

# Cablefax Daily™

Tuesday — September 18, 2018

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 29 / No. 179

## The Dilemma: Drawing the Ethical Line on AI

Artificial Intelligence is already at use in everything from healthcare to defense, but where do humans set boundaries in their use of AI? The **Brookings Institute** investigated those ethical boundaries at a panel Friday afternoon, questioning whether AI and algorithms can respect human values. Brookings vp and director, governance studies *Darrell West* believed that changes within corporations like **Microsoft** and **Google** and their deployment of these technologies should be the focus for now, as that is where the most action is likely to take place. His recommendations for those corporations include hiring ethicists to meet with their key decision makers, developing an ethics code to outline how various issues will be handled, creating an AI review board, developing AI auto-trails that can show how various decisions were made by the technology, implementing AI training programs for staff and having a plan for remediation should their AI end up inflicting harm on consumers. **Intel Labs** senior research scientist *Heather Patterson* said her company is working on a set of principles, but has not made it public. "AI isn't one thing. It's a constellation of sensors and machine learning techniques, algorithms and data collection... and it's not just something that occurs inside of a computer," Patterson said. "It's something that happens in reaction to, in conjunction with real people." For that reason alone, Patterson argued that social scientists, anthropologists and the like should be involved in the conversation to understand the effects of the technology within home life, the workplace or in other social contexts. Google has also been full speed ahead on AI, with more than 21K of its engineers being trained in the company's machine learning crash course, which is available online. According to global policy lead for emerging technologies *Charina Chou*, Google is looking into all uses of AI, including early cancer detection and translations that could help doctors communicate with patients faster and easier. "Given all of these potential opportunities, is it ethical not to pursue AI?" Chou said. Google has put together a set of [AI principles](#) as well as responsible [AI practices](#), publishing them in order to share its view on AI technology and to have an internal way to assess features and new ideas Google is pursuing. They're not called best practices because Google doesn't quite know yet what the best ways are, with it being so early in the technology's lifecycle. The panelists could all agree that as AI is further explored, the ethical codes surrounding it should include transparency and greater explainability when



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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 ● Associate Editor: Mollie Cahillane, 212.621.4951, mcahillane@accessintel.com ● Acct. Exec: Olivia Murray, 301.354.2010, omurray@accessintel.com ● VP Marketing: Amy Jefferies, 301.354.1699, ajefferies@accessintel.com ● Director of Marketing: Kate Schaeffer, kschaeffer@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

possible. However, Brookings senior fellow, governance studies *William Galston* believes that will not be enough and government oversight will be necessary. “The closer we can get to getting out in front of these changes that are going to be so transformative and bring the capacity of democratic decision-making to bear on these incipient social transformations, the better off we’re going to be,” Galston said, adding that laws help prevent companies from breaking social norms in order to get out ahead of their competition. “The issue at stake is nothing less than what kind of society we want to be living in in the next 10 or 20 years. Do we want to live in a society subject to universal surveillance? I don’t. But I think we’re going to need affirmative steps from government to protect that from happening.”

**Hurricane Relief: Charter** will give \$350K to national nonprofit **Rebuilding Together** to support relief efforts and assist with repairs and renovations in areas impacted by Hurricane Florence. Charter is also offering an additional \$1mln in PSAs to air at no cost to assist in fundraising and awareness for disaster relief efforts. The MSO made similar contributions in Texas and Florida last year following Harvey and Irma. Others donating money to support relief efforts include **The NFL Foundation**, which announced a \$1mln donation Sunday. Charter has opened 5,100 Spectrum WiFi hotspots across North and South Carolina to support the preparation and recovery efforts and will keep them open to all users until further notice. It’s also working to provide WiFi access to a number of shelters in impacted areas within its service area. As of 11am ET Monday, nearly 188K NC cable subscribers were reported by communications providers as without service. That’s according to the most recent **FCC** Disaster Information Report. The number was up from 165K as of Sunday morning and 72K as of 11am Saturday. **Cox** said Sunday evening that its customers have been largely unaffected by the storm. The MSO opened up free WiFi hotspots to help evacuees who found refuge in Northern Virginia and Roanoke shelters. “It’s our job to do everything we can to support our communities in times of emergency,” said *J.D. Myers*, svp and region manager for Cox Virginia. “Although our region didn’t take a direct hit from Florence, we’re doing what we can to keep our neighbors connected to people and information—that is critical right now; our hope is to make those connections easier during the recovery process.” **Comcast** said it had resumed normal operating procedures in Charleston, SC, Monday and all of its retail centers in impacted areas were open as well.

**Streamers Fights Fees: Netflix** and **Hulu** are fighting an attempt by Missouri communities, led by the city of Creve Coeur, to impose franchise fees and other requirements on the streaming services. In their separate motions to dismiss the case, Netflix and Hulu argue that they’re not video service providers because they do not have video service authorization from the Missouri PSC. “Hulu willingly pays all properly assessed state and municipal taxes and fees. But here, Creve Coeur demands a fee that plainly does not apply to Hulu’s services, attempts to bypass

# Congratulate and Reach the Most Influential Minorities in TV, Cable and Broadband



**Publication Date: October 15, 2018**  
**Advertising Contact: Olivia Murray, Account Executive**  
 301.354.2010 | omurray@accessintel.com  
**Ad Space deadline: September 17**  
**Artwork due: September 21**

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the statutorily required authorization process before any fee can be collected, and ignores the PSC's exclusive authority over the authorization process," Hulu said. The city argues that the state's 2007 Video Services Providers Act applies to Netflix and Hulu because customers use internet wireline facilities located at least in part of the public right-of-way. It also cites the use of internet protocol technology.

**Newsmax Expands:** Newsmax TV will increase its reach thanks to an agreement with **Comcast** to carry its 24/7 cable news channel to Xfinity TV customers. It will initially launch to subscribers of Xfinity's "Digital Starter" package that have an X1 device. The news channel has a conservative perspective and first launched in 2014. It currently reaches 50mln homes in the US, and it expects to reach as many as 80mln cable/satellite homes by the end of 2019.

**National Alert:** Given the severe weather on the East Coast, **FEMA** has pushed back the national emergency alert system and wireless emergency alerts original slated for Thursday to Oct 3. The test is scheduled to have the headline "Presidential Alert." It will assess the operational readiness of the infrastructure for distribution of a national message and determine whether improvements are needed. **ACA** advised its members to stop running PSAs with the original test date.

**CSG Reviews:** **CSG** will acquire **Forte Payment Systems**, a provider of advanced payment solutions, for \$85mln in cash at closing (net of cash acquired). The acquisition is expected to close in 4Q, with \$13mln possibly held back subject to certain tax filings. There's also the potential for earn-out payments if Forte meets or exceeds certain targets. CSG's board also authorized a stock repurchase of up to \$150mln worth of shares over the next three years. The company said the Forte acquisition accelerates its ability to offer a comprehensive suite of next generation payment solutions that enable service providers to provide a differentiated customer experience.

**Latin Insights:** **Insight TV** has entered the Latin American market through SES' Latin American Ultra HD platform. Its 4K UHD content is now available on a 24/7 basis in English, Spanish and Portuguese to all providers who are working with SES in Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean and South America.

**Indiana Upgrades:** **Enhanced Telecommunications Corporation (ETC)** announced it has chosen **Innovative Systems** as its new IPTV middleware vendor. ETC has served 10 counties in southeastern Indiana for 85 years. The company said that tighter system integration is essential for rural providers.

**Ruff Life:** **DOGTV** is being made available on **Cox** across the US. The net is aimed at dogs, created by animal behaviorists using colors, sights and sounds that are believed to make dogs happy. It is available for \$4.99 a month. **DOGTV** also gained distribution through **DISH** in recent weeks.

**Lionsgate Cashes In:** **Lionsgate** announced that its board approved a quarterly cash dividend of \$0.09 per each class of its common shares. The dividend is payable on Nov 8 to shareholders of record as of Sept 30.

**On the Circuit:** Journalist *Brit Hume* and Howard University pres *Wayne A.I. Frederick* will present awards at **The Media Institute's** "Free Speech America" Gala on Oct 24. Hume will present the Freedom of Speech Award to "Fox News Sunday" host *Chris Wallace*, and Frederick will present the American Horizon Award to *Cathy Hughes*, founder and chairperson of **TV One** and **Radio One** parent **Urban One**.

**Programming:** **Fox News** will premiere a four-episode midterm election series hosted by *Ben Shapiro* of **The Daily Wire**. "The Ben Shapiro Election Special" will run for four consecutive Sundays at 8pm beginning this weekend. -- **Science Channel's** series "Mythical Beasts" will premiere Oct 14 at 10pm. The eight-episode show dives into the mysteries behind legendary creatures such as minotaurs, dragons, cyclops, vampires and sea monsters. -- Beloved chef *Alton Brown* is revisiting old episodes of "Good Eats" and reviving classic episodes with new scenes, science and recipes. "Good Eats: Reloaded," premiering Oct 15 at 9pm on **Cooking Channel**, will feature 13 episodes celebrating the original series and Brown's signature humor. -- **ESPN** is collaborating with **YouTube Originals** to air all eight episodes of docuseries "Best Shot." The series will come to **ESPN2** on Tuesday, Sept 18 at 8pm.

**People:** *Geoff Shook*, COO for **Buckeye Broadband**, was named interim evp and gm of the company, the *Toledo Blade* reports. He replaces former pres *Jeff Abbas*, who previously served as pres/CEO of **NCTC**. The Blade said Abbas left to pursue other opportunities. -- *Elaine Barden* is now **Comcast's** vp of business development and strategic initiatives for the California region. Barden has 30 years of marketing, sales, product development and general management experience in cable. -- *Viet Dinh* is the chief legal and policy officer for **Fox**, the new company to be spun-off in connection with the merger with Disney. He stepped down from his role as independent director on the 21st Century Fox board prior to the appointment, and will be an important part of setting up the new company following the close of the **Disney** transaction. He most recently was a partner at **Kirkland & Ellis** and also founded **Bancroft PLLC**.

## CFX TECH

### New in Town

Arris's IT department has a new woman in charge. *Karen Renner* joined the company about a month ago, replacing *Phil Baldock* as he pursues other opportunities. She's already a leader amongst leaders, previously serving as the North American CIO for global aerospace company **Thales** and the CIO of aluminum company **Novelis**. She's been recognized by the *Atlanta Business Journal* as one of the region's Top 100 Technology Leaders and was also previously named CIO of the Year by the **Georgia CIO Leadership Association**.

Her current mission at Arris is driving a lot of the programs already in place in order to improve its core business processes, digitizing and moving into current best practices for those business processes. Arris also has a culture of acquisitions, so Renner's taking on the challenge of trying to commonize and simplify processes brought in by those acquired companies. That should free the company up to invest in other key areas of the business. Renner is excited to be able to drive some of those programs, which are internally known as Business 2.0.

Speaking of bringing acquisitions together, Arris is still completing its integration of **Ruckus Wireless**. It's going to deploy a wireless network with Ruckus products all across its enterprise. "We've really enjoyed having the Ruckus brand in the company and have decided to leave pieces of it as an independent business unit and integrate some of the back office functions," Renner explained of the integration strategy.

While she's still getting acquainted to Arris, Renner is already excited about the company's ability to continue driving the interconnectivity of devices. Although it's not entirely surprising that interconnectivity has progressed so far, Renner noted that its important in everything from manufacturing facilities to family homes has been interesting to watch. "We are well positioned to be able to help integrate multiple devices in the home and improve that end use experience with all their different devices," Renner said.

Of course, that growth in interconnectivity has only spurred conversation around the security and privacy of end users. Renner noted that protections for those two pain points need to be built into the product, so it has to be "architected where customers and end users don't need to worry about the data going between their devices." That embedded security is the key.

Blockchain has become an area where Arris sees some organizational opportunity. Renner said it could be used to manage the serialization and traceability around Arris products as they move through the supply chain, through the distribution channels into service providers and then to the end user. The data being delivered from that could be leveraged to continuously improve the company's programs and products.

It has become more common to see women entering these executive roles in technology, but it's still far from the norm. Renner called herself extremely lucky to have had leadership that provided opportunities for her to stretch beyond what she thought herself capable of doing. "Young girls today entering the workforce and middle management leaders just need to continue to ask for what they want, challenge themselves and be confident that they can continue to do more," Renner said. — *Sara Winegardner*

**Tech Support:** **NAGRA** announced comprehensive support for **Android TV** with an end-to-end user experience ecosystem. OpenTV Signature Edition, NAGRA's OTT solution, now also features an Android TV Operator Tier solution. It is designed to maximize content value while also optimizing the experience. **Ooyala** announced it will provide extended support for the Interoperable Master Format with its Ooyala Flex Media Platform, a flexible content supply chain optimization platform. The company says the platform is the world's fastest growing media asset management and workflow automation solution, and it can significantly reduce costs and improve efficiency.

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