

Cablefax Daily™

Wednesday — July 15, 2020

What the Industry Reads First

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Spread Wings: Peacock Ready for Flight

NBCUniversal's **Peacock** is doing something a little different than other streamers we've seen come into the space. First of all, it's the only new streamer to offer a free tier, albeit ad-supported. SVODs such as **HBO Max**, **Disney+** and **Apple TV+** all have no free option, and while AVOD isn't new, other players like **Tubi** and **Pluto TV** don't produce original content. Peacock launches nationally on Wednesday, and its free option will have more than 13K hours of programming with the ability to channel surf. The free tier will have a library of popular movies, original content, new episodes of **NBC** current season series a week after they air, and "hundreds" of shows including "30 Rock" and "Parks and Recreation." Sports fans will also get some live events at no cost, including four exclusive Premier League matches on launch day, coverage of the US Open Championship and an NFL Wild Card Playoff. The free tier represents about two-thirds of all of Peacock's content. Peacock Premium costs \$4.99 a month and offers more than 20K hours of content, with some ads (but will be free for **Comcast** and **Cox** subs). Then there's the \$9.99/month option that's completely ad-free. Peacock also has more than 30 curated channels, reminiscent of broadcast TV. Users will be able to jump from channels like NBC News Now and Sky News, TODAY All Day, Peacock Reality, or curated channels that put together best moments from shows like "The Office" (Office Shorts) and "Saturday Night Live" (SNL Vault). However, there's no access to the live, linear NBC channel, something that **CBS All Access** does offer with its \$5.99 price point. And while the coronavirus pandemic delayed production on some Peacock Originals for its beta launch back in April, nine original series will launch with the service Wednesday, and four more shows have premiere dates ranging from Aug 6 to Sept 17. **WWE** also announced on Tuesday it's bringing 100 hours of content to the streamer in August. Comcast offered a sneak peak of Peacock to 15mln Xfinity subs back in April, so most bugs should be worked out. The service already has many major distribution deals in place at launch, but noticeably lacks carriage with **Amazon** and **Roku** (as does HBO Max). Peacock announced on Tuesday carriage with **Sony** for its PS4 systems beginning the week of July 20. Not everyone is thrilled with Peacock's launch, however. Some of NBC's largest local affiliate groups, including **Gray Television**, **Hearst**, **Nexstar**, **TEGNA** and **Sinclair**, won't broadcast Thursday night's "30 Rock" reunion special. According to industry trades, the station owners believe the reunion is too much of a promotion for Peacock. Since the service will have next-day reruns of NBC series on its premium tier, and early

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As always, it's free to nominate candidates for the Diversity List.

NEW for 2020!

INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES

Diverse Executive of the Year

A diverse executive with outstanding business results over the last year. All departments and job functions are eligible.

D&I Champion

An executive whose contributions to diversity initiatives and overall D&I leadership has made an important impact within the cable & broadband industry and inspired others to step up their games.

D&I Mentor of the Year

An individual whose extraordinary mentoring effort has made a measurable impact in helping to increase the number of low- to mid-level diverse executives that have risen to senior roles.

LGBTQ+ Executive of the Year

An executive who identifies as an LGBTQ+ individual and embodies excellence in leadership, community service and overall business acumen.

The Trailblazers

This select group of diverse executives exhibits outstanding innovation, creativity and passion—all while making enormous contributions that take their companies to the next level.

Thrivers Under 30

These young and diverse up-and-comers represent the future of the industry, which depends on their energy, new ideas and unique perspectives to drive success.

ORGANIZATION AWARDS

Advertising Campaign

Recognizing an advertising campaign for a brand, service or product that appeals to diverse customers or increases a company's outreach to minority or other diverse communities.

Community Outreach

Recognizing specific community outreach efforts related directly to helping underserved communities or promoting a more diverse community.

Diversity in Business Award

Recognizing a for-profit initiative that ties diversity objectives to a new product or service that bolstered the company's bottom line.

D&I Mentoring Program

Recognizing a successful diversity promotion program that has been in place for at least 2 years and has made a sustained and measurable impact on a company's ratio of diverse employees.

Public Affairs Campaign

Recognizing a public affairs media, lobbying or awareness campaign (local, regional or national) designed to create awareness of a company's diversity efforts, charitable contributions or other initiatives aimed at a more diverse and inclusive world.

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Olivia Murray at

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streaming of the late night shows, broadcasters are likely worried that Peacock will siphon viewers of the network. It's clear the streamer hopes to draw customers in through a combination of original programming and its light ad load, and is heavily emphasizing its free option. There may be no better time to launch a streamer, however. Research from Braze shows that since the pandemic started, 41% of consumers have subscribed to additional TV streaming services, and customers are more likely to keep a TV streaming service after testing out a free trial if the service offers new shows and channels (49%) and has competitive pricing (35%). But don't count on Peacock becoming a replacement for the likes of Netflix. MoffettNathanson found that while 56% of Netflix users also use Amazon Prime Video and 41% use Hulu, 80% of Prime, Hulu and Apple TV+ users stream additional content on Netflix, and nearly 90% of Disney+ users do. "Streamers have yet to make the choice of replacing their Netflix subscriptions in favor of Disney+ and other new entrants (i.e., HBO Max, Peacock, Quibi). Early on, the new bundles continue to be complements rather than substitutes to Netflix," MoffettNathanson wrote.

Diversity Week Update: The industry's annual Diversity Week will look a little bit different this year. NAMIC and WICT have both moved to virtual initiatives instead of their traditional conferences and events. The virtual conferences will take place during the original time frame, the week of Oct 4. The orgs said they will communicate directly with members and conference participants to outline plans. The Walter Kaitz Foundation announced it is canceling the 37th Annual Kaitz Fundraising Dinner, and instead pivoting to a major fundraising campaign to support the work of its grants programs.

Utah Strong for Google Fiber: Google Fiber is expanding its Utah footprint, announcing it will soon be building its network into the city of Millcreek. In a blog post, Google Fiber thanked Millcreek Mayor Jeff Silvestrini and the Millcreek City Council, which has approved a license agreement giving Google Fiber access to rights of way to begin construction in the city later this year. The provider's goal is to serve Millcreek customers in early 2021 while also completing construction on its Salt Lake City network.

Verizon Commits to Digital Literacy, Environmental Goals: Verizon revealed its Citizen Verizon responsible business plan Tuesday, which is designed to drive business initiatives that also create an impact. The plan lays out how the company will use its resources to drive economic, environmental and social progress. "There has never been a more critical moment to demonstrate the power of purpose," Verizon chmn/CEO Hans Vestberg said in a statement. "To continue being one of the world's technology leaders, we must address the economic, environmental and societal issues that are most pressing." Verizon has pledged to provide 10mln youths with digital skills training and offer 1mln small businesses with resources to help them thrive in a digital economy by 2030. Additionally, the company

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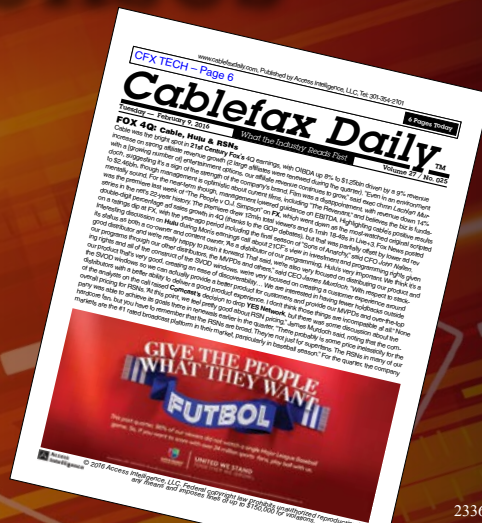
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will offer 500K individuals skills training for the jobs of the future by 2030 and will become carbon neutral in its operations by 2035 by reducing emissions, investing in renewable energy and purchasing carbon assets. Verizon plans to bring together business leaders, activists and thought leaders for the inaugural “Citizen Verizon Assembly: Charging Social Change Forward” virtual event, which will be livestreamed on Yahoo Finance on July 28 from 5-6pm ET.

Altice Closes Service Electric Deal: Altice USA closed its [previously announced](#) acquisition of NJ cable operator **Service Electric Cable TV**, extending its footprint into neighboring NJ communities. Altice announced back in February that it was buying the operator for \$150mln.

Quibi Wins Injunction Battle: Quibi received some good news Monday with a federal judge denying a tech company’s motion for a preliminary injunction against the company and its Turnstyle technology. **Eko** claimed that Quibi had misappropriated proprietary technology to create the Turnstyle functionality at the heart of the short-form streamer’s platform. “The Motion fails to make a sufficient showing of irreparable harm to Eko’s reputation and goodwill because of the technical implementation of Turnstyle that allegedly resulted from misappropriation of Eko’s claimed trade secret Mobile Device Optimized RTS,” Judge *Christina Snyder* said in the order. “Evidence does not indicate any significant investigation by Eko into Quibi’s product, which would be expected if Eko believed that Quibi had relied on Eko’s proprietary technology.” Snyder did not rule on the merits of Eko’s lawsuit against Quibi.

NAD Cautions Verizon on 5G Claims: The **National Advertising Division** recommended **Verizon** discontinue claims related to its rollout of 5G service in cities across the country. NAD determined that in two television commercials, Verizon made implied claims about the breadth of its 5G coverage and typical speeds that could be misleading to customers. In addition to claims about typical speeds, NAD recommended that Verizon discontinue claims that communicate that its 5G service is widely available in US cities and that its service is broadly and readily accessible in the cities where it has been launched. The commercials’ claims were challenged by **AT&T**. Verizon said that it will comply with NAD’s recommendations even though it does not agree with all aspects of its decision.

No Huawei for UK: The UK made the decision to follow the US and ban **Huawei** equipment from its 5G networks. The UK has restricted broadband providers from buying new Huawei 5G equipment after Dec 31 and all existing Huawei equipment will be removed from 5G networks by the end of 2027. The action was celebrated by **5G Action Now** chmn *Mike Rogers* and **FCC** chmn *Ajit Pai*. “There is an overwhelming consensus that Huawei is in a position to exploit network vulnerabilities and compromise critical communications infrastructure for the benefit of the Chinese Communist Party,” Pai said in a statement.

How FCC Moved Fast on Telehealth: In an interview with *Axios* co-founder *Mike Allen*, **FCC** chmn *Ajit Pai* expressed his pride in how quickly Commission staff stood up the COVID-19 Telehealth Fund. The fund provided \$200mln in funding, appropriated by Congress as part of the CARES Act, to health care providers looking to offer connected care services to patients in response to the pandemic. “To the extent that the FCC gets authority outside of the typical arcane, slow-moving, statutory-bound legacy programs that we’ve got, we can execute really quickly,” Pai said. “Going forward, I do hope that as Congress thinks about how to update the telehealth rules, one of the things it will consider is giving all agencies more flexibility.” He pointed to the FCC’s Rural Healthcare Program as an example of an initiative that has complex rules that don’t allow the American consumer to get the most out of it. **Cablefax** will be hosting a virtual event on Aug 13 from 1-4:30pm ET to explore opportunities for operators in the world of telehealth.

Discovery Launches New Ad Product: **Discovery**’s new cross-channel ad product is set to unify audiences across all of the company’s linear and digital platforms and provide new audience targeting. OneGraph, combined with Discovery Engage, will offer marketers a single platform to analyze and reach Discovery’s 30% share of cable TV viewers across all platforms. OneGraph is powered by LiveRamp, and Discovery advertisers will now be able to activate more than 50 unique segments and access over 20K third-party segments.

Ratings: **Fox News** was number one in both prime and total day this week, averaging 3.292mln and 1.653mln viewers, respectively. In prime, **MSNBC** brought in 2.183mln viewers, followed by **CNN** with 1.469mln. MSNBC saw 1.243mln viewers in total day, and CNN with 999K.

Programming: **HBO Max** ordered six episodes of “Untitled Michael Che Project (wt),” an original sketch comedy series starring *Michael Che* (“Saturday Night Live”). -- **Nickelodeon**’s 20-episode animated series “Santiago of the Seas” will premiere Oct 9 at 12:30pm. -- The **Moving Picture Institute** and **BET** announced production of a feature-length film inspired by the work of criminal justice reform advocate *Kemba Smith*. The film will have its television premiere on BET with additional launch and distribution plans to be announced at a later date. Principal photography is slated to begin in 2021.