

# Cablefax Daily™

Tuesday — May 28, 2019

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 30 / No. 101

## Putting on the Hitz: Comcast Launching Movie Service to Replace Cinemax

Comcast is rolling out **Hitz**, a commercial-free, on-demand service that will replace **Cinemax** in some packages come July. Not a lot of info yet on what exactly Hitz is, with the company filing a trademark for it April 30. A [website](#) describing the service said it will feature “more than 200 different movie titles from a variety of studios,” which sounds like it could include more than **NBCU** content. Hitz will be exclusive to **Xfinity** customers. Comcast will share more info, including participating studios and titles, closer to launch, a spokesperson said. Hitz will replace Cinemax and its associated channels in the Xfinity Premier and Super packages as well as certain other packages. Some packages will still feature Cinemax and customers can subscribe to the premium net on an a la carte basis for \$12/month. However, it’s clear from messaging that Hitz is meant to be a Cinemax substitute for many. “Most of the movies on Cinemax have also aired on **HBO**. By offering Hitz instead, we’ll be delivering customers a better variety of content,” Comcast said. HBO/Cinemax didn’t respond to inquiries by deadline. While Cinemax is largely movies, it has been adding more original series to the mix. Nine-episode crime drama “Jett” debuts June 14, and the net’s currently airing “Warrior,” a crime series set in San Francisco’s Chinatown that’s been renewed for a second season. It’s also bringing back action series “Strike Back” for a seventh and final season. The net garnered critical acclaim for *Steven Soderbergh’s* “The Knick,” but nixed it in 2017 after two seasons. Per Comcast’s trademark application, it sounds like Hitz flicks will span all genres, including comedy, drama, family, animation and westerns. Distributors have increasingly been looking at ways to offer up content on their own to customers. This month, **Charter** rolled out “L.A.’s Finest,” a “Bad Boys” spinoff, as the first series from its **Spectrum Originals** series. It’s also inked deals for exclusive content with **Viacom** and **AMC Networks**. And **DirectTV** and **U-verse** subs have long had exclusive content through the **AT&T Audience Network**.

**This Time Around:** It’s been all about **T-Mobile** and **Sprint** this week at the **FCC**, and commish **Brendan Carr** has laid out exactly what led to him saying yes. The FCC previously said no to reducing the number of wireless carriers from 4 to 3 during the 2011 attempt by **AT&T** to purchase T-Mobile, Carr said the 5G buildout drove him

## THE FAXIES

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE IN PR, MARKETING & CONTENT

In 2019, The FAXIES have expanded to include content & design. The FAXIES mission to find the best of the best regardless of where it originated or how consumers watch it.

**PR & Marketing Categories**  
Still Open for Entries

- Deadline: June 21

**Content & Design Categories**  
(Formerly the Program & Trailer Awards)

- Early Bird Deadline: June 14
- Deadline: June 21



[www.TheFAXIES.com](http://www.TheFAXIES.com)

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 ● Kerry Smith, Divisional President, Marketing & Media Group, ksmith@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

to support the merger. “When we think about the US leadership in 5G, one of the challenges and one of the points we’ve been pushing so hard for at the FCC is to make sure every community in the country, particularly rural America, has a fair shot at next-generation connectivity... When you think about the scope and the scale of the infrastructure bill we need to get 5G in rural communities, I think this is going to be a really good win for rural America,” Carr said in an interview for **C-SPAN’s** “The Communicators” series. Addressing concerns regarding pricing increases following the three-year commitments currently proposed by T-Mobile and Sprint, Carr believes that the opportunity to create a stronger wireless carrier outweighs the deal’s potential harms. “This combination will for the first time create a third provider that has the same scale and scope in terms of size with their customer base as **Verizon** and **AT&T**, and I think that’s going to lead to an increase in competition that we haven’t seen before,” Carr said. He didn’t offer any insights into which way **DOJ** antitrust chief *Makan Delrahim* is leaning or if fellow Republican commish *Michael O’Rielly* has given any confirmation that he would be onboard with approving the deal. O’Rielly tweeted Monday that he was “inclined to support” the merger following chmn Ajit Pai and Carr’s public statements calling for the deal’s approval.

**Top 12 MVPDs:** Who are the top 12 traditional multichannel distributors for 1Q19? **Kagan**, a media market research group within **S&P Global Market Intelligence**, published its 1Q19 estimates earlier this month. **Comcast**, naturally, is in the top spot with 21.8mln subs, followed by **DirectTV** at 18.7mln (estimated based on combined reporting of **DirectTV/U-verse**, exclude **DirectTV Now**), and **Charter** (16.5mln). **DISH** (9.6mln, excludes **Sling TV**), **Verizon FiOS** (4.4mln), **AT&T U-verse** (3.7mln), **Cox** (3.6mln), **Altice USA** (3.5mln), **Frontier** (800K), **Mediacom** (800K), **WOW!** (400K) and **Cable ONE** (300K).

**To the Board:** **Cox Communications** pres *Pat Esser* was re-elected as chmn of **NCTA’s** board. Other re-elections included **Comcast Cable** pres/CEO *Dave Watson* as vice chmn; **Eagle Communications** pres/CEO *Gary Shorman* as treasurer and **Viacom** pres/CEO *Bob Bakish* as secretary. New to the board is **Fox Entertainment** CEO *Charlie Collier*, who will serve as an at-large programmer director.

**Carriage:** **GCI** is now carrying **PeopleTV**, making it available on most of its Choice TV Plans. The Alaska-based operator is PeopleTV’s first domestic MVPD partner.

**Dividend Alert:** **CenturyLink** declared a regular quarterly cash dividend of \$0.25 per share. It’s payable June 14 to shareholders of record at the close of business on June 3

**Cablefax Selected by SCTE•ISBE  
as Exclusive Partner for the Official Show Daily**



**Supercharge Your Exposure!**

“As the only official publication of cable’s premier trade event, our **Cablefax SCTE•ISBE Cable-Tec Expo Show Daily** editions and video coverage will give advertisers and audiences new opportunities to connect with key decision-makers in the industry”  
- Cablefax Publisher Michael Grebb.

**Featuring Expanded Coverage in  
Print, Online & Video Show Dailies**



**Space is selling quickly! Contact Olivia Murray at omurray@accessintel.com or 301.354.2010**

**Programming:** YouTube is kicking off its summer slate following the announcement that all its original content will be free. “State of Pride,” a documentary diving into the significance of Pride 50 years after the Stonewall riots, will premiere May 29, just in time for Pride Month. “Maluma: Lo Que Era, Lo Que Soy, Lo Que Sere” premieres June 5 and examines Latin music star Maluma’s origins in Colombia. “This Is Everything: Gigi Gorgeous” will be available June 5 as well, following the life of the transgender star timed with Pride Month. -- **Travel Channel** will premiere “Ghosts of Morgan City” June 21 at 9pm. The series heads to Morgan City, LA, to dive into a spike of unusual emergency calls dealing with the paranormal. -- “BattleBots” will enter its second season on **Discovery Channel** and **Science Channel**. Eight two-hour episodes begin airing June 7 at 8pm on Discovery, and then kick off Science on Wednesday nights at 8pm starting June 12. -- **Weath-erNation TV** is buckling down to prepare its viewers for the start of hurricane season. The network will air a “Hurricane Prep Week” from May 26-June 1 featuring stories designed to educate the public on tropical storm systems and the dangers of severe winds and flooding that appear as a result.

**Editor’s Note:** Cablefax Daily will not publish Monday in observance of Memorial Day.

## Cablefax Dashboard

### Tweet Tweet



### Up Ahead

**June 2-7:** [WICT Global Rising Leaders Program](#); La Jolla, California

**June 3-5:** [Fiber Connect](#); Orlando

**June 4-6:** [Promax Conference](#); L.A.

**June 6:** [Cablefax Celebration of Leadership Gala](#); NYC

**June 17-19:** [SCTE-ISBE DOCSIS 3.1 Boot Camp](#); Denver

**July 18-21:** [Comic Con International](#); San Diego

### Research


- > The average consumer watches TV and movie content from more than 4 different sources, including pay TV.
- > 42% of consumers now use at least two of the “Big 3” SVODs: Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Hulu.
- > 24% of consumers feel that they have too many platforms to manage, up from 14% in 2018.
- > 36% would definitely or probably drop at least one of the subscriptions they currently have.

(Source: [Hub Research](#))

### Quotable

“I believe that we are transitioning from a ‘digital divide’ into a state of ‘internet inequality.’ Now what do I mean by that? Two points. First, we are rapidly moving to a 5G world that will offer lightning fast speeds—gigabit speeds or more. And I’m all for ushering in fifth generation of wireless technology, but I am deeply concerned about the far too common communities with ‘no-G.’ I am worried about a world where those with much get even more, and everyone else gets left behind. That rings to me of inequality.”

– **FCC commish Geoffrey Starks** at the [Partnership on the Digital Divide](#) at Georgetown University



NEW ORLEANS, LA  
SEPT. 30-OCT. 3

[expo.scte.org](http://expo.scte.org)

# RAISING THE BAR.

# SAVE BIG! EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!