

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Moving Forward: AT&T Details Path to Winning Connectivity Crown

AT&T is working to complete its transformation back into a pure connectivity company, laying out the first part of a two-act plan at its investor day Friday that it hopes will set it apart from the competition.

Discovery shareholders voted to approve the company's merger with **WarnerMedia** to create **Warner Bros. Discovery**, keeping it on track to close in 2Q22. AT&T CEO *John Stankey* admitted that after reducing the company's investment in entertainment, more work has to be done to differentiate AT&T as a connectivity provider. Taking a jab at previous management teams, he clarified that transformative M&A is not a core part of that equation. Instead, the focus is on developing software and additional capabilities that can lay on top of the network and provide more value to customers.

"When our first act is done, we'll be a more focused, agile and capable domestic network leader. We'll be a company with a smaller product portfolio built on the back of fiber in the core metropolitan and suburban areas combined with a highly capable nationwide wireless network able to extend even greater capabilities and utility than ever before beyond our core," Stankey said in an opening statement.

Company leadership maintained its previously-stated guidance of 30 million fiber locations by 2025, breaking it down further to 3.5-4 million new fiber locations per year. That estimate is on the conservative side and could increase as

AT&T continues its buildouts. The provider currently counts 16 million fiber locations and is looking to retire approximately half of its copper assets as it pushes more of its footprint onto fiber. Of the locations within its footprint that are left, 75% will be covered with fiber. **New Street Research** said in a note reacting to the presentation that it isn't sure that retiring those copper assets is the right decision.

"The single biggest advantage they have over the national wireless carriers is their large fixed footprint... an integrated fiber and wireless network would go a long way to curing their spectrum shortfall and improving their offering in markets with fiber," the firm said. "Our vision for the endgame is 3-4 nationwide integrated networks... Cable has a place in the endgame by virtue of a nationwide terrestrial network today (far easier to attach spectrum to fiber than build a fiber network under spectrum)."

In addition to its core fiber builds, AT&T is edging out from its traditional footprint today in places that can easily be attached. Stankey said those were typically really easy additions as there are no incremental fixed cost startup dynamics and customers usually quickly pick up an AT&T plan. The company has also set up a special organization that is focused on bidding on opportunities in subsidy or grant programs established by both the state and federal governments.

"We actually think the approach... is a really smart public-private approach. The combination of the subsidy that comes in plus the additional monthly subsidy that comes in with the ACP

THE FAXIES

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE IN PR & MARKETING

Submit your entries by **March 11**

Your hard work is done – and now it's time for you and your team to get recognized!

Honoring those people, shows, and networks who excel in digital content, marketing, advertising, social media and online content.

Categories include Audience Engagement & Experience, PR & Marketing, Executives and Teams of the Year.

www.TheFAXIES.com



makes it a really good combination, and we're highly interested in continuing to participate in it," Stankey said in comments about the **NTIA's** BEAD program. No wins are included within the company's guidance, but he has high hopes they'll be a strong program participant.

He also joined the chorus of CEOs that chose to denounce fixed wireless this week. He pointed to the company's estimates that consumers will be consuming 4.6 terabytes by 2025, with roughly 30 times more data being consumed within the home than what is being used outside of the home via smartphones.

"We're not opposed to fixed wireless and I'm sure there's going to be segments of the market where it's going to be acceptable and folks are going to find it to be adequate right now. I would just tell you having played the catch-up game for a significant part of my career on the broadband side of the equation... the reality is that the curve is moving away from the scalability of wireless," Stankey said.

CNN+ LAUNCHING IN LATE MARCH

CNN+ is launching in the U.S. on March 29 at a price of \$5.99/month or \$59.99/year. Subscribers who sign up within the first four weeks of launch will get 50% off the monthly plan for life if they remain subscribers. One **CNN** app will house **CNN+** as well as access to CNN's linear TV feeds and an on-demand offering for pay TV customers.

FCC WARNS ON ACP DECEPTIONS

The **FCC** Office of Inspector General issued an advisory Friday alerting consumers to improper and abusive enrollment practices by some providers of Lifeline, Emergency Broadband Benefit

and Affordable Connectivity Program services. The office said several providers who offer both Lifeline and ACP are misleading Lifeline consumers into enrolling for undesired service when they apply for Lifeline using the providers' online application process. At least one provider requires consumers to agree to transfer their existing ACP service even after the consumer indicates they only seek Lifeline service, OIG said. It's urging consumers who encounter such attempts to contact its hotline. The FCC's Wireline Competition Bureau announced new program integrity measures Friday and said it will refer any potential violations of the Commission's rules to the Enforcement Bureau for further investigation and appropriate enforcement action.

ALTICE USA RAMPING RETAIL PRESENCE

More evidence of how **Altice USA** is trying to better frame itself against **Verizon Fios**: It's adding 13 new retail Optimum stores across the NY Tri-State area. New stores already opened or are coming soon in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Connecticut, and Long Island. The stores feature state-of-the-art showrooms and the ability to interact with Optimum products, including Optimum Mobile.

UNLIMITED DVR COMING TO HULU + LIVE TV

Hulu + Live TV subscribers will have unlimited DVR added to their subscriptions at no additional cost on April 13. Hulu's version of the offering will give customers on-demand playback and fast-forwarding capabilities on recordings for up to nine months. Prior to this, Hulu + Live TV subs received up to 50 hours of DVR storage with their plans with the option to upgrade to up to 200 hours for a fee. Subscribers that previously purchased the Enhanced Cloud DVR add-on for



CONGRATULATE the **CABLEFAX 100** and **REACH** the Top Leaders in Cable, Broadband & Digital

Ad Space Close: April 4 | Ads Due: April 8

Advertising Contact: Ellen Kamhi, Director of Business Development
917-626-5574 | ekamhi@accessintel.com

WWW.CABLEFAX100.COM **Magazine Publish Date: April 27**

Cablefax Daily (ISSN 1069-6644) is published daily by Access Intelligence, LLC | www.cablefax.com | 301.354.2101 | Editorial Director: Amy Maclean, 301.354.1760, amaclean@accessintel.com | VP/Group Publisher, Cablefax and Synopsis: Robbie Caploe, 917.974.0640, rcaploe@accessintel.com | Managing Editor: Sara Winegardner, 301.354.1701, swinegardner@accessintel.com | Associate Editor: Noah Ziegler, 301.354.1704, nziegler@accessintel.com | Director of Business Development, Cablefax: Ellen Kamhi, 917.626.5574, ekamhi@accessintel.com | Dir of Marketing: Kate Schaeffer, kschaeffer@accessintel.com | Production Manager: Joann Fato, jfato@accessintel.com | Kerry Smith, Divisional President, Marketing & Media Group, ksmith@accessintel.com | Group Subs/Subscription Questions, Client Services: 301.354.2101, clientservices@accessintel.com | Annual subscription price: \$1,799.00/year | Access Intelligence, LLC, 9211 Corporate Blvd., 4th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850

\$9.99/month or Enhanced Cloud DVR + Unlimited Screens add-on for \$14.98/month will transition to the free unlimited DVR offering and see a reduction in their monthly bill.

GOOGLE FIBER 2 GIG FOR BIZ

Google Fiber is now offering its 2-gig product to businesses for \$250/month. Customers can get up to 2,000 mbps download and up to 1,000 mbps upload along with Wifi 6 and up to two mesh extenders. The 1-gig plan for businesses runs at \$100/month.

NEXTGEN COMES TO CHARLESTON

The leading TV stations in Charleston are now broadcasting with new digital broadcast technology **NextGen TV** powered by **ATSC 3.0**. This week's launches include WCIV (ABC), WCSC-TV (CBS), WTAT-TV (FOX), WCBF-TV (NBC) and WGWG (H&I). NextGen TV allows broadcasters to reach viewers with advanced emergency alerts and higher quality video that also works with internet content. It also has a Voice+ dialogue enhancement that keeps volume consistent across channels.

PROGRAMMING

"How to Survive a Pandemic" debuts March 29 at 9pm on **HBO** and will be available to stream on **HBO Max**. The documentary details the worldwide hunt to research, develop and roll out COVID-19 vaccines. – **XUMO** is streaming the Oscar-nominated "RBG" documentary as an AVOD exclusive through April 15. The film celebrates U.S. Supreme Court Justice *Ruth Bader Ginsburg*, who would've turned 89 this month.

ON THE CIRCUIT

Kudos to "Team InnOvention," a business school student team from the Univ of Colorado that took first place in the 16th annual **Media+Tech Innovation Challenge** (formerly the Rocky Mountain Cable Association's Cable Apprentice program). The team took home the \$3,000 grand prize in the case study competition, which explored ideas for the next chapter of **DirectTV's** business strategy. Each member of the winning team will have a preferred opportunity for a local paid industry internship. Previous hiring companies include **Comcast, Sand Cherry Associates, Charter** and **Starz**.

CABLEFAX DASHBOARD

Twitter Hits





Research

(Source: [CNBC|Momentive Women at Work Survey](#))

- > 11% of women say they quit a job in the last 12 months, equal to the number of men.
- > 29% of women quit because they "didn't want to deal with the stress anymore." 11% had concerns about getting COVID-19 or spreading it to a family member, 9% started their own business and 8% left to take care of children full-time.
- > 24% of women are working more hours now compared to a year ago and 29% say the biggest source of work-related stress stems from being overwhelmed

Up Ahead

- MARCH 11:** [FAXIES Entry Deadline](#)
- MARCH 20-23:** [WICT Network Senior Executive Summit](#), Stanford
- APRIL 14:** [WICT Signature Luncheon](#), NY
- APRIL 23-27:** [NAB Show](#), Las Vegas
- APRIL 24-26:** [NTCA Legislative + Policy Conference](#); DC
- APRIL 27-28:** [BCAP Cable Academy](#), Lancaster, PA

Quotable

"I'd say we're still kind of searching a little bit for what normal is exactly going to look like post-COVID. We're still working our way through that. But I would say I think there's probably overly focused attention on subscriber numbers. What we focus on is building a great business—we're focused on growing revenue, growing profits, growing cash flow. And that's about driving not just membership, but driving engagement, increasing engagement, and, obviously, increasing member value pricing occasionally into that value that we create. For us, it's the combination of those things, as opposed to a year-to-year or quarter-to-quarter member number."
 – [Netflix CFO Spencer Neumann](#) during an [appearance](#) at the [2022 Morgan Stanley Technology, Media & Telecom Conference](#)