

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Proactive Position: Comcast Wants to be Home IoT Consultant

(Editor's Note: Last week, we looked at how [Cox Homelife](#) is shifting to an automation-first philosophy. This week, we chat with Xfinity Home about how Comcast is trying to react to customer needs in a proactive manner.)

As MVPDs seek to own the home as IoT ramps up, **Comcast** has some promising news. Customers aren't calling in that often to ask how to integrate their **Nest** thermostats, etc, according to Xfinity Home vp *Shuvankar Roy*. "It's more 'I have heard about smart thermostats. Why do I need it?' or 'who are the providers I should think about for a garage door opener' and 'if I need installation help, how does that work,'" he told **Cablefax**, estimating that about 1/3 of Xfinity Home calls fall in this category. "We have become a consultative partner with customers now calling us to get guidance on their IoT world." That fits with Comcast's goal of being more than just another home security operation. To achieve that sort of street cred, Roy and his team are focused on being proactive to customer issues. That ranges from improving the install process by trying to gather information ahead of the tech visit (ie, where do they want sensors located, etc) to proactively reaching out when there's something like a false alarm. That could mean reaching out and explaining reasons that generally cause false alarms and asking if there's a way Comcast can help, Roy explained. In addition to gathering more info pre-install, Comcast techs are spending more time explaining how the home security product looks—especially important since Roy estimates that about half of the customers are new to security. "If any customer has experience an onboarding problem or trouble call, we want to make sure those customers are handled with the specialized white glove treatment that they're looking for," he said. "It's imperative for us to follow up to make sure the new system is meeting our new customers' needs and expectations. To achieve this successfully, we proactively make a personalized phone call to new customers to understand their personal experience with the service (and products) and offer them relevant tips and assistance, as needed." The MSO goes as far as using digital media communications to help customers learn about the systems for at least the first 30-60 days. Comcast also will look at a customer's usage and



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make recommendations, such as alerting them that a camera is offline or that they haven't subscribed to continuous live recording. If there's a low battery in the system, it will prompt a notification in the app which will take a customer to a self-help article explaining how to replace a battery, where the battery can be purchased, etc. Other examples of Xfinity Home's proactive process include push notifications such as: "We have noticed you have not armed your home security system this week. Do you know you can automatically arm and disarm your home at your desired time any day of the week? Click here to learn more and how to set it up." Roy's team is also integrating AI capabilities into chat within the Xfinity Home mobile app to improve support while minimizing calls and truck rolls. At the same time, when there is a call, there is a specialized group of agents tasked with solving those issues. "Incubating this small group in the big machine has really given customers a differentiator," Roy said.

Roseanne Ruckus: It's not just **ABC** that's backing away from *Roseanne Barr* after her tweet about *Obama* adviser *Valerie Jarrett*. Following the network's decision to cancel her reboot, others channels have said they will stop airing reruns of the original "Roseanne" series. "While we believe viewers have always distinguished the personal behavior of the actress Roseanne Barr from the television character Roseanne Connor, we are disgusted by Barr's comments this week. Therefore, we are removing the original 'Roseanne' series from the **Laff** schedule for the time being, effective immediately," the digital multicast network said Tuesday afternoon. You may recall that Laff sister net **Bounce TV** pulled "The Cosby Show" from its schedule following last month's verdict against the comedian. **CMT, TV Land** and **Paramount Network** will be removing the original Roseanne sitcom from their respective channels as of Wednesday.

FCC Notebook: The **FCC's** transition to new Local Number Portability Administrator, **Telcordia Technologies** (doing business as **iconectiv**), is now complete. The LNPA acts as an operator of the system that gives consumers the opportunity to keep their telephone numbers when they switch communications service providers. It also supports the law enforcement and public safety communities. -- The FCC approved additional immediate funding to speed the restoration of communications networks in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands that were damaged during the hurricanes of 2017. The Commission is also seeking comment on injecting close to \$900mln in medium- to long-term funding toward the expansion and improvement of broadband access on the islands. The news came the same day *The New England Journal of Medicine* published an article estimating the death toll in Puerto Rico from Hurricane Maria at more than 70 times the official estimate of 64. -- The FCC Media Bureau granted a permanent waiver to those remaining analog-

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only cable systems from a requirement that emergency info be provided visually during non-newscast video programming be made audibly accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired through the use of a secondary audio stream. ACA made the waiver request in March, arguing that the financial burden of compliance would force marginal analog systems to go out of business. Known as the “Audible Crawl Rule,” the provision was implemented under the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010.

Ratings: TNT’s presentation of the 2018 NBA Western Conference Finals Game 7 between the **Golden State Warriors** and the **Houston Rockets** was the second most-watched NBA game in the history of cable, and the most-viewed NBA telecast of the 2018-19 season. Airing Monday night, the program averaged 14.8mln viewers, peaking at 18mln viewers from 11-11:15pm. The game was the top program across all of television, cable and broadcast, over Memorial Day weekend. -- Game 1 of the 2018 Stanley Cup Final on Monday night between the **Washington Capitals** and the **Vegas Golden Knights** averaged a total audience delivery of 5.279mln viewers across **NBC**, **NBCSports.com** and the **NBC Sports** app. It was the most-watched Game 1 in three years with viewership up 7% from last year. The game also broke local ratings records in Las Vegas and Washington D.C. -- For the 3rd time in 5 weeks, **Freeform’s** “Famous in Love” posted new season highs with A18-34 (181K), W18-34 (163K) and W18-49 (253K). Wednesday’s telecast grew over last week by double digits in A18-34 (+29%), W18-34 (+42%) and W18-49 (+35%).

Don’t Stop the Music: **Stingray** reached a long-term deal with **Bell**, making Bell the first Canadian operator that can offer its subs Stingray’s entire music and video services portfolio. The renewal is set to include Stingray’s music video TV channels, its specialty and premium TV channels as well as all of its SVOD services, including Stingray Karaoke and Stingray Music Videos. Stingray Music and the music video TV channels will be included at no extra cost in all Bell TV programming packages.

Coming in Spanish: The **NFL** and **CBS** have come to a deal with **ESPN Deportes** to televise Super Bowl LIII live in Spanish. ESPN Deportes first hosted a Super Bowl telecast in 2016, the first to air on an ESPN network in the US. The commentator team of *Álvaro Martín*, *Raul Allegre* and *John Sutcliffe* will call the game live on February 3, 2019 from Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta, Georgia.

The Power of Words: **The New York Public Library** and **HBO** are teaming up for a national campaign to celebrate the written word while encouraging people to read, talk about and enjoy literature. #ReadingIsLit will showcase writers, performers and creators from HBO series, who will share what they’re reading, what stories inspire them and what books they recommend. Stars including *Reese Witherspoon*, *Thandie Newton* and *Laura Dern* will also ask members of the public to go to their local libraries and sign up for library cards through videos. Interviews and social media interactions. The New York Public Library will be hosting information online at nypl.org/readingislit and will have special book displays at its 88 neighborhood branches in the Bronx, Manhattan and Staten Island. HBO will donate a “bookshelf” of featured titles to 25 libraries across the US.

Programming: **HBO Sports** is partnering with the **Bill Simmons Media Group** for “Courtside At The NBA Finals.” The unscripted one-hour special covers the sights and sounds of the 2018 NBA Finals. It’s set to debut June 19 at 9pm, with a replay airing at 11pm. -- **Google Assistant** users will be able to access an early sneak peek at the first episode of **YouTube** original series “Impulse” before its premiere on June 6. They’ll gain access by saying “Talk to Impulse” and giving the Assistant a secret password. -- **SundanceTV** and **Sundance Now** announced a partnership with **Tele München Group** on limited series “The Name of the Rose.” The series, based on the novel from *Umberto Eco*, will launch in 2019 on Sundance TV and will stream on Sundance Now in the US and Canada. -- Sundance Now is celebrating Pride Month by premiering five original LGBTQ-themed documentaries on June 7. The collection will be curated as a part of Sundance Now’s “Take 5” franchise and called “Take 5: Beyond the Parades,” exploring stories of personal identity, acceptance and social movements worldwide. It will include “On My Way Out: The Secret Life of Nani & Popi,” “Becoming More Visible,” “Cold Fear: Gay Life in Russia,” “Faith and Gay Fear” and “Seed Monday: The Chuck Holmes Story.”

People: *Darryl Heggans* is joining **NBC Sports Washington** as vp of sales. Before making the move, Heggans was a member of **ESPN’s** multicultural multimedia sales team, developing and leading cross-platform media strategies. He’s also spent time at **TV One**, the **Gospel Music Channel** and **BET**.