amount of audio-visual material produced by non-professionals. This strategy of including the viewer in the construction of on-air schedule may also serve to bridge the gap between the commercial and the editorial dimension of the on-air schedule at TV 2. As promotion producer Ole Sort puts it “TV 2 can also be something the viewers have filmed themselves” (personal interview, 31.5. 2016).

The enhancement of a personal relationship and dusting off old tools

The other major effort made to promote the provider-viewer relationship involves ongoing discussions of how to use the channel voice. For many years, the channel voice was a live production at TV 2, but is now recorded. The reason for this is the increasing time scarcity between the programmes, and live voices have a built-in unpredictability factor that the time frame and the playlist do not allow anymore. For example, a verbal mistake, a cough or a change in the speech tempo may use precious time that will seriously disturb the playlist. However, at the moment the head of on-air promotion, Henrik Sand, is considering going back to using live voices during prime time on the main channel. The kind of para-social communication, feeling of human presence and immediacy provided by the live channel voice is regarded as increasingly important to secure the attention of the viewers and the kind of 'personality' the TV 2 brand is promoting. The recorded channel voice leaves a somewhat artificial and mechanical impression according to Sand, and his point of view is supported by the continuity producers Stephan Randahl and Britt Lange (8.6. 2016, personal interviews). To sum up, a very old tool in the continuity producers' toolbox will perhaps be dusted off in order to distinguish TV 2's main channel from the competitors in order to strengthen the use of linear main channel among the viewers.

Conclusion: A third television paradigm in the making?

As this analysis has hopefully substantiated the tensions between the traditional well-known linear television environment and the non-linear services included in TV 2's portfolio are changing the production culture in ways that makes on-air

scheduling a far more complicated but also more important part of producing television. The producers all struggle to understand what on-air scheduling requires in order to secure the economic and political survival of the TV 2 company. At TV 2 this means that the aim is to ensure the survival of the linear main channel within the framework of the public service obligation and the media regulations in Denmark, as well as to meet the changing viewer habits. Even though the producers underscore the importance of online services in the portfolio, it is still the traditional linear television that dominates the production culture. The driving force is the dominant business model of the linear television paradigm: the commercial break, and it has a very strong conservative effect on the production culture. As a consequence, the conceptualisation of television in the production culture is still dominated by flow television's way of being part of the time structures of everyday life, serving as a public-private arena, which is supposed to attract an audience of scale. The task facing producers involves understanding and optimising the way in which the streaming service, the niche channels and the strategic use of social media can support this aim in new ways.

The three lessons learned to achieve this aim are first and foremost that the work flow of promoting content and the demands on the qualities of the promotional material have changed. This entails a strengthened desk-top organizational structure at TV 2 increasing the editorial power of the schedulers and on-air continuity producers in the creative processes. Second, an understanding of the interplay between flow and SVOD scheduling is slowly emerging that is able to support both platforms. Certain genres stand out, the scheduling tactics are revised and the promotional value of the para-texts and trailers is getting more important. And third, a renewed focus is put on branding

the viewer-provider relationship. New and older tools in the toolbox are being cultivated and dusted off for reconsideration in order to emphasize what is regarded the core values of the TV 2 brand: the egalitarian values. The need for promoting the provider identity and its communicative ethos is on the increase, and it must be able to entertain and attract the audience inside as well as outside the linear flow in the effort to 'find' and guide the viewers into profitable user flows. In this way, the spatial dimension in creating the textual structure and content leading to a 'flow' experience among the viewers is becoming more important for the producers. The same goes for the aesthetic/stylistic dimension of the 'flow' experience. The need for a strong and easily identifiable brand as a navigation tool is underscored. This is of huge importance on the provider level as well as on the channel and programme level (Johnson 2012). Furthermore, a personality level might be added to these levels of branding: providers as identifiable personalities in a crowded market place for audio-visual content.

To sum up, the producers of the on-air schedule are in this way an increasingly important part of the 'above the line' creative staff (Caldwell 2008), even if they mainly consider themselves as part of "the engine room" of television production, as described above. As Ellis has pointed out (2000b) based on the changes to television in the 1980s and 1990s in Europe, scheduling is indeed a creative act. The contours of what might be called a third television paradigm are in fact produced as a result of their work. In this third paradigm, the characteristics of the traditional linear television paradigm are combined and intertwined with the emerging non-linear television paradigm now an integrated part of the portfolios of the incumbent television companies. The simple distinctions between the linear and the non-linear do not really apply, and it is

certainly not a fruitful point of departure if television studies want to understand how on-air scheduling is developing at the moment. Instead, the production culture of these producers needs to be followed in more detail and the way in which their practices are evolving may reveal a good deal about what television as a technology and a cultural form is, or is becoming, in the digital era. The body of research driven by such questions has been growing in television studies in recent years (e.g. Spigel and Olson 2004; Turner and Tay 2009; De Valck and Teurlings 2013; Lotz 2014, 2017; Johnson and Weissmann 2017; Johnson 2017; Barra and Scaglioni 2017). The idea of an evolving third television paradigm might therefore be a fruitful point of departure for further and similar studies of on-air scheduling in the digital era, and especially in Europe with its tradition of dual systems of public service and commercial television, as well as small markets like the Danish and very big ones like the Italian or the German.

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