

# Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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## Up Ahead: NBC Sports Looking Forward to Streaming Advances in 5G

If there's one thing that's clear at **Mobile World Congress Americas**, it's that everyone is excited about the possibilities for 5G, whenever it gets here. **NBC Sports** is no exception. During a panel this week on video and entertainment in a 5G world, NBC Sports Digital CTO *Eric Black* discussed the potential to drastically improve the live streaming experience. The network has come a long way since it started streaming live events with the Beijing Olympics and **NFL** games in 2008. That year, the network streamed about 25 events to fans on their personal computers. Last year, NBC streamed upwards of 20K live events, including every second of the Rio Games, and then some. On top of offering basic linear event streams, Black pointed to ancillary content, like live in-car views during **NASCAR** events. With that progress comes higher consumer expectations, something Black is acutely aware of. "Everyone expects to turn on these devices and they expect broadcast-level experiences, no matter what the platform," he said. "One of the constant complaints that you'll see on **Twitter** is, 'Why is this 45 seconds behind what I'm watching on my television?'" Fans streaming video over a 5G network will get a lot closer to seeing touchdowns and home runs in real time thanks to the lower latency the technology provides relative to even 4G. *Mark Russell*, who serves as CTO/head of strategy and technology for TV & media at **Ericsson**, said while mobile video will never be fully synced with linear TV feeds, 5G and accompanying advances will allow it to get much closer. "Part of the reason that your Twitter feed is so far off your main screen TV, some of it is to do with the network and some of it is to do with the way the underlying mobile streams adapt to how different streams are coded and distributed," he said. "We're putting a lot of energy into those fundamentals to make sure that latency is minimal. It'll never be exactly synced with your TV, but it'll get awfully close. That in combination with the network itself we think will give you a nice fundamental way to distribute content everywhere on every device." Just hours after **Apple's** iPhone X announcement, Black also discussed the possibilities for delivering ultra HD video to mobile devices over 5G networks. "5G opens up not just latency but, as we look toward HDR, 4K technologies, how do I get you a better picture?" Black said. "How do I get higher-quality video to my consumers to drive engagement?" Next year is expected to be a huge one in



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terms of 5G, and it happens to coincide with a massive slate for NBC Sports. In addition to the Winter Olympics in PyeongChang, it is NBC's turn in the rotation to broadcast and stream the Super Bowl. The company also services **Telemundo**, which has Spanish-language rights to the 2018 World Cup. "We need these technologies because the scale of the operation is becoming broadcast-level scales," Black said. (*Join Cablefax at the DC5G Summit Oct 11 in DC where we'll dive into the changes 5G will bring <http://www.dc5gsummit.com>*)

**Retrans Beat:** It seems that **AT&T** is driving an especially hard bargain on retrans these days. **Capitol Broadcasting's WRAL-NBC** and **WRAZ-FOX** out of Raleigh-Durham, NC, and low-power **WILM** of Wilmington, NC, went dark on AT&T **U-verse** Wednesday evening. **Dispatch's WBNS** in Columbus (**CBS**) and **WTHR** in Indianapolis (**NBC**) have been dark on U-verse and **DirecTV** since Sept 6. Then there's **Raycom**, which has agreed to three extensions following its retrans deal with DirecTV expiring at the end of August. Not all broadcast blackouts involve AT&T though. Anyone remember **Mediacom** losing **Independent Communications'** Sioux Falls **Fox** affil **KTTW** on Oct 15? We're coming up on the one-year anniversary and it's still off. This might be one for the record books.

**Verizon's Fiber Diet:** Remember those "**Verizon** wants to buy **Charter**" headlines from a few months ago? Well, when it comes to cable deals, the company has moved on, according to CEO *Lowell McAdam*. He confirmed at an investor conference Thursday that Verizon had taken a look at cable about a year ago, but "the fiber infrastructure isn't there." That's why you're seeing it plunk down \$225mln for **WOW!'s** Chicago-area fiber infrastructure or its three-year, \$1bln minimum purchase agreement with **Corning**. Later on **CNBC's** Squawk Box, McAdam elaborated that he thinks Charter is a great company, but it's just not a good fit. "We are very focused on deploying fiber and 5G. That's where we need to put our capital dollars," he said. Even in markets where FiOS exists, the preferred architecture for the last mile is 5G. "We're building a network that doesn't care... whether the customer goes over-the-top or buys a linear package, we'll be able to provide either one to him," the CEO said.

**On the Hill:** Reps *Bob Latta* (R-OH) and *Kurt Schrader* (D-OR) introduced the Small Entity Regulatory Relief Opportunity Act. It would have the **FCC** create streamlined procedures for small businesses seeking relief through petition waivers. The cost and resources involved in such petitions are often a complaint of **ACA**, which reps small operators. The bill also would provide a one-year grace period before new regs apply to smaller entities after they become effective for larger businesses—unless statute bans deferment or to protect public safety. -- **FCC** chmn *Ajit Pai* testified before the Senate cmte on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs about the problems with the Lifeline program. A **GAO** report in May found evidence of waste and mismanagement. To combat eligibility-related waste, fraud and abuse, the FCC will launch the Lifeline National Eligibility Verifier in at least six states this year. Pai's testimony also offered support for state commission policing providers. Democratic commish *Mignon Clyburn* has been a steadfast supporter of the program. "Despite significant reforms made under the previous administration and no new evidence of waste, fraud, or abuse, the Lifeline program continues to be under attack while our nation's most vulnerable remain on the wrong side of the digital and opportunities divide," she said in a statement that lamented the administration refusing to allow new broadband providers into the program.

**Cord-Cutting Numbers:** In response to a faster-than-expected rate of growth in cord-cutting, **eMarketer** has lowered its estimate for US TV ad spending. This year's totals will only expand to \$71.65bln, down from the \$72.72bln originally projected in its 2017 Q1 forecast. At these rates, TV's share of total media spending is expected to drop below 30% within the next five years, by 2021. That same year, cord-cutters are expected to nearly equal those who have never had pay TV. The overall prediction has 196.3mln US adults watching pay TV this year in the US, a 2.4% decrease over 2016. -- A new study from **Beta Research** ranks basic cable networks that are keeping potential cord-cutters from leaving pay TV behind. **Food Network** is at the top of the heap, with 46 percent granting it a 4 or 5 rating on a 1-5 scale, with 5 meaning it's a "must-have." Other high scoring nets with cord-cutters included **AMC** (45%), **Discovery Channel** (44%) and **ESPN** (43%). **Investiga-**

tion **Discovery** continued to resonate as well, with 69% of viewers overall granting it “must-have” status. More details at Cablefax.com.

**SCTE-ISBE Spotlight:** Charter’s *Debi Picciolo*, Ed Marchetti of **Comcast** and **Cox** vp *Patricia Martin* will share their expertise at the opening general session of SCTE-ISBE’s Cable-Tec Expo on Oct 18 in Denver. Dubbed “Operation Bottom Line: On a Mission to Drive Customer Satisfaction and ROI,” the panel will be moderated by Leslie Ellis, president of Ellis Edits.

**Time OTT:** **Time Inc’s** free OTT network has now become **PeopleTV**. The new name for the ad-supported service comes one year after its launch alongside a number of series renewals and greenlights. Shows making their return include “Dirty Laundry” and “The Jess Cagle Interview,” while series like the animal-centric “Paws & Claws” and bridal show “Sizing Up the Dress” will make their debuts. *Entertainment Weekly* will continue to support the net, which offers premium short and long-form programming centered on pop culture, lifestyle and human interest stories. To date, PeopleTV content has received 100mIn views across all platforms.

**Programming:** **TBS** renewed a number of its original comedies. “The Guest Book,” “People of Earth” and “Wrecked” will all return for new seasons. -- **Comedy Central** and *Trevor Noah* reached an agreement solidifying the comedian’s late night presence on the network through 2022. In addition to “The Daily Show with Trevor Noah,” he’ll produce and host annual year-end “Daily Show” specials starting this year. -- **Fox News** has resigned anchor *Chris Wallace* to a long-term contract with the network. He’ll continue to lead “Fox News Sunday” while also contributing to other programs. -- **A&E** is the latest to take another deep dive into the life of *OJ Simpson* with original doc, “O.J.: Guilty in Vegas” (Sept 21 at 9pm). -- “Vikings” is sailing into its sixth season, thanks to a 20-ep order from **History**. The drama’s fifth season will be split into two parts, with the first set of ten premiering Nov 29 at 9pm. -- One of **AMC’s** biggest stars is back for another motorcycle adventure with the third season renewal of “Ride with Norman Reedus.” Season 2 premieres with a two-night event, starting on Nov 5 11pm to be followed by a second episode on Nov 6 at 9pm.

**Honors:** **Discovery Comm** pres/CEO *David Zaslav* is being awarded the title of **MIPCOM** 2017 Personality of the Year. The honor comes in the wake of Discovery’s agreement to acquire **Scripps Nets Interactive**, a deal expected to close in early 2018. -- **NAMIC’s** 2017 Mickey Leland Humanitarian Achievement Award is going to the head of the **US Tennis Association**, *Katrina Adams*. She’ll be honored alongside the 2017 Next Generation Leaders and Luminaries at the 31st Annual NAMIC Conference on Sept 27.

**Editor’s Note:** Enjoying the **CFX** Video Series? Our cameras will be at **SCTE-CableTec Expo** in Denver next month. If you’re interested in being featured, contact *Amy Maclean* (amaclean@accessintel.com) or *Mike Grebb* (mgrebb@accessintel.com).

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# PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

## The Awards Pack...

Awards season drapes over Hollywood every year like a warm blanket. The hopes. The dreams. The comfortable solace of endless possibilities. But despite “peak TV” and more than 450 original scripted shows in contention, only a select few TV shows actually get nominated. Far fewer actually win. And while the Emmys this weekend will feature some of the best shows out there, many nominees are the same ones recognized all the time. And you can bet that many of the Emmy winners Sunday night will get repeat recognition in the coming months, whether it's through the Golden Globes, the SAG Awards or in other upcoming celebrations of TV awesomeness. That's perfectly fine. Great shows deserve multiple awards. But for critics, academy members and others, the volume of shows means that there's no longer time to watch everything. And so whatever gets recognition early in awards season (or for that matter happens to be trending on social media or getting ink from critics) becomes the celebrated cream that rises to the top of the must-watch pile—and therefore ends up sucking up all the awards oxygen. It's a pack mentality. And it means that lots of worthy shows that lack well-funded awards campaigns or star-fueled buzz during key voting periods languish in relative obscurity. It's a vicious cycle that props up some shows and suppresses others, often without much rhyme or reason. What can we do about this? Frankly, not much. The onus largely rests with critics, voters, fans and anyone who wields influence. Here's an idea: Once a week, watch something random. Just pick something you've heard nothing about and give it a whirl. Sure, you'll sometimes find yourself wasting a half hour or more on dribble. But you just might find some gems that will never get their due in the mainstream awards matrix. And if you become a fan, you have but one responsibility: Tell people about it. Good luck to all the Emmy nominees—and here's to the Golden Age of Television. — *Michael Grebb*

**Reviews:** “Breaking2,” 8pm, Wednesday, **Nat Geo**. Can a human run a marathon (26.2 miles) in fewer than two hours? This extraordinary film takes three of the world's best (*Lelisa Desisa*, 27, of Ethiopia; *Zersenay Tadesse*, 35, of Eritrea; and *Eliud Kipchoge*, 32, from Kenya), sports scientists and **Nike** shoe engineers to see if it can be done. Desisa won the Boston Marathon in 2013, when bombing disrupted the end of the race, although he was relaxing in his hotel room at the time. Tadesse owns two of the best half-marathon times, but he eschewed water during those races. The scientists feel if he drinks he can complete the marathon, perhaps in fewer than two hours. Kipchoge, who might be the best of all-time, has run 2.03, so he seems most capable of going sub 2. The humility, humanity and competitiveness of these three men and the gorgeous footage of their home countries make this film a treat. -- “Outlander,” Season 3, 8pm, Sunday, **Starz**. Jamie (*Sam Heughan*) is in Scotland of 1752, living underground and miserable without Claire (*Caitriona Balfe*), who's in a different century and continent. She's not as miserable as Jamie, yet she misses him and his presence hangs over her marriage. Meanwhile, the British are hot to find Red Jamie, nearly unrecognizable as a longhaired mountain man. — *Seth Arenstein*

Basic Cable P2+ Prime Rankings (9/04/17-9/10/17)			
		Mon-Sun Rtg	(000s)
1	FOXN	1.1	2392
1	ESPN	1.1	2386
1	TWC	1.1	2245
4	MSNB	0.9	1959
5	CNN	0.8	1824
6	USA	0.6	1511
6	HGTV	0.6	1345
8	TBSC	0.5	1117
8	FX	0.5	1051
8	ID	0.5	1038
11	DSNY	0.4	875
11	HIST	0.4	846
11	DSE	0.4	78
14	HALL	0.3	779
14	ADSM	0.3	757
14	DISC	0.3	754
14	TLC	0.3	747
14	FOOD	0.3	745
14	TNT	0.3	731
14	A&E	0.3	730
14	AMC	0.3	721
14	TVLD	0.3	695
14	LIFE	0.3	619
14	NAN	0.3	610
14	ESP2	0.3	571
14	OWN	0.3	564
14	NKJR	0.3	561
14	SPK	0.3	555
14	HMM	0.3	538
30	BRAV	0.2	545
30	APL	0.2	519
30	INSP	0.2	504
30	BET	0.2	489
30	SYFY	0.2	479
30	VH1	0.2	477
30	NBCS	0.2	469
30	FRFM	0.2	467
30	DSJR	0.2	442
30	LMN	0.2	414
30	WETV	0.2	406
30	TRAV	0.2	395
30	CMDY	0.2	392
30	MTV	0.2	375
30	NGC	0.2	368

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



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