

# Cablefax Daily™

Wednesday — October 14, 2020

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 31 / No. 199

## Expo Reflection: Managing the Network in the COVID Era

Every ISP out there saw a surge in data traffic in the first few months of the pandemic, but they rose to the challenge. **Atlantic Broadband** saw internet traffic in early months increase by about 25%, and in some areas, it was about 30%, chief communications officer *Andy Walton* said during a panel Tuesday at **SCTE-ISBE Cable-Tec Expo**. “With work from home, a typical household is starting to look more like a small business in terms of data usage,” he said.

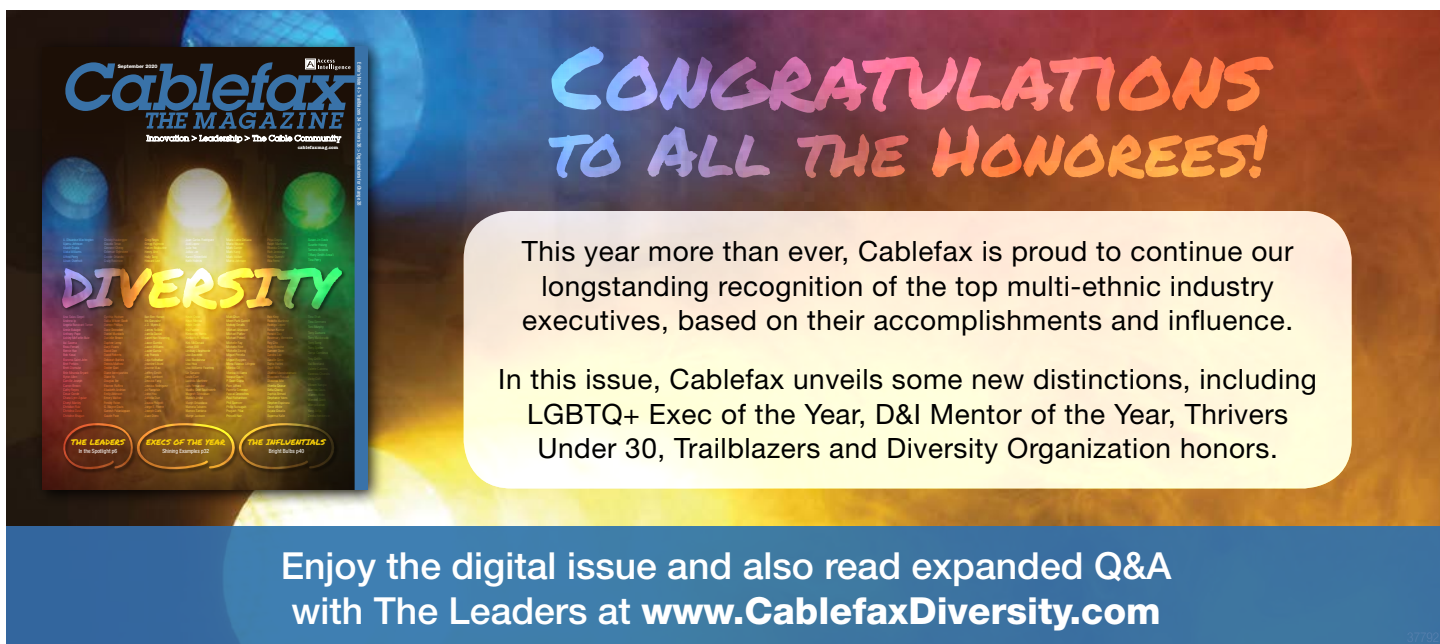
Operators report that network investments helped them rise to the challenge. But there was also work done to increase capacity. **Schurz Communications** had as many node splits in three months as it would normally have in an entire year, according to CTO *Tom Williams*. For 2020, it will have done twice the amount of node splits it normally does in a year to keep up with growing capacity.

“We went up drastically—roughly 37% on the upstream, 32% on the downstream” from March through June,” *Williams* said. “It came down just a little bit, but we’re seeing a surge again as kids are going back to school and more work is occurring.”

A Fall Technical Forum session later in the day drilled down on how the network fared, with the big takeaway being that it was small tweaks that helped networks handle the surge. “I think one of the great learnings during COVID is that the networks are much more resilient and elastic than a lot of us thought. Some of us have been working with DOCSIS for almost 30 years at this point. Quite honestly, it was a great surprise,” said **Cox** chief access scientist *Jeff Finkelstein*. “We were very able to weather this storm just making these small incremental changes. Not everything is these big shiny objects that require massive uplifts.”

There’s been a lot of talk about the big increases in upstream traffic COVID-19 brought thanks to apps like video conferencing, but *Williams* warned that the uptick isn’t all due to the pandemic. There’s also significant growth in Internet of Things devices, particularly video-related such as security cameras. “I think you’re going to see a shift in investment toward mid- or high-splits, or even overlaying with fiber in the next few years,” *Williams* predicted.

**Atlantic Broadband** has seen a lot of interest from schools and educational institutions in symmetrical speeds.



**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE HONOREES!**

This year more than ever, Cablefax is proud to continue our longstanding recognition of the top multi-ethnic industry executives, based on their accomplishments and influence.

In this issue, Cablefax unveils some new distinctions, including LGBTQ+ Exec of the Year, D&I Mentor of the Year, Thrivers Under 30, Trailblazers and Diversity Organization honors.

Enjoy the digital issue and also read expanded Q&A with The Leaders at [www.CablefaxDiversity.com](http://www.CablefaxDiversity.com)

The advertisement features a magazine cover on the left with the title 'Cablefax THE MAGAZINE' and the theme 'DIVERSITY'. The cover also lists 'THE LEADERS', 'EXEC OF THE YEAR', and 'THE INFLUENTIALS'. The background is a colorful, abstract design with light trails.

# L&D Experience: The Evolution of Learning

As objectives and circumstances change, learning must evolve to stay ahead of the curve.

## L&D EXPERIENCE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2020 | 1:00PM - 3:00PM EDT  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2020 | 2:00PM - 2:30PM EDT



**L&D EXPERIENCE CHAIR**

**Nancy Murphy**  
Executive Director,  
Learning Workforce  
Capability,  
Cox Communications



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**Anthony LaPia**  
Sr. Manager, Global Lead,  
Strategic Account Managers,  
Learning Solutions,  
LinkedIn

**Evolution of Learning Panel: Wednesday, October 14 | 2:00pm - 3:00pm EDT**



**Abbie O'Dell**  
Senior Director Learning  
Services, Field Operations,  
Charter Communications



**Robert Wilk**  
National Training  
& Quality Manager,  
Eastlink



**Stacey Young Rivers**  
Director of Tech Human  
Capital Management,  
WarnerMedia



**MODERATOR**

**Agnes Francis Adolphine**  
Director, Learning &  
Implementation (Technology  
& Operations),  
Cox Communications

**Happy/Connection Hour: Wednesday, October 14 | 4:00pm - 5:00pm EDT**

**The Impact of Learning: Thursday, October 15 | 2:00pm - 2:30pm EDT**



**Shawna Erdmann**  
SVP, Learning,  
Comcast



**Colleen Langner**  
SVP Field Operations,  
Cox Communications



**Joanna Spencer**  
CEO,  
Digicel Antigua  
& Montserrat



**MODERATOR**

**Rich LaPat**  
VP, Learning & Development -  
Business Engagement,  
Comcast University

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“It’s going to be capital intensive to make changes to be able to upgrade to mid-splits or higher, or to deploy GPON solutions, for example, and then to migrate to DOCSIS 4. It’s not something that’s going to happen overnight,” Walton said. “We’re doing some mid-split testing right now. We’re also doing some GPON testing right now in our markets where we’re producing symmetrical upstream and downstream speeds.”

Cox’s Finkelstein described how the industry has moved away from wider guardbands to help increase upstream capacity without having to do anything in plant. There was a realization that these big guardbands between carriers were no longer needed as technology has improved. His presentation, “All Roads Lead to DOCSIS 4.0,” illustrated the continued strength of DOCSIS. “We have a 10- to 15- even 20-year run rate with DOCSIS 4.0. But even with DOCSIS 3.1, we still have a good 5-10 years of potential where DOCSIS 3.1 is going to be very capable of meeting the needs of our customers while we make this transition to DOCSIS 4.0 to get another 10 years out of it,” Finkelstein said. His advice: leverage existing technologies as long as you can—but not longer. There comes a time when you need to sunset technology. His other tip: “You can never have too much fiber and spectrum in your network.”

**Broadband Associations Ask Trump to Oppose 5G Nationalization:** Carriers across the country are united in urging *President Trump* to oppose any effort to nationalize the country’s growing 5G network infrastructure. Signatories in a letter to Trump include **USTelecom, NCTA, NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association, CTIA, the Competitive Carriers Association, the Wireless Infrastructure Association** and the **National Rural Electric Cooperative Association**. “Whether it is access to spectrum, fiber backhaul infrastructure, antennas and radios, or any other elements necessary to power resilient, secure and fast 5G networks—we will always be better off with private innovation and competition,” they wrote. The letter also noted the groups’ ability to respond during the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to close the digital divide. “Nationalized infrastructure will only create additional obstacles and challenges as we work to connect all Americans, including those who are hardest to reach, with high-speed Internet service. It would also unnecessarily expose our infrastructure to greater security risks,” they said.

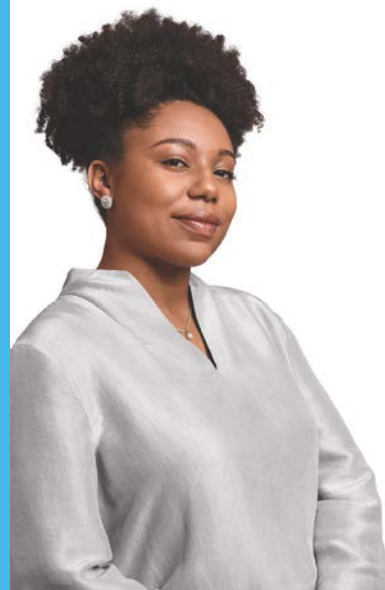
**FCC Announces Qualified Bidders for RDOF Phase I:** The **FCC** announced that 386 applicants are qualified to bid in the RDOF Phase I auction, beginning Oct 29. Potential bidders include **Charter, Cox, Midco, Windstream** and **Verizon**. The number is a 75% jump to the number of bidders in the 2018 Connect America Fund Phase II auction. Qualified bidders will compete for up to \$16bln over 10 years to provide broadband to wholly unserved areas.

**ATIS Launches Next G Alliance:** ATIS is debuting an industry initiative Next G Alliance, working to advance North

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American mobile technology leadership in 6G and beyond over the next decade. Initial founding members include **AT&T, Bell Canada, Ciena, Ericsson, Facebook, InterDigital, JMA Wireless, Microsoft, Nokia, Qualcomm Technologies, Samsung, TELUS, Telnix, T-Mobile, US Cellular** and **Verizon**. The initiative will focus on three strategic actions: developing a national 6G roadmap, aligning the North American tech industry on a core set of priorities to influence government policy and funding, and identifying and defining early steps and strategies to facilitate and lead to rapid commercialization of Next G tech across new markets.

**Xfinity Mobile Launches Nationwide 5G:** Xfinity Mobile has expanded its 5G coverage nationwide and is now available on all Xfinity Mobile data options, and can be accessed by all 5G-enabled devices. Customers can choose to pay for unlimited or by-the-gig data options (\$15/gig or \$45 unlimited).

**New Kids on the Block:** In the first half of 2020, 110 brands launched their first-ever national TV campaigns, spending over \$450mln across 59 different categories, even in the midst of a national pandemic, according to a new report from the **VAB**. Nearly 70% of the new first half national TV dollars were spent during the second quarter, and brands spending over \$5mln in national TV accounted for 15% of total new advertisers, led by pharmaceutical and video streaming categories. Additionally, DTC brands made up 56% of total new advertisers, spending over \$144mln.

**fubo Closes Public Offering:** fuboTV closed its previously announced public offering of 18.3mln shares at \$10/share. The company received total gross proceeds of \$183 million, before deducting the underwriting discounts and commissions and other offering expenses.

**Ratings: Fox News** was the most-watched cable net during the week of Oct 5-Oct 11, pulling in 4.559mln viewers in prime and 2.076mln in total day. In prime, **MSNBC** followed with 2.846mln and **CNN** with 2.428mln. In total day, MSNBC saw 1.548mln viewers and CNN 1.478mln. In similar news, Fox News delivered the largest audience for the first day of coverage of Supreme Court nominee *Amy Coney Barrett's* hearing on Monday. Fox saw 2.855mln viewers from 8:45am to 2:30pm, compared to MSNBC's 1.238mln and CNN's 1.107mln.

**Distribution: Newsy** continued its expansion into OTT, adding its full slate of news programming to **Philo**.

**Doing Good: ACA Connects** and **EducationSuperHighway** are partnering in support of the "K-12 Bridge to Broadband" initiative working to connect students with online learning. Within the program, broadband service providers help school districts and states identify students that lack broadband at home and then supply them with connections. So far, 39 ACA Connects members have signed on to participate.

**On the Circuit: CTAM** honored *Leigh Woisard*, svp of public affairs at **Cox**, with the 2020 CTAM Beacon Award for communications excellence. The group also announced the 2020 TAMI Award winners for their contributions to initiatives critical to driving the continued success of the industry. Winners include: for Password Sharing, *Todd Greenbaum*, gm, **Adobe Pass**; for Marketing & Sales, *John Hays*, vp, sales channel strategy, Cox; for Business Services, *Jennifer Ingram*, vp, SMB marketing, **Charter**; for Piracy, *Don Jones*, director of strategic fraud intelligence, **Comcast**; for Metadata Practices, *Jeff Kreger*, pres, **Align Broadcasting**; and for Pandemic Insights & Business Impact, **Data Partners, Equifax, HarrisX, Horowitz, Hub Entertainment Research, Magid, Nielsen** and **Sharetracker**.

**Programming:** The final season of "Shameless" will hit **Showtime** on Dec 6 at 9pm. -- **Telemundo's** first-ever non-scripted primetime reality competition "El Domo del Dinero" will debut Tuesday at 7pm. The two-hour show will air daily. -- **Hallmark Channel** and **Hallmark Movies & Mysteries** will premiere four new Christmas movies on Oct 31 and Nov 1. "One Royal Holiday" hits Hallmark on Halloween at 8pm, and "On the 12th Date of Christmas" airs Nov 1 at 8pm. On HMM, "Cranberry Christmas" premieres Oct 31 at 9pm and "Holly & Ivy" Nov 1 at 9pm. -- **INSP** will debut Season 2 of competition series "Ultimate Cowboy Showdown" on Feb 24 at 9pm. -- **Tennis Channel** and **ATP Media** struck a multiyear TV and digital rights deal, making the network the exclusive US TV home for the majority of ATP Tour events. The agreement begins in 2021.

**People: FanVestor** named former **News Corp.** exec *Marty Pompadur* to its board as it gears up for "significant growth" in 2021.

**EXHIBITOR SPOTLIGHT**

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