

# Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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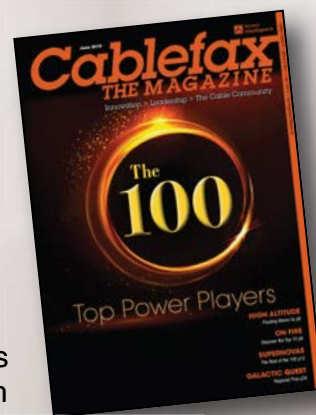
## 5 Questions: Nat Geo's Carolyn Bernstein on Programming Trends

Nat Geo's upcoming series "Valley of the Boom" dives into the insanity behind Silicon Valley and reflects the priority for net: technology and innovation. Cablefax caught up with Carolyn Bernstein, evp, head of global scripted development and production on the new series and all things programming. **What was the inspiration behind Valley of the Boom and how was it developed?** We all in the modern day are completely technology obsessed and dependent, but I think it's important to understand where all these devices we rely on come from, to understand how we got to where we are today. It's a way to understand the world we're living in right now by going back about 20 years. **Do you see these kinds of hybrid series as part of a larger programming trend?** I think we felt like that to tell this particular story it was a really great opportunity to tell not just the scripted drama version of the story, but also have their real-life counterparts who now have all this perspective commenting on, looking back on and reflecting on what's happening in the story as it progresses. I think it makes a lot of sense for this particular project, we're not looking at it at Nat Geo as a trend, but definitely as an interesting, new storytelling possibility when the narrative asks for it. **Is Valley of the Boom part of a larger programming strategy for Nat Geo?** Technology and innovation are two important categories for us, we also really love telling more contemporary stories. In our scripted-drama strategy, "Genius" is our flagship series. This was such a great opportunity that feels very much in our wheelhouse, but in a very contemporary way. We're always trying to find stories that help us better understand the world we live in today, and this feels like a story that is incredibly relevant to our lives. What better way to understand where we are today than to look at how it all started? It feels very Nat Geo to us, but the execution of the show is as fun and provocative and disruptive as the late-90s in Silicon Valley were. **As Nat Geo moves over to Disney, do you get any sense of if things will be changing in terms of your programming strategy?** I think in terms of strategy, no. But we are hopeful that there will be more storytelling opportunities for us, whether that's increased original programming opportunities for us on the channel or one of the Disney-owned platforms or both. What we've been hearing is keep doing what you're doing, but maybe even do more of it. **What's next for Nat Geo?** On the scripted side, we have "The Hot Zone" from Ridley Scott's production company, and that's going to be premiering this spring, and it's a six-hour scientific-suspense thriller. It's a really exciting



## 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](http://www.Cablefax100.com) | Questions: Mary-Lou French at [mfrench@accessintel.com](mailto:mfrench@accessintel.com)

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suspenseful true story with science and a woman scientist at the very center of the action. It couldn't be more Nat Geo.

**Retrans Ruckus:** The largest New Year retrans blackout, **Charter-Tribune**, ended in the early hours of Friday morning, but more skirmishes continue to pop up. The latest had **DISH** subs lose **Sarkes Tarzian** stations in Reno, NV, and Chattanooga, TN, Thursday night. DISH's messaging includes info on how eligible customers can drop local channels and save \$12/month. It's also offering up free digital over-the-air antennas. Sarkes Tarzian is telling viewers that the broadcast programming is available on DISH rivals, such as **Comcast, DirecTV** and OTT services. As for Charter and Tribune, mum's the word on what finally brought the nine-day blackout to a close, with 33 stations and **WGN America** back on the Spectrum lineup. The **NFL** playoffs, which continue over the weekend, likely played a role in ending the stalemate. Other blackouts continue. DirecTV lost a couple stations Monday, including **Independent Communications' KTTW**. No word on how long it could go. After all, KTTW has been dark on **Mediacom** since Oct 15, 2016. Meanwhile, **Nexstar** stations that came down from **TDS'** lineup on Dec 31 are still off. It is the first time TDS has gone down with a major affiliate station. The operator has encouraged customers to make formal complaints about retransmission rate hikes at the **FCC**. But with the partial government shutdown underway, the FCC's ECFS isn't updating to show how many have been filed.

**Read My Lips:** **Fox** made it clear that it doesn't plan to bid for the 22 RSNs **Disney** must sell as a condition for acquiring Fox entertainment assets. "In connection with these preliminary discussions, Fox confirms that it does not intend to bid for any of the Fox regional sports networks that Disney (or any entity operating on its behalf) may sell as required by the consent decree with the US Department of Justice," the company said in a regulatory filing Friday.

**Emergency Briefing Request:** Most **FCC** operations have been suspended because of the partial government shutdown, but that's not stopping new **House Commerce** chmn **Frank Pallone** (D-NJ) from calling on the agency to explain why it hasn't ended "wireless carriers' unauthorized disclosure of consumers' real-time location data." Pallone wants an emergency briefing Monday with chmn **Ajit Pai** or a designate. The request comes after **Motherboard reported** Tuesday that **T-Mobile, AT&T** and **Sprint** were selling their customers' phone location data, with a bounty hunter able to find a phone for the pub using the black market.

**On to the Next:** **Sen John Thune** (R-SD) will serve as chmn of the Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation and the Internet. Thune, the outgoing chmn of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, was selected by Commerce Committee incoming chmn sen **Roger Wicker** (R-MS). "We made significant progress in helping to make 5G internet a reality during my chairmanship, something I will continue to push for in my new role as

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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)

chairman of this important subcommittee,” Thune said in a statement. “I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate and with the administration and local leaders to continue to encourage 5G deployment, along with a better quality of rural broadband throughout South Dakota and across the region.”

**Rumor Mill:** Talk renewing for a **CBS-Viacom** merger isn't the only deal chatter. *The Information* reported Friday that **Viacom** is eyeing ad-supported streaming service **Tubi TV**. Tubi features free movie and TV titles from more than 200 titles and is available via **Comcast, Roku, Amazon Fire TV, Apple TV, Chromecast** and other platforms. The pub said Tubi, partly owned by **MGM** and **Lionsgate**, would likely run around \$300mln, according to a source.

**Programming:** **MSG Networks** premiered “Red Storm Report” on Friday at 7:30pm. The weekly 10-episode series follows the **St. John's** men's and women's basketball teams. -- **Acorn TV** announced its Feb slate of programming, with “Delicious” Series 3 kicking things off on Feb 11. Dutch drama series “The Oldenheim Twelve” premieres Feb 18, and British crime drama “London Kills” is available Feb 25. -- **Game Show Network** will premiere “Common Knowledge” on Jan 14 at 5:30pm. It will be hosted by *Joey Fatone* of \*NSYNC and “My Big Fat Greek Wedding” fame. -- “American Chopper” returns to **Discovery** on Feb 12 at 10pm.

## Cablefax Dashboard

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### Up Ahead

- Jan 16:** [The Work Culture List](#) Nomination Deadline
- Jan 22-24:** [NATPE Miami](#)
- Jan 25:** [Cablefax 100](#) Nominations Due
- Jan 28-31:** [Realscreen Summit](#), New Orleans, LA
- February 25-26:** [NCTC Winter Educational Conference](#), Atlanta
- March 8-17:** [SXSW 2019](#); Austin, TX

### Research

- > In the first three days of CES (Jan 7-9), more than 223K devices were detected across the convention's venues.
- > Total WiFi traffic rose to 3.55 terabytes while total internet traffic skyrocketed to 29.33 TB.
- > Peak download speeds reached 1.55Gbps while peak upload speeds hit 970Mbps.
- > The average session time per device was 2.81 hours.

(Source: [Cox Communications](#))

### Quotable

“It's not 5G or 10 Gig. It's 5G and 10 Gig, but also WiFi and low power networks and gateways in the home and businesses. A wireless network is only as valuable, as powerful, as the robust broadband network that connects it. Wireless is wireline. All you're doing is jumping to an access point or antenna to get to a wireline network as quickly as possible...This is not a battle of 5G and 10 Gig. If you're trying to roll out a wireless 5G network, you need us deploying a 10 Gig network to make it more robust in the longer term.”

– **Cox pres Pat Esser speaking on 10G at CES 2019**

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