

# Cablefax Daily™

Tuesday — May 19, 2020

What the Industry Reads First

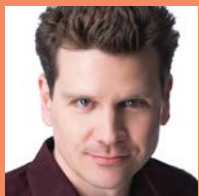
Volume 31 / No. 097

## ATSC 3.0 Ahead: FCC Vote Helps Set the Path for NextGen TV

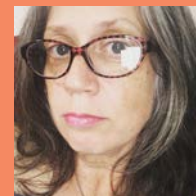
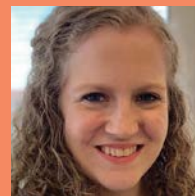
With the **NAB Show 2020** in Vegas canceled, we didn't hear quite as much about ATSC 3.0—or NextGen TV (its preferred consumer friendly name) this spring as we might normally have. That's about to change. Several stations are set to go live with the broadcast standard this year, NextGen TV-enabled sets are starting to hit retail and now the **FCC** plans to vote on a declaratory ruling meant to provide more certainty for broadcasters. FCC commish *Brendan Carr*, speaking at a joint **NAB** and **CTA** virtual event Monday, talked up ATSC 3.0's potential to deliver "broadcast internet services" capable of delivering 25Mbps services that could play a pivotal role in autonomous vehicles, IoT, smart agriculture and telemedicine. This follows his declaration at the last NAB Show that ATSC 3.0 should be seen as a new and competitive broadband pipe. Carr revealed the FCC will vote at its June 9 open meeting on a declaratory ruling that would allow a broadcaster to enter into lease agreements with multiple broadcasters in a single geographic market for purposes of offering broadcast internet services without triggering the FCC's attribution or ownership rules. Could a broadcaster end up using their primary channel to deliver internet instead of a primary TV signal? Doesn't sound like it. "You'd run into Communications Act issues at that point" because broadcasters are required to provide one free stream of television," NAB gen counsel *Rick Kaplan* said during a panel discussion at Monday's event. "That's not going to change. It's not something we want to change. It's a key part of what we do, and I think will always be part of our DNA." So what broadcast internet services use cases could we see for ATSC 3.0? Experts point to its one-to-many capability. "It could send out targeted map and traffic data or provide large, fleet-wide software updates—quickly and efficiently" to autonomous vehicles, Carr said. And broadcasters don't have to wait for autonomous vehicles, added *John Taylor*, **LG Electronics USA's** svp, public affairs and communications. He pointed to the backseat entertainment experience as well updates to maps and telematics. Even things like digital signs on a highway could be updated in real time. "The sky is the limit once we get this off the ground," Taylor said. So, how is it coming along? "You would have seen a bunch of announcements at the NAB Show. I have to say COVID has put a slight delay on things just because our engineers can't get out to those markets to turn on those stations, but we do have plans to deploy in the top markets in the US this year," said *Anne Schelle*, managing director of **Pearl TV**, a business organization of US broadcast companies exploring forward-looking broadcasting opportunities. "You'll see much

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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

more this summer... Collaboratively, we made announcements last year to launch the top 40 markets and we're still on progress to do that. We'll see what that turns out to be this year, but I'm confident we'll be able to meet CE's desire to sell sets and we'll also be looking to promote those heavily in the fall." While COVID has hindered the ability to physically get to stations, she said much of the ecosystem was primed with the station repack in its ninth inning and most stations already upgraded for NextGen transmission equipment. The FCC also will take up a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking at its June meeting seeking comment on whether there needs to be changes to existing rules to further promote the deployment of such services, including whether licensing structure changes would spur more investment.

**RDOF Moves Forward:** FCC chmn *Ajit Pai* has circulated draft procedures for the upcoming \$16bn Phase 1 of the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction, with the Commission slated to vote on finalizing the plans at its June 9 open meeting. The draft will be made public Tuesday. Bidding in the auction is set to begin Oct 29. Under the draft timetable, an online auction application tutorial would be ready by June 15, with a short-form application filing window opening July 1 and closing July 15. There would be an online tutorial and mock auction in October ahead of opening day of bidding. The FCC will hold a second webinar on RDOF Wednesday to help state, local, Tribal, and territorial government officials understand the auction framework, and provide tips for service providers that want to participate in the auction.

**Mayer Trades Disney for TikTok:** Disney streaming chief *Kevin Mayer* is leaving the mouse house for a position as CEO of **TikTok**. Mayer, who will also serve as COO of Chinese conglomerate **ByteDance**, spent 27 years at Disney in various roles and led the rollout of **Disney+** last fall. "Kevin has had an extraordinary impact on our company over the years," Disney CEO *Bob Chapek* said in a statement. "Having worked alongside Kevin for many years on the senior management team, I am enormously grateful to him for his support and friendship." Mayer will be replaced by *Rebecca Campbell*, who currently serves as pres of Disneyland Resort. As a result, Walt Disney World Resort pres *Josh D'Amato* will become chmn, Disney parks, experiences and products—the role previously held by Chapek.

**IBC 2020 Canceled:** COVID-19 has led to the cancellation of one of broadcast's biggest shows. **IBC** officially nixed its 2020 show, previously scheduled to take place Sept 11-14 in Amsterdam. "Right now, despite the best work of the IBC team and our Dutch colleagues, there are still many unknowns," IBC CEO *Michael Crimp* said in a statement. "It is also evident that important aspects of a large-scale event such as IBC will be greatly altered by social distancing, travel restrictions, masks etc. So much so that the spirit of IBC will be compromised." Following in the footsteps of the **NAB Show**, it will launch a virtual event to replace the in-person show. More details on that are coming soon.

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**Publication Date: July 22, 2020**

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**ViacomCBS Upfront Kicks off:** ViacomCBS's two-day virtual upfront kicked off Monday, becoming the first official replacement for canceled in-person upfronts (**NBCU** and **Univision** streamed "updates" last week for advertisers vs "upfronts"). The sessions were pre-recorded, with Monday focusing on the Viacom cable nets and Tuesday to spotlight **CBS**. Monday's event kicked off with a cartoon *Stephen Colbert* teaming up with characters from **Nick Jr's** "Paw Patrol," highlighting the combination of the companies. The upfront touched on the Super Bowl, and emphasized the new Wild Card NFL game that **Nickelodeon** will broadcast. Brands got their own individual spotlights, and ad sales chief *Jo Ann Ross* teamed up with "60 Minutes" *Bill Whitaker* to explain advanced advertising. While not the splashy planned upfront at Carnegie Hall, the digital presentation still managed to spotlight the combined talent from ViacomCBS. *Colbert* closed out the presentation (this time in live-action), alongside hosts *Trevor Noah* and *James Corden*.

**Public Knowledge Eyeing Google:** **Public Knowledge** sent a letter Monday urging the DOJ to take a comprehensive approach to its antitrust investigation into **Google's** digital advertising conduct. The group is recommending the DOJ examine a new research paper from Yale professor *Fiona Scott Morton* and *David Dinielli* of the Omidyar Network that argues Google used its products to shut out rival online advertisers, raise competitors' costs and force buyers and sellers to rely on Google services to generate sales. "If the facts support a comprehensive case along the lines described in this paper, the Division should proceed to file a monopolization complaint that includes the full variety of troubling conduct," the letter reads. "Enforcing our nation's antitrust laws here would not interfere with the technology that fuels the internet's enormous potential."

**Verizon Welcomes BlueJeans:** **Verizon** closed its acquisition of B2B videoconferencing firm **BlueJeans Networks** on Friday. BlueJeans's 390 employees will now work under Verizon's advanced communications portfolio, and Verizon said the company's products will be deeply integrated into Verizon's current and future 5G product roadmap.

**Promotions:** **Charter** announced Monday it will provide one month of free services to any new customer that signs up for **Spectrum Business**. The offer is aimed at Spectrum's SMB customers, including restaurants and fitness clubs, that are slowly starting to re-open their doors with the lifting of stay-at-home orders. -- **Sling TV** is offering new and existing customers 30 days free of **EPIX**, **Showtime** and **STARZ**. The offer is also extending to existing customers who are within 30 days of their next bill due date.

**Distribution:** **CBS Television Stations** and **CBS Interactive** are launching **CBSN Dallas-Fort Worth**, the 10th of ViacomCBS' local DTC streaming news services. The OTT service will feature local news and content produced by KTVT-TV. -- True crime net **Law&Crime** is now available on **Verizon Fios'** most popular channel packages nationwide. -- Free live streaming channels **OAN Encore** and **AWE Encore** have launched on VOD platform **Glewed TV**.

**Ratings:** Live sports returned over the weekend in a big way. **Fox's** coverage of **NASCAR** pulled in 6.32m viewers, making it the most-watched non-Daytona NASCAR Cup Series race since March 5, 2017. It also ranked 38% better than Fox's last NASCAR race on March 8. The next race takes place Wednesday at 7:30pm on **FS1**. -- **TNT's** series "Snowpiercer" premiered as the No 1 new cable entertainment program of 2020. The series pulled in 3.3m total viewers across TNT and **TBS** Sunday night, the largest premiere for TNT since "The Alienist" in 2018."

**Charter Invests in SMB:** **Charter's** Spectrum Community Investment Loan Fund invested \$1m in the Economic and Community Development Institute, a community development financial institution in Ohio. The money will be used to provide loans to small business within Charter's Ohio footprint. Over the next year, the loan fund expects to invest an additional \$4m in community development institutions in California, Florida, North Carolina and Wisconsin.

**Programming:** On the heels of "The Last Dance," **ESPN** will exclusively air "Game 6: The Movie" on Wednesday at 9pm. The special game telecast of Game 6 of the 1998 NBA finals will follow encore presentations of The Last Dance episodes 9 and 10. -- **INSP** will kick off summer 2020 programming with the premiere of "The Warrant." The post-Civil War film airs on June 20 at 8pm. -- **HGTV** is premiering "House Hunters: Comedians on Couches" in a four-night special event at 10 and 10:30pm June 2-June 5. Seven popular comedians will watch and comment on classic episodes of House Hunters via videoconference.

**People:** **ViacomCBS** International promoted *Ezequiel "Quelo" Fonsesca Zas* to gm of streaming and mobile for international. He previously held the title of svp of emerging business for VCNi Americas. -- **Altice USA** named *Jacques Natz* gm of **News 12**, the news group serving the New York tri-state area. Natz spent nearly eight years as svp & senior consultant for media research at firm **SmithGeiger**. -- *Kathleen Burke* joined **Public Knowledge** as policy counsel to support its copyright reform and telecom policy capabilities. Burke last served as a PK policy extern and previously spent time as director of education and outreach at non-profit Fayette Alliance.