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—Ryan Osborn, vice president of digital innovation at NBC News

en up network reporting and help avoid the dilemma that “political journalism in election year can become a little formulaic.”

For CNN, that has translated into significant improvements in its online, mobile, social and on-air coverage, all of which will be pulled together on Election Night.

“Election Night is our Super Bowl,” said NBC’s Schiller. “It is when we pull out all the toys and all the stops to create the best experience possible.”

The Streaming Election Night Guide

Here’s what the major broadcasters and cable news networks are planning to stream on Nov. 6:

- **ABC** will be streaming live primetime coverage online at its site, via its iPad app and at the YouTube Election Hub. In addition, as part of its partnership with Yahoo, it will also offer separate live ABC News Now coverage available on Yahoo, Hulu and other platforms.
- **CBS** will be streaming its Election Night coverage to CBSnews.com.
- **NBC** will be pumping out its primetime coverage to a variety of platforms, including NBCpolitics.com, the NBC Politics app, the NBC Xbox live app, the Xbox Election Live hub, Twitter and Facebook.
- **PBS** will be streaming to the Web, with *PBS NewsHour* providing a special *NewsHour* Livestream channel during the day; after 6 p.m. it will offer multiple streaming channels, which will include its primetime broadcast feed.
- **Telemundo** will stream its primetime coverage to Web and mobile users.
- **Univision** will be streaming to both its own website and the YouTube Election hub.
- **Fox News** will offer a live webcast of *The Strategy Room* on foxnews.com.
- **CNN Digital** will provide live streams from Obama and Romney campaign headquarters in Chicago and Boston and make key acceptance and concession speeches available via mobile apps and the Web. Turner also has a TV Everywhere app that will offer live streams of its CNN and HLN channels to Internet-connected devices of authenticated subscribers.
- **MSNBC** will not be streaming its primetime coverage; its hub NBCnews.com and its digital properties provide a wide array of additional streaming coverage. —GW



CNN and others will be making a wide variety of content and interactive features available online and on their apps.



ABC News iPad app, which provided live video streams during the debate, will also be streaming its Election Night coverage on November 6.



On election night NBC News is using the Zeebox second-screen app to enhance its on-air coverage.

Setting a New Political Stage

Several networks’ on-air sets will have better integration with digital media

As networks look for ways to better juggle their online, mobile and social media efforts with their on-air coverage, new sets will play an important, conducive role in keeping all the balls flying in the air at the same time on Election Night.

CBS is deploying its first virtual set for election coverage; Telemundo built a new physical set that will play a key role in its coverage of social media trends; Katie Couric will be heading up a “social desk” at ABC News election headquarters in New York’s Times Square that will monitor trends in social sentiment; and CNN will be showing off new studios and control rooms in Washington, D.C., that were specifically designed for Election Night coverage.

“We have worked hard to incorporate social and digital much more organically into our election special coverage, and the new set is a major example of that focus,” said Sylvia Rosabal, senior VP of network news at Telemundo. “It will be used mostly for digital media and social media displays.”

A particularly notable example of new infrastructure designed to meld a wide range of video, data and social media can be found at CNN’s new studios and control rooms in Washington.

Those operations will mark “the first time that CNN or any other network has anchored and produced their election coverage from Washington, D.C.,” noted Sam Feist, Washington bureau chief and senior VP of CNN.

The facility was specifically designed for Election Night coverage, with “270 degrees of monitor walls” to help visualize election-related data, and three control rooms “built to handle an enormous amount of incoming feeds and graphics,” Feist said.

A fourth control room will handle a virtual studio powered by Vizrt that “will provide immersive graphics to better tell the story,” Feist added. “When you combine the new studios and the brand new control room, it gives us a number of tools that we haven’t had before.”

One of those tools will be a better ability to visualize social media. CNN has an exclusive deal with Facebook, which will be providing analysis and data that can also be displayed on those walls. “We will use social media both to analyze information and as a reporting tool to follow voting irregularities,” Feist said.



CNN’s Sam Feist in the new Washington D.C. control rooms that are specifically designed for election coverage.

Ryan Osborn, VP of digital innovation at NBC News cautions, however, that “everyone loves to talk about how social media helps their reporting, but there are very few news organizations that are actually doing it in a way that makes stories for the end users better.”

Network executives also caution that they have to walk a fine line between viewers who dislike on-air tickers—specifically those bottom-screen Twitter feeds known as Twickers—showing streams of tweets and commentary from viewers who avidly follow what is trending.

Osborn notes that NBC uses the Mass Relevance platform, culling hundreds of thousands of social posts and selecting those that would be interesting to TV viewers. He also stresses that newer social media tools will help streamline their workflows and speed the transmission of information on-air.

“In the past, someone might send an email to a producer in a control room who would work it into a graphic,” Osborn said. “Now, a tweet can go into a content management system that myself and a few others are viewing and with a click of a button it can go on-air.” —GW