

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Whole Home: Rogers Beginning to Ramp Up X1-Supported IgniteTV

Canadian operator **Rogers** is moving full-steam ahead with its IPTV service Ignite TV using **Comcast's** X1 platform. It started a phased awareness and advertising campaign last week. "Over the long term, this is much more than an IPTV service. It is a roadmap to connect everything in the home," Rogers pres/CEO *Joe Natale* said during the operator's 2Q earnings call Thursday. The service was soft launched to select customers in Ontario during the quarter with it now going wider. Rogers' goals follows Comcast's—integrate everything in the home, including lighting and security, with a solution that can be controlled by voice. Natale said Ignite will be a rolling campaign that will build over time, with this initial phase just the beginning of Rogers' connected home solution. "We've fully integrated **YouTube** into our capability, 4K TV is live and working well with respect to Ignite TV," he said. "The most important thing to consider is that now we really believe we have the ability to fight with both hands. On one hand, we have a strong 1 gigabit capability across our entire footprint, on the other hand, we have a best-in-class video entertainment solution that is really one step or phase one of the connected home roadmap and having spent quite a bit of time with Comcast in the future of that roadmap, we are very excited about what's to come as a whole." Rogers saw an improvement in video in 2Q, with net losses falling to 9K from 25K a year ago. Natale was careful not to let Ignite take the credit here. "It's really happened from just a better focus on go-to-market discipline and a better focus on base management," he said. "We work very hard on looking after the whole home... as opposed to just Internet-only or sort of specific product sets only, because we believe that winning the home matters most." Internet net additions climbed in the quarter to 23K from 13K a year ago, the most for a 2Q since 2005. Rogers added 122K net postpaid wireless subs. Competitor **Cogeco** recently said it may enter the wireless space, possibly through an MVNO. For Rogers, a wholesale arrangement or MVNO approach isn't part of the current strategy, Natale said. Cogeco also operates **Atlantic Broadband** in the US, though management's wireless discussions seem focused on Canada.

More 5G for AT&T: AT&T revealed that Charlotte, Raleigh and Oklahoma City will be among the dozen cities it is launching 5G in by year-end. They join the previously announced 5G markets of Dallas, Atlanta and Waco, with the company saying it is deliberately choosing a mix of big and mid-sized cities. AT&T also expanded its LTE-Licensed Assisted Access



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into eight new markets Austin, Dallas, Houston, Little Rock, San Antonio, San Jose, Tampa, and Tuscaloosa, AL, for a total of 15 markets. LTE-LAA has peak theoretical wireless speeds reaching up to 1Gbps on capable devices.

Emergency Alerts: The **FCC** has scheduled a nationwide wireless emergency alert system test for Sept 20 with a backup date of Oct 3. Immediately following the wireless test, **FEMA** will conduct a live test of the Emergency Alert System. EAS participants must complete the filing of ETRS Form One on or before Aug 27. In other alert news, **Senate Commerce** chmn *John Thune* (R-SD) and Sen *Brian Schatz* (D-HI) introduced legislation on Wednesday that would explore establishing a system to offer emergency alerts to audio and video streaming services, such as **Netflix** and **Spotify**. Their legislation follows a false missile alert in Hawaii from January, with the two saying that the incident exposed flaws in the alert system. Their bill would seek to make sure more people receive alerts by eliminating the option to opt out of receiving certain federal alerts, including missile alerts, on mobile phones; and require active alerts issued by the president or FEMA to be repeated. Currently, alerts on TV or radio may only be played once.

An Apple Dish: **DISH** became the first pay-TV provider to launch on Apple Business Chat. Customers can now start a text conversation with a DISH customer service representative in Messages on iPhones or iPads. The conversation never times out, and consumers can start and leave a conversation based on their personal convenience.

YouTube Learns: **YouTube's** latest stats show 1.9bln logged-in users come to the service each month, with users watching more than 180mln hours of YouTube on TV screens every day. In her mid-year update to platform creators, CEO *Susan Wojcicki* said the company has made an effort to communicate more with them, answering 600% more tweets in 2018 than 2017. The update also discussed YouTube's new copyright match tool and its education-themed initiative YouTube Learning, which provides grants and promotion to support education-focused creator content, expert organizations and learners.

GCI Doings: When it comes to **Liberty's** acquisition of **GCI**, it hasn't really changed the Alaskan operator's mission, GCI gen counsel *Tina Pidgeon* said on **C-SPAN's** "The Communicators." "For us, this was really a full circle transaction. Dr [John] Malone was an early partner in GCI's beginning. We're happy where we are right now and expect great partnerships to continue," she said in the interview, which is part of C-SPAN's special "Alaska Weekend" programming (the ep airs Saturday at 6:30pm ET on C-SPAN; Monday at 8am and 8pm ET on **C-SPAN2**). Pidgeon discusses how GCI provides broadband and phone service in a state of vast expanses and small villages. Out of ne-

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cessity, it has been on the front-edge of telehealth and tele-education. “In many of our small communities, sometimes there is no doctor. Often it’s community health aides who are delivering care to residents,” she said. “When an emergency comes their way, really in Alaskan communities they have utilized telemedicine for years... to improve the quality of healthcare and really actually reduce costs over time.”

New York Television Festival: The New York Television Festival wrapped up its first summer edition, honoring the top indie pilots and scripts. A record 620 development meetings took place, up from 600 last year. A total of 75 different companies were represented at the festival from networks, studios, agencies and digital platforms. NYTVF’s flagship Independent Pilot Competition showcased 59 pilots, and the “Best of the Fest” and NYTVF Critics Award were given to “Hammerhead.” “The Curse” and “Granted” tied for Best Comedy Script, and Ticker was awarded Best Drama Script.

Ratings: The “Harry Potter Wizarding Weekend” event scored a tune-in of more than 27mln P2+ viewers across **USA** and **Syfy** July 13-16. The television event kicked off **NBCU’s** rights deal for the Harry Potter franchise, extending through 2025. The stunt resulted in seven of the top 10 movie titles of the year for USA, and 6 of the top 10 movies of 2018 for Syfy.

Cablefax Dashboard

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Research

➤ ABI Research forecasts that 4K flat panel TV shipments will surpass 102 million in 2018, representing 44% of total global flat panel TV shipments.

➤ Asia-Pacific leads the 4K unit shipments representing 37% of global unit shipments in 2018. However, North America and Western Europe have the highest 4K TV penetration at present.

➤ ABI Research expects that consumer demand for 4K flat panel TV sets will drive the market to grow at CAGR 17.3% to reach 194 million unit shipments in 2022.

Source: ABI's "Media Devices: UltraHD, 4K, HDR, 8K, HEVC" report

Up Ahead

July 25-July 29: CTAM portion of [Television Critics Association Summer Tour](#)

July 27: [Disney-Fox Shareholder Vote](#)

July 27: Cablefax [Most Powerful Women](#) Nomination Deadline

July 29-Aug 1: [The Independent Show](#); Anaheim, CA

Aug 2: FCC August [Open Meeting](#)

Aug 5-8: [CableLabs Summer Conference](#); Keystone, CO

Quotable

“Around the world, net neutrality has won as a consumer expectation. And some countries have net neutrality laws, other countries don’t. But broadly around the world, consumers have the expectation and ISPs are delivering it. So I would say the net neutrality advocates have won the day in terms of those expectations. So we don’t see any changes to that in the U.S. or other countries. So it’s quite a positive outcome for changing cultural expectations in a positive way.”

- [Netflix pres/CEO Reed Hastings on net neutrality during 2Q earnings](#)



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