

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

On the Battlefield: Cybersecurity is a Team Sport

A lot of issues could be impacted by the November elections, but one topic that doesn't seem to be swayed much by partisan politics is cybersecurity.

"The difference is really in the rate in which this regulatory regime will emerge," **Comcast** VP, Policy Counsel *Rudy Brioché* said during a webinar Tuesday on cybersecurity trends. "For the past decade or so, we've been on this slow walk toward increased attention, both from consumers and from governments of all levels, internationally... To be perfectly honest, we're only one major incident away from regulation from either party becoming a major issue."

Some have feared that incident could stem from the Russia-Ukraine conflict, with the White House warning companies in March that Russia could be planning to launch cyberattacks against critical U.S. infrastructure. "Fortunately, there hasn't been a lot of significant events related to the geopolitical events around the world, but we still need to stay hyper vigilant," said *Joe Viens*, Senior Director of Government Affairs for **Charter**. "And the United States and the world are short hundreds of thousands of cybersecurity professionals, so we have to use our critical resources wisely."

Viens gave a plug to the **National Council of ISACs**, a coordinating body of 27 **Information Sharing and Analysis Centers** (ISACs) designed to maximize the flow of information across private sector critical infrastructure and with govern-

ment. He serves as secretary of the Communications ISAC. "It helps with understanding what the international threats are, and just general threats and techniques, how to mitigate those threats," Viens said. "Cybersecurity is a team sport. We must remember that the bad guy only needs to be right once; we have to be right all the time."

The wide-ranging discussion, hosted by **ALLvanza**, **MMTC** and **OCA**, also delved into ways marginalized communities are particularly vulnerable. Moderator *Danielle Davis*, Tech and Telecom Policy Counsel at MMTC, cited a 2021 study that found disadvantaged groups are not only more frequent targets of cyberattacks, but also suffer disproportionate damage from them. BIPOC respondents in the study were 6% more likely to have their identities stolen, 5% more likely to experience financial scam attempts and 5% more likely to have a social media account hacked, leading to reports of feeling less safe online than white respondents.

"I frankly would have expected [the margin] to be greater. There isn't a line between what happens in the physical world and what happens in the cyber world," said Brioché, who suggested someone with limited English skills or in a high stress situation, such as single mothers, as well as the elderly can find themselves being taken advantage of.

One possible salve could be a first-of-its-kind cybersecurity grant program made possible through the bipartisan Infrastructure Act. It provides \$1 billion in funding between 2022-2025 for the **Department of Homeland Security** to award grants to state, local



The WICT
Network

Empowering Women
in Media, Entertainment and Technology

WELCOME TO

The WICT Network!

New name, new look, same great organization dedicated to empowering women in **media, entertainment & technology.**

Learn more at wict.org.

in    @WICTHQ

and tribal governments to address cybersecurity threats and risks to their information technology systems. The program requires a planning committee to dole out this money, which Brioché thinks could be a historic opportunity. “It will have a certain technical component. But I believe that it also provides opportunities for key stakeholders, individuals who work with affected communities on the ground, to be part of that process,” he said.

The Charter and Comcast execs rattled off a list of protections their companies provide to their networks and to consumers, suggesting consumers ask what their services offer. Often, customers are unaware of the free options that are part of their HSD subscriptions. Charter’s advanced WiFi routers have a security shield pre-installed to help protect customers from attacks originating inside the home or from the broader internet. “This service launched in 10 million Charter homes in mid-2022 and has already blocked many, many threats,” said Viens.

This month, Rep. Marc Veasey (D-TX) introduced the Cybersecurity Clinics Grant Program Act, which would create a Department of Homeland Security grant program to fund higher education-based cybersecurity at community colleges and minority-serving institutions. **Roberto Gittens, Qvine’s** Information System Security Officer, said diversifying the cybersecurity workforce often boils down to breaking stereotypes. “I think maybe movies and shows show that it’s something that’s too hard for a person to understand... There’s so many areas that the cybersecurity space touches that there’s room for a lot of growth and understanding, not just technical, which I had to learn,” he said. “I think expressing and showing and providing an awareness that it’s more than just the technical side of it, and there’s plenty of opportunity for all.”

DIRECTV ASKS FOR STATIONS THROUGH ELECTIONS

DirecTV asked **Mission Broadcasting** and **White Knight Broadcasting** to return their 27 local stations to its customers in 25 DMAs through at least the final result of the Nov. 8 midterm elections. “This is a critical time in American political life. We are less than two weeks from one of the most important Congressional midterm elections in American History, and gubernatorial elections in 36 states. The results of this midterm will have a profound impact on some of the most important political, public health and economic issues of our time,” DirecTV said. “Broadcasters like **Nexstar**, Mission and White Knight claim a unique and special role in delivering news to Americans. The broadcast industry is, even now, asking Congress to provide it with special regulatory protections because, in the words of its trade association: ‘Local radio and TV stations provide a lifeline for our communities.’” DirecTV cited how Mission and Nexstar returned stations to **DISH** during the COVID-19 pandemic to keep citizens informed of the health crisis. In return, it pledged to pay Mission and White Knight whatever higher retransmission consent rates the parties eventually agree upon retroactively to the date the signals are reinstated. DirecTV lost White Knight stations Oct. 7 and Mission stations Oct. 14. Both have management arrangements with Nexstar, which has been dark on Verizon Fios since Oct. 14.

WBD DETAILS RESTRUCTURING COST, DC’S FUTURE

Warner Bros. Discovery will take on approximately \$3.2-4.3 billion in charges against its 3Q22 earnings as a result of merger-related actions, according to an 8-K filed Monday. In a further breakdown, the programmer attributed \$2-2.5 billion of the charges to strategic content programming assessments

Cablefax Daily (ISSN 1069-6644) is published daily by Access Intelligence, LLC | www.cablefax.com | 301.354.2101 | Editorial Director: Amy Maclean, 301.354.1760, amaclean@accessintel.com | VP/Group Publisher, Cablefax and Synopsis: Robbie Caploe, 917.974.0640, rcaploe@accessintel.com | Managing Editor: Sara Winegardner, 301.354.1701, swinegardner@accessintel.com | Associate Editor: Noah Ziegler, 301.354.1704, nziegler@accessintel.com | Director of Business Development, Cablefax: Ellen Kamhi, 917.626.5574, ekamhi@accessintel.com | Dir of Marketing: Kate Schaeffer, kschaeffer@accessintel.com | Production Manager: Joann Fato, jfato@accessintel.com | Kerry Smith, Divisional President, Marketing & Media Group, ksmith@accessintel.com | Group Subs/Subscription Questions, Client Services: 301.354.2101, clientservices@accessintel.com | Annual subscription price: \$1,799.00/year | Access Intelligence, LLC, 9211 Corporate Blvd., 4th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850

leading to content impairment and development write-offs; \$800 million-\$1.1 billion to organization restructuring costs including severance, retention, relocation and other related costs; and \$400-700 million in facility consolidation activities and other contract termination costs. “While the company’s restructuring efforts are ongoing, including the strategic analysis of content programming which could result in additional impairments above the estimate provided above, the restructuring initiatives are expected to be substantially completed by the end of 2024,” the filing said. In separate news, we finally have the names of the new leaders of the DC Universe. *James Gunn* and *Peter Safran* will take over **DC Studios** as Co-Chairmen/CEOs, reporting to Warner Bros. Discovery CEO *David Zaslav*. Effective Nov. 1, they’ll spearhead the development and execution of a long-term strategy for properties from DC Comics. Safran and Gunn will develop, direct and produce the projects while working collaboratively with fellow WBD executives *Channing Dungey*, *Casey Bloys*, *Kathleen Finch*, *Pam Lifford* and *David Haddad*. Safran is known for having produced films like “Shazam,” “Aquaman” and “Annabelle” while Gunn is the first filmmaker to have directed a movie for both **Marvel** and DC. His credits include “Guardians of the Galaxy,” “Peacemaker” and “Slither.”

FSF: CONGRESS SHOULD FURTHER SUPPORT ACP

The **Free State Foundation** is calling on Congress to commit long-term support to the **FCC’s** \$14.2 billion Affordable Connectivity Program. In a [column](#), President *Randolph May* argued that lawmakers should provide a second, one-time appropriation to the program to support its goal of growing broadband adoption across the nation while also taking a look at narrowing some of the ACP participation guidelines. As of Oct. 17, approximately 14.5 million households were enrolled in the program. The problem: some estimates have that funding running out by mid-2024, depending on participation. Should Congress appropriate more funding to the ACP, May believes it should also revise the program’s rules to ensure those dollars go to those most in need. That would mean lowering the income-based eligibility threshold closer to the federally defined poverty level from its current ceiling at 200% of the poverty line, or \$55,500.

MOVEMENT FOR BETTER INTERNET FORMS

Public Knowledge, **Creative Commons**, **Internet Archive** and four other organizations joined together to form the **Movement for a Better Internet**. The aim of the collaboration is to jointly advocate for policy changes that benefit all users, pushing for greater privacy, equity and openness on internet platforms. The organizing partners have launched a [website](#) with a mission statement as well as information on how to join and attend future events.

RITTER ENTERS MISSOURI

Ritter Communications is embarking on a \$5.5 million project to bring its telecom service and advanced cloud solutions to businesses, manufacturers and schools in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. It’s the company’s first project in the Show Me State, and once construction is complete, customers can expect speeds of up to 100 Gbps. Service is expected to roll out to some customers by late October.

WEEKLY RATINGS

It was a home-run week for **TBS** as the network topped the prime P2+ rankings. It had the ALCS showdown between the New York Yankees and Houston Astros, which helped it average 2.94 million viewers. **ESPN** followed with 2.8 million viewers after a big college football weekend. One of its showings, Mississippi State vs Alabama, had 3.6 million viewers on its traditional telecast on ESPN and alternate broadcast “CFB Primetime with The Pat McAfee Show” on **ESPN2**, making it the most-viewed game among cable networks. **Fox News**, **Fox Sports 1**—which had the NLCS content between the Philadelphia Phillies and San Diego Padres—and **MSNBC** had 2.3 million, 1.68 million and 1.13 million, respectively. Fox News reigned supreme in total day with 1.48 million viewers. TBS was second at 892,000, with ESPN (888,000), MSNBC (719,000) and **Hallmark Channel** (549,000) rounding out the top five. – The **Shudder** original “V/H/S/99” became the most-watched film debut in the streamer’s history, edging the previous record holder’s (“V/H/S/94”) mark by 28% more unique viewers.

SCREAMBOX BACK WITH NEW LOOK

Cinedigm relaunched horror streaming service Screambox ahead of Halloween. The user experience has been revamped to improve content discovery and incorporate several live FAST channels from Cinedigm and its partners into the platform. That channel lineup includes **El Rey Network**, **CONtv**, **Crime Hunters** and **Mystery Science Theatre 3000**. Screambox is available on iOS, Android, Prime Video, YouTube TV, Xfinity, Vizio and Roku.

DIRECTV NONPROFIT DISCOUNT

DirecTV is introducing a video service plan specifically made to support nonprofits. Eligible organizations can sign up through DirecTV for Business and receive a discount on the provider’s Business Entertainment Pack which currently touts more than 100 channels and is typically priced at \$74.99/month.

A+E NETWORKS POWER UP

Ahead of the upcoming release of the video game “Marvel’s Midnight Suns,” **A+E Networks** is partnering with **2K** for a new ad campaign. A+E Networks Ad Sales Partnerships is bringing the video game maker into the development process of a new episode of the “Forged in Fire” competition series on **History Channel**. Footage from the game will be used throughout the episode.

PROGRAMMING

There’s still plenty of debating before November’s elections, and **C-SPAN** has much of it covered. This week’s schedule includes the Florida and Michigan governor debates (8pm and 9pm ET, respectively, tonight on C-SPAN) as well as New Hampshire and South Carolina’s gubernatorial debates (6pm and 7pm, respectively). Thursday has the New Hampshire and Illinois Senate debates, while Friday feature a primetime play of Thursday’s Alaska U.S. Senate debate. – **Fubo Sports Network** signed multi-year deals with *Gilbert Arenas* and *Josiah Johnson*, the hosts of “No Chill with Gilbert Arenas.” Season 3 of the program will debut Thursday at 3pm on the network’s **YouTube** channel and Sunday at 7pm on the linear channel.