

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

We Have Liftoff: Project Kuiper Preps For Milestone Ahead of Launch

Project Kuiper is preparing to send its first full batch of satellites into the sky, marking one step closer to the launch of a satellite broadband competitor to **Starlink**.

The mission, dubbed “KA-01” for Kuiper Atlas 1, will launch from Cape Canaveral and deploy 27 satellites at an altitude of 280 miles above Earth. The launch is scheduled for no earlier than 12pm ET on Wednesday.

Once the satellites have begun successfully orbiting the planet, Project Kuiper’s team on the ground will begin testing that will ultimately ensure it can provide end-to-end connectivity. That includes sending data through its ground infrastructure up to the satellites, back down to customer terminal antennas and then repeating that journey in the other direction.

While the progress is exciting for those who have watched Project Kuiper’s progress, potential customers should not expect service plans to become available in the coming weeks. Its first-gen satellite system will include more than 3,200 LEO satellites, and it will take more than 80 launches in partnership with **United Launch Alliance**, **Arianespace**, **Blue Origin** and **SpaceX** to deploy that constellation. Project Kuiper also has not detailed a timeline for when it will begin accepting customers aside from saying it expects to deliver service before the end of this year.

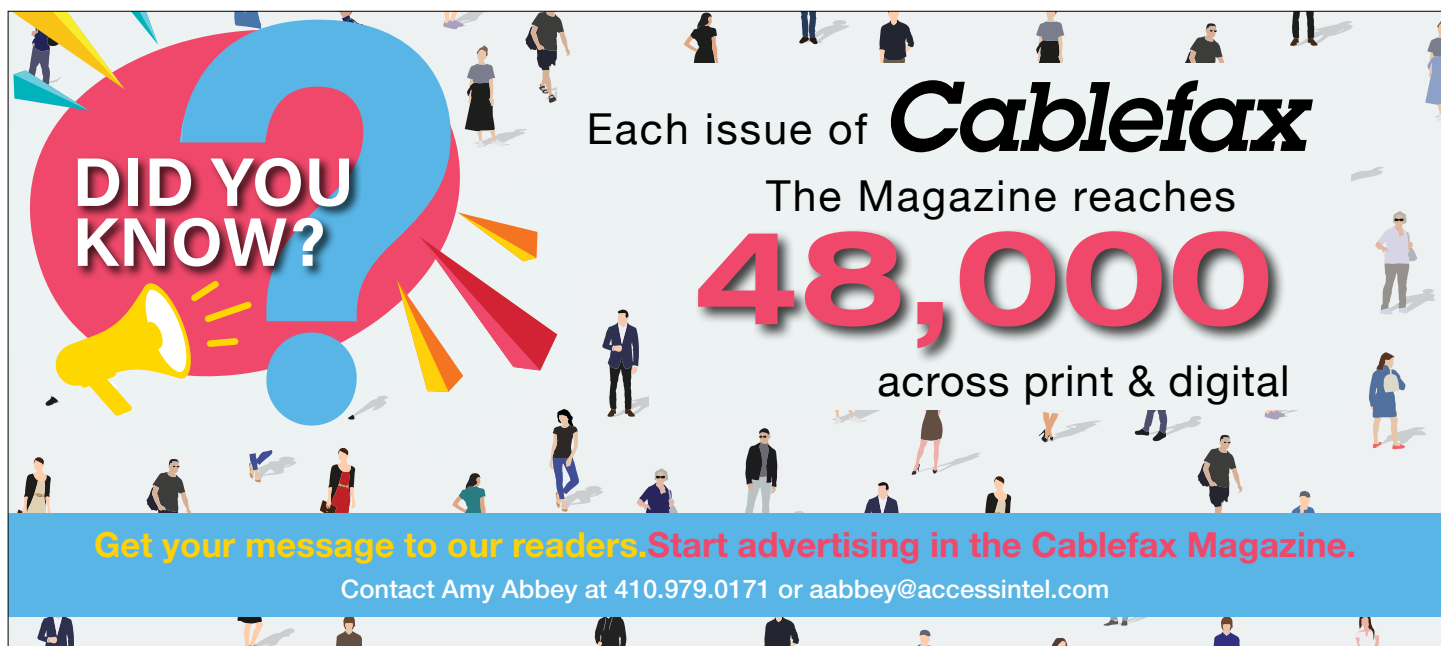
Even though it isn’t officially on the market yet, Kuiper has

made it clear it wants to take home a share of the BEAD dollars to assist in ensuring it can access a wide customer base shortly after launch. In Nevada alone, it was awarded \$14.49 million to serve 4,891 locations. Its wins are coming at a time

Of course, there are questions about whether those awards will stand given potential changes coming to the program. Critics have spoken out against **NTIA**’s fiber preference and **Elon Musk**’s influential position within the federal government has had many wondering if a rule change would encourage more funding to go toward options like Starlink. Complicating things even further for those tasked with prognosticating the future is a [Politico report](#) that Musk will be stepping back in the coming weeks from his current role in order to pay greater attention to his businesses. It is unclear if he will still play a lesser role in the Trump administration.

“Musk leaving makes it slightly easier for the Commerce Department to let the states that have completed, or are near completing, their bidding process, to simply continue without putting what Republicans regard as problematic conditions into the contracts with ISPs, something both the states and ISPs would welcome,” **New Street Research** said in a note to clients. “That would result in Starlink not gaining a material amount of federal funding as it has not been a bidder in any of the 42 states that are done or far down the road with their bidding process.”

Those who don’t want the federal government to make



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changes to BEAD are continuing to speak out as the program undergoes a review by the **Department of Commerce**. On Thursday, a group of 115 bipartisan state legislators from 28 states sent a letter to Commerce Secretary *Howard Lutnick* requesting that any changes to the BEAD program be made optional. They noted concerns that any mandatory shifts would undermine the states' authority over their individual grant programs, undo the plans they've spent years working on and ultimately delay broadband deployment by at least another year.

"As state legislators, we understand that no program is perfect. Indeed, we welcome some changes. However, we ask that you defer to our states about which changes we adopt," the letter said. "The federal approach to broadband programs—most recently exemplified by the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund—has created obstacles that we are only now overcoming. Let us not repeat mistakes of the past."

TARIFFS SPARK MARKET TUMBLE

The stock market was quite turbulent Thursday after President *Trump* announced widespread tariffs that instituted a 10% baseline tariff on all imports in addition to higher rates applied to certain countries including China, Vietnam and the European Union. The Dow finished today down 3.98% while the S&P 500 dipped by 4.84%. We'll keep an eye on how these tariffs impact the industry, but it doesn't seem like the immediate negative reaction will spark changes or pullbacks. Commerce Secretary *Howard Lutnick* joined **CNBC's** "Squawk Box" on Thursday morning to discuss the tariffs, saying the move has been coming as the new administration looks to bring more manufacturing and production to the U.S. "If you want to build your product, you're going to have to build it in America if you want to avoid these tariffs, or these countries have to fundamentally alter the way they do their business," Lutnick said. "Those two things going together are going to result in interest rates in the United States of America being much, much lower, high-quality production jobs, much, much higher, domestic production of huge amounts of factories." Some legislators opposed to the tariffs are already fighting back. Sens. *Maria Cantwell* (D-WA) and *Chuck Grassley* (R-IA) introduced the Trade Review Act of 2025, a bipartisan legislation that would re-establish limits on a president's ability to impose unilateral tariffs without the approval of Congress. The bill would require the president to notify Congress of a tariff within 48 hours if they wish to enact a new one. The notification would require an explanation as well as analysis of potential impacts on businesses and consumers. Within 60 days, Congress must then pass a joint resolution of approval,

otherwise all new tariffs expire after that deadline. "Trade wars can be as devastating, which is why the Founding Fathers gave Congress the clear Constitutional authority over war and trade," Cantwell said. "This bill reasserts Congress's role over trade policy to ensure rules-based trade policies are transparent, consistent, and benefit the American public. Arbitrary tariffs, particularly on our allies, damage U.S. export opportunities and raise prices for American consumers and businesses." If the measure clears the Senate, it would still have to be approved by the Republican-controlled House.

HALLMARK SET FOR UPFRONT

Hallmark is rolling out the red carpet for advertisers ahead of upfront season, announcing plans for an expanded programming slate in addition to the 16th running of "Countdown to Christmas." After the success of last year's "Holiday Touchdown: A Chiefs Love Story" which premiered during Countdown to Christmas, Hallmark is back with "Holiday Touchdown: A Bills Love Story." The Buffalo love story will come with co-branded merchandise and promotions across various platforms. Also part of this year's Countdown to Christmas lineup is a six-episode scripted series "The Twelve Dates of Christmas," based on the novel of the same name by *Jenni Bayliss*. Hallmark is introducing a new slate of unscripted series as well, branding it as "Reality TV with Heart." It'll fuse together friendly competition series, community building, home and lifestyle enhancement shows. The lineup will include new seasons and network premieres of "Celebrations with Lacey Chabert" and "Finding Mr. Christmas," which launched late last year. Other unscripted originals in development include "Baked with Love: Holiday," "Armed to Build," "Daughter of the Bride" and "Murder Mystery House." And if that's not enough Hallmark, the company is offering brand partners to engage with its superfans with the second edition of its Christmas cruise. This year's cruise is already sold out and will sail from Miami to Cozumel in November. Additionally, the Hallmark Christmas Experience will return to Kansas City's Crown Center during the weekends between Nov. 28 and Dec. 21.

OPTIMUM SAYS NO TO SLOW

Optimum unveiled a new marketing campaign and tagline to tout its internet speeds. The company is dubbing it "Don't Take Slow for an Answer" and it's set to launch this week across all marketing channels, including TV, radio, social, OOH and more. The campaign features characters encountering everyday situations involving the reliance on connectivity. Optimum partners with Publicis on the marketing plan and campaign.

QUICKPLAY SHORTS' NEXT STEP

Quickplay is joining pre-NAB Show festivities, announcing the next phase of Quickplay Shorts as it looks to deploy solutions for vertical short-form content. At NAB, Quickplay will demonstrate a use case involving its orchestration layer, CMS and front-end technology to analyze, understand and timestamp key moments in videos. Quickplay's CMS then integrates with the technology to enable the creation and distribution of live short-form content. Quickplay's presentation will take place at NAB's AWS Theater on Tuesday from 12:15-45pm PT.

TCA CANCELS SUMMER PRESS TOUR AMID CHALLENGES

The **Television Critics Association** is leaving behind plans to host its annual summer press tour. It was originally scheduled for July 10-17. The news comes just a few months after TCA also made the decision to skip its winter tour, and the struggles with that event are the same that have come to plague the summer edition. Networks and streamers that previously served as the backbone of the event are no longer participating due to M&A, financial concerns and other factors.

VERIZON COMES OUT WITH NEW OFFERS, GUARANTEES

Verizon is hoping to attract a slew of new phone and internet customers with a number of revamped promotions. All new and existing customers will receive a three-year price lock guarantee of any myPlan and myHome network plans. Existing customers don't have to take any action to activate the offer, and the timer will reset any time they make changes to their myPlan. Home internet routers are also being offered at no additional cost with every myHome plan and free satellite text messaging is being guaranteed on qualifying devices across all myPlan tiers.

T-MOBILE'S SPRING DEALS

T-Mobile is launching a slew of new offers for its 5G Home Internet product. Starting Thursday, customers switching to T-Mobile Home Internet can receive up to \$750 to cover early termination fees from a previous broadband provider as well as either a \$200 or \$300 virtual Mastercard if they choose an All-in Internet or Amplified Internet plan. Customers over the age of 55 will be able to save \$20/month on the fixed wireless product when switching to T-Mobile and bundling it with any of the operator's 55+ voice plans.

FIBER FRENZY

Oregon operator **Beacon Broadband** crossed the milestone of its 5,000th customer connection. Beacon reaches areas such as Brookings, Gold Beach, Port Orford and Langlois, with further plans to expand in Coos County.

RATINGS

Telemundo finished 1Q25 as the top network in Spanish-language television on weekday afternoons. The network's viewership in the 1-5pm timeslot averaged 542,000 total viewers and 126,000 A18-49, beating out rival **Univision** by 12% and 2%, respectively, in the same timeslot. Telemundo's daytime slate is headlined by "En Casa con Telemundo," "La Mesa Caliente" and "Al Rojo Vivo."

DIRECTV, NOTRE DAME TEAM UP FOR 'GOALS FOR GOOD'

Notre Dame Athletics and **DirecTV** are working together to support the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Michiana. DirecTV will donate \$10 to RMHC of Michiana for every goal scored by the Notre Dame men's and women's lacrosse teams during the 2025 regular season. DirecTV originally began Goals for Good when it introduced the program for the 2023 Soccer Champions Tour, and more recently the MVPD had the "Bucks for Buckets" initiative for the Big Ten Men's Basketball Tournament.

DOING GOOD

Charter donated \$200,000 in cash and in-kind donations to local community organizations to local community organizations in hard-hit areas from Hurricane Helene. Through Spectrum's Community Center Assist and Spectrum Employee Community Grant programs, Spectrum is also sponsoring a series of events across western North Carolina and upstate South Carolina, including youth sports activities as well as professional and minor league teams. Recipients of the donations include the Phillis Wheatley Community Center in Greenville, SC, the YMI Cultural Center in Asheville, NC, and the WAMY Community Action in Watauga, Avery, Mitchell and Yancey Counties (NC). – **Sparklight** is now taking spring 2025 applications for its Charitable Giving Fund. The Fund awards \$250,000 in grants each year to nonprofit organizations, focusing on the areas of education and digital literacy, hunger relief and food insecurity and community development. Applications will be accepted through April 30. More information can be found [here](#).

PROGRAMMING

We're exactly one month away from the Kentucky Derby, and **Netflix** revealed plans for the horse racing version of "Drive to Survive." "Race for the Crown" will premiere April 22 and follow horse owners and jockeys over the course of a Grade I stakes thoroughbred racing season. – The 27th season of "South Park" will begin July 9 on **Comedy Central**. – **Fox Nation** is set to premiere "Rebound: A Year of Triumph and Tragedy at Yeshiva University Basketball on Wednesday. The documentary spotlights the Maccabees as they navigate their season in the months following the Oct. 7 terrorist attacks on Israel.

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

MLS, Apple TV+ Go Behind the Scenes in 'Onside'

Apple and **Major League Soccer** signaled turning points when they signed a 10-year rights deal through 2032. **Apple TV** took a significant step into the live sports game, and the burgeoning MLS looked to grow through a unique distribution deal. Not only has that seen MLS Season Pass host a litany of games, but it's brought on opportunities for the league to give fans a deeper look. It did so through its "Onside: Major League Soccer" docuseries that debuted on **Apple TV+** in late February ahead of the start of the 2025 season, spotlighting moments that transpired during the 2024 campaign. With Executive Producers *James Gay-Rees* and *Paul Martin* having worked on "Formula 1: Drive to Survive" and *Hillary Olsen* being part of the "Faceoff: Inside the NHL" crew, there was an abundance of experience in showcasing the inner workings of high-level athletes. Onside also had plenty of material to work with given MLS has 30 teams, putting more importance on following the captivating storylines like Ohio's "Hell is Real" rivalry between FC Cincinnati and Columbus Crew. "Our approach to filmmaking has always been to follow the most dynamic stories rather than trying to be everywhere at once, and that remained true with Onside," Martin told **CFX**. "By collaborating with the league, we were able to hone in on key fixtures like the 'Hell is Real' rivalry where we knew there would be guaranteed opportunity for friction and drama." The production team covered numerous bases that showed what MLS has to offer on a global scale such as Lionel Messi landing at Inter Miami or 14-year-old Cavan Sullivan becoming the youngest player to debut in a league match for a major professional league in the U.S. "There is so much exciting talent emerging within MLS, and one of our goals with Onside was to really shine a spotlight on this burgeoning moment for soccer in the U.S. and some of the great young players with massive potential," Martin said. – *Noah Ziegler*

REVIEWS

Our previous column included the unfortunate phrase that with all the delicious television on the menu, who has room for "Deli Boys" (streaming on **Hulu**) and "Toxic Town" (streaming on **Netflix**)? Your reporter admits this was a glibly worded mistake. The new prescription: make room for Toxic and, if possible, at least the initial ep of one of the most difficult mini-series we've encountered lately: "Adolescence" (also streaming on Netflix). Of the two, Adolescence is the more intense, though both are excellent. A modest plan: work up to Adolescence with Toxic, especially if you're a fan of "White Lotus" (streaming on **Max**) and *Aimee Lou Wood*, who flexes her acting muscles so much here that you almost forget her as Chelsea, the spiritual girlfriend of *Walton Goggins'* unpleasant Rick. In Toxic, Wood's character Tracey coaxes working-class mothers to collaborate on a lawsuit against the male-dominated establishment, which polluted their small, English town. While it's a tight 4 eps, creator *Jack Thorne* eschews Hollywooding the story. Instead, it's realistic, with justice's wheels grinding slowly, maybe too much so. Similarly, Adolescence, also an English import (though not subject to a tariff), is methodical and gritty. Its initial ep is its best, shot (amazingly) in a single take. We'll skip a plot summary, mindful of spoiling things. Be prepared. Adolescence sticks with you for days. – *Seth Arenstein*

BASIC CABLE

P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*

(03/24/25-03/30/25)

MON-SUN	MC US AA%	MC US AA (000)
FNC	0.863	2737
TBSC	0.539	1709
MSNBC	0.367	1164
ESPN	0.272	861
HGTV	0.202	642
CNN	0.172	545
TRUTV	0.172	545
HALL	0.153	485
HIST	0.141	446
INSP	0.139	440
FOOD	0.128	405
TLC	0.123	391
USA	0.120	381
DISC	0.119	379
TVLAND	0.106	337
ID	0.096	305
HALLMYS	0.094	297
BRAVO	0.094	297
NWSMX	0.091	287
A&E	0.090	285
WETV	0.085	269
GSN	0.082	259
TNT	0.080	253
LIFE	0.078	249
NAN	0.077	246
FX	0.074	233
AMC	0.069	220
REELZ	0.066	209
NATGEO	0.064	203
ESPN2	0.063	200
PRMNT	0.062	196
OXY	0.060	189
TENNIS	0.055	174
FRFM	0.054	173
TRAVEL	0.054	171

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

2025 SIGNATURE AWARDS LUNCHEON

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