

# Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

## Coast to Coast: Cox Mobile Goes National, Others Plan Wireless Pushes

**Cox Mobile** is finally national. **Cox Communication's** mobile arm is now offering service nationwide, the company announced at **CES** Thursday, thanks to an MNO deal with **Verizon**. Subscribers can choose between a Pay As You Gig (\$15/GB per month) or Gig Unlimited plan (\$45/month) and have the flexibility to switch between the two on a daily basis, if they ever need to.

The big move comes four months after Cox Mobile sprang to life through a pilot launch in three markets: Hampton Roads, Virginia; Omaha, Nebraska; and Las Vegas. At the time, it planned to introduce the product to the rest of its footprint on a rolling basis through the remainder of the year, but stayed quiet on who would be its national partner. Cox originally planned to launch the service in October 2021 in partnership with Verizon, but that was put on pause after **T-Mobile** sued the broadband provider claiming it was obligated to strike a deal with T-Mobile due to previous deals with Sprint. A court ruling last year opened the door for a Verizon deal.

While Cox was offering its update in Las Vegas, **TDS Telecom** and **USCellular** had some MVNO news of their own to share at Citi's annual Communications, Media and Entertainment Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona. TDS is going to be rolling out branded cellular service in some of its markets and it plans to do so in a way that also benefits sister company USCellular. "USCellular does cover 40% of our footprint, so

when we work with a mobile enabler, we will make sure that USCellular's network is used when we use the enabler and we'll route the traffic over their network," TDS Telecom President/CEO *Jim Butman* said.

The marketing teams of the two companies have also been collaborating on opportunities to grow in key markets like Wisconsin. It's one of USCellular's biggest markets and TDS is building out fiber networks across the state. As builds are completed, the broadband provider's teams will be collaborating with USCellular to sell internet service at the wireless operator's retail locations.

"We're recognizing that at USCellular, only 4% of our households have TDS Telecom service so any broader bundling is going to have to be through partnerships," USCellular EVP/CFO *Douglas Chambers* said. "Ultimately, we're using TDS Telecom as a way to learn and develop that. That model is something that we're going to be pursuing in 2023." He also said there is an opportunity for USCellular to be an MVNO partner for other cable providers that are looking to offer a mobile product, but it isn't often the first choice for partnerships as USCellular is a regional provider. "The reality is that if a cable provider used us, they would also have to use another carrier [for the out-of-market areas]," Chambers added. "That's the model that is being pursued by TDS Telecom, so we do have the benefit of showing that can work. Once we do that, I think we'll have to opportunity to potentially sell wholesale on a regional basis.

When broadband adds slowed down in 2022, cable provid-

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The screenshot shows the Cablefax website with the following elements:

- A**: LOGIN, SUBSCRIBE, and SEARCH buttons in the top right corner.
- B**: A box titled "Featured in this Issue:" containing a list of companies such as Amazon, AMC, AMC Networks, Apple, BBC America, BET, BET Studios, Charter, Comcast, Cox Communications, Disney, DOJ, Estrella TV, Evoca, Facebook, Fox Corp, Fox Deportes, Fox Nation, FTC, Galavision, Goldman Sachs, Google, Hisense, Hotwire Communications, Hulu, iFC, Locast, Microsoft, MSNBC, NAB, NBC, NBC News, NBCUniversal, Netflix, NFL RedZone, Pantaya, Peacock, SCTE, Show, Sony Cine, SundanceTV, Telemundo, Tubi, UniMás, Univision, ViacomCBS, WE tv, and YouTube.
- C**: A list of headlines on the left sidebar, including "Still Assisting: Charter Looks to Aid Community Centers, Job Training", "NAB Show In Person No More", "Comcast to Debut XClass TV?", "Carriage", "FTC Rejects Vertical Merger Guidelines", "BET Unveils BET Studios", "Introducing Hispanic Heritage Month", "Fox Giddy on Locast Victory", and "Editor's Note".
- D**: A PDF icon and "FULL ARCHIVES" link in the left sidebar.
- E**: A search bar in the top right corner.

- A** Subscriber Login: Gain access to every Cablefax Daily story PLUS the archives
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ers' mobile offerings picked up the slack and then some. **Spectrum Mobile** had more than 4.6 million customer lines as of 3Q22 with 396,000 residential and SMB lines being added within that quarter. **Comcast** announced in October that **Xfinity Mobile** surpassed the five million customer line milestone five years after the service's launch.

Those figures are what drew **NCTC** to start looking into striking some sort of MVNO deal for its members. The co-op has been in negotiations for an MNO partner for several months and expects to have an agreement in place by the end of the month or soon thereafter. Some launches could come as soon as 1Q23, but it is more likely that they'll start rolling out in 2Q23.

"Comcast and Charter have provided a roadmap for us and proven that this is a viable option for our members," NCTC CEO *Lou Borelli* told **CFX**. "I'm not sure there's another product that will have a bigger benefit on membership than this MVNO option."

#### KNUTSON PROMOTED AMID RESTRUCTURE

The **E.W. Scripps Company** is restructuring and elevating *Lisa Knutson* to COO as it looks to grow across new distribution platforms. The former **Scripps Networks** President will now lead both Scripps Networks, the Local Media division and all restructuring efforts at the larger company. Additional key growth areas are in news and sports content as well as in the deployments and capabilities of ATSC 3.0. More details on the restructuring will be discussed in February when the company offers an earnings update.

#### ROKU PASSES 70 MILLION MILESTONE

**Roku** closed 2022 with a bang, revealing it now has more than 70 million global active accounts. That's a significant jump with the super aggregator measuring 60.1 million global active accounts in 4Q21. Streaming hours were up 19% YOY, totaling 23.9 billion for 4Q22 and 87.4 billion for the full year.

#### FRONTIER GIVES PEEK BEHIND CURTAIN

**Frontier** pre-announced its 4Q22 subscriber results Thursday, announcing a better-than-expected 75,000 fiber net adds for the period. The boost leaves it with 17% more fiber customers than it had at the end of 2021. Fiber additions outpaced losses among Frontier's copper customers, resulting in 8,000 total broadband customer net additions for 4Q22.

#### CES NOTEBOOK

**CES** 2023 officially kicked off Thursday, but there have already been plenty of memorable moments for the books. BMW tapped actor and former politician *Arnold Schwarzenegger* to reveal its color-changing car and those walking the show floor were treated to massive [displays](#) from **LG**, opportunities to ride a [roller coaster](#) in VR and an array of smart

## Cablefax Executive Round Up

**While there will be twists and turns throughout the year and nobody can predict the future, executives are the ones closest to the action. Here's what some in the industry are predicting for 2023.**



**Steve Alexander**  
CTO  
**Ciena**

"While rollouts continue unabated, incumbent service providers (CSP, Cable and MSOs) will need to accelerate their investments to add capacity and service agility to their access and aggregation technology to remain competitive.

This is particularly the case as we're expecting more fixed wireless access (FWA) services from mobile network operators that will further increase competition and innovation. Massive once-in-a generation government funding for broadband deployments will also expand broadband availability to help close the digital divide."



**Dr. Abdul Rehman**  
CEO, CTO and Co-Founder  
**SSIMWAVE**

"The avalanche of pandemic streaming has ceased and providers are in pitched battles for the attention of ever-more-discriminating consumers. Having a great series may help you attract subscribers in the short term, but what keeps them in the fold? Providers are leaning into technology investments that will drive better content recommendations and discovery, richer apps and UXs, and especially video quality of experience. Providers that commit to those differentiators in 2023 will be able to improve retention and monetization of viewers."



**Mikaël Schachne**  
VP, Telco Market  
**BICS**

"In 2023 satellite networks are going to change the global connectivity landscape, but not in the way everyone expects. The immediate potential of [non-terrestrial networks] lies not in developed countries, but in bridging the 'digital

divide' in developing, remote, and rural areas around the world. Satellite networks (which are already being launched) promise to address this lack of connectivity in rural and remote areas around the world, and it's going to happen a lot sooner than you think."



**Matt Sotebeer**  
CSO  
**Digital Remedy**

"Search and Social have been the primary drivers of performance for Digital Marketers. These channels are becoming saturated and marketers are faced with diminishing returns on channels that have traditionally brought high ROI. As a result, the rise of CTV as an opportunity to deliver real, measurable outcomes will continue to become a focus for marketers in 2023."

glasses. At the show, **Hisense**, **Sinclair** and **Technicolor** have teamed up to showcase HDR programming transmitted by the broadcaster over the air to Hisense TVs using ATSC 3.0. Advanced HDR by Technicolor solutions have been integrated into a number of Hisense TVs, and households will need to purchase devices capable of displaying that content to receive the highest quality signal. **Comcast** and **Charter's** streaming ju **Xumo** announced that **Element Electronics** will launch a new line of 4K Ultra HD TVs this year that will feature the platform. There was no big splash at CES for the news, but Xumo has folks on the ground in Vegas taking meetings. The smart TVs will join a growing portfolio of products soon to be made available under the new Xumo brand, including XClass TV and Flex, a 4K streaming device Xfinity offers to its broadband customers. Element Xumo TVs will launch in select U.S. retail locations in a range of sizes and price points later in 2023. Xumo also announced that **PGA Tour** is the first content partner to utilize Xumo's self-service content management system for FAST channels. Capabilities of the CMS include building a programming schedule, managing ad loads, and gaining viewing and engagement insights

#### FIBER FRENZY

**Archtop Fiber** is acquiring New York's **Hancock Telephone Company** through a stock purchase agreement. The buy will allow Archtop to deliver broadband and phone services to customers throughout New York's Delaware County and northeastern Pennsylvania. The deal is anticipated to close in early 2023.

#### MURPHY'S LAW FOR THE WIN AT C-SPAN

**C-SPAN** announced last month that longtime Programming VP *Terry Murphy* would retire on Jan. 6. What a week for the 42-year C-SPAN vet to go out on! As comedian *Jon Stewart* tweeted this week, "This is the best season of cspan...ever." Normally, C-SPAN's House coverage is the feed from government-controlled cameras, but special events such as a Speaker of the House election, allow for independent cameras. C-SPAN has deployed several, allowing the public affairs network to provide those riveting images as the House voted ten times unsuccessfully for Speaker (so far). House cams wouldn't give those zoomed-in reaction shots of Rep. *Kevin McCarthy* (R-CA) as votes are cast against him or that conversation between Rep. *Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez* (D-NY) and Rep. *Paul Gosar* (R-AZ), who the House voted to censure last year after he posted a photoshopped video that showed him appearing to kill Ocasio-Cortez.

#### DELTA FLIES WITH T-MOBILE, PARAMOUNT+

**T-Mobile** and **Delta** have teamed up in a deal that will allow SkyMiles members flying the airline to access free WiFi. The free WiFi will be rolled out to most domestic mainline Delta flights starting Feb. 1 with more than 700 aircraft expected to offer the service by the end of the year. Additionally, beginning this spring, Delta will bring **Paramount+** to its SkyMiles members. The airline and streamer entered a partnership that'll allow loyalty members to view a free trial of Paramount+ Premium on flights originating in the U.S. Members can customize their

in-flight experience through their phone and watch programs such as "Criminal Minds: Evolution" and "Top Gun: Maverick."

#### RATINGS

Six networks that are part of the US Networks Group at **Warner Bros. Discovery** ranked in the top 10 cable networks for 2022. The nearly 30 nets combined to deliver over 138 million total viewers on average per month, helping them make up almost 31% of all P25-54 and P18-49 primetime cable viewing. **TNT** and **TBS** were the No. 1 and 2 cable entertainment networks in primetime among P25-54, while **Discovery Channel** ranked in the top five among M25-54 and in the top 10 in P25-54. **HGTV** was top 10 among cable nets in P25-54 and W25-54 every week-night in total day and primetime, and **Food Network** finished the year in the top five among W25-54 in total day and prime.

#### DOING GOOD

The premiere of **Shudder** original "Joe Bob's Ghoultime Get-Together" helped raise more than \$208,000 to go toward the Jeanette Rankin Foundation, March of Dimes, Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance and Motion Picture & Television Fund. The special debuted Dec. 16 on **AMC Networks'** Shudder TV and included a charity auction, telethon and limited-edition items, with all proceeds going to the charities.

#### PROGRAMMING

Season 3 of **Apple's** "Truth Be Told" will premiere Jan. 20 on **Apple TV+**. It'll span 10 episodes and have one episode released weekly through March 24. – The Season 3 debut of "Biography: WWE Legends" will begin Feb. 19 at 8pm on **A&E**. The second season of "WWE Rivals" will start afterward at 10pm. Both will be available to stream on the A&E app and aetv.com. – **Fox Nation** will roll out a six-part docuseries "A Year on Planet Earth" on Jan. 8. It'll look at more than 60 locations across the globe and study the different aspects of cultures and areas of the planet.

#### CABLEFAX 100 CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Nominate the most influential executives in the media, cable and broadband industry for our annual must-read, **The Cablefax 100** magazine. It's free to [nominate](#), but you must do so by Jan. 20.

#### OBITUARY

Former **ESPN** EVP/CFO *Jim Allegro* passed away on Dec. 31 at the age of 88. He's survived by his wife *Lesley Bade Allegro* and seven children. Allegro was a 14-year veteran of **Capital Cities/ABC** before joining the sports programmer, holding a variety of senior roles in finance and operations. His contributions to ESPN were monumental, including his active involvement in the founding of The V Foundation and his leadership over the creation of The ESPYs, ESPN2 and ESPN Radio, among other brand extensions. "He was warm, genuine, kind... with a great sense of humor," ESPN said in a statement. "You may never have heard his name, but he is a central and beloved figure in ESPN history." Visitation is scheduled for Jan. 12 at 5pm at St. Anastasia Catholic Church in St. Augustine, Florida. Memorial donations are being accepted in his honor to [The V Foundation](#).

# PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

## Lifetime Investigates R. Kelly Case

**Lifetime's** highly acclaimed documentary series "Surviving R. Kelly" returned for "The Final Chapter" earlier this week, this time bringing in the journalists who covered the R&B singer's trial and sentencing for federal racketeering and sex trafficking. Of those were *Jim DeRogatis*, who began reporting on Kelly in December 2000 for the Chicago Sun-Times. DeRogatis has covered the multiple trials that Kelly has been involved in over the past 23 years and even is credited with being the inspiration for the Surviving R. Kelly series. Executive producer *Jesse Daniels* read an article by DeRogatis in 2017 that called attention to the amount of evidence against Kelly, but the lack of prosecution. Daniels didn't understand why nothing happened. After the success of the first two seasons of Surviving R. Kelly, the third helped tie up any loose ends. "We wanted this final chapter to go beyond the headlines, so we were very fortunate to really connect with journalists who are going to be attending every day of the trial, and watching from TVs inside the courthouse, every single testimony," Daniels told **CFX**. "Through their experiences, coupled with the survivors', we were able to provide unprecedented access to the trial." Fellow EP of the series *Tamra Simmons* added that the network took a chance to provide a platform for the victims and their families to share their stories, noting that empathy was an important aspect of creating the series. The second night of The Final Chapter revealed more survivors as well as the reactions to the verdict that sentenced Kelly to 30 years in prison. "The goal has always been to extend beyond just this single story and the stories of our survivors, and create a larger conversation," Daniels said. "If that can happen and continue to happen. I feel like, you know, we've done our job." – *Noah Ziegler*

### REVIEWS

"Flavorful Origins," streaming on **Netflix**. Loyal readers know of our quest to find programs that are 'like nothing you've ever seen on TV.' This Chinese import qualifies. "Flavorful" is a 3-season series of 15-minute mini docs about Chinese food. Documentaries isn't quite the right descriptor. True, the shows—watch them in Mandarin with subtitles, the sometimes-balky translations enhance the experience—are loaded with documentary-style insight about authentic Chinese cuisine from relatively obscure regions. Yet they're also filmed beautifully. The camera work isn't on the level of **BBC** nature docs, but the food porn factor is high. Flavorful is not recommended for those hewing to New Year's resolution diets. – "Treason," streaming on Netflix. For viewers craving a fast pace—the spy thriller has just 5 episodes—this London-based series is a watchable entry. That's not saying viewers won't spot myriad inconsistencies—the ability of MI6's chief to leave spy headquarters unaccompanied and give guards the slip when one is assigned to him seems highly unrealistic. More than that, most characters are one-dimensional. Still, the mix of Cold War spy tropes updated to a current setting, as well as a good cast, including *Olga Kurylenko* as a Russian spy and *Ciaran Hinds* as an intelligence chief with a dastardly agenda, makes "Treason" a fine, quick watch. Its ending seems ideal for a Season 2. – *Seth Arenstein*

BASIC CABLE P2+ PRIME RANKINGS* (12/26/22-01/01/23)		
MON-SUN	MC US AA%	MC US AA (000)
<b>ESPN</b>	<b>2.370</b>	<b>7398</b>
<b>FNC</b>	<b>0.424</b>	<b>1323</b>
<b>PRMNT</b>	<b>0.373</b>	<b>1163</b>
<b>HALL</b>	<b>0.307</b>	<b>957</b>
<b>CNN</b>	<b>0.264</b>	<b>824</b>
<b>HGTV</b>	<b>0.263</b>	<b>820</b>
<b>MSNBC</b>	<b>0.251</b>	<b>784</b>
<b>TLC</b>	<b>0.236</b>	<b>737</b>
<b>TBSC</b>	<b>0.217</b>	<b>678</b>
<b>INSP</b>	<b>0.209</b>	<b>652</b>
<b>HIST</b>	<b>0.201</b>	<b>626</b>
<b>FOOD</b>	<b>0.176</b>	<b>550</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>0.164</b>	<b>513</b>
<b>A&amp;E</b>	<b>0.161</b>	<b>504</b>
<b>ID</b>	<b>0.159</b>	<b>495</b>
<b>DISC</b>	<b>0.151</b>	<b>471</b>
<b>TVLAND</b>	<b>0.151</b>	<b>470</b>
<b>HMM</b>	<b>0.147</b>	<b>458</b>
<b>SYFY</b>	<b>0.123</b>	<b>385</b>
<b>GSN</b>	<b>0.117</b>	<b>366</b>
<b>TNT</b>	<b>0.117</b>	<b>365</b>
<b>FX</b>	<b>0.113</b>	<b>354</b>
<b>WETV</b>	<b>0.106</b>	<b>330</b>
<b>AMC</b>	<b>0.099</b>	<b>308</b>
<b>HLN</b>	<b>0.098</b>	<b>307</b>
<b>NATGEO</b>	<b>0.094</b>	<b>294</b>
<b>FRFM</b>	<b>0.094</b>	<b>294</b>
<b>LIFE</b>	<b>0.094</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>BRAVO</b>	<b>0.093</b>	<b>291</b>
<b>BET</b>	<b>0.092</b>	<b>287</b>
<b>TRAVEL</b>	<b>0.088</b>	<b>275</b>
<b>OXY</b>	<b>0.088</b>	<b>274</b>
<b>SUND</b>	<b>0.085</b>	<b>266</b>
<b>E!</b>	<b>0.085</b>	<b>265</b>
<b>REELZ</b>	<b>0.079</b>	<b>246</b>

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



## Who Deserves to Rank Among Cablefax's Annual Top Power Players?

The Cablefax 100 salutes the most influential executives whose leadership continues to take the industry to new heights. We will rank the top professionals in the media, cable & broadband industry and publish the list in the June edition of Cablefax: The Magazine.

**It's free to enter — but you must submit your entries by Jan. 21!**



Nominate at [www.Cablefax100.com](http://www.Cablefax100.com) | Questions: Kate Schaeffer at [kschaeffer@accessintel.com](mailto:kschaeffer@accessintel.com)