

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Adapting Again: Adaptive Spirit

Glides into Virtual Paralympics Fundraiser

A year ago, **Adaptive Spirit** had to cancel its sold-out 25th anniversary event in Vail, Colorado, as the country was entering the early stages of the pandemic. This year, the event is back, but in a virtual setting.

The non-profit association's annual educational and networking event helps fund the US Paralympics Ski and Snowboard teams. More than 20,000 telecom execs and guests have participated over the years, with Adaptive Spirit (formerly SkiTAM) raising more than \$11 million for the US Paralympic Alpine, Nordic, Snowboard and Biathlon teams.



RICH DIGERONIMO

"We made the call, probably in early Q4... that it'd be really hard to pull off a live event" that normally draws about 1500 attendees, said Adaptive Spirit co-chair and **Charter** chief product and technology officer *Rich DiGeronimo*. "We've spent a lot of time trying to build unique virtual events. And really with the promise that we'll all be together in 2022."

It won't be the same as hitting the slopes on a Thursday afternoon, but the two-day, virtual gathering has an impressive lineup that kicks off April 7 with a keynote from **Discovery** CEO *David Zaslav*. Also woven into the event, which sponsors receive a set number of tickets to, are panels on the business case for accessibility and best practices for big data

with speakers from companies such as **Cable One, Amdocs, Facebook** and **Cox**.

"In some ways, because it's virtual, the speakers may be the best we've ever had," said DiGeronimo, adding that there may be some elements of the virtual event that could carry on to broaden the audience when Adaptive Spirit returns to Vail. "I think that's what everyone's trying to figure out—what elements of the pandemic can you learn from to incorporate into making yourself or your company better?"



STEVE RAYMOND

There's some fun thrown into the two-day event as well, including trivia, a silent auction and even something for the kids—a drawing tutorial of Sammy the Fox, a character that's appeared at Adaptive Spirit events for more than 12 years.

The move to virtual shouldn't put much of a crimp in the amount of money Adaptive Spirit is able to give to Paralympic athletes. "Close to 70% of our sponsors are supportive and are sponsors of this year's virtual event. Since we will not be incurring the hard costs of an in-person event, including hosting a banquet and a ski race, we feel like we will still be able to provide the US Paralympic Ski and Snowboard team a significant donation as they prepare for the 2022 Paralympic Games," said *Steve Raymond*, Adaptive Spirit co-chair and Charter accessibility vp.

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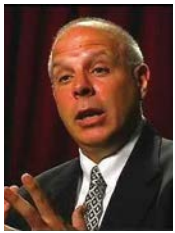
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Gray Television, Inc.



Julie Anderson
Editor-in-Chief,
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July 13 – 1:00 PM (Eastern)

Maintaining Corporate Culture in a Changing World
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MSG ENTERTAINMENT, NETWORKS COMBINE

Just a few weeks after the rumor mill reported these two were talking, **MSG Entertainment** is re-combining with **MSG Networks** in an all-stock transaction. MSG Networks stockholders will receive 0.172 shares of MSG Entertainment Class A or Class B common stock for each share of MSG Networks Class A or Class B common stock they own. The entertainment company said that purchasing MSG Networks would give it a stronger liquidity position to support its live entertainment business, which suffered during the pandemic with the shutdown of venues. The combined company will also have greater financial flexibility to fund growth initiatives, including its planned Las Vegas venue, MSG Sphere at The Venetian. MSG Entertainment spun MSG Networks into a standalone company back in 2015 and proceeded to separate its sports businesses from its entertainment businesses with the creation of **MSG Sports** last year. The deal is expected to be completed during 3Q21.

FOX NEWS FRIDAY

Fox News made the headlines Friday after **Dominion Voting System** filed a \$1.6 billion lawsuit claiming defamation in election coverage. The network said it is proud of its 2020 election coverage and will vigorously defend itself. Fox also got attention for an exchange Friday in the White House briefing room between correspondent *Peter Doocy* and Press Secretary *Jen Psaki*. Doocy complained Thursday that he was snubbed in *Biden's* first press conference and asked Psaki on Friday why Fox News is the only member of the five network TV pool that is never on the pre-approved

list of reporters for the president to call on. "The president's taking your questions. And I'm looking forward to doing 'FOX News Sunday' this Sunday for the third time in the last few months," Psaki said.

OWN AND ANA SEEK TO #WRITEHERRIGHT

OWN and the **Association of National Advertisers'** SeeHer movement released a co-developed guide emphasizing the importance of hiring Black female talent behind and in front of the camera at every level. The [resource](#), called "#WriteHer Right Black Female Characters: Authentic Representation and Storytelling Guide," describes how doing so helps to create the most accurate and nuanced depictions of Black women in media. The guide includes several questions for storytellers falling into two main categories, one being affirmation and inspiration and the other being pitfalls and misconceptions. The resource was developed using evidence from literature reviews on content analysis, original research from OWN and surveys of OWN's talent and executive leadership.

COX DRAWS MIDDLE SCHOOLERS CLOSER

Performers of all ages have suffered throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and that includes middle schoolers in Clark County, Nevada. **Cox Communications** stepped up to support a drama class of 22 children who were unable to put on performances face-to-face. The provider coordinated an entirely virtual production, giving each student tablets with animation technology that allowed them to voice an animated version of themselves. Director *Patrick Osborne* is assisting in the animated short, called "Drawn Closer," which will hit TV screens this May. Check out the making of it [here](#).

FAST FORWARD 2021

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AT THE COMMISSION

The **FCC's Media Bureau** set the effective date for the new rules for broadcast internet services enabled by ATSC 3.0 as March 25. The rule revisions clarify and update regulations to foster the efficient use of broadcast spectrum capacity for the provision of broadcast internet services. – The **Wireline Competition Bureau** is seeking comment on a supply chain reimbursement program study and preliminary catalog of expenses that would help eligible providers participate in the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Reimbursement Program. It is also seeking comment on a preliminary list of categories of suggested replacement equipment and services to aid in the replacement of those that have been deemed to pose an unacceptable risk to US national security. Comments are due April 26.

DISTRIBUTION

DirecTV Puerto Rico and **HITN TV** reached a deal for DirecTV Puerto Rico to access Spanish language content from HITN-TV. The content is also available via **HITN GO** for DirecTV Puerto Rico subscribers. HITN reaches more than 44 million homes in the US and Puerto Rico through deals with **Comcast, Verizon** and others.

PROGRAMMING

The first half of the two-hour “Snowpiercer” season finale will drop on VOD Saturday. The full finale will air on **TNT** Monday at 9pm. – **USA** picked up reality show “Chrisley Knows Best” for a ninth season, and renewed “Growing Up Chrisley” for a third season. Both will air later this summer. Year to-date, Chrisley Knows Best is averaging 1.5 million total viewers, while S2 of the spinoff delivered 1.1 million viewers. – **Tubi** will be the home of six seasons of “Barney & Friends” beginning April 9. Seasons 7-9 will be exclusively on the streamer, which will add Seasons 10-12 to its library non-exclusively.

PEOPLE

PR firm **ICR** tapped *Eric Becker* as svp, pr consumer group with a focus on media & entertainment. Becker last served as principal, **Becker PR** and spent time at **Starz** as svp, corporate communications.

CABLEFAX DASHBOARD

Tweet Tweet

Rich Greenfield, LightShed @RichLightShed

Charging \$30 extra for streaming a movie is not the right long-term strategy -- build consumer love and engagement and move overall pricing up

SVOD > PVOOD

ANTENNA @AntennaData · Mar 25
Raya & The Last Dragon received 20% fewer PVOOD purchases than Mulan in each film's respective opening weekend. Nearly 60% of users who purchased Raya & The Last Dragon joined Disney+ in the first two months after the service launched in late 2019.
[Show this thread](#)

Butler Blue IV @TheButlerBlue

We are one day away from the #Sweet16, people! The madness is almost back in #Indy. #MayorofMarch | #MarchMadness🇺🇸



Jessica Rosenworcel @JRosenworcel

It's not just that we need to remember the women who lost their lives in Atlanta. We need to reject the increase in threats and condemn the attacks nationwide. An attack on our neighbors is an attack on all of us.
#StopAsianHate💜

1:36 PM · Mar 26, 2021 · Twitter Web App

Research

- > Despite pandemic-related advertising declines in 2020, spending picked up near the end of the year. Global ad agencies expect a notable rebound in 2021.
- > 18% of all television ads were COVID-themed. As restrictions began to loosen up, that fell to 12% in 3Q20 and to 11% in 4Q20.
- > Many consumer segments are optimistic about returning to “normal” in 2021. 73% of US consumers are very or somewhat eager to emerge from COVID restrictions and take a vacation.
- > Ad-supported and linear streaming platforms have grown to account for over 1/3 of the total share of streaming in 2021 among homes that are capable of doing so.

(Source: [Nielsen Total Audience Report](#))

Up Ahead

- MARCH 26:** THE FAXIES ENTRY DEADLINE
- APRIL 9:** STARZ #TAKETHELEAD TRANSPARENCY TALK
- APRIL 9:** CABLEFAX 100 NOMINATION DEADLINE
- MAY 13:** WICT ROCKY MOUNTAIN VIRTUAL WALK OF FAME

Quotable

“I would support two specific changes [to Section 230], especially for large platforms. For smaller platforms, we need to be careful about any changes that we make that remove their immunity because that could hurt competition... First, platforms should have to issue transparency reports that state the prevalence of content across all different categories of harmful content... the second change that I would propose is creating accountability for the large platforms to have effective systems in place to moderate and remove clearly illegal content... I think it would be reasonable to condition immunity for the larger platforms on having a generally effective system in place.”

– Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg at House Commerce’s Thursday hearing on social media’s role in spreading disinformation and extremism