

Cablefax Daily™

Tuesday — March 26, 2019

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 30 / No. 057

Get Smart: Charter, US Ignite Select St Pete as Smart Gigabit Community

With gigabit speeds rolled out across its footprint, **Charter's** taking the next logical step and getting into the smart city game. On Monday, smart city nonprofit **US Ignite** announced that it had joined with Charter Spectrum to select St Petersburg, FL, as a Smart Gigabit Community. It's the first partnership between the two, with the work focusing on the downtown area dubbed the "St Petersburg Innovation District." What's significant here is that Charter isn't just the connectivity provider as it is bringing in device companies, sensor companies, IoT companies, software platform companies, etc to create an overall solution. "There are a lot of cities that use our connectivity today for smart city application. Some of those we know; some of those they just do," said *Satya Parimi*, GVP, enterprise data products for **Spectrum Enterprise**. "Now we're saying, 'we'll help you leverage the connectivity options you have, but for this to really move forward, we're true partners bringing in the right mix of other companies needed to make this happen.'" While the network capabilities are impressive, Charter's Spectrum Enterprise unit is showing how it can integrate so a city doesn't have to work with dozens of vendors for one smart application. Spectrum Enterprises is talking to a few other cities and has responded to RFPs, but St Pete is the first it is publicly announcing and is the furthest along, according to Parimi. One of the takeaways from an **NCTA**-released whitepaper this past fall is that municipalities don't always understand how cable companies are uniquely suited as a smart city partner, particularly given all the talk these days about 5G. Another problem can be narrowing down what areas a municipality wants to hone in on for smart city applications. St Petersburg has identified local issues it's trying to solve, with Parimi noting the partnership is close to finalizing the first two areas of focus. It looks like those will be smart lighting and remote education. With smart poles that offer sensor-based LED lighting, there will be energy savings. "But we're looking to use the pole to put other sensors to gather information. Sensors for ambient light. Sensors for traffic cameras. We're looking at environmental sensors. We're looking to use this smart pole to gather a whole bunch of information and then crunch the data to take action," Parimi said. "Lighting, traffic management and public safety are three areas we're looking at it through this one smart lighting solution." For education, St Petersburg is interest in streaming AR/

Cablefax

Leaders Retreat

April 29-30, 2019

Ocean Reef Club, Key Largo

The Cablefax Leaders Retreat fosters off-the-record executive discussions that simply can't be had anywhere else. **But don't just take our word for it...**



JIM GLEASON
CEO
Vast Broadband

“

The Cablefax Retreat was a great way to hear a wide variety of opinions on industry issues and challenges. I was really impressed with the people that attended as well as the topics of discussion. I definitely had good takeaways from the meeting.

”

Extremely Limited. Don't Wait Any Longer to Get Your Seat at the Table.

www.cablefax.com/event/CLR19

Sponsored By:



Industry Partners:



ANNOUNCING Cablefax's TOP OPS Nominations

Who deserves to appear in Cablefax's
annual power Top Operators list?

Nominations Due: March 29!

Help Cablefax compile this influential list of MSOs and Independent Operators by nominating the companies and executives you think should be included in our annual list of leading cable operators.

The categories recognize excellence in a variety of areas, including marketing, technology, finance, lifetime achievement, customer service and community involvement. Nominations are open to all operators.

It's free to enter – but you must submit your entries by March 29!

Honorees will be honored during Cablefax's Celebration of Leadership Gala on Thursday, June 6, 2019 at the Yale Club in NYC and profiled in the July issue of Cablefax: The Magazine.

The Independent Operator of the Year Award (IOY) is presented in conjunction with ACA and NCTC.



Submit Today at: www.CablefaxTopOps.com

Questions: Contact Mary-Lou French at mfrench@accessintel.com or 301.354.1851.

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 • Senior 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

VR content into the classroom, including oceanographic research. Charter is looking at multiple connectivity options—fiber, WiFi, coax and LoRaWAN. The company is sponsoring a three-year private sector grant, which could expand beyond these initial areas over time. The project marks the first joint initiative between Charter and US Ignite, which currently is working in 27 smart gigabit communities, including Austin, TX and Chattanooga, TN. **Cox Communications** is sponsoring three-year grants for Las Vegas, Phoenix and San Diego to be US Ignite Smart Gigabit Communities, with the MSO connecting Phoenix's first gigabit home in 2014.

Big Apple: Well folks, it finally happened. **Apple** CEO *Tim "Apple" Cook* took to the Steve Jobs Theater in Cupertino to announce the launch of Apple TV+, its new subscription streaming service with original video content. "Today's going to be a very different kind of event," Cook said at the beginning of the presentation. The majority of the presentation was focused on the Apple TV+ announcement, and featured original Apple programming announcements from celebrities and creators including *Oprah Winfrey*, *Reese Witherspoon*, *Jennifer Aniston*, *Octavia Spencer* and others. Ironically enough, *Steven Spielberg*, who recently criticized **Netflix's** Oscar win, was on-hand to announce his new project with the tech giant. The ad-free, on-demand service will be available both on- and off-line in 100+ countries starting this fall. The company notably declined to provide pricing, however. Apple also debuted the new Apple TV app, coming in May 2019. The revamped application will bring together various streaming and cable channels all in one place, similar to **Comcast's** X1 platform. It will allow consumers to directly subscribe to paid content providers such as **HBO**, **Showtime**, **Starz** and others. **AMC Networks'** four streaming services—**Shudder**, **Sundance Now**, **Acorn TV** and **UMC**—are all also included in the lineup as are SVODs such as **CuriosityStream**, **BritBox** and **Noggin**. The app will offer suggestions for shows and movies from more than 150 streaming apps, including **Amazon Prime** and **Hulu** (no Netflix), pay-TV options like **Charter Spectrum**, **DirecTV Now** and **PlayStation Vue**, with **Optimum** and **Suddenlink** later this year. Apple TV is coming to MacBooks for the first time this fall, and hitting smart TVs (**Samsung**, **LG**, **Sony** and **Vizio**) in the spring. The Apple TV app will also be available on **Roku** and Amazon Fire TV. Who knows if Apple TV+ will be a big Netflix competitor, but research from the **Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB)** shows that in 2018 257mln users stream digital video on any platform in a typical month, with 192bln minutes streamed in the same time-frame.

Viacom-AT&T BDTT: This weekend went down pretty much the same as **DISH-Viacom** (2016) and **Charter-Viacom** (2017). There was a lot of noise about a possible blackout, then the deadline rolled around with the channels remaining up as negotiations continued. By Monday morning, news came that AT&T and Viacom

Cablefax: What's Happening... April & May

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

EDITORIAL: Amy Maclean • amaclean@accessintel.com
Sara Winegardner • swinegardner@accessintel.com
Mollie Cahillane • mcahillane@accessintel.com
ADVERTISING: Olivia Murray • omurray@accessintel.com
AWARDS: Mary-Lou French • mfrench@accessintel.com

		Awards	Events
APRIL	<p>NAB Show Cablefax will preview and cover the hottest trends, panel discussions and show floor action at this massive annual gathering of the TV and broadcast industry.</p> <p>Customer Experience In a crowded marketplace, smart providers know that to stand out they must create the ultimate customer experience. This report examines what's working and what isn't when it comes to both traditional distribution and direct-to-consumer offerings.</p> <p>CFX Leaders Retreat Join us at this exclusive, off-the-record executive retreat designed to generate in-depth discussions on industry challenges and opportunities, leaving participants with actionable ideas to take back to the office.</p> <p>Cablefax: The Magazine – April Issue The Work Culture List *NEW* Cablefax: The Magazine's newest issue shines a spotlight on top employers who are making waves in areas such as veteran hiring, continuing education and diversity.</p>	<p>The FAXIES Entry Deadline: April 12 Final Deadline: April 26</p>	<p>CFX Leaders Retreat April 29-30</p>
MAY	<p>Cable Center Cable Hall of Fame & WICT Signature Luncheon Cablefax will provide the lowdown on this year's honorees and all the details surrounding these annual must-attend events.</p> <p>The Year Was 1979... It was a pivotal year for the industry that included the creation of WICT, ESPN, USA Network. Cablefax looks at what made this such a key year for the industry and how it has changed over the past four decades.</p> <p>The Gatekeepers A series of Q&As with MVPD programming and technology gatekeepers.</p>		

had hashed out a new agreement, even though details were scarce. Really scarce... We know it includes continued carriage across multiple AT&T platforms and products, with AT&T adding its customers will receive “more choice and improved value for Viacom content.” In the case of Charter, details didn’t really emerge until about a month after a handshake agreement was reached. What’s different this go-round is that many believe the AT&T deal was a precursor to getting serious about **CBS-Viacom** renewal talks again. “With this news behind us, we think it is imperative to combine these two companies and name a full-time CEO to integrate these two sets of assets,” **MoffettNathanson** said Monday. “The current industry dynamics demand it and the calendar keeps turning with more renewals in the future. Nothing will change here for CBS and Viacom shareholders until the inevitable happens... and that can’t come soon enough.” Viacom shares closed up 6% Monday, while AT&T shed about 1%.

Retrans Reconciliation: **AT&T/DirectTV’s** eight-day blackout with **Block Communications** came to an end Friday night. The impasse includes **WAND-NBC** in Champaign, IL, and **WDRB-Fox** in Louisville, KY. Five stations in all were involved with blackouts impacting **DirectTV** and **U-verse** subs. The channels returned Friday at 11pm ET.

5G Ad Spat: The **National Advertising Division** has recommended **Verizon** modify or discontinue certain claims around its 5G services following a challenge by **AT&T**. It’s the first time the ad industry’s self-regulatory unit has had a case involving 5G. NAD recommended that Verizon commercials be discontinued or modified in order to avoid conveying certain messages, including the unintended message that it has launched a 5G mobile wireless network. Verizon said that it will appeal the adverse findings.

One Discovery Place: Friday was the end of an era, marking **Discovery Inc** employees’ last day in the One Discovery Place HQ in Silver Spring, MD. **Facebook** was filled with images from over the years—from pics posed in front of the 13-foot tall *Tyrannosaurus rex* that towered over the lobby to snapshots of now much older children who once graced its on-site daycare center. The Discovery sign was removed from the building earlier in the month, with the programmer selling the office space (reportedly for \$70m) and moving its HQ to NYC. Another Discovery headquarters will be in Knoxville, where **Scripps Networks** was based. It’s not the end of Discovery’s Silver Spring presence, with several hundred employees moving down the street into what’s being called the “Maryland Hub.” Discovery’s move to Silver Spring from Bethesda, MD, in 2003 kicked off a revitalization of the city, with numerous stores and restaurants popping up around its \$165m 10-story tower. And while Silver Spring may never have evolved into the Hollywood of the East, there are still other programmers who call the city home—**TV One**, **CuriosityStream** and **RLJ Entertainment**.

Game On: **Comcast Spectacor** and **The Cordish Companies** are building a \$50m, next-generation esports and entertainment venue in the Philadelphia Sports Complex. The venue will seat up to 3,500 people and be the largest new-construction, purpose-built esports arena in the Western Hemisphere. It will be called Fusion Arena, after its primary tenant, the **Philadelphia Fusion** esports franchise. Construction is set to begin this summer.

Ratings: March Madness is off to the races over on **CBS** and **Turner Sports**, pulling in strong numbers across all platforms. Tournament-to-date coverage is the second highest-rated in 29 years, up 8% over 2018. **NCAA** March Madness Live set all-time records in live streams and live hours, with both seeing more than a 25% increase through the first full week. Live game coverage across **TBS**, **CBS**, **TNT** and **truTV** is averaging a 6.4/15 HH rating/share in the metered markets. -- **Fox News** was the top-ranked cable net for breaking news coverage of the *Mueller* report Friday. For the 5pm hour (when the news broke), Fox averaged 2.3m total viewers compared to 1.7m for **MSNBC** and 1m for **CNN**. Fox also had the lead in prime, averaging 2.9m viewers compared to MSNBC’s 2.2m and CNN’s 944K. -- **Freeform’s** “Pretty Little Liars: The Perfectionists” is cable’s top drama debut since Sept 2018 among Women 18-34 (212K), Females 12-34 (287K) and Persons 12-34 (353K). It was Freeform’s biggest drama launch in a year among the same demos since “Siren” in March 2018.

People: **NCC Media** tapped *Marty Shelata* as svp, automotive partnerships. He comes over from **NBCU**, where he served as vp, portfolio ad sales and client partnerships for the company’s network sports, entertainment, news and Hispanic properties. -- **Charter** upped *David Lange* to svp, programming acquisition and *Julie Unruh* to svp, programming financial operations and analytics. -- **Smithsonian Networks** promoted *Cathy Perifimos* to vp, head of legal and business affairs. She previously held the role of counsel and director of legal and business affairs. -- **TBS** and **TNT** hired *Kristina Edwards* as vp, unscripted series and specials. She joins from **Facebook Watch**, where she worked in unscripted development.