

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Stoppage Time: FuboTV Hit by Cyberattack During World Cup Match

FuboTV subscribers excited to watch Morocco, the first African nation to reach the FIFA World Cup Semifinals, take on current champions France on Wednesday were left disappointed. The vMVPD confirmed Thursday that a criminal cyber attack prevented many customers from accessing their accounts for a period of time that included the scheduled time of the match.

In a lengthy statement released Thursday morning, FuboTV said it immediately began working to restore service once the attack was detected. Service was fully restored Wednesday evening, and the attack was reported to law enforcement. FuboTV has also retained incident response firm **Mandiant** to assist with its ongoing investigation and response. The provider has not said whether any customer information was compromised as a result of the attack, but noted on Twitter that it will update subscribers when it has more information to share.

“Our primary focus currently is on ensuring that the incident is fully contained and that there is no threat of further disruption for any of our customers,” FuboTV said. “Although no company can ever be immune from the risk of cyber attacks, we assure you that we are working diligently with our outside cybersecurity experts to take all appropriate steps to remediate this incident and to prevent any similar incident from recurring in the future.”

Subscribers responded to the statement on **Twitter** with calls for refunds and one-month service credits as an apology for the interruption. We’ll surely find out more details on the

costs and nature of the attack in the weeks to come. **Sinclair** was hit with a ransomware attack in October 2021 that disrupted its news broadcasts, and it wasn’t until February that CEO *Chris Ripley* revealed the impact on the broadcast segment’s ad revenues was \$63 million. While the broadcaster did have some insurance protections, the unrecoverable net loss was estimated at that time to be \$24 million.

The disruption comes at a time when there is a focus, particularly in the nation’s capital, on closing security gaps and establishing better protections for when those cyber strikes occur. The Senate passed the No TikTok on Government Devices Act Wednesday by unanimous consent, preventing individuals with a device issued from the United States or a government corporation from downloading or using the social media app that has been deemed a national security risk. FCC Commissioner *Nathan Simington* called on the agency Thursday to make modifications to its equipment authorization regime to ensure that device manufacturers explicitly commit to supporting their wireless devices with security updates for a specified period. His concern is the widespread practice of abandoning support for wireless devices while they are still actively used by as many as millions of Americans creates a significant risk for wireless providers, their networks and their customers.

The agency’s **Wireline Competition Bureau** is also seeking comment through Feb. 13 on whether E-Rate program funds should be allowed to be used to support advanced or next-gen firewalls and network security services. Reply comments are due March 30.



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STARRY FACES DELISTING FROM NYSE

The **New York Stock Exchange** notified fixed wireless provider **Starry** Wednesday that it has decided to start proceedings to delist the company's Class A common stock and warrants to purchase those shares from the NYSE. Trading of the stocks and warrants was suspended immediately. Starry has the ability to appeal the decision if it files a written request within seven calendar days after receiving the notice. The NYSE also notified Starry last week that it is not in compliance with the rules for listing as its average global market capitalization over a consecutive 30 trading-day period was less than \$50 million. Its last reported stockholder's equity was also less than \$50 million. Starry has 45 days following the receipt of that notification to submit a plan of action the company is taking to bring it into compliance. Starry's board has not yet determined how it will proceed.

CHIME TV SET TO LAUNCH IN NEW YEAR

ChimeTV, a general entertainment network and digital platform targeting multigenerational Asian-American and Pacific Islander audiences in English, is gearing up for a January launch. **Charter** signed on as its first MVPD partner, with the operator beginning to notify customers that the channel is set to debut on or around Jan. 9. Charter has committed to launching the Asian-American and woman-owned channel across its 41-state footprint on its Spectrum TV Select video tier. ChimeTV promises a wide mix of programming, including lifestyle, movies, public affairs and animation.

COMMSCOPE ADDS DISTRIBUTOR PROGRAM

CommScope introduced its Infrastructure Distributor Program, marking the launch of the first leg of the Service Provider Channel Partner Program it announced last month. The Distributor Program offers CommScope's longtime partners with specific tools, educational resources and customer development incentives. CommScope University will give those partners on-demand access to the company's learning management system and a badge recognition system will offer unique benefits inline with specific achievements.

FOX NEWS WINS YEAR AGAIN

2022 marks lucky #7 for **Fox News**—as in its seventh year as the top-rated network in all of cable TV. **Nielsen** data has it easily leading the pack in prime, averaging 2.33 million viewers through Dec. 13. Runner-up **ESPN** comes in at 1.92 million, followed by **MSNBC** (1.21). Fox News also has a sizable lead in total day, averaging 1.49 million viewers compared to second-place finisher MSNBC's 733,000. There's a few more weeks left in the year, so final numbers could change a little. Fox News' strong year included 92 of the top 100 cable news shows of the year as well as its second-highest share of the cable news audience in its history with 53% in total day in the 25-54 demo.

VERIZON OPENS +PLAY BETA

Verizon launched early access to its +play beta Thursday, offering customers one year of **Netflix's** Premium plan for free when paired with the purchase of select other subscription services through the destination. +play is Verizon's take on streaming aggregation, a content hub for its mobile, 5G Home and LTE Home customers that allows them to manage various subscriptions. The Netflix Premium plan credit is available with the purchase of a 12-month or seasonal

Cablefax Executive Round Up

We asked **Cablefax's Most Powerful Women** how their definitions of success changed over the course of their careers.



Catherine Bohigian
EVP, Government Affairs
Charter Communications

"Early on, I think I mostly saw success in terms of concrete advancements—explicit policy changes, promotions, etc. But being able to encourage women in my field, formally through WICT or our Spectrum Women group or more informally, has actually become one of the most rewarding aspects of my career."



Amy Gravitt
EVP, Programming & Head of Comedy
HBO

"For me, success is an elusive feeling, and it doesn't show up at the expected times. I feel it when I'm having a meaty conversation about a script more than I do when I'm getting dressed up for a big event. Knowing there are still achievements to be had somewhere on the horizon is what fuels me."



Susan Swain
President & Co-CEO
C-SPAN

"Early in your career, success often means another rung climbed, another promotion merited. Today, my pride truly comes from cheering on the success of the people around me, whether it's a project well done for our network or a note of recognition for one of my colleagues. I also take much pleasure in marking the achievements of our interns as they progress in their lives and celebrating former C-SPANners who have gone on to pursue interesting and important careers. I'm so glad many of them have stayed in touch over the years."



Aisha Thomas-Petit
Chief People & Diversity Officer
AMC Networks

"Early on in my career, I defined success as making it to the next level, earning bigger opportunities at whatever organization I was operating in. When I look at myself now, I count my successes based on the number of opportunities I'm able to open up and champion for other women. Ensuring that women continue to win and grow in corporate spaces is what I now consider success."

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

subscription from other +play partners including **NFL+**, **NBA League Pass**, **AMC+** and the **Peloton** app.

OFF TO THE RACES

It's getting hard to keep up with all the motorsports free streaming options launching. **Speedvision** returned as a FAST network this fall, with *Bob Scanlon*, co-founder of the original Speedvision, at the helm. Then came news the former SPEED channel is returning as **YouTube** channel **SPEEDtube**. Now at the starting line is **Speed Sport 1**, which expects to debut as a FAST channel this spring. It's being developed by **Obsession Media** and *Speed Sport Magazine*, with former **MAVTV** president *Dan Teitscheid* signing on to run the venture. This will be Obsession Media's second FAST channel, joining **Outdoor America**. The company includes former **ESPN** CEO/Speedvision co-founder CEO *Roger Werner* as an investor and adviser.

BUMPY AD MARKET AHEAD

MoffettNathanson is currently modeling +7% U.S. ad growth in 2023 driven by +13% growth (\$25 billion) in digital advertising offset by -3% declines in TV, including AVOD. "Clearly, we see risks to the forecast and believe that TV, which has been supported by sports, political and the guaranteed demand of the upfront in the fourth quarter, is at greater risk than digital," the firm said, pointing to the current weakness of the scatter market as well as concerning financial health for the largest 100 U.S. advertisers. The firm's not modeling a recession right now, but it sees worrying signs that the start of 2023 will be challenging for national TV. At this time last year, MoffettNathanson had forecasted that U.S. ad spending would increase 14% in 2022. Instead, it's looking like it will end up around 8%.

HOLIDAY PROGRAMMING HOLDS VALUE

Approximately 92% of households tune in to holiday programming, research from **Effectv** found. The ad sales arm of **Comcast Cable** looked at trends in holiday programming, finding that households watch an average of 20 hours of holiday content during the season (Nov. 25, 2021-Dec. 25, 2021). There was a 46% increase in streaming viewership on top holiday networks—**Lifetime**, **Hallmark** and **Freeform**—during that period, and 79% of streaming impressions are on a big TV screen. Original TV movies make up 44% of holiday viewership, followed by "other TV movies" at 34% and TV shows and specials at 12% and 10%, respectively. Effectv also found that families are 15% more likely to watch holiday programming, and there's a 12% jump in co-viewing on top of holiday networks during the season.

CARRIAGE

Peacock will become the exclusive streaming partner of airline **JetBlue** in spring 2023. JetBlue flyers will be able to watch a section of Peacock Originals for free from their seatback screens, while flyers using their own devices and JetBlue's free internet can stream Peacock's full offerings. The airline is also integrating Peacock subscription special offers as part of its loyalty program. – **MotorTrend** FAST TV is now available on **Vizio**'s free streaming service WatchFree+. The FAST channel includes shows such as "Roadkill" and "Texas Metal." – **NBCUniversal** is expanding its

partnership with **Samsung** to bring more news content to the FAST channel Samsung TV Plus and Samsung owned, operated and branded mobile applications in the U.S. and Canada. U.S. users can now watch "Dateline" on the Dateline 24/7 channel, and Canadian users can watch live news from NBC News NOW.

PLUTO SHOWS OFF TAGLINE IN NEW ADS

Pluto TV is launching a global brand campaign touting its recently-revamped "Stream Now, Pay Never" tagline. The campaign stars *Drew Barrymore* and features three unique commercial spots highlighting the ease of signing up to the service and the programming it offers. The spots launch Friday in the U.S. and will run across select Pluto TV international territories in the beginning of 2023.

PROGRAMMING

Showtime has a lot of faith in critically acclaimed series "Yellowjackets," renewing it for a third season before Season 2's March 24 premiere. Season 1 received seven Emmy noms, averaged 5 million weekly viewers across platforms and has a rare 100% score on Rotten Tomatoes. – **Starz** is in development with *Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson* ("Power," "For Life") on drama series "Fightland," which is set in the high stakes world of British boxing. Meanwhile, the third season of "Power Book II: Ghost" will premiere on Starz on March 17. – **Disney's** Onyx Collective will bow six-part docuseries "The 1619 Project" on **Hulu** on Jan 26. The expansion of "The 1619 Project" created by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist *Nikole Hannah-Jones* and *The New York Times Magazine* seeks to reframe U.S. history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of Black Americans at the center of the national narrative. – The second season of **INSP's** "Into the Wild Frontier" arrives on Feb. 15 at 10pm ET.

HONORS

ABC's "Abbott Elementary," **FX's** "The Old Man," **Hulu's** "Only Murders in the Building," **HBO's** "The White Lotus" and **Paramount Network's** "Yellowstone" were nominated for Best TV Series in **AARP's** annual Movies for Grownups Awards. The honors will be presented in Beverly Hills on Jan. 28, with **PBS** to broadcast the event in February. The race for Best TV Movie/Limited series is between **Apple TV+'s** "Black Bird," **Hulu's** "The Dropout," **Netflix's** "Inventing Anna," **HBO's** "The Staircase" and **Netflix's** "The Watcher."

DOING GOOD

Cable One awarded more than \$110,000 in grants to 28 nonprofits this holiday season through its Charitable Giving Fund. The fund supports organizations having a meaningful impact on education and digital literacy, food insecurity and community development in its 24-state footprint.

PEOPLE

Cinedigm selected *Mark Lindsey* as EVP, Finance and Accounting. – Sending out well wishes to longtime **Broadband Communications Association of Pennsylvania** comms director *Brian Herrmann*, who is set to retire at year-end. He joined the association in 2003, guiding it recently through a change of leadership (last year, *Todd Eachus* became the association's fourth president in its 65-year history), a name change and various policy debates.

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

Window Shopping with 'Storefront Stories'

Storefronts receive a special amount of attention at this time of year, and the owners of those small businesses place as much thought and care into their displays and inventory as you might put into the choosing of gifts for friends and family. **Magnolia Network** is giving shoppers a behind-the-scenes look into the decisions that create the stores they love with "Storefront Stories," arriving Friday on **discovery+**. The idea came to *Johanna Gaines* as she was window shopping in New York, but the show quickly expanded beyond the Big Apple. "As those first few episodes came in and we realized we found something special in this series, we branched out to unique shops around the country that have passionate owners with amazing stories," Magnolia Network SVP, Content *Sarah Kuban* told **CFX**. "The design and layout of each store was important for casting as well as the curation and diversity of goods sold in the shops." Scheduling filming with the owners was arguably the toughest part of the production process due to the chaotic nature of their days. Magnolia was able to find times to film when those owners were creating a new look to their storefronts or merchandising part of their store, giving viewers a more realistic peek into the thought process and effort that goes into a display. "We noticed that the design of the stores is really an extension of the owners' tastes and passions, and with that comes a happiness level that balances out all of the many hats that the small business owners wear," Magnolia Network Director, Content and Development *Jessica Winchell Morsa* said. "In Portland, Oregon, we spent time with the owner of Notary Ceramics who came to owning her own business after years in a stressful PR job. In her case, her studio for making ceramics as a passion became a shop to share her beautiful work with others." – *Sara Winegardner*

REVIEWS

"I Hate Suzie Too," Season 2 premiere, streaming, Dec. 22, **HBO Max**. It's hard to know what to praise first about this 3-part mini, the follow-on to the series' previous, far lighter yet still effective first season. Once again, the viewing experience is engrossing. *Billie Piper* ("Secret Diary of a Call Girl") makes it so, as do the production values and camerawork, which are vitally important in this series. The frenetic life and mind of Suzie (Piper), an actor with a badly damaged reputation, is conveyed through unusual camera angles, close-ups, overheads, tight shots in small hallways. During a session with her divorce attorneys, Piper makes Suzie's anxiety clear through facial expressions and body language, with assists from close-ups on her writhing face and a synthesized soundtrack that signals her distrust of the process. Suzie cheated on her husband. It was caught on video and her life is in tatters. Social media has seen to that. As such, her soon-to-be ex is taking as much from her as he can, including custody of their young son. It's true, in our divided world, where war and health concerns continue brewing, this anti-Christmas Christmas special may lack mass appeal. On the other hand, if a realistic, brave portrayal of someone whose life is veering out of bounds is appealing, then watch Piper. Absolutely. – *Seth Arenstein*

BASIC CABLE		
P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*		
(12/05/22-12/11/22)		
MON-SUN	MC	MC
	US	US AA
	AA%	(000)
ESPN	0.751	2345
FNC	0.683	2132
MSNBC	0.450	1405
HALL	0.384	1198
HGTV	0.236	737
TLC	0.230	719
HST	0.230	717
PRMNT	0.230	717
CNN	0.220	687
FOOD	0.208	649
INSP	0.206	643
DISC	0.191	596
TBSC	0.189	591
FRFM	0.184	574
HMM	0.181	566
USA	0.174	543
A&E	0.157	490
TVLAND	0.154	482
ESPN2	0.149	466
ID	0.149	465
AMC	0.149	465
TNT	0.142	444
FX	0.140	437
REELZ	0.119	371
LIFE	0.118	368
BET	0.111	345
GSN	0.103	323
WETV	0.096	299
BRAVO	0.094	293
NATGEO	0.089	277
OXY	0.088	274
FX	0.085	264
COM	0.074	232
ADSM	0.072	223
TRAVEL	0.070	218

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



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