

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Convention Connection: Charter's \$1.4mln DNC Investment in Milwaukee

When Charter signed on as the primary connectivity provider for the Democratic National Convention, it didn't quite envision an event like this. As with most things, COVID-19 has forced most of the festivities into the virtual realm with the host city mostly empty this week. Still, Charter is doing its part to shine a spotlight on Milwaukee. The cable operator has built and upgraded the broadband infrastructure in downtown Milwaukee to serve the Wisconsin Convention Center, Panther Arena and Miller High Life theater—with much of the upgrades to remain in place post-convention. Charter's overall investment in Milwaukee is \$1.4mln, comprising connectivity, infrastructure and community investment. Charter added to its infrastructure in a three-block area to serve the DNC, including a high-capacity, fiber-based network that will offer multiple advanced services with industry-leading bandwidth, including redundancy. It's also providing internet, video, voice and transport services to support virtual attendance, and three 10 Gbps circuits with DDOS Protection to the DNCC technology team. Along with 24x7 monitoring and support, the commitment reflects 2,500 **Spectrum Enterprise** man-hours. Charter also announced a diverse community impact program that will invest \$100K to support the city and its residents through a series of activities and events with Milwaukee nonprofits, including YWCA of Southeast Wisconsin, Milwaukee Public School and Revitalize Milwaukee. Charter's made a similar commitment in Charlotte, NC, the host city for the 2020 Republican National Convention (Aug 24-27). In Milwaukee, Charter is giving out 500 Spectrum Safe & Healthy Home Kits, which include items such as a smoke alarm, weather stripping and carbon monoxide tester. Other projects included volunteer work over the weekend to repair 15 homes and a virtual event with focused on empowering youth through technology. "Milwaukee is a special city that many of our employees call home," *Gary Underwood*, Charter's vp, State Government Affairs, said in a statement. "We felt the best way to give back was to build on our longstanding community presence through a special program that honors the DNC host city providing resources and support to several nonprofit organizations to help further their good work." Meanwhile, Charter's **Spectrum News 1 Wisconsin** is busy covering not just the convention itself, but the impact on the city. Even with most things virtual, there are still street closures, security restrictions and some protests. Spectrum News 1 state political reporter *Anthony DaBruzzi* will interview

T. HOWARD
FOUNDATION
Diversity in Media

Dear Friends and Supporters of the T. Howard Foundation:

As promised, we are pleased to announce that we are going to air a Virtual 2020 Diversity Awards Event.

On September 30th, the Virtual Diversity Awards Event will recognize the intern class of 2019, pay tribute to our 2020 honorees; Jason Collins, NBA; Ayo Davis, ABC Entertainment and Disney+; Johnathan Hargis, Charter Communications and DeDe Lea Viacom/CBS and thank our incredible supporters that have stood by us during this challenging time.

It's not the same as celebrating with our friends and partners, but everyone's safety is more important.


Don't forget that this year contributions to the Foundation will be 100% tax deductible.

Stay tuned for announcements letting you know exactly when and how to access the video.

Until then, take care and stay safe,



Andy Topping,
SVP, Human Resources
Comcast Communications, Inc
Chairman, Board of Directors, T. Howard Foundation



Jo Pamphile
President & CEO
T. Howard Foundation

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Wisconsin's state and local elected officials, and provide expert analysis throughout the week-long convention. Charter's coverage will go beyond the local Spectrum News teams' work, with all 30 linear news nets and the Spectrum News app delivering programming for both the DNC and RNC. Thursday is the big night for the DNC as that's when *Joe Biden* will accept his party's nomination, but Monday will be the first run of the virtual experience. We've been promised a mix of live and pre-recorded speeches under the theme, "We the People." Monday's jam-packed two-hour schedule includes remarks from NY gov *Andrew Cuomo*, House Democratic Whip *James Clyburn* (D-SC) and **Quibi** CEO *Meg Whitman*, *Michelle Obama*, *Bernie Sanders* and former OH gov *John Kasich* (R) as well as musical performances from *Leon Bridges*, *Billy Porter* and *Steven Stills*. The news nets will all be out in force for the event, with a parade of pundits. **C-SPAN** will stick to its commentary-free coverage (in 2000, C-SPAN was the first to livestream the conventions in their entirety). **Fox News** anchor *Bill Hemmer* will offer **FOX** O&O stations and broadcast affiliates live convention coverage throughout the week. While the networks will all be there, the Democratic National Convention Committee also is making its own play with its own DNC stream available on its website or through DNC apps on Apple TV, Roku, Amazon Fire TV, Twitch and on various smart TVs. There's also a livestream on the @DemConvention YouTube, Facebook and Twitter social media channels.

FCC Extends Lifeline Waivers: The **FCC** is extending Lifeline-related waiver deadlines until later this fall due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The **Wireline Competition Bureau** introduced a number of measures in April to make it easier for the unemployed to qualify for Lifeline, and also extended Lifeline-related waivers. "In light of the ongoing pandemic, we find good cause to extend, on our motion, our prior waivers of certain Lifeline program rules governing recertification, reverification, general de-enrollment, subscriber usage, income documentation, and documentation requirements for subscribers residing in rural areas on Tribal lands through November 30, 2020," the Bureau said. It added that it will continue to monitor the situation to determine whether any additional extensions are necessary. The Bureau has also directed the Universal Service Administrative Company to pause its periodic, targeted reviews designed to identify and de-enroll ineligible subscribers.

Disney Adds More Streamers to Verizon Deal: **Verizon** and **Disney** expanded their partnership, with the former unveiling a new range of Mix & Match plans that bundle in streaming services. Beginning Thursday, **Disney+**, **Hulu** and **ESPN+** will be included in select Mix & Match Unlimited wireless plans. Also included in those plans will be features like Apple Music and access to Verizon's 5G Ultra Wideband network. Mix & Match plans start at \$35/month. Existing customers currently receiving 12-months of free access to Disney+ can move to Verizon's Play More and

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NEW FOR 2020!

Cablefax is expanding the recognition of female excellence & achievements by adding 7 individual & organization award recognitions including: The Wavemakers, The Rising Tide (*honoring women 30 & under*) and Mentoring Programs.

DEADLINE: FRIDAY, AUG. 21

www.CablefaxWomen.com



Get More Unlimited plans with the Disney bundle included, or can choose to stay in their current plan and add both ESPN+ and Hulu to their package for \$6/month.

WWE Goes Virtual: WWE live events—including USA Network’s “Monday Night RAW”—are transitioning to a virtual arena experience. The Aug 17 RAW will still originate from Full Sail arena, but next Monday’s will mark the first interactive RAW from Amway Center in Orlando. Fans can register online to be brought into the arena via live video on LED boards. The live experience, created in partnership with **The Famous Group**, kicks off Friday on **FOX** with “Friday Night SmackDown” on Fox. WWE said the virtual experience will continue for the foreseeable future, with only essential personnel in attendance.

At the Commission: The **FCC’s Wireless Telecommunications Bureau** is seeking comment on a request from **ACA Connects** to stay the Aug 31 deadline for earth station operators to make lump sum elections under the Commission’s C-Band Order. While Commission rules normally require that oppositions to requests must be filed within seven days of the request’s filing and forbids replies to oppositions, the Bureau has decided that a shorter turnaround is necessary to ensure that the Commission has time to respond to the stay request ahead of the deadline for filing lump sum elections. With that, oppositions are due Wednesday.

Distribution: **DirecTV** joined **Movies Anywhere’s** family of digital retailers Monday, and the pair are celebrating the deal with a limited-time promotion. Through Sept 9, new and existing registered Movies Anywhere users can choose one complimentary digital movie to add to their collection when they connect any digital retailer to their Movies Anywhere account for the first time.

FCC CBRS Spectrum Auction: Gross proceeds have topped \$4.32bln in the **FCC’s** 3.5GHz spectrum auction. It looks like the end could be near, with bidding slowing down (Friday’s Round 47 closed at \$4.2bln). Last week was a busy one, with gross proceeds climbing 64% (\$1.6bln) from the week before. **New Street Research** attributed some of the growth to bidders pulling out of large urban markets like NYC as prices exceeded \$0.5/MHz-POP and then putting those bids in counties where supply exceeded demand. That created “a rotation of bids that drove up gross proceeds, while leaving aggregate bids little changed,” the analysts said.

Doing Good: **Sparklight** and the other **Cable One** brands have donated more than \$50K to schools in their communities to help with the upcoming school year. They also recently donated hundreds of Chromebooks to Title 1 schools. Over the past 7 years, Cable One has donated more than 1500 Chromebooks.

Programming: “Tyler Perry’s *Madea’s Farewell Play*” will launch exclusively on **BET+** on Aug 27. The film marks Perry’s last in the role. -- **ESPN’s** 2020 “Monday Night Football” commentating team will feature *Steve Levy*, *Brian Griese* and *Louis Riddick*. The team will begin the season with the **Tennessee Titans** at the **Denver Broncos** Sept 14, 10:10pm ET. -- **Mysteries** are working so well for **Ovation TV** that the arts network has created “Mystery Alley,” an expanded category on AVOD service **Ovation NOW** and a Saturday night block on linear TV (content also available on demand). Initial programming on the AVOD includes “Midsomer Murders” and “Cloudstreet.” Linear offerings for the block will include seasons 1 and 2 of “The Fall.”

On the Circuit: We’ll be hearing more about the **CBS All Access** rebrand at **NATPE Streaming Plus**, taking place Sept 14-17. *Marc DeBevoise*, chief digital officer at **ViacomCBS** and *Julie McNamara*, evp and head of programming, CBS All Access, will participate in a keynote conversation on the service’s evolution and upcoming rebrand. -- **NAMIC** is gearing up for its 2020 conference, taking place virtually Oct 6-9. The group announced a panel “The Value of Mentoring,” sponsored by the **Walter Kaitz Foundation**, featuring *James Anderson*, svp, enterprise inclusion, marketing and communications at **WarnerMedia**; *Christy Haubegger*, evp, chief enterprise inclusion officer at **WarnerMedia**, and *Ed Lewis*, co-founder, CEO and publisher of **Essence Communications**.

ViacomCBS Taps Intelsat for International Distribution: **ViacomCBS** has chosen **Intelsat** to continue distributing content internationally across Central Europe, Eastern Europe and across the Asia Pacific region. In the European markets, ViacomCBS will use Intelsat’s direct-to-home platform on the 1 West video neighborhood to deliver its programming. The programmer will use the Intelsat 19 satellite to serve its distribution affiliates in the Asia Pacific region, and will take advantage of Intelsat’s terrestrial uplink services to deliver content to remote and hard-to-reach areas.

People: With **TiVo** and **Xperi’s** merger behind him, former TiVo CEO *Dave Shull* is joining work-from-home infrastructure provider **Poly** as pres, CEO and board member effective Sept 8. Poly, formerly Plantronics and Polycom, is a global communications company that makes solutions, including headsets and video collaboration devices, for a variety of service providers.