

# Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

## 5 Questions: Midco CEO on Management Changes, Fiber & Fixed Wireless

Midco has recently had several senior level changes, including the addition of a president and chief operating officer role. Cablefax caught up with Chair/CEO Pat McAdaragh to talk about the appointment of his brother Tom McAdaragh to the post as well as the operator's latest developments in serving more markets. Excerpts from the interview follow.

### Why is this the right time to create this role?

The real impetus was we had some succession going on in terms of retirements. We had our Chief Operating Officer Debbie Stang and our SVP of Field Ops Todd Jensen retire at the beginning of the year. In addition, we had John Pederson, as longtime CTO, want to step back from day-to-day management and focus on innovation and outreach. That led to rethinking how we're going to run the business from a leadership perspective. We happen to have my brother working for us. He's been with us about seven years now. He was SVP, Operations at another company, and prior to that he had been in engineering. So for us, he was doing engineering, but he also has good people skills. It just made a lot of sense to separate the CEO and president roles. He's more customer facing, day-to-day operational, and I'm more external, working on the big strategy items. As part of the changes, Ben Dold was promoted to SVP, Operations.

### When you hear someone is in engineering, you don't always think customer-facing. Those are often different skillsets.

Yes, he's rather unique. In high school, he was voted most popular kid in his senior year. He's got this really unusual combination of good people skills, in addition to technical expertise. He's been in management for 15 years now, so he's been overseeing large groups of people that are technical in nature and operational too. Succession is so important to run a solid business over time. I am so proud of our team. We've got all this talent and it's deep in the organization—a lot of it's what I call next-generation talent.

### Let's talk about what that team is doing. Midco has been busy with fiber builds. What's the latest?

Greenfield—pushing out fiber, edging out into places where we're not and also all of our plant extensions in markets we're already in, all that's fiber-to-the-premise. We're doing about 30,000 homes a year with that and have been doing so for three years now. We're also working on upgrading our current existing hybrid fiber plant. That is a combination of remote PHY, high-split technology and in some cases fiber-to-the-prem. That's a major initiative that's going to take seven years. Both of these together we call Fiber Forward. When we're done with this, around 2026 or 2028, 25% of our footprint will be fiber-to-the-prem and the rest will be upgraded to multi-gigabit speeds for downloads, and at least a gigabit for uploads. Our goal is to be the best network there is in our service areas and have the best customer experience.



## CONGRATULATIONS to the 2022 Cablefax 100!

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Where does Midco stand with its fixed wireless offering?

We got into it with the Connect America Fund, which was an auction before RDOF. By the end of this year or early next year, we'll have fulfilled all the obligations, building out to all the places and will be offering 100 megabits down and 20 megabits up ubiquitously through our fixed wireless footprint. That is going really well. It allowed us to get a lot more middle mile too. The thing is that RDOF came along and it really started to move to fiber, or everything's got to be a gigabit, I should say. So our enthusiasm to continue and expand a lot more into fixed wireless kind of waned because of all this government money coming into the picture and emphasizing gigabit speeds. We still think it's a valuable asset for us, and we'll be able to get to some spots that nobody else can get to. It also allows you to get to an area quick, with the plans to build later too.

What about video for Midco?

We partnered with TiVo for a product called Midco TV that's IPTV and in front of about 85% of our customers. All of our stats and metrics show how stable it is and we're getting very good customer feedback. We're kind of entering a phase where it's 'let's displace the legacy QAM video with this Midco TV product.' We think that will take three years or so to finish.

FTC BRINGS HAMMER DOWN ON CHILD DATA PRIVACY

The FTC took a strong stance on children's privacy Thursday, voting 5-0 at an open meeting to clarify that it is against the law for education technology companies to require the surrendering of a child's privacy rights in exchange for access to remote learning tools. Specifically, the commission noted

that companies cannot deny children access to educational tools in the circumstance that their parents or schools refuse to agree to commercial surveillance. The move earned direct praise from the White House. "When children and parents access online educational products, they shouldn't be forced to accept tracking and surveillance to do so," President Biden said in a statement. "The FTC is making it clear that such requirements would violate the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, and that the agency will be cracking down on companies that persist in exploiting our children to make money."

FCC EXTENDS DEADLINES FOR TEGNA TRANSFER

The FCC Media Bureau is extending the petition to deny deadline for the transfer of TEGNA's licenses to an indirect subsidiary of Standard General in light of a motion from public interest groups for additional information and a time extension. The petition to deny deadline is now extended to June 22 with oppositions to petitions to deny due at the petition no later than July 7. Replies will need to be submitted on or before July 18.

DIRECTV SERVES THE FRENCH OPEN

DirectTV will have seven channels dedicated to action from this year's French Open, which begins Sunday. The "Roland-Garros Experience" is harbored at channel 901 with simultaneous events from matches, and channels 902-907 will be dedicated to individual match play on other courts. The channels will have on-demand enhancements allowing viewers to access match results, an on-screen ticker with scores, updated men's and women's tournament draws, player bios and more. One men's and one women's semifinal match and both championships will be produced by NBC Sports in 4K UHD. Alternate viewing

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## Cablefax Daily

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for the tournament will be available on **Tennis Channel**.

**RATINGS**

**TNT's** broadcast of Game 1 of the NBA Western Conference Finals between the Golden State Warriors and Dallas Mavericks averaged 6.5 million total viewers. The telecast was the most-watched NBA Conference Finals game since 2018 and the most watched playoff game on cable this year. Ratings peaked at 7.5 million viewers from 9:45pm-10pm.

**NATIONAL STREAMING DAY DEAL**

**Philo** is celebrating National Streaming Day (May 20) with a discount through May 31 for new customers and those in trial to get \$10 off their first month. Customers can use the code "STREAM" when signing up online.

**PROGRAMMING**

**HBO Documentary Films** acquired worldwide TV rights to "All That Breathes" from director *Shaunak Sen*. The film premiered in January at the Sundance Film Festival and will make its debut on **HBO** and **HBO Max** in 2023. – **ESPN+** has a weekend of soccer ahead, starting with the German Cup Final between SC Freiburg and RB Leipzig on Saturday at 1:45pm. Two MLS matches—D.C. United vs. Toronto FC at 4pm and FC Cincinnati vs. New England Revolution at 6pm—round out Saturday's slate before each match of the final day of the Spanish La Liga season is broadcast on the streamer Sunday. The first match kicks off at 11:20am. – **MAVTV Motorsports Network** will broadcast the 12 races in the 2022 Lucas Oil Pro Motocross Championship on **MAVTV** and **MAVTV Plus**, with the first race coming May 28 at 4pm. MAVTV is available on 220 providers across cable, satellite and digital platforms, including **AT&T U-Verse**, **Spectrum**, **DirecTV**, **fuboTV**, **YouTube TV** and **Hulu**.

**PEOPLE**

**TelevisaUnivision** named *David Katz* SVP of Corporate Events, where he'll oversee the company's corporate events strategy and lead event planning across external and internal events. Katz joins after holdings roles at **Viacom** and **Nickelodeon**.

**CABLEFAX DASHBOARD**

**Twitter Hits**

i2i Systems @i2iSystems  
 Rather than being a passing fad, Internet has proved itself as a very powerful tool that has forever changed the way we communicate!  
 #WorldTelecommunicationDay #i2iSystems #innovation2integration

Xavier Hill (birthday June 17) @HijHopandGames  
 On this day in 1998, Celebrity Deathmatch premiered on MTV. Another one of my favorite shows back when MTV was MTV (music television). What are some of your favorite fights? #CelebrityDeathmatch #MTV

Grant Spellmeyer @GRANTatACA  
 It's a deal! I look forward to our joint collaboration.

NCTA - The Internet & Television Association @NCTAItv · May 17  
 We congratulate @GRANTatACA on today's announcement and look forward to working with you and the entire @ACAConnects team on the important work of connecting every corner of America to robust broadband service.

**Research**

(Source: [GSMA 2022 Internet Value Chain Report](#))

- > Revenues across the internet value chain nearly doubled from \$3.3 trillion in 2015 to \$6.7 trillion in 2020. Much of that growth comes from online services, with paid-for online services soon set to exceed \$1 trillion in revenues.
- > The annual growth rate of number of users being connected to the internet globally sits at 7.5%.
- > Return on investment in infrastructure for network operators ranges from 6-11%. That is concerning due to pressures on telecom operators to invest capex into that infrastructure at rates of up to 20% of revenues.

**Up Ahead**

**MAY 23-25:** [Media Financial Management Association's Annual Conference](#); Tampa, FL

**JUNE 12:** Cablefax's Fiber Panels for Cable Operators, [Fiber Connect Pre-Conference](#); Nashville

**JUNE 27-30:** [CTA's CEO Summit](#), Santa Barbara

**JUNE 29:** [Cablefax's FAXIES Virtual](#)

**JULY 24-27:** [NCTC and ACA Connects' Independent Show](#); Orlando

**Quotable**

"When you take a look at what's left in the bundle of value, it's news and sports. So, you know, I don't believe that MVPDs such as DirecTV are going to be willing to take the risk to go without some key product. Specifically, we're talking about DirecTV, they are a very sports-focused offering, sort of the opposite of DISH. The MVPDs very much want this content. And to some degree, we've already crossed the Rubicon on direct-to-consumer because we had to negotiate for the right to do it years in advance. They all want this content. They know their subscribers want it, and I don't see them taking the risk."  
 – Sinclair CEO Chris Ripley at the MoffettNathanson Media & Communications Summit discussing whether the launch of Bally Sports+ raises the risk that Sinclair nets will be dropped by MVPDs