

Cablefax Daily™

Monday — April 13, 2020

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 31 / No. 071

Connected Care: Interest High in Federal Telehealth Dollars

It's only been a week since the **FCC** approved plans to dole out \$200mln in telehealth funding allocated through the CARES Act, but the requests to spend the money are already flowing in. The agency said it will open a portal for applications starting Monday, but the telehealth docket is already seeing requests from eager healthcare providers that want assistance. The telehealth proposals are varied, with the FCC allowing healthcare providers to seek funding for broadband connectivity, telehealth devices and telecommunications. With cable's networks increasingly supporting telehealth and operators looking to partner even further, the industry might want to take notes on some of these requests. **Cox** has been an early leader in the telehealth space, acquiring connected care firm **Trapollo** in 2017. Last week, Trapollo launched a Bring Your Own Device option so that healthcare systems can enable physicians and clinicians and COVID-19-positive patients to download its care app from iOS and Android app stores. Trapollo said it continues to source and deliver tens of thousands of devices to healthcare systems around the country to meet surging patient requirements. The FCC has pledged to process applications for the \$200mln in funding quickly and on a rolling basis. Some of the early filers include the **NYC Fire Department**. FDNY is seeking money for mobile cloud-based nicotine bio-monitoring that works with smartphones for its tobacco treatment program. "New York City is THE epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak in the US. FDNY assumes every firefighter, paramedic, and EMT has been exposed to COVID-19," the program's director wrote in the request, which estimates 1090 FDNY members are tobacco dependent. "There are significant data and studies demonstrating that tobacco use is associated with dramatic COVID-19 disease progression and mortality." The program submitted an invoice of \$457,800 that includes monthly supplies of nicotine biostrips and associated consumable. The FCC has said it doesn't expect to give more than \$1mln to a project. Other requests include healthcare providers looking for funding to invest in a telehealth platform. The stats provided in some of these letters help illustrate what a sea change is taking place. A private practice that performs mental health counseling to rural parishes in Louisiana said it began providing telehealth to approximately 5% of its client base last June. Today, it's at 100% and estimates remaining there for the duration of the pandemic. "With this immediate increase, **Empowerment Consultants** continues to have challenges with keeping up with a large volume of patients due to outdated equipment

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Cablefax Daily (ISSN 1069-6644) is published daily by Access Intelligence, LLC ● www.cablefax.com ● 301.354.2101 ● Editorial Director: Amy Maclean, 301.354.1760, amaclean@accessintel.com ● Publisher: Michael Grebb, 323.380.6263, mgrebb@accessintel.com ● Senior Editor: Sara Winegardner, 301.354.1701, swinegardner@accessintel.com ● Associate Editor: Mollie Cahillane, 212.621.4951, mcahillane@accessintel.com ● Acct. Exec: Olivia Murray, 301.354.2010, omurray@accessintel.com ● Director of Marketing: Kate Schaeffer, kschaeffer@accessintel.com ● Prod. Mgr: Joann Fato, jfato@accessintel.com ● Kerry Smith, Divisional President, Marketing & Media Group, ksmith@accessintel.com ● Group Subs or Subscription Questions, Client Services: 301.354.2101, clientservices@accessintel.com ● Annual subscription price: \$1,749.00/year ● Access Intelligence, LLC, 9211 Corporate Blvd., 4th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850

such as a 1st Generation iPad and 7+ model iPhone,” the firm said. A perusal through these early responses also illustrates the potentially far-reaching impact telehealth can have. A nonprofit healthcare provider in Fruta, CO, detailed how moving to telehealth frees up 2-4 staff members in its pediatric clinic to be available elsewhere in its hospital system to support COVID-19 efforts as their primary responsibilities, such as sanitizing materials and prepping therapy sessions, are no longer relevant with telehealth. The push to expand telehealth continues, with Reps *Anna Eshoo* (D-CA) and *Don Young* (R-AK) introducing a bill Friday that would expand the FCC’s Rural Health Care Program by providing an additional \$2bln and would expand to include urban and suburban healthcare providers. Today, the fund subsidizes 65% of the cost of broadband for eligible public and nonprofit rural healthcare facilities. The bill’s supporters include **NCTA, ACA Connects, the Fiber Broadband Association** and the **National League of Cities**.

DISH Initiates Reorg, Cuts Staff: DISH is moving forward with a company reorg and staff cuts as it weathers the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and prepares to build out the wireless business it acquired from **Sprint** in its merger with **T-Mobile**. “Due to the current economic climate, combined with changing needs of our customers and how we best serve them, DISH has made the difficult decision to reevaluate our organization. This includes a focused set of staffing reductions to align our workforce with the current and future needs of the business,” a DISH spokesperson said in a statement. “It is not a step we took lightly. Our goal is to best serve our DISH and **Sling** customers, position the company to support our future wireless aspirations, and create long-term opportunity for our teams.” DISH did not offer any details on how many employees would be affected by the reorg.

ANA Cries Foul on COVID Ad Ban: The **Association of National Advertisers** is taking issue with an executive order by Michigan’s governor that would impose certain limits on advertising in stores larger than 50K square feet and regarding some housing rentals. Specifically, Gov *Gretchen Whitmer* (D) has imposed a ban on the advertising or promotion of goods that are not groceries, medical supplies, or items that are necessary to maintain the safety, sanitation, and basic operation of residences. It also includes ads for certain rental properties. “This ban almost certainly violates the First Amendment and the Commerce Clause of the Constitution,” ANA said it calling for it to be rescinded. The group said the order is vague about what falls within the ban and there’s no explanation for why only large retail outlets are included. It also said the order is counterproductive since it calls for maintaining communications and information technology, specifically news media, while undermining their life blood of advertising.

NBCU Ad Reduction: **NBCUniversal** announced earlier this week it is permanently reducing linear ads to give more content to viewers, and consumers can see the first activation Friday night. NBCU’s “Stay-In Theater” Family

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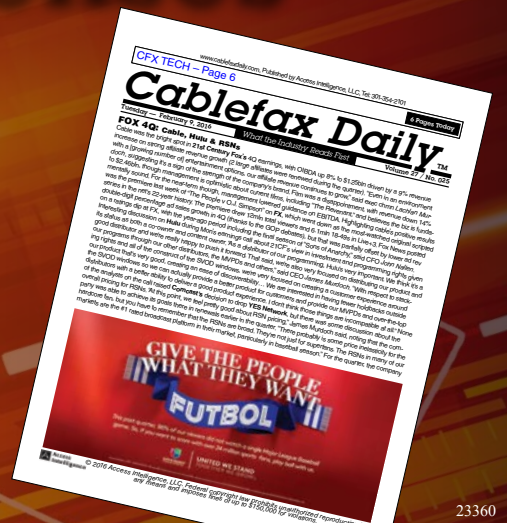
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Movie Nights will air across **USA, Syfy** and **E!**, with **Telemundo** joining in on Saturday night. Friday at 7pm, NBCU will simulcast “Harry Potter and the Family of Secrets” with just one minute and 15 seconds of ad time, down from the national average of 35 minutes, thanks to a sponsorship from **Target**. The nets have also repurposed about seven minutes of promo time to show “fun, behind-the-scenes content related to the movie.” Saturday has “Kung Fu Panda 2” on Telemundo.

New Look for ID: **ID** is shaking things up with a new logo, tagline and on-air primetime strategy. Its new logo simply says “ID,” which the net says enhances its multiplatform visibility. Its new tagline “Don’t just watch. Witness” is designed to promise the viewer immersion in mystery. As for the primetime strategy, there will be an “ID Primetime Starts Now” video intro at 8pm, and the net layered an “An ID Original” intro card into every original series episode. The net also added a “Next Up” window that runs the last 10 seconds of each hour.

Programming: **Telemundo** is expanding its daytime programming to at least 12 hours of live news coverage and entertainment news during the week, beginning April 13, to offer extensive coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic. -- **Food Network** is premiering a new self-shot series from quarantine “Amy Schumer Learns to Cook” with actress *Amy Schumer* and her husband *Chris Fischer*, a professional chef.


Cablefax Dashboard

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Over 4500 Easter eggs have been donated to doctors and health workers in Florence as a gift from President Rocco Comisso and the Viola Family to the heroes of these days, who continue to fight constantly 🙏🏻🧡🦋

#Commisso @mediacomcable
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Brendan Keefe @BrendanKeefe

#BREAKING it was @tylerperry! @kroger confirms that he picked up the tab for all seniors' groceries at 44 Atlanta-area Kroger stores. Look at these faces -- you can see the smiles and tears through the masks!



Quotable

“I think if we didn’t know it already, I think we’ve gotten a real checkpoint here on how vital sports is in our society in this country... we have so many sports that we avidly follow here as a culture and for it all to be taken away from you at one time, it’s been jarring... I do believe that we’re going to get through this. We’re going to have a recheck of things in our lives and a greater appreciation for the little things and how fragile it can be and how fast it can be taken away from you. I will never look at the world the same.

– **CBS Sports announcer Jim Nantz** on *NBC Sports daily talk show* “Lunch Talk Live”

Research

- Looking at all set-top box-based VOD, the month of March saw a nearly 30% increase in average transactions per household that subscribe to VOD YOY, with the average household accessing, purchasing or renting 16 titles of VOD content through the month.
- SVOD had the highest growth, with a 53% increase in average transactions YOY.
- Free on Demand was the next highest growing area, recording a 21% increase.

(Source: **Comscore**)



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