

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

System Shutdown: Fight Against Ransomware Attacks Continues

Ransomware attacks are on the rise, and lawmakers are now asking what they can do to offer companies large and small a helping hand in combating them.

The attacks come in the form of a type of malware that encrypts files on a victim's network. The attacker then demands money from the victim to restore access to the data. **Cox Media Group** was reportedly struck by a ransomware attack in early June that caused multiple system shutdowns at affected broadcast stations. The good news is that there are plenty of things companies can implement on their own to produce a solid defense against any attacks.

"The best way to resolve a ransomware attack is to make sure that it can't get into the system in the first place. There are some simple things that are just true for preventing cyber attacks in general—enabling multi-factor authentication, doing better training of your employees and staff on identifying phishing..., segmenting your network so that cyber criminals once they are in can't laterally move," **Microsoft** assistant general counsel *Kemba Walden* said during a **House Oversight** Subcommittee hearing Tuesday.

Philip Reiner, CEO of the **Institute for Security and Technology**, said that while it does take some upfront investment to safeguard networks, it is much more affordable in the long run to do so. The main problem is that many organizations, particularly smaller ones, are still in the dark about what ran-

software attacks are and how they could start implementing defensive measures.

"I think there are organizations out there that simply do not know that this is happening and they do not have the resources in order to prepare in advance," he said. "We have to do better in terms of getting to them and letting them know what it is that they can be doing better."

While education is the first step, it won't solve everything. The cost of hiring security professionals is often prohibitive, and those in IT roles are expected to tack network security onto their other regular duties.

"Unfortunately, a lot of these smaller organizations, some of them don't even have security staff, some of them rely on IT resources to perform security functionality... I want organizations to do the best that they can from a cyber hygiene perspective, but I don't believe the onus is fully on the organizations themselves," **FireEye-Mandiant** svp/chief technical officer *Charles Carmakal* said. "I think they would need government support and from a governance perspective, I think there are things that government can do in terms of indictments and arrests of individuals that are behind these attacks."

He added that there's more information sharing that could occur from victim organizations, and that data could be used to help other organizations develop plans to prevent ransomware attacks in the future.

Walden agreed, saying that actionable information sharing should also be at the center of any public-private partnerships

HELP CABLEFAX RECOGNIZE THE TOP MULTI-ETHNIC EXECUTIVES IN THE INDUSTRY

In addition to The Diversity List honorees, nominate for your company's D&I Champion, D&I Mentor, Thrivers Under 30 and LGBTQ+ Executives of the Year. Company categories include recognitions for DEI Initiatives, Community Outreach and Public Affairs.

DEADLINE: Friday, July 23

www.cablefaxdiversity.com

The
DIVERSITY
List
PRESENTED BY CABLEFAX



dedicated to preventing ransomware attacks.

“The government has legal authorities that the private sector doesn’t have right now. They have law enforcement authorities, they have intelligence authorities. The private sector has a lot of signals. If you match those things together, we can do coordinated actions to bring cyber criminals to justice... private sector can work along with law enforcement to identify those criminals, but we can also work with law enforcement to pare down the infrastructure that they use,” Walden said.

There are already some efforts in the government to fight against these ransomware attacks. Just this week, President *Biden* formed an interagency ransomware task force that will design offensive and defensive measures against the cyber threats. But there is still some confusion as to which agency a company should call when they need resources to bolster their security ahead of a potential attack or to report one when it happens. *Robert Lee*, CEO of cybersecurity firm **Dragos**, said it would be beneficial if one agency was named as the go-to for any industry player.

“That doesn’t necessarily mean they’re the ones that are going to do all the work, but to be the coordinator of the interagency process would be much more efficient,” Lee said.

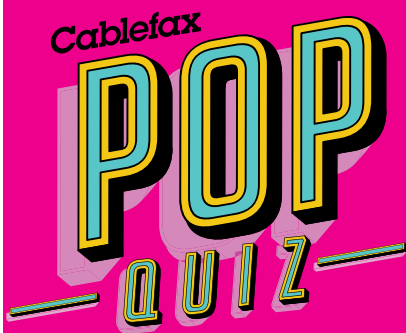
NETFLIX MOVING AHEAD ON GAMING CONTENT

Netflix confirmed in a letter to shareholders that mobile games will be coming to its platform in the future, living as a separate content category alongside original films and TV series. “Games will be included in members’ Netflix subscription at no additional cost similar to films and series. Initially we’ll be primarily focused on games for mobile devices,” the streaming giant said. “We’re

excited as ever about our movies and TV series offering and we expect a long runway of increasing investment and growth across all of our existing content categories, but since we are nearly a decade into our push into original programming, we think the time is right to learn more about how our members value games.” Netflix also took time to react to the increase in M&A activity in the media space, and it doesn’t believe that any of the deals that have occurred since its rise to the top have impacted its growth much, if at all. It also signalled that it doesn’t plan on joining that particular party any time soon. “The planned combination of Warner Media Group and Discovery and Amazon’s pending acquisition of MGM are examples of the ongoing industry consolidation as firms adapt to a world where streaming supplants linear TV,” Netflix said. “While we are continually evaluating opportunities, we don’t view any assets as ‘must-have’ and we haven’t yet found any large scale ones to be sufficiently compelling to act upon.” The company added 1.54 million new subscribers during 2Q21, a count far below the 12 million additions it recorded in 2Q20. It now totals more than 209 million global subs.

COMCAST, VIACOMCBS IN TALKS ON INTERNATIONAL

Comcast and **ViacomCBS** are in talks on potential streaming deals for international markets, according to a *WSJ* report. Comcast CEO *Brian Roberts* reportedly met with ViacomCBS chair *Shari Redstone* and ViacomCBS CEO *Bob Bakish* to discuss various partnership opportunities that would allow their respective companies to enter into global markets together. **Paramount+** is aiming to reach 45 markets by 2022. The story comes one month after *WSJ* reported that Comcast could be looking to pur-



One winner will be selected each week for a Starbucks gift card

Last week’s answer: USA Network used the tagline “The Remote Stops Here” in the 1990s.

Kudos to last week’s winner: Thomas Bailey, Sparklight

What is the longest-running scripted series in television history?

[CLICK HERE TO ANSWER](#)

chase **Roku** or merge with **ViacomCBS**. Analysts told us at the time that a deal involving streaming assets was far more likely.

ASTOUND PURCHASES HARRIS BROADBAND

Astound Broadband isn't slowing its M&A train. **Grande Communications**, one of Astound's divisions, is acquiring Texas-based provider Harris Broadband. Harris offers video, internet and voice services to companies in Brownwood and Early, Texas. Upon closing, the deal will add more than 6,000 customers, 150 miles of fiber plant and 12,500 homes passed to Grande's operations in Texas. The transaction is expected to close later this year.

HBO MAX HEADS TO SNAPCHAT

Snapchat users now have the ability to access **HBO Max** programming through Snap Minis, Snapchat's platform for shared experiences. Snapchat users can watch pilot episodes of popular HBO Max shows, with available titles to be updated on an ongoing basis. Pilots available on **HBO Max Mini** at launch include "Euphoria," "Game of Thrones," "Gossip Girl" (2021), "Lovecraft Country," "Selena + Chef" and more. Following the episodes, 18+ users on Snapchat will be given the option to subscribe to HBO Max. Viewers can watch a program with Snapchat friends and chat in the viewer. This makes HBO Max the first major streamer to build a Mini, bringing full-length episodes to Snapchat.

COMCAST LAUNCHES BUSINESS MOBILE

Comcast is launching **Comcast Business Mobile**, a service using **Xfinity Mobile** to offer small businesses 5G coverage and data nationwide. Comcast Business Mobile gives **Comcast Business Internet** customers up to 10 lines with no line access fees and two data options, Unlimited and By the Gig. The Unlimited plan starts at \$24/line/month for 10 lines. By the Gig offers 1 Gig, 3 Gig and 10 Gig shared data for \$15, \$30 and \$60 per month, respectively.

OLYMPICS DESTINATION COMING TO ROKU

NBCUniversal and **Roku** will work together to bring an immersive Olympic experience to Roku users in the U.S. The agreement will simplify and centralize access to Olympic coverage and related entertainment on supported Roku devices and **Roku TV** models. This provides user access to NBCU's 5,500 hours of streaming coverage of the Summer Games and coverage of the Olympic Games in Tokyo via **NBC Sports** or **Peacock** on Roku devices starting Tuesday.

COMCAST ADDS TWO OREGON TOWNS TO FOOTPRINT

Comcast is investing \$15 million to expand its service area to include the communities of Hubbard and Woodburn, Oregon. Residential customers will have access to speeds of up to 1.2Gbps, and up to 10Gbps will be available for business customers. Hubbard customers will likely be able to access the services in September. Construction in Woodburn is expected to begin in December 2021 and be complete by the end of 2022. Comcast will also bring its Internet Essentials Community Impact programs to the towns.

WOW! NAMED BEST & BRIGHTEST IN TWO REGIONS

WOW! was named one of the Best and Brightest Companies to Work for in two cities by the **National Association for**

Business Resources. The organization awarded WOW! the title in Atlanta for the fifth consecutive year and Chicago for the 12th consecutive year. The award is given to companies who have gone above and beyond for their employees with thoughtful and innovative human resource practices.

WEEKLY RATINGS

Fox News Channel topped primetime and total day ratings, at 2.172 million P2+ and 1.193 million P2+, respectively. In total day, **MSNBC** came in second at 776,000 total viewers, with **HGTV** at 644,000 in third place. **CNN** (573,000) and **Hallmark Channel** (558,000) rounded out total day ratings. **ESPN** came in second in primetime ratings with 1.350 million total viewers, just ahead of MSNBC's 1.321 million. HGTV took fourth with 1.232 million, followed by Hallmark Channel with 998,000.

CARRIAGE

News 12 New York began streaming on **Pluto TV** starting Tuesday. The digital network offers local news from across New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

PROGRAMMING

Showtime signed "The L Word: Generation Q" showrunner, ep, director and writer *Marja-Lewis Ryan* to a deal that will see her develop projects exclusively for Showtime. – **INDYCAR** and **NBC Sports** announced a multi-year extension of their media rights agreement. NBC Sports will remain the exclusive home of the **Indy 500** and provide coverage of all **NTT INDYCAR SERIES** races, qualifiers, practices and **Indy Lights** races across all platforms, including **Peacock**. **NBC** will broadcast 13 races in 2022. **USA** and **Peacock Premium** will show the remaining races. **Telemundo Deportes** will supply Spanish-language coverage of the season opener, the Indy 500 and the season finale. Peacock will stream all races on NBC and USA Networks as well as qualifiers, practices, Indy Lights races and full-event replays. – **HBO Max** gave an eight-episode order to rock-climbing competition series "The Climb." – **AMC Networks** streamer **Sundance Now** acquired the U.S. rights to a British remake of comedy series "Call My Agent!" The show will premiere on the service in the U.S. in 2022 following its U.K. world premiere.

PEOPLE

CommScope CTO and segment leader, broadband networks *Morgan Kurk* is stepping down. Current CTO, broadband networks *Tom Cloonan* has been named interim CTO as the company evaluates its longer-term requirements for the post. *Ric Johnson*, svp of the Converged Network Solutions business, will assume leadership of the broadband networks segment. – **Comcast** appointed *Kalyn Hove* to regional svp, Twin Cities Region. Hove was previously vp, **Comcast Business**, Twin Cities region. – **NFL Media** announced new vice presidents for three departments. *Angela Ellis* joins as vp, head, entertainment and initiatives. She most recently was on the leadership team for **Disney's** "The Tamron Hall Show." *Sandy Nunez*, a former head of production for **ESPN's** L.A. office, joins as vp, talent management. *Tony Cole* will serve as vp, media operations. He last spent time at media tech provider **Piksel Corporation** as svp, global business development.