

# Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

## Other Side: Comcast NBCU Teases Ad Tech, E-Commerce at ONE21

**Comcast NBCUniversal** is about more than content and connectivity. At the company's first-ever developer conference, dubbed ONE21, top leadership pitched potential partners and advertisers on the full capabilities Comcast NBCUniversal can offer.

"It's an opportunity to see, for the first time, the full depth and breadth of this unified company," NBCU chmn, global advertising and partnerships *Linda Yaccarino* said during the event. "If the future of distribution is broadband, if the future of content is aggregation and if the future of viewing is streaming, then Comcast NBCUniversal Sky is built perfectly for the future."

The presentation isn't a replacement for the company's upfront. That's still set for later this spring. Instead, ONE21 established a roadmap for the company's ad tech strategy, opportunities for marketers and opportunities for partners to get involved. Much of that strategy has been shaped by the rise in streaming and shifts in consumer behavior.

"It used to be that our shows were limited by filters, time-slots or space on a schedule. But our audiences don't think of dayparts anymore... we are not thinking about things by network, but by genre," *Susan Rovner*, chmn of entertainment content at NBCU television and streaming, said. "If something is great, we can and will find a home for it."

Much of NBCU's content has found a home on **Peacock**, and the company is bringing programmatic ad capabilities to

the streamer. Partners will now be able to extend their unified cross-platform plans onto Peacock, and advertisers will have the option to target any incremental audience, including custom segments.

Going deeper on ad tech, NBCU is launching the NBCU Audience Insights Hub later this year. The data clean room environment will allow for data interoperability between the company and its partners. Using the environment, NBCU will be able to offer its first-party audience data to partners through the platform while maintaining the privacy of individual users.

The company has also partnered with **The Trade Desk** on an NBCU ID initiative, which would aim to combine first-party audiences from across all divisions to create a 360-degree profile of consumers under one ID. That ID promises to inform cross-platform planning and measurement use cases while also driving personalization for viewers across all screens.

On the commerce side, NBCU revealed an expansion of One Platform Commerce to both **Facebook** and **Instagram**. The deal will see NBCU's suite of commerce tools and its retail partner network integrated with the social networks' shoppable capabilities. NBCU is also working with The Trade Desk to create new programmatic opportunities including shoppable ads.

NBCU CEO *Jeff Shell* closed the show, saying that what sets the company apart is its culture of collaboration and partnership. "We want to build on this culture of collaboration and our culture of technology and innovation, consumer insights and global scale to really be successful in the future," Shell said.



## Who Deserves to Rank Among Cablefax's Annual Top Power Players?

The Cablefax 100 salutes the most influential executives whose leadership continues to take the industry to new heights. We will rank the top professionals in the media, cable & broadband industry and publish the list in the June edition of Cablefax:The Magazine.

**It's free to enter - but you must submit your entries by April 9!**



Enter at [www.Cablefax100.com](http://www.Cablefax100.com) | Questions: Mary-Lou French at [mfrench@accessintel.com](mailto:mfrench@accessintel.com)

**SPEED SHOWDOWN OVER LIFT AMERICA ACT**

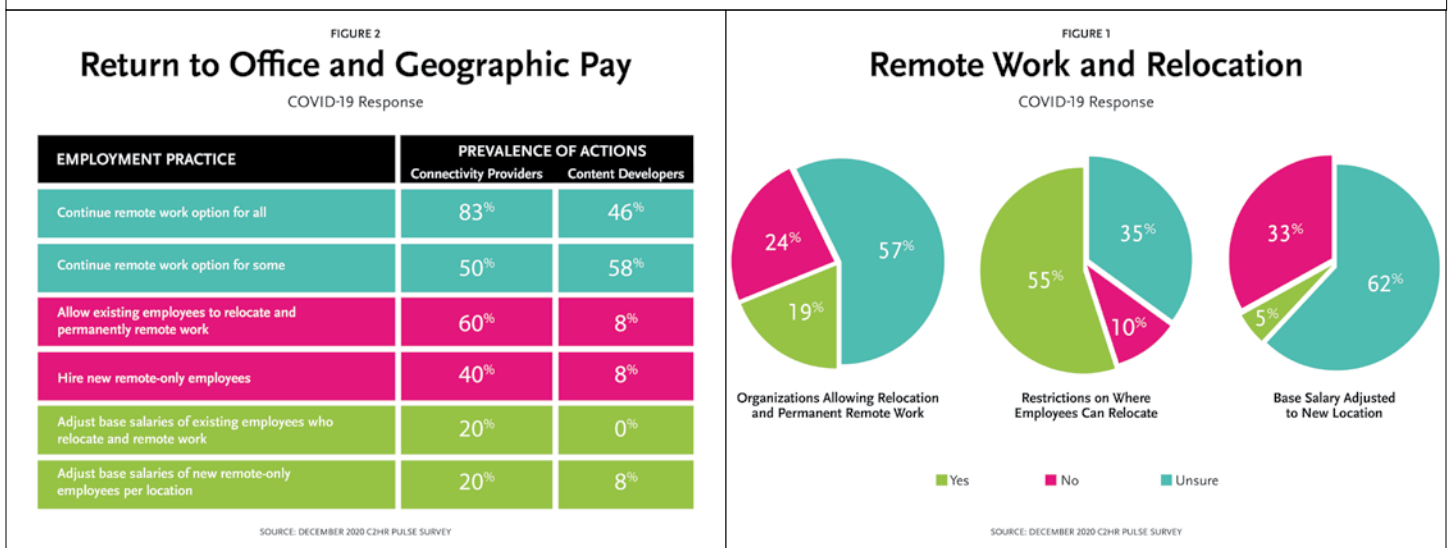
Much of Monday's more than five-hour long **House Commerce** hearing on the LIFT America Act focused on the debate over whether symmetrical 100Mbps broadband service should be the baseline of any government broadband subsidies. Firmly in that corner is former **FCC** chair *Tom Wheeler*, who proposes going even further to 1 gigabit service. On the other side of the debate is former FCC commissioner *Mike O'Rielly*, who declared that, "a 100 meg upload speed does not reflect reality for now or anytime soon." He argued that 25Mbps/3Mbps is adequate for business, work, education and pleasure, saying he testified to Congress last week with a 30Mbps connection. O'Rielly is also concerned that such a definition would make a lot of markets that people don't consider as rural or unserved eligible for subsidized overbuilding. Wheeler argues that the buildout of broadband should be approached the same way America builds highways—pay for it once. "Thus far, we have repeatedly subsidized just good enough networks that were soon outdated," he said. He noted that when he was FCC chair, the agency voted to increase the definition of broadband to 25/3. "Today that is wholly inadequate," he said, citing **NCTA** data that 80% of America homes have access to 1 gigabit internet service. "Private capital didn't build that capacity to waste money, but to meet demand. Public monies have an even higher obligation." The LIFT America Act is a Democrat-backed infrastructure bill that directs \$31.2 billion for projects, including \$80 billion for broadband deployment for unserved and underserved areas. Members were pretty much split down party lines in terms of their opinions on the measure. "Sadly, the direction this committee is going with the LIFT Act America will only further grow the digital divide and widen the gap between

rural and urban America," said Rep *John Joyce* (R-PA). House Commerce chair *Frank Pallone* (D-NJ) contends the bill "will allow for 100% broadband deployment across the country, closing the digital divide." O'Rielly complained that the LIFT Act puts the thumb on the scale for fiber with 100Mbps symmetrical goals and ignores other technologies. Wheeler said he remains a wireless advocate, but to catch up the 20% American without gigabit service means building with fiber and hybrid fiber coax. "Wireless is constrained by the finite nature of spectrum from being a full-fledged substitute for wired broadband," he said.

**INDUSTRY GRAPPLING WITH RETURN TO OFFICE**

Telework isn't going away anytime soon, and most participants in **C2HR's** most recent study expect employees to work from home through the end of the first or second quarter due to the ongoing pandemic. Some 19% of organizations intend to allow remote work and relocation for existing employees. Back in 2019, only 14% of connectivity providers and 10% of content developers offered telecommuting to all or most employees. Connectivity providers are still more likely to embrace telework than their content counterparts with 83% reporting that they plan to continue a work-from-home option for all employees. Only 46% of content developers are doing the same. More than half (55%) of companies have restrictions on where an employee can relocate (same state, area with existing operations) while 5% plan to adjust base salaries based on the employee's new location. Companies are also examining different strategies for the eventual return to office. 50% of connectivity companies and 17% of those on the content side have examined modifying the work week and employee hours or introducing an alternating schedule of employees who come into the office.

**C2HR REVEALS TRENDS IN TELEWORK**



**CHARTER SHAREHOLDERS CALL FOR D&I REPORT**

Non-profit shareholder advocacy organization **As You Sow** is backing a shareholder proposal that would have **Charter** publish an annual report assessing the company's diversity and inclusion efforts. Handlery Hotels Inc, John B & Linda C Mason Comm Prop and Samajak LP submitted the shareholder proposal, which cites concerns that Charter's extensive marketing related to diversity and inclusion may be considered "corporate puffery" by stakeholders if the company does not provide meaningful reporting on its workplace equity practices. Charter's board opposes the shareholder proposal, saying the executive steering committee regularly reviews progress against D&I strategy to ensure both are integral across the business and partners with several groups, including **NAMIC**, to recruit and develop diverse talent. "Charter will be releasing an environment, social and governance report that will include information regarding our D&I efforts," a spokesperson said. As You Sow has a track record of pushing companies to make change over 25 years. A representative said this is the first year the org has engaged with Charter.

**INSIDE THE BELTWAY**

President *Biden* intends to nominate antitrust expert *Lina Khan* as a **FTC** commissioner. Khan is an associate law professor at Columbia Law School who has previously served as counsel to the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial, and Administrative Law. – Rep *GK Butterfield* (D-NC) said he plans to soon reintroduce his Expanding Opportunities for Broadband Deployment Act, which removes the requirement that only ISPs designated as eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) may receive USF dollars. He made the remarks during a hearing Monday on the LIFT America Act, which he noted doesn't have an ETC requirement attached to broadband funding.

**TDS NETWORK HUB RUINED IN FIRE**

A fire destroyed **TDS's** central network hub site in Winterhaven, California, Friday, causing an outage for phone and internet customers in the area. In total, the outage impacted 78 internet and 523 phone customers. TDS has not received a full report indicating the cause of the fire and expects to hear more in the following week. The telecom company is working on alternative measures to fill the gaps in service for the people affected, but details are still being worked out, according to a spokesperson. TDS is still determining the extent of the damage but will have a better idea of how long services may be interrupted by the end of the week.

**DAVID LEVY JOINS GENIUS SPORTS GROUP**

**Genius Sports Group** tapped *David Levy* as its new chairman. He'll lead the board's oversight of company operations and strategy. Genius, a data firm, has a hand in sports betting and maintains partnerships with leagues and betting operators. This comes more than two years after Levy's departure as president of **Turner**, ending a 32-year run that included helping to define Turner Sports. Since then, he joined **Arctos Partners** as a senior advisor and works with investment bank **Raine**

**Group**. He also spent two months as CEO of the **Brooklyn Nets**. "With his incredible track-record working with many of the biggest names in sports and media, David's appointment as chairman is the latest historic milestone in Genius Sports Group's growth journey," said Genius CEO *Mark Locke*. The announcement comes as Genius is in the process of going public via an acquisition by **dMY Technology Acquisition II**.

**FCC WANTS TO HEAR BROADBAND STORIES**

The **FCC** launched a webpage Monday that will allow consumers to submit their first-hand accounts on broadband availability and service quality. The site, part of the Commission's Broadband Data Collection program, explains the program, lays out important milestones and provides direct links to consumer resources and an option to share their broadband experience. Once launched, information about the new Broadband Data Collection reporting systems will also be posted to the page. Stories shared will be used to inform the work of the agency's Broadband Data Task Force.

**VIACOMCBS TO RAISE \$3 BILLION**

**ViacomCBS** is offering \$3 billion in stock and plans to use the combined net proceeds for general corporate purposes, including investments in streaming. The concurrent offerings of \$2 billion Class B common stock and \$1 billion Series A Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock come weeks after the launch of Paramount+, its revamped SVOD service. Morgan Stanley and J. Morgan are acting as joint book-running managers for the offerings.

**DISTRIBUTION**

**HBO Max** launched a customizable profile image feature allowing users to upload their own image or choose an avatar from a selection of more than 120 characters from the HBO Max library. The feature will roll out across all supported partners by Friday.

**PROGRAMMING**

**INSP's** annual "The Duke Days of May" programming event will feature 15 titles starring *John Wayne*, including the network premieres of "Blood Alley," "Sands of Iwo Jima" and "The Fighting Seabees." The event starts 8pm ET April 30 and continues every Friday, Saturday and Sunday in May. – **NBCU** will provide exclusive live coverage of US Olympic Team Trials for wrestling across **NBCSN** and **Peacock** on April 2 and 3. The NBC Sports app will live stream all television coverage and feature exclusive coverage of select matches April 3. – "ZOMBIES 3," the third installment in **Disney's** popular musical movie franchise, will begin production this spring in Toronto. – **National Geographic** has partnered with online platform **Watch The Bands** to host virtual competition "All Hail the Queen: HBCU Band Tribute." The competition will feature four HBCU bands competing for a \$5,000 prize by performing *Aretha Franklin's* greatest hits in celebration of National Geographic series "Genius: Aretha." All Hail the Queen premiered on **YouTube** Friday and the winner will be announced Thursday via Nat Geo and Watch The Band/Watch The Yard social platforms.