

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Millennials Wanted: Zeus Founder Shares His First-Year Learnings

It's been a year and some change since former producer *Lemuel Plummer* stepped into streaming with the July 2018 launch of the millennial-focused SVOD **Zeus Network**, but if you logged on now, you'd find quite a different product than what he originally envisioned. While it seemed like a wide selection of bite-sized content would be exactly what the younger generation wanted, it didn't keep them sticking around for long. "We originally launched with a lot of short-form content from primarily social media influencers," Plummer told **CFX**. But the Zeus audience quickly made it known that it wanted longer-form content. "We quickly started to produce more originals that were longer than 15 minutes... we greenlit more episodes and began working with more traditional stars. Just expanded our roster of content a bit more... to include influencers that had a foot in both worlds: social media and those traditional spaces." For Plummer, changing the model also just made better business sense. "People don't want to wait a week to watch a 10- or 15-minute show or episode. And if they can binge watch it... they get through it quicker, so you're going to naturally see experience churn a lot faster," Plummer said. Making the change has allowed Zeus to scale and rapidly grow its subscriber base while keeping churn at a minimum. And those subscribers are watching full episodes of that long-form content from the service with those Zeus selections showing over a 90% completion rate. Plummer said there is a time and place for licensing third-party content, but believes originals are Zeus' best investment. "It's really just about having hits and having shows that people want to watch," Plummer said. "Don't worry about just licensing content or a bunch of filler content. Focus on having hits." That opinion comes from another Zeus experiment with bringing in that third-party content, but much of it went unwatched or brought in far lower viewership numbers than its original series. Plummer is taking the lessons from Zeus's launch and using them to expand his presence in the SVOD space with the upcoming launch of **Black Box Faith**, a streamer aimed at faith-based African American consumers. Plummer has partnered with **ICM Partners**, **Vimeo** and others to support the service, which is expected to launch as a free VOD platform by the end of the year. It's designed to be more of an aggregator than Plummer's first project. "That platform is focused more on curating content from pastors," Plummer said. "We'll eventually create originals and things like that, but it's a completely different type of platform and business model."

Cablefax
MOST POWERFUL WOMEN

Awards Luncheon

Thursday, December 5
11am - 2pm | 583 PARK Avenue

Join us as we salute the women who have made their mark on the industry with their leadership and innovation.

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In the 2019 issue, Cablefax honored innovative & engaging employers who are making work more than a job. This recognition program pulls back the curtain to give a glimpse at the culture behind the company names, shining a light on the magic that happens when work enhances your life.

The WORK CULTURE List

Cablefax is seeking nominations for The 2020 Work Culture List, the definitive guide to the most innovative and attractive work environments in the business, creating a benchmark of excellence in a number of specific categories.

THE WORK CULTURE LIST

This recognition program evaluates companies based on a number of criteria, honoring those who excel in specific areas such as:

- What makes your organization a top place to work in the industry.
- How growth opportunities at your company make a real difference when it comes to retention, continuing education, mentorship, recruitment and other worthy initiatives.
- How your company or agency offers unique or noteworthy benefits above and beyond traditional health insurance, 401K programs, etc.
- How your diversity initiatives help shape your corporate culture and environment, including how it affects senior positions and your board of directors.
- How your company gives back to the community.

We also want to hear about other noteworthy areas where your company truly excels in:

- Retention
- Mentorship
- Recruiting
- LGBTQ Initiatives
- Veterans Initiatives
- Continuing Education
- Community Connection
- Unique Work Environment
- Corporate Wellness
- Any Other Awesome Initiative

Tell us what else we should know about your work culture.

Nominate a Vendor or Partner that Enhances Your Work Culture. Who would you recommend to someone else?

- Corporate Healthcare Provider
- Training/Education Vendor
- Payroll Vendor
- Research Partner
- Executive Coach
- Recruitment Firm
- E-Learning Tool

Which Employees are Cornerstone to Your Work Culture? Tell Us About Them.

Examples:

- Mentoring Champion
- Employee Spirit Hero
- HR Professional of the Year

All companies that touch media, content, cable and broadband are eligible for inclusion on this prestigious list. In today's fast-paced environment amid record low unemployment, top talent can pick and choose where to work and live. The Work Culture List is the perfect tool for job seekers, as well as a way for employers to tout their commitment to workplace excellence.



WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR SUBMISSION!

www.CFXWorkCulture.com

Free to Nominate. Deadline: December 13, 2019

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Quibi Names T-Mobile Official Wireless Launch Partner: Upcoming short-form mobile-only streamer **Quibi** struck a deal with **T-Mobile** for the provider to be the official telecommunications partner ahead of its April launch. However, T-Mobile isn't required for access to Quibi—anyone can sign up, regardless of carrier. The companies haven't revealed specifics of the partnership, but it's likely T-Mobile will give Quibi prominent placement for its 83.1mln users or offered as an add-on or in a bundle. "Quibi will deliver premium video content for millennials on a technology platform that is built exclusively for mobile, so a telecommunications partner like T-Mobile, with their broad coverage today and impressive 5G roadmap, is the perfect fit," Quibi CEO *Meg Whitman* said in a statement to *Variety*. The short-form video venture has already raised over \$1bln to date and sold more than \$1mln upfront in ad inventory and has seen investments from nearly all the major studios and partnered with multiple programmers including **NBC News**, **Telemundo**, **MTV** and **ESPN** for original content. Quibi, short for "quick bites," will launch with two tiers, costing \$5 monthly with ads and \$8/month without ads.

Whistle Launching Linear OTT Net: Entertainment and sports media company **Whistle** is launching its first linear OTT network, **WhistleTV**. It will initially have 24-hour ad-supported content including original programming, episodic content with social media influencers, niche sports programming, movies and documentaries. Set to launch in 4Q, the company hired *Griffin Gmelich* as its evp, OTT and content. Gmelich has held content acquisition and sales roles at of **Hulu**, **Entertainment One** and **Warner Bros**.

Good Buzz: **INSP's** competition series "Ultimate Cowboy Showdown," hosted by country music icon *Trace Adkins*, wrapped up Sunday (Oct 20) with its finale airing at 9pm ET. The end comes after a whirlwind of big press for the indy network series—with Adkins appearing on "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon," "Fox & Friends" and "GMA3: Strahan, Sara & Keke." For a giggle, check out Adkins singing lyrics to "Breaking Bad's" theme [on Fallon](#).

Smithsonian Reporting for Duty: **Smithsonian Channel** kicks off its second Veterans Month screening tour Tuesday, with the National Museum of the US Airforce in Dayton, OH, the first stop. The net is teaming with **Comcast**, **Charter** and **Altice USA** as well as the **CBS Veterans Network** to host private viewings across the country of "Memphis Belle in Color." The hour-long doc tells the story of the famed B-17 bomber and features color footage of the aircraft in combat.

Programming: **HBO Max** greenlit lifestyle follow-doc series "Brad & Gary Go To..." (wt). The six-episode series follows Hollywood couple *Brad Goreski* and *Gary Janetti* as they travel around the world. The upcoming streamer also picked up the documentary "Expecting Amy" (wt) from actress and comedian *Amy Schumer*. -- The **National Women's Soccer League** is headed into playoffs, and **ESPN** is ready to catch all the action. The semifinal double header

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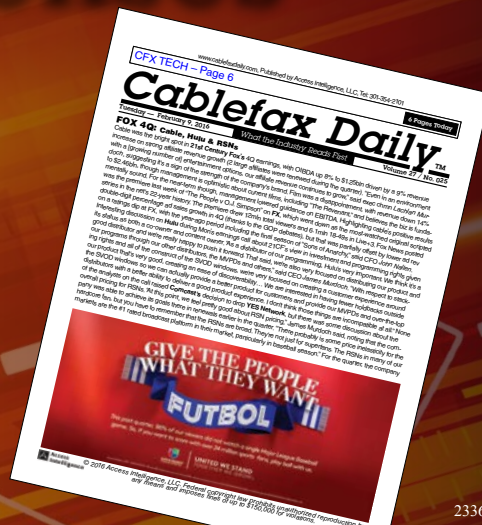
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airs on **ESPN2** on Sunday, starting with defending champs North Carolina Courage vs Reign FC at 1:30pm, followed by the Chicago Red Stars vs Portland Thorns FC at 3:30pm. The NWSL Championship takes place Oct 27 at 3:30pm. All postseason matches will stream live on the ESPN app.

People: **Magid** tapped *Scott Carlin*, the former pres of **HBO** Domestic Television, as evp of global media and entertainment, effective immediately. Carlin spent seven years at HBO, where he was responsible for generating \$1bln in new revenue for the network. -- *Bart Fisher* is once again a member of the **Crown Media Family Networks** gang, returning as vp, development. Fisher stepped down as vp, original programming in January 2018 to work as an independent screenwriter and editor. -- **Urban One** upped *C Kristopher Simpson* to svp/general counsel and appointed *Tony Spinelli* as CIO. Simpson has been with Urban One for 12 years, most recently serving as vp/deputy general counsel. Spinelli most recently led digital analytics and data science startup **Fractal Industries**.

Editor's Note: Still haven't reserved your seat at **The FAXIES Award Luncheon**? There's still time! Join **Cablefax** on Tuesday at the Edison Ballroom in NYC as we honor the best of the best in PR, marketing and content, including teams from **WWE**, **Smithsonian Channel** and **Crown Media Family Networks**.

Cablefax Dashboard

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Up Ahead

- Oct 22: **The FAXIES 2019**; NYC
- Oct 22-24: **MWC 19**; Los Angeles
- Oct 23-24: **BCCA Media Credit & Collections Workshop**; Washington, DC
- Nov 4-5: **DC5G**; Arlington, VA
- Nov 21: **Gracies Leadership Awards**; NYC
- Nov 24: **WICT Rocky Mountain Tech It Out**; Denver, CO

Research

- > 27% of consumers are spending more than \$100/month on subscription services.
 - > 59% of US consumers are happy with their current subscriptions and aren't looking to make any changes.
 - > A fifth of US consumers (22%) would consider adding another service, but only if something new came to market.
 - > 39% of consumers say a bundled platform of all their services is the best way to solve the burden from the amount of subscriptions they have.
- (Source: **Amdocs**)

Quotable

"When you look at this transaction, whether its our review at the FCC or... the pending litigation led by Democrat State AGs, it tees up two fundamentally different approaches to technology. One I think is very backwards-looking that operates to preserve the status quo. I think that fails the Gretzky test. When you look at where the hockey puck is today and where it's going on 5G, I think we should embrace this disruptive, new competition... approving this deal puts us on a clear path to getting there."
- **FCC commish Brendan Carr** talking the **T-Mobile/Sprint Merger** on **CNBC's "Squawk Alley"**

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