

QUOTABLE

"On this 25th anniversary, tell the story. Tell your children where you were. Ask someone who remembers where they were. Remember the nearly 3,000 lives lost. Remember the courage of those who ran toward danger. And remember something else about September 11: in one of our darkest hours, Americans found strength in one another," NCTA President, CEO Cory Gardner reflecting on the anniversary of 9/11.

BRIDGES ERA BEGINS AT CABLELABS

Longtime **CableLabs** leader *Phil McKinney* is known for his "Killer Questions," but as he prepares to step aside from the role he's held since 2012, it's *Mark Bridges* who finds himself fielding a lot of killer questions.

Bridges moved from CableLabs' EVP and CTO to President/CTO last month and will take over as CEO come Jan. 1, when McKinney retires and moves to an advisory role. The two are spending the few months in between working in tandem as part of a careful transition period, one that's drawn guidance from many who have gone through leadership shifts.

In an interview on **CFX Download**, Bridges detailed what he deems a deliberate handoff, rather than a clean break. He and McKinney have held "transition meetings" with the CEOs of CableLabs' members and other industry officials, probing about aspects such as timetable, logistics and—most importantly—what members would like to see CableLabs address as it begins writing its next chapter under Bridges.

"It's given us a chance... to do a lot of these things jointly, so we can get folks used to working with me, and Phil is there to give me the historical perspective and guidance on things that he's heard and really work on developing those relationships over a four-month period," Bridges said, acknowledging that he's gotten a head start since he's been with CableLabs for 16 years. "I know a lot of these folks. The board knows me. A lot of the leadership within our members know me very well, but it's still good to have that transition and be able to work through this because it's a different role, different function."

That continuity extends to Bridges' strategy. His early priority is setting up an operating model that positions CableLabs to be "a good partner to our members" through a period of heavy industry change, building on three years of Tech Vision work already underway. Part of that means deepening the roughly five-year-old integration with **SCTE**, which could entail joint workforce development platforms and closer coordination on how training and micro-credentialing efforts feed into new technology pushes, including AI.

Bridges is also looking to shorten the time between CableLabs research and real-world deployment. "Can we decrease that window from concept to actually getting something into the field and into operations substantially?" Bridges pondered, citing active projects on reliability and convergence built around that goal. Standards and specification work isn't going away, of course, but the broader push—accelerated by AI and automation tools—is toward faster adoption without losing sight of longer-term technology bets.

As for whether industry consolidation and a shrinking CableLabs member roster could change the organization's funding model or influence, Bridges said no.

“We’re set up in a way that we’re fairly flexible in that sense, so as there’s changes in the organizations, we can absorb that,” he said, adding that the case for industry-wide alignment and scale is “probably more critical today than it’s been in years.” Additionally, Bridges confirmed CableLabs isn’t rebranding (for now), despite recurring chatter about the idea.

On the near- to mid-term technology front, Bridges painted convergence and in-home experiences as his main focus areas. He wants to see connectivity work seamlessly regardless of access technology or location, in addition to improving visibility into how WiFi and applications perform in homes. Longer term, Bridges flagged AI-driven network automation, advanced optics and emerging wireless standards like 6G as areas CableLabs is tracking.

Bridges will get a test run of that positioning later this month at SCTE TechExpo 26 in Atlanta (Sept. 29-Oct. 1). He’ll moderate a CTO panel featuring the likes of **Comcast** EVP/Chief Network Officer *Elad Nafshi*, **Charter** EVP, Technology Strategy & Information *Justin Colwell* and **Google Cloud** Global Market Lead, Telecommunications *Matt Anderson*. And with the show also welcoming programmers, hyperscalers like **Nvidia** and sessions on network vandalism, Bridges knows he’ll have an opportunity to meet with a dynamic crowd.

For now, however, Bridges will continue working through whatever killer question comes his way. If you’re wondering what the best “killer question” he’s received so far, tune in to the full interview with Bridges on [YouTube](#), [Spotify](#) or [Apple Podcasts](#).

FCC NOMINATION HEARING SET

The **FCC** inched closer toward filling one of its vacant seats. Senate Commerce Committee Chairman *Ted Cruz* (R-TX) set a nomination hearing for Thursday at 10:30am, and on the fight card is the latest nominee to become an **FCC** Commissioner *Danielle Thumann Severs*. The former **Crown Castle** Senior Attorney, Government Relations was [nominated](#) to the seat last month by President *Trump* for a five-year term starting July 1, 2024. She currently works as Senior Counsel to FCC Chairman *Brendan Carr*, specifically on matters before the Wireline, Public Safety and Homeland Security and Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureaus. Since her nomination, she’s garnered support from **NCTA**, **ACA Connects** and **NAB**. This week, a group of 12 industry organizations—signed by the **Fiber Broadband Association**, **NTCA**, **INCOMPAS** and others—wrote to Cruz and Ranking Member Sen. *Maria Cantwell* (D-WA) advocating for Thumann Severs to receive a full confirmation. “Throughout her tenure at the agency, she has been a leading architect of the durable, bipartisan work that makes for smart and lasting communications policy. She has demonstrated unique skill in shepherding agency proceeding and bringing together support from stakeholders across the political spectrum, including state and local officials of every stripe,” the letter read. If confirmed, one Commissioner seat would remain open.

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MCMAHON'S TWO CENTS ON BROADCAST CONSOLIDATION

Former **CBS News and Stations** chief *Wendy McMahon*, who resigned from the network in 2025 as **CBS** faced a lawsuit lodged by President *Trump* over the editing of "60 Minutes" segment featuring *Kamala Harris*, led a convo on local media at this week's **Status Summit**. During the talk, she chimed in on **Nexstar-Tegna** and broadcast consolidation in general. "I've seen the economics in local television news. It gets really frightening from an overall business model perspective. So we do need to challenge the ways we are currently working. Full stop. That is absolutely the case," opined McMahon, who is now a media advisor. "But consolidation to me is not a strategy. It's a P&L move. It's a balance sheet decision. It's ultimately going to give you scale and size in the short term, but it's not going to ensure relevance." Instead, McMahon is concerned that the industry's current consolidation quest is a distraction from "what really needs to be done, which is to rethink [and] reimagine local news." "When you're always consolidating and integrating and holding off on this partnership or not advancing because you're in the middle of a merger, more time passes. The viewer continues to evolve, the business model continues to evolve and nothing gets done." McMahon thinks it's important for broadcasters to "maintain the why" of what they do, which is to serve local communities, "but challenge the what and how."

COMCAST AND FASTLY ON THE EDGE

Comcast is partnering with edge cloud platform **Fastly** on a next-gen content and application delivery model that pushes live streaming content closer to the edge of the network. This new approach will power faster, lower latency experiences with improved video quality for Xfinity members by delivering content from locations closer to customers' homes. Other use cases, such as online gaming and emerging AI services, will also reap the benefits from this partnership. "The stakes will never be higher than during this upcoming fall football season, when a single streaming game can drive record network traffic. Delivering these moments flawlessly, and at increasing frequency and scale, demands that content providers, edge platforms, and network operators collaborate on future-ready innovation," said Comcast Chief Network Officer *Elad Nafshi*.

PLANETCAST ACQUIRES BROADCASTSTREAM

Media services and tech company **Planetcast** plans to acquire **BroadStream Solutions**, a provider of integrated playout, captioning, subtitling and broadcast workflow solutions. The terms of the deal were not disclosed. Broadcaststream will anchor Planetcast's new products division, enabling content owners and broadcasters to build and operate linear, streaming and hybrid media workflows more efficiently.

CARRIAGE

Sinclair's Tennis Channel launched as a Premium Subscription on **The Roku Channel** this week. The SVPD offers live coverage of more than 100 tournaments and thousands of matches per year for \$11.99/month.

PROGRAMMING

AMC Global Media green lit a new original series continuation of classic '90s heist thriller "Point Break." Set in the present day, decades after the events of the film, the show will focus on a new heist crew with ties to the Ex-Presidents gang. The first season of eight episodes will go into production early next year, in partnership with Studiocanal, and will air on **AMC** and **AMC+**. – The final season of **Starz** drama series "P-Valley" will debut on Dec. 4 pm. New episodes will be released weekly on Fridays on the Starz app.

PEOPLE

Telemundo named *JC Acosta* as Head of Telemundo Studios, reporting directly to Chief Content Officer *Javier Pons*. In the new role, Acosta will lead the studio's growth strategy and the development and production for scripted content for all linear and streaming platforms. Most recently, he was Head of Mediapro Studios and spent over 15 years at **Paramount**.