

Cablefax Daily™

Friday — August 16, 2019

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 30 / No. 157

Back and Forth: Programmers Still Wary of ACA Coalition's C-Band Plan

ACA Connects, the **Competitive Carriers Association** and **Charter** took a defensive stance in **FCC** reply comments on their C-Band proposal after receiving heavy opposition from programmers. The most recent opponent to emerge is **A+E Networks**, which joined a chorus of content companies by agreeing that the ACA Connects Coalition proposal underestimates the complexity, timing and cost that would be necessary to make any transition from satellite to fiber. "Put simply, the ACA Connects Coalition proposal is unworkable and would harm our business," A+E said in its comments filed with the FCC Wednesday. Other programmers expressing concerns in an earlier joint filing included **CBS**, **Fox**, **Discovery**, **Disney**, **Univision** and **Viacom**. The **C-Band Alliance** referred to comments like these in its own filing, saying that the ACA Connects Coalition plan lacks detail and shows major technical flaws. It also claimed that the Coalition has not considered who would be responsible for managing the transition "nor has the Coalition explained who will finance such a costly approach, including not only fiber buildout, but the increased operating and staffing costs that the record shows will be incurred." Rather than take such a hard stance, **QVC** and **HSN** have told the Commission that until the ACA Connects Coalition provides those additional details on how the fiber transition would take place, they would continue to back the CBA plan as it provides the best assurance of uninterrupted video distribution. That doesn't mean they're completely closing the door on the ACA Connects plan. "A transition plan to fiber-based distribution, such as suggested in the ACA Proposal, could be appropriate in a successor phase to the CBA Plan," the home shopping networks said. ACA Connects' members and Charter responded this week, by telling the FCC that they both have major incentives to ensure that video delivery is not disrupted. They also fought back against the idea that fiber networks aren't able to provide the reliability that video providers currently enjoy, saying that by adding redundancy to network design, fiber transport can be engineered to provide 99.999% availability. Additional reliability could be ensured by using redundant equipment in data centers that can automatically recover from failure without any manual intervention. "Moreover, **SES**, **Intelsat**, and **Telesat** have all individually reported damages to satellites in the last few years where downtime can range from hours to two or more weeks," the ACA Connects Coalition said. "To fault fiber with reliability problems ignores these significant problems of satellite delivery." None of this is to say that the ACA Connects Coalition does not have strong supporters as well. **Altice USA**

The
DIVERSITY
List

CONGRATULATE
the Most Influential Multi-Ethnic Executives

AD SPACE
DEADLINE
AUGUST 22

Diversity Week Bonus Distribution Includes NAMIC,
WICT and The Walter Kaitz Foundation Events

www.CablefaxDiversity.com

Contact: Olivia Murray | omurray@accessintel.com | 301.354.2010

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 ● 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: \$1,749.00/year ● Access Intelligence, LLC, 9211 Corporate Blvd., 4th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850

submitted reply comments claiming that for cable operators, transitioning video from a satellite to a fiber-based model is the best way to avoid any adverse impacts to incumbent receive-only earth station operators. “Although the transition of video programming operations to fiber will require significant investment, fiber backhauling offers comparable, if not superior, transmission quality and reliability to that of the legacy television receive-only (“TVRO”) model occupying much of the C-Band today,” the MVPD said. Altice has some proof to back up its claims. It is currently executing a plan to connect more rural households in its western footprint with fiber connected back to two master headends. In much of the Optimum service area in the New York Metropolitan Area, the company receives and delivers video through direct fiber connections with programmers. “Because the company’s network is built with multiple redundant paths to mitigate fiber cuts and other network problems, Altice USA has achieved a high degree of network reliability, including video,” it said.

Cable for Life: Altice USA is ditching the idea of a one- or two-year contract, rolling out a [promo](#) this month for new **Optimum** and **Suddenlink** customers offering a “price for life” for video and internet. The lowest video and internet package starts at \$65/month for eternity, while the lowest internet package for 200Mbps downstream coming in at \$45 (with Optimum advertising that it’s the same speeds at Fios “for \$5/month less). There is some fine print, however... It applies to the base price for internet or internet/video, and doesn’t include fees and surcharges, such as the current \$8.97/month RSN fee, \$7.49/month broadcast fee and \$3.50/month network enhancement fee. There’s also a \$20 Altice One Pak monthly fee (that’s for the Altice One box, which is a cable box, router, modem all in one). The deal includes an offer of \$100 Amazon gift card for some customers. “Essentially, we know that rolling off promotions is a pain point, and with this offer, customers will no longer roll off to different pricing at the end of a promotional period,” an Altice spokesperson said.

FCC Settles EAS Misuse: The **FCC** announced settlements Thursday with **AMC** and **Animal Planet** for misusing emergency alert tones in programming. **AMC Networks** agreed to pay a \$104K for using an alert tone twice in a February episode of “The Walking Dead.” The FCC says it was transmitted on eight separate instances across cable and satellite systems. Animal Planet agreed to a \$68K penalty for an episode of “Lone Star Law” which included an actual Wireless Emergency Alert signal that was caught while filming in Texas during Hurricane Harvey. In all, the FCC issued more than \$600K in penalties, including a \$395K levy for **ABC’s** “Jimmy Kimmel Live” and \$67K penalty for **Meruelo Radio Holdings**. The FCC has a history of taking these sort of fake alerts seriously, proposing millions in fines over the years. In 2015, **Viacom** was hit with a \$1mln penalty, **ESPN** received \$280K and **NBCU** with \$530K after running movie trailers that contained EAS tones.

Service Provider Business Still Soft: Cisco said it doesn’t anticipate any significant improvement in the service



NAMIC
NAMIC.COM

33RD ANNUAL NAMIC CONFERENCE

Breaking Barriers: *The Multicultural Media Agenda*

SEPTEMBER 17–18, 2019 · NEW YORK, NY

REGISTER NOW AT CONFERENCE.NAMIC.COM

provider business in the very near term. That came in comments during the company's 4Q earnings reported after the bell Wednesday. For the reporting period, service provider segment was down 21% YOY on total product orders. CEO *Chuck Robbins* said there's pressure across all different types of providers. Telcos are focusing on 5G trials, which they don't expect to be a huge near-term profit driver. *Light Reading* reported last week that Cisco had suspended investment on development of next-gen Full Duplex DOCSIS tech until there's more clarity on marketing timing and the size of the opportunity. The company has become much less reliant on service provider business over the past five years as it transitions toward a software-based revenue model. Overall, revenue was up 5% YOY to \$13.4bln.

WICT SoCal's Tech It Out Panelists Laud Choice: Monetizing the disruption affecting the entire TV business is all about adjusting to consumers' clear preference for more viewing options, said panelists at **WICT SoCal's** annual "Tech It Out" event in L.A. Tuesday night. How to do that, of course, depends largely on your position in the industry. *Sarah Strobback*, **Comcast's** director, product management, pointed to Comcast's more than 60 deals struck with SVODs whose content is available through its X1 platform—"and that's really a testament to Comcast's openness to any or all partners that can bring life to the platform and offer value to our customers." *James Darcey*, director of product development at mid-size op **Windstream**, said the disruption of the traditional bundle has prompted the MSO to double down on customer needs despite having fewer resources than a large MSO. On the advertising front, *Aleesa Pagliei*, regional digital sales manager at **Spectrum Reach** in LA, said she stresses **Charter's** local advantage and ability to parse set-top data when pitching to advertisers. And *Amanda Morris*, director of marketing & PR for indie net **Ride TV**, said the goal is to serve both die-hard equestrian lifestyle fans while luring new viewers—not only with an appealing mix of programming but also by "optimizing the content for who is watching on these screens." That can include shorter-form content on online/mobile vs. linear, among other adjustments, she said. *Ahmed Darwish*, **Starz's** vp, product & marketing, meanwhile, stressed that Starz isn't trying to compete with mega-streamers trying to please everyone, but instead focuses on its mission to wow underserved audiences. "This is a natural evolution of the industry," he said. "We get more choice. We get exactly what we want. And it's really our industry catering to what consumers want."

beIN Will Keep LaLiga: Spanish soccer league **LaLiga** and **beIN SPORTS** extended their exclusive rights agreement in the US and Canada through 2024. The agreement comes just in time – LaLiga's season kicks off Friday with a matchup between Athletic Bilbao and Barcelona. The partnership dates back to 2012 and was renewed in 2015. Reports had suggested LaLiga may have followed Germany's Bundesliga and Italy's Serie A to **ESPN+**, with beIN SPORTS no longer carried by **DirectTV** and **Comcast's** Xfinity. The company also announced it has secured the former US women's soccer star *Hope Solo* for US coverage of the 2019-2020 LaLiga season.

French Entertainment Coming to More Cox Markets: **Cox** and **TV5MONDE USA** announced an expansion to their distribution relationship that will make the French language entertainment channel available in more than 20 additional markets. Customers in the following markets will be able to access TV5MONDE for an additional \$9.99/month: Ft Smith-Fayetteville-Springdate-Rodgers, AR; Phoenix (Prescott), AZ; Tucson (Sierra Vista), AZ; San Diego, CA; Santa Barbara-Santa Maria-San Luis Obispo, CA; Mobile-Pensacola (Ft Walton Beach), AL-FL; Gainesville, FL; Orlando-Daytona Beach-Melbourne, FL; Panama City, FL; Macon, GA; Twin Falls, ID; Topeka, KS; Wichita-Hutchinson Plus, KS; Springfield, MO; Joplin-Pittsburg, MO-KS; Omaha, NE; Las Vegas, NV; Cleveland-Akron (canton, OH); Oklahoma City, OK; and Tulsa, OK.

Discovery and Gamut Partner for OTT Lifestyle: **Discovery** and OTT advertising company **Gamut** partnered up for local market OTT inventory ad sales efforts in the US. The **Cox**-media owned group will have access to premiere seasonal events across Discovery's events. Discovery entered the DTC OTT space in 2016, and will use Gamut's data-driven local targeting market insights and performance measurement and optimization capabilities to accelerate its OTT growth by offering customized advertising programs.

Amobee Launches Data Market for Connected TV and Ads: Digital advertising company **Amobee** has launched a data marketplace for connected TV advertising, allowing brands and agencies to connect with more than 60 data providers. Partners include the **Oracle Data Cloud**, **LiveRamp Data Store**, **IRI**, **Tru Optik** and others and will give advertisers access to over 60K audience segments to create targeted campaigns for connected TV. The company said that its connected TV data marketplace will also include custom built segments to manage cross-screen frequency, maintain share of voice and reach new viewers to drive incremental reach.

Programming: Legal thriller "Sacrifice," starring *Paula Patton*, is the first original, two-hour film announced for upcoming streamer **BET+**. It will launch in 2020 as a back-door pilot to possible series. -- **E!** greenlit new reality sitcom "Meet the Frasers," premiering in 2020. The series follows Rhode Island celebrity couple psychic medium *Matt Fraser* and his pageant queen girlfriend *Alexa Papigiotis*.

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

Soak Up the Sun...

Now that **Pop** is fully owned by **CBS** (soon to be **ViacomCBS**), its future looks increasingly bright. Yes, its signature hit and Emmy nominated “Schitt’s Creek” will end soon, but new comedy “Florida Girls”—about four working class Clearwater gals scrounging for rent as they party it up—may just be the next big thing. The series aired its Season 1 finale last week, and if you haven’t checked it out, run don’t walk to either PopTV.com or the Pop Now app. Like Schitt’s Creek, which sweetly skewers self-absorbed rich people forced to slum it, Florida Girls sweetly skewers self-absorbed poor people who, uh, really have no choice but to slum it. But the show’s never mean, and its rapid-fire banter between often clueless characters who talk themselves into ridiculously bad decisions can be vaguely inspiring. They want to get it together. Sort of. Starting tomorrow. Promise. “We really wanted them not to be just women, but to be humans,” creator and star *Laura Chinn* told **CFX**. Chinn, who grew up in the show’s setting of Clearwater, FL, said the key is to create character flaws with which viewers can easily identify. “Everyone’s different flaw comes from a sympathetic place,” she said. “We all are so similar deep down even though we’re in these toxic situations and behaving poorly.” To be sure, the show exposes the folly of class divisions, racism and other social ills without being preachy—and always with the sense that self-defeating behavior stems from our own faulty perceptions of the world. Sometimes you can even blink and miss it. At one point, kleptomaniac Erica (*Patty Guggenheim*), who is white, is shoplifting, but the security guard is too busy following Jayla (*Laci Mosley*), who is black, to notice. It’s funny. And true. And sad. All at once. “Comedy is a vehicle for showing people just how ridiculous you look for doing certain things,” said Mosley. “Watching that unfold is a fun way to wag the finger at that without necessarily making it too heavy.” The bottom line is that Florida Girls will make you laugh... and think. But not too much. No decision from Pop on a second season yet, but this one seems like a no brainer. — *Michael Grebb*

Reviews: “Ted Bundy: Mind of a Monster,” series premiere, 9pm, Sunday, **Investigation Discovery**. Was *Ted Bundy* the prototypical serial killer? After watching ID’s excellent mini doc, it seems so. A law school student, charming and good-looking, Bundy allegedly killed 30+ women, mostly at colleges. At least that’s what he confessed to days prior to his execution in 1989. Bundy might have murdered hundreds. We’ll never know. A signature element of ID’s best series, interviews with principals in the incidents, is used well here. Speakers include media, law and Bundy survivors. In rare audiotapes, Bundy also speaks, which is highly creepy. In the wake of *Jeffrey Epstein’s* suicide, we’re reminded Bundy also embarrassed authorities twice with escapes. — “Sweetbitter,” Season 2 finale, 9pm, 9:30pm, Sunday, **Starz**. Recently, we were lukewarm about Season 2 of this restaurant-based fictional series. Fortunately, it’s on surer footing in the two eps this Sunday that comprise the series’ finale. Of course, you have to accept that restaurant workers know everything about each other’s lives. And wait for the very last moment in ep 2. Whoa. — *Seth Arenstein*

Basic Cable P2+ Prime Rankings* (8/5/19-8/11/19)		
Mon-Sun	MC US AA%	MC US AA (000)
FNC	0.771	2,353
MSNBC	0.498	1,520
HGTV	0.401	1,224
USA	0.377	1,151
TLC	0.360	1,100
A&E	0.352	1,075
HALL	0.347	1,061
HIST	0.307	939
DISC	0.301	920
CNN	0.298	909
ID	0.294	897
TBS	0.281	859
FOOD	0.267	815
NICK	0.254	775
ESPN	0.236	721
NFL	0.226	691
DSNY	0.215	658
ADSM	0.214	654
TNT	0.213	649
INSP	0.206	629
NAN	0.195	597
HMM	0.192	586
TVLAND	0.190	579
BRAVO	0.182	556
VH1	0.182	555
HBO	0.171	522
AMC	0.167	510
LIFE	0.160	488
SYFY	0.159	486
WETV	0.156	477
APL	0.153	467
PARA	0.147	450
MTV	0.139	425
TRAVEL	0.130	398
GSN	0.130	396
DSJR	0.128	390
FRFM	0.124	379
NATGEO	0.122	373
FX	0.119	363
NKJR	0.118	360
BET	0.112	341

*P2+ L+SD rankers are based on national Nielsen numbers, not coverage.

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

Featuring Expanded Coverage in
Print, Online & Video Show Dailies



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.



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