

# Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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## Better Together: Charter Asks C-band, CBRS Licensees to Cooperate

Players across cable and telecom are voicing their opinions on a **Charter** petition to modify the **FCC's** C-band order to require some cooperation between C-band and CBRS licensees to avoid disruptions. Charter, which has been involved in both proceedings, has asked the FCC to require that C-band flexible use licensees make Time Division Duplex synchronization available to CBRS licensees and users upon request. TDD, which is used in both the C-band and the CBRS band, uses the same spectrum for both downlink and uplink operations. Having two TDD bands next to each other creates the possibility for interference, but synchronization between the two bands can ensure that base stations on both bands transmit at the same time. Without FCC regulation, Charter believes some C-band licensees will refuse to work together with those operating in the CBRS band. "While carriers with spectrum in both bands will have an interest in engaging in internal coordination, C-Band licensees without CBRS operations could have the incentive to resist cooperation with CBRS operators who are likely to offer competing services," Charter said in its petition. "This harm to competition directly contradicts the intent of the CBRS proceeding, which is to create innovative competitors and improve the efficient use of spectrum." Opponents to Charter's petition, which include **T-Mobile** and **AT&T**, have pointed out that the FCC already considered Charter's request when it crafted the C-band order and determined that standard out-of-band emission limits would be enough to keep C-band operations from harmfully interfering with CBRS operations. The Commission also formed a Technical Working Group with a CBRS Coexistence subcommittee, which **Verizon** called in its opposition "the optimal forum for CBRS users and future 3.7GHz Service licensees—who may be one in the same—to discuss how best to provide for co-existence between the operations in the two bands." Notably, representatives from Charter and Verizon are co-chairing the subcommittee. Charter has acknowledged that there are industry working groups considering interference between the spectrum bands that are likely to encourage synchronization, but a working group does not have the authority to require a C-band licensee to make synchronization available if it does not have any incentive to help a CBRS competitor. Siding with Charter is **NCTA**, which agrees that CBRS users are "highly likely" to experience harmful interference from adjacent 3.7GHz Service Licensees. NCTA said in its filing that the Commission stopped just short of explicitly stating that all CBRS operations are entitled to protec-



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tion from harmful interference from adjacent operations. It's time to make that clear, NCTA said. "It should also require 3.7GHz Service Licensees to work in good faith with CBRS operators to resolve harmful interference concerns, including by making TDD synchronization available upon request from CBRS operators," NCTA said.

**ESN Nets to Comcast Expanded Basic:** More details are emerging on **Comcast's** carriage agreement with *Byron Allen's Entertainment Studios Networks*. Earlier this month, the two announced they had settled Allen's racial discrimination lawsuit and that Comcast would be launching ESN's **Comedy.TV**, **Recipe.TV** and **Justice Central**. The announcement didn't say what Xfinity package the nets would be added to, but Comcast has begun to issue programming change notifications showing the nets will be added to its expanded basic tier as well as its Entertainment genre pack. The ESN nets will begin launching in Comcast markets over the next few weeks.

**Fox Closes Door on US Open:** The US Open golf tournament will move to **NBCUniversal**, with **Fox Sports** ending its 12-year contract with the USGA. The change-up is COVID-19 related, with the US Open now pushed to Sept 17-20. That puts it up against the NFL, college football and MLB, which Fox also has contract for. The *AP* first reported that NBCU would take over the contract Sunday night.

**Bill Features Broadband Subsidy:** Another day, another broadband bill. The Emergency Broadband Connections Act, sponsored by 26 Senate Dems, including *Ron Wyden* (D-OR) and *Richard Blumenthal* (D-CT), would provide a \$50/month benefit to low-income workers who have been laid off or furloughed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Its introduction comes as the FCC's voluntary Keep Americans Connected pledge ends on Tuesday. Eligibility would be based on qualification for the Lifeline program, the National School Lunch Program or Federal Pell Grants. It also includes a provision to provide devices, such as laptops and tablets, to eligible households. The bill parallels provisions in the House HEROES Act and the Emergency Broadband Connection Act by Rep *Marc Veasey* (D-TX). Groups supporting the measure include the **ACLU**, **Consumer Reports**, **CWA**, **NAACP** and **Public Knowledge**.

**AT&T Lights Up More 5G Sites:** **AT&T** activated its 5G network in 28 additional US markets Monday across Arkansas, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and Puerto Rico. In parts of some markets, AT&T has also enabled dynamic spectrum sharing technology, allowing carriers to share the same channel between both 4G and 5G users simultaneously.

**BET Awards Numbers:** Sunday's "BET Awards" drew 3.7m P2+ with its simulcast across **ViacomCBS** networks. The virtually produced event drew 1.6m viewers on **BET** alone and 1.9m on **CBS**, the first time it has ever been

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available on broadcast. It's up from 2.43mln viewers for the show last year. BET is home to the top three cable awards shows for 18-49s for the 2020 season year-to-date (BET Awards, "Soul Train Awards," and "Hip-Hop Awards"). The BET Awards generated more than 31mln viewers across BET Digital on show day—up 2.5x from last year.

**Doing Good:** Cox announced Monday the award of a \$100K grant from the **James M Cox Foundation** to the **Boys & Girls Club of America**. The funds will support development of new digital programming and enhance the functionality of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America's MyFuture virtual learning platform, which will now be available to students participating in the Cox Connect2Compete program through the operator's Digital Academy. The Academy is an online learning platform with a library of computer literacy tips, educational videos, tutorials and interactive games.

**Smart Home Notes:** DISH's installation brand **OnTech** has expanded its partnership with **Google**. Now anyone who buys **Nest** products through the Google Store can add installation services and schedule an appointment with OnTech during the checkout process. Nest products through the Google Store can add installation services and schedule an appointment with OnTech during the checkout process.

**LLA Taps Ericsson for Virtualization:** **Liberty Latin America** is partnering with **Ericsson** to perform a major upgrade of its mobile core network in the Caribbean and Latin America. The three-year deal will see Ericsson deploying virtualized and cloud-based mobile core network solutions. Deployment is expected to begin later this year.

**Plume Finds Friends in Japan:** Japanese cable op **J:COM** signed an extended partnership with **Plume** under which it will distribute Plume's platform to other operators throughout Japan. The larger partnership follows the successful launch of J:COM Mesh Wi-Fi, Powered by Plume last October. J:COM has already secured roll-outs with 10 cable operators.

**Distribution:** Starting on July 15, all seasons of **INSP's** "The Cowboy Way" will be made available on digital platforms **Tubi**, **YouTube**, **IMDb TV**, **Facebook Watch** and **INSP.com**. That includes Season 7 of the series, which will debut on INSP on July 29 at 9pm.

**Programming:** **EPIX** will air the first season of drama "Britannia" on Aug 2. EPIX will also exclusively premiere the second season for US audiences on Oct 4. It will be the US home to Season Three as well, which is currently in production. -- It'll be different, but there will still be a Nathan's Famous Hot Dog-Eating Contest on July 4, with **ESPN** airing the event at noon ET. This year's contest will take place in a private location with COVID-19 safety measures in place.-- **FNC** named former **ESPN** radio host **Will Cain** co-host of "FOX & Friends Weekend." Cain will make his debut on August 15. -- **Ovation TV** will air Australian crime drama "The Code" on Aug 1. Eps will also be available on demand and on the net's app.

**People:** **Charter** named **Steve Raymond** vp, accessibility. Raymond most recently served as vp, client solutions at **Nielsen Connectivity**. Raymond has long been involved with **Adaptive Spirit** (formerly **SkiTam**), a not-for-profit trade association that focuses on building effective networking practices in telecom and supporting the US Paralympic Ski, Snowboard and Nordic teams. He's also spent periods of time at **Disney**, **AT&T Sports Networks** and **Vubiquity**. At Charter, Raymond will report to digital platforms gvp **Peter Brown**.

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