

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Set in Stone: FCC Formalizes RDOF Auction Procedures

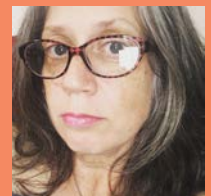
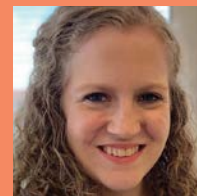
The FCC adopted procedures for the RDOF Phase I auction set to award up to \$16bln in support over 10 years for the deployment of fixed broadband networks in unserved areas. Bidding in the auction will kick off on Oct 29 with the application window for potential bidders opening July 1. The Republican majority backed the procedures while Democrats on the Commission chose to consent in part, dissent in part. Their issues with the proceeding continue to be with its reliance on the FCC's existing broadband data rather than the more granular data the Commission will use to update its maps under the Broadband DATA Act. "I get it. I understand wanting to do more to address the nation's digital divide... but there's a wrong way to do it and a right way to do it. This is the former—and it's irresponsible," commish *Jessica Rosenworcel* said. Commissioner *Geoffrey Starks* said he would have preferred to have started with a smaller pool of money or shorter term of support in Phase I of the RDOF auction so the majority of funding would have been based on the more granular data to be collected when the FCC overhauls its broadband maps. In a press conference following the meeting, chmn *Ajit Pai* argued that there was no reason to delay the auction, especially because Phase II will rely on updated maps. Phase II of the RDOF auction will make available at least \$4.4bln in addition to any unallocated funds from Phase I to target partially served areas as well as any areas not won in the first auction. While some members of Congress want to see the deployment of RDOF Phase I funds for shovel-ready projects by [September](#), Pai has concerns that doing so may actually have an adverse effect. "Our bottom line here is that we do not want to do anything that could ultimately, and ironically, delay the auction and the distribution of funding to help close that divide," Pai said. The Commission also sparred over a declaratory ruling meant to clarify rules that would limit the power of local governments to object to upgrades to existing cell towers. The new rules would block them from delaying changes to existing towers as long as the underlying structure remains intact. The decision was quickly backed by **Verizon**, which said in a statement that the "common sense clarifications" would ensure that providers are able to quickly upgrade existing facilities to support 5G capabilities. Starks and Rosenworcel both argued that the item should be voted on at a later date due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but their colleagues on the other side of the aisle were of a different mind. "The COVID-19 pandemic isn't a reason to

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- Acquisition and upgrade marketing
- Affiliate marketing
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- Content Marketing Campaign
- Community relations
- Corporate social responsibility campaign
- Digital Marketing Campaign
- Influencer Campaign
- Integrated Marketing Campaign
- Interactive Brand Content
- Internal communications campaign
- Marketing of a continuing series
- Marketing of a new series or show
- Marketing of a special or documentary
- Media event
- Media relations campaign
- Multicultural marketing
- Partnership marketing
- PR stunt
- Press kit
- Public affairs campaign
- Shoestring marketing
- Sponsored Content
- Trade show marketing/PR

Audience Engagement & Experience

- App for Smartphone
- App for Tablet
- Contest/Sweepstakes/Promo
- Editorial Excellence
- Fan Base Cultivation
- Graphics/UX Design
- Mobile Experience
- New Product or Launch
- Online Community
- Online Game/Gamification
- Overall Social Presence
- Social Good Campaign
- Social Media Campaign
- Tchotchke
- Use of Facebook
- Use of Instagram
- Use of Snapchat
- Use of Twitter
- Use of Video/Moving Image
- Use of YouTube
- Use of Other Social Platform
- Virtual reality/augmented reality marketing

Pandemic Response

- Audience Engagement
- Corporate Citizenship Hero
- Courage Award
- External Communications
- Internal Communications
- Social Media Campaign



Submit Your Entries by Friday, June 12!

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slow down our efforts to expand wireless connectivity. It's a reason to speed them up," Pai said. "It's easy to say that you favor moving forward quickly on 5G, but what actually matters is to do it."

Ready for CBRS: The **FCC** released the names for those interested in participating in the CBRS auction slated for this summer. Bidding on the 70MHz of shared spectrum is currently scheduled to begin on July 23, and **Comcast, Charter, Cox, AT&T, Verizon, and T-Mobile** all have filed short-form applications to be a part of the action. Others showing interest in the auction include **Vast Broadband, Cable ONE, CenturyLink, Mediacom, Cincinnati Bell, Midco and Liberty Latin America**. More than 22K licenses will be offered in Auction 105, the most to ever be up for grabs in a single auction.

Consumer Satisfaction: Telecom companies are stepping up their game, according to a new report from the **American Customer Satisfaction Index**. The report found that both ISPs and subscription TV saw their first customer satisfaction boost in four years (though still rank towards the bottom among 46 industries, alongside VOD and fixed-line telephone). However, video streaming exceeds the average for all ACSI industries, with a score of 76/100. Customer satisfaction with subscription TV service rose 3.2% YOY to a score of 64. **Comcast's** Xfinity service saw the largest boost, jumping up 11% to a score of 63. Leaders **Verizon Fios** rose 3% to 70 to tie with **AT&T's** U-verse TV (up 1%). **DISH** and **DirecTV** both dropped 3% to a score of 65 and 64, respectively. Video streaming outpaces subscription TV by 12 points, with a score of 76. **Disney+** debuted in the ACSI with the top score across all five telecom categories (80). In second, **Netflix** dropped by a point to 78. Lowest scoring was **Sony Crackle** with a score of 68. On the ISP side, the service overall saw a gain of 4.8%, with Fios again topping the providers with a score of 74, up 4%. Comcast was again the most improved, jumping up 8% to 66. For the first time this year, the ACSI measured key aspects of in-home WiFi experience. The research found that customers using third-party equipment are more satisfied than those using their ISP's equipment across all aspects of the in-home experience, including reliability, range and price. Verizon leads the field for quality with a score of 77, followed by Comcast with 72.

Rumor Mill: **Fox Business's** *Charlie Gasparino* has sources claiming that **DISH** chmn *Charlie Ergen* is trying to renegotiate aspects of its deal to acquire Boost Mobile from the new T-Mobile in order to create a fourth wireless provider. If the reports are true, it's likely that the fall in Boost Mobile's value due to the pandemic is at the heart of the renegotiations. Neither the DOJ nor DISH have denied the rumors. The deadline for the transaction to be completed is July 1.

Nomination Hearing: **Senate Commerce** plans to convene a nominations hearing Tuesday at 2:30pm. Among the presidential nominations being considered are *Mike O'Rielly*, who was nominated for a third **FCC** term in March. If

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approved, the new term would expire in 2024.

FCC Pushes ATSC 3.0 Forward: The FCC voted unanimously Tuesday to clarify that current television station ownership restrictions do not apply to broadcast-delivered services to be powered by the ATSC 3.0 standard. Under the rulemaking, broadcast television licensees can lease spectrum to other broadcasters or to a third party for ancillary and supplementary services without triggering the Commission's broadcast attribution or ownership rules. In an accompanying NPRM, the Commission has asked for comment on whether and how to modify its existing ancillary and supplementary service rules to further promote the deployment of broadcast internet services. It also seeks comment on potential uses of the new technological capabilities to come with the implementation of ATSC 3.0 as well as any existing regulatory barriers to deployment.

Comcast Launches STB VOD Solution: Comcast Technology Solutions and FreeWheel, a division of Comcast Cable, teamed up for a new industry solution that aims to bring programmatic capabilities to set-top-box VOD video inventory. The company said the solution allows both content owners and distributors to offer advertisers access to STB VOD content, unifying it with other inventory sold programmatically across connected TV and digital video channels. It works by combining FreeWheel's ad targeting capabilities with Comcast Technology Solutions' Ad Store, providing real-time creative conditioning and ad distribution to all STB VOD MVPD end points.

Events Update: And it's official, SCTE-ISBE's Cable-Tec Expo will hit the virtual circuit Oct 12-16, instead of its planned in-person event. It will be free for all attendees, thanks to partnerships with Charter, Cox, Comcast and the SCTE Foundation. The event's Fall Technical forum will have a record 267 abstracts on topics such as AI, operational transformation, advancements to cable's 10G platform, lessons learned from COVID-19, and more. The conference was originally scheduled to take place in Denver at the Colorado Convention Center, which was designated in May as a temporary medical facility for the remainder of 2020. Cablefax is the official Show Daily for Cable-Tec Expo. The 2020 Cable Pioneers dinner, originally set to take place Oct 13 in Denver, has also been affected. The Cable TV Pioneers said it would announce its 2020 Class by early July, and is "studying a variety of options for the 54th Annual induction celebration."-- NAB New York, originally scheduled for Oct 21-22, will transform into a digital event taking place in the fall of 2020, building off the success of NAB Show Express last month. "This decision follows extensive surveying of our show community and consultation with the state and local officials in New York, as well as the Javits Convention Center," Chris Brown, evp, conventions & business operations, said in a letter. -- On Wednesday, Comcast NBCU's innovation hub The Farm will host its first-ever online Demo Day celebrating the 10 startups who completed its spring 2020 global accelerator program. The virtual production will feature live pitches by startup founders to an online audience of both investors and the general public. The fourth cohort consists of 10 companies, 90% of which are minority founded and 40% include a female founder.

Pride Month at Comcast: Though Pride usually kicks off on June 1, Comcast NBCUniversal held off on announcing its 2020 Pride initiatives out of "respect to its employees, customers and communities" alongside the social upheaval triggered by the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor. The company is honoring Pride Month with special content and free programming, available on an LGBTQ Film & TV destination on Xfinity X1. Nets USA and Syfy have partnered with LGBTQ advocacy org GLAAD for a multiplatform campaign spotlighting positive representation all month. NBCU has also launched 2020 Pride Honorees, honoring 12 LGBTQ individuals helping in the fight against COVID-19, recognizing that LGBTQ people are at greater exposure and risk of both economic and health complications than non-LGBTQ people. Additionally, the company provided a grant to PowerOn, a non-profit working directly with LGBTQ communities that have little or no access to technology.

Soccer Returns: beIN Sports is resuming coverage of the Spanish LaLiga league on Wednesday, followed by the return of the Turkish SüperLig on Thursday. Live matches will air across all channels on beIN Sports, beIN Sports en Español and beIN Sports Extra, alongside streaming platform beIN Sports Connect. The first match kicks off Wednesday at 3:50pm. -- The Premier League's 2019-2020 season returns to Telemundo Deportes on June 17 at 1pm, available on the Telemundo Deportes app. On June 20 at 12:30pm, viewers can catch matches on the linear Telemundo net. Coverage of the league will air across Telemundo, Universo and the app with 36 days of live action.

Ratings: Fox News was the most watched net across total day and primetime, earning its highest-rated week ever for the month of June. Prime averaged 3.978mln viewers, followed by CNN with 2.51mln and MSNBC with 2.266mln. In total day, Fox averaged 2.034mln, CNN 1.475mln and MSNBC 1.352mln. -- On Saturday, CNN and Sesame Street's joint Town Hall "Coming Together: Standing Up to Racism" was No 1 in cable news at 10am in the A25-54 demo, averaging 492K. The program averaged 1.31mln viewers overall on the net.