

Cablefax Daily™

Thursday — July 14, 2016

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 27 / No. 134

MMTC Chatter: O’Rielly, Hundt Dabble in Presidential Race and Zero Rating

Wonky Washington panels are always a bit more fun when a presidential election is near. So was the case Wed with the **Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council’s** annual conference, which featured an hour-long discussion with current GOP **FCC** commissioner *Michael O’Rielly* and former FCC chmn *Reed Hundt*, an unabashed *Hillary Clinton* supporter. He was after all appointed to the Commission by her husband. O’Rielly didn’t offer support for a particular candidate, saying only that he’ll “look to my party first and foremost in terms of ideas.” The two were asked by **Lathen Consulting** pres *Deborah Lathen* what they would like the agenda to be for the next president. “The FCC should be aligned with the goals that the majority of the country endorsed when that majority elected the president of the United States,” Hundt said, noting that there’s only one nationwide election. Thus, the new president’s “goals and the FCC goals shouldn’t be disconnected.” The *Obama* Administration has drawn criticism from Republicans for weighing in on issues such as the set-top box proposal and net neutrality. O’Rielly disagreed with Hundt’s view, saying that people don’t vote for the president based on communications issues. His hope is that a new Commission will focus on the process of working together to solve problems and have some humility. Hundt said the new president will need to address inequality in the US, pointing to network build out rules, and suggested the country needs more public benefits. Hundt drew a few laughs during the discourse, including when he told the crowd he was a law school classmate of Hillary Clinton. “Hillary did not agree to go out with me in law school. History would be very different... I’d be the former president,” he joked. The conversation delved into policy issues before the current FCC, including zero rating—when mobile or broadband providers offer some services that don’t count against data caps (ie, **T-Mobile’s** Binge On offering). The FCC is currently investigating the issue. “I think the FCC is going to have to decide that people are going to have to be able to give things away for free,” Hundt said. “I’m not sure how you all get to that decision, but being against free is not very popular.” O’Rielly said companies are withholding certain offerings and waiting for the FCC to act, complaining that the general conduct standard under the FCC’s Open Internet order has no process for concluding the debate. The annual MMTC conference is focused on moving the needle for minority participation in media, including the expansion of minority ownership. “We don’t want it to be easier to get stopped by the police than to get access to capital,” MMTC pres/CEO *Kim Kennan* told attendees.

SHARPEN YOUR VISION

SHAPE TOMORROW

THE 2016 WICT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 19–20, 2016
NEW YORK MARRIOTT MARQUIS

THE 2016 WICT TOUCHSTONES LUNCHEON

SEPTEMBER 19, 2016
11:00 AM–1:00 PM
NEW YORK MARRIOTT MARQUIS

REGISTER FOR THE WICT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE TODAY AT WICT.ORG

WICT GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE TOP SPONSORS OF THE 2016 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

PLATINUM CHAMPION PREMIER TOUCHSTONES LUNCHEON

COMCAST NBCUNIVERSAL

Disney and ESPN Media Networks

HBO turner ONE

AMC NETWORKS

CABLEFAX DAILY (ISSN 1069-6644) is published daily by Access Intelligence, LLC ● www.cablefax.com ● 301.354.2101 ● Editorial Director: Amy Maclean, 301.354.1760, amaclean@accessintel.com ● Publisher: Michael Grebb, 323.380.6263, mgrebb@accessintel.com ● Sr. Editor: Joyce Wang, 301.354.1828, jwang@accessintel.com ● Cablefax/Screenster Editor: Kaylee Hultgren, 646.764.8267, khultgren@accessintel.com ● Advisor: Seth Arenstein ● Dir. of Business Dev.: Rich Hauptner, 203.899.8460, rhauptner@accessintel.com ● Acct. Exec: Olivia Murray, 301.354.2010, omurray@accessintel.com ● Dir. of Market Dev.: Laurie Hofmann, 301.354.1796, lhofmann@accessintel.com ● Production: Joann Fato, jfato@accessintel.com ● Diane Schwartz, SVP Media Comms Group, dschwartz@accessintel.com ● Group Subs: Laurie Hofmann, 301.354.1796, lhofmann@accessintel.com ● Sub Questions, Client Services: 301.354.2101, clientservices@accessintel.com ● Annual subscription price: \$1,699.97/year ● Access Intelligence, LLC, 9211 Corporate Blvd., 4th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850

MVNO Movement: Sounds like **Comcast** is about to hone in more on wireless, with *Multi* reporting an exec shake up that will see veteran exec *Greg Butz* heading **Comcast Mobile**. Comcast confirmed the moves, which took effect Wed. Additionally, *John Schanz* moved to an advisory role at **Atairos**, the Comcast-backed investment company headed by former CFO *Michael Angelakis*, and *Cathy Avgiris* becomes interim global risk officer. The shakeup sees *Steve Croney* replacing Avgiris in the evp, CFO role. He's a 25-year Comcast veteran known for strong operations and financial chops. Croney, most recently svp, financial operations, previously ran finance ops for the company's former Eastern Division.

ACA Says Count Us Out: When it comes to **NCTA's** counter set-top proposal, **ACA** has said thanks, but no thanks for its members. It would cost small operators even more than the **FCC's** set-top proposal, according to its analysis. NCTA recognized this, with its plan exempting operators with fewer than 1mln subs. Still FCC staff wanted to get the group's take on the plan. "ACA estimates that, based on its current understanding of the proposal, larger MVPDs will need to expend upwards of approximately \$2mln per system to implement the 'App' proposal. The amount is likely to exceed ACA's estimated cost of more than \$1mln per system that MVPDs would incur to comply with the proposal the Commission set forth in the Navigation Device NPRM," said an ex parte filed Tues. However, ACA said NCTA's plan is in line with ACA members' long-term path and that large MVPD adoption of the approach would complement the market-based offering of its members.

Hiring Veterans: It's no secret that cable has been focused on hiring more veterans. And on Wed, **Disney** and **Mission Media** presented a cable and media industry specific workshop and networking event in DC, sponsored by the **NCTA** and **CTHRA**, that focused on the hiring and retention of military veterans in the cable and entertainment industry. Many veterans do not understand the type of civilian positions they qualify for because they do not realize how their military experiences, values and skills are applicable to civilian career opportunities, especially in the cable and entertainment industry. "There is not one anecdote or scenario that fits all vets," said *Carol Eggert*, **Comcast's** military and veteran affairs vp and Brigadier General (Ret.) US Army. While several military assistance programs aid the transition process, the cable and entertainment industry can ease this transition by inserting themselves into the process. "It's not going to be simple, no matter what your transition is," said *Wes Moore*, Army combat veteran and best-selling author of "The Other Wes Moore." The event highlighted the importance of military-friendly language within the search, interview and onboarding processes. Speaking a mutually understandable language between veteran and potential employer helps vets translate their military experience to a civilian skill-set necessary for the particular position. When *Jon Dorsey* was applying for jobs post-military, "what sealed the deal for both of us is that we spoke the same language," said Dorsey, a mid-grade non-commissioned officer and **Discovery Comm's** Emerging Networks associate producer. This language extends from initial attractive messaging that motivates veterans to consider a company, a pre-interview basic understanding of military culture and language to understand a veteran's military experience, and a clear expression of company values. "The measure of a country is how well they take care of their service members upon departure," Eggert said.

Convention Bound: **NBC News** and **MSNBC** will together deliver nearly 300 hours of coverage of the 2016 Republican and Democratic national conventions on both television networks, online and across social media platforms. MSNBC will cover more than 20 hours live each day the conventions are in session, including live editions of "Morning Joe" in Cleveland and Philadelphia. *Tom Brokaw*, who has covered every presidential election for the past 48 years, will contribute to all the **NBCU** news platforms. **Fox News** will provide live coverage leading up to and during the conventions via several programs, including "Fox & Friends" and "On the Record with *Greta Van Susteren*." "The Five" will kick off convention coverage with a two-week road trip from Cleveland to Philadelphia on July 15, and there will be special editions of "The O'Reilly Factor" and "Hannity." **C-SPAN** will cover every minute of the 2016 national conventions with live gavel-to-gavel coverage, continuing the network's tradition since 1984. The content will be televised on C-SPAN and streamed live on C-SPAN.org and C-SPAN Radio. Viewers can watch and share each individual speech via the Video Library on C-SPAN.org. C-SPAN's cable affiliates On-Demand platforms will show key speeches from the conventions. **CNN's** 2 weeks of convention coverage includes roaming cameras on the floor of the conventions, content on its **Snapchat** Discovery channel as well as special daily **Facebook** Live segments and the "CNN Grill," a hospitality venue and live broadcast studio where it will host lawmakers, celebs, reporters and politicians. The Grill will serve as home base for the network with a newsroom and live broadcasts daily, a fully operational restaurant and multiple bars. **Fuse** will cover the conventions with its Crash the Parties initiative with *Voto Latino*, while **TV One** will air broadcasts live each morning from the conventions with host *Roland Martin*.

Think about that for a minute...

Transitions

Commentary by Steve Effros

One of the most difficult things we all are having to deal with in the electronics and telecommunications world right now is transition. We seem to always be in a state of transition, and the technology is moving so rapidly at this point that these transitions to “new” and “better” stuff often wind up with the users—both providers and consumers—being left with expensive, seriously compromised or non-functioning “legacy” devices.

Given, as you know, that I am one of those folks who, while not a “first adopter,” certainly likes to experiment with and use new technology, I see this “up front and personal” a lot. It’s getting tiring.

I recently wrote about my continuing appreciation of the Amazon Echo device. I still love it. I still “talk” to Alexa, and she provides the latest news, or the weather or plays the music I ask for or responds with the Wikipedia information I request to answer an open question at the dinner table. “She” also provides reminders, sets timers, and wakes me up in the morning. But as I also noted, Google is about to come out with a competitive product that apparently does all those things but also is linked to the Google search engine, which is a whole lot bigger than Amazon’s. The two, however, apparently won’t be able to “talk” to each other.

So what to do? I also have a home that is “programmed” with lights turning on and off at given times. But the switches I use around the house are part of an older technology, and while the original “hub” linked to my computer system talked that “old” language as well as new ones, the newly introduced hub (which can now “talk” to Alexa) doesn’t know that older language! So now I have “legacy” light switches that won’t work with the new system! At the moment I have a workaround,



I’ll be using two different “hubs” at the same time! But lots of folks won’t be able to figure out how to configure things that way and will just wind up spending lots of money on all new equipment... only to find that equipment will be outmoded by a transition to some newer technology in less than a year or two. It’s getting out of hand.

Of course there is little that can be done about the march of such progress. It’s a fool’s errand for the government or anyone else, like an “industry group,” to try to mandate which technology to use and then assume that technology will be in any way “permanent.” It’s just not going to happen. I think the best we can probably do is seek some agreement that, where possible, transitions from one iteration of technology to the next include consideration of legacy devices.

I understand that there are lots of instances where the new technology is so different from the old that there is no chance for “backward compatibility.” But in many other cases it can work. We should try for that result.

Sure, the consumer electronics folks would prefer if consumers always had to move totally to the “new” thing. Think HDTV. But that’s just not the case, for instance, with 4K, or UHD, or “Ultra UHD” and the like. We should let our customers know that they need not automatically “have to have” the “new” thing, that their current equipment will work just fine and the difference between the “old” and the “new” may not be necessary for them. They’ll thank us for that information.

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.)

Cablefax
THE MAGAZINE

Who are cable’s most powerful women and influential minorities?

Nomination Deadline: July 15 | Free to Enter

Nominate the executives you think should be included in these two annual issues of *Cablefax: The Magazine*.

Enter at www.cablefax.com/2016-nominations

Questions: Kate Schaeffer at kschaeffer@accessintel.com
Advertising Information: Rich Hauptner at rhauptner@accessintel.com

