

# Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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## Internet Essentials: Comcast Expands Eligibility to Low-Income Veterans

As concerned policymakers and business leaders work to close the digital divide, **Comcast** is aiming to do its part with another buildout of its Internet Essentials program. The next group to become eligible is low-income veterans, nearly 1mln of whom live within Comcast's footprint. The inclusion of veterans is the second largest expansion in the history of the program, which has been built out 11 times over the past 7 years. According to the **US Census Bureau's** 2016 American Community Survey, fewer than 70% of low-income veterans have internet access while only approximately 60% own a computer. Any veteran who gets state or federal assistance automatically qualifies to participate, Comcast senior evp and chief diversity officer *David L Cohen* told **CFX**. "We've had veterans on our radar screen for a number of years, particularly given the commitment of the company to veterans and all the work we do with veterans' non-profits around the country as part of our hiring program," Cohen said, referencing efforts such as its partnership with the **US Chamber of Commerce** Foundation's "Hiring Our Heroes" initiative. Veterans and students in the free lunch program (some of the original participants in Internet Essentials) don't necessarily run in the same circles, but Cohen explained that they rely on carefully cultivated relationships with partners to get the word out. "You can't just make an announcement and expect people to sign up," Cohen said. "You have to create a comprehensive web of non-profit partners, governmental partners that you can work together with to communicate to the chosen population their ability to participate in this program." Each of the program's expansions have had to wait until Comcast could build that network in order to ensure its success, Cohen said. In addition to the expansion of the program's eligible customers, Comcast updated its pre-existing offerings aimed at low-income students. Its Internet Essentials Learning Center has been redesigned to include new content from **Common Sense Media** and **ConnectSafely.org** to educate young Internet users in four content areas, including online safety. The move extends a partnership that began last year between Comcast and Pennsylvania Attorney General *Josh Shapiro* to educate seniors, parents and kids on how to stay safe online. The partnership expanded in May when members of

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Entry Deadline: August 24

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the Conference of Western Attorneys General signed on to assist in their individual states. Comcast also released an updated seven-year progress report for Internet Essentials Monday, showcasing a number of milestones for the program. Since the program began in 2011, Comcast reported that more than 6mIn low-income Americans in 1.5mIn households have been connected to the internet.

**One Down:** One of **beIN's** disputes is finally settled after the company reached an agreement with **Verizon Fios** to restore carriage of beIN Sports channels, marking an end to a battle that began earlier this month. beIN is still dark for **Xfinity** subs, who have been without the channels since midnight on July 31.

**Rising to the Top:** Only 38% of pay-TV subs reported being "very" or "completely" happy with their cable service offerings, according to a new survey from **Consumer Reports**. Meanwhile, **Google Fiber** got kudos for its technical support, customer service and equipment ease of use, and also ranked as second in internet service. It was the only company aside from top-rated provider **EPB** to get a favorable mark for value. Even with all of this, the service only received a "passable" rating for value. **Armstrong** made a strong showing in the survey, earning the second place TV service spot behind Google Fiber. The Tier 2 operator only operates in Kentucky, Maryland, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia, but garnered high ratings for technical support, reliability and customer support. **Verizon, DirecTV** and **DISH** ranked higher than **Cox, Comcast, Spectrum** and **Optimum**.

**Joining the Family:** **Arris'** newly-introduced VAP4641 wireless extender is the first product to receive Wi-Fi EasyMesh certification from the **Wi-Fi Alliance**. Wi-Fi EasyMesh allows multiple access points from different vendors to come together into one unified Wi-Fi network. They are compatible with existing home networks if the service provider gateway or access point are also WiFi EasyMesh compatible. The extender joins the HomeAssure product line and uses EasyMesh to extend Gigabit speeds across greater distances when paired with other EasyMesh devices. -- **Cox Business** grew Thursday with the division acquiring **RapidScale**, a managed and hybrid managed cloud services provider. Cox will combine its managed services portfolio with RapidScale's offerings, improving productivity and reducing IT expenditures for businesses.

**Open Source:** The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced a partnership with **The Linux Foundation** to launch the **Academy Software Foundation**. The foundation seeks to provide a

## Cablefax: What's Happening in September

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SEPTEMBER

### The Outlook for Wireless & 5G

As the industry gears up for Mobile World Congress Americas in Los Angeles, we'll take a look at the wireless opportunity and how the industry will capitalize on the rollout of super-fast 5G networks. What will 5G mean for the future of TV content and broadband competition? Who are the likely winners and losers as terrestrial wireless networks rival the performance of wired broadband? And what wireless technology innovations will drive the future?

### Multichannel Programming & Advertising

Cablefax will examine the demographic sea change that has transformed TV viewership in recent years, including how content creators and distributors are responding to a more multicultural customer base.

#### Awards

##### Overachievers Under 30

Deadline: September 7

Final Deadline: September 14

neutral forum for open source software developers in media industries to share resources and collaborate on technologies. Founding members include **Cisco**, **DreamWorks Animation**, **Google Cloud**, **Intel** and **Walt Disney Studios**. The ASWF was created after a two-year investigation by the Academy's technology council, finding that more than 80% of the industry uses open source software.

**Pretty Fly:** **HBO** will open an interactive experience in NYC on Friday. The two-day pop-up experience will celebrate "Random Acts of Flyness," a new late-night series from *Terence Nance* that explores patriarchy, white supremacy and sensuality. The experience will feature vignettes and installations designed to celebrate black culture and reflect themes and scenes represented in the series. Guest stars in the show include *Whoopi Goldberg*, *Adepero Oduye* and *Dominique Fishback*.

**A Wider View:** **comScore** is strengthening its measurement footprint through a partnership with **Inscape**, the largest single source provider of opt-in ACR TV viewing data in the US. ComScore hopes the addition of Inscape's opt-in smart TV viewing data will add another dimension to ad effectiveness studies that give clients the ability to see how their campaigns are performing.

**Expansion:** **Comcast Business** is investing more than \$1m in Manassas, VA, building out its fiber-based network to reach more than 400 additional businesses. The network aims to deliver up to 100Gbps of network capacity. The extensions, which will be both aerial and underground, will reach prime areas south of the Manassas National Battlefield and Route 66.

**Ratings:** The Season 2 premiere of "90 Day Fiance: Before the 90 Days" on Sunday, August 5 saw the highest-rated season premiere in franchise history for **TLC**, averaging a 1.9 W25-54 rating, a 1.6 W18-49 rating, a 1.3 W18-34 rating and 2.2m total viewers. -- The season premieres of "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" and "Very Cavallari" on Sunday, August 5 had **E!** ranking as the No 1 ad-supported cable network in primetime with P18-34. **KUWTK** delivered 2.2m total viewers, 1.4m P18-49 and 785K P18-34. It also earned more than 586K interactions across **Twitter**, **Facebook** and **Instagram**. *Very Cavallari* saw season highs with 910K total viewers, 661K P18-49 and 372K P18-34.

**Programming:** **Nat Geo** announced seven-time Emmy-nominated documentary "Jane" is now available for free for two weeks on the Nat Geo TV website. The doc uses previously unseen footage to tell the story of *Jane Goodall's* early explorations and research in Tanzania. -- **UPtv** will syndicate "Fresh Off the Boat," the first network sitcom starring Asian Americans to reach syndication. The network will kick off its run of the show with a Labor Day Marathon Sept 1-2 from 7pm-3am and Sept 3 7pm-11pm. -- In a move that will elate trivia fans, **Hulu** added "Jeopardy!" to its catalog. The show has been in syndication for 35 years but made its streaming debut on Monday. Hulu kicked off the premiere with curated collections of some of the most popular events, including a "Tournament of Champions" and "Battle of the Decades." -- **History** greenlit a second season of its hit drama series "Nightfall." The network announced "Star Wars" *Mark Hamill* will join the cast, and the show will now be run and executive produced by *Aaron Helbing* ("The Flash," "Spartacus: War of the Damned"). -- **IFC** is celebrating the "52nd season" (really Season 3) of "Documentary Now!" with a special musical episode. The episode will be inspired by 1970 documentary "Original Cast Album: Company," which follows the overnight cast recording of *Stephen Sondheim's* musical. The first of seven new episodes will premiere on February 20 at 10pm.

**People:** **Netflix** CFO *David Wells* will step down after helping the company choose his replacement. Wells joined Netflix in 2004, acting as vp of financial planning and analysis before being named CFO in 2010. Wells has been known for creating change outside of Netflix's US business as well, spending two years based in the Netherlands building up its European operations. He said in a statement that his next chapter will "focus more on philanthropy." Wells will assist with the search for his successor, and that process will consider both internal and external candidates. -- *Doug Macdonald* is joining **605** as the company's evp of sales, reporting to 605 pres/co-founder *Ben Tatta*. Macdonald last served as svp of digital solutions at omnichannel data provider **V12 Data** and has also acted as the vp of business development at **Deep Root Analytics**. -- **fuboTV** appointed *Erik Gerson* and *David Yoon* to newly-created positions of svp, engagement and svp, design, respectively. -- Former **Microsoft** and **Ericsson** exec *Pete Mihan* is now vp, sales for **Zone TV Studio**, an AI-powered service focused on content discovery, channel curation and video delivery.