

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Key Play: Charter Helps Black News Channel Reach the End Zone

Former congressman and **Black News Channel** chmn/co-founder *J.C. Watts* gave the **Charter** legislative team a standing ovation recently, saying that the more than 10-year quest to bring the channel to life was nothing but a “pipe dream” until the MSO stepped up and agreed to carry it. BNC also has commitments to carriage from **Comcast** and **DISH**. However, Watts said it was Charter’s initial agreement that really got the ball rolling. BNC and Charter held a joint reception in Charter’s DC office this past week to celebrate the upcoming Jan 6 launch, with Congresswoman *Yvette Clarke* (D-NY) joining Watts for a brief discussion. With a tip to Watts’ past as an Oklahoma Sooners quarterback, Clarke said she will be like a running back when it comes to getting more diverse voices in media. “We’ve been pushing for more diversity and inclusion in the broadcast and cable space and the tech space. It’s because we live in a multi-racial, multi-religious civil society, and for far too long, our media did not speak to that. And to this day, does not fully speak to that diversity,” the lawmaker said. “Many companies have been short-sighted in that. The thought is if there’s a black news channel, only black people are going to watch it and I beg to differ. I look at the impact we all have on one another in civil society and I look at ways in which quite frankly the talent, information and expertise of black people have been appropriated—repackaged and sold by other folks.”

When Charter acquired **Time Warner Cable** in 2016, it reached an agreement with several leading national civic organizations to build on diversity efforts, including through expanded programming for diverse audiences and enhancing investments in organizations serving communities of color. The Tallahassee-based network will have bureaus in DC, NYC and other parts of the country. BNC’s co-founder/CEO is *Bob Brillante*, who developed Florida sports network **Sunshine Network** (now **Sun Sports**) with former **Continental Cablevision** exec *Dave Reid*, and also launched **Florida’s News Channel** in 1998. The net wants to be a new voice in politics, economics and social discourse. Watts said the channel will offer a perspective that’s missing today. “We are a network that is culturally specific to the African American community,” he said. “No disrespect to any other network, but rarely do you hear anybody on any network on the TV dial today talk about sickle cell. That’s something that primarily impacts the African American community.” For Clarke’s part as running back, she’s hoping it will go all the way. “I’m going to be vigilant... and make sure this is

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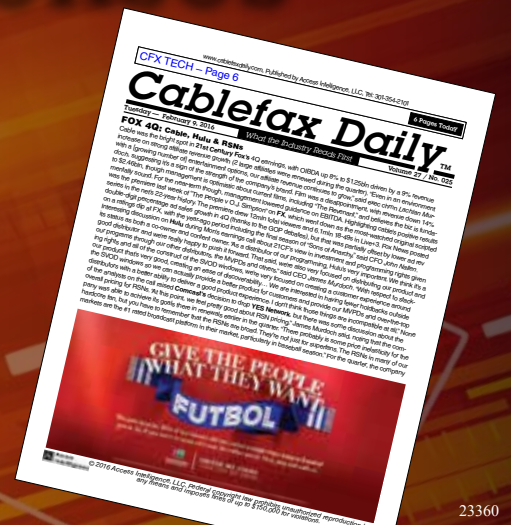
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a success and that this is a model that others will emulate because indeed it is time,” she said.

WarnerMedia Honors Ted: WarnerMedia upset some with the removal of the Turner name after it acquired Time Warner, but it hasn't forgotten maverick Ted Turner. On Friday, CEO John Stankey, CNN's Wolf Blitzer and Turner himself were in Atlanta for the dedication of WarnerMedia's Techwood campus to Turner, complete with a mural of the founder. "Turner Broadcasting and its networks, including CNN, are my proudest professional accomplishments and they always will be. The Techwood campus holds a lot of meaning to me because this is where it all began," Turner said. The company also announced a \$550K gift to the Univ of GA that will establish the Ted Turner Exhibition Hall & Gallery at the UGA Library. The money will also fund need-based scholarship to the university's school of Journalism & Mass Communication and create WarnerMedia's Ted Turner Maverick Internship.

C Spire Expanding in Alabama: C Spire announced a major expansion of broadband services designed to bring high speed-internet to Birmingham, Shelby County and other parts of Alabama. Last month, the Mississippi-based company had announced it plans to make Jasper, in northwest Alabama, one of its first broadband markets in 2020.

Tremor Expands ACR Solutions: Programmatic video platform Tremor Video renewed its partnership with Alphonso to expand its exclusive automatic content recognition solutions, designed to enable brands to reach TV audiences more precisely and effectively cross video devices. Alphonso's viewership data reaches 15mln opted-in US households, and the partnership has been extended for two years. ACR data's value is only growing in the US, projected to hit \$5bln by 2021. Tremor now offers display ACR solutions in the US and Canada, and will also launch PMPs (private marketplace) on its subsidiary RhythmOne in early Q1.

Portrait of a Cord Cutter: Who is most likely to cut the cord? FuboTV found in its 2019 trend report that those most likely to take full advantage of cord-cutting are families looking for a service that meets different needs of everyone in the household, particularly families led by a parent(s) ages 35-54 with 2-3 children in the household who are working professionals with a college or advanced degree. The streamer found that on its service, fuboTV users watched an average of 103 hours a month, an increase of 135% YOY.

INSP Teams Up With Mediahub: INSP retained marketing company Mediahub to drive promotion strategies for the net and its brands. "As a top-20 rated network that, to date, has experienced low visibility, we are thrilled to partner with Mediahub as we expand our content offerings across multiple platforms and elevate our entertainment brand

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to new heights,” said INSP’s evp of marketing *Hayes Tauber*.

Google Sling: Sling TV is offering new customers a free Google Nest Hub when they prepay for three months of Sling Orange or Sling Blue. The OTT service rolled out on Nest Hub last month.

Ratings: ESPN broke record after record with the 2019 Formula 1 season. Over the 21-event season, live race telecasts averaged 671K viewers, an increase of 21% over the average of 554K on ESPN networks last year. Formula 1 returned to ESPN, **ESPN2** and **ABC** in 2018 after previously airing on **NBC**. Seventeen of the 21 races saw YOY viewership increases and seven races earned US viewership records. -- **Netflix’s** film “The Irishman” pulled in 17.1mln unique viewers in the US during its first five days, according to figures released by **Nielsen**. On its first day on Nov 27, *Martin Scorsese’s* latest flick was seen by 751K US viewers, about 18% of the total Netflix audience. According to Nielsen, it drew an average minute audience of nearly 2.6mln viewers on its premiere.

People: **NCTA** added *Mary Beth Murphy* to its legal & regulatory affairs team as vp, deputy general counsel. She comes over from **Facebook**, where she was a public policy manager. She also served more than 23 years with the **FCC**, where she held the title of deputy bureau chief of media

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Up Ahead

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

Jan 21-25: [NATPE Miami](#)

Jan 27-30: [Realscreen Summit](#); New Orleans

Research

➤ When asked to rank the top three challenges facing their businesses in 2020, small business owners cited acquiring new customers (31%), controlling costs (24%) and finding qualified employees (18%).

➤ To attract new talent for hard-to-fill positions, 60% say they’ve offered higher wages and 29% have offered benefits beyond what was typically offered in the past.

(Source: [CNBC/SurveyMonkey Small Business Survey](#))

Quotable

“We have a significant of our customers today that use their wireless phone and their broadband connection. Depending upon economic circumstances and value, you’ll see for some people that phone is really their device. They may not have computers, it’s their phone. And so we understand the necessity for both those. Now quite frankly to have a really great wireless network, you need a lot of fiber. And so they’re complimentary. They’re not contradictory, they’re complimentary. So yes, we do believe that broadband capabilities can be important but the ability to do it mobile-y and deliver things where people want, when they want them, how they want, it’s going to continue to be really important. -- **AT&T senior evp/ CFO John Stephens at the 2019 Wells Fargo TMT Conference**



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