

Cablefax Daily™

Thursday — October 11, 2018

What the Industry Reads First

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WarnerMedia Now: AT&T Streaming Service to Come in 2019

2019 is shaping up to be the year of the streamers. An SEC filing from AT&T Wednesday revealed the company is planning a new streaming service to launch in 4Q2019. "This is another benefit of the AT&T-Time Warner merger, and we are committed to launching a compelling and competitive product that will serve as a complement to our existing businesses and help us to expand our reach by offering a new choice for entertainment with the WarnerMedia collection of films, television series, libraries, documentaries and animation loved by consumers around the world," the filing reads. Financial support for the product's launch is expected to come from a combination of "incremental efficiencies within WarnerMedia operations, consolidating resources from sub-scale D2C efforts, fallow library content and technology reuse." News of the filing broke as WarnerMedia CEO John Stankey was preparing to take the stage at the Vanity Fair New Establishment Summit. Of course, AT&T already has DirectTV Now as a direct-to-consumer offering, but the new service doesn't look like it'll be any sort of replacement. Instead, it'll build off of the recently-acquired Warner entertainment library, positioning itself as more of a rival of Netflix, Amazon Prime and the like. "Our service will start with HBO and the genre defining programming that viewers crave," Stankey said in an internal memo. "On top of that we will package content from Turner and Warner Bros with their deep brand connections that touch both diverse interests and mass audiences." Speaking at the an investor conference in September, Stankey was clear that when AT&T made its next direct-to-consumer play, it wouldn't be looking to recreate Netflix. "We need to think about what's unique and special at WarnerMedia and AT&T that we can bring to the table on a product that works for us," Stankey said, highlighting the importance of HBO in that move. "It carries very unique attributes for high quality, highly engaging scripted content, documentaries, some sports and a great library of movies. Still, you're going to need more about that, and more around that is probably going to come under other brands that are bundled together." The price point is one factor that remains unknown, and most likely will stay that way until the time of launch draws near. Stankey said at New Establishment Summit that the new service would be at a premium to that of a stand-alone HBO service. HBO Now is currently priced at \$14.99/month.

Charter Gets Another Extension: Charter was granted yet another extension by the NY PSC for detailing plans to



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exit the state. The MSO had sought a 60-day extension, but was instead granted 45 days—the third such extension for its six-month exit plan since the PSC rescinded its approval of the **Time Warner Cable** merger in July. It now has until December to file plans to leave the state. Charter also was given another 45 days to file a rehearing petition for the PSC’s revocation and compliance orders. The extension came after Dept of Public Service staff recommended only one further extension of time for resolution of negotiations, adding that any additional time allowed must either result in a settlement agreement being presented to the PSC or the cessation of settlement talks. Staff also recommended limiting the extension to 45 days vs 60. Charter said it was pleased “that the PSC has granted this extension so Charter can preserve its legal rights while we continue discussions.” The PSC order said the latest extension should not be viewed as “an indefinite grant of time” for discussions to continue between the two. “Many Upstate New Yorkers living in Charter’s franchise areas are understandably frustrated by the lack of modern communications infrastructure. The Compliance and Revocation Orders were designed to deal with very serious issues presented by Charter’s conduct related to the company’s network expansion,” the order said. The two have been in a dispute over whether Charter has met buildout requirements that were conditions of the Time Warner Cable acquisition.

Hurricane Michael Makes Landfall: It was wall-to-wall storm coverage on the news and weather networks Wednesday as Michael made landfall in the Florida Panhandle as a Category 4 hurricane. **MSNBC’s Lester Holt** was barricaded in a Panama City hotel with a mattress pushed up against the window. **Fox News** kept a graphic up during commercial breaks providing the latest details on the hurricane. At one point, Fox’s **Griff Jenkins** was reporting via iPhone from Alligator Point because of relay problems. **The Weather Channel** was live reporting during the storm, with **Jim Cantore** in Panama City and **Mike Bettes** in Apalachicola. **AccuWeather** video focused mainly on meteorologists tracking the storm from the studio. MVPDs were doing what they could to prepare for the storm. **Mediacom** expects to feel the impact in its system in the Panhandle as well as GA and NC as it tracks north. “Our priority for today is making sure our employees are in safe locations out of harm’s way. Our field operations team has a lot of experience with these types of natural disasters and is closely monitoring the storm in preparation for a response,” a rep said Wednesday. “In anticipation of some outages, we will be offering outdoor community WiFi hotspots free to the public in areas like Gulf Shores, AL, and Valdosta, GA, in the days following the storm.” **Comcast** had opened up 8K WiFi hotspots in Northern FL and Southern AL ahead of the storm. **WOW!** said it had dozens of fully fueled, portable generators staged throughout the Panama City area and Florida coast on standby. Power companies were warning Wednesday afternoon that it could be weeks in some areas before power is re-

Cablefax:

What’s Happening in October

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 Sara Winegardner • swinegardner@accessintel.com
 Mollie Cahillane • MCahillane@accessintel.com
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>> Most Influential Minorities Magazine

Cablefax’s annual Most Influential Minorities magazine, celebrates the men and women who are shaping the industry and opening doors for minorities across all areas of business.

>> Hispanic Heritage Month

This growing demo has a huge impact on every aspect of the industry. This series we’ll explore upcoming trends in the Hispanic marketplace, examine the latest research and look at what networks and distributors are doing to cater to this powerful segment.

>> CTHRA

Cablefax looks at the HR side of the business. What do the hiring trends and needs say about where cable is headed? Coverage will include HR organization CTHRA’s annual Symposium and awards.

>> Diversity Week

Cablefax will be on the ground in New York for all the Diversity Week happenings, including WICT’s Leadership Conference, NAMIC’s annual conference and The Walter Kaitz Annual Fundraising Dinner.

>> SCTE Cable-Tec Expo

Daily coverage from the Expo show floor along with a preshow special report. We’ll look at the technology and standards development that you need to know about right now. Our preshow will also highlight SCTE, WICT and Cablefax’s Woman in Technology award winner.

Events

Cablefax & NAMIC Diversity Breakfast
 October 16
 NYC

stored. Of course, power must be restored before video, phone and internet services can begin working again. The **FCC** has activated its disaster reporting system, with communications providers to have started providing outage reports as of 10am Wednesday (Oct 10).

Stock Hit: Cable stocks followed the market's dive Wednesday, with US stocks posting their biggest decline in more than six months. The **S&P 500** was down for its fifth consecutive day, while the **Dow** shed 800 points. **Charter** ended the day down 3.88%, while **Altice USA** was down 3.3% and **Comcast** dropped 3.27%. Also falling about 3.3% were **DISH** and **Cable One**. **AT&T**, which revealed new streaming plans, was down 1.94%, while **Verizon** fell 1.2%.

Vertical Views: Vertical content isn't going anywhere anytime soon, if **Snap** has anything to say about it. The company launched Snap Originals Wednesday, debuting serialized shows, scripted series and docuseries. Snap said that since the start of the year, the amount of time viewers spend engaging with its shows has tripled. The initial lineup includes six series while another six have been greenlit for production. For many of the shows, Snapchat users will be able to swipe up from an episode and interact with the objects and characters in that scene. On top of it all, Snap announced that **NBCU** extended its content production commitments through 2019 while **Viacom** has signed on to create 10 new Snap Originals. It will also syndicate at least 500 episodes of its network's shows for Snapchat audiences.

Disney Directs: *Aaron LaBerge* has been named evp and CTO of the recently formed **Disney Direct-To-Consumer and International (DTC)** segment. He will be the company's first CTO and will support innovation and drive strategic use and development of tech to power the business and deliver content to consumers around the world. LaBerge served as evp and CTO at **ESPN** since 2015, and from 2007 to 2013 he served as CEO of venture-funded consumer software and digital development company **Fanzter Inc.**, which he also co-founded.

Suburban Speed: **AT&T Fiber** has descended on Evansville, IN, making it the 72nd market to receive the ultra-fast internet. The move also prepares the Evansville area for the launch of 5G. AT&T Fiber now reaches at least 84 metro areas, adding 3mln locations in 2018. The company is working to bring the fiber network to parts of 12 additional metro areas by the end of the year.

Powering WOW!: **WOW!** is the latest to adopt **Espial's** Elevate video platform, using it to power its **WOW! Ultra** set-top box offering. Elevate provides service providers with a TVaaS solution, complete with cloud tools for their operations, product, marketing and engineering teams. Providers can deploy IPTV, OTT and cable services faster with low deployment risk and predictable costs. **WOW!**'s service area footprint includes about 3mln homes and businesses passed, covering more than 300 communities.

A Safer Internet: Organizations including **Microsoft**, **Facebook** and **AT&T** have joined together to form **Power of Zero**, a collaborative campaign focused on teaching kids how to be compassionate and inclusive online. The campaign will include learning materials developed by **Scholastic**. Power of Zero will officially launch in January.

Programming: **PGA of America**, **CBS** and **ESPN** reached an 11-year multimedia rights agreement for the PGA Championship. CBS, ESPN and **ESPN+** will combine to deliver more than 175 hours of live coverage across the championship. The PGA of America will retain the rights to PGA.com and produce web and mobile app experiences. The agreement, extending through 2030, extends CBS Sports' relationship with PGA to 40 consecutive years and 47 overall. ESPN and ESPN+ will greatly expand its viewing options for fans in pre-tournament and early rounds. -- **FS1** will premiere "Fair Game with Kristine Leahy" on Oct 22 at 5:30pm. The new 30-minute weekday sports show features host *Leahy* interviewing some of sports' biggest stars. -- **UPtv** is launching more than 500 hours of holiday-themed programming beginning Nov 1. The net will premiere seven new movies, 45 total films, and a "GILMORE the Merrier" "Gilmore Girls" marathon, hosted by star *Scott Patterson*, on Nov 19 at 3pm. The series will run for 153 hours straight and end on Nov 25 at midnight. The first premiere movie "The Christmas Switch" airs Nov 4. -- **Showtime** ordered a ten-ep second season of "Kidding," starring *Jim Carrey*. -- **A&E** is taking viewers inside the NC-based Word of Faith Fellowship Church in "The Devil Next Door," premiering Nov 27 at 10pm. The series will cover the abuse former members suffered at the hands of the Church as well as their efforts to convince other loved ones to break free.

People: **MTV**, **VH1** and **Logo** are welcoming back *Mike Greco*, who's coming on board as evp, content strategy and business planning. Greco spent 7 years at MTV during the 2000s before serving in leadership positions at **A&E**, **Lifetime** and **Discovery**. -- *Lois Norris* is joining the **SSIMWAVE** team as CFO, effective Oct 22. Lois brings 25 years of experience to the table, previously acting as CFO at **InvestorCOM**.



Awards Luncheon

November 15, 2018 | 11am - 2pm | 583 PARK Avenue, NY

We are inviting you to join in the festivities. Meet & mingle with your friends and colleagues as we honor the achievements of Cablefax's Most Powerful Women. Register at www.cablefaxwomen.com

Congratulations to all the 2018 Honorees!

- › **Cori Abraham**, Oxygen Media
- › **Tricia Alcamo**, Charter Communications
- › **Elizabeth Allan-Harrington**, Pop
- › **Adria Alpert Romm**, Discovery
- › **Lisa Gonzalez Anselmo**, Altice USA
- › **Rebecca Arbogast**, Comcast NBCUniversal
- › **Janice Arouh**, Entertainment Studios Networks
- › **Sarah Aubrey**, TNT - Turner Entertainment
- › **Bernadette Aulestia**, HBO
- › **Sarah Barnett**, BBC AMERICA
- › **Wendy Bass**, NBC Sports Group
- › **Molly Battin**, Turner
- › **Barbara Bekkedahl**, The Weather Channel
- › **Karen Bennett**, Cox Communications
- › **Nomi Bergman**, Advance Newshouse Partnership
- › **Carolyn Bernstein**, National Geographic
- › **Pamela Bertino**, Pop TV
- › **Frances Berwick**, NBCUniversal Cable Entertainment
- › **Tricia Betron**, ESPN
- › **Jamia Bigalow**, Fox Networks Group
- › **Catherine Bohigian**, Charter Communications
- › **Lisa Bonnell**, Comcast Corp.
- › **Val Boreland**, NBCUniversal
- › **Tamara Bowens**, Charter Communications
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- › **Kerry Brockhage**, NBCUniversal
- › **Elaine Frontain Bryant**, A+E Networks
- › **Karen Buchholz**, Comcast Corp.
- › **Dawn Callahan**, Boingo Wireless
- › **Mary Campbell**, Qurate Retail Group
- › **Ann Carlsen**, Carlsen Resources
- › **Jennifer Caserta**, AMC Networks
- › **Sherita Ceasar**, Comcast Cable
- › **Sofia Chang**, HBO
- › **Lynn Charytan**, Comcast Corp. and Comcast Cable
- › **Mary Collins**, Media Financial Management Association (MFM) & Broadcast Cable Credit Association (BCCA)
- › **Italia Commisso-Weinand**, Mediacom
- › **Lori Conkling**, NBCUniversal
- › **Norma Cordova**, Charter Communications
- › **Angela Courtin**, YouTube
- › **Jill Cress**, National Geographic
- › **Meeri Cunniff**, E! Entertainment
- › **Nancy Daniels**, Discovery & Factual
- › **Susanne Daniels**, YouTube
- › **Kristine Dankenbrink**, Comcast Corp.
- › **Debra Sharon Davis**, The Davis Communications Group
- › **Noopur Davis**, Comcast Cable
- › **Kelly Day**, Viacom
- › **Sandra Dewey**, TBS & TNT - Turner Entertainment Networks
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- › **Kim Dickson**, Spectrum Reach, Charter Communications
- › **Susanna Dinnage**, Animal Planet
- › **Kristin Dolan**, 605
- › **Jennifer Dorian**, Turner
- › **Amy Doyle**, MTV, VH1 and LOGO
- › **Christine Driessen**, ESPN
- › **Shannon Driver**, Discovery
- › **Stephanie Druley**, ESPN
- › **Nancy Dubuc**, VICE Media
- › **Rosalyn Durant**, ESPN
- › **Carol Eggert**, Comcast NBCUniversal
- › **Teresa Elder**, WOW! internet, tv & phone
- › **Mandy Esposito**, Altice USA
- › **Karen Etzkorn**, Qurate Retail Group
- › **Mirna Eusebio**, Altice USA
- › **Jessica Fang**, Fox Networks Group
- › **Kristine Faulkner**, Cox Communications
- › **Rita Ferro**, The Walt Disney Company
- › **Charlotte Field**, Charter Communications
- › **Kathleen Finch**, Discovery
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- › **Cindy Holland**, Netflix
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- › **Lisa Hsia**, Bravo & Oxygen Media
- › **Susette Hsiung**, Disney Channels Worldwide
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- > **Vicki Jones**, AT&T
- > **Dina Juliano**, NBCUniversal
- > **Georgia Juvelis**, AMC Networks
- > **Yvette Kanouff**, Cisco
- > **Nancy Kanter**, Disney Channels Worldwide
- > **Kristin Karp**, Hotwire Communications
- > **Kim Keever**, Cox Communications
- > **Kathy Kelly-Brown**, Comcast Cable and NBCUniversal
- > **Jennifer Khoury**, Comcast Corp.
- > **Kasia Kieli**, Discovery
- > **Cathy Kilstrom**, Comcast Cable
- > **Jill King**, Turner
- > **Kathryn Koles**, Comcast Cable
- > **Amy Kuessner**, Pluto TV
- > **Julie Laine**, Comcast Corp. and Comcast Cable
- > **Colleen Langner**, Cox Communications
- > **Tal Laufer**, ARRIS International
- > **Julie Laulis**, Cable ONE
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- > **Audrey Lee**, Starz
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- > **Nora Zimmert**, The Weather Channel

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Think about that for a minute...

Wag the Dog

Commentary by Steve Effros

Alphabet announced that it is shutting down Google+. Given the notable lack of success of that effort to compete with Facebook by creating its own “social platform,” Google’s parent didn’t really have to say anything. Google+ was clearly going away no matter what. But the formal declaration included some critically important additional information; Google had found a “bug” in its application program for Google+ that potentially exposed personal user information of over a half-million users to some of Google’s application partners.



The problem was found last March. Google announced it this week. The reasoning behind the delay was both business-obvious and legally precise. On the business side, memos shot back and forth noting that Facebook was right in the middle of the Cambridge Analytica mess at the time and Google didn’t want to get anywhere close to that PR disaster. Being hauled before Congress isn’t fun. Calls for regulatory oversight are almost sure to follow. And anyway, said Google, we found the “bug” that allowed all those partners to potentially see data about Google+ users “friends,” but there’s no evidence anyone else knew about or used the “bug” and we fixed it. So no harm, no foul. Oh, and this all happened before the stiff new EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) privacy rules went into effect that would probably now require an announcement within days of learning of the problem.

This one was, so far as we know, a “bug” that was fixed, not a “leak” or a “breach” or a “hack.” It could have been all those other things and third-party app developers may have used it, but there is no current evidence they did. The more interesting thing to me, however, is that in the future Google and anyone else will have to play by different rules, those written by the EU, and coincidentally,

the State of California, which now require more stringent disclosure rules than the federal government does.

That’s a harbinger of things to come. As I’ve noted before, with the Supreme Court now clearly set on a more “conservative” path in reading the Constitution, the irony may be that those who were seeking less regulation, less interference by the “feds,” are going to find themselves saddled with far more regulation from States and foreign countries! Like it or not, we have a global economy, and certainly data, the Internet and social networks are not only imbued with “interstate commerce,” they are involved in international commerce as well. As a result, they’re going to have no choice but to adhere to the stiffest set of regulations they are beholden to, not the most lax!

We’ve seen this play out before. The Texas regulations on schoolbook content negatively reverberated nationwide for years. The California emission controls affected how every car manufacturer makes their engines. The State’s population was simply too large to ignore its rules. Very big “tails” tend to affect the balance of the entire dog, and we are about to see what happens in a lot of different ways as the move toward defederalization continues, at least for a while.

I don’t think it will last long. There’s good reason to have generalized rules that apply to everyone, not state-by-state or country-by-country enforcement of rules that would inevitably assure that the strictest rules would prevail. At some point Congress is going to have to get back in the game and seek uniformity. Also, international agreements will have to be reached, and kept. Without them, the tail will wag the dog.

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.)

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