TUESDAY, JULY 22, 2025 VOLUME 36 | NO.134

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Net Positive: ViX, Soccer Bright Spots, Despite Ad Rev Drop at TelevisaUnivision

Spanish-language streaming platform **ViX** was a major talking point during **TelevisaUnivision**'s 2Q25 earnings call Tuesday. CEO *Daniel Alegre* confirmed that the DTC product has now surpassed 10 million subscribers, "delivering double-digit growth" YOY for the media company, "with momentum accelerating across both free and premium tiers."

A June report from **Ampere Analysis** forecasted that ViX would be the fastest-growing streamer in the Americas in 2025. The 3 million sub increase since 2023, when ViX finished the year with 7 million subs, may bolster that thinking. That growth was due to "disciplined execution across product and programming," with Alegre also highlighting recent distribution deals, including a ViX, **Disney+** bundle in Mexico and the addition of ViX Premium with Ads to **DirecTV**'s Spanish-language skinny bundle, which "strengthens our strategy to drive scale and monetization by making ViX more accessible through top-tier distributors."

A recent price increase for ViX Premium to $8.99/month "didn't impact acquisition or churn," according to Alegre, adding that the $5.99/month ad-supported premium tier of the service had "a very healthy take rate of approximately 30%, which allowed us to move through the price increases" and that "the time tested approach" of new subs testing out ViX via the ad-supported model before upgrading to the subscription model is "working very well for us."

On the distribution front, U.S. subscription and licensing revenue grew by 9% YOY to $348 million. Alegre was pretty rosy about MVPDs' "very healthy" embrace of Spanish-language bundles. "They've seen that work very, very well with their overall business distribution strategy, and those Spanish bundles are high margin and highly retentive," Alegre said. "**Charter** was at the forefront of that, and we're seeing others really lean into that. I think that's actually going to be a very net positive for our business, and for meeting the demands of the Hispanic market in general."

Unfortunately, those hoping TU would have a positive update on a new carriage deal with **Fubo** didn't get their wish. TU pulled its programming from the vMVPD in December, but Alegre had nothing new to announce on that front, saying only that negotiations were ongoing and that it "behooves both companies to hopefully come to an agreement" for the Hispanic audience.

Total revenue for the quarter came in at $1.21 billion, a nearly 4% YOY decline compared to $1.257 billion in 2Q24. Partly to blame for the decline was "modest softness" in ad revenue—a 5% decrease YOY to $742 million, including an 11% drop in Mexico, where sub and licensing revenue was also down by 23%, a decline "related to the renewal cycle with a key distribution partner" in the country, according to TU. Ad revenue also decreased in the U.S. by 2% to $455 million, although that is "a sequential improvement from the first quarter, as we saw growth in ViX and linear ratings stabilize at the same time, which is very reassuring."

That said, coverage of two major international soccer tour-



© 2025 Access Intelligence, LLC. Federal copyright law prohibits unauthorized reproduction by any means and imposes fines of up to $150,000 for violations.

naments was a "huge bright spot" in terms of revenue this quarter, particularly the CONCACAF Gold Cup, whose revenue was up more than 50% compared to the 2023 tournament. The Gold Cup was the most watched soccer tournament among U.S. Hispanics, according to Alegre, with the tournament opener between Mexico, the most watched international soccer team in the U.S., and Dominican Republic delivering 1.6 million total viewers, up 60% versus the 2023 opener. The final, which saw Mexico defeat the U.S., is the most watched soccer game of the year on Univision. Matches were also streamed on ViX, which we imagine only helped the service's sub count.

While **DAZN** had the exclusive U.S. broadcast rights for the FIFA Club World Cup, it also sub-licensed 18 games to TelevisaUnivision, who provided Spanish-language coverage via Univision and cable channel **Unimas**. According to Alegre, the CWC was the top-rated daytime event of the summer, with TU's coverage ranked as the most watched of the tournament regardless of language. The final averaged 1.4 million total viewers.

TU also highlighted its cost-cutting initiatives. Operating expenses for 2Q25 were $812 million, down 9% YOY, due to lower content, tech and marketing costs, and "the normalization of our DTC-related investments." Adjusted OIBDA also grew 10% to $398 million, reflecting cost-cutting. Those initiatives include taking a multi-platform approach to first-party content. TU has stopped producing exclusive ViX content "that wasn't performing well" and that "was not applicable to U.S. and Mexican linear platforms."

"Our new strategy is that we will not green light any content unless we can actually show it on at least two platforms. That could be linear Mexico, linear U.S., it could be linear Mexico and ViX or linear U.S. and ViX—but ideally it plays across all three platforms," he added. TU is also moving away from producing movies for the platform, as they aren't what users come to ViX for. "We ended up really doubling down on our dramas [and] our sports offering that was a very strong retentive and acquisition target for our ViX business."

Looking forward to 3Q25, Alegre said "performance is in line with our expectations," citing a strong slate of upcoming programming, including a new series of microdramas (or "micronovelas"), which began rolling out this week on ViX, with 40 original titles planned by EOY. These 1-2 minute, vertical-style episodes are aimed at the TikTok generation. "The format offers a high mobile-first engagement environment that's uniquely ripe for advertisers looking to reach young Hispanic audiences in fresh, culturally resonant ways."

Whether TU's take on short-form content is a hit with the kids remains to be seen. The same goes for prospective advertisers, although Alegre said he's seeing excitement for both microdramas and soccer in conversations with agencies and advertising clients. In other words, expect ViX and live sports to remain a key part of TelevisaUnivision's strategy for the foreseeable future.

CHARTER, COMCAST INK T-MOBILE MVNO DEAL FOR BUSINESS

Charter and **Comcast** execs have both said repeatedly that they are happy with **Verizon** as their MVNO partner, but it sounds like there was room for improvement. Late Tuesday, the two unveiled a multi-year exclusive agreement with **T-Mobile** to use the carrier's network starting next year to deliver mobile service to business customers across the country. The arrangement is solely focused on providing wholesale mobile connectivity to Charter's and Comcast's business customers, with the Verizon MVNO continuing to support residential and current business customers. Comcast Business President *Ed Zimmermann* described the move as a "capital-light partnership," with Charter Product EVP *Danny Bowman* saying it will allow the provider to "rapidly and cost-effectively bring even more value to our Spectrum Mobile business customers."

NTIA OPENS 'BENEFIT OF THE BARGAIN' ROUND

BEAD's new "Benefit of the Bargain" round of subgrantee selection is underway. **NTIA** announced this week that all 56 states and territories participating in BEAD received approval to begin the process. The Benefit of the Bargain came from last month's revisions to BEAD and seeks to "ensure taxpayers receive the greatest benefit from their investment in broadband infrastructure" while also allowing technology platforms "to compete on a level playing field, without the distortions of misguided technology preferences or extralegal, burdensome requirements. Eligible states and territories have until Sept. 4 to submit an updated BEAD proposal.

CARR JOINS IN RESPONSES TO 'THE LATE SHOW' AFTERMATH

The fallout continues after "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" was canceled last week. Colbert hosted his first show since the news broke Monday, and it doesn't look like he'll hold back on any sort of criticism between now and the show's scheduled end in May 2026—including his thoughts on **Paramount**, **Skydance** and President *Trump*. "Now for the next 10 months, the gloves are off. I can finally speak unvarnished truth to power and say what I really think about Donald Trump. I don't care for him," Colbert said. Meanwhile, *Puck* reported

Cablefax Daily (ISSN 1069-6644) is published daily by Access Intelligence, LLC | www.cablefax.com | 301.354.2101 | Editorial Director: Amy Maclean, 301.354.1760, amaclean@accessintel.com | SVP Media Group: Dave Colford, 631.786.9796, dcolford@accessintel.com | Sr Editor: John Saavedra, 908.477.1758, jsaavedra@accessintel.com | Editor: Noah Ziegler, 301.354.1704, nziegler@accessintel.com | Sales Director Cable & Broadband Group: Amy Abbey, 410.979.0171, aabbey@accessintel.com | Account Executive: Harry Singh, 917.832.0064, hsingh@accessintel.com | Senior Director of Marketing / Brand Director, ScreenShift, CTV Connect: Stephanie Cronk, scronk@accessintel.com | Sr Production Mgr: Joann Fato, jfato@accessintel.com | Kerry Smith, Divisional President, Marketing & Media Group, ksmith@accessintel.com | Group Subs/Subscription Questions, Client Services: 301.354.2101, clientservices@accessintel.com | Annual subscription price: $1,999.00/year | Access Intelligence, LLC, 9211 Corporate Blvd., 4th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850

that The Late Show has been losing north of $40 million per year for **CBS** (not including some ancillary revenue). **FCC** Chairman *Brendan Carr* centered on that aspect in his criticism of Colbert and his recent remarks. "I'm surprised to learn that CBS didn't find this stuff profitable," he said on **X**. In a later post Tuesday morning, he added, "The partisan left's ritualist wailing and gnashing of teeth over Colbert is quite revealing. They're acting like they're losing a loyal DNC spokesperson that was entitled to an exemption from the laws of economics." Carr interacted with a few other posts discussing Colbert. He also responded to **CNN**'s *Brian Stelter*, who quoted Carr's Tuesday comment with "FCC chair's latest message:" Carr responded, "Thank you for your attention to this matter." Meanwhile, that other CAR—the **Center for American Rights**—is pushing the FCC chair to put conditions on any Skydance-Paramount deal that would ensure the new owners are committed to fair fees that give local stations the economic support they need to operate, citing Carr's letter to Disney in December over network-affiliate relations. In a letter this week, the group pushed for protection from "network domination," including pressure to convert more stations into owned-and-operated properties.

COMMSCOPE, DVSUM ADD TO SERVASSURE NXT SOLUTION

CommScope is teaming up with **DvSum** to create a new network monitoring solution that builds on ServAssure NXT. The platform combines DvSum's self-service analytics technology for call center and network operations with CommScope's existing network monitoring solution, enabling service providers to identify and resolve issues more quickly while reducing call center triage times and improving customer experience. The AI-fueled product analyzes data across network and subscriber systems to deliver predictive insights and detect anomalies.

AOI GETS CHARTER CERTIFICATION FOR 1.8GHZ AMPLIFIERS

Applied Optoelectronics (AOI) wrapped up the testing stage and received certification from **Charter** to deploy its 1.8GHz Quantum18 amplifiers and QuantumLink remote management platform. The products will support Charter's network evolution project using extended spectrum DOCSIS, enabling symmetrical and multi-gig services that provide speeds of up to 10 Gbps downstream and 1 Gbps upstream. Charter has approved multiple AOI HFC solutions in the past, including system and booster amplifiers, line extenders and monitoring software that are designed to help operators transition legacy HFC networks to newer systems without having to replace existing amplifier housings.

CANELA'S YEAR OF GROWTH

It's been a year of progress for **Canela Media** and its portfolio of FAST channels. In June, Canela-owned channels eclipsed 6 million monthly viewing hours, serving as an 88% increase YOY from the 3.2 million recorded in June 2024. The Hispanic-focused streamer offers 70 channels on **Canela.TV**, of which include 20 owned-and-operated channels and 48 premium partner channels like **Hallmark en Español** and **Novelisima**. It's doubled down on its engagement capabilities as well over the past year, having introduced an AVOD loyalty program back in April. Dubbed Club Canela, the initiative allows users to earn rewards for viewing and engaging with content. Canela Media's overall ecosystem reaches 60 million monthly active users.

BLUE STREAK TAPS RENDER TO STREAMLINE FIBER BUILDS

Blue Streak Telecommunications is partnering with **Render Networks** to modernize construction operations and scale fiber deployments. By adopting Render's AI-powered construction management platform, Blue Streak hopes to improve forecasting accuracy, reduce delays and gain real-time visibility across multiple projects. The shift away from manual workflows lets Blue Streak streamline labor and materials while speeding up invoicing cycles.

SUMMER RATINGS

It's been quite the summer for **Fox News**, with the network leading all of broadcast and cable TV in prime from May 26 to July 20. Fox News recorded 2.96 million viewers P2+, followed by **ABC** (2.79 million), **NBC** (2.44 million), **CBS** (2.1 million) and **Fox** (1.16 million). The next cable network to make the list was **ESPN** as the sports net posted 1.12 million viewers, with **MSNBC**, **HGTV** and **CNN** trailing with 923,000, 586,000 and 498,000, respectively. – This weekend's **WNBA** All-Star festivities drew in memorable ratings for **ESPN**, **ABC** and **Disney+**. ESPN's telecast of the skills and three-point contest was the most-viewed program across all of TV in primetime among A18-34, scoring 1.3 million average viewers—up 89% from last year. Saturday's All-Star game on ABC was the most-watched program of the night in all of TV behind 2.2 million average viewers. That's the second most-watched of all time, only trailing 2024's mark of 3.44 million (also on ABC).

PROGRAMMING

Court TV will be on site Wednesday in Boise, Idaho, for the highly anticipated sentencing of *Bryan Kohberger*. Kohberger pleaded guilty to the 2022 murders of four University of Idaho students. Court TV anchor *Ted Rowlands* will host "Closing Arguments with Vinnie Politan" at 8pm live outside of the courthouse. – A fourth "Power" prequel series is in the works. **Starz** gave the green light to "Power: Origins" and ordered 18 eps for its debut season. It joins other Power prequels "Power Book II: Ghost;" "Power Book III: Raising Kanan" and "Power Book IV: Force," which will air its third and final season this fall.