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WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Yellow Card: 2022 FIFA World Cup Comes With Controversy

It's been a long 4.5 years for soccer fans since the 2018 **FIFA World Cup** in Russia, but the wait is nearly over. Just 13 days stand between now and the beginning of the most peculiar and controversial edition of the world's biggest sporting event, and broadcasters are gearing up for coverage from Qatar.

This year's World Cup is already different from past iterations, with the tournament being held in cooler months instead of during the summer to avoid the high temperatures Qatar gets. The opening match between the host country and Ecuador will kick off Nov. 20 at 11am, with the opening ceremony preceding the game at 10am. The tournament will run until the final, which is scheduled for Dec. 18 at 10am.

For fans, there are plenty of options to find their desired viewing experience. **FOX** has the rights to the World Cup in the U.S. and will have matches with English commentary on its broadcast network as well as **Fox Sports 1**. *John Strong* and *Stu Holden* will be the main broadcasting pair, and they'll be anchored by studio analysts *Alexi Lalas*, *Carli Lloyd*, *Chad Johnson*, *Clint Dempsey* and others. Each reporter, announcer and analyst covering the tournament will be on-site in Qatar, with pre- and post-match coverage coming from the network's outdoor studio. Studio programming will be produced in 1080p HDR and upscaled to 4K, but every match will be shot and aired in native 4K HDR.

FuboTV will also carry the tournament through its content partnerships with Fox Sports and **Telemundo**. The vMVPD will

have dedicated carousels on its home page with highlights, content and more.

For Spanish-language viewers, **Telemundo Deportes** will also have all 64 matches of the tournament on Telemundo or **Universo**. Every contest will have one hour of pre-game coverage, and during the group stage, coverage will begin at 4am with "Hoy en La Copa" (Today in the Cup) previewing the day's slate. Encore presentations of each day's games will be played on Universo starting at 5pm before shifting to a 7pm air time for the semifinals and third-place match.

Telemundo's coverage will be bolstered by **Peacock** simul-streaming every match, making it the only DTC service to do so in the U.S. That enhancement is helped by the fact Peacock is already home to English Premier League matches, making it easier for casual fans to stay on the same platform for the World Cup.

"It's our job to make content available to consumers wherever they are on whatever platforms they are [on]," *Romina Rosado*, EVP of Hispanic Streaming for **NBCUniversal** Telemundo Enterprises, said at a virtual press event Monday. "That means for this World Cup in particular, we believe that the combination of Peacock, which has a ton of scale and audiences both of English as well as Spanish-language users ... and then obviously a broadcast is the perfect complement for the audience."

NBCU President, Advertising Sales and Partnerships *Mark Marshall* noted streaming helps connect to a younger audience,

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saying almost 3/4 of Latinos 16+ would label themselves as soccer fans. Among them, over half have “reshuffled their priorities” in order to watch a high-profile match.

On the advertising front, Marshall said NBCU and Telemundo have already surpassed their record revenue despite having a handful of units remaining for the tournament. It has three presenting sponsors for its pregame, halftime and postgame shows, as well as over 20 new advertisers across the auto, retail, restaurant and other industries.

“I would think most people are trying to reach the entire soccer population when they’re thinking about that side of it, but we obviously have some deep relationships in the soccer world,” Marshall said. “We have many advertisers that we’re partners with for Premier League that have come over and are partners with World Cup as well.”

There’s no questioning the excitement that’s been building for 4.5 years, but there’s also a darker side to this year’s tournament. Since Qatar was awarded the World Cup back in 2010, the country and FIFA have been met with allegations—and subsequent proof—of bribery being used to win votes. For a small country of around 3 million people, Qatar also relied on migrant workers building luxurious hotels and stadiums to accommodate the world. However, the working and living conditions for the workers have been documented as severely unkempt. An analysis by *The Guardian* found that as of February 2021, more than 6,500 workers from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka [died](#) working in Qatar.

For a network that has experience covering the 2022 Olympics in Beijing while China was under fire for human rights

atrocities, Telemundo Deportes President *Ray Warren* said **NBC News** and **Telemundo Noticias** will continue their coverage of world events in the Middle East. But for protests related to the World Cup, Telemundo Deportes will report on the impacts they could have on the tournament.

“I do think we have to kind of talk about the legacy we leave,” Warren said. “By the time the tournament’s over, we will have been not ignoring the geopolitical issues that might arise should that occur.”

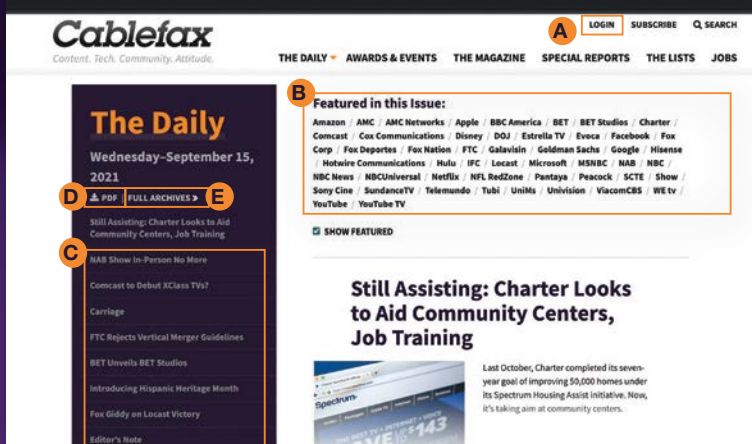
NY BROADBAND OFFICE CHALLENGES FCC DATA

New York’s broadband office is challenging the preliminary data the **FCC** will use to make its revamped maps, submitting more than 31,000 addresses under the Broadband Data Collection challenge process. The office compared that preliminary data to the interactive map the state launched earlier this year, which saw 60 ISPs collaborate and conduct surveys to obtain street-level data on the availability of broadband in New York households. The 31,798 addresses submitted to the FCC are all listed as either unserved or underserved on the New York map and the state has evidence those locations meet the Commission’s definition for inclusion on the revamped federal maps. New York is still analyzing the FCC data and considering additional challenges before the map’s final release.

NAD TELLS COMCAST TO CHANGE T-MOBILE ADS

The **National Advertising Division** has recommended that **Xfinity Mobile** discontinue and/or modify a number of claims made within ads comparing its plans and services to **T-Mobile’s** offerings. At issue was whether **Comcast** properly disclosed all material information relating to a claim that it offered Un-

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limited data for \$30/line that was made in a print mailer, an online paid Google ad and two commercials. The mailer and the Google ad were found not to adequately tell consumers that those prices are only limited to those customers that also subscribe to Xfinity Internet plans. It also recommended that Comcast disclose “clearly and conspicuously” Xfinity internet subscription and data throttling conditions in close proximity to the \$30/line claim. Additional claims that the Xfinity Mobile Unlimited plan is 30% cheaper than T-Mobile’s Essentials plans were also examined and NAD gave Comcast the green light to continue making those claims. However, it recommended that Comcast disclose which plans are being compared in a way that is easy for consumers to find and understand. Comcast has agreed to comply with NAD’s recommendations, adding that it “appreciates NAD’s review and, in particular, is pleased that NAD followed the **FTC’s** .com disclosures guidance concerning search engine advertising and space-constrained ads.”

MVPDS HOUSING MORE OF FANS’ FAVE SHOWS

Viewers are gradually going back to finding and loving the content they’re receiving on linear TV. According to **Hub Research’s** 2022 “Conquering Content” study, the proportion of viewers watching their new favorite series from an MVPD set-top box rose two points YOY to 23%. Online sources reign supreme as they have since 2016, housing the favorite shows of 75% of respondents. The remaining 2% found their show over-the-air. Some 61% of respondents, a 6% increase from 2021, agreed strongly or somewhat that they want a “universal listing to find shows from any source.” As for how they are finding content now when they don’t know which service it is on, 41% use universal search, 30% start hunting on a service-by-service basis and 29% use some other method.

NBCU INTRODUCES DIRECTORS’ PROGRAM CLASS

NBCU revealed the 2022-23 class of NBCU Launch TV Directors Program and Female Forward, two scripted directors programs, Monday. Each participant will take part in curated workshops to prepare them to direct an episode of an NBCU show and be given networking opportunities to set them up for a future in episodic television. This year’s class and the shows they will direct are *Tayo Amos* (“Chicago Fire”), *Melanie D’Andrea* (**Telemundo Global Studios**-produced series), *Kryzz Gautier* (**Telemundo Global Studios**-produced series), *Saray Guidetti* (“The Blacklist”), *Gia-Rayne Harris* (“Chicago P.D.”), *Elisabeth Rohm* (“Law & Order”) and *Nicole Taylor-Roberts* (“Chicago Med”).

HONORING VETERANS

ESPN is highlighting veterans all week through programming and various initiatives. The highlights include the annual Veterans Day showdown between Gonzaga and Michigan State on the flight deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln on Friday at 6:30pm ET and the “SportsCenter Veterans Day Special” airing Sunday at 12:30pm on ABC and on ESPN later that day at 4:30pm. Throughout the week, celebrities, athletes and coaches will give daily shout-outs to members of the military within ESPN programming including “SportsCenter” and “First Take.” – **Spectrum** will have an on-demand collection of war-themed movies in honor

of Veterans Day. Films will be made available in the Spectrum On Demand portal under the “For the Troops” category from Tuesday until Nov. 14. Movies include “American Sniper,” “A Private War,” “Saving Private Ryan” and “Red Tails.” – **TNT** is the home of the **NHL’s** “Navy Federal Credit Union Veterans Appreciation Night” Wednesday. The Washington Capitals will host the Pittsburgh Penguins at 7:30pm ET.

DISH OFFERS SENIOR SECURED NOTES

DISH Network priced an offering of \$2 billion aggregate principal amount of its 11.750% senior secured notes due 2027 Monday. The notes will be issued at a price of 98.171% of the principal amount with the net proceeds to be used for general corporate purposes, including the buildout of DISH’s wireless infrastructure. The offering is expected to close on Nov. 15.

FIRE UP, FRNDLY TV

Frndly TV is teaming up with the smokeless fire pit company Solo Stove to roll out a new spin on the Yule log channel. The “Cozy Holiday Bonfire Presented by Solo Stove” pop-up channel debuts Tuesday and will be available to subscribers through Jan. 3. It will have programming featuring an outdoor fire pit being used in a variety of outdoor settings. The channel will have a fall theme until Nov. 28 before shifting to a holiday theme through the end of its run. It’ll have 24/7 loops coordinated with the time of day—based on central time—and will also have a QR code where viewers can learn more about Solo Stove products.

T-MOBILE COLORS LUGGAGE BUSINESS MAGENTA

T-Mobile may call itself the Uncarrier, but it’s diving into the business of carry-ons in its newest partnership. The luggage, created in collaboration with Samsara Luggage, is bright magenta (of course) and offers wireless and USB-C charging, tracking capabilities and an eight-bag packing set. Pre-orders are now open for the carry-on for \$325 plus tax at TravelMagenta.com with orders expected to ship later this month.

FIBER FRENZY

Sparklight is speeding up Natchez, Mississippi, and Vidalia, Louisiana, completing a \$6.5 million upgrade to its fiber-rich networks in both locations. Starting Nov. 22, residential and SMB customers in the towns will be able to sign up for speeds of up to 1 Gigabit. – **Vexus Fiber** has begun construction on a fiber-optic network that will reach Alexandria and Pineville, Louisiana. The network is privately funded and will bring symmetrical multi-gig speeds to more than 25,000 homes and businesses upon its completion in 2023.

PROGRAMMING

HBO four-part docuseries “Branson” debuts on Dec. 1 at 10pm and will be available to stream on **HBO Max**. It follows the billionaire as he prepares for his first flight into space. – **National Geographic Documentary Films’** “Retrograde” will hit theaters on Nov. 11 before making its linear debut on **Nat Geo** on Dec. 8 at 9pm. The film will stream on **Disney+** on Dec. 9 and **Hulu** on Dec. 11. – **Shudder** acquired the rights to Malaysian horror “Blood Flower (Harum Malam).” It will be available exclusively on the streamer in the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Ireland, Australia and New Zealand in 2023.