

# Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

## The Show Will Go On: NTCA Prepped and Ready for Fall Conference

It's been a rollercoaster ride for so many trying to put on in-person conferences this fall, but a return to some semblance of normalcy is arriving this weekend for **NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association** members.

NTCA's Fall Conference is hitting Nashville's Gaylord Opryland from September 19-22 and will be available virtually for those not wanting to travel. The association is hoping this will be the first of many in-person and hybrid shows to come.

As of Thursday, it is expecting 1,500 in-person attendees and an additional few hundred who chose to register for access to virtual livestreams of the conference's content. Access to the virtual platform was included for all registrants of the in-person program.

"We've been in constant contact with our members since the very early days of the pandemic being declared and they really needed our help just in getting information, getting resources from the government," NTCA vp, strategic communications *Laura Withers* told **CFX**. "We think this is a really key time for our industry to be coming together and having some really important discussions."

And vendors have been itching to be a part of the conversation as well. Withers said the association has sold more booths than ever before, and it has surpassed the number of larger booths that have been purchased in years past.

There's most certainly pent-up demand for those in-person

interactions. **Fiber Connect** successfully held its in-person event in June and saw a major increase in attendees from its 2019 program. While it attracted 1,339 attendees in 2019, the 2021 show drew in 2,041 attendees.

Notably, that was back in June, before the Delta variant made its grand arrival. NTCA has continued to modify its safety protocols to keep up-to-date with the latest government mandates and case numbers. All attendees, regardless of vaccination status, must wear a mask to all official NTCA events and social distancing is encouraged whenever possible. Aisles in the exhibit hall have been widened to eliminate as much crowding as possible and exhibitor spaces have been made larger to allow for social distancing at booths.

When it announced its safety protocols, NTCA offered its members an option to transfer their registration to the online event if they chose not to travel or even get a full refund for any reasons related to COVID-19. That led to approximately 100 cancellations, Withers said, but the overall impact was not significant.

"We have charted a path forward in this crazy world that we're all living in for live events. It's not going to feel exactly the same as it was before. We're certainly asking a lot of our attendees that we wouldn't have done before," she said. "I think everybody understands that that is going to be necessary for this conference, and it does just feel like pulling the Band-Aid off."

Once NTCA wraps, all eyes will turn to the rest of the major

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## 2021 CATEGORIES

In addition to spotlighting the industry's biggest leaders, Cablefax is promoting the power of one-to-one relationships. This year, we are looking for executives to sponsor a female candidate to be included in The Rising Tide and will be featured along with their sponsor in a special section of the Most Powerful Women edition of Cablefax: The Magazine.

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conferences planned for the fall and winter. Mobile World Congress Los Angeles is still scheduled for Oct 26-28 at the Los Angeles Convention Center. The **GSMA** has asked its attendees to provide proof of vaccination or a negative COVID test result to gain entry to the venue, and that test result must be updated every 72 hours. Temperature checks will be instituted at all entrances to the venue, masks must be worn and touch-free technology will be installed throughout the venue.

And heralding in the new year will be **CES 2022**, set to transform Las Vegas into one giant technological showcase from Jan 5-8. All attendees and exhibitors will have to show proof of vaccination to attend the conference, and the **Consumer Technology Association** is also debating whether it will accept proof of a positive antibody test as an alternative requirement. There will be a digital component to the show, but it is not yet clear whether all panels and sessions will be available to those virtually attending the show.

#### LOCAST BANNED FROM RESTARTING OPERATIONS

**Locast** is no more. A judge in the Southern District of New York issued a permanent injunction Wednesday that bans the broadcast streaming app from returning to its normal operations. The announcement comes two weeks after Locast announced to viewers that it would be ceasing all operations for the time being. That announcement came after a judge ruled that Locast was not protected by an exception to US Copyright Law allowing non-profits and government organizations to retransmit broadcasters' signals. While the door is still open for Locast to appeal, the broadcasters are ready to move on. In a filing submitted to the court on Wednesday, counsel for the

plaintiffs asked for the district judge to schedule a bench trial to discuss statutory damages. A previous agreement between the broadcasters and defendants **Sports Fans Coalition of New York** and Locast founder *David Goodfriend* places specific limits on the size and scope of the award that can be sought. "The Parties will first attempt to agree on a statutory award against SFCNY. If the Parties cannot reach agreement, the Broadcasters agree to pursue a statutory award not to exceed \$10,000 per infringed and eligible work, and solely against SFCNY," the agreement said. Lawyers for Locast did not respond to our request for comment.

#### COMCAST NOT BUDGING ON THE N-WORD

**Comcast** is fighting back against an arbitration award that would allow an employee who was fired after saying the n-word during a team meeting to return to his previous role with backpay. After an investigation into the July 29, 2020 incident, Comcast terminated *Michael Bernabe*. **IBEW Local 827**, the union representing Bernabe, filed a grievance over the incident. The employee claimed that he was singing along with one of his favorite rap songs and forgot to mute himself at the start of the meeting. Arbitrator *Melissa Biren* decided that he should be reinstated to the same position and location he worked in prior to his termination and be given full backpay and benefits. In a filing in the US District Court for the District of New Jersey Thursday, Comcast of New Jersey argued that following through with the arbitration award would be a violation of Comcast's legal obligation to take swift action to ensure its workplace is free from racial slurs. "Although, in Arbitrator Biren's view, the use of the n-word on one occasion is not a serious enough violation

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that warrants discharge, the use of the n-word in the Comcast workplace under Comcast's policies is serious enough to warrant termination," the operator said in the filing.

### STREAMING CONTENT WATCH RATINGS

The **TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board** released its guidance for how streamers can incorporate TV ratings into their services, like displaying TV on screen at the time consumers start playing a video asset. The board created a task force to spark conversations with member companies operating streamers like **Disney+**, **Discovery+**, **HBO Max**, **Hulu**, **Paramount+**, **Peacock** and **Tubi** to see how ratings information is incorporated across streaming platforms. With insights from the conversations, the task force released the guidance. The Ratings Best Practices Guidance for Streaming Services comes just more than a year after an August 2020 survey conducted on behalf of the board showed 84% of kids are watching content via streaming services.

### NAB LAUNCHES NEW AD CAMPAIGN

**NAB** launched new ad spots for a campaign to promote the importance of fact-based broadcast radio and television journalism in the age of digital misinformation. The spots, available for stations to download in English and Spanish on its "We Are Broadcasters" website, highlight the work of broadcasters to provide trustworthy coverage. The ads are part of the NAB's We Are Broadcasters campaign, which began in 2013 to raise awareness of the role local stations serve in their communities.

### NEW COMSCORE TECH SPECIFIES USERS

**Comscore** is developing a methodology to help conduct measurement at the person-level for its video products. Using the new process, Comscore will estimate which individuals in a given household are viewing what units of content. The methodology hopes to deliver consistent, granular-level viewership estimates through the use of both massive and passive viewership behavior data.

### GLO-FIBER SAYS HELLO TO CARLISLE

**Shentel's Glo Fiber** brand is headed to Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The expansion will see more than 7,000 miles added to Shentel's network. The build will begin in 4Q21.

### AT&T CENTERED ON LEARNING

**AT&T** is planning to launch more than 20 of its Connected Learning Centers in eight cities across the nation. The centers will be located in local community organizations and provide students and families with free access to the internet, computers and educational resources. AT&T Connected Learning Centers are planned for Dallas, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Cleveland, Detroit, Houston, Miami and San Francisco. The Connected Learning Centers are part of the Connected Learning program, announced in April as a part of the provider's three-year, \$2 billion commitment to promote broadband affordability, accessibility and adoption.

### HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH ON DEMAND

There are plenty of choices for Hispanic Heritage Month on demand. **Sony Canal**, a FAST channel for Spanish-speaking viewers in the U.S., is adding marathons of Sony Canal Novela "Zorro: La Espada y la Rosa" on Saturdays throughout the

month, starting this week. Meanwhile, **FOX AVOD Tubi** will premiere soccer comedy film "Domingo" and Tubi-exclusive dramatic thriller "la DOSIS," as part of its LatinX Heritage Month programming. **Charter's** "Spectrum On Demand" launched a collection of Latin-inspired entertainment for customers to view under its Hispanic Cinema category, including "Frida," "Pan's Labyrinth," "In the Heights," "Dora and the Lost City of Gold," "Coco" and more. Meanwhile, **Univision AVOD PrendeTV** launched a special curated Hispanic entertainment hub in celebration of the month. It will feature seven curated VOD channels, highlighting beloved genres such as award-winning movies, novelas, comedies and more, providing over 1,000 hours of family-friendly viewing.

### AWM GRACIE AWARDS

The **Alliance for Women in Media Foundation's** Gracie Awards will go virtual for its second year in a row October 5, streaming exclusively on the foundation's Facebook page at 7pm. The Gracie Award winners, announced in June 2020, include *Hillary Rodham Clinton*, *Kelly Clarkson*, *Robin Roberts* and more. The awards are granted to women whose work influences and furthers the achievements of all women in media. The event also marks the 70th anniversary of the AWM.

### ON THE CIRCUIT

*Christiane Amanpour*, chief international anchor at **CNN**, is joining the lineup of the 2021 **WICT Leadership Conference** speakers. She'll be joined by WICT global board member *Johnita Due*, svp and chief diversity and inclusion officer, **Warner Media News and Sports**, for an intimate conversation about her career journey. The 2021 WICT Leadership Conference takes place virtually from Oct 4-5.

### PROGRAMMING

**Turner Sports** has a 50-game telecast schedule slated for its inaugural NHL regular season starting October 13. The "NHL on TNT" 2021-2022 season coverage will include exclusive Wednesday night telecasts, along with seven weeks of Sunday games in Spring 2022. The kickoff game starts at 7:30pm ET with the New York Rangers at the Washington Capitals, followed by Colorado Avalanche hosting the Chicago Blackhawks 10pm ET. Other highlighted games include the 2022 Navy Federal Credit Union NHL Stadium Series matchup between Tampa Bay Lightning and Nashville Predators February 26 and the 2022 Tim Hortons NHL Heritage Classic March 13 at 3pm ET. – *Piers Morgan* is returning to **FOX News** and joining **News Corp** in a global deal that will give him a TV show in early 2022. It will air weeknights in the U.K., U.S. and Australia. – **Black News Channel** is premiering primetime program "Amplified with Aisha Mills" Monday at 7pm ET. It will air weeknights – Adult animated comedy series "Ten Year Old Tom" debuts Sept 30 on **HBO Max**. – The first three episodes of wrestling drama "Heels" is available to stream for free on **Facebook**, **YouTube** and the **STARZ** app Friday. The episodes will also be available on **Amazon**, **Apple**, **AT&T**, **Centurylink**, **Charter**, **Comcast**, **Cox**, **DISH**, **DirectTV**, **Google**, **Roku**, **Sling**, **Verizon** and **Vubiquity**. – **Paramount+** gave a series order to "Skymed."

# PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

## One Day, 6 Eps, 20 Years

Saturday marked the 20th anniversary of the attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, resulting in the collapse of two buildings, four hijacked flights, nearly 3,000 deaths and a traumatized nation. For 20 years, children have watched historical footage in classrooms, people have mourned the loss of loved ones, recollections have been exchanged and more. Plenty of documentaries and shows have come out on the subject of the attacks, and this year **Nat Geo's** docuseries "9/11: One Day in America" joined the pack. The short-form series gave an in-depth, minute-by-minute perspective on the attacks over six episodes. The 9/11 Memorial and Museum inspired and partnered with the people behind the production. Everyone on the project had separately been to the museum and agreed that the way it had handled telling these stories was what they wanted to model their own storytelling after. "Basically, early on in the process, we approached them and suggested a partnership. They get asked all the time and wanted to take their time in considering the partnership. We had meetings with them all through our process. We shared cuts with them, and then when they saw the first cut, that's when they finally agreed. They said that this project had nailed the way that they think about the events of that day," said ep *Carolyn Payne*. Current and former New Yorkers, as well as people who have lived in places affected by terrorist attacks, are likely to connect with at least one common thread throughout the series. Payne said her team went out of their way to showcase the actions and kindness of the ordinary people on the ground at least once or twice in each episode. "The thing that struck us again and again as we were going through stories, was how incredible the responders were, and I don't just mean first responders, I mean people that helped on that day...Many people have their lives because sacrifices had been made by other people, and it blew us away," Payne said. 9/11: One Day in America is available to stream on **Hulu** and **Nat Geo TV**. – *Theresa Maher*

### REVIEWS

"30 for 30: Once Upon a Time in Queens," streaming on **ESPN+** and the **ESPN** app. The "30 for 30" series is iconic. Debuting in 2009, its goal was 30 sports-related films celebrating ESPN's 30th year. "30" was ambitious and attracted plenty of doubters. Today, with 100+ films in the can as well as Emmys and an Oscar on the trophy shelf, its legacy is secure. 30 stands out for its consistent quality—we've not seen a bad film. And its ability to tell stories about sports that are not only about sports means it attracts non-sports fans. That said, our review of *Jimmy Kimmel's* "Once Upon a Time in Queens," a four-part doc about the 1986 Mets, is mixed. It's an enjoyable romp about a wild team and its miraculous World Series. And the footage is stupendous. Yet, in spite of its length, the doc is too ambitious. It contains so many story nuggets that depth sometimes suffers. And while we applaud its myriad perspectives, unfortunately they're often snippets. For example, ep 3's treatment of slugger *George Foster's* claim that his release was racially motivated. A quibble: too often we hear talking heads' voices without knowing their identity. And a warning: Families with youngsters should opt for the censored edition. Thanks to outfielder *Lenny Dykstra*, uncensored it rivals "The Sopranos" for f-bombs. – *Seth Arenstein*

BASIC CABLE P2+ PRIME RANKINGS* (09/06/21-09/12/21)		
MON-SUN	MC US AA%	MC US AA (000)
<b>FNC</b>	<b>0.716</b>	<b>2,229</b>
<b>ESPN</b>	<b>0.390</b>	<b>1,216</b>
<b>HGTV</b>	<b>0.345</b>	<b>1,074</b>
<b>MSNBC</b>	<b>0.329</b>	<b>1,025</b>
<b>HALL</b>	<b>0.284</b>	<b>883</b>
<b>TLC</b>	<b>0.282</b>	<b>877</b>
<b>INSP</b>	<b>0.268</b>	<b>835</b>
<b>TBSC</b>	<b>0.231</b>	<b>721</b>
<b>CNN</b>	<b>0.226</b>	<b>705</b>
<b>HIST</b>	<b>0.221</b>	<b>687</b>
<b>DISC</b>	<b>0.205</b>	<b>637</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>0.204</b>	<b>637</b>
<b>FOOD</b>	<b>0.203</b>	<b>631</b>
<b>ID</b>	<b>0.188</b>	<b>585</b>
<b>HMM</b>	<b>0.177</b>	<b>552</b>
<b>LIFE</b>	<b>0.172</b>	<b>537</b>
<b>WETV</b>	<b>0.170</b>	<b>528</b>
<b>TNT</b>	<b>0.157</b>	<b>490</b>
<b>AMC</b>	<b>0.150</b>	<b>466</b>
<b>TVLAND</b>	<b>0.146</b>	<b>454</b>
<b>NATGEO</b>	<b>0.142</b>	<b>442</b>
<b>BRAVO</b>	<b>0.138</b>	<b>430</b>
<b>GSN</b>	<b>0.137</b>	<b>426</b>
<b>A&amp;E</b>	<b>0.136</b>	<b>425</b>
<b>ADSM</b>	<b>0.128</b>	<b>397</b>
<b>FX</b>	<b>0.124</b>	<b>387</b>
<b>PARA</b>	<b>0.120</b>	<b>373</b>
<b>FRFM</b>	<b>0.113</b>	<b>353</b>
<b>MTV</b>	<b>0.110</b>	<b>344</b>
<b>NAN</b>	<b>0.104</b>	<b>324</b>
<b>BET</b>	<b>0.104</b>	<b>323</b>
<b>NICK</b>	<b>0.099</b>	<b>310</b>
<b>APL</b>	<b>0.099</b>	<b>309</b>
<b>TRAVEL</b>	<b>0.099</b>	<b>308</b>

\*P2+ L+SD rankers are based on national Nielsen numbers, not coverage.

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