

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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CableLabs Conference: Cable's Wireless Future

With the convergence of fixed and wireless networks becoming increasingly critical for cable, **CableLabs** put together its first-ever Informed Wireless Conference, held Wed in NYC. It came after CableLabs attended the Mobile World Congress for the 1st time in Feb, yet another indicator of the need to address issues that will shape the combination of fixed and mobile services. Cable's expanded involvement in wireless is especially timely as the mobile industry explores new technologies such as 5G, the next wireless standard that can potentially deliver gigabit speeds. Regulators seem to recognize the convergence. Policies that encourage the build-out of networks using new next-gen wireless technology are needed, Democrat **FCC** commish *Jessica Rosenworcel* said at the CableLabs gathering. However, "wireless networks require wired networks... It doesn't just happen in the airwaves. None of the 5G activity can happen unless there's backhaul," she said, urging greater deployment of small cells, which are used for data offloading. With mobile carriers struggling to support mobile data growth, small cells are seen as vital to new technologies such as 5G. At the FCC, "we need to make sure policies designed for giant cell towers don't apply to small cells," Rosenworcel said. The Commission is looking to free up additional spectrum, both licensed and unlicensed, for mobile broadband use. Rosenworcel urged a focus on spectrum above 3 GHz, almost all of which she said is under-utilized. The challenge is "those airwaves don't go very far... But we can turn that limitation into strength if we can deploy more small cells," she said. She acknowledged millimeter-wave backhaul has the potential for building high-capacity networks to deliver advanced video and multimedia content. "The race to 5G using millimeter-wave technology is on," she said. CableLabs joined **NYU Wireless'** initiative to drive the development of 5G last year. While it's hard for FCC commissioners to agree on things these days, spectrum might be an exception. Both Rosenworcel and GOP commish *Michael O'Rielly* see the 5.9GHz band, now used for vehicle safety applications, as mobile broadband's single best opportunity. Combined with adjacent bands already used by cable for WiFi, they could greatly boost speeds and capacity. While the automobile industry opposes sharing the band because of interference concerns, "I am confident that interference technology today is good enough" to accommodate both vehicle safety and unlicensed use, said Rosenworcel. Cable companies previously asked the FCC to conduct testing on sharing in the 5GHz band. Meanwhile, **Comcast** is exploring multiple options beyond WiFi, said *Rob Howald*, vp of network

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Questions: Contact Alex Virden at avirden@accessintel.com

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architecture. Last year, CEO *Brian Roberts* said during the company's 3Q conference call that the MSO plans to start customer trials of a mobile service after invoking a 3-year-old deal which allows it to use Verizon's wireless network. "We want to complement the services we have today," said Howald. "Adding that special service called cellular can make sure our service is well complemented outside of home." Wireless will play a role in Comcast's network migration plan, which seeks to support long-term capacity requirements, increased broadband speeds and emerging services, he said. Key parts of the plan include WiFi, distributed access architecture technologies and transition to all IP networks. And they are "very synergistic with potential opportunities in wireless access," he said.

Multi-Streams for Sling: DISH still doesn't carry **YES Net**, but its **Sling TV** does. On Wed, the OTT service launched a beta, live multi-stream service for \$20 month and including live and on-demand content from the **Fox Networks Group**. For the first time, Sling is giving consumers the option to stream on up to 3 devices simultaneously in or outside the home. Fox Locals (including local RSNs such as YES), **Fox Sports**, **Nat Geo** and **FX** are available in the multi-stream offering. All of the channels available on the single-stream offering are part of the multi-stream package except **ESPN**, **ESPN2**, **Disney** and **Freeform**. "We are in active discussions with DISH about their multi-stream Sling TV service but we have yet to reach an agreement. Our brands and content are best-in-class and would add unparalleled value to this new service," said a Disney/ESPN Media Networks statement. On the flipside, the Fox Nets are not part of the single-stream offering. Each package costs \$20/month, with the new multi-stream package available for purchase with or without the current single-stream service. **Comcast** stopped offering YES in Nov. The Yankees RSN was available for streaming on Sling starting with Wed night's game against the Blue Jays. Subs will receive the RSNs for their billing zip codes. Fox RSNs will be available for streaming only in its eligible zone (ie, if you leave NYC for your beach house in FL, you won't be able to stream YES there through Sling).

Charter Watch: Still nothing from the **FCC**, but a promising sign from CA. An admin law judge has recommended the CA PUC approve Charter's Time Warner Cable acquisition. The state's regulating agency is currently scheduled to vote on the deal May 12. CA is the only state that hasn't signed off on the deal. The ALJ recommendation included several conditions for approval, including that Charter increase broadband download speeds to at least 60Mbps for HHs in its CA footprint and that are on an all-digital platform. Other recommended conditions include converting all CA HHs to all-digital/60Mbps greater download speeds in 30 months and giving customers the option to acquire their own modems and set-tops.

Anti-LGBT Bill: **Time Warner Cable** CEO *Rob Marcus* joined 50 execs from major corporations, including **Unilever**, **Bloomberg** and **Salesforce**, in signing an open letter addressed to MO's Speaker of the House and urging state lawmakers to reject a bill that they say would allow businesses and people to discriminate against LGBT people. "Legislation like Missouri's SJR39 and North Carolina's HB2 are clearly bad for business, serving as a barrier to attracting and retaining the best talent and discouraging customers and potential customers from living and doing business in our markets," Marcus wrote in a blog post Wed. "But equally importantly, this troubling trend of laws runs counter to our core values of diversity and inclusion."

5G Ahead: 5G is coming faster than expected, several speakers at **CableLabs'** Informed Wireless Conference said Wed. **Ericsson** alone has 21 memorandums of understanding with carriers for early field trials, said *Bjorn Ekelund*, head of its device technology & ecosystem. That said, broad commercial network upgrades are unlikely to start until around 2020, as 5G standards are still being developed, he said. Each generation of wireless technology lasts for a long time because standards development takes time, said *Tim Burke*, vp of strategic technology at **Liberty Global**. There's still plenty of life in 4G, he said. Burke sees 5G as a potential fixed broadband equivalent thanks to the technology's ability to deliver gigabit speeds, reduce latency and improve spectral efficiency. It can support diverse services including mission critical control applications, autonomous vehicles and energy/smart grid, enhanced mobile broadband applications, virtual reality, broadband fiber to the home, as well as remote sensors and smart cities, said Burke.

Special Access: **NCTA** is sounding off against a recent proposal by **Verizon** and **INCOMPAS** that has garnered the support of **FCC** chmn *Tom Wheeler*. The cable group worries that rates charged by cable ops and other facilities-based competitors for business data services could be subject to regulation, which "would reverse decades of bipartisan Commission policy and should be eliminated from the item that will be considered at the Commission's next agenda meeting," NCTA said in a filing at the Commission Wed. Wheeler has proposed regulation be neutral no matter who provides special

BUSINESS & FINANCE

access—ILECs, CLECs or cable ops. NCTA believes competition is generally sufficient to ensure reasonable rates, but if the FCC finds that prices charged by ILECs are not responding to competitive entry, “the most logical approach is to continue regulating the rates charged by the incumbent carrier, not to impose rate regulation on new entrants,” the group said.

Cable HoF: “BBC World News America” lead anchor *Katty Kay* is set to emcee the **Cable Center Hall of Fame** dinner May 16 in Boston. This year’s fete will see the induction of **Cox’s Pat Esser, Evans Telecom’s John Evans, TiVo’s Tom Rogers, Arris’ Bob Stanzione, Landmark’s Dubby Wynne and MSNBC hosts Mika Brzezinski and Joe Scarborough.**

People: *Betsy Bergman* was named svp, marketing and brand strategy for **NBCU TV** distribution. She’s rejoining NBCU from **Sony Pictures TV**, where she served as VP, marketing on shows such as “Shark Tank” and “The Dr Oz Show.” -- **Nat Geo** hired *Hugh Fitzpatrick* as vp, scripted development and production. He most recently served as head of TV for production company **Teakwood Lane** (“Homeland” and “24”). -- **Met-rolological** appointed *Greg Riker* as svp, sales, Americas. Riker was most recently svp, sales, cloud video solutions at **Arris**, which he joined as part of the **ActiveVideo** joint acquisition by Arris and **Charter**.

Cablefax Daily Stockwatch

Company	04/13 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	04/13 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DISH:	44.68	0.94	ECHOSTAR:	41.18	0.77
ENTRAVISION:	7.30	0.21	GOOGLE:	751.72	8.63
GRAY TELEVISION:	12.26	0.62	HARMONIC:	3.29	0.06
MEDIA GENERAL:	17.01	0.30	INTEL:	32.13	0.27
NEXSTAR:	47.56	1.37	INTERACTIVE CORP:	47.41	0.90
SINCLAIR:	32.28	0.85	LEVEL 3:	53.46	0.94
TEGNA:	23.79	1.10	MICROSOFT:	55.35	0.70
MSOS					
CABLE ONE:	450.83	6.06	NETFLIX:	109.65	2.67
CABLEVISION:	32.97	(0.03)	NIELSEN:	53.19	0.29
CHARTER:	202.71	2.46	SEACHANGE:	3.99	0.10
COMCAST:	61.95	0.23	SONY:	28.10	0.13
GCI:	17.48	0.08	SPRINT NEXTEL:	3.42	(0.07)
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	58.34	0.78	SYNACOR:	1.40	(0.03)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	39.45	0.69	TIVO:	9.23	0.25
SHAW COMM:	18.94	(0.22)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	65.51	1.94
SHENTEL:	26.68	0.58	VONAGE:	4.61	0.02
TIME WARNER CABLE:	205.13	2.46	YAHOO:	37.31	0.65
PROGRAMMING					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	29.80	0.51	TELCOS		
AMC NETWORKS:	66.38	1.80	AT&T:	38.25	(0.42)
CBS:	54.29	0.71	CENTURYLINK:	32.19	0.19
CROWN:	5.10	UNCH	FRONTIER:	5.36	0.02
DISCOVERY:	28.70	0.32	TDS:	29.43	0.42
DISNEY:	99.48	2.13	VERIZON:	51.29	(0.66)
GRUPO TELEVISA:	26.39	0.17	MARKET INDICES		
HSN:	53.07	0.86	DOW:	17908.28	187.03
LIONSGATE:	20.30	0.50	NASDAQ:	4947.42	75.33
MSG NETWORKS:	16.86	0.34	S&P 500:	2082.42	20.70
SCRIPPS INT:	65.02	0.51			
STARZ:	25.28	0.70			
TIME WARNER:	75.00	1.23			
VIACOM:	43.28	1.31			
WWE:	16.28	0.12			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADDVANTAGE:	1.86	(0.01)			
AMDOCS:	58.25	0.60			
AMPHENOL:	59.05	0.77			
APPLE:	112.04	1.60			
ARRIS GROUP:	22.05	0.72			
AVID TECH:	6.14	0.15			
BLNDER TONGUE:	0.42	0.02			
CISCO:	28.23	0.59			
COMMSCOPE:	28.31	1.27			
CONCURRENT:	6.12	UNCH			
CONVERGYS:	27.25	0.47			
CSG SYSTEMS:	45.83	1.07			



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VANGUARD AWARDS

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Think about that for a minute...

Comic Reality

Commentary by Steve Effros

Humor is often the best indicator of where things are going, and what folks actually perceive is happening around them. How could we ever forget “the Cable Guy,” and “57 channels and nothing to watch!”



We have certainly taken care of the “nothing to watch” issue, and the industry is really hard at work eliminating the old perception of customer service as well. We haven’t quite gotten there yet on that one, but making and meeting the appointment schedules has gone way down on the complaint list, and the remaining bugaboo on billing is one that is really hard to overcome, especially given the shift to more on-demand and multiple bundle programming. A work in progress.

While we will always have a way to go in dealing with public perceptions and expectations, (actually, we’re doing rather well with broadband delivery, except for the plea that everything should be free) the world has moved on, as best demonstrated by the latest cartoons.

The one I saw this Sunday, Wiley Miller’s “Non Sequitur,” was a wonderful indicator, and one I hope sends a signal to the folks over at the FCC about what the public’s reality is. After all, they are supposed to be dealing in “the public interest,” not theirs, or their dated perception of what is going on around them.

In the cartoon, big sister (Kate) is trying to interest little sister (Danae) in the wonders of reading books. Danae’s complaint: “You make it sound so easy, But I’m still intimidated by the number of pages.” Kate’s response: “OK... maybe try to think of it as binge-watching on Netflix, but actually using your brain!” Now that, folks, I think is a major change! It was certainly not too long ago that you could have easily guessed the punch line would have included “cable.” Now it’s “Netflix,” and therein lies a

significant difference.

It’s not the only indicator of change. To be sure, there is still an almost pathological need to blame “cable” news for all the ills that have been visited upon us, especially in the political realm, and there’s certainly a lot of truth to that. But change is happening there, too. Now we hear a lot more about the effects of “social media,” Twitter, Google and the like. There is a shift going on, and what it says is that, as some of us have argued for many years, people don’t watch a technology, they watch programming or they read and react to news and information regardless of how it gets to them. Cable delivers... both “cable programming” and broadband. But the public doesn’t care how it gets to them; they care about what they see, read and hear. And there is just no argument that they aren’t seeing, reading and hearing more... a lot more. Not less.

Folks are experiencing it in different formats, on different devices and from a whole host of new and different sources. Yes, it’s true that some of those principal sources are the “old guard.” The companies, editors, distributors, creators and curators who have been doing this for a long time and have been very successful at it. Why wouldn’t they still be major players? But just because they are—and in some cases they are very big—does not mean that the young, new, model busting folks will be intentionally suppressed by the old guard, even if they could be. The evidence is the opposite, and Netflix and Google are the poster children. They obviously don’t need any government help!

Steve

T:202-630-2099
steve@effros.com

(Steve Effros was President of CATA for 23 years and is now an advisor and consultant to the cable industry. His views do not necessarily reflect the views of Cablefax.)

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