

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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AI Forum: FCC Chair Calls for Regulatory Restraint for Developing Tech

Artificial intelligence isn't a newfangled phrase. From sci-fi movies to IBM's Deep Blue chess computer, theories surrounding AI have been around since the 1960s. So why has it become such a talking point over the last two years and not when Deep Blue beat the Russian chess master *Kasparov* in 1997? The answer is in your pocket. "Normal people are experiencing the abilities of the AI technologies in their day-to-day life," Arizona State University professor *Subbarao Kambhampati* said at the inaugural FCC Forum on Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Friday. "It's both the fact that it reached a lot more people and the fact that essentially it helps us to deploy the technology, perceptual technology to each of us that wound up making a big difference in AI becoming so popular right now." FCC commish *Brendan Carr* pointed out the shift from printing out Mapquest directions to using the GPS on your phone or even using apps as dating tools. While these technologies are becoming more widespread, that doesn't mean it's time for government to play a major role. FCC chmn *Ajit Pai* said in his opening remarks that the government should view these technologies with restraint and allow them to develop organically. Kambhampati commented that while the government should not be regulating what kinds of technologies are developed, the FCC and other agencies have a role to play in ensuring the democratization of access to technologies. The focus should be in supporting good uses of AI and working to mitigate adverse effects by combating data bias, funding research and development and backing educational efforts. Microsoft director, technology policy, *Carolyn Nguyen* agreed, adding that for the world to harness the true potential of AI, it must be accessible, transparent and inclusive. Microsoft published a book that lays out the six principles it believes will make AI trustworthy, including fairness or lack of bias, inclusiveness and reliability. Fear of the negative effects of AI remains very real, and even kept MIT-IBM Watson AI Lab director *David Cox* and his team from using the term prior to this year, instead favoring machine learning. In these early stages, however, it's important for those developing AI and similar technologies to see the possibilities of it while self-regulating. "The goal for the near term is that AI is here to make us better, better versions of ourselves, to augment us and give us superpowers," Cox said. "I think the way to chart the path is we keep a key focus on asking how can AI work for us. How can it make us better, how can it make us less biased, how can we use it to make us better than we were natively?"

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Date Set for ACC Net: ESPN's ACC Network has a kickoff date—Aug 22. That'll give fans a week to locate it (or find out their MVPD isn't carrying it) before the linear net's first conference game—GA Tech at Clemson. ESPN is following the same playbook that it did for its **SEC Network**, which launched in August 2014, a couple weeks before its first games. SEC Net scored carriage with all the major distributors, save **Cablevision**, though some of those deals came at the eleventh hour. The Cablevision gap was remedied last year, with new owner **Altice USA** reaching a deal that included launching the channel in 2018 as well as a commitment to rollout ACC Network at launch to **Suddenlink** and **Optimum** subs. **Comcast** is already carrying the digital ACC Net component. ACC Network plans to have 1300 live events annually across its TV and digital offerings. "The strength of the season opening game between Georgia Tech and Clemson is indicative of the robust schedule and programming we have planned for ACC fans," ESPN pres/**Disney Media Nets** co-chair *James Pitaro* said. Fans were to get a tease of the net from a 30-second spot during the ACC Championship game Saturday on **ABC**. ESPN also launched GetACCN.com to spread the word.

Sprint Patent Victory: On Friday, the **Federal Circuit Appeals Court** upheld a jury's \$140mln verdict that **Time Warner Cable** infringed upon five **Sprint** patents in a 2-1 panel decision. **Charter**, which now owns Time Warner Cable, had no comment. The court rejected Time Warner Cable's argument that the jury was prejudiced by being told about Sprint's victory over **Vonage** in another patent dispute. The majority disagreed with TWC's claim that the Vonage-Sprint case was different enough that it should have been excluded, declaring the core allegations in both proceedings as the same. Judge *Haldane Mayer* dissented, saying he believes the verdict should be reversed and Sprint's patents found invalid.

Sticking to the Plan: AT&T is completely committed to the three-tiered **WarnerMedia** SVOD service coming next year, and looks prepared to cut off some of its media assets. At the company's Investor Day Thursday, AT&T CFO *John Stephens* said the company has been reviewing its balance sheet and is "looking for opportunities to monetize assets that are nonessential" to its current plans. Amongst those on the chopping block could be the company's "minority investments in things like **Sky México** or **Hulu** or a variety of other things." Proceeds from those sorts of sales would go towards paying down \$18bln of AT&T's debt by the end of 2019. WarnerMedia currently holds a 10% stake in Hulu, and its departure from the streaming service would leave **Disney** and **Comcast** (with 30%) as the only owners.

Alaska Quake: A **GCI** spokesperson said Friday that the operator was assessing damage following a 7.0

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WHERE WE'LL BE

1/8/19	CES in Vegas (Jan. 8 - 11)
1/22/19	NAPTE in Miami (Jan. 22 - 24)
1/28/19	ReelScreen Summit in New Orleans (Jan. 28 - 31)
1/29/19	TCA in Los Angeles (Jan. 29 - Feb. 13)
2/25/19	NCTC Winter Conference in Atlanta (Feb. 25 - 26)
3/8/19	SXSW Interactive in Austin (March 8-12)
3/19/19	CFX Roundtable at ACA
3/19/19	ACA Summit in DC (March 19-21)

magnitude earthquake near Anchorage. The operator reported that employees are safe and accounted for, encouraging customers to consider text messages or social media due to extremely high call volume. “Generally the network seems to be intact. There appears to be a great deal of damage to roads, highways and to many residential and business structures,” she said. Power outages also were an issue in damage assessments. Stores in Anchorage, Wasilla, Palmer, Seward, Kodiak and Homer all closed Friday.

Gather Together: All that holiday programming seems to be paying off. **Hallmark Channel’s** seven original movie premieres Thanksgiving week averaged 3.8mln viewers and 715K women 25-54, earning the net the title as highest-rated and most-watched cable net for the fourth consecutive week among W18-49 and W25-54. The net counted for 10 of the top 30 cable programs of the week. **UPtv** brought back its “Gilmore Girls” holiday marathon for a third year Thanksgiving week, and it set ratings highs. It was UPtv’s strongest week of 2018 in W18-49, W25-54, P18-49 and P25-54 with the stunt reaching over 4.9mln. Initially, UP thought “GILMORE the Merrier” would be a one-time stunt, tied to the launch of new Gilmore programming on **Netflix**. “The second year we brought it back, we thought it doesn’t have that heat around the movie releases any more, but let’s just see,” said evp, gm *Amy Winter*. “Sure enough. Everybody came back.” In its third year, the marathon’s audience only slid 10% vs 2017. One of ways to keep holiday shows front and center is with a big social push. UPtv had actor *Scott Patterson* (Luke Danes) hosting the bingeathon, with social media trivia contests, hourly prizes and a watch-and-win sweeps. Over at Hallmark, Sunday’s original movie “A Shoe Addict’s Christmas” was the most-watched cable non-football program of the week in total viewers, behind only **AMC’s** “The Walking Dead” (3.49mln vs 3.32mln). Hallmark gave it a big social push, with the flick starring Candace Cameron Bure ranking as the #1 most-social original movie premiere of the holiday season-to-date (10-22/11-25)—not to mention the second most-watched original movie premiere in network history among W18-34. The ranking is based on the **Nielsen Social Original Movie Ranker** (10/22-11/25/18), which looks at total interactions on **Facebook, Instagram** and **Twitter**. It’s worth noting that despite holiday buzz for **Hallmark Movies & Mysteries** (it was a top 10 most-watched cable net for the week among households) thanks to Thanksgiving premieres, Crown Media Family Networks adding new net **Hallmark Drama** to its Christmas list. “Right now, Hallmark Drama will continue with dramatic series and movies. It has not entered the holiday space yet, and I’m not really sure it will ultimately,” pres/CEO *Bill Abbott* told **Cablefax**.

November Ratings: Perhaps all that holiday TV viewing is to balance out all the news viewers watched in November. **ESPN** was the top cable network in prime for November, with 3.12mln total viewers, but **Fox News** was runner-up (2.44mln) followed by holiday heavyweight Hallmark (2.15mln), according to Nielsen data. November was an election month, which helped Fox News nab its 29th consecutive month as the most-watched basic cable network in total day. Fox’s 1.48mln total viewers was up 3% over November 2017. It’s way out ahead of its competitors, but they also saw nice gains in November. **MSNBC** averaged 1.02mln viewers in total day for November, a 9% uptick from the same period last year. **CNN’s** 761K total viewer average for November is up 10%.

WICT LEAs: Kudos to **WICT So Cal** pres *Ellen Schned* and all the 2018 LEA Awards honorees, who gathered in Beverly Hills Thursday to celebrate female leadership—and, as **Turner** evp, original programming and LEA honoree *Sarah Aubrey* put it, break bread with some “formidable, formidable bad asses” being recognized. “Bottom line,” noted Schned. “We’re honoring the best of the best.” *Jamia Bigalow*, svp, distribution marketing at **Fox Networks Group**, said her “smart and strategic colleagues... make me feel prepared for whatever lies ahead” as the **Fox-Disney** merger nears closing. “While I don’t know where my next chapter will take me, one thing I know for sure: Even though it might not always be easy to be a female leader in the workplace, it is a path that I embrace,” she said. “I commit to being the best support system I can for other women and nurturing the next generation of women executives.” Similarly, *Rhonda Crichlow*, evp & Chief Diversity Officer at **Charter Communications**, revealed her “strong desire and ... deep commitment to make a conscious effort to create a journey for those around me to achieve their greatest potential.” She thanked her mother, “who instilled in me the drive to achieve all that I have accomplished in my life and played such a pivotal role developing the person who stands before you today.” *Amy Introcaso Davis*, evp, development and production at **E! Entertainment**, said she has come to appreciate both good and bad luck. “I believe it’s how we deal with both of these that make us effective leaders,” she said, urging attendees to “honor those unlucky moments, those unsung times where the show you loved just didn’t work, you lost the tough negotiation or you didn’t get the promotion that you wanted.” It’s those times that let you “capitalize on the luck when it inevitably arrives,” she said. **Hello Sunshine** CEO *Sarah Harden* noted that before she joined the *Reese Witherspoon*-backed production company, she had never reported to a woman and thanked the men who mentored her in the past. “These men were not only very decent to me, but they used their power to get me into board rooms,”

she said. "I wouldn't be here without their advocacy." As for Aubrey, she urged women to seek out female advocates as "queens supporting queens... A cosmic shift happens when you look up and realize that your friend is here." The event closed with The Supremes co-founder *Mary Wilson* doing a little cappella, before which she declared, "Girls, we women have come a long, long way... Dreams do come true, and you've got to dare to dream to make those dreams come true."

Brag Worthy: Thursday night's 13-10 Cowboys win over the Saints goes down as the highest-rated Thursday Night Football game since the package's creation in 2014. It delivered a 14.6/25 rating in metered markets for **Fox** and **NFL Network**, it's 36% higher than 2017's week 13 Dallas-Washington game, according to Nielsen data. -- **Bravo's** "Dirty John" is the net's most-watched scripted telecast, with the premiere drawing a combined 3.8mln total viewers in L+3 across all platforms and airings (including Bravo, **USA, E!** & **Oxygen** premiere night encores). The limited series debut Nov 25, though it could also be viewed 10 days earlier via VOD, **YouTube**, BravoTV.com and the Bravo Now app. It notched 530K views through those measures and became Bravo's most-streamed series launch ever.

Cablefax Dashboard

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Up Ahead

- Dec 4:** Cablefax [People to Watch Luncheon](#)
- Dec 6:** The [TV of Tomorrow Show](#), NYC
- Dec 7:** Cablefax [Digital & Tech Awards](#)
- Jan 7-11:** [CES 2019](#); Las Vegas, NV
- Jan 22-24:** [NATPE Miami](#)
- Jan 28-31:** [Realscreen Summit](#); New Orleans, LA
- February 25-26:** [NCTC Winter Educational Conference](#); Atlanta, GA

Research

- > By 2020, 60% of the global population (4.8bln) will be internet users, with more than 28bln devices and connections online.
- > Nearly half of all devices and connections will be video capable, which will account for 82% of all IP traffic.
- > IoT devices will account for over 50% of total global devices and connections thanks to the rise of consumer smart devices.

(Source: [Cisco's Visual Networking Index](#))

Quotable

"I think you should always be very fearful of your competition, but you shouldn't let fear drive it. I think the big thing that, what I learned over the last 20 years, focusing on technology, I think it's all about, first you really have to identify who are your customers, and I think that so many companies always forget who their customers are. And once you identify your customers, you have to be maniacally focused on serving those customers the best."
- **Former Snap Inc. Chief Strategy Officer Imran Khan** at **CNBC's inaugural technology event, East Tech West**, in Nansha, Guangzhou

Cablefax: What's Happening in December

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Augmented & Virtual Reality

As the industry prepares yet again for CES, we'll take a look at the latest developments around augmented and virtual reality—including an honest look at where the opportunities (and pitfalls) could be hiding for distributors, programmers and vendors.

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Awards	Events
Digital Awards Deadline: Dec. 7 Final Deadline: Dec. 14	People to Watch Dec. 4 Yale Club, NYC
Top Lawyers Deadline: Dec. 14	