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WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Ch-Ch-Changes: Say Hello to Leadership Development Week

Given the *Trump* administration's anti-DEI executive order, there have been questions over what will happen to the industry's decades-long Diversity Week initiative. It's sticking around, but will be dubbed Leadership Development Week.

The annual event includes the **NAMIC** Conference as well as the **WICT Network** Leadership Conference. The week, set for Oct. 20-22, culminates with the **Kaitz Fundraising Dinner**, which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2023.

"In a continued effort to foster greater inclusion across all sectors of our industry, The WICT Network and our Annual Leadership Conference will partner once again with NAMIC and the **NCTA Education Foundation** to introduce Leadership Development Week, formerly known as Diversity Week. While the name has evolved, our shared commitment remains steadfast: to champion the business imperative of building inclusive, high-impact workplaces where every voice is valued and represented," WICT Network CEO *Maria Brennan* told **CFX**.

It's not the first time the week has gone by a different name. For several years, it was affectionately nicknamed by many as "Hell Week," a nod to the large number of industry events that were packed into those few days. That moniker was appropriately retired after 2001, when attendees were gathered in NYC on the same day as the 9/11 attacks. In 2009, the industry attempted to create "Cable Spring Week" and "Cable Fall Week" to cluster industry events, but the ef-

fort was short lived.

"Leadership Development Week is a time to join forces with our partners to honor the movers and shakers in the media, entertainment, and technology industries and collaborate together to advance workforce development," said NAMIC's *Anne-Marie Burton*, MS, Chief of Strategy & Programs. "We are excited about the rebrand because it reflects and acknowledges the contributions of all the amazing and talented individuals in our industries. The rebrand also reflects the learning NAMIC and its partners provide to develop the best-in-class leaders of tomorrow. Collectively, these leaders bring a wide array of skills, perspectives, and experiences that help to strengthen and ensure the media, entertainment, and technology industries are well positioned for future growth and success."

Cablefax is also broadening the scope of its annual *Diversity List and Work Culture Magazine*, renaming it as the *Voices of Impact and Work Culture* issue. Nominations will open for the special issue next month, with the magazine to be released during Leadership Development Week.

The NCTA Education Foundation, which fully absorbed **The Walter Kaitz Foundation** in 2024, began soliciting [nominations](#) Tuesday for its 2025 ChangeMaker Award that will be presented at the capstone fundraising event. Notably, communications referenced a "Kaitz Event" to be held on Oct. 22 at the New York Marquis, suggesting that the Foundation may be considering something a little different.

Plans are still coming together for the Kaitz event, but we're

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told it will still be held during the dinner hour. Organizers are looking at ways to reinvigorate the evening, which might mean ditching the full sit-down dinner format or making the night more entertainment focused. (Bring back *Jennifer Hudson*!)

The annual fundraiser supports targeted grant-giving for workforce development to industry associations, including WICT Network, NAMIC and the **Emma Bowen Foundation**. Last year's dinner raised more than \$1.1 million.

"This celebratory, mission-driven series of events underscores why our industry is such a meaningful place to work: because our people—whether they are part of today's workforce, tomorrow's talent pipeline, or the communities we have the privilege to connect—are truly valued, and their loyalty to our companies does not go unnoticed," the Foundation said.

Established by **NCTA**, the NCTA Education Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to leveraging the industry's positive impact on communities while supporting people, organizations and opportunities. In July, the **Walter Kaitz Foundation** was integrated into the NCTA Education Foundation. The Kaitz Foundation was founded in 1980 by *Spencer Kaitz* in honor of his father *Walter Kaitz*, a Russian immigrant who was president of the California Cable Television Association from the early 1960s until his death in 1979. From 2004 to 2020, the Foundation distributed over \$20 million in support of programs and initiatives for NAMIC, WICT Network and Emma Bowen.

The Changemaker Award is now in its fourth year. It honors the significant contributions of an individual, group, organization or content that drives meaningful social impact in the communities served by NCTA's industries and includes a monetary grant. Last year, *Karlo Handy* of The Handy Foundation was presented with the 2024 Changemaker Award in the category of social impact for its work in helping underrepresented communities get below-the-line jobs in the entertainment and film industry. Nominations for this year's honor are due by April 25.

GOMEZ APPEARS AT NAB SHOW

Although the **FCC's** *Nathan Simington* was a late scratch from the **NAB Show** lineup, the agency's leadership still had a presence through fellow Commissioner *Anna Gomez*. Gomez was part of a fireside chat late Monday, in which she once again voiced her displeasure with the FCC's actions over the past few months. Gomez said that while she's "always heard how great it is to be a minority Commissioner," she's yet to find the joy in that role, adding that it's been stressful living in D.C. these past few months. "The uncertainty, the DOGE, the every single day watching while this administration just tramples on the First Amendment, on press freedom, on freedom of speech, it's been very difficult," she said before reassuring folks that she does

love her job. "I keep hoping that we'll have a normal week where we talk about pole attachments." While that's music to the ears of **ACA Connects** Chairman *Patty Boyers* (she exclaimed "hot damn!" when the subject came up during ACA Connects Summit last month), Gomez's chat centered on FCC Chairman *Brendan Carr's* approach to investigating broadcasters for biased reporting and the DEI practices at companies like **Comcast** and **Disney**. She also mentioned spectrum auction authority being a high priority for the FCC in addition to broadcast ownership rule changes possibly being on the horizon. Another nugget Gomez provided was the fact that FCC-sanctioned travel is suspended following an Executive Order, meaning her trip to Las Vegas was self-funded. Gomez didn't confirm whether Simington's absence also comes from the order, saying she doesn't know why his trip to NAB Show was nixed.

COMSCORE SCORES NEW MRC ACCREDITATION

Comscore was given accreditation for its household-level TV measurement by the **Media Rating Council** on Tuesday. The accreditation encompasses Comscore's national and local TV time-based grid reports, specifically for household, age and gender "households with" metrics. Comscore received the recognition after a process that included an independent audit conducted by the MRC's CPA firm, before getting approval from MRC's Board of Directors. Last year, Comscore [became the first TV measurement provider to use big data to earn accreditation](#) for both local and national TV time-based grid reports for total household rating and average audience estimates. Comscore also remains the only measurement company to have MRC accreditation in all 210 local markets based on big data device-tuning measurement.

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS UNDERGO WEBSITE MAKEOVERS

There must be an unwritten rule that associations need to revamp their websites when there's a change in administration. The **NCTA website** just debuted a new look. The refreshed site is designed to better show how NCTA is addressing the future of connectivity and entertainment. Among the primary changes include a background video on the homepage that plays upon arrival, a shift in layout that puts the association's priorities higher up and an "About Us" [video](#) that's featured under the site's "About NCTA" section. In addition to font and color changes for the site's text, NCTA kept the "Latest News" carousel as well as a dedicated spot for the "Every Last Mile: The Untold Story of Connecting Rural America" documentary.

NAB also has a new [website](#), which President and CEO *Curtis LeGeyt* unveiled Tuesday at **NAB Show**. The website outlines six key policy priorities: Modernizing Antiquated Broadcast Ownership Rules to Let Stations Compete; Keeping AM Radio in Cars to Ensure Public Safety; Supporting NEXTGEN TV to Protect our Critical Infrastructure; Preventing Harmful Changes to Existing Advertising Tax Deductibility; Opposing a New Performance Tax on Local Radio; and Protecting Broadcasters' Investment in Local Content. Not to be left out, **The Consumer Technology Association** unveiled a newly designed [CTA.tech](#) site last week. CTA President *Kinsey Fabrizio* called it the final step in a process to bring CTA and CES together under one brand that supports and represents the tech industry. The CTA website now has a more intuitive user experience with a renewed emphasis on community. It also features a new resource library for easy access to research, standards, policy filings and press releases.

FIBER FRENZY

Ground has been broken as **TDS** looks to complete a fiber-optic infrastructure project that'll connect over 1,200 rural addresses in Grant County, Wisconsin. In late 2023, the TDS-owned Farmer's Telephone Company was awarded more than \$1.55 million by Wisconsin's Public Service Commission to bring FTTH service to an initial batch of 800+ addresses. TDS is now investing \$7.1 million to finish the project while expanding to an additional 400 addresses in the area. On top of that, TDS is receiving support from the **FCC's** Enhanced Alternative Connect America Cost Model program. The build process will entail accessing public utility easement areas to bury conduit and fiber-optic cable as well as upgrading aerial cables. TDS will launch service to Grant County customers in phases. – The town of Yarmouth, Massachusetts, will soon get **GoNetspeed's** symmetrical internet offerings. The company's \$8.5 million investment will reach more than 9,100 homes and businesses. Construction is slated to begin in 2026, with the first customers to be connected in the Fall of that year.

RATINGS

Fox News may be familiar with sweeping the weekly primetime and total-day cable network ratings, but the week of March 31-April 6 ushered in a new achievement for one of its programs. After finishing with 1.75 million viewers P2+ in total day, the network's weekday 5pm show "The Five" contributed with an average of 4.2 million viewers, making it the first cable news program to post more than 4 million viewers for 20 consecutive weeks. Fellow news net **MSNBC** kept its rebound going with 701,000 viewers in total day, followed by **ESPN**, **CNN** and **HGTV** with 547,000, 449,000 and 319,000, respectively. Fox News remained well in control of the primetime crown with 2.8 million viewers while ESPN came second with 1.5 million and MSNBC (1.24 million) and HGTV (602,000) trailed behind. CNN, a usual

figure in total day, made an appearance in the primetime top five after posting an average of 602,000 viewers. – The **NASCAR** Cup Series race in Darlington, South Carolina, nabbed 2.52 million viewers Sunday on **FS1** and peaked with 3.1 million from 6:15-6:30pm. Viewership finished up 15% from the equivalent weekend last year (2.19 million on FS1) and is up 5% from last year's full-season FS1 average of 2.39 million. The race also finished as the most-watched cable telecast Sunday.

DISNEY ADVERTISING MANEUVERS

Disney Advertising is looking to bolster its premium streaming inventory on a global scale after announcing that Disney's biddable programmatic offerings are now available in Canada, Latin America and select EMEA regions. The company is making its proprietary Audience Graph product accessible in certain EMEA areas as well, assisting campaigns with more accurate planning, buying and measurement data. In Canada, Disney Advertising expanded integrations with DSPs including The Trade Desk and Google's Display & Video 360, in addition to the sell-side platform Magnite. Private marketplaces and preferred deals were also added to Canadian advertisers. Programmatic guaranteed deals for both VOD and live inventory are being rolled out in select LATAM regions. Disney Advertising made live, biddable inventory in the U.S. across Disney+, Hulu and ESPN available via Disney's Ad Server.

PROGRAMMING

A documentary about the legacy of *Jayne Mansfield* since her death in 1967 is coming to **HBO** in June. "My Mom Jayne," directed by Mansfield's daughter *Mariska Hargitay*, recounts the public and private sides of Mansfield's life. It'll be Hargitay's directional debut as well. No exact premiere date was given. – If you're not familiar with *Alana Thompson*, you may know her by a different name. **Lifetime** is coming out with a new biopic "I Was Honey Boo Boo" on May 17 at 8pm, showing her perspective of what was really going on behind the scenes of "Toddlers & Tiaras" as she rose to fame. Thompson will narrate the program.

PEOPLE

The community-owned open-access network **UTOPIA Fiber** is going with *Nicole Cottle* as its Deputy Director. Cottle joined UTOPIA as Director, Government Relations and General Counsel in 2023, and has since helped it grow fiber builds in seven Utah cities while contributing to legislative initiatives and economic development efforts. Cottle, a recipient of the Fiber Broadband Association's 2024 Advocacy Allstar award, holds 25 years of experience leading in the public sector. – *Jennifer Ball's* role at **BBC Studios** has expanded to EVP, Global Marketing and Brand. She previously served as SVP, Marketing, having joined the company after stints at **PromaxBDA** and **Univision**.