

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Storm Surge: Operators Hunker Down Ahead of Hurricane Ian

This hurricane season hasn't been kind to the southern U.S., and operators with a presence in Florida, Georgia and the surrounding areas are doing their best to prepare for Hurricane Ian.

Comcast has staged hundreds of emergency generators and fuel trucks while also bringing in additional technical and network restoration teams that can be deployed as soon as the storm's path becomes clear. In the event the weather becomes too severe, the operator may begin sending text alerts to customers with information about any service disruptions or with tips for restoring their services.

Cox delivers storm-related updates to its customers through its app and online, but it is also in the process of reaching out to customers in the storm's path proactively to let them know how it is preparing to respond. "We're also staging technicians and equipment to be ready to move quickly if disruptions occur," Cox said in a statement. **Mediacom** held a team call Monday afternoon to bring corporate staff up to speed on all of its plans, and it has been reaching out to local government leaders in the communities within its footprint that could be impacted to ensure those entities have contact information and anything else they need to track any repairs in the aftermath of the storm.

WOW! told **Cablefax** it has been taking multiple steps throughout the year to prepare its southern markets for the

anticipated increase in hurricane activity, testing the resiliency of the network and updating crisis and business continuity plans as needed. "Equipment and hurricane response teams in the potentially affected areas have been activated and are prepared to respond to any reported outages as safely and quickly as possible alongside local emergency services," WOW! said in a statement. "To ensure employee safety, WOW! has internal processes in place to communicate with employees including real-time updates to the company's intranet."

Hurricane Ian's landfall will come less than two weeks after Hurricane Fiona devastated Puerto Rico with many of the island's residents still left without power. According to the **FCC's** Monday Communications Status Report for areas impacted by Hurricane Fiona, 17.7% of cell sites within that footprint are still out of service. Cable and wireline companies reported 503,664 subscribers that have lost telephone, television and/or internet services. **FEMA** has approved nearly \$40 million in funding for disbursement to survivors through its Other Needs Assistance program, one that offers financial help after a disaster to cover expenses like transportation, childcare and medical care that aren't covered by insurance.

Wireless companies are also stepping in to make a difference in recovery efforts. **Verizon** has committed \$100,000 to the **American Red Cross** to aid disaster relief efforts on the island. It has also made it easy for subscribers to make donations to the American Red Cross, **Americares** and the **Salvation Army National Corporation** via text. **T-Mobile's**

Guide to Your Online Cablefax Daily Issues

The screenshot shows the Cablefax website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'LOGIN', 'SUBSCRIBE', and 'SEARCH' buttons. Below that, the main header reads 'THE DAILY AWARDS & EVENTS THE MAGAZINE SPECIAL REPORTS THE LISTS JOBS'. The main content area is titled 'The Daily' and includes a date 'Wednesday-September 15, 2021'. On the left, there's a sidebar with a list of headlines and a 'PDF' button. The main article is titled 'Still Assisting: Charter Looks to Aid Community Centers, Job Training' and features a photo of a Charter building. A 'Featured in this Issue' section lists various companies like Amazon, AMC, Apple, etc.

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network on the island was impacted, but many sites are now operating as usual. The primary problem is Puerto Rico's widespread power outage. The provider is matching employee donations 2:1 to the American Red Cross as well. **UScellular** is allowing its customers to make outbound calls to Puerto Rico with no international dialing rates through the end of October. Postpaid customers will have those charges automatically waived while prepaid customers whose plans allow for international dialing can receive credits for applicable calls by calling customer service.

ALASKA WINS MILLIONS FROM RECONNECT

USDA is sending major money up to Alaska to ensure internet no longer moves at a glacial pace for the state's remote populations. Two providers serving Alaska's North Slope and southeastern regions have received a total of \$63 million from USDA's ReConnect Program grants to improve access and affordability. **Alaska Telephone Company** is taking home a whopping \$33 million for the deployment of a fiber-to-the-premises network that, when finished, will connect 221 people and five businesses across the Haines Borough, the Hoonah Angoon Census Area and the Skagway Municipality. Alaska Telephone will also implement the **FCC's** Lifeline Program in Skagway and the Chilkat Alaska Native Village areas. **Arctic Slope Telephone** has been awarded \$30.9 million for the deployment of its own fiber-to-the-premises network, one that will have nearly double the connections to that being built by Alaska Telephone. Upon completion, the Arctic Slope network will connect 476 people, 15 businesses and a public school in the North Slope Borough. The Arctic Slope Telephone As-

sociation Cooperative will also offer the FCC's Affordable Connectivity and Lifeline programs.

WOW! DETAILS GREEN EFFORTS

WOW! released its 2022 Sustainability Report Monday, a first of its kind for the company, and it offered standout stats on how the company has shifted practices to become greener. The rise in self-installs during the COVID-19 pandemic has meant huge energy savings for WOW!'s vehicle fleet. In 2021, total items shipped to households increased by more than 200% from 2020. That meant fewer miles driven for WOW!'s vehicles and reduced maintenance expenses. On the real estate front, WOW! decreased its footprint by 59% in 2021. According to calculations provided by University of California-Berkeley research initiative CoolClimate, that reduction led to a 26.4% reduction in WOW!'s carbon dioxide emissions for the year. At the same time, its headend facilities and data centers embraced new battery technologies that have made them more energy efficient. The report also offered details on WOW!'s DEI practices, employee benefits, community outreach and more.

JOIN THE GREAT AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Great American Media's free DTC app **Great American Community** launched in the U.S. on Monday. It's available on **Apple TV**, iOS and Android Mobile by searching for "GAcommunity," and the app comes with 16 original short-form series including "Bits of Joy with Danica McKellar" and "Giving & Caring with Larissa Wohl." Five new episodes of certain series will be released daily throughout the year alongside behind-the-scenes content. More devices where the app is available will be revealed this week.

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CARRIAGE

RSN streamer **Bally Sports+** celebrated its launch today, and it can now be found on **Roku**. Users can download the Bally Sports+ app to subscribe to the service and watch live programming. Those who have a pay TV service can authenticate within the app to access content. The service goes for \$19.99/month or \$189.99/year and is also accessible on **Amazon Fire TV**, **Apple TV**, mobile devices and [BallySports.com](https://www.ballysports.com). – The **Spectrum TV** app is now available on **Comcast XClass TV**, letting customers view live and on-demand content on the affordable TV offering. Subscribers will be auto-authenticated when their TV is linked with their Spectrum home network, and they can also access Spectrum's cloud DVR. XClass TVs come in 50- or 43-inch screen sizes and come with 4K UHD resolution. They can be purchased at Walmart stores or online. – The combined **QVC+** and **HSN+** platform launched on Samsung Smart TVs last week. It has five total linear channels—**QVC**, **QVC2**, **QVC3**, **HSN** and **HSN2**—and comes with live, on-demand, streaming-only and Spanish-language content. – Local news OTT service **NewsON** agreed to a licensing deal with **CBS News and Stations** to add its O&O TV stations. NewsON will add 13 local CBS stations today, which include top markets such as New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Philadelphia. Customers can watch live newscasts, CBS News Local FAST channels and story clips from each station. – **Allen Media Group's** free streamer **Local Now** is partnering with **Heart Television's** Very Local digital service to add 27 news channels to its lineup. The FAST channels serve 26 U.S. media markets across 39 states and feature curated local content as well as original series centered on food, travel, dating and true crime. Hearst's Very Local programming will also be available on **TheGrio's** streaming app as part of the deal.

RING THAT BELL

It's been just under a month since **Xperi's** board [gave the thumbs up](#) on the separation of its product business from its IP licensing divisions, and the separated entity will celebrate accordingly at the New York Stock Exchange. Xperi CEO *Jon Kirchner* will ring the NYSE opening bell Oct. 3 alongside other executives to mark the first day of trading under the "XPER" ticker. The IP licensing business will now be called **Adeia**, and CEO *Paul Davis* will ring the closing bell at the Nasdaq MarketSite that same day to commemorate its own debut.

DOING GOOD

The Univision Foundation, **TelevisaUnivision's** nonprofit dedicated to empowering those in the Latino community, donated \$10,000 each to 12 organizations as the company celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month. The foundation is also allowing viewers to donate to one or multiple organizations on the [Univision website](#). The donations come on the heels of the network's annual Univisionarios Gala that was held Thursday in D.C., highlighting Hispanic trailblazers across several fields of work. On hand to celebrate with TelevisaUnivision CEO *Wade Davis* was U.S. Secretary of Education *Miguel Cardona* and **Univision News** Lead Anchor *Teresa Rodriguez*.

VERIZON ULTRA WIDEBAND IN PHILLY, DC

Verizon is now offering broadband service through its 5G Ultra Wideband service to homes and businesses in parts of Philadelphia; Washington, D.C; the Delaware Shore and Hampton Roads, Virginia. Standalone 5G Home Internet service starts at \$50/month with Auto Pay.

T-MOBILE SECURES WIFI FOR BUSINESS SUBS

T-Mobile launched a Secure Wi-Fi mobile app for its business customers Friday, offering them greater security on the go. The app, developed by **Mobilize**, acts as a SmartVPN to protect customer data when they're connecting to public networks. It also works to enhance the data experience on those networks, using T-Mobile's network to minimize disruptions when the public network is performing badly or is handling a high volume of traffic. The Secure Wi-Fi app for iOS and Android is free with select T-Mobile for Business plans and can be used for \$1.99/month per user on non-qualifying business plans.

PROGRAMMING

"Alaska: The Last Frontier" returns for its 11th season starting Oct. 9 at 9pm on **Discovery Channel**. – The new chainsaw carving competition program "A Cut Above" premieres Sunday at 10pm on **Discovery Channel**. Each episode will feature carvers hoping to beat the clock and create pieces of art out of wood in hopes of winning a cash prize at the end of the 12-week competition. – **AMC+** original "Gangs of London" will return for its second season on Nov. 17 with two episodes. Following the premiere, one episode of the drama will debut each Thursday on the streamer. – The second season of **HBO** hit "The White Lotus" will debut Oct. 30 at 9pm on HBO and will be available to stream on **HBO Max**.

A CRYPTO MVNO?

Nova Labs and **T-Mobile** made a multi-year agreement ahead of Nova's plans to launch the first crypto-powered mobile service. Called **Helium Mobile**, the platform would let subscribers earn crypto rewards for using the network. The deal with T-Mobile enables access to its 5G network on top of the local Helium 5G network. Helium subscribers can earn mobile tokens for sharing data regarding coverage quality which helps identify dead-spot locations. So far, Helium has more than 2,500 active 5G hotspots in 889 U.S. cities.

PEOPLE

Julia Franz stepped down as **Fox Entertainment** Head of Comedy Development after three years. Former SVP, Comedy Development for **20th Television** *Cheryl Dolins* will fill in as SVP, Comedy Programming and Development, where her duties include managing the development and production of the company's comedy programming slate. Franz will remain with Fox Entertainment in a consulting role, serving as the network and studio creative for "Animal Control" and "Welcome to Flatch." Dolins previously led the development of shows such as **Hulu's** "Only Murders in the Building" and **ABC's** "The Wonder Years."