

# Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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## Wraps are Off: Comcast Plays Show & Tell with Wireless Service

The wait is over, with **Comcast** execs unveiling the company's Xfinity Mobile service and price points for wireless at an analyst event Thursday. Right off the bat, the company seemed to temper expectations somewhat while highlighting that it won't be a me-too offering. "We get it. Wireless is a very hyper competitive marketplace. We understand that. We're used to competing," Comcast Cable CEO *Dave Watson* said. "Based on that, we will measure success I think very differently than traditional wireless carriers." So rather than market share, Comcast will focus on packaging and bundles. This is about building loyalty and reducing churn. "Xfinity Mobile will be designed to support the core cable business," the newly installed CEO said. That should help squelch speculation over a possible wireless acquisition. As for pricing, Comcast is offering a pay by the gig service for \$12 per GB of data on an account each month, noting that 70% of wireless customers use less than 5GB/month. It's also offering a \$65/month unlimited plan with up to 5 lines and a \$45/line offering for customers with its best X1 packages. Customers can switch back and forth between plans, and different users in a household can be on different plans. All include unlimited talk and text. Other elements include auto connecting to Comcast's 16mIn WiFi hotspots from **Verizon's** network and several popular phone options, including **Apple's** iPhone, **Samsung** and **LG**. Employees begin testing the service this week, with a commercial launch planned later in the year. Analysts seemed pretty taken with the idea. "We still don't know the exact financial impact but it doesn't sound like Xfinity Mobile will be a long term drag. In fact, this product might end up being one of CMCSA's more significant growth drivers," **Wells Fargo Securities** said. A little less excited was **Evercore**, which called the service "competitive, but not disruptive." Evercore told clients it was surprised the Stream video app won't be zero-rated, chalking up the decision in part to Comcast's belief that the bulk of usage will be in areas with WiFi. **Macquarie Capital** said the news introduces another potential negative to the wireless industry. "Roughly 25% of the base is eligible for \$45/line. In this bucket alone and at a mere 4% penetration rate, there could be ~1mIn mobile subs over the next few years and ~US\$80mIn in revenue. We expect this could come at the expense of **AT&T/Verizon**. Initial margins will likely be less attractive than Verizon's which are currently ~44%," said a research note. UBS, noting that the pricing is similar to or cheaper than AT&T and Verizon, thinks Xfinity Mobile could help the company upsell customers who buy HSD only or HSD+ video to a double or triple-play. An Xfinity Mobile subscription requires an Xfinity broadband subscription as well as a new phone. According to Xfinity Mobile chief *Greg Butz*, about 80% of customers will be 10-15 minutes from an Xfinity Store. Comcast will be working hard on optimizing its retail presence, already reporting that its stores have about 20mIn visits today.

**Charter Sues Union:** Charter has filed suit against **Local Union No 3 of the IBEW, AFL CIO**, alleging vandalism related to the ongoing strike in NY and NJ. Charter's complaint says both the company and its subs have been "victims of a pattern of sabotage and vandalism which, upon information and belief, relates to and arises out of the work stoppage." It cites more than 30 occasions throughout NYC where the MSO's fiber cable has been "deliberately cut." The company claims Local 3

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and *Lance Van Arsdale*, assistant business manager for Local 3's Maintenance Division, have "encouraged and condoned such conduct by, without limitation, their public statements made since March 28 referencing service outages suffered by Charter during the strike." Local 3 did not return a call for comment by press time. As a result of the strike, more than 1K Charter employees who were scheduled to work on March 28 to the present have engaged in the work stoppage, and hundreds of Charter employees have been picketing at Charter facilities. "Spectrum is dedicated to providing great service to our customers and investing in our workforce is a critical part of how we do that," a Charter spokesperson said about the Local 3 dispute. "This is why Spectrum is offering our field technicians a pay increase larger than the union has demanded, along with competitive and robust healthcare and retirement benefits. We believe this greater compensation to be more beneficial to our employees and allows us to grow a well-paid, highly skilled workforce for the benefit of our customers."

**Broadband Deployment Advisers:** FCC chmn *Ajit Pai* named 29 members to the newly created **Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee**, which will hold its first meeting on April 21. Among the members are **Comcast** vp, regulatory policy *David Don*; **Nittany Media** gm/CTO *Michael Hain*; **Google Fiber** vp, access services *Milo Medin*; and **Sprint** CTO *John Saw*. The group is tasked with providing advice and making recommendations to the Commission on how to accelerate the deployment of broadband by reducing and removing regulatory barriers to infrastructure investment. *Elizabeth Pierce*, CEO of **Quintillion Subsea Operations and Quintillion Networks**, will chair the group, with *Kelleigh Cole*, director of the Utah Broadband Outreach Center in the Governor's Office of Economic Development, serving as vice chair.

**On the Hill:** Dems can't stop, won't stop when it comes to the **FCC's** just scuttled broadband privacy rules. Eleven senators, including *Richard Blumenthal* (D-CT) and *Elizabeth Warren* (D-MA), introduced legislation to restore the rules following the president signing a formal resolution rescinding them this week.

**One More Belt for WrestleMania:** **WWE's** *WrestleMania 33* goes down as the most social event in **WWE** history, according to **Nielsen Social**, with 5.19mln interactions on **Facebook** and **Twitter** during the broadcast alone. During the day, there 2.8mln tweets about the big event. More bragging rights: *WrestleMania 33* accounted for nearly 30% of all social TV interactions on Sunday, surpassing the *Country Music Awards* (13%), "The Walking Dead" season finale (10%) and *MLB Opening Day* on **ESPN** — *Chicago Cubs* vs. *St. Louis Cardinals* (10%). As for SVOD service **WWE Network**, its nearly 2mln subscribers viewed 22.5mln hours during *WrestleMania Week* or 13 hours per subscriber during the week.

**Download & Go:** **Showtime** is now letting authenticated Showtime Anytime users and subs to its standalone streaming service download programming to watch offline at no extra cost.

**People:** *Kerry Brockhage* was promoted to evp and chief counsel for **NBCU** content distribution. She will continue to serve as the primary legal counsel for the distribution of NBCU's entire portfolio of networks across multiple platforms, and report to *Matt Bond* and *Kimberley Harris*. -- After 33 years with the company, *Kevin Hess* intends to retire at year-end from his post as evp, govt and regulatory affairs, with *Drew Petersen*, now vp, external affairs and communications, replacing him. -- **The Paley Center for Media** announced 3 new members of its board of trustees: **Altice** pres and **Altice USA** pres/CEO *Dexter Goei*; *Shari Redstone*, vice chair, **CBS** and **Viacom**; and *Arzuhan Do an Yalçinda*, CEO and chairperson of **Do an Broadcasting Group**. -- *Chris Swan* was named svp, network development for **RLTV**. -- **DISH** named *Brian Norris* as vp, media sales, overseeing **DISH** and **Sling TV** ad sales, analytics and operations.

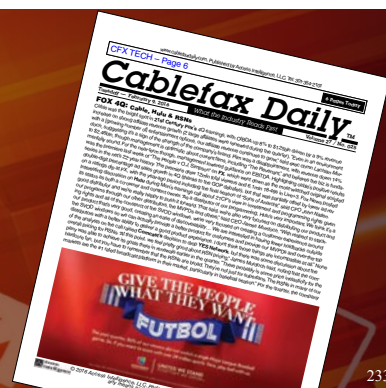
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## PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

### Rising Son...

The best Westerns always resonate. But identifying with these tales requires that we relate to the century-old hardships of its characters, whose vices and flaws mirror our own. **AMC** and **SundanceTV's** "The Son" (premieres April 8) takes the idea a bit further. This story of McCullough family struggling to stay afloat at the crux of the Texas oil boom cleverly weaves modern issues such as immigration and Native American sovereignty into the narrative—all without preaching a particular point of view. "The Son does what the best, most compelling stories do," noted **AMC** and **SundanceTV** President & GM *Charlie Collier* at the Los Angeles premiere this week. "It transports you to a world fully and credibly, it tells a story through characters that you come to deeply care for, and it tells you something about a period of time where the lessons are just as relevant for the world today." Those lessons continue to inform the modern political debate just as they did back then. And as Collier pointed out, The Son is "not the white washed, mythic version that you find in our history books." On the contrary, the founding of Texas was "bloody and violent, driven by greed and power." At a time when the country debates a border wall, The Son lays bare the tension between whites and Mexican-Americans at the turn of the century and the distrust that still exists along the Southern border. And one need only check in on the Standing Rock pipeline protest to understand the continuing disputes over land, broken promises and honor between Native Americans and the Western-Europeans who settled America. Check out *Seth Arenstein's* full review below, but one thing's for certain: The Son is a Western with a social conscience. And that's refreshing. As Collier noted at the premiere this week, "You're never free from your history." — *Michael Grebb*

**Reviews:** "Making Pet Sounds," premiere, 8pm, Friday, **Showtime**. A wonderful look at arguably a watershed album, created when *Brian Wilson*, exhausted from touring, stays in LA and creates the visionary album "Pet Sounds." A treat in this short doc is the dissection of Pet's songs: The Beach Boys' singing (often imitated but rarely matched), the instrumentals (from top-flight studio players, aka The Wrecking Crew), the drumming (sometimes just a single beat, but highly effective) and the lyrics, which were similarly basic, yet dove immediately to universal ideas. Wilson and others literally play individual tracks from iconic tunes, such as "Wouldn't It Be Nice," illustrating how parts make the whole. -- "The Son," series premiere, Sat, 9pm, **AMC** and **SundanceTV**. It's wonderful to see Pierce Brosnan back on TV, looking great, if not sounding so (Eli McCullough, the first son of Texas, has a lot of Irish in his accent). Based on Philipp Meyer's Pulitzer Prize-nominated novel—and with Meyer writing much of the series—the opening minutes raise the stakes (sorry, AMC asks we omit details). After that, though, "The Son" seems conventional, a period treatment of "Dallas," complete with familial conflict, good and bad guys and love triangles. Our hope is the remaining eps in this 10-part series Meyer can convey the rich, historical conflicts of his novel. — *Seth Arenstein*

### Basic Cable Rankings

(3/27/17-4/2/17)

#### Mon-Sun Prime

1	FOXN	1	2328
2	MSNB	0.8	1744
3	USA	0.7	1542
3	HGTV	0.7	1511
3	ESPN	0.7	1475
6	TBSC	0.6	1409
6	AMC	0.6	1402
8	DISC	0.5	1219
8	TNT	0.5	1114
8	HIST	0.5	1036
8	ID	0.5	1015
8	DSE	0.5	98
13	CNN	0.4	1040
13	FX	0.4	1001
13	DSNY	0.4	969
13	FOOD	0.4	897
13	A&E	0.4	845
13	TLC	0.4	834
13	HALL	0.4	798
13	HMM	0.4	590
21	NAN	0.3	715
21	TVLD	0.3	708
21	ADSM	0.3	686
21	BRAV	0.3	662
21	LIFE	0.3	652
21	NKJR	0.3	640
21	VH1	0.3	630
21	SPK	0.3	606
21	APL	0.3	601
21	INSP	0.3	545
21	DSJR	0.3	527
21	LMN	0.3	514
21	CINN	0.3	46
34	SYFY	0.2	544
34	WETV	0.2	512
34	OWN	0.2	486
34	ESP2	0.2	484
34	TRAV	0.2	448
34	TRU	0.2	445
34	FRFM	0.2	443
34	MTV	0.2	435
34	NGC	0.2	419
34	BET	0.2	370
34	GSN	0.2	360

\*Nielsen data, supplied by ABC/Disney, is based on coverage area of individual networks

## Cablefax Industry Jobs

### TIP 1 : Target Candidates!

Post your openings on Cablefax's job board to reach top talent and filter applicants that lack industry experience. Ask about bundles to fit your needs and budget.

### TIP 2 : Be Selective!

Don't waste time reading pointless resumes. You can search Cablefax's resume database for free, while utilizing the demographic filters.

### TIP 3 : Stand Out!

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