

ICYMI

Happy SCTE TechExpo26 week! Ahead of the expo, CFX Download spoke to SCTE CEO Maria Popo about what to expect and how the show is evolving to include content companies. Tune into the chat on [YouTube](#), [Apple](#) and [Spotify](#) now!

CT GROUP SAYS SPECTRUM SKIPPED NOTICE

Not everyone cheered Sept. 16's Spectrum Day, the day **Charter's** pricing and services made their debut in former **Cox** markets. The **Cox Cable Advisory Council of Manchester, CT**—a citizen group that acts as a liaison between the operator and customers in six Connecticut towns—has told the state's **Public Utilities Regulatory Authority** (PURA) that it wasn't provided the required 30-day advance notice of cable programming/rate changes.

Council Chair *Eric Prause* wrote that the group didn't learn about the changes until Sept. 16. It wants PURA to determine if the required notice was provided and, if not, direct Spectrum to provide proper 30-day notice to affected advisory councils and other parties entitled to notice. Existing Cox plans weren't changed, but Spectrum plans launched.

It's a reminder that Charter may be done with all the state-by-state wrangling to get the \$34.5 billion merger done, but there's still plenty of work to prove the promises made to regulators are being kept. Like other states, Connecticut worked out a settlement agreement to approve the merger. Charter agreed to maintain a list of compatible customer premise equipment and to file annual rate cards with PURA for each service area, providing copies to the Office of Consumer Counsel and Office of the Attorney General. When complaints such as the Manchester Council's come in, it serves as a test of a settlement's transparency provisions.

Charter has also made various infrastructure and employment commitments to states. In New York, it is supposed to file a report detailing all employees in the state, a list of 500 outdoor WiFi access points to be upgraded as part of merger conditions and a list of investments made under the capital investment program. The company said it has made "substantial progress" compiling the necessary info, but because the Cox deal didn't close until Aug. 19, it has needed a bit more time to submit the data. The **NY Public Service Commission** granted it a 2-week waiver until Oct. 2 for the filings.

In Connecticut, Prause filed an addendum after he contacted Spectrum customer service on Sept. 18 to inquire about downgrading his Cox TV Preferred plan to Cox TV Starter, which he said would've reduced his monthly price by \$65. Charter has said Cox customers can stay in their existing plans, but anyone changing plans would have to select the new Spectrum packages. Prause wrote that switching to a new Spectrum package would "require approximately \$60 in new equipment" and would require a \$13/monthly fee for the DVR functionality associated with his existing service.

Notably, Prause said a Spectrum customer service rep quoted him prices "significantly below" those contained in the pricing information distributed by Charter Sept. 16. That may sound like a good thing, but the council argues that it adds to the confusion of not having received proper notice.

"This creates uncertainty regarding what rates have actually been implemented, whether the Sept. 16 information accurately reflects the rates currently being offered to Connecticut subscribers and whether subscribers accepting the lower quoted rates could subsequently be moved to the higher rates identified in the Sept. 16 notice," Prause wrote.

Attorneys for **Day Pitney** told PURA that Charter is reviewing Prause's letters "regarding certain enhancements now available to Cox customers" and would file a response today.

For its part, it's marketed [Spectrum Day](#) as an opportunity for former Cox customers to get additional savings and enhancements on internet, mobile and TV packages, including the Spectrum One bundle that packs internet, Advanced WiFi and mobile for one price.

CFX didn't find any comparable formal complaints at this point in other ex-Cox markets, but many states don't make complaints public. An aside, someone needs to alert the City of New Orleans that its [utility/telecom complaints web-site](#) has been overtaken by spam bots!

CABLE LABS PUSHES DOCSIS 4.0 TO 3 GHZ

As bandwidth demand keeps climbing, **CableLabs** is giving operators another lever to pull on HFC networks they already have. The organization finalized a new optional annex to the DOCSIS 4.0 Physical Layer Specification that extends downstream operation to 3 GHz, a change that can enable up to 25 Gbps of aggregate network capacity without new plant builds. In a blog, CableLabs said the annex was published earlier this month and updates the Media Access Control, Operations Support System and Remote PHY specifications as well. The annex is also the first to define downstream requirements to 3 GHz for both Node/RFD equipment and cable modems. It emerged from a year of work by the DOCSIS 4.0 PHY Working Group, which brought together operators and vendors to model cable plant performance and assess whether components like amplifiers, taps and passives could handle higher frequencies. CableLabs also noted that the effort builds on DOCSIS 4.0's validated 10G-class interoperability and sets up further research into 6 GHz operation, targeting speeds up to 50 Gbps.

CHARTER, AMCGM HEADLINE TECHEXPO26

Operators and tech vendors will converge this week at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta for **SCTE TechExpo26**. Kicking off Tuesday, the trade show won't just showcase the latest innovations in connectivity but also how they're powering the streaming industry. Underscoring the focus on the convergence between connectivity and content is the participation of **AMC Global Media**, TechExpo's first-ever programmer co-sponsor. AMCGM CEO *Kristin Dolan* and CTO *Stephanie Mitchko* will speak at Tuesday's Headliners sessions. Expect to hear a bit about the programmer refocusing as a streaming business as well as how it's partnered with distributors to evolve its products. One of AMCGM's partners is fellow TechExpo co-host **Charter**, which currently bundles **AMC+** in its hybrid live TV-streaming video packages. It's no surprise then that Charter President/CEO *Chris Winfrey* and President, Product and Technology *Rich DiGeronimo* will also headline Tuesday morning's talks. Winfrey and DiGeronimo are hitting the Main Stage just a few weeks after Charter closed its

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\$34.5 billion **Cox** merger, so we'll be interested to hear a status update regarding how the operator is applying its convergence playbook in former Cox markets. Beyond talking convergence, Charter will showcase how its edge computing infrastructure, which it's partnering on with **Nvidia**, is advancing new AI applications. The operator's "very large booth," as SCTE CEO *Maria Popo* [described it](#) on **CFX Download**, will feature demos from partners **Cast AI**, **HP**, **World Wide Technology** and **Hydra Host**. The big-ticket item is an exhibit featuring a humanoid robot performing tasks that show how edge computing will enable next-gen physical AI. "These collaborations show what happens when AI moves from responding to prompts to acting in the physical world: the advantage shifts to whoever has computing power close to where people live and work," Charter said of the demos, which TechExpo attendees can check out at booth #B335. **AOI**, **Harmonic**, and **CommScope** are among the tech vendors back on the show floor this year, but there are also quite a few new exhibitors, including security company Alarm.com, vehicle telematics and fleet management solution Camera-Matics and fiber network mapping platform **Geograph**. Preceding the start of the trade show is the **Cable TV Pioneers** Diamond Jubilee Annual Banquet on Monday night, celebrating the org's 60th anniversary. You can take a stroll down memory lane in our special Cable TV Pioneers retrospective in **CFX's Top Ops 2026** magazine out Tuesday.

S&P GLOBAL DOWNGRADES CABLE ONE CREDIT RATING

Sustained competition and subpar broadband numbers were among the reasons **S&P Global** demoted all of its **Cable One** ratings by one level. That includes the operator's issuer credit rating, which went from BB- to B+. In S&P's view, competition from FWA providers will remain at an elevated level through at least 2028. The ratings firm also believes FTTH overbuilds will increase to 75% of the addressable cable market by 2028, up from 55-60% today. "We believe the company's competitive overlap with FTTH and hybrid fiber coaxial cable overbuilders has increased to over 60% from roughly 20% in 2021, which has reduced its EBITDA per passing (a metric used to evaluate competitive positioning that captures the ability of an operator to monetize its investments) to about \$250 from about \$330 over the same period," S&P wrote. The firm added that Cable One would remain on a negative CreditWatch, the list used when S&P thinks there's at least a 50% chance of a rating change (usually within 90 days, per its website). Cable One was first put on the list with negative implications in June. S&P said it's keeping it there due to weaker-than-expected performances at Cable One and **Mega Broadband Investments**, the company Cable One hopes to fully acquire later this week. "After the transaction closes, we could maintain our view that there is heightened risk of a downgrade if we believe Cable One will be unable to successfully refinance its upcoming maturities," the firm wrote. "... We will likely lower all our ratings on Cable One by one notch, including the ICR, when it closes its acquisition of MBI."

OOKLA PONDERES FUTURE OF FIBER M&A

In a period of consolidation, it's fair for **Ookla** to assume more mergers and acquisitions will arise, so it's using its Speedtest data to try and forecast the U.S. fiber market. In a recent [analysis](#), Ookla identified seven fiber providers that have been expanding their network footprint across multiple markets, judging by how each operator's user base evolved between 2021 and 2025 in the cities they operate in. Ookla screened roughly 500 ISPs that "match a number of characteristics displayed by the companies typically involved in fiber transactions," with **Allo Fiber**, **Gateway Fiber**, **LiveOak Fiber**, **Wire 3**, **Ripple Fiber**, **Intrepid Fiber** and **Ezee Fiber** making the list. Ookla covered its tracks by clarifying that the group isn't a list of companies that'll for sure be bought or make deals of their own, but they at least check the boxes for ones to watch. Plus, Ripple Fiber already has a pending transaction with **Verizon** partner **Eaton Fiber**, and other operators in Ookla's analysis have been active already. Ezee Fiber snatched up Texas-based **Tachus Fiber Internet** in July 2025. LiveOak Fiber scored a \$250 million investment from **J.P. Morgan** a year before that. And **IQ Fiber** absorbed Maryland-based **ThinkBig Networks** and the network assets of South Carolina's **Orangeburg Fiber** just last month.

CARRIAGE

The four **NHL** franchises that partnered with the league after the **FanDuel Sports Network** collapse will have regional distribution on **Fubo** this upcoming season. The defending Stanley Cup champions Carolina Hurricanes, Columbus Blue Jackets, St. Louis Blues and Minnesota Wild will have their new RSNs available on the **Disney**-owned vMVPD. It's a multiyear deal between Fubo and the NHL, which is embarking on a centralized local game production strategy as teams iron out their long-term RSN plans. Although Fubo carries **ESPN**, **ABC**, **NHL Network**

and most RSNs, it's been at odds with D.C.'s **Monumental Sports Network** since June 2024. It also still lacks a deal with one of the NHL's primary national rights holders: **Warner Bros. Discovery**. We'll see if that changes when WBD becomes part of **Paramount Skydance**. Puck drops Tuesday at 5pm with the Panthers vs Hurricanes on ESPN.

PEACOCK, NBC GET MLB POSTSEASON UNDERWAY

That'll do it for the 2026 **MLB** regular season. Fear not—the Playoffs get underway Tuesday, and it'll be **NBC Sports'** return to the postseason. NBSCS will carry four best-of-three series, with two games airing on **NBC/Peacock** and two on **Peacock/NBC Sports Network** each day. Phillies vs Braves get the Playoff celebrations started Tuesday on NBC/Peacock, followed by the White Sox vs Astros at 5pm on Peacock/NBCSN. Red Sox vs Yankees will meet in a postseason rivalry duel at 8pm on NBC/Peacock, before Cubs vs Padres round the day out on Peacock/NBCSN at 10pm.

In The WILD

A CFX feature highlighting industry doings spotted in the real world.

Kinetic's Milestone Week



Kinetic doesn't do things small when there's a milestone to celebrate. After adding more than 7,600 fiber locations in Texas' greater Sugar Land and Fort Bend County area over the past year—nearly a 25% network expansion that pushed the Uniti-owned provider beyond 40,000 homes passed—Kinetic rolled out a self-funded, five-day "Fast Forward: Sugar Land" celebration that touched all corners of the community.

The week opened Sept. 15 with Kinetic teaching its Digital Literacy Program at GiGi's Playhouse, a Down Syndrome achievement center. Kinetic walked the organization's Professionals group through smartphone basics, safe browsing and scam avoidance, a presentation the provider more



often gives to senior audiences. The next day, staff traded lesson plans for moving boxes and spent the afternoon sorting supplies at the Fort Bend Rainbow Room, which stocks emergency essentials for abused and neglected children and adults.

From there, Kinetic shifted into activation mode and conducted

merch give-aways on back-to-back nights, tapping into the long-beloved Texas tradition of high school football. The company was on hand at Fort Bend District games featuring Ridge Point vs Strake Jesuit and Austin vs Bush. It switched from the gridiron to

the baseball diamond a day later when CMO Cliff Dinwiddie threw the first pitch at a Sugar Land Space Cowboys game, giving Kinetic additional exposure through the Triple-A affiliate of the Houston Astros.

The company closed the week with a Sugar Land Fall Festival, giving out more swag and a grand prize for attendees.



– Noah Ziegler