

# Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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## **5G Nation: AT&T to Acquire Straight Path Communications for \$1.6 Billion**

In a deal expected to bolster its 5G ambitions, **AT&T** on Monday entered into a definitive agreement to acquire **Straight Path Communications** for \$95.63 per share in an all-stock transaction worth \$1.6 billion. Straight Path shareholders will get \$1.25 billion, with the rest reserved for liabilities. According to **UBS**, Straight Path has 735 licenses in the 39 GHz band covering areas nationwide and 133 licenses of 28 GHz in markets such as NYC, San Francisco, Miami, Tampa and Houston. AT&T's recent acquisition of **FiberTower** gave it 46 licenses in the 29 MHz and 39 GHz bands. With commercial 5G standards expected to be set in late 2018, AT&T is well on its way toward a robust 5G rollout in 2019. "With these transactions, and with their recently announced win of the government's FirstNet contract, AT&T has now developed a spectrum road map that stretches out well into the next decade," noted **MoffetNathanson's Craig Moffett**. The FirstNet deal refers to the 25-year contract awarded in March to AT&T by the Commerce Department for AT&T to build a first responder public safety network. That contact, as well as the Straight Path deal, comes a little more than a year after **Verizon's** \$1.8 billion purchase of XO Communications' fiber network business, and UBS pointed out that the Verizon-XO deal included an option to buy LMDS spectrum in the 28-31 GHz bands. Verizon is running fixed wireless trials in 11 markets in 2017. "By buying millimeter wave spectrum on the private market, carriers seem collectively to be hedging their bets with respect to what is expected to be the government's next (but as yet unscheduled) large spectrum auction," said Moffett. "Investors will now be left to ponder the implications of these transactions for spectrum more broadly."

**Kotay Departs Comcast: Comcast Cable** confirmed Monday that CTO *Sree Kotay* has left the company for personal reasons less than a year after he became CTO as *Tony Werner* advanced to President, Technology and Product, in June 2016. Kotay actually joined Comcast in 2007 as chief software architect and as CTO had led Comcast's software and technology strategy, particularly as it relates to new customer-facing products and services, including advanced video and Internet. He also oversaw Comcast Innovation Labs. Kotay's departure is only the latest change in senior leadership at Comcast Cable, whose CEO *Neil Smit* became a part-time advisor as Vice Chairman on April 1 and passed the pres/CEO torch to veteran Comcast operations exec *Dave Watson*.

**Financial First: Fox News** has appointed *Amy Listerman* as CFO and evp, finance and accounting, effective May 1. Listerman, most recently CFO and svp, advertising sales and head of advertising sales data strategy at **Scripps Networks Interactive**, will report directly to co-presidents *Jack Abernethy* and *Bill Shine*. At Scripps, she oversaw the roughly \$2 billion advertising sales division and saw her role expanded in 2016 to include leadership of the Scripps Data and Analytics organization. She'll oversee all financial operations for both **Fox News Channel** and **Fox Business Network**—and she's also Fox News' first female CFO. In a joint statement, Abernethy and

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Shine praised Listerman's "impressive track record of strong controllership, leading with integrity and partnering with management on growing new revenue streams," and Listerman said she has "always admired the strength and success of Fox News."

***Slinging in the Cloud:*** Sling TV has expanded its Cloud DVR "First Look" program to all Roku and Android users, who can now add the service to their subscriptions for \$5 per month for 50 hours of storage. Sling TV said it will also expand to **Apple TV** "in the coming weeks." First Look had previously only been available to customers with an Amazon device.

***Braving Broadband:*** Comcast Business said it has signed 16 new business customers inside The Battery Atlanta, and several others nearby as its network set to power the Atlanta Braves' new ballpark and mixed use development nears completion. Recent customer additions include **Mizuno USA**, The **Coca-Cola Roxy Theatre** and **The Omni Hotel**. The network already includes two 100 Gbps Ethernet lines that went live last month, as well as 320 Wi-Fi access points, in addition to 800 located within SunTrust Park.

***Ratings:*** HGTV's "Flip or Flop Vegas" averages a 0.68 rating among viewers P25-54 during its April 6 premiere, a 19% increase YoY in the timeslot.

***Programming:*** A+E Studios signed a multiyear exclusive overall television deal with Emmy-nominated writer, producer, director and "UnREAL" co-creator *Sarah Gertrude Shapiro*. She will continue as writer and ep on UnREAL while also working closely with the A+E Studios team to develop, create and produce new original programming for the A+E portfolio of nets, as well as outside buyers. -- **Syfy** unveiled a spring/summer slate that sets an Aug 6 premiere for "Sharknado 5" and a June 14 debut for "Blood Drive," in the tradition of classic grindhouse movies and featuring cars that run on blood. -- **Univision Deportes** celebrates 5 years with a month of anniversary programming. Viewers can participate in the Univision Deportes celebration by uploading images of how they "Live their Passion" and possibly win a trip to one of the net's top events this year. -- **Investigation Discovery** and its "Deadline: Crime" host *Tamron Hall* will sit down with two sexual assault survivors for her special "Sexual Assault in College: Tamron Hall Investigates," premiering April 30. -- **E!** announced the eight-episode, half-hour docuseries "Life of Kylie" following *Kylie Jenner* as she navigates her multi-faceted life. The show premieres this summer.

***Quiet Cabin:*** In a move unlikely to elicit many complaints from travelers seeking refuge from loud talkers, FCC chmn *Ajit Pai* on Monday proposed terminating a 2013 proceeding that sought to relax rules governing mobile communications on planes. "I stand with airline pilots, flight attendants, and America's flying public against the FCC's ill-conceived 2013 plan to allow people to make cellphone calls on planes," he said in a statement. "I do not believe that moving forward with this plan is in the public interest. Taking it off the table permanently will be a victory for Americans across the country who, like me, value a moment of quiet at 30,000 feet."

***People:*** Showtime Networks promoted *Donald Buckley* to Chief Marketing Officer from evp, program marketing and digital services. He'll continue to oversee the network's marketing, creative advertising and digital media divisions. -- **Music Choice** has upped *Tom Soper* to svp, national ad sales.

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