

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Squad Up: Lower Latency Key Priority for Esports' Cable Partners

Field trials for 10G are coming up in 2020, but there are still some who question what the use cases are for the higher speeds and lower latency capabilities it touts. "The first community we heard not say that was gaming," NCTA pres/CEO *Michael Powell* said at a 10G and Esports panel hosted by the association Friday. "What we've come to realize is that speed comes in many forms. Particularly to the gaming industry and the gaming community, the improvement in latency is extraordinarily powerful." That's true whether you're playing a casual match with friends in your bedroom or are participating in a professional match. **Atlanta Esports Ventures** director, partnership *Jeremy Poore* said latency is undoubtedly the most important thing to any gamer, as the quickness with which they're able to execute an action in-game can be the difference between life and death. "It also matters from a fairness standpoint," added **Comcast** svp, complex solutions and connectivity *Sam Chernak*. "It's somewhat easily managed inside a professional arena where you have a wireline setup... latency will be far more inconsistent home by home, neighborhood by neighborhood, and that's where there's a lot of focus on... understanding that, acknowledging it and coming up with a next-gen protocol to ensure lower latency." **Charter** svp, emerging technology & innovation *Andrew Ip* also said there's a direct connection between your chances to win a match and how low your latency is. Bandwidth isn't as much of an issue when it comes to the gaming community. "If you look at the cable industry as a whole, our latency generally is pretty predictable. As you look at some of the dials we have not only in the current DOCSIS spec but in the 10G spec, it's about tightening that window," Ip said. "So there's a pretty interesting pathway to solving this equation." **Google Stadia**, the company's attempt at true cloud gaming, launched Tuesday and plenty of network operators were watching to see how well gamers could play their favorite blockbuster titles on sometimes nothing but their mobile phones. Chernak said the introductions of these new ways to play are a cable operator's friend. "These are things that introduce wonderful capabilities to goodness knows how many people that want to use it that put demands on our network," Chernak said. "These are things that help us justify investing in the network, help create new standards... these are all treasure chests of our network that are terrific." Ip agreed, adding that in order for products like Stadia to be successes, those architecting and improving the network need to be working hand-in-hand with those developing the technology. "As we think about moving the gaming, the esports, the immersive world further,

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it's going to require a lot of collaboration," Ip said. "As we build our networks, we have to keep a close eye on what some of these content players are doing and almost do it together because where Google Stadia begins and where our network ends, the lines are very blurred." Ensuring network latency is as low as possible is just one of a number of issues cable networks are facing as esports events gain linear distribution. Though **ESPN** has plenty of experience producing traditional sports events, director, business development *Kevin Lopes* said the programmer has experienced a host of new challenges when it comes to the backend technology necessary to put on events like the 2019 Overwatch League Finals. If you're lucky, the game being played will have something called an observer mode that creates viewable camera placements within the virtual environment. "If the game has a really good built-in observer mode, you theoretically have an infinite, unlimited amount of camera positions... If you don't have that tech built into the game, you have to do that manually," Lopes said. **Turner Sports** vp, esports *Jennifer Dill* said there can also be challenges in storytelling and showing the level of expertise professional gamers have. "When you're watching basketball, you can see the sweat, you can see how hard someone's working and in esports, you don't necessarily have all those visual cues," Dill said.

DISH Begins Rights Offering to Raise \$1Bln: **DISH** commenced its previously announced rights offering to raise proceeds of about \$1bln. All shareholders of DISH's outstanding series of convertible notes as of Nov 17 are being granted the right to participate in the offering and subscribe for newly-issued shares on a pro rata basis. The company plans to use proceeds from the rights offering for general corporate purposes, including investments in the wireless business.

Former NBCU Exec Joins Criticism of Comcast In Relation to Allen Suit: A day after **Revolt** founder *Sean "Diddy" Combs* criticized **Comcast** in relation to **Entertainment Studios Networks** founder *Byron Allen's* racial discrimination suit against the MVPD, former **NBCU** evp/chief diversity officer *Paula Madison* also spoke out against Comcast in regards to its dealings with **The Africa Channel**. She said that while it's true Comcast carries the net, it would be a stretch to call them a good business partner. "TAC has been an extraordinarily good partner by supporting all of Comcast's multi-cultural initiatives such as sponsoring the Odunde Festival, the largest African gathering in Philadelphia... as well as other Xfinity VOD marketing initiatives targeting the African American community but to no meaningful reciprocity," Madison said in a statement. "With an unkept—yet repeated—promise by Comcast of 4 million additional subscribers it's inaccurate to include TAC in any grouping of Black-owned independent networks which would typify the Comcast business relationship as good or in any way proactive." Comcast fought back against Madison's claims, saying that it has always been dedicated to the success of independent channels like The Africa Channel. "We are proud to be The Africa Channel's largest distributor, a commitment which is over a decade old, and pre-dates our acquisition of NBCUniversal," Comcast said.

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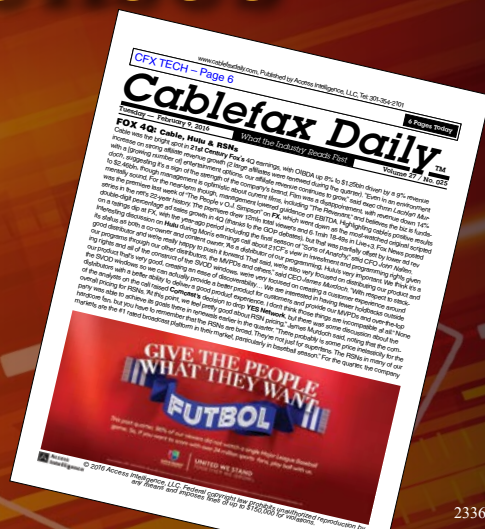
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“We have always met or exceeded our commitments to this channel. We’ve included the network’s content in tentpole on-demand events. To be successful industry wide, beyond the distribution and promotion by any one company, the responsibility to market and have a successful business plan belongs to the network.” Enough fireworks have flown in the last few weeks to gain the attention of the **Congressional Black Caucus**, which said in a statement that Comcast, by fighting its case against ESN’s Allen, is taking “steps to completely gut a civil rights law to protect their bottom line.”

Xfinity Eye Control on Best Invention List: As the year (and decade) wraps up, publications are starting to release Top 100 Lists, including **TIME’s** Best Inventions of 2019. The publication named **Comcast’s** Xfinity X1 Eye Control to the list, under the “accessibility” category. The web-based remote control allows those with physical disabilities to control devices with their eyes, allowing them to surf, search and record just by looking at different buttons.

People: *Eliot Goldberg*, **AMC Networks’** evp of nonfiction and alternative programming for the entertainment group, is stepping down. *Marco Bresaz*, svp of nonfiction and alternative programming, is stepping up to lead the nonfiction programming group moving forward. *Kelly Nash*, recently promoted to vp, nonfiction and alternative programming, will now oversee the West Coast team. Goldberg joined AMC Networks in 2013.

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Up Ahead

- Dec 4:** [TV of Tomorrow Show](#), NYC
- Dec 5:** [Cablefax Most Powerful Women 2019](#), NYC
- Dec 5-6:** [CableLabs Latin America & Caribbean Summit 2019](#), Miami
- Dec 13:** [Cablefax Work Culture 2020 Entry Deadline](#)
- Jan 7-10:** [CES 2020](#); Las Vegas

Research

- 94% of Latin Americans that stream video have experienced frustrations, including being annoyed with advertisements (54%), the video taking too long to start (52%) and the video re-buffering (52%).
- Fewer people are willing to accept those frustrating experiences associated with streaming than in 2018 (30% vs 34%).
- 83% of Latin American respondents said that they expect a streaming service to include a mobile video download feature.

(Source: [Penthera Latin America Streaming Behavior Survey](#))

Quotable

“Look, I think a lot of the things Trump has tried to do — identifying problems and trying to solve them — has been great. I just don’t think he’s the right guy to do it. Half the people that he’s hired and thrown under the bus are now trying to kill him. I mean, what kind of thing is that? It’s chaos... I just don’t think he’s the right guy to do it. He just doesn’t build a team, I think that’s the No 1 problem.”

-- **Liberty Media** chmn **John Malone** speaking to **CNBC** about *President Trump*



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