

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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TNF N/A: NFL Net Leaves MVPDs without Game, Ad Revenue

The workaround for blocking **DISH/Sling** subs from watching Thursday Night Football's Rams-Seahawks game on **NFL Network** if they're **Fox** station is dark was for NFL Net to not simulcast the game at all. That meant all pay TV providers lost the simulcast, with a source telling us distributors received virtually no notice of the drop. While there were other ways to view the game, dropping the simulcast impacted any ad spots sold by distributors. Local ad firm **Viamedia** told **Cablefax** the game's loss caught it by surprise and it's still working to credit advertisers. NFL reps couldn't be reached by deadline. The decision to pull the game came after **DISH** lost **Fox O&Os** in 16 markets last Thursday as well as **FS1**, **FS2**, **Big Ten Network**, **Fox Soccer Plus** and **Fox Deportes**. Fans posted complaints that NFL Net's TV listing didn't change and their DVRs recorded the a "Top 100 plays" telecast instead. The game was still available on **Prime Video**, **Twitch** and through local **Fox** affils (for those whose stations aren't blacked out). NFL Net likely could contractually pull the game because it was a simulcast, not one of the seven games that it is airing exclusively (the two exclusive TNF match ups have already aired on NFL Net). *Sports Business Daily's John Ourand* was the first to report that NFL Net planned to drop the game. Ahead of Thursday's kickoff, **DISH** said it was working to spread the news of alternative viewing options, including **Locast**. "We continue to urge Fox to come to a fair agreement on behalf of our customers and its viewers." -- In other Fox carriage news, **Cox** and Fox announced a renewal Friday. As expected **Fox News** and **Fox Business** have been added into the comprehensive deal, which includes the O&Os along with **FS1**, **BTN**, etc. The news nets had previously been negotiated separately, which is why they are still available on **DISH** right now.

FCC Taking Up Effective Competition: It's been more than a year since **Charter** filed a petition at the **FCC** seeking to have effective competition declared in Hawaii and Massachusetts thanks to OTT service **AT&T TV Now** (nee **DirecTV Now**). The agency has teed up a vote at its October meeting to approve the request. "Adopting this order would be a major step toward the Commission recognizing the realities of the modern video marketplace, and the increasingly important role that streaming services are playing in it," FCC chmn *Ajit Pai* wrote in a blog post. Not surprisingly, **ACA Connects** and **NCTA** applauded the proposal. If approved, it would be the latest change to ef-



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fective competition rules. In 2015, the FCC switched things up to presume that most US franchises have effective competition, with the burden of proving otherwise on the locality instead of the cable operator. The exceptions are 118 municipalities in Massachusetts as well as the franchise area of Hawaii's Kauai. Charter was the first to argue that streaming constitutes effective competition. NCTA and ACA Connects cheered the

AT&T Gets a Retrans Deal Done: Remember that gang of independent broadcasters that **AT&T** filed a retrans good faith complaint against at the **FCC**? One of them, **GoCom Media** of Illinois, has reached a renewal deal with AT&T. GoCom owns two **Fox** stations and one **CW** in Champaign-Springfield-Decatur, IL, that had been dark since June 1 on **DirectTV**, AT&T and **U-verse**. AT&T's complaint at the FCC is still pending, with blackouts continuing with **Deerfield Media**, **Howard Stirk** and others. AT&T alleged that the owners, each with **Sinclair** shared services agreements, have failed to negotiate in good faith. The broadcasters say they've done nothing wrong and AT&T is really trying to get the FCC to nix joint retrans negotiations.

Getting National Linear Addressable TV to Scale: Industry experts all agree there are issues when it comes to enabling national linear addressable television across a unified cable footprint. But agreeing on the largest obstacle is tougher. *Sid Gregory*, evp of internal services for **Canoe Ventures**, said technology isn't the problem, it's making sure people understand there's an ease of access to it. "But I'll admit I stay awake at night figuring out how we make this thing scale from a performance perspective," he during an ad tech panel hosted by Canoe at **SCTE-ISBE's** Cable-Tec Expo Wednesday. **Imagine Communications** pres *Steve Reynolds* agreed that tech won't be an issue, but he's also not worried about scale. "Guys like **Amazon** have solved scaling problems before. What I'm more concerned about is making sure, especially at the buy-sell interface, there's a good way for the advertisers and for the agencies to actually look at this inventory and understand how they can get to the audience that they want," Reynolds said. He emphasized that it's necessary to solve the problem in a way that's not going to undermine the value of the TV advertising ecosystem. "Part of the reason why TV is still such a great advertising model is because you have things like brand safety, and you've got things like category separations and all those things that need to be a part of the TV ecosystem in order to keep the CPMs high," Reynolds said. "What we don't want to do is turn TV inventory into another kind of digital inventory, and that's part of the danger here." *Geritt Niemeijer*, CTO at **Ampersand** (formerly **NCC Media**), believes that there is actually a scale issue, but it comes from the fact that cable, broadcast nets and satellite all have slightly different characteristics. "I think the main challenge will be to make it look like it's one system," he said. **FreeWheel's** Blockgraph gm *Jason Man-*



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ningham said driving simplicity of addressability for buyers is one of the biggest challenges and biggest opportunities. "There's a lot of complexity when it comes to all of the signaling that's necessary, the data layer that's necessary, then the insertion and measurement. I think it's really important for us to help simplify that process and that's going to require a lot of coordination amongst a lot of different players throughout the ecosystem," he said. While it's important to note that addressable is growing in linear TV (projected to hit 7% of total ad spend next year), the US is behind in terms of implementing it. Over in the UK, for example, **Sky** (now owned by **Comcast NBCU**) has been selling targeted, addressable advertising on an audience basis for 10 years.

Programming: **AT&T Sports Networks** and the **Pittsburgh Pirates** announced an extension of their multi-year TV rights deal. The net will continue to be the regional home of the Pirates, including at least 150 live Pirates games team-related shows.

People: Three **HBO** executives have been upped to expanded roles within **WarnerMedia**. **Karen Jones** is now HBO evp, communications; **Ronni Cobern-Basis** is evp, talent relations, events & awards for WarnerMedia and **Laura Young** is WarnerMedia svp, corporate communications. All three have spent more than two decades at HBO.

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Up Ahead

Oct 14-17: **MIPCOM**; Cannes, France

Oct 15: **RampUp Chicago**; Chicago

Oct 16-17: **C2HR Conference**; Philadelphia

Oct 16-17: **NAB NY**

Oct 22-24: **MWC 19**; Los Angeles

Nov 4-5: **DC5G**; Arlington, VA

Nov 19-21: **IAB Direct Brand Summit**; NYC

Research

➤ Unauthorized access through misuse of employee credentials and improper access controls (42%) as well as insecure interfaces and APIs are tied as the single biggest perceived vulnerability to cloud security.

➤ 25% of organizations surveyed reported that they don't know whether they have been breached.

➤ The top cloud security concerns of cybersecurity professionals are data loss and leakage (64%) and data privacy/confidentiality (62%)

(Source: **Coalfire**)

Quotable

"I'm very excited about what this means for consumers because since we made that decision, speeds in America are up 40% on average YOY. Infrastructure investment is up for the second year running and millions more Americans are getting access to the internet... The harder regulations make it to build a business case for building these networks, the less likely it is those networks will be built. The result of our decision has been largely positive and now, with the Court of Appeals' blessing, we're going to move forward full steam ahead."

– **FCC commish Ajit Pai** reacting to the Federal Court of Appeals' ruling on net neutrality on "Fox and Friends"

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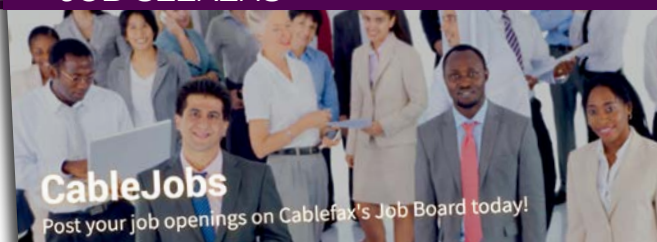
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