

Cablefax Daily™

Thursday — January 18, 2018

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 29 / No. 011

ATSC 3.0: Broadcasters Tout Standard's Power Ahead of Full Implementation

The tower is power... That was the message from a **NATPE** panel Wednesday focused on the Next Generation Broadcast standard, aka ATSC 3.0. "Amazon could try and put up sticks around the US and couldn't match the infrastructure that broadcasters have built over the last 60-70 years," said *Andrew Finlayson*, **SmithGeiger's** evp, digital and social media strategies. The international market research and strategy firm recently completed a survey of some 1200 adults, the results of which are stoking broadcasters' excitement over the standard's potential. Some 55% of respondents said they plan to buy a smart TV in the next 12 months, spending an average of \$950. These same people are excited about ATSC 3.0 capabilities such as restarting a program or weather alerts on TV that will wake them up. Those figures are definitely exciting to OEMs, who broadcasters said are already asking about stickers to label sets as ATSC 3.0 or 1.0. The first of those 3.0 sets and DVRs are expected to arrive in 2020. Full-scale implementation is probably 7-10 years off (partly because the **FCC's** spectrum repack process needs to wrap), but there's plenty of opportunity before it's 100% deployed, said *Anne Schelle*, managing director of **Pearl TV**, a business consortia of broadcast companies working to develop next-generation broadcast television platforms. She cited the huge embedded ecosystem of smart TVs going back to 2013 that can potentially be retrofitted for ATSC 3.0. A dongle currently in the prototype phase could bring full 3.0 capabilities (could we see a government program for these like we did with the DTV tuner?). "In addition to that, you could enable potentially a software upgrade to some of these sets to do the run time component," she said. That would allow those older sets to run 3.0 applications, even though they wouldn't have the tuner capabilities for features such as UHD. "There are things we're testing out to leverage the embedded base and monetize [3.0]," Schelle said. One of the big drivers of ATSC 3.0 for broadcasters is the potential for advanced advertising. Broadcasters are already dabbling with that on OTT platforms, which should help provide the proof points by the time 3.0 gets to scale, Schelle said. Cable has some concerns about the standard, worrying that it could further complicate retrans negotiations. But one of the messages from broadcasters at NATPE is that 3.0 could help bring some of those cord-cutters back into the traditional TV environment to cable's benefit. The panel agreed that ATSC 3.0 could use a new name. Lew Leone, the vp and gm of Fox's NYC-area sta-



STANDING
THE TEST OF TIME

AMERICAN CABLE ASSOCIATION'S

Summit 25

MARCH 20-22, 2018 | WASHINGTON, D.C.

REGISTER NOW! ACASUMMIT.ORG

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 ● Associate Editor: Sara Winegardner, 301.354.1701, swinegardner@accessintel.com ● Community Editor: Alex Silverman, 212.621.4951, asilverman@accessintel.com ● Acct. Exec: Olivia Murray, 301.354.2010, omurray@accessintel.com ● VP Marketing: Amy Jefferies, 301.354.1699, ajefferies@accessintel.com ● Prod. Mgr: Joann Fato, jfato@accessintel.com ● Diane Schwartz, SVP Media Comms Group, dschwartz@accessintel.com ● Group Subs or Subscription 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

tions, suggested “Eden: the rebirth of the broadcast television business.” “Our job is to make sure clients and viewers take a bite of the apple,” he said. That’s the next step, with **Sinclair** vice chmn *David Amy* proclaiming that the engineering side of the standard is settled. “What’s left for us is [to convey] what’s in it for the consumer,” he said. “Defining that and making it happen is really going to be the renaissance of whether 3.0 survives and really takes off.”

Merger Talk: **National Amusements** pres *Shari Redstone* is reportedly pushing to replace a number of directors on the **CBS** board as part of a renewed effort to merge the company with **Viacom**, according to sources cited by the *Wall Street Journal*. The sources said Redstone reached out to CBS CEO *Leslie Moonves* earlier this month about merging the companies as soon as this quarter. Moonves, however, reportedly has been against a merger in the past and still has reservations about such a move. Redstone last explored a CBS-Viacom combination in 2016. The report Wednesday sent Viacom’s share price soaring. The WSJ report is timestamped 2:24pm online, and Viacom stock increased more than 6% between 2:20-2:25pm. By the close of trading it had reverted to \$31.96, still representing a 1.85% increase on the day. Shares of CBS declined by .82% to a closing price of \$58.94. -- At NATPE, **Sony Pictures Entertainment** chmn/CEO *Tony Vinciguerra* shot down talk of a possible CBS-Sony merger. “Les and I have not talked about that,” he told journalist and **Starfish Media Group** founder *Soledad O’Brien*. As for the **Disney-Fox** deal, the exec acknowledged Sony was interested in 21st Century Fox. “The ironic part is I built most of the businesses that were sold so I knew them pretty well, and it would have been great to have them back,” he said, identifying the TV and movie studios as the most attractive because of the potential for scale. “When you think about who we are competing with on many different levels—you have the Disney company, **Google, Facebook, Amazon, Apple**. These are massive companies with \$500, \$600, \$700bln market caps. Sony, the entire company, has a \$60bln market cap. We’re a tiny, little minnow fighting against all these gigantic companies who have very different business models, where they generate their revenue and profits comes from a very different place than where are come from.”

Medal Heads: **Comcast** unveiled special X1 functionality for next month’s Winter Olympics, which will air on **NBC** and its cable nets. At an event for media Wednesday, Comcast CEO *Brian Roberts* called the event a “laboratory” for new technology. The Olympics will have a dedicated hub within the X1 interface, where viewers can find a mix of live and VOD content from both NBCU telecasts and the net’s online portal. Viewers will also be able to tune into curated Olympic “channels,” some of which are specific to an individual sport. Others include “Trending Now,” “Gold Medal Moments” and “Best of Team USA.” Comcast also added additional voice commands for the Olympics. For instance, saying an athlete’s name pulls up a lower-third info box with information and stats on that individual. Similarly, saying “USA men’s hockey” would open a sidebar with recent results and roster information, as well as live and

Cablefax is **THE** Place to Advertise

Launching a new product? Send a targeted eblast!

Premiering a new show? Advertise in our Daily newsletter!

Want to be a thought leader? Promote your content to our audience!

The Cablefax brand reaches the top executives in corporate management, business development, programming, content acquisition, technology and policy.

Deliver your message with impact and influence the industry’s elite.

Work with Cablefax Today!

Rates & More Information: Olivia Murray at omurray@accessintel.com or 301-354-2010

on-demand content pertaining to that team. In addition, fans of figure skating can ask X1 to identify the song playing during a particular routine. -- On the coverage front, NBC will stream the Olympic opening ceremony live for the first time ever. With the 14-hour time difference from South Korea, it'll start at 6:00am ET/3:00am PT. The ceremony will air again on NBC in primetime. NBC Sports chmn *Mark Lazarus* said the net has yet to decide whether it will take the same approach to the closing ceremony. The net announced *Katie Couric* will serve as *Mike Tirico's* co-host for the opening ceremony, Couric's first since the 2004 Athens Games. *Meredith Vieira* and the recently dismissed *Matt Lauer* hosted the event in recent years. It's also worth noting that NBC will provide live primetime coverage in all time zones (as opposed to events on tape delay), anchored by figure skating and skiing. The NBCU cable nets will also have live coverage in primetime.

Broadband Reform: Rep *Anna Eshoo (D-CA)* and Rep *David McKinley (R-WV)* introduced the first in a series of bills that Eshoo says would expand broadband access in local communities nationwide. The Broadband Conduit Deployment Act of 2018, commonly referred to as "Dig Once," would mandate the inclusion of broadband conduit during the construction of any road receiving federal funding, eliminating the need to dig up roads in order to expand broadband infrastructure and lowering costs. In other broadband news, Sen *Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)* and Rep *Andy Harris, MD (R-MD)* wrote to FCC chmn *Ajit Pai* urging the group to reconsider a proposal that would eliminate the distinction between mobile and fixed broadband in the Commission's annual 706 Broadband Progress report. Doing so would reverse decades of precedent, but the duo claims that while mobile broadband is not insignificant, it cannot act as a replacement for fixed broadband. "There are challenges in expanding broadband deployment to rural communities but the solution for Congress and the Commission is not to redefine itself out of the problem but to work with industry to propose and promote viable solutions to address obstacles," the letter read. "It would be a disservice to rural Americans to be told by the Commission that their broadband needs are being met when their reality is much different."

#GoodbyeSpike: If you haven't been following **Spike** on **Twitter**, you've been missing out on some raw language and potshots aimed at the new **Paramount Network**. "Hey @paramountnet, newflash... no one knows who you are and no one is going to watch. Dead on arrival, buddy," says one of many harsh missives from the net's Twitter handle. "I hated all my [Spike] logos, but this last one looks like a tattoo design from a rejected Ink Master contestant." It may look like a disgruntled, laid off Spike employee with access to the account, but it's actually a PR stunt to help promote Spike's transition to Paramount, which officially takes place Thursday. **Cablefax** caught up with *Red Fabbri*, vp of fan engagement and editorial, as he was driving out to the desert Wednesday to "systematically destroy" the Spike logo on **Facebook** Live. "This is the way Spike would want to go," he said. It's a tribute to the 'bro' Spike used to be, before 'Ink Masters' and 'Lip Sync Battle.' Back when it was 'The Joe Schmo Show' and '1000 Ways to Die.' That male-focused social media audience has dropped off in recent years as the network and Facebook algorithms changed. This campaign, nearly a year in the works with the help of agency We Are Social, is a way to re-engage that audience," said Fabbri. "We're reminding viewers of the journey they've been on with us and where we're going," he said. A long with the zingers, Spike is promoting upcoming shows on Paramount such as "Heathers" and "Waco." "There's no reason that audience won't like these programs," said Fabbri, who was quick to thank **Viacom** for taking a risk and not killing the idea in the boardroom. -- At **TCA**, Paramount Channel execs this week told critics that the net will continue to cater to the male-skewing Spike audience but gradually shift to hit a broader mix of the 18-49 demo. "One of the reasons we started 'Ink Master,' the 10th season, last week is we don't want the Spike audience to go away, but we need to broaden this audience," said Paramount Channel chief *Kevin Kay*. "So, we're looking for an audience that's 50-50 male/female. We're not that far off as we kind of end Spike, but we want to make sure that we bring the Spike viewers with us." He said that's part of the reason the net is starting with a gritty show like 'Waco' about the tragic standoff between the **FBI** and *David Koresh* and the Branch Davidians at their compound in Waco, TX, in the early 1990s. "Because we believe it's a big, broad show and everybody will watch, but it feels like it still will have some resonance with the Spike viewers."

World Cup Ready: **Fox Sports** and **Telemundo** aren't the only ones excited about the World Cup. **History** announced at **NATPE** a 14-day event called "History of Football," set to air from May 28-June 10. It will run in 160 territories around the world featuring a slate of globally focused docuseries, short-form specials and World Cup films. For Spanish language-rights holder Telemundo, it will be important to execute to the fullest, **NBCU International Group** and NBCU Telemundo Ent chmn *Cesar Conde* told NATPE attendees Wednesday morning. "For Hispanics, soccer is a religion and World Cup is our cathedral. This is the biggest sporting event on the planet," he said. The bidding process pre-dated Conde at NBCU, with the exec tipping his hat to Comcast leaders *Brian Rob-*

erts and Steve Burke. “I think it started with their belief that sports is one of the genres that they really believe has tremendous potential, that will transcend all the changes in our industry,” Conde said. The plan is for Telemundo to provide coverage in new ways—with live broadcasts on the network and streaming apps despite the seven-hour time difference. “You will be able to see content related to the World Cup across all the emerging digital platforms we are partnering with. We really want to make sure we surround our consumer, both the soccer fanatic as well as the individuals who just come to watch the World Cup, with a very unique experience,” the exec said. Who will Conde be cheering for during the tournament? “I root for anyone who brings ratings to Telemundo!”

Full Optimization: Comcast Technology Solutions is partnering with content delivery optimization service **DLVR**, adding multi-CDN flexibility and enabling maximum viewing experiences across all screens. The solution simplifies the management of the multi-CDN approach and allows content providers to easily to add the Comcast CDN to their environment.

Access for All: Cable One's GigaONE Gigabit service has expanded to cover more than 95% of the provider's footprint, representing more than 200 communities in the US. This brings the company closer to its goal of providing all customers with access to speeds from 100 Mbps up to 1Gbps.

X Marks the Spot: FuboTV is now working with **SpotX** as its supply-side platform for monetizing its live OTT content. The partnership is aimed at increasing the virtual MVPD's market share by giving more brands, agencies and trading desks the ability to advertise on the platform. Fubo previously monetized content via subscriptions, but turned on ads this past summer. More than 150 national brands purchased Fubo's ad inventory programmatically during 4Q17—twice as many as the previous quarter.

Gamers Unite: The **Overwatch League** scored more than 10mln viewers on video game streaming service **Twitch** in its inaugural four-day opening week. Twitch, which is the esports promotion's exclusive third-party digital broadcast partner, claimed an average minute audience of 280K for the week. Twitch and league operator **MLG** noted a peak concurrent online audience of 437K, which occurred during the day-one matchup between the Dallas Fuel and Seoul Dynasty.

Programming: Netflix is now streaming a two-part original series from **NBC Olympics** previewing the upcoming Winter Games in PyeongChang. The two installments are called “Go for the Gold” and “Meet Team USA.” -- **Fox News** will debut a seven-part docuseries called “Scandalous” about the impeachment of President *Bill Clinton* at 8pm on Sunday. The following six episodes will air on subsequent Sundays in the same timeslot. Fox News isn't the only net with plans to tackle the Clinton impeachment this year. **History** last year greenlit “The Breach,” a scripted drama on the same subject matter set to debut in 2018. -- **Hallmark Channel** renewed “Chesapeake Shores” for a third season. Production will begin this year in preparation for a premiere in summer 2018. The net is also preparing for the Season Four premiere of “Good Witch,” a series based on its “The Good Witch” movie franchise, on April 29 at 9pm.

People: Former **Pandora** exec *Sara Clemens* is joining **Twitch** as COO, according to a report from *Variety*. The streaming website will also welcome **Microsoft's** *Mark Weiler* as svp, head of platforms and services, as well as *Amir Shevat*, who will take over as vp, developer experience. -- **Freeform** welcomed *Lynn Barrie* as svp, original programming and development. Formerly serving as vp of comedy development at **ABC Entertainment Group**, Barrie will oversee the development of scripted drama and comedy series. --**Turner** elevated **Adult Swim's** *Kim Manning* and *Liz Pate* to vp, programming and vp, production operations for games and connected devices, respectively. At **Cartoon Network**, *Sherri Glass* has risen to vp of digital production while *Beau Teague* will become vp, product management.

Cablefax Industry Jobs

3 Tips to Finding and Hiring the Perfect Candidate

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!

Take advantage of upgrades to add exposure by taking advantage of upgrades, including weekly job eletters sent to over 40k industry executives.

Let
Cablefax's
Job Board
do the work
for you

Think about that for a minute...

Optics Over Objectives

Commentary by Steve Effros

And they wonder why most of us, even in Washington, DC, are fed up with what's going on in Washington, DC! Sorry, folks, but I'm going to have to go on a bit of a political rant here for a while since things have gotten so out of control that it seems no one remembers their original stated objectives for the things they are now expostulating about.

I'll leave the obvious stuff, like President *Trump's* crude reversal during a meeting with leading Senators to close a bipartisan deal on the DACA immigration issue, to others for now. I'll stick with the utter intentional waste of time being engineered in the Senate to block the **FCC's** net neutrality decision. The purported idea, hatched by the likes of Senator *Markey*, is to get the Senate to vote, based on the Congressional Review Act, to disapprove and block the FCC from shifting regulation of broadband back from Title II (common carrier) to Title I (where it has been for all but two years of FCC involvement).

This full-throated, well-funded lobbying campaign for a Senate vote is close to claiming a majority of 51 votes, we are told, repeatedly, through yet another full-throated, well-funded PR campaign that followed the full-throated, well-funded "viral email" campaign that inundated the FCC with "comments" (actually they looked more like legally irrelevant "votes") during the lead-up to the Commission's decision. I'm still waiting for the articles fully exploring who was supplying the funds, who engineered the email campaigns and why. Would it surprise anyone to learn that maybe the companies which would benefit the most from regulating broadband as a common carrier had something to do with it?

I'm not going to speculate, here... but the *Wall Street Journal* yesterday certainly gave us some data to chew on when it noted that the really big tech companies (hint:



none of them are regulated ISPs) are starting to be looked at askance because they seem to be accumulating an awful lot of power.

As *Politico* summarized: "**Google** drives 89% of internet search; 95% of young adults on the internet use a **Facebook Inc.** product; and **Amazon.com Inc.** now accounts for 75% of electronic book sales. Those firms that aren't monopolists are duopolists: Google and Facebook absorbed 63% of online ad spending last year; Google and **Apple Inc.** provide 99% of mobile phone operating systems; while Apple and **Microsoft Corp.** supply 95% of desktop operating systems."

No broadband supplier comes close to those dominant numbers, but the only ones being focused on in the continuing NN imbroglio are the broadband suppliers, not the dominant "edge" companies. Why?

It's really simple; the Feds don't have any current regulatory jurisdiction over those companies except under the antitrust laws, and it's not clear they have violated those. Mr. Markey and company have been very close with the Google's of the world for some time now, and politically it "plays well" to claim "protection of the public" by demanding "net neutrality" even though that's not really the dominant active danger to the public!

It's politics over policy. Even if the CRA is adopted by the Senate, do you think it will get by the House...and be signed by the President? Not a chance. But unfortunately, what it does mean is we will have months of optics rather than focus on the objective of a new law that really deals with the issues.

That's why we're all fed up.

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 TOP OPS

Who deserves to appear in Cablefax's annual power Top Operators list?

Help Cablefax compile this influential list of MSOs and Independent Operators by nominating the companies and executives you think should be included in our annual list of leading cable operators. Our Top Ops list will be honored in the July issue of Cablefax: The Magazine.

Enter at www.cablefax.com/awards

Questions: Contact Mary-Lou French at mfrench@accessintel.com.

NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS!

It's **free** to enter – but you must submit your entries by **February 16!**

