

# Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

## Gear Shift: Comcast Doubles Down On Convergence As Broadband Stalls

Comcast's 4Q24 broadband numbers were worse than expected, closing out a disappointing year for the operator.

Total domestic broadband customer net losses were 139,000, including a modest negative impact associated with Hurricanes Milton and Helene. That number is lower than Comcast anticipated based on what it saw from the market in the earlier parts of the quarter, and Comcast Cable President/CEO Dave Watson acknowledged that management may have been a little too optimistic with early estimates released in December, particularly when it came to the price-conscious segment.

"It's intensely competitive in all segments, so it's a little bit of a shift. You have fixed wireless which, while it's leveled, they're still out there aggressively marketing and you've got fiber that's overbuilding, so that has continued," Watson said during 4Q24 earnings call Thursday. "Satellite, we see it, it's just been de minimis. It has not been a material thing for us. We're not being dismissive of it, we're going to watch it closely. But we see it being more active in rural areas and not so much in suburban or urban areas at this point at all."

Analysts were mixed on how to read the tea leaves for how broadband will look in 2025 based on Comcast's results and executive remarks. MoffettNathanson said the glass-half-full view is to say that the worst broadband losses are now behind everyone and the market can focus on the good at Comcast, but the half-empty view is that broadband losses,

even reduced, will still be losses moving forward. Even if competition from fixed wireless fades, there are questions around Starlink surging in a huge way in the years to come and ongoing pressure from fiber.

New Street Research said in a note to clients it expects market growth to recover now that the unwind of the Affordable Connectivity Program is largely complete, but an overall slowdown in household growth expected to take place over the next four years will make it challenging for cable to return to growth on broadband.

"Comcast is no longer speaking to a return to subscriber growth. They don't anticipate any change in the market environment in 2025. They didn't discuss 2026, but their comments framed the competitive pressures they are facing as a constant feature of the market," New Street Research said. "They don't seem to be anticipating a return to growth after 2025."

To respond to the pressure around broadband, Comcast's intention is to push harder when it comes to its converged product offerings. Comcast has fully virtualized more than 50% of its network, and it plans to reach approximately 70% by the end of the year. With these milestones under its belt, it plans to introduce new pricing and packaging in those upgraded markets in the coming months that will bundle wireless and internet with faster upload speeds and simplified all-in pricing. The goal is to ultimately remove friction points for customers.

"We've seen Charter try some things that we have watched and seen what they're doing, so I think pushing for more simplified

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bundles... and I think in addition to that, we're going to be looking at trying to attach and penetrate our existing base of customers, not just new customers, but especially those in our highest value wireless cohorts," Comcast Corp. President *Mike Cavanagh* said.

Focusing specifically on wireless, Comcast has achieved 12% penetration of its residential broadband customer base with its 7.8 million total wireless lines. Total domestic wireless line net adds were 307,000 and total domestic video customer net losses were 311,000.

Meanwhile at **Peacock**, revenue increased 28% to \$1.3 billion and the streaming service now has a base of 36 million subscribers. The leadership team at **SpinCo** will talk strategy around that set of assets in the future, but Cavanagh said the remaining business at NBCU will ultimately create great fuel for a strong streaming strategy around Peacock. Comcast Chair *Brian Roberts* said 98% of the viewing on Peacock does not include content from the networks to be spun off. Cavanagh also reiterated that executives would be open to all types of partnerships, including bundles, and moving many of the cable networks into SpinCo opens the door to new deals that would have been more challenging in the past.

"Getting our assets very tightly focused around a strong strategy for Peacock enables us to be a good partner for any partnerships that may or may not come to pass, but if they don't come to pass, I think we're fine running what we have," he said.

## FCC LAUNCHES INVESTIGATION INTO PBS, NPR STATIONS

The **FCC's** Enforcement Bureau is launching an investigation into whether **PBS** and **NPR** member stations recognizing financial sponsors on air violates federal rules prohibiting commercials. First [reported](#) by the *New York Times*, FCC Chairman *Brendan Carr* wrote a letter to the chiefs of PBS and NPR on Wednesday informing them of the investigation, writing that he's "concerned that NPR and PBS broadcasts could be violating federal law by airing commercials." Carr is particularly worried about underwriting announcements and whether they've breached the line into commercial advertisements, which are prohibited by federal law from running on noncommercial educational broadcast stations. "PBS is proud of the noncommercial educational programming we provide to all Americans through our member stations," the network said in a statement to **CFX**. "We work diligently to comply with the FCC's underwriting regulations and welcome the opportunity to demonstrate that to the Commission." NPR President/CEO *Katherine Maher* echoed sentiments that its programming and underwriting messaging complies with federal regulations

and FCC guidelines. "We have worked for decades with the FCC in support of noncommercial educational broadcasters who provide essential information, educational programming and emergency alerts to local communities across the United States," Maher said in a statement. Fellow FCC Commissioner *Anna Gomez* already staked her disapproval of the news, [writing](#) on X: "This appears to be yet another Administration effort to weaponize the power of the FCC. The FCC has no business intimidating and silencing broadcast media." **Public Knowledge** Legal Director *John Bergmayer* also spoke out against the investigation, calling it "a nakedly political attempt to undermine public broadcasting under the guise of regulatory oversight."

## ACC, ESPN COMMIT LONG TERM

In an age where college athletics draws its lines based on broadcast partners, the **ACC** and **ESPN** are sticking together for a while. The two announced that ESPN exercised its option to extend the ACC's base rights agreement through the 2035-2036 academic year. It's a move that could alleviate lawsuits the conference is facing from Clemson and Florida State—two of its bigger brands—that stem from the discrepancy in media payouts from the ACC's deal compared to the **SEC's** (also with ESPN) and **Big Ten (Fox, CBS and NBC)**. Reports also indicate the ACC could now move to have some of its higher-profile teams face Notre Dame each year.

## WIRELESS SATISFACTION FALLS, J.D. POWER FINDS

**J.D. Power's** 2025 U.S. Wireless Customer Care Study—Volume 1 found overall satisfaction with wireless customer care decreased for the first time in two years. The biggest areas that saw dips were in-store experiences with an 8-point drop (on a 1,000-point scale), while website experiences fell 10 points. There was good news for **Charter** as it looks to unseat the traditional wireless players. For the second consecutive year, **Spectrum Mobile** came out on top with a score of 845, once again with the highest score among full-service MVNOs as well as MNOs. **T-Mobile** scored an 837, making it the top performer in the MNO category for the 15th consecutive volume. **Verizon** followed with 815 while **AT&T** came in third with 806. On the MVNO side, Spectrum Mobile was followed by **T-Mobile's Metro** (836), **Cricket** (832), **Boost Mobile** (799) and **Comcast's Xfinity Mobile** (786). Price seems to matter, with **Consumer Cellular** claiming the top spot across the value MVNO category with a score of 883. **Mint Mobile** and Verizon's **Visible** trailed with 857 and 821, respectively.

**MORE LIVE SPORTS ON TUBI**

Tubi appears to be leading the charge when it comes to having live sports on an AVOD. After announcing it'll [stream the upcoming Super Bowl](#), it's also set to get the inaugural Cook Out Madhouse Classic on Feb. 1. **NASCAR** is partnering with **FloSports** to distribute the game on **FloRacing** and on Tubi's NASCAR Channel. Live coverage will begin at 1:30pm, and the green flag is set to go at 1:45pm.

**MAX'S NEW NASCAR FEATURE**

**NASCAR** fans will feel like they're behind the wheel on **Max**. **TNT Sports** unveiled a Max exclusive "NASCAR Driver Cam" experience that'll let viewers see from inside each driver's car during races throughout the 2025 NASCAR Cup Series. The feeds will include a layered audio mix of scanner team radios and ambient car noise that's synced up to the driver cam feed. Fans will initially be able to choose between individual driver cams or two pre-set multiview stream options featuring four drivers each. Multiview will be determined based on compelling matchups and storylines. Other features include live stats as well as data like speed, RPM and more.

**FIBER FRENZY**

**Armstrong** detailed plans to launch its advanced fiber network to more than 200 homes and businesses in Portersville and Ellwood City, Pennsylvania. Slated for launch this year, the rollout will provide symmetrical speeds and bring in other technology upgrades.

**SLING TV'S 10TH BIRTHDAY**

**Sling TV** is ready to turn 10 years old once Feb. 9 rolls around. To celebrate, the streamer is giving new customers \$10 off their first month of Sling Orange, Sling Blue or Orange + Blue packages. They'll also get a free month of **Max** in addition to a month of unlimited DVR. For existing customers, they can get additional chances to win cash prizes of up to \$10,000 via Sling Rewards' "Spin to Win" feature.

**WBD'S 13TH 'SAY YES TO THE PROM'**

Prom is right around the corner, and **Warner Bros. Discovery's** "Say Yes to the Prom" initiative is set to return for a 13th time. WBD employees and **Monte Durham** of **TLC's** "Say Yes to the Dress: Atlanta" will team up to help 1,500 students create unique prom looks through a day of shopping. Macy's, a longtime partner of the event, donated 2,000+ dresses, jewelry and footwear for

this year. WBD will also provide mentorship and resources for those interested in pursuing a career in the media and entertainment industry. The tour will make its stop in Atlanta from Feb. 3-4 before heading to Manhattan from Feb. 11-12 and L.A. from March 19-20.

**PROGRAMMING**

**Fox Sports** will be on hand again for the 149th Annual Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show on Feb. 8, 10 and 11. Feb. 8's coverage will go from 4:30-7pm on **Fox** before the action moves to **Fox Sports 2** on Feb. 10 from 1-4pm. **FS1** will take over at 7pm for group judging, which will continue into Feb. 11 at 7pm on FS1. – Season 4 of "The Righteous Gemstones" will debut March 9 at 10pm on **HBO**, available to stream on **Max**.

**HALLMARK, CHABERT EXTEND DEAL**

**Hallmark Media** is unwrapping a new collection of holiday lifestyle products to coincide with the extension of its partnership with **Lacey Chabert**. Chabert's new multi-year deal includes hosting and executive producing Season 2 of "Celebrations with Lacey Chabert" as well as extending her multi-picture movie deal. Recently, she starred in her 40th Hallmark original movie "The Christmas Quest." Fans of the proclaimed "Queen of Hallmark Movies" can celebrate the news with the Lacey Chabert Collection that's available in Hallmark Gold Crown Stores and online. The products will be made available later this year and will feature greeting cards, gift wrap and more.

**PEOPLE**

**FCC** Commissioner **Anna Gomez** is making a few changes to her staff. **Hayley Steffen** will head to the FCC's Office of International Affairs after previously serving as Gomez's Legal Advisor on Wireline and Space issues. **Jessica Greffenius** will move from Acting Legal Advisor on Wireline and Public Safety issues to the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau. Lastly, **Jonathan Uriarte** will join Gomez's office as a Strategic Communications and Policy Advisor. – **Austin Walton** is joining **NCTA** as VP, Government Relations. Walton is quite used to D.C., having spent more than a decade on Capitol Hill working in the House and Senate. He was most recently a Policy Advisor to Sen. **Eric Schmitt** (R-MO) and led initiatives on the Senate Commerce, Science and Technology Committee. Walton also served as a Policy Advisor for House Majority Leader Rep. **Steve Scalise** (R-LA).

BASIC CABLE		
P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*		
(01/20/25-01/26/25)		
MON-SUN	MC	MC
	US	US AA
	AA%	(000)
<b>FNC</b>	<b>1.181</b>	<b>3745</b>
<b>MSNBC</b>	<b>0.318</b>	<b>1008</b>
<b>ESPN</b>	<b>0.200</b>	<b>635</b>
<b>HGTV</b>	<b>0.194</b>	<b>616</b>
<b>CNN</b>	<b>0.191</b>	<b>605</b>
<b>HALL</b>	<b>0.187</b>	<b>593</b>
<b>HIST</b>	<b>0.158</b>	<b>502</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>0.158</b>	<b>502</b>
<b>INSP</b>	<b>0.151</b>	<b>479</b>
<b>TLC</b>	<b>0.145</b>	<b>461</b>
<b>DISC</b>	<b>0.141</b>	<b>447</b>
<b>TBSC</b>	<b>0.129</b>	<b>408</b>
<b>FOOD</b>	<b>0.121</b>	<b>383</b>
<b>NWSMX</b>	<b>0.120</b>	<b>379</b>
<b>A&amp;E</b>	<b>0.111</b>	<b>353</b>
<b>TNT</b>	<b>0.108</b>	<b>343</b>
<b>ID</b>	<b>0.107</b>	<b>340</b>
<b>TVLAND</b>	<b>0.102</b>	<b>325</b>
<b>BRAVO</b>	<b>0.100</b>	<b>316</b>
<b>LIFE</b>	<b>0.095</b>	<b>301</b>
<b>GSN</b>	<b>0.083</b>	<b>264</b>
<b>NAN</b>	<b>0.081</b>	<b>258</b>
<b>HALLMYS</b>	<b>0.081</b>	<b>255</b>
<b>WETV</b>	<b>0.079</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>FX</b>	<b>0.075</b>	<b>237</b>
<b>AMC</b>	<b>0.075</b>	<b>237</b>
<b>REELZ</b>	<b>0.074</b>	<b>235</b>
<b>ESPN2</b>	<b>0.071</b>	<b>226</b>
<b>OXY</b>	<b>0.068</b>	<b>216</b>
<b>BET</b>	<b>0.066</b>	<b>209</b>
<b>NATGEO</b>	<b>0.064</b>	<b>204</b>
<b>SYFY</b>	<b>0.061</b>	<b>193</b>
<b>COM</b>	<b>0.056</b>	<b>178</b>
<b>PRMNT</b>	<b>0.055</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>ADSM</b>	<b>0.054</b>	<b>170</b>
<b>MTV</b>	<b>0.049</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>E!</b>	<b>0.049</b>	<b>154</b>
<b>TRAVEL</b>	<b>0.049</b>	<b>154</b>
<b>MGNLA</b>	<b>0.048</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>NWSNTN</b>	<b>0.046</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>SDNCE</b>	<b>0.046</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>NICK</b>	<b>0.045</b>	<b>142</b>
<b>BBCA</b>	<b>0.045</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>FETV</b>	<b>0.043</b>	<b>138</b>
<b>FRFM</b>	<b>0.043</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>LMN</b>	<b>0.041</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>FS1</b>	<b>0.040</b>	<b>127</b>

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