

Cablefax Daily™

Thursday — January 10, 2019

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 30 / No. 006

10G Talk: Cable Prepared to Deliver Next Broadband Leap

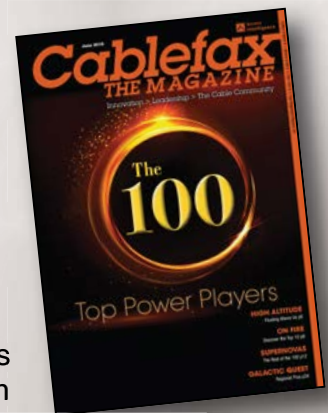
Cable providers had plenty to be proud of in the past year, rolling out gigabit speeds to 80% of homes, but the industry is proving that it's not content with standing still by introducing a 10G broadband initiative. And no, cable didn't come to that name just by doubling 5G. At a breakfast panel at CES Wednesday morning, **NCTA** pres/CEO *Michael Powell* said the name shows a drive to deliver 10G speeds to consumers around the globe. It will live side-by-side with 5G and WiFi to support future tech needs while delivering faster speeds. Sounds like a lofty goal, but most of the innovation battle has already been fought on this front. "Nothing new has to be invented," **CableLabs** pres/CEO *Phil McKinney* said. "Everything has been specified, everything has been designed, everything has been proven. The technical risk is near zero." **Comcast** CTO *Tony Werner* agreed, saying that while there's still some work to be done, testing and existing tech have shown that this will work without a doubt. And it could be coming sooner than you think. McKinney said early field trials will arrive in 2020. Following that, everything will be driven by market demand and the desire for the rollout. But with gigabit and 5G service still being rolled out through 2019, why talk 10G now? It's all about bringing the innovations littering the CES show floor to residential and business customers. "I somewhat joke that the Star Trek holodeck is coming," **Cox Communications** pres *Pat Esser* said. "But it's going to take a 10G network to deliver that to people's homes." While the industry's best are on board with the 10G initiative, does Washington understand the need to invest in the step forward? "Policy leaders recognize that the destiny of our economy and the destiny of our future is heavily rooted in how successful we are as a technological empire, as an information economy," Powell said. There could be some improvement, as Powell doesn't see policymakers recognizing that technology and innovation are a virtuous circle. He said too much focus is put on big names like **Amazon** and **Google** rather than the idea that tech stimulates the growth of critical infrastructure, allowing for more innovation. "There is only one critical infrastructure in the whole country that isn't in tatters and it's our networks," Powell said.

DTC at CES: The conversation around direct-to-consumer and SVOD services used to be one of opportunity. Now, it's one of immense competition, and new entrants will need to fight off other platforms while building their own subscriber base. "What they're going to find is it is very difficult to drive subscriber momentum and growth and also to scale in



Who Deserves to Rank Among Cablefax's Annual Top Power Players?

The Cablefax 100 salutes the most influential executives whose leadership continues to take the industry to new heights. We will rank the top professionals in the media, cable & broadband industry and publish the list in the June edition of Cablefax: The Magazine.



It's free to enter - but you must submit your entries by January 25!

Enter at www.Cablefax100.com | Questions: Mary-Lou French at mfrench@accessintel.com

A Letter from the Publisher

Dear Cablefax Readers:

Thank you for being a loyal Cablefax Daily subscriber, attending our premier events and interacting with our team. What an incredible time to be part of this unique industry that embraces its own legacy while always looking to the future.

We're making several exciting changes to help you navigate this changing landscape, connect with the top players—and, of course, deliver the vital information you need to be successful in media, content and broadband.

Key to this initiative is enhancing the focus of our awards and recognition programs to make them more efficient and impactful.

First, we have migrated all our awards to utilize the same platform, making it easier for you to nominate your executives and enter your submissions. In addition, we are launching the Cablefax People Awards and integrating several of our beloved award recognition programs including: Top Lawyers, Sales Hall of Fame, People to Watch and other individual categories.

On the event side, Cablefax is planning three major awards events revolving around leadership, marketing and female empowerment.

- **June 2019 – A Celebration of Leadership**

This dinner gala at the prestigious Yale Club in NYC will start with mentoring sessions to connect our Cablefax 100 honorees with our People to Watch list of up-and-coming executives. That will be followed by cocktails and a dinner celebration that also includes recognition of Cablefax's Top Ops and other special awards recognizing executive leadership.

- **October 2019 – The FAXIES. Bigger. Better. Faxier...**

We've expanded the Faxies to cover the intersection of marketing, PR and content as distributors, programmers and vendors dazzle consumers with better experiences, endless content diversity and a dizzying array of entertainment options. This celebration lunch will bring together all the puzzle pieces and recognize the best people and initiatives making a huge impact on American culture.

- **November 2019 – The Most Powerful Women**

This signature Cablefax event always draws an elite crowd of senior-level female execs across disciplines from distributors, programmers and technology—and it's the perfect opportunity to catch up with old friends, make new connections and celebrate the continued advancement of women throughout the TV, cable, broadband and media universe.

We will also host the Cablefax Leaders Retreat, an exclusive gathering of C-level executives in Key Largo, FL, at the Ocean Reef Club on April 29-30. This 2-day event combining off-the-record roundtable discussions with offsite activities and private meetings is like nothing you've ever experienced. Our 2019 Cablefax Leaders Retreat will expand on the success of our 2018 gathering, with more intense discussions, more vital takeaways and insights for you to take back to the office and use to hone your company's strategic direction.

Meanwhile, our editors are gearing up for another exciting year of coverage. Look for new features and surprises within the pages of Cablefax Daily, as well as a new Spring edition of Cablefax: The Magazine recognizing the best work cultures in media, along with some of the most innovative people contributing to these companies' success. And 2019 will bring a bevy of new features to the Cablefax.com website, enhancing all aspects of this important resource.

I'm personally looking forward to an incredible 2019, and there's no doubt that the innovative minds of this industry will continue to astound consumers, forge meaningful new partnerships and push the envelope of what's possible in media, content and broadband.

Here's to you and a fabulous 2019!

Sincerely,



Michael Grebb
Publisher, Cablefax

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this business as quickly as they're going to need to take a leading position," **Hulu** CMO *Kelly Campbell* said at a CES panel Wednesday. At Hulu, they're focusing on three words: choice, flexibility and control. That means not only drawing customers in, but making sure they can customize their experience and easily find new content they'll love. "Fundamentally, what it's about at **YouTube** is this notion of a personal primetime," YouTube chief product officer *Neal Mohan* said. "The recommendations that we should give to you should really speak to you." **Discovery Networks** DTC CEO *Peter Faricy* said that the programmer is relentlessly working on customer service and "superserving the superfan." With the average customer only being able to afford subscribing to a few services, ad-supported VOD services have a unique opportunity to complement SVOD content. **Tubi** founder/CEO *Farhad Massoudi* pointed to SVOD services' continued investment in original content as a move that draws subscribers in, but leads to shrinking libraries. AVOD services can fill in those gaps for consumers without the change to spare for yet another subscription fee.

Trump Address: Nielsen numbers have **Fox News** raking in the most viewers among cable nets for President *Trump's* address and the Democrats response Tuesday. For 9-9:30pm ET, Fox News averaged 8.044mln total viewers, more than **MSNBC** (4.24mln) and **CNN** (3.57mln) combined. It looks like Fox News also squeaked past broadcasters. With Nielsen and **CBS** in a contract dispute, no numbers were released for CBS. But an industry source put CBS at 8.033 viewers for the half hour. **NBC** notched 7.03mln, and **ABC** averaged 5.8mln viewers. CNN said its digital coverage reached 24mln cross-platform unique visitors with 1.4mln live video starts.

Wicker in the Senate: Sen *Roger Wicker* (R-MS) was elected as **Senate Commerce** chmn. Wicker, who previously headed the committee's Communications and Tech subcommittee, replaces *John Thune* (R-SD), who served as chair for four years. Thune will continue to serve as a member of the committee, but couldn't serve again as chmn as he's been elected as Majority Whip for the 116th Congress. Things to know about Wicker? He led a group of bipartisan senator last year in successfully pushing the FCC for more time in the challenge process for the map of eligible areas for Mobility Fund Phase II support. He repeatedly raised concerns over map accuracy, with the agency announcing in December that it will be investigating whether one or more major carriers violated auction rules and submitted incorrect info. Wicker supports a unified approach to data privacy and was one of the bipartisan sponsors of the SpectrumNow Act, aimed at funding spectrum research and identifying best practices.

CES Notebook, Day 2: Content companies had plenty to say about 5G at **CES**, from **Disney Studios'** 5G deal with **Verizon** to **Discovery** CEO *David Zaslav* hyping the potential of its lifestyle programming on 5G mobile networks. Cable's 10G announcement also saw some programming love. "If there's two takeaways from walking the floor..."

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DR. FRANK LUNTZ
 National Pollster

there's a tremendous amount of activity around more broadband capability, typically called 5G," an alternative to the fixed cable modem, **Viacom** CEO *Bob Bakish* said in a **CNBC** interview from CES Wednesday. "Something less talked about is what the cable guys are doing, which is 10G—their next generation to go from 1 Gig to 10. All that bandwidth coming is going to have to get supplied." His other takeaway: video is coming to cars. "It's the last bastion of video-free time, and it's coming and that's great for us." -- **CTA** announced it will invest \$10mln in venture firms and funds focused on women, people of color and other underrepresented startups and entrepreneurs. CEO Gary Shapiro said it's another tool to help promote diversity in tech.

Sprint/T-Mobile Opposition: **WISPA**, the Wireless Internet Service Providers Assn, and two rural wireless carriers—**United Wireless** of Kansas and Pennsylvania-based **Indigo Wireless**—have joined a group opposing the **Sprint/T-Mobile** merger. The **4Competition Coalition**, which counts **DISH**, **Public Knowledge** and **C Spire** among its 18 members, was formed to speak out against the proposed deal. The **FCC's** review of the deal is currently paused because of the partial government shutdown.

Done Deal: **Scripps** completed a new multi-year affiliation agreement with **NBC**. The deal covers **WGBA** in Green Bay, WI, **WTMJ** in Milwaukee, **KJRH** in Tulsa, OK, **WPTV** in West Palm Beach, FL, and **KSHB** in Kansas City, MO.

Basic Ads: **ESPN** came out on top in the 2018 **Beta Research** Ad Exec Study, with 53% of participating ad executives planning to increase ad spending on the net in the next 12 months, and 72% awarding **ESPN/ABC Sports** with a 4-5 rating on providing creative/innovative multi-platform opportunities on a 5-point scale. **HGTV** saw 50% of respondents planning to increase ad spending, followed closely by **Food Network** with 47%. **Discovery Networks** earned a 67% 4-5 rating for multi-platform opportunities, tied with **Viacom** also at 67%. On the social side, **E! Entertainment** came in top with 68% of respondents awarding it a 4-5 rating on increasing viewer engagement through social media. **ESPN/ABC Sports** and **Viacom** both came in a close second with 66%. However, the overall winner may be **HGTV**, with 87% of respondents giving the net a 4-5 rating when it comes to offering a desirable programming environment in which to advertise, followed by **Food Network** at 85% and **ESPN** at 83%. The data comes from responses from 225 advertising media professionals and measured 42 basic cable nets and the four major broadcast nets.

Showy Space: **Showtime Networks** announced the official opening of the company's new 50K sq-ft West Coast headquarters in West Hollywood. The three-story space has interactive meeting areas, a central social hub cafe, new workspaces for employees and a state-of-the-art screening room. -- Speaking of showy spaces, check out *Philly.com's* [inside look](#) at the new **Comcast** Technology Center.

Programming: The Force is still strong with **Disney**, as **Disney Channel** ordered Season 2 of the animated series "Star Wars Resistance" for a fall 2019 premiere. -- "Lost Gold" premieres on **Travel Channel** Jan 14, 10pm. -- Bada bing! **HBO** will celebrate the 20th anniversary of "The Sopranos" with a marathon of the show's final season Thursday kicking off at noon on **HBO2**. Each ep of the series is currently available on HBO NOW and HBO GO. -- "Barrett-Jackson Live" will kick off Jan 15 at 6pm for the first time on the **MotorTrend** App and Motor Trend TV. It will continue on MotorTrend Jan 16 and 17 at 6pm and Jan 18 at 4pm, before moving over to **Discovery** on Jan 19 with live coverage from 3pm-8pm. -- **USA** dropped the premiere episode of "Temptation Island" a week early. The ep is now available to stream on USA on Demand, the USA app, the USA website and **YouTube** ahead of the linear debut Jan 15 at 10pm.

Board Appointments: **WICT** announced the members of its 2019 global board of directors to kick off the new year. **Charter's** *Marva Johnson* enters her second year as chair and *Sandy Howe* of **Technetix** was elected vice-chair. *Catherine Bohigian* of Charter and *Jen Neal* of **E! Entertainment** were both elevated to executive committee.-- **Disney** govt relations vp *Bill Bailey* has joined **The Media Institute's** board of trustees. He replaces Disney govt relations svp *Richard Bates*, who had served on the board since 2010.

People: **TripleLift** tapped *Andrew Eifler* as its new svp of product. He will be responsible for the company's expansion beyond native programmatic into the OTT marketplace. He comes over from **AppNexus**, a **Xandr** company, where he served as vp of product management. -- **Synamedia** named *Julien Signes* as svp/gm of its video processing unit. Signes served as CEO of **Envivio**, which he founded in 2000.

Editor's Note: What makes your organization a top place to work in the industry? We're shining a light on innovative employers making waves in areas such a corporate wellness and recruiting. **Cablefax: The Magazine's** inaugural [Work Culture List](#) also will look at vendors and partners that enhance the work environment. It's free to nominate a company, but you must do so by Jan 16.

Think about that for a minute...

The Bleeding Edge

Commentary by Steve Effros



I'm a bit conflicted about this week's column. I've been chronicling my switch from Verizon's FiOS back to Cox's bundled services here in Fairfax County, just outside of DC. I was, and still am very impressed with Cox, both as to its management and workforce as well as the broadband and cable service I'm getting. But you may notice that I have left one thing out of that list; the phone service. Unfortunately, it's not up to snuff, and I have to say so because it suggests a lesson we all have to learn.

Years ago, I switched from Cox to Verizon to see their new navigation system. I didn't care about "fiber," digital is digital. But the one thing Cox couldn't match, and what I was most focused on, was navigation capabilities. Since Verizon had new digital boxes and Cox had old ones, there was no question that FiOS was "out front" at the time.

Cox finally caught up. I know CEO Pat Esser was frustrated for years that he couldn't get the old boxes to learn new tricks, but Cox finally moved onto the Comcast Xfinity platform and that's all it took for me to switch back. It's great. In the process I also switched my broadband service to Cox's Panoramic offering, which guarantees full WiFi reception around the house. It, too, has operated flawlessly.

I had two telephone numbers, one for "home" and one for "business." This is where things started to go awry. To begin with, while one line was included at a very reasonable price within the "triple-play," the second line came at an absurd price; \$49 per month! It worked fine, for a while, but since most of the "business" calls I get these days are from "Police Benevolent Association" folks asking me to give them

money, I decided enough was enough. I dropped the second line, added a little box that connects directly to a Google Voice number from my broadband modem, and saved almost \$600 a year! Google Voice is free. It, too, has worked flawlessly.

Unfortunately I can't say the same about the Cox dedicated VoIP line I still have. About once every 10 days I lose dial tone. I just get a "fast busy" signal. Cox clearly knows there's a problem because they tell you on their website to reboot your modem and that should take care of it. It does, except until you happen to pick up your phone you don't know it has happened and meanwhile anyone trying to call you just immediately gets dropped into voicemail! They can't get through. Not good. Meanwhile, same modem, same wires, same phone, the Google Voice line works fine. Then there's the matter of trying to make calls and immediately getting a busy signal. Hang up, redial, and it goes through. Happens way too often. Again, not good. The level 1,2 and 3 techs know me by my first name. They've been out to the house twice, put in new firmware, new modems, "reprovisioned" the service at least twice. Nada. If I could easily save my home number of 40 years and port it to Google Voice I'd do it in a heartbeat!

Bottom line; they say they don't know what's wrong, and they don't know how to fix it. I was told that a "new platform" was initiated around the same time all this trouble started. I'm guessing that Cox moved from the "leading edge" of phone technology to the "bleeding edge." Beware.

Steve

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(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.)

Cablefax: What's Happening... January

Cablefax Daily Digital Edition: www.cablefax.com/daily • Online Product Listing: www.cablefax.com/advertise

JANUARY

CES

Cablefax will cover the largest consumer technology show in the world, previewing the hottest technologies and coolest gadgets across the broadband and video landscape.

Programming Trends

January is a busy month for programmers with NATPE, Realscreen and the Golden Globes all competing for attention. Our special coverage will examine the trends shaping up for the 2019 TV season.

Winter TCA

Cablefax will cover executive sessions and programming developments at this bi-annual gathering of TV critics.

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AWARDS:

Awards

Work Culture List

Nomination
Deadline:
January 16

Cablefax 100
Nomination
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January 25