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What the Industry Reads First

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Next Gen: Cloud-Based Advertising with ATSC 3.0, 5G

With 5G and ATSC 3.0 looming, ad-tech companies are being forced to adjust. **Nielsen** recently partnered with **AT&T's Xandr**, marking the first time the measurement company will include mobile audiences within its Total Ad Ratings reporting. Nielsen's also expanding its coverage to include OTT audiences from Digital Ad Ratings. **Imagine Communications** is jumping in feet first, building an open modular platform that's primarily cloud-based. The tech company debuted an updated xG GamePlan solution at **NAB** last month, designed to give customers the ability to blend both spot and audience-based campaigns. In MVPD spaces, Imagine says customers can achieve campaign targets using up to 75% less inventory, and an unnamed MVPD customer was able to deliver a targeted audience with 66% more efficiency in a pilot. "If you look at the way Imagine is moving forward with their next-gen platform, we are building an open modular platform, which if you look at most of the ad-tech platforms they're all monoliths," *Dave Villano*, evp and chief transformation officer, told **Cablefax**. Right now, Imagine has a partnership with **Nine Entertainment** in Australia. "We took the lower 20% of their inventory and we've demonstrated tremendous lift on their inventory by demonstrating where those spots would fit, how they could get the most out of their least valuable inventory," Villano explained. "They've been seeing tremendous results, between 20 and 29% in their inventory." But where Imagine's tech is really looking to shine is with the upcoming launch of ATSC 3.0 and 5G. "I see us as a cloud-based agnostic platform, I think we expand into the ability to do broadcast channels in the cloud," said Villano. "We have proven the technology, we can run this stuff in the cloud, and what we anticipate as the bandwidth increases with 5G. A lot of places in the rest of the world 5G was embraced earlier because it's the only way they can get it. What you're going to see is a real shift in this space across the planet. 5G, ATSC 3.0, it really becomes the way in which media is consumed. What's next for Imagine is it'll play out in the cloud, monetization in the cloud, we'll be doing that in the cloud in a highly scalable manner, managing first and third party data for yield optimization management." ATSC 3.0, the next-gen broadcast standard, will have significant ramifications for both broadcasters and MVPDs, according to Villano. "ATSC 3.0 is going to change the way MVPDs operate," said Villano. "What you'll see is the bundles are going to start to break down, and I think you're going to see MVPDs have to play in that space. It'll



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probably reach critical mass in the next three years. Broadcasters can directly target their audience without the help of MSOs, and they'll have direct local distribution capability. Now, it gives them an opportunity with ATSC 3.0 to build a direct to consumer module in local broadcast. They can start to build their own data caches. You're going to see the broadcasters over the next few years are going to look a lot like MVPDs." While Imagine may be confident in its ability to handle new tech, other companies are taking a wait-and-see approach. "Regardless of the technology, regardless of any of the players or any of the vendors, we just look at the world from a quality service assurance point of view, and that any successful platform, whether that's cable, OTT, ATSC 3.0, there needs to be this level of quality that goes into any platform," said *Chris Pizzurro*, **Canoe's** head of sales and marketing. "You need to always make sure the ad assets are there, and the ad load is correct, and all sorts of things that we always watch over. What happens a lot of times with any new technologies is most people say, 'it technically works and we got this thing to stand up,' but to us that's always the first step. Will all your thousands and thousands of ad campaigns continually run over the course of the year? Usually the answer is no."

Storm Stories: While some were celebrating a long, holiday weekend, parts of the country were walloped by tornados, flooding and severe storms. Cable operators were quick to respond—sometimes getting creative in restoring service. Take **Mediacom's** Seven Mile Creek system in Southwest Iowa. A creek overflowed its banks and tore out a chunk of fiber. With no way to safely cross the water, crafty employees used a bow & arrow to reattach fiber, restoring service to 6500 customers without waiting for the water to recede. **Cox** director of field operations for Tulsa, *David Seabolt*, took his personal boat out to help people return home and gather belongings. In Jefferson City, Mediacom was able to get 2700 out of 3000 customers back up within 18 hours after an EF-3 tornado damaged the Missouri Capital Wednesday. The provider also opened up community WiFi and offered free charging stations. Communities served by Ohio-based **MCTV** were lucky, lying on the edge of the storms that rocked the state's central region and suffering only a few downed lines and power outages. Tuesday morning, **The Weather Channel** began work to ensure customers know how to respond the next time a storm strikes with its "Surviving the Tornado" immersive mixed reality segment. Meteorologist *Alex Wilson* takes viewers through what they should do if they're stuck on the road in the path of a tornado.

STELAR Hearings: **House Commerce** will hold a STELAR review hearing on June 4, with **Senate Commerce** expected to hold a similar hearing the same week. The Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act Reauthorization (STELAR) grants a compulsory copyright license to **DISH** and **DirecTV** to retransmit distant broadcast signals and contains provisions requiring retrans consent negotiations to be conducted in good faith. It's that second part that

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makes it a closely watched vehicle for retrans reform. These hearings will be the first real barometer of how interested Congress is in doing more than just a straight renewal of the legislation.

Sold!: The **FCC** concluded bidding of its millimeter wave auction for the 24Ghz band. Combined with the previously closed 28Ghz band auction, the first high-band 5G airwaves auctions brought in more than \$2.7bln. Bidding concluded at 5pm ET Tuesday in the 24GHz band, with the auction raising (in gross bids) \$2,024,268,941. Bidders won 2,904 of the 2,909 licenses offered. Coming next will be the kickoff of Auction 103 on December 10, which includes the upper 37 GHz, 39 GHz and 47 GHz bands. It'll be the largest spectrum auction in US history with 3400 megahertz up for grabs. -- The **FCC** is ready to authorize Connect America Fund Phase II support for eight NY winning bidders. To receive the total 10-year support, the entities must submit necessary letters of credit and legal counsel's opinion letters by June 11. **Armstrong** is estimated to receive more than \$12.8mln in support, with **DTC Cable** on track for \$2.1mln. The largest CAF award is slated for **Verizon** at \$18.5mln. All told, the FCC estimates awards for more than \$55.4mln for the eight winning bidders.

Future is Now: More than 100 college students are descending on NYC this week for the third annual **Future is Now** conference, which brings together some of the industry's most influential leaders and most promising talent. "We're all about diversity and inclusion, and I think part of that is how we recruit the students to the conference," said **iSTANDtv** and **FUTURE NOW Media Foundation** founder/CEO *Margaret "Peggy" Kim*. "We cast a very wide net and we get students from all over the country, and they have to apply to attend. They're coming from all backgrounds, every socio-economic background, racial and ethnic background, and also geographic diversity." The three-day event kicks off Wednesday and includes moderated panels, mentored roundtables and 16 media tours from companies such as **HBO**, **A+E Networks**, **Verizon Media**, **Fox**, **ESPN**, **ABC** and **CBS**. New this year are recruiters, representing **AMC Networks**, **WarnerMedia**, **Charter**, **Emma Bowen Foundation**, **T. Howard Foundation**, **NAMIC** and **WICT New York**. "It's really giving these students not only access to start building their professional networks while they're still in school, but they're also learning first-hand from professionals and from our leaders in the business," Kim said. And what prompted Kim to undertake organizing the conference? "I'm doing this because this is the stuff I wish I had when I started out my career. I didn't know anybody when I started out, and I didn't have somebody taking me under their wing. I work a lot with college students now through my other company [media production company **iSTANDtv**], and it's been through those relationships and understanding where the gaps are and what I see their needs are and what their potential is..." she said. "My hope and my dream is that we're really going to transform the industry and how we do things so that it's more diverse and more inclusive, it's more vibrant and we're solving the problems that we face in the industry."

Univision Day: The Texas House of Representatives declared this past May 23 as "Univision Day" at the State Capitol. The resolution was sponsored by Texas Rep *Rafael Anchia* (Dallas), recognizing **Univision's** contributions to Texas and the nation, particularly its efforts to register Hispanic voters. The company was founded in San Antonio nearly 60 years ago to serve the Spanish-speaking community of the state, and has now grown to include 11 TV and 20 radio stations across the state. Hispanics make up 39% of the state, and two in five of new registered voters in the 2018 elections were Hispanic, more than doubling the number of Hispanic voters since 2014.

Summer Sports: **fuboTV** is kicking off its lineup of summer sports programming in 4K, starting with the FIFA Women's World Cup on June 7. The streamer is airing every match of the month-long tournament in 4K, and is the only vMVPD currently streaming in ultra-high definition. The matches will stream on **Fox Sports**, **FS1** and **FS2** in 4K Beta, and the streamer will also carry **Telemundo's** coverage of each match in Spanish (not in 4K, however). Additional 4K content in June and July includes several **MLB** matchups such as the July 27 Yankees/Red Sox game (4pm, FS1) and the 2019 MLS All-Star Game on July 31 (7:30pm, FS1). -- **ESPN+** scored the rights to be the exclusive English-language home of the 2019 CONMEBOL Copa America. The entire tournament, to be played in Brazil from June 14-July 7, will be streamed live on the streaming service. ESPN+ will also carry the matches in Portuguese.

Ratings: **Univision Deportes'** telecast of the Liga MX Gran Final provided the top two most-watched soccer matches of the year across all languages. The second leg of the Leon-Tigres matchup, airing Sunday at 8:30pm on **Univision** and Univision Deportes, brought in nearly 2mln total viewers P2+ and close to 1mln A18-49.

People: *Kristine Fargotstein* has joined **USTelecom** as vp, policy and advocacy. She'll leave behind the **FCC** where she held several roles, including acting wireline adviser to chmn *Ajit Pai* and attorney advisor in the Wireline Competition Bureau. Most recently, she was assigned to **House Commerce's** Communications and Technology subcommittee to work on broadband infrastructure, net neutrality and spectrum.