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WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Trust(y) Issues: FCC Gets Its Third Commissioner

Get ready for *Olivia Trusty*'s **FCC** debut next week. The Senate confirmed her as a Commissioner on Tuesday, despite objections from Dems who sought to have the Republican paired with a Democrat.

Nathan Simington's abrupt June 6 exit from the agency put her confirmation on the fast track since the FCC no longer had the necessary three-commissioner quorum or a Republican majority. With the Senate confirming Trusty for *Jessica Rosenworcel*'s term that expires June 30, it is assumed she will be sworn in at the Commission posthaste, allowing her to attend the June 26 open meeting. The Senate still needs to vote on confirming her for a five-year term that would begin July 1. However, Tuesday's vote makes her an official FCC commissioner and able to stay with the agency until the end of 2026, even without a vote on the five-year term. Trusty was confirmed on a 53-45 vote, with Sen *John Fetterman* (D-PA) breaking (again) from his party to vote in favor of her confirmation.

While **Senate Commerce** Ranking Member *Maria Cantwell* (D-WA) supported Trusty's nomination at her April 30 confirmation hearing, she made it clear that support wasn't absolute if the Senate didn't advance both Republican and Democratic nominees, with Democrat *Geoffrey Starks*' seat vacated earlier this month.

"Given President Trump's alarming record of seeking to illegally fire Democrats on independent commissions like the FCC, I remain seriously concerned that this administration will try to illegally terminate Democratic Commissioner *Anna Gomez,* refuse to nominate any Democratic replacements, and then operate the Commission on a strictly partisan basis," Cantwell wrote in a letter to Senate Majority Leader *John Thune* (R-SD).

Beltway observers are keeping an eye not only on Gomez, but also what happens with spectrum in the "One Big Beautiful Bill." The *WSJ* editorial board gave the thumbs up this week to the Senate Commerce Chairman *Ted Cruz* and Trump for hammering out a plan that would give the FCC authority to auction 800 MHz of spectrum through 2034, with 500 of that coming from government agencies within the 1.3 and 10.5 GHz range. The cable industry doesn't share that enthusiasm since there are no specific protections for CBRS and 6GHz, and there are a lot of questions over just where 800 MHz would even come from (the House Reconciliation text would auction off 600 MHz).

Cantwell also has concerns: "The Senate Commerce Committee and its counterpart in the House have released plans for the FCC to auction vast amounts of spectrum currently used for national security, aviation safety and next generation connectivity. This reckless approach to spectrum management threatens essential systems that protect American lives."

Trusty, with experience on Senate Commerce and **Armed Services** Committees, actually seems to be pretty well-liked despite the no votes. During her confirmation hearing, Sen *Ben Ray Luján* (D-NM) complimented her ethical record and strong reputation on Capitol Hill, warning her to "protect it." She also spent time in policy roles at **Verizon** and **Qwest Com-**

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munications before moving to the public sector.

As per usual, Trusty's confirmation was met with a ticker tape parade of well wishes, starting with FCC Chair *Brendan Carr*, who said he's confident her expertise will allow her to "hit the ground running." Gomez added she's known her for years and has been impressed with her strong background in communications policy and deep understanding of the technical aspects of the job.

NCTA made sure to mention advancing policies that "expand access to spectrum" in its congratulatory statement, while an **NAB** dreaming of a broadcast ownership rule overhaul declared that her "deep understanding of the issues impacting local broadcasters make[s] her a strong addition to the Commission at a pivotal time for our industry."

ACA Connects President/CEO *Grant Spellmeyer* said his members look forward to working with her and her fellow commissioners to "cut red tape, grow the economy in rural communities and further encourage America's small and independent broadband providers to invest in affordable, high-performance broadband networks."

Public Knowledge commended Trusty as a "highly qualified communications policy leader" despite their differences. The public interest group went on to say the administration and Senate must nominate and confirm a Democratic nominee to ensure the agency can meet its mission, "rather than sycophantically bend to President Trump's will."

NIELSEN: STREAMING BEATS CABLE AND BROADCAST FOR FIRST TIME

Nielsen's latest The Gauge report says that streaming TV viewing eclipsed combined cable and broadcast usage for the first time ever in May. Streaming took 44.8% of TV viewership, while cable and broadcast got 24.1% and 20.1%, respectively. Not only is this streaming's largest share of viewing to date, but it's also a 71% increase in usage since Nielsen began producing The Gauge in May 2021. Broadcast and cable, meanwhile, are both down 21% and 39%, respectively, since that May 2021 report. Of course, there's a caveat: the original report only included **Netflix**, **YouTube**, **Hulu**, **Prime Video** and **Disney+**. The May 2025 report features 11 streamers, including FAST services **Pluto TV**, **Roku Channel** and **Tubi**, which reeled in a combined TV viewership of 5.7% last month, more than any single broadcast network. Additionally, Tubi announced Tuesday that it reached 100 million monthly active users in May. Unsurprisingly, YouTube Main (which excludes **YouTube TV**) pulled in the largest share of streaming viewing in May: 12.5%, its fourth consecutive increase in viewership and the largest share for a streamer to date. The continued rise of YouTube, which has also maintained its top spot in Nielsen's Media Distributor Gauge since toppling Disney in February, remains a major topic of discussion among CTV competitors and media companies, including at last week's StreamTV Show, where several panels tackled questions about how to contain the growing threat of the streamer and its ability to command more and more eyeballs. While no definitive solution was offered, one thing seemed to be agreed upon: YouTube has yet to reach its full potential, especially when it comes to getting its CTV and FAST ducks in a row.

SURVEY: FEWER PEOPLE ARE WATCHING LIVE TV

A separate survey, **Attest**'s sixth annual U.S. Media Consumption Report, will feel like rubbing salt on the wound for cable and broadcast. According to the study, fewer people are watching live TV in 2025 than 2024 or 2023. 28% of consumers surveyed said they don't watch any live TV on an average day, up from 24% last year and 20% in 2023. That number is even worse when you zoom in on under-30s: 41% of younger consumers surveyed said they don't watch live TV. Those under-30s who do say they only watch 30 minutes to one hour of live TV, less time than older demos, who average 1-2 hours of viewing time. Interestingly, the report also found that consumers are spending less time watching streaming services than in the past. There was a 4% decrease in consumers who spent 2-3 hours streaming TV, with a third of consumers now only watching 1-2 hours per day. As you might expect, under-30s lead on the streaming viewing front, with 50% saying they stream between 1-4 hours of TV per day.

MAX MAKING UI UPGRADES

Ahead of its return to the **HBO Max** moniker, **Max** is introducing updates to its user interface that improve the browsing experience. Soon, users will be able to hover over a title, and a corresponding video preview will automatically play at the top of the homepage. Subscribers can toggle the video and audio on or off from the settings and playback menu. It follows Max's previous feature launch that gave video previews with audio on the homepage's hero carousel. The update will be rolled out this week for U.S. adult profiles across all subscription tiers on connected TV devices. Max also made note of another feature it's working on. The streamer is in the early stages of building an in-house AI tool that'll help identify and suggest "Drop-In Moments," or popular short scenes from library content that'll be featured as previews. The product will enable Max to make further improvements to the content that appears on the homepage.

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AMAZON ADS CUTS DEALS WITH DISNEY, ROKU

Advertisers using **Amazon**'s DSP will soon be able to access more premium inventory across **Disney+**, **Hulu** and **ESPN+**, thanks to a new deal between Amazon and **Disney**. The deal also means better data and targeting tools for buyers who want to serve their ads on Disney's platforms. The new integration will launch in 3Q25. Amazon is also teaming up with **Roku** to expand advertisers' reach across **The Roku Channel** and **Prime Video** as well as other streaming services on the Fire TV and Roku operating systems. The companies say that when the new integration launches in 4Q25, it'll give media buyers access to 80 million CTV households through Amazon's DSP.

MEDIACOM OPENS IOWA NETWORK OPS CENTER

Mediacom announced the opening of a new network operations center in West Des Moines, Iowa, which will oversee broadband network ops across its 22-state footprint, more than 877,000 miles of fiber. The hub will monitor both residential service as well as business and enterprise customers. The NOC will also keep an eye on local Iowa venues, such as the Iowa Events Center, Mediacom Stadium and Xtream Arena.

FREE 'SQUID GAME' AT COMCAST

"Squid Game" Season 3 debuts on **Netflix** on June 27, with **Comcast** helping build the hype. Xfinity customers on X1 and Flex devices can watch Season 1 of the South Korean thriller for free this week simply by saying "Squid Game" into their voice remotes. Comcast is hoping fans will convert to the **Netflix**, **Apple TV+** and **Peacock** bundle available for $15/month through StreamSaver to watch the saga's final chapter.

FIBER FRENZY

Archtop Fiber broke ground on a new broadband infrastructure project in Sullivan County, New York this week, with plans to deploy more than 220 miles of fiber in the county. Upon completion of the project, Archtop will service over 22,000 Sullivan Country addresses with symmetrical speeds of 10 Gigs. First customers are expected to go online later this year, with full implementation planned by the end of 2026. The ISP also plans to expand to other markets in the Northeast in the future, including Catskill, Red Hook and Tivoli in New York and Pittsfield, Massachusetts in The Berkshires.

RATINGS

It was once again **Fox News** and **MSNBC** leading the weekly primetime and total-day cable ratings, but ongoing coverage of the conflict in the Middle East gave **CNN** a boost as well. In total day, Fox News and MSNBC posted 1.93 million and 699,000 viewers, respectively, while CNN finished higher than normal at 561,000. **ESPN** checked in with 395,000, and **HGTV** and **USA** finished tied for fifth with 315,000. Fox News (3.16 million), MSNBC (1.11 million) and **TNT** (1.04 million) led the primetime ratings. ESPN came fourth in that one with 832,000, and CNN fifth with 775,000. – The "so cringe, you can't look away" approach to matchmaking is really working for "Love Island USA." Season 7 hit **Peacock** on June 3, and like a new bombshell entering the villa, it's quickly eclipsing everything that's come before, including the show's record-breaking sixth season. Week 2 of the new season crossed the 1 billion minutes viewed mark, according to streaming data from **Luminate** (via Deadline), something Season 6 didn't do until its fifth week.

FORBES' ACCESSIBILITY 100 LIST

Forbes released its first-ever Accessibility 100 list Tuesday, seeking to highlight the innovators and impact-makers in the realm of accessibility for people with disabilities. We spotted a few familiar companies and their leading accessibility officers on the inaugural list. **NBCUniversal** and Senior Producer *Alexa Pritting* were among those recognized. Pritting has been with NBC Sports for 15 years and oversees Paralympic Games coverage. **Charter** and VP, Accessibility *Steve Raymond* were also named to the Accessibility 100, as was **Verizon** and Chief Accessibility Officer *Fred Moltz*. Other familiar folks include **Apple**, **Google**, **Meta** Platforms and **Microsoft**.

PROGRAMMING

Michael Weatherly and *Cote de Pablo* are returning to the "NCIS" universe as special agent couple *Tony DiNozzo* and *Ziva David*. Their spinoff series, "NCIS: Tony & Ziva," will premiere on **Paramount+** on Sept. 4. – *Stanley Tucci* isn't done with Italy just yet. **Disney** has greenlit a second season of **Nat Geo** travel docuseries "Tucci in Italy." Season 1 premiered in May. – **Roku** is releasing more content as part of its partnership with **MLB**. Come July 6 on **The Roku Channel**, "Going, Going, Gone: The Magic of the Home Run" will stream for free, exploring the evolution and appeal of a home run and the annual Home Run Derby. It'll feature baseball legend *Albert Pujols*, who launched 703 home runs during his career, as well as broadcasters *Chris Berman* and *Bob Costas*.

PEOPLE

Spectrum Reach promoted *Dan Callahan* to SVP and CRO, overseeing all revenue generation activities at the company. Callahan joined Spectrum Reach in 2023 and spent nearly a decade at **Fox Networks Group** before that. – *Robert Benoit* is the new CFO at **Viamedia**, filling a position that's been open at the company since 2022. Benoit previously served as the CFO of **Rev.io**, an automation software provider for communications and technology service providers.