

ONLINE & DIGITAL MEDIA NEWS – ROGERS RESURRECTS ‘SPEAKERS CORNER’ ONLINE

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Rogers is resurrecting Speakers Corner, the iconic little booth that stood at the corner of Queen St. West & John St. in Toronto from 1990 until 2008, and was part of the legend of MuchMusic and the CHUM-City building. Rogers, which now owns Citytv, announced Wednesday that it's bringing back Speakers Corner online, to give Canadians a place to talk about the current politically and socially-charged climate as protests continue in the wake of the recent police-involved deaths of George Floyd in Minneapolis and Regis Korchinski-Paquet in Toronto. Rogers Sports & Media has also announced plans to host a virtual CityNews & OMNI Television Town Hall where "prominent Canadians will share their views and opinions on the need for change in the fight against racism and inequality." Read more here.

Media Technology Monitor (MTM), a research product of CBC/Radio-Canada has released its latest Sneak Peek Report looking at technology use and communication patterns during COVID-19. Based on an online survey of 4,000 Canadians, its findings include huge growth in use of platforms like Facebook Messenger and Zoom. Just over six in 10 online Canadians have made an online video call during COVID-19. Over-the-top (OTT) streaming services are seeing increases in both subscriptions and stacking of those services. Three quarters of online Canadians currently subscribe to at least one OTT service and the number of Canadians who subscribed to three or more OTT services has grown by 58% (12% pre-COVID vs. 19% during COVID). In the absence of watching live sports entertainment, half of sports fans have forgone any kind of replacement for this loss, however the other half have turned to classic games (30%), sports clips and past games (21%), and sports documentaries (16%). Just over one in six online Canadians have used a social viewing feature like Netflix Party to watch content with friends and family during COVID-19. Facebook and YouTube lead as the most popular options for remote social viewing at 36%, followed by Netflix Party at 31%. MTM also found that three quarters of online Canadians have watched a Canadian news channel this Spring, up from 53% pre-COVID.

Comscore says Canadian media consumers use of News and Information categories online reached their peak the week of Mar. 23. According to its latest analysis, Comscore says the same trend can be seen across all news categories, including general news, local news, and business/finance news. As Canadians settled into the new normal, digital media consumption saw a slight decline for the weeks beginning Apr. 27th and May 4. Comscore says at the same time, there is renewed interest in real estate and automotive content, and continued growth in retail, especially in categories like sports/outdoors and home furnishings.