Broadcast TV still exists, and now it’s sort of getting a built-in DVR

Broadcast TV is in trouble, and for a long time now, a lot of people have pointed to a new broadcast standard, ATSC 3.0, as the way it can be saved and finally compete against streaming, YouTube, and TikTok. And finally, after years of hype that failed to deliver, there’s an actual glimmer of hope for your local TV stations. Local news is about to get a lot more interactive.

Part of that’s because of Roxi, a company we covered back at CES. Then, the company was showing off an app that streamed music over the airwaves to your ATSC 3.0-outfitted TV and let you skip tracks, choose genres, and interact with it like you would a traditional smart TV app. Apparently, we weren’t the only ones utterly delighted by the technology Roxi showed off. CEO Rob Lewis told me last week he had broadcasters from all over the country (and from a few other countries as well) coming to his door eager to see the tech in action— including at least one literally banging on the door to get in.

From all of that came a partnership with Pearl TV, an organization of nearly every major broadcaster in the US, including: Sinclair, Scripps, Hearst, Nexstar, and Cox. But this new partnership isn’t for Roxi’s music app; it’s for the underlying technology, dubbed FastStream, that can allow people to essentially have a DVR for live TV, no additional hardware, Wi-Fi, or fees required.

And Roxi’s FastStream tech isn’t the only thing helping.

Yesterday, NBCUniversal separately announced its own “personalized broadcast experience” that will provide an experience similar to Roxi’s. That means you’ll be able to restart applicable programs that are in progress, but NBCUniversal’s rollout will also include hyperlocalized elements on *Today,* like weather forecasts and severe weather alerts as well as clips, full episodes, and alternate programming. And unlike Roxi’s big news, NBCUniversal’s is available right now in the following markets:

a:hover]:text-gray-63 [&>a:hover]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a:hover]:text-gray-bd dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-underline-gray [&>a]:shadow-underline-gray-63 dark:[&>a]:text-gray-bd dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-gray”>Image: NBCUniversal
NBCUniversal’s partnership also includes Pearl TV, but the tech being used appears to come from Ease Live, another company investing in broadcasting over ATSC 3.0, but with a focus more on sports.

Is all this interactivity in local news and NBC’s *Today* show going to be enough to halt broadcast TV’s rapid decline? Probably not, but with streaming prices soaring and FAST TV growing ever more popular, people definitely have an appetite for something new and cheap. If companies like Ease Live and Roxi can expand ATSC 3.0’s capabilities further and give us true on-demand broadcast TV, then your local TV station could have a chance.

https://www.theverge.com/2024/4/16/24130968/atsc-3-0-roxi-fast stream-ease-live-local-news-dvr