

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Partner Up: AT&T Fiber Slowing as JV Rumors Abound

AT&T's fiber train keeps rolling on, recording 338,000 **AT&T Fiber** net adds in 3Q22. That growth has come both from gaining share within its fiber footprint and conversions of IP broadband internet subscribers to the fiber product. Unfortunately, the business slowed significantly in its building of new passings, only adding 500,000 more passings in the quarter. That has some investors wondering whether the company can meet the ambitious benchmarks it has set for its fiber buildout.

"We had been expecting them to pass ~1MM per quarter this year, and the summer months usually see a higher pace than 1Q and 4Q," **New Street Research** said in its reactions. "At this rate they will be lucky to hit the low end of their fiber deployment target of 304MM (we started the year expecting them to add 4.5MM)."

Reports emerged Wednesday that AT&T is exploring the idea of creating a jv with an infrastructure investment firm or another partner that would be willing to offer up funding to continue the buildout of AT&T's fiber network. **MoffettNathanson** believes those headlines could have some truth to them, particularly as the economic environment continues to become more challenging for businesses and consumers by the day.

"AT&T's fiber deployment plans were created at a time when a 6% cost of capital wasn't an unreasonable starting point. Today, [weighted average costs of capital] are sharply higher," **MoffettNathanson** said in a note. "With this as context, one

can't be surprised to hear that AT&T is reportedly considering partnerships to help offload the heavy burden of capital spending for their fiber deployment plan."

AT&T CEO *John Stankey* wouldn't comment on the rumors during the company's 3Q22 earnings call, but he did take time to elaborate on what the team would consider before doing fiber builds outside of the company's immediate footprint.

"Number one, can we go in and be the first fiber provider in that area? Two, do we believe it's a market where the brand is going to perform, and we'll get the rate and pace of penetration that we need to make an economic return on it? Three, can we build because of the dynamics around a particular municipality or area cost effectively and quickly with a relatively low overhead around that and get an operating scale in that geography that warrants the fixed cost infrastructure start-up?" Stankey said.

He also noted that whether or not there could be some interplay in terms of having the asset benefit AT&T's wireless business could be a factor to any builds outside of the existing footprint. Fixed wireless is a tool within AT&T's portfolio that it could use to deploy broadband in certain communities, and Verizon and T-Mobile are finding success with the product. And while Stankey isn't wholly against the idea, he's still far from fully embracing fixed wireless.

"I'd rather take one million new fiber customers a year than one million new fixed wireless customers a quarter. The value equation of those one million fiber customers is a far superior

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The screenshot shows the Cablefax Daily website. At the top, there are navigation links for 'THE DAILY', 'AWARDS & EVENTS', 'THE MAGAZINE', 'SPECIAL REPORTS', 'THE LISTS', and 'JOBS'. A search bar is also present. The main content area features a 'Featured in this Issue' section with a list of companies including Amazon, AMC, AMC Networks, Apple, BBC America, BET, BET Studios, Charter, Comcast, Cox Communications, Disney, DOJ, Estrella TV, Evoca, Facebook, Fox Corp, Fox Deportes, Fox Nation, FTC, Galavision, Goldman Sachs, Google, Hisense, Hotwire Communications, Hulu, IFC, Locast, Microsoft, MSNBC, NAB, NBC, NBC News, NBCUniversal, Netflix, NFLRedZone, Pantaya, Peacock, SCTE, Show, Sony Cine, SundanceTV, Telemundo, Tubi, UniMás, Univision, ViacomCBS, WE tv, and YouTube. Below this is a 'SHOW FEATURED' section with a headline: 'Still Assisting: Charter Looks to Aid Community Centers, Job Training'. The left sidebar contains a 'The Daily' section for Wednesday-September 15, 2021, with a 'FULL ARCHIVES' link and a 'PDF' icon. Callouts A through E point to the Login/Subscribe/Search bar, the Featured in this Issue list, the issue headline, the PDF icon, and the Full Archives link, respectively.

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value equation for the long haul for our shareholders,” Stankey said. “Fixed wireless will be that answer in a small number of geographies and applications and homes. It will not be to our entire nationwide base.”

Revenues from continuing operations in the third quarter totaled \$30 billion, down 4.1% YOY due to the separation of DirecTV back in July 2021. Excluding that, operating revenues were up 3.1% from \$29.1 billion in 3Q21. Of course, a significant portion of AT&T’s business is its share in the wireless market. 3Q22 brought 708,000 postpaid net adds with postpaid churn rising slightly to 1.01% from 0.92% one year ago. Mobility revenues were up 6% YOY to \$20.3 billion thanks to higher service and equipment revenues.

FCC SAYS NO TO BDC CONFIDENTIALITY

The **FCC**’s Wireline Competition Bureau has denied requests from a number of providers to make confidential the fixed broadband availability data they have submitted for the agency’s Broadband Data Collection. Some like **Firstlight Fiber** requested that subscription data be treated confidentially, which the FCC will allow, but it also asked that its methodology for finding its fixed broadband coverage be kept under wraps. The bureau has denied that request and similar asks from other providers, including **Lumen** and **ClearCom**, noting that the availability of the methodologies used by each provider will play a huge role in ensuring that the Broadband Data Collection’s challenge process is effective. “The aim of the BDC is not only to provide this information to the Commission, but also to make such data available to the public for purposes of validating and challenging the accuracy of service providers’ submissions,” Bureau Chief **Kirk Burgee** said in a Thursday filing. His letter said the providers failed to explain why their situations differ from their competitors, nor how disclosure of the information will place them at a competitive disadvantage to rivals whose information also is being publicly disclosed.

STARRY’S CAPITAL PROBLEMS CRASHING DOWN

Starry has hit a wall when it comes to its money problems, forcing it to implement cost-cutting measures that include its withdrawal from the **FCC**’s RDOF program. It originally won \$268.9 million to cover more than 108,000 locations across nine states through the Commission’s Phase I auction. The company has also cut approximately 50% of its workforce, implemented a freeze on hiring and non-essential expenditures and is focusing on growing penetration in its existing footprint rather than expanding its fixed wireless access network. “This is an extremely difficult economic climate and capital environment, and at present we don’t have the capital to fund our rapid growth,” Starry CEO **Chet Kanojia** said in

a statement. “Because of that, we’re focusing our energies on our core business: serving multi-tenant buildings in our existing dense urban markets.” The provider is withdrawing its FY22 guidance, but did offer a glimpse into its 3Q22 earnings. Starry now counts 91,297 customer relationships and has increased its number of homes serviceable to 5.96 million. Net additions in the quarter were a record 10,347. Starry Connect, its digital equity program, now reaches more than 87,000 units of public and affordable housing. Full financial results for 3Q22 will be released on Nov. 2.

Cablefax Executive Round Up

We asked honorees on **Cablefax: The Magazine’s Pride List for their favorite media milestone moment in LGBTQ+ history.**



Blake Callaway

General Manager, IFC, Sundance TV and BBC America
AMC Networks

“Each moment or milestone builds on the past, and opens doors for the future, so I will focus on a recent one. I don’t think you can underestimate the importance of after 240+ years, we have a very visible and inspiring US Cabinet Secretary. Pete Buttigieg as the US Secretary of Transportation is a role model and a media figure who is poised for a bigger moment.”



Eric Dziedzic

VP, Diversity and Inclusion
Charter Communications

“There are so many it is difficult to narrow it down to just one. I think back on Billy Crystal’s pioneering character on ‘Soap’ – a real character with texture, and a life. Or Ellen’s coming out on her sitcom – a beloved character being her authentic self and the show’s portrayal of the fear of coming out. Or TV’s first gay kiss on ‘Will and Grace.’ These all had a huge impact on the visibility of the LG-BTQ+ community. Perhaps my favorite milestone isn’t just one moment but rather the more recent portrayal of LGBTQ+ people as fully dimensional main characters, highlighting our community in all its wonderful diversity in shows like ‘Special,’ ‘Pose’ or ‘Love, Victor.’ In times like these, it is more important than ever to show the world that the LGBTQ+ community exists in every dimension of life – in every color, gender, ability and age. We’re here, we always have been... get used to it.”



Brooke Sopelsa

NBC Out Editorial Director
NBC News Digital

“This is a bit of an obscure example – and I don’t know if it quite counts as a milestone – but one of my favorite TV segments dates back to 2011, when MSNBC’s Rachel Maddow paid a beautiful tribute to Frank Kameny, widely considered the father of the gay rights movement, following Kameny’s death that year. When I first watched that segment, I couldn’t help wonder what Kameny would have thought back in 1957, when he was fired from his U.S. government job due to his sexuality, or in 1965, when he was picketing for basic human rights for gays and lesbian, if he could look into the future and see an out lesbian with her own primetime cable news program eulogizing his contributions toward LGBTQ equality for a nationwide audience to see. While we still have further to go, that segment really made me reflect on how far we’ve come as a country on LGBTQ rights in just a half century.”

DIRECTV SIGNALSAVER

DirectTV is now allowing customers with an internet-connected set-top box to switch from satellite to streaming in the event of connectivity interruptions. Called SignalSaver, the feature seeks to prevent disruptions to the satellite signal in case a storm or other external event occurs. A pop-up will appear after the signal is interrupted, asking the viewer if they want to switch to the connected set-top box. It comes at no additional charge to satellite customers and can be used for 83 national networks including **CNN**, **ESPN**, **Fox News** and **The Weather Channel**.

LIGA MX BRINGS COMMERCIAL RIGHTS TO U.S.

To help brands engage more with U.S. Hispanic viewers, **TelevisaUnivision** expanded its partnership with **Liga MX** to bring the league's commercial rights to market in the U.S. Using IP-driven media, experiential, retail activations and more, TelevisaUnivision will allow brands to grow their presence among fans. Its U.S. networks have been the broadcast home for Liga MX for over 30 years and holds the rights to 13 clubs in the league.

STREAMING ON TOP AGAIN

Streaming remained the most-watched TV format for the month of September as overall TV viewing saw a 2.4% rise, according to **Nielsen's** monthly TV and streaming report "The Gauge." That's partially due to a return of football—fueling a 222% month-over-month increase in sports viewing—and other fall programming, but 36.9% of viewers P2+ are utilizing streamers to watch TV compared to 33.8% watching via cable. Of those streaming services, 8% used **YouTube** or **YouTube TV**, 7.3% watched on **Netflix** and **Hulu**, **Prime Video** and **Disney+** followed at 3.8%, 2.9% and 1.9%, respectively. **HBO Max** garnered 1.3% of streaming viewership. Making its debut in The Gauge was **Paramount's** FAST service **Pluto TV**, which earned a 1% share of the pie. In the broadcast TV category, usage went up 12.4% in September to 24.2%.

NEW LOOK FOR NECTA

NECTA, the trade association representing TV and internet providers across Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont, is getting a new name and is launching a new website, logo and tagline as it undergoes a rebrand. The New England Cable Television Association will now be called the New England Connectivity and Telecommunications Association and is focusing on its goal of "Connecting New England." Its new logo features a blue circle with "NECTA" in white letters across the center. It's the association's first rebrand since 2004.

AT THE COMMISSION

The **FCC** launched a pilot program Thursday designed to make it easier for Tribal libraries to apply for broadband funding through E-Rate. Through the program, Tribal schools and libraries could receive support with the goal of finding affordable broadband internet service for those institutions. The pilot will initially target 20 Tribal libraries that are either new to the program or have expressed challenges applying in the past. It will also offer one-on-one assistance. Applications to participate are due Nov. 18.

CARRIAGE

Sony Pictures Television FAST channel **Sony KAL Hindi** launched on **Xumo** in the U.S. The network, which features dramas and comedies directly from India, is also available on the **TCL Channel**, **Sling TV**, **LG Channels** and **Plex** with more platforms to come before the end of the year.

LIBERTY, PLUME LAUNCH SERVICE IN PUERTO RICO

To bring new digital services to Puerto Rico, **Liberty Latin America** is partnering with **Plume** to launch the "WOWfi powered by Plume HomePass" service to the island. WOWfi's features include adaptive WiFi to monitor connection disruptions, access controls, AI-powered cybersecurity and whole-home motion awareness. The launch also entails Plume's smart home services suite leveraged by OpenSync, allowing customers to upgrade their service instantaneously and at a large scale.

DOING GOOD

As many are still grappling with the aftermath of Hurricane Ian, **Charter** is donating \$300,000 to the Florida Disaster Fund and is making its nearly 65,000 WiFi access points in Florida available at no cost through Oct. 31. A map of the access points can be found [here](#).

ON THE CIRCUIT

Paramount is hosting the Paramount Global Summit on Disability on Oct. 31. The virtual event will center around three fireside chats featuring performers, company leaders and philanthropic figures to encourage more disability inclusion in media and entertainment. – Next year's **NAB Show New York** will be held Oct. 25-26. This year's event saw its preliminary registered attendance reach 9,756, with 245 exhibitors at the Javits Center.

PROGRAMMING

Season 2 of **AMC+'s** "Gangs of London" will premiere Nov. 17 with the first two episodes. Following that, one episode will be released on Thursdays. – *Alexa* and *Carlos PenaVega* signed a multi-picture overall deal with **Hallmark Media**. The two have recently starred in "Love in the Limelight" and "Picture Perfect Mysteries" for **Hallmark Movies & Mysteries**. – The nightly entertainment news show "E! News" is returning Nov. 14 at 11:30pm on **E!**. *Adrienne Bailon-Houghton* and *Justin Sylvester* will co-host the program. – **Starz** renewed "P-Valley" for a 10-episode third season. – **ESPN** unveiled a new alternate telecast of select games featuring *Stephen A. Smith*. "NBA in Stephen A's World" will debut Oct. 26 at 7:30pm during the Brooklyn Nets vs Milwaukee Bucks contest and be available on **ESPN2** and **ESPN+**.

PEOPLE

Nickelodeon picked *Makeda Mays Green* as SVP, Cultural and Consumer Insights and *Andrea Strauss* to SVP, Content and Brand Insights. Green will continue to oversee the leadership and landscape studies on cultural topics for kids and families, as well as the research that helps Nickelodeon, **Nick Jr.** and **Noggin's** digital strategies. Strauss, who was previously on the Strategic Services Group at **Grey Advertising**, will keep her role of managing the Brand, Consumer Insights and Content Insights teams and add oversight of the West Coast Insights group.

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

Boys Become Men In 'The Cave of Adullam'

The Cave of Adullam isn't your typical martial arts studio. It labels itself as a transformational training academy, and while it does teach self-defense and other means of discipline, it emphasizes emotional well-being above all. "The Cave of Adullam" (premiered Sunday on **ESPN** and available to stream on **ESPN+**) follows the journey of four young men in Detroit who attend The Cave run by *Jason Wilson*. When Wilson first started The Cave, it was to teach discipline to young men, but that quickly changed when he realized kids need more than discipline—they need love. Wilson has a calm demeanor throughout the documentary as he teaches life lessons, even when reading weekly progress assessments that teachers send to him. When a kid receives lackluster scores in the three categories—academic, behavior and focus—he maintains that tranquil manner and turns it into a lesson. Sometimes that involves dodging a foam stick (as a metaphor for avoiding temptations to not pay attention in class) or balancing a ball on top of a foam stick to improve focus. Wilson told **CFX** he enjoys seeing the kids apply The Cave's principles to their lives instead of having a negative reaction to a situation. While those lessons are valuable, the documentary has sparked an increase in interest in The Cave. "The Cave of Adullam' debuting on ESPN is exciting, yet sobering because we already receive a plethora of calls and emails asking us to scale The Cave nationwide," Wilson said. "We currently have over 500 boys on our waitlist. Our nonprofit is productive but small—hopefully we soon will have the resources to hire people needed to meet the demand." The development of the documentary flowed naturally according to Wilson, who said Director *Laura Checkoway* "just let life unfold." But that doesn't mean everything was smooth sailing. "We finished filming just three months prior to the pandemic. Thankfully one of the executive producers, *Helen Sugland*, decided it was best for us to wrap up filming in December 2019, instead of waiting until 2020." – *Noah Ziegler*

REVIEWS

"Burning Questions: Covering Climate Now," premiere, 8pm ET, **World Channel**. Various researchers have created multiple personas of Americans on the issue of climate change. A project at Yale found 6 categories, including "alarmed," people who are convinced global warming is human-caused and urgent. Yet they don't know what to do about it. The "cautious" aren't sure climate change is occurring or serious. "Concerned" members consider climate change real, though they believe it's a problem for the distant future, not today. There's a "disengaged" group and a "doubtful" contingent, who don't see it as a serious risk. Last, there is the "dismissive" group. Perhaps this fast-moving short doc from *AI Roker* will change the minds of some in these groups, most notably in the cautious and concerned cadres. Indeed, the content is extensive and alarming. On the other hand, the film's fast pace vast coverage at times block its effectiveness. Many stories, centering on journalists covering the climate change beat, fail to provide much depth. On the other hand, if viewers want an overview of climate change topics and how global journalists are covering them, this is an excellent resource. – "The Bad Sisters," streaming, **Apple TV**. No doubt similarities with **HBO's** "Big Little Lies" exist here. Still, *Sharon Horgan's* disparate group of plotting sisters is a dark, enjoyable romp. – *Seth Arenstein*

BASIC CABLE		
P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*		
(10/10/22-10/16/22)		
MON-SUN	MC	MC
	US	US AA
	AA%	(000)
ESPN	1.199	3742
FNC	0.689	2150
FS1	0.599	1871
TBSC	0.482	1505
MSNBC	0.425	1328
HGTV	0.255	795
HALL	0.252	786
TLC	0.216	675
CNN	0.206	643
FOOD	0.189	591
DISC	0.187	585
INSP	0.187	585
USA	0.177	554
HIST	0.176	549
TVLAND	0.156	487
BRAVO	0.133	415
ID	0.123	384
A&E	0.121	378
AMC	0.119	372
LIFE	0.112	348
HMM	0.110	342
WETV	0.109	340
GSN	0.106	332
TNT	0.106	331
REELZ	0.106	330
FRFM	0.096	299
BET	0.095	298
FX	0.095	297
OXY	0.083	259
TRAVEL	0.080	249
PRMNT	0.079	247
NATGEO	0.078	244
SYFY	0.076	237
TUDN	0.076	237
COM	0.073	228

*P2+ L+SD rankers are based on national Nielsen numbers, not coverage.



Congratulations to all the Honorees!

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