

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Empowering Women: Cable Execs Talk Positives of Industry Disruption

It was hard not to feel inspired walking through a sea of women in red at the 2019 **WICT Leadership Conference** on Monday. The 40-year-old organization is celebrating its ruby anniversary, and members of the industry dressed up in the color to celebrate. Taking place at the Marriott Marquis in NYC, **Comcast** senior evp and chief diversity officer *David Cohen* opened the conference for the ninth year in a row, joking that if he was a TV show, he'd been renewed for a ninth season. But, as Cohen put it, "this whole industry is renewed every year by **Diversity Week**." Disruption is heavily prevalent in the industry, and this year nearly 50% of conference attendees are first timers. While the industry frequently discusses disruption, execs took the opportunity to discuss how change can help them be even more successful. "I think about disruption and the logical part of my brain says disruption's a good thing. But then I have this other part of my brain, the more emotional part, and it thinks 'disruption is the stuff of nightmares,'" said *Leigh Woisard*, **Cox Communications'** svp of corporate and public affairs. WICT Woman of the Year *Jen Caserta*, chief transformation and people officer for **AMC Networks**, is a self-described "self-disrupter." "I've worked at AMC Networks for 15 years, and most recently over the past year I've zig-zagged my career into something unlike anything I've ever experienced," she said. **Discovery's** group svp of communications *Catherine Frymark* has certainly experienced a lot of disruption in her career, through the merger with **Scripps Networks** and relocation of the company's headquarters from Silver Spring, MD, to NYC. "Very quickly after we announced the acquisition the focus turned from external to internal communications," Frymark explained. "Mergers very often succeed more because of the emphasis on creating a new culture and talking to your employees and being transparent. I think one of the key things that we did is creating a new set of guiding principles. It wasn't Discovery forcing a 30-year set of values on a new company." While Caserta hasn't gone through an acquisition, she did experience a major career change when she shifted from heading cable net **IFC** to her corporate role. "I moved into this role a year ago, based solely on my soft skills," she said. "I was able to demonstrate that there were skills that were applicable, and while they're soft skills, and in some ways under-appreciated by management, because you get very focused on the hard skills, but those are the skills that you often have to take the most time to promote and acknowledge," she said. Frymark added that career-wise, people should take any opportunity for disruption, including making lateral moves. "It's your best oppor-

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tunity to enhance your skills. I would never have been tapped for the job of running TLC communications from outside the company. I had the opportunity to take a sideways step and learn a whole new basket of skills," she said.

FCC Approves Nexstar-Tribune: The **FCC** voted 3-2 in favor of **Nexstar's** \$4.1bln acquisition of **Tribune**, concluding that the merger with divestitures is in the public interest. Democrats **Jessica Rosenworcel** and **Geoffrey Starks** dissented, expressing concerns about localism and the agency's use of the UHF discount. "Today's merger will create one of the largest broadcasters in history, reaching more than 60% of United States households. In my mind, permitting that large a single broadcaster runs counter to our fundamental tenets of promoting competition, localism, and diversity," Starks said in his dissent. "Furthermore, the only way to achieve such a broadcast behemoth is through the application of the UHF discount – a loophole that, unfortunately, this administration revived permitting consolidation that I believe is against our statutory authority." Republican **Mike O'Rielly** spoke out in favor of the deal, declaring that Nexstar has a history of increasing news content on the stations it acquires and has been a lead proponent of ATSC 3.0. Although he approved the transaction, O'Rielly went on record taking issue with the many stations spinoffs required by **DOJ**. "Many of these stations, if not all, should have been allowed to transfer to Nexstar. Forcing so many to be spun off is more consistent with the bygone era of black and white television and a dilapidated, out-of-touch philosophy than the modern high-tech world in which we live," he said. Nexstar previously announced sales of 21 stations to **Tegna**, **EW Scripps** and **Circle City Broadcasting**, with the deal receiving the DOJ's approval in July. Nexstar said it anticipates closing the Tribune transaction and divestiture sales shortly. The deal also includes **WGN America**. Cable had objected to Nexstar owning two top-four rated stations in Indianapolis and EW Scripps ending up with two top-fours in Norfolk, VA, but the order OK'd the deals, saying they do "not present a situation involving a new combination of two top-four stations, but rather the assignment of a pre-existing top-four combination." Meanwhile, Nexstar said it has signed a multi-year deal renewing its **Fox** network affiliations. The deal covers its Fox stations in 31 markets as well as the eight Fox affiliates it is acquiring from **Tribune**. Once the deal closes, Nexstar will be the largest independent operator of Fox stations, covering 16% of the US.

Altice One Adds Amazon Prime: **Altice USA** is the latest operator to incorporate **Amazon Prime** into its gateway, with the streaming service to join the Altice One box in the coming months. It's the second collaboration between the companies, with the two teaming on intelligent home speaker Altice Amplify (Amazon Alexa is built in for smart home control, including through Altice One).

Off to the 3.5GHz Band Races: The **FCC's** Wireless Telecommunication Bureau and Office of Engineering & Technology certified that the Spectrum Access Systems [SAS] operated by **Amdocs**, **CommScope**, **Federated Wireless**, **Google**

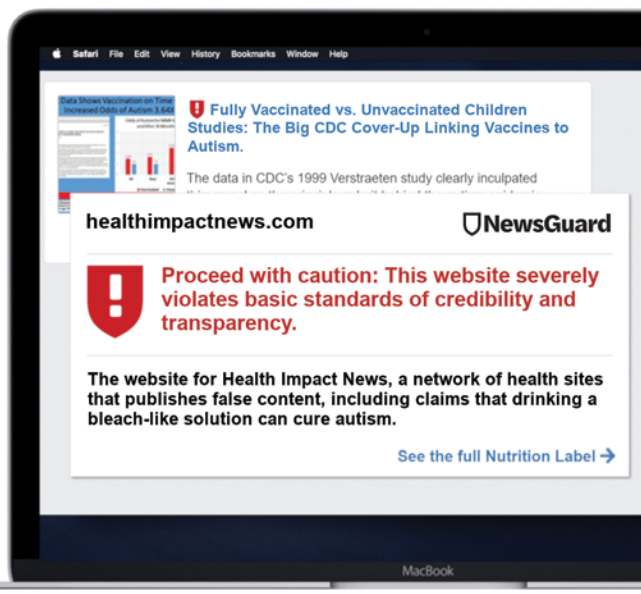
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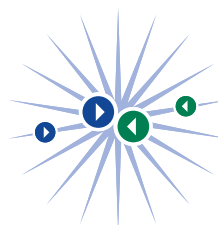
and **Sony** have satisfied the agency's testing requirements and are approved to being their initial commercial deployments. The FCC will carefully oversee the operations of the SASs during these initial deployments in the 3.5GHz CBRS Band and will publicly announce those that receive final certification to operate an SAS. The CBRS band is valued at \$15.6bln. It's a big week for the band, with **The CBRS Alliance** hosting an event Wednesday in DC celebrating the launch of commercial services. FCC commish *Michael O'Rielly*, **AT&T's** *Hank Hultquist* and **Charter** wireless technology svp *Craig Cowden* are among the speakers. The CBRS momentum continues with a **Wells Fargo Securities** mini-conference in NY on the subject next month. "One interesting expert leveraged to the equipment part of the CBRS story wrote me this last week: 'The funny thing about this industry is everyone wants to always talk mobile phone spectrum when talking CBRS. But IT mobilization is even more important and valuable.....This space could be the most exciting and most highly monetized segment of wireless is years,'" Wells Fargo's *Jennifer Fritzsche* wrote in a research note Sunday.

Anthem Hires Industry Vets: **Anthem Sports & Entertainment**, which just bought **AXS** and **HDNet Movies**, has added *Randy Brown* and *Peter Cohen* to its executive team. Brown, who has held roles at **ESPN**, **Tennis Channel**, **Outdoor Channel** and **One World Sports**, will serve as svp, distribution. Cohen, whose resume includes stints at **HBO**, **MTV**, **Billboardlive** and **MuchMusic**, will serve as svp, programming strategy & content development. Both had served as strategic advisers for about a year. "They are key members of what is evolving as an extraordinary management team that will help accelerate our growth and expansion into the future," Anthem CEO *Leonard Asper* said. Anthem's portfolio includes **Fight Network**, **Impact! Wrestling** and **The Pursuit Channel**.

Comcast Deepens its OTT Bench: A rumor making the rounds at **IBC** proved true, with **Comcast** snatching up application platform developer **Metrological** for an undisclosed sum. The Netherlands-based company allows operators to integrate their TV and OTT content into a single viewer experience—a natural fit for Comcast as it vies to make X1 a one-stop shop for subscribers.

Say Hello to Wi-Fi 6: The newest generation of WiFi connectivity is here, with **The Wireless Broadband Alliance** launching its Wi-Fi 6 certification Monday. "This is the point at which Wi-Fi 6 starts to become mainstream—it's the end of the beginning. Up until now, Wi-Fi 6 has been the domain of pioneers and pilots, including some of our members like **Korea Telekom**, **SK Telekom**, **Cisco** and **Boingo Wireless**," Alliance gm *Tiago Rodrigues* said, explaining that more operators and enterprises will begin investing in the standard. The new iPhone 11 supports Wi-Fi 6.

WICT Touchstones Lunch Gets Personal: Almost 1,000 people traveled from all over the country to honor **WICT's** 2019 Women of the Year and Women to Watch at the annual Touchstones Luncheon in NYC Monday. *Zenita Henderson*, **SCTE-ISBE's** vp of marketing and business development, was honored with the first WICT Woman to Watch award. Henderson explained how her mother passed away in her arms on Mother's Day two years ago. "She was my superhero and my biggest champion. I learned through the most devastating event in my life the people I work long hours around the world with for over 30 years were also my champions. See, my coworkers and partners transcended coworkers and partners a very long time ago. We are family, and for that I am thankful to the cable industry," she said. **HBO's** svp of legal



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affairs *Meeka Bondy* also got personal, talking about experiencing racism as a Korean immigrant child walking home from school. "It was the beginning of a balancing act I would navigate for the rest of my life," she said. "Fit in, stand out. Get along, speak up. Be a team player, be a leader. Cultural fit, change agent. In America, we say 'the squeaky wheel gets the grease.' In Asia, we say 'the nail that sticks out gets hammered down.'" Bondy now knows she's earned her place. "I realized that I belong in that room just as much for how I fit in as how I stood out," she said. *Susan Anable*, vp, public affairs, Southwest region for **Cox** and the third Woman to Watch, discussed her career transition to cable from a desire to be a broadcast journalist. Woman of the Year on the operator side, *Lee Schroeder*, evp, govt and community affairs and chief diversity officer for **Altice USA**, told the crowd about the leap of faith she took staying with Altice from **Cablevision**. "In truth, *Dexter [Goe]* was fully transparent in what it would be, though none of us believed it. But he was right, Altice is entrepreneurial, innovative and committed to constantly challenging itself to do better," she said. **AMC Networks** showed its love for *Jennifer Caserta*, chief transformation and people officer, who was named Woman of the Year on the programmer side. In a video featuring *Cher*, *Bruce Springsteen* and *Fred Armisen*, celebs and AMCN employees touted Caserta's skills. "We're all aware that over the last several years our industry has been dealing with disruption on a scale we've never seen before, and that's been compounded by the kind of head-spinning societal disruption that makes day-drinking look like a very reasonable life choice," Caserta joked. "We have all this rapid-fire change coming at us daily, it's great to have a job that's essentially about the kind of change we can control. The kind that makes our jobs and our lives better."

Diversity Week, Day 2: Diversity Week continues Tuesday with a joint town hall as **NAMIC** and **WICT** present their employee surveys. The organizations will host the L. Patrick Mellon Mentorship Program lunch, with former RNC chmn *Michael Steele* a featured speaker. Other highlights include a NAMIC session on the ins and outs of 10G.

Just Released: Congratulations to all the men and women in **Cablefax: The Magazine's** 2019 Diversity List. You can read the digital version of the magazine [here](#) or pick up a copy during Diversity Week. We also have our honorees full Q&As available [online](#). These insightful execs weigh in on what their organizations are doing to make employees feel included as well as thoughts on what sort of questions the industry should be asking itself.

GOT Tops Creative Arts Emmys: HBO walked away from the weekend's **Creative Arts Emmys** with plenty of bling. "Game of Thrones" beat out all other programs with 10 wins, followed closely by the net's "Chernobyl" (7). HBO received a total of 25 awards at both Saturday and Sunday's ceremonies. **Netflix** earned 23, followed by **National Geographic** (8), **Amazon Prime Video** (8), **CNN** (5) and **NBC** (5). **FX** will broadcast the awards Saturday at 8pm.

People: Former **Turner** boss *David Levy* is reportedly the new CEO of the Brooklyn Nets. **ESPN** reported the scoop Monday, citing league sources. Levy's appointment is expected to become official after the **NBA** Board of Governors approves *Joseph Tsai's* new majority ownership of the team later this week. Levy exited Turner in March, after 32 years with the company. -- **Ebay** svp, chief strategy officer *Kristine Miller* has joined the board of **Cable ONE (Sparklight)**. Prior to joining eBay, Miller was a partner and director at **Bain & Company**. -- **BET Networks** welcomed *Kimberly Paige* as evp, chief marketing officer. She'll manage brand strategy across all platforms, including linear nets, **BET+** and **BET Digital**.



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GUEST COLUMNIST

Ingredients for Inclusion: A Recipe for Success

By Jana Henthorn



Jana Henthorn

I've been in the industry a long time (a really long time). I've been an operator, a programmer, and have led numerous teams before becoming president and CEO of The Cable Center.

Early in my career, as sometimes the only woman in the room, I learned that it's not enough to just be invited in. I needed to demonstrate that I had the chops – the skills to make a difference – so that I truly had a seat at the table where my ideas were heard. Heading into Diversity week, I've been reflecting on my own journey and how it parallels diversity efforts today. *Diversity* is the necessary first step to get more people a seat at the table, but *inclusion* is how organizations ensure that all people at the table are heard.

So, how do we cultivate inclusion – of thought, perspectives, and ideas?

At The Cable Center, we study and teach intrapreneurship and how to drive new ideas and change within organizations. The program we developed also serves as a great recipe for inclusion, starting with these three ingredients:

1. Nurture a culture that values new ideas.
2. Provide tools for innovation.
3. Build diverse teams.

Nurture an Innovation-Friendly Culture

For organizations to stay vital, change is necessary. But it is also extremely difficult. Large organizations are driven to be more efficient through the creation of formal procedures, but often these processes become too embedded in the work culture. If your culture over-values process, change then becomes threatening. Another example of an innovation-busting culture is one where authority can't be questioned. Either direct or implicit, if the culture allows for only top-down innovation, people with great ideas will eventually disengage or leave the company. Organizations need to consciously nurture a culture where individuals and

their ideas can thrive and be heard.

Provide Tools

Innovation is more than just a "flash of inspiration." Having a great idea is just the first step of a proven model that takes an idea from initial problem identification to a fully-baked executable plan. It seems counter-intuitive to build a structured framework for creativity, but studies have shown that constraints actually spark new ideas, not hinder them. Organizations need to provide a toolkit that enables diverse teams to filter ideas through an intrapreneurial lens, developing ideas that add value and are within the goals of their organization, and discarding those that don't.

Build Diverse Teams

Innovation is a team sport. Yes, Steve Jobs may have come up with the idea for a touchscreen phone, but you can bet that there were hundreds of technologists iterating countless versions. It's the same for all innovation – the best ideas come from collaborative teams with a variety of experiences, perspectives, and skills. In a 2016 HBR article by David Rock and Heidi Grant, they explored why diverse teams are smarter*. Various empirical studies show that teams with diverse members are more innovative overall. If you build teams of different genders, nationalities, generations, skills, and experiences, then use inclusive practices that ensure all perspectives are heard, you already have the ingredients for success.

These three steps – culture, tools, and teams – put innovation on the menu. For best results, make sure you marinate new ideas, season with diverse perspectives, and invite everyone to the table. This recipe serves an entire industry.

* <https://hbr.org/2016/11/why-diverse-teams-are-smarter>

Jana L. Henthorn took the helm of The Cable Center as President & CEO on January 1, 2016. She brings 30+ years of experience to her position. Prior to The Cable Center, she worked for A&E Television Networks and Jones Intercable. For more on the Intrapreneurship Academy, visit www.intrapreneurshipacademy.org or contact Janice Silver and jsilver@cablecenter.org.



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