

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Chasing Storms: Fox Weather Marks Four Years Since Launch

It was more than four years ago when *Sharri Berg*, *Suzanne Scott* and other leaders in the **Fox News Media** ecosystem saw an overloaded category of programming: weather. It seemed like a paradox of choice with the number of ways viewers could figure out how to plan their outfits for the week, making it that much more difficult to find the gaps in what audiences crave with weather-related content on TV. So, instead of further fragmenting the space, it sought to create the first “weather news network” in an effort to illustrate the human element of severe weather.

Fox Weather celebrated its four-year anniversary Saturday. After launching with a mobile app, website and full-service FAST channel, it has since worked toward an omni-channel experience that encompasses streaming, CTVs, online and linear. Currently, it has distribution deals with **Charter**, **Comcast**, **DirecTV**, **Dish**, **Fubo**, **Optimum** and **YouTube TV**, as well as FAST platforms like **Tcl+** and **Xumo**.

When it did launch, Berg said it was a priority to reach every platform. She recalls 2021 being “the crossroads of cord-cutters and cord-nevers,” so the team building Fox Weather knew it had to be deliberate with its strategy—from content to how it distributes itself—in order to gain and retain engagement from viewers. Since it prioritized creating an all-encompassing experience, there wasn’t as much pressure to convert users from one platform to another.

“The goal was to reach every possible viewer, every possible

platform, whether it’s cable, OTA, streaming, FAST services and even platforms that hadn’t yet been created,” Berg, Fox Weather’s President, told **CFX**. “Being omnipresent and easily accessible is the ultimate consumer-facing strategy and a big part of Fox Weather’s ability to find different audiences and this growth in four years.”

There were trials and tribulations with each platform Fox Weather expanded its reach to. It took time for the company to get a grasp on the inner workings of each platform and the differences in functions like dynamic ad insertions, but it continues to believe that content would guide it through any storm.

Fox Weather’s programming has undergone its own evolution over the years to offer weather content that dives deeper than forecasting, while supplementing content to sister brands such as **Fox News** and **Fox Business**. For example, Fox Weather will highlight the risk of weather-related impacts on sporting events like Bassmaster fishing, football and baseball games. It also has its storm trackers and live radar analysis to enhance the connection it has with viewers.

“We’re the weather news network. We’re not a science channel. It’s weather news, and everyone who we hired, all of the shows and coverage that we produce is all done—I mean, we’re live 19 hours a day, and our strategy has been to be live, be compelling,” Berg said. “... Our programming aims to create an immersive experience for the viewer, for the user, for the watcher, for the consumer, wherever, whoever you are. We want to take you in it.”



VIEW HONOREES

Congratulations 2025 Voices of Impact & Workplace Culture Honorees!

The Cablefax team is thrilled to announce this year’s honorees for the Voices of Impact & Workplace Culture Awards, celebrating the individuals and organizations driving meaningful change, fostering inclusivity, and shaping a more dynamic and equitable workplace across the media and broadband industries.

Visit our site to explore the full honoree list and read their inspiring Q&As.

Berg added that the folks at Fox Weather have the ability to see in real time what's working and what's not landing with audiences. One case was "Fox Weather @ Night," where the network felt it was repetitive and had a more "standard" feel, so it revamped the program.

"What we found was on social platforms, that's where we were getting a lot of engagement, so we said, 'Why don't we do a program at night that's less polished, really authentic and feels like sort of a conversation that invites the audience in?' That's what we do now," Berg said, noting the changes on the production side of things and only needing two people to operate the show. "There is no control room, there's no rundown. They have notes, and we developed this dashboard ... that basically mirrors the control room and it gives the producer, it gives the two of them the complete ability to run, produce [and] direct the show, including graphics, live shots [and] video. Everything you see on the air is done by two people."

Besides being more efficient, the authentic feel feeds into Fox Weather's goal of providing a valuable experience for viewers. That, and the belief it should cover weather-related events beyond the cleanup process and the aftermath, is how it hopes to continue adding to its viewership.

In the short term, Fox Weather will have its hands full covering Hurricane Melissa, a Category 5 storm that's expected to ravage Jamaica and the Bahamas over the next couple of days. Over the next few years, though, Berg thinks Fox Weather will continue to expand with a focus on innovation to help bring audiences into each experience.

"We have table stakes. We have success. We have growth. We have a very bright future ahead of us," Berg said. "I think that you have to show the value in innovating and what that enables you to do."

SLING TV CHANGES WEEKEND PASS PARAMETERS

Sling has updated the parameters for its \$9.99 Weekend Pass on the Sling Orange service so that it runs from 1am MT on Friday to 1am MT on Monday, making it now a full 72 hours. The passes originally launched with access beginning at 4am MT through 1am MT Monday. None of this changes **Disney** or **Warner Bros. Discovery's** minds about suing over the offering, which they argue breaches their OTT licenses. Both programmers are pursuing preliminary injunctions that would halt the service pending resolution of their lawsuits. The U.S. District Court judge hearing the case seems to have a sense of humor. On Monday, Judge *Arun Subramanian* issued an order for an in-person conference in the WBD case at 10am on Friday, Oct. 31, with the addendum, "Costumes optional."

VERIZON'S CREATIVE FIBER DEAL

Verizon's latest fiber play has it striking a commercial fiber agreement with **Eaton Fiber**, an affiliate of **Tillman Global Holdings**, that is intended to bring fiber service to customers in markets outside of Verizon and Frontier's current FTTH footprint. In other words, the deal could help in quickly expanding to new markets with Verizon handling sales, marketing and customer service and Eaton building and maintaining the network. Don't know what **Eaton** is or where it has or plans to have fiber? You're not alone. **New Street Research** muses that it could be run by **Frontier** execs, such as *Veronica Bloodworth* or *Vishal Dixit*, with funding details likely still being lined up. We're hoping for a lot more details during Wednesday's earnings call with new Verizon CEO *Dan Schulman*.

FIOS, NEXSTAR SHAKE HANDS

All's well that ends well. **Verizon** and **Nexstar** extended their retransmission consent negotiations past Friday's deadline. By the end of Saturday, the two had come to a new agreement without any disruption to programming, including broadcast stations and cable net **NewsNation**. Verizon Fios had begun notifying customers earlier in the week that they could lose programming because of "significant price increases" sought by Nexstar. The deal comes as Nexstar pursues a proposed \$6.2 billion deal to acquire **Tegna**.

NAD IS MAD AT AT&T

We haven't seen the **National Advertising Division** get this fired up in some time. Late Friday, NAD said **AT&T** violated procedures that it and the **National Advertising Review Board** have in place for the industry. Specifically, it's targeting a press release and commercial AT&T rolled out that uses NAD procedures and its findings for promotional purposes. The release, which is still up on AT&T's website, puts **T-Mobile** in the crosshairs and notes "The Better Business Bureau's advertising watchdog asked T-Mobile to correct their marketing claims 16 times over the last four years. That's more than each of the entire consumer electronics and financial services industries." According to NAD's guidelines, companies agree not to "mischaracterize any decision, abstract or press release issued or use and/or disseminate such decision, abstract or press release for advertising and/or promotional purposes." NAD ordered AT&T to remove the promotional materials that violate its rules and encouraged it to cease future dissemination. "The integrity and success of the self-regulatory forum hinges on the voluntary agreement of participants in an NAD

proceeding to abide by the rules set forth in the BBB National Programs' Procedures," NAD said. "As a voluntary process, fair dealing on the part of the parties is essential and requires adherence to both the letter and the spirit of the process."

NCTA CHIEF MAKES INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE APPEAL

Washington lawmakers fear falling behind in the AI race—particularly to China—with new **NCTA** boss *Cory Gardner* drawing on those anxieties in a [new op/ed](#) on **Fox News** that's focused on a stronger policy around unlicensed spectrum for WiFi. "The Chinese Communist Party understands that AI supremacy depends not only on data and algorithms, but on leveraging a national approach to building the infrastructure and connectivity required to develop and deploy advanced AI systems. It is building internet infrastructure to leapfrog the U.S.," Gardner wrote, describing how China is challenging America's leadership in WiFi by pushing its domestic standards internationally. He touted how 87% of broadband networks are already offering gigabit speeds with cable investing more than \$340 billion in private capital to build these networks. For the U.S. to keep the lead, he called on lawmakers to create a national framework for broadband policy along with a better national policy on unlicensed spectrum.

MS NOW REBRAND COMING...

Next month. On Monday, **MSNBC** President *Rebecca Kutler* said [the network's rebrand](#) to **MS Now** would go into effect on Nov. 15. That means MSNBC will have one last hurrah when it covers this year's Election Day before completing its split from **NBC News**—all while **Comcast NBCUniversal's Versant** spinoff inches closer. MS Now will live under the Versant umbrella, though for now, it's emphasizing that viewers won't see changes beyond the brand reset. It debuted the tagline "Same mission. New name" in addition to rolling out 15-second advertisements featuring talent that promote the new moniker. It'll ramp up the marketing efforts in the next few weeks as well.

NCTA URGES CAUTION WITH CBRS

NCTA and **Federated Wireless** aren't seeing eye-to-eye on the CBRS band. In an **FCC** filing late Friday, the cable association claimed the SaaS company is proposing changes to the 3.5 GHz band that would "unjustifiably modify licenses and destroy significant investments, harming licensees, American consumers and innovators, and the U.S. economy"—all while further entrenching MNO dominance in the wireless market. Specifically, NCTA is pushing back against changing rules regarding power or emissions limits, saying they'd cause significant disruption to the CBRS ecosystem and necessitate ripping out existing infrastructure and the development of new equipment. Federated Wireless claims an NCTA study on the matter

failed to fully consider the capabilities of the Spectrum Access System in managing and mitigating interference.

RATINGS

ESPN had its third-most-watched **NBA** season-opening Wednesday ever last week. Its doubleheader averaged 2.33 million viewers, led by the Spurs' win over the Mavericks pulling in 2.49 million and peaking at 2.86 million. That was enough to be the most-watched primetime program across all of TV that night among demographics including People under 50 as well as Adults and Males 18-34, 18-49 and 25-54. The Knicks' victory against the Cavaliers had 2.17 million viewers and a peak of 2.84 million. Additionally, the ESPN debut for "Inside the NBA" averaged 1 million viewers, good for the show's highest-rated regular-season episode since February 2023 and a 13% improvement from last year's opening-night postgame program. ESPN's coverage throughout opening week finished with an average of 2.2 million viewers. – **Prime Video** had 13.12 million viewers watch the Chargers take down the Vikings last Thursday. That's up 4% vs the comparable game last year, which is the sixth YOY viewership increase Thursday Night Football has had so far this season. Through seven weeks, TNF is averaging 15.29 million viewers, in addition to having double-digit improvements across P18-34 (17%), P18-49 (19%), P25-54 (18%) and P55+ (11%). Additionally, Prime Video's TNF median age is 48.1, nearly eight years younger than audiences watching the NFL on linear networks (55.7).

ON THE CIRCUIT

You know those **T. Howard Foundation** interns who go on to have impressive careers in the industry? Well, now there's a way to spotlight them. The Foundation launched a [Distinguished Alumni Showcase](#) section on its website. It highlights more than 30 alumni who are now industry leaders, including *Rosalyn Durant*, **ESPN** EVP, Programming & Acquisitions (Class of 1997-1998) and *Isaac Ahn* VP, Development, **Universal Television Entertainment Group** (Class of 2009-2010).

PROGRAMMING

Paramount has been bolstering its portfolio since its merger with **Skydance**, but it's set to lose one of its well-known faces in a few years. *Taylor Sheridan* will head to **NBCUniversal** in a five-year overall deal that'll go into effect once his current Paramount contract expires in 2028. The film aspect of the NBCU agreement will begin next year, but the TV duties will start in 2029. – "Dark Winds" Season 4 will premiere on **AMC** and **AMC+** on Feb. 15. – **USA** renewed its legal thriller series "The Rainmaker" for a second season, which will air in 2026. – **Fox Entertainment** acquired an equity stake in Chain, *B.J. Novak's* food experience and pop-up company, in order to integrate it into *Gordon Ramsay* programming. Studio Ramsay Global will partner with Chain's events as part of the deal.