

QUOTABLE

“When one of the world’s largest online retailers engages in unfair and deceptive conduct, the impact can be staggering. Amazon has millions of advertising customers who were misled into paying significantly higher prices. These higher costs were largely passed on to American consumers. The FTC under President Trump won’t allow this deception to continue.” - FTC Chairman Andrew Ferguson

NIELSEN RECALIBRATES TV CURRENCY

Nielsen is heading into the new broadcast TV season with yet another refinement of its audience measurement. The ratings firm implemented seven updates to its currency methodology Monday that are set to impact programmers’ viewership figures, and thus the dollars spent on advertising.

The changes touch nearly every layer of Nielsen’s Big Data + Panel system, from how the company accounts for co-viewing and assigns household demographics to how it weighs its panel against data from automatic content recognition providers. Nielsen emphasized that the changes are designed to improve accuracy, while stressing that they won’t necessarily lead to higher ratings. Still, the vast array of networks, advertisers and agencies will be paying close attention to any movement in audience behavior—and whether it’s indicative of actual change or the result of a new way of counting up the numbers.

The latest tweaks are headlined by co-viewing enhancements, an area Nielsen sought to address when it [first began piloting](#) an update earlier this year. It’s expanding the use of its proprietary wearable devices that panelists wear, enabling Nielsen to passively identify audio from TV programming without requiring a formal login process. The firm said that should better determine how many people are watching a given program on the same screen, which could be consequential for live sports, entertainment events and other high-profile programming.

Another item on the list of adjustments is Nielsen’s enhanced weighting process as it tries to combine panel and Big Data metrics more efficiently. Last week, it emphasized that push for better transparency in a memo to clients that advised against combining internal or third-party data with Nielsen’s data for the purposes of making comparative statements in the press.

The memo feels slightly pointed at **NBC**, which often posts its total audience delivery by meshing Nielsen with **Adobe Analytics** data. But it’s ultimately an attempt to gain a better sense of streaming viewership. **Fox** President, Insights and Analytics *Mike Mulvihill*, who’s used his social media to criticize Nielsen once or twice in the past, cheered the memo on **X**.

“Hopefully this clear, fair policy will be rigorously enforced during football season,” Mulvihill [wrote](#).

Mulvihill is far from being the only Nielsen critic in the media space, but another entity has been taking its scrutiny public more often: the **NFL**. The league criticized Nielsen [heading into last season](#) and is doing the same this year as kickoff looms in September.

According to Front Office Sports, the NFL [feels](#) Nielsen’s adjustments are “overly rushed” and that measurement statistics won’t be transparent this season. The

league's Chief Data and Analytics Officer *Paul Ballew* told FOS that the NFL—and sports overall—have taken a negative hit from Nielsen of late.

Nonetheless, Nielsen continues to believe Big Data + Panel is capable of keeping up with a media environment that's only growing more fragmented. And while its partners have been able to receive a preview of how data will be impacted, there will be a period of time before networks have a full grasp of how to interpret the new-look numbers.

Nielsen is also updating its Household Demographic Assignment Model (HDAM), a machine learning tool used to determine the demographic makeup of households represented by Big Data providers. The firm said HDAM will have more representative data going forward and not artificially skew toward older viewers.

Nielsen is adjusting the tuning methodology behind its Automated Content Recognition to account for differences between sources measured by its ACR providers and within Nielsen's panel. After adopting the Advertising Research Foundation's DASH Universe Estimates earlier this year, the firm is now introducing a latency adjustment that addresses timing delays in survey data and better factors in recent consumer behavior. Additionally, Nielsen is expecting more accurate Spanish-language estimates as it now utilizes data from two surveys (the American Community Survey and the National Hispanic Enumeration Survey), and it overhauled the model used to group together Big Data devices into households for one of Nielsen's ACR providers.

CHARTER CFO CHANGE-UP

Having helped shepherd **Charter** through its merger with **Cox Communications**, CFO *Jessica Fischer* is moving on to join the AI infrastructure joint venture between **Blackstone** and **Google**. She'll step down from her role as Charter CFO on Oct. 15, with the company searching for her replacement. *Kevin Howard*, currently EVP and Chief Accounting Officer & Controller, will assume the position of Interim CFO. It's a role he held before in 2010. Plus, he's led the financial integration of a number of Charter's major transactions, including the acquisitions of **Bresnan**, **Time Warner Cable**, **Bright House Networks** and **Cox**. Fischer has been with Charter for nearly 10 years, and was upped to CFO in 2021. "I leave behind an incredible team. Together we made important investments in the future of cable and brought together businesses with tremendous potential," she wrote on **LinkedIn**.

CIRCLE CITY TELLS DIRECTV SUBS TO SWITCH

A week after **DirectTV** [lost](#) Indianapolis **ABC** affiliate WRTV, station owner **Circle City Broadcasting** is launching a campaign to encourage affected viewers to switch television providers. Notably, the "Make the Switch" campaign rewards DirecTV customers who switch to **Comcast** or **Charter**. We clocked that it doesn't mention DirecTV rival **Dish/Sling**, which has had its own run-ins with Circle City. Those who make the switch and provide qualifying proof receive an undisclosed "free gift," per the WRTV website. Circle City took over ownership of WRTV from **Scripps** in late March. DirecTV said it's tying carriage of the station to its Indianapolis **CW** and **MyNetwork TV** stations, which DirecTV hasn't carried since 2019. Dish also doesn't carry those two networks, and it's unclear when its WRTV

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retransmission consent contract expires. Circle City unsuccessfully sued DirecTV and Dish over their lack of carriage of the CW and MyNetwork stations that it bought from **Nexstar**.

OPTIMUM, T-MOBILE EXPAND 5G/MOBILE DEAL

Optimum signed an expanded MVNO agreement with **T-Mobile** to bring more advanced 5G capabilities to its wireless customers. Through the deal, the operator will provide connectivity on the uncarrier's 5G standalone platform starting in early 2027, which will bring improved reliability, greater network efficiency and support next-gen mobile services. **Optimum Mobile** runs on an in-house mobile core network, which will be integrated to T-Mobile's SA platform. This will enhance roaming capabilities and expand connectivity for customers in rural and hard-to-reach areas of the U.S. The agreement also allows Optimum to support a broader portfolio of devices. The operator has mobile momentum at the moment, adding 50,000 net lines in 2Q26, its best-ever 2Q mobile performance, helping it reach 724,000 total lines, up 33% YOY.

PLUME: SUPERBOX, SUPER PROBLEM

MVPDs and streamers hate the SuperBox. The **Android**-based streaming device, sold upfront to consumers, connects to third-party apps—some which carry pirated content or hidden malware. *The Verge* did a great [story](#) earlier this year on SuperBox and its rival vSeeBox. Now the **Plume** Security Lab has published the second part in its three-part series, [revealing](#) that the residential proxy networks these devices create are being used as delivery platforms for entirely new malware families. Researchers found that some of these proxy implementations can reach household routers and cable modems directly through an infected device, opening the door to reconnaissance deep inside a subscriber's home network. Plume also found a total of five separate residential proxy networks operating on a single SuperBox device over just a few months. In July, **Google**, the FBI, and the IRS's Criminal Investigation division [dismantled](#) NetNut—also known as Popa—a residential proxy network built on more than two million hijacked devices, including smart TVs and streaming boxes. But Plume's telemetry shows the takedown barely made a dent: "The current baseline of 60k+ unique domains per day is not caused by the intended use of the devices; the smaller residential proxy networks are still in place and operational, and they are growing in numbers day by day," Plume said.

FCC'S NEW ENFORCEMENT BUREAU CHIEF

FCC Chairman *Brendan Carr* appointed *Hunter Deeley* as Chief of the Commission's Enforcement Bureau, replacing *Patrick Webre*, who will continue to serve in a senior role in the Office of Managing Director. Deeley brings plenty of experience to the job, having already served as Chief of Staff and Deputy Bureau Chief. Prior to joining the FCC, Deeley worked at the **DOJ**, serving in the National Security Division's Foreign Investment Review Section. He was also previously a Special Assistant U.S. AG.

SONY LAUNCHES PS5 FAST PLATFORM

Sony's PlayStation 5 isn't only for gaming. As of Monday, it's also the home of a new FAST platform offering news, sports, entertainment and creator programming. Simply called Live TV on PS5, the service includes access to **NBC News Now**, **LiveNOW from Fox**, **Fubo Sports Network**, **Fox Sports**, **Fox Weather**, **Hot Ones**, **FilmRise Free Movies** and more. Sony plans to add new channels and content over time, with the platform also coming to additional regions soon. PS5 owners can access Live TV on PS5 via the Media tab on their console's home screen.

FIBER FRENZY

Optimum completed its \$6 million network upgrade project in Lubbock, Texas, to boost performance across the city for residential and business customers as well as fire stations and essential public facilities. To give back to the community, the operator is also presenting the Boys & Girls Clubs of Lubbock with a \$5,000 technology grant to help modernize its computer lab. It also awarded a \$10,000 STEM grant to Bayless Elementary School. – **Comcast** services are now available to more than 1,100 additional homes and businesses across Allen County, Indiana. It also began construction in Kamas and Francis, Utah, to bring approximately 2,400 locations online, with completion expected by EOY.