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REMINDER

Friday is the final deadline to submit nominations for the CFX Most Powerful Women Awards. The awards have honored hundreds of industry leaders throughout more than two decades. This year's honorees will be celebrated at a Nov. 3 awards gala in NYC. Selfnominations are encouraged. Visit the Most Powerful Women website for more information, including how to nominate.

IT'S OFFICIAL: COX IS SPECTRUM

When the sun rose Thursday, **Charter**'s acquisition of **Cox Communications**, valued at $34.5 billion including assumed debt, had officially closed. Based on analyst projections, the combined company now surpasses **Comcast** in both network reach and subscriber count, making it the nation's largest broadband and cable provider.

And the marketing machine was ready. "Cox is now Spectrum" read a banner atop Cox's website along with a welcome offer of a free year of mobile with a qualifying internet plan as well as the news that various Cox video packages will soon get access to Spectrum's more than $127/month in streaming apps, such as the ad-supported versions of **HBO Max** and **Disney+**. Cox customers in Las Vegas, Orange County, Palos Verdes and Santa Barbara awoke to find **SportsNet LA** in their lineups—something that hasn't been the case in the 12+ years since the Dodgers RSN launched.

Charter CEO *Chris Winfrey*, who is also leading the combined company, spent the day in San Diego on Thursday for a town hall with Cox and Spectrum employees to celebrate the close of the transaction. On **LinkedIn**, Cox and Charter employees cheered the close—in some cases posting their new positions with the combined company and in others celebrating what they built at Cox as their role comes to an end. Current Charter leadership remains in place and some of those Cox senior leaders will join the merged company. ***CFX*** hears EVP, Chief Commercial Officer *Jeff Breaux* will be part of Team Spectrum. Cox EVP, Chief Network & Field Operations Officer *Len*

Barlik has added retired to his title on LinkedIn, and Chief HR Officer *Kia Painter* celebrated a 28.5-year career that started as a part-time assistant at Cox, saying she's looking forward to her next chapter.

Approximately 90% of Cox employees are frontline, with minimal impact expected to those roles. In fact, Charter touted that it's hiring more than 1,000 new sales positions in the former Cox markets. One of the commitments of the deal is maintaining a significant presence in Atlanta, with Charter entering into a long-term lease on the buildings housing Cox Communications.

"The composition of the different types of employees is going to change to optimize for the footprint that we have and the talent that we have. But there'll be certain functions that come out of Atlanta, and there are certain functions that are already being moved into Atlanta," Winfrey said in a call with media Thursday.

One example is Charter's Southeast region, which is going to be re-headquartered on the Cox Atlanta campus. "Our goal is to fill it and to have a well-populated building that takes advantage of first-class facilities, and be side-by-side with the other Cox businesses along the way," Winfrey said, adding that it will "change composition for a number of different employees at the legacy Spectrum footprint and the legacy Cox footprint from an overhead perspective."

Cox Enterprises received roughly $5 billion in exchangeable Charter Holdings units and $6 billion in convertible preferred units—together equivalent to just over 46 million Charter shares, plus a total of about $4 billion in cash. Cox Enterprises now owns approximately 26% (up from the 23% estimated when the deal was announced in May 2025) of the combined entity, which is set to be renamed Cox within a year. For now, we're going to call it Charter. Charter also closed its merger with **Liberty Broadband** the same day, converting Liberty Broadband shareholders into Charter shares at a 0.236 exchange ratio. Approximately $12 billion of Cox debt and finance leases will remain outstanding at subsidiaries of Charter as a result of the transaction.

Cox Enterprises CEO *Alex Taylor* is chairman of Charter's board for an initial three-year term, with Winfrey to serve as chairman after him. Former Cox Communications President *Mark Greatrex* and Cox Ent President/CFO *Dallas Clement* are joining the board. "For generations, my family has believed in building businesses that matter and stand the test of time," Taylor said in a statement. "I look forward to partnering with Chris and the board to build on a proud legacy and create long-term value for our shareholders, customers, employees and the communities we serve."

While we're waiting to hear details on Breaux's role at Charter, it makes a lot of sense to bring him on board since he was responsible for the strategic direction of Cox's commercial business, which includes fiber-based commercial/carrier network **Segra** and managed cloud services provider **RapidScale**—new types of business for Charter. An SEC filing on the deal's close shows Charter paid $3.5 billion in cash for Segra and RapidScale, structured separately from the equity consideration used for the residential cable business.

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Winfrey said there are no plans to change how those businesses are operated, including leadership. "I think a bigger opportunity for both RapidScale and for Segra is where there is overlap inside of some of the Spectrum network footprint," he noted. "I think there'll be more selling opportunities for both as a function of our of our size and bringing them together. And we're going to leverage the expertise that we have with Cox Business, the Spectrum Business, to continue to grow those businesses."

On the consumer side, everyone will be watching how combining Cox and Charter helps grow the internet subscriber base. Ultimately, it all comes down to convergence. "The mobile changes that we're making in Cox today are significant. They've not had the benefit of the pricing that we have and some of the capabilities we have for mobile, and so I think that will act as an accelerant for internet there," Winfrey said. "And certainly, video is so much lower penetrated. Less households take the traditional video product at legacy Cox, and by coming out with this new form of video, Seamless Entertainment, I think it's a great message for existing internet customers as well as a way to bring on new broadband internet customers into the legacy Cox footprint. It's the same as legacy Spectrum, but even more so because the starting penetration point that's lower."

On the network side, Winfrey shared that Cox is pretty far along with mid-split upgrades that can deliver 300+ Mbps upstream and sometimes higher. Given the long runway there, he said Charter sees "no rush" to force a high-split conversion, adding the upgrade would mainly be predicated on new modems and customers. Charter is wrapping up its own broadband expansion this year and will complete its high-split upgrade at Spectrum next year. "Kudos to the Cox team," Winfrey said. "They've never been afraid to invest in their facilities, trucks or people. So these are great assets, and we're stepping into something that is actually different than some of the other stuff that we've stepped into in the past."

With the long-awaited deal finally closed, mid-September is the next milestone moment. That's when Charter will debut the Spectrum brand, pricing and packaging in all Cox markets. ***CFX*** will be watching closely to see how that transition—and the new org—takes shape.

CHARTER'S RSN HEADACHE

The fact former **Cox** subs will be able to watch Friday's Dodgers-Pirates game on **SportsNet LA** is pretty sweet if you're a baseball fan, but it doesn't solve the economics of the RSN model. "The regional sports network business is significantly challenged, and most of those RSNs have gone bankrupt," **Charter** CEO *Chris Winfrey* said on a call with media after the merger with Cox closed. He reminded reporters the SportsNet LA and the Lakers RSN **Spectrum SportsNet** were inherited when Charter acquired **Time Warner Cable** in 2016. "Spectrum has so far remained committed to that. We believe in the local teams, the Lakers and the Dodgers. It's very important to us. It's very important to our customers. That doesn't mean that it's a great economic agreement with us," he said, adding that the company would love to find innovative ways over time for a "better long-term solution" for the operator, teams and customers. It's a timely topic with the Lakers possibly being sold to former Disney CEO *Bob Iger* and *Josh Kushner* (the Lakers' team governor is contesting the effort) and reports late last year that Charter had hired **The Raine Group** to consider selling the Lakers RSN. This week, *Puck*'s *John Ourand* reported that Dodgers owner/outgoing Lakers owner *Mark Walter* engaged in conversations with Charter to end its deals for both RSNs early for a lump sum payout, but they went nowhere. Winfrey said it's difficult to get into detail around "ongoing conversations," simply saying Charter is trying to be "constructive and respectful on all fronts."

OPTIMUM LAUNCHES ADVANCED SECURITY SUITE

Optimum launched Advanced Security, a new internet security management service, on Thursday, citing a national survey it conducted which found that 66% of Americans would pay more for a high level of protection for its devices and personal info. The survey also revealed that two-thirds of Americans feel it is important to choose an ISP that offers a high level of security and competitive pricing. So for $5/month, Advanced Security offers Optimum Internet customers built-in protection for all connected devices and smart home tech, parental controls and easy setup without any additional hardware to install. Customers can also bundle Advanced Security with other services, including Whole Home WiFi and Total Care.

ROKU'S BIG WORLD CUP

Fox and **Telemundo** saw big boosts from the 2026 FIFA World Cup but so did distributors, including **Comcast**. Add to the list **Roku**. The platform reports that its Soccer Zone hub drove hundreds of thousands of sign-ups for its content and streaming partners in 2Q. More than half of sign-ups for services carrying matches (**Peacock** and **Fox One**) originated from Roku. It was also the top World Cup streaming platform in the U.S., per **Nielsen**. Total sports streaming hours in the U.S. were also up 46% YOY in the quarter.

PSKY-WBD LEGAL FIGHT UPDATE

U.S. District Court Judge *Araceli Martinez-Olguin* ruled that PSKY will have to wait until Sept. 24 for a decision regarding its motion requesting that the states and the **Writers Guild of America** pay a bond of $1.88 billion to cover the ticking fee it will owe WBD shareholders while it waits for a March antitrust trial to begin. Per the merger agreement with **Warner Bros. Discovery**, PSKY will have to pay $650 million for every quarter the deal doesn't close, starting Oct. 1. California AG *Rob Bonta*, who is leading the coalition of 12 states suing to stop the merger, wasn't moved by PSKY's bid for the $1.88 billion bond. "Bottom line: Paramount went into this process with eyes wide open. They are lying in a bed of their own making, and once again, trying to blackmail us to get us to back down," the AG said. PSKY is also considering moving its operations out of California if it can't settle with the states and the WGA by Oct. 1.

CORNING, ZAYO GEAR UP FOR AI DEMAND

Everyone is planning for AI's continued growth. On Thursday, **Corning** signed an expanded supply agreement with digital network infrastructure provider **Zayo** as the latter hopes to address fiber constraints "before it becomes a barrier to execution." Zayo noted that the deal covers a significant portion of the fiber it anticipates will be needed for the remainder of the decade. Currently, Zayo intends to create 15,000 new route miles by 2030, including over 8,000 miles of long-haul fiber through a separate partnership with **Nvidia**. Plus, Zayo plans to add capacity across existing corridors where AI infrastructure is being centralized.

DAZN COMPLETES VIEWLIFT DEAL

After striking an agreement in late April to buy **ViewLift**, **DAZN** said the acquisition was finalized Thursday. ViewLift, a streaming and digital solutions provider, will operate as a standalone business unit within DAZN and maintain its executive leadership. DAZN, which recently became the DTC streaming home for the **NBA**'s Timberwolves and New York's **MSG Networks** and **YES Network**, will absorb the 17 major-league teams and six RSNs ViewLift is partnered with. DAZN said it'll now be able to provide an expanded suite of streaming, fan engagement and monetization solutions to organizations. "DAZN can offer leagues, teams and rights holders a broad set of flexible B2B2C and SaaS solutions, allowing partners to operate direct-to-consumer products while drawing on DAZN's technology, infrastructure and global reach," the company added.

PROGRAMMING

"Bannerman," about a group of retired assassins in the suburbs, is the first series co-produced by **AMC Global Media** and **Netflix**. Based on the books by *John R. Maxim*, it'll debut on AMC in the U.S. before becoming available on Netflix 90 days after the finale.

BASIC CABLE P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*
(08/10/26-08/16/26)

MON-SUN	MC US AA%	MC US AA (000)
FNC	0.629	2025
MS NOW	0.280	903
HGTV	0.230	740
ESPN	0.218	703
NFL	0.217	697
CNN	0.187	601
HALL	0.174	560
USA	0.155	499
TBS	0.146	471
DISC	0.144	464
TLC	0.136	439
FOOD	0.136	437
TV LAND	0.127	410
INSP	0.123	395
GSN	0.123	395
HIST	0.121	390
ID	0.100	322
HALLMYS	0.089	288
A&E	0.082	263
BRAVO	0.080	256
FX	0.080	256
OXY	0.079	255
NAN	0.079	253
LIFE	0.076	244
TENNIS	0.072	233
AMC	0.072	231
WETV	0.066	213
REELZ	0.064	207
COM	0.063	203
BET	0.062	200
TNT	0.062	198
MGNLA	0.057	183
NWSMX	0.053	170
SNDNCE	0.052	166
MLB	0.052	166
FRFM	0.052	166
ADSM	0.051	165
FXX	0.051	165
PRMNT	0.049	158
UP	0.049	156
E!	0.047	152
NATGEO	0.046	147
LMN	0.045	146
ESPN2	0.045	144
FETV	0.044	142
IFC TV	0.043	137

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