

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Hear Me: Cable Blames Power Cos for Fiber Cuts During Disasters

It's a mad dash to restore services to customers in the aftermath of storms like Hurricanes Fiona and Ian, but sometimes that haste comes with unforeseen consequences. Cable providers often follow power companies as they work to repair headends or fiber cuts, and sometimes that damage is caused by the power crews preceding them.

"When faced with a national disaster such as Hurricane Fiona, the power sector faces extreme pressure to restore service and unfortunately, the adequate communications procedures still are not in place to make sure communication providers can communicate effectively with the power sector," **Liberty Puerto Rico** President/CEO **Raji Khoury** said during an **FCC** field hearing Thursday focused on the impacts of Fiona and Ian and recovery efforts. "Our largest system outage resulted from a cable cut caused during the restoration of a power line."

REV CEO **Josh Descant** agreed that secondary network outages often come from inadvertent cuts, both aerial and underground, and that can put emergency communications at risk. He added that for small- and medium-sized operators that don't always have staff solely focused on government affairs and public relations, it can be challenging to establish direct lines of communication with others, particularly local government officials that may be holding important meetings related to disaster relief. That has improved since Hurricane Ida, but there's still a long way to go before everybody has a

seat at the table. At the same time, lines of communications need to be opened up between power companies and cable operators to ensure the latter knows where crews will be working and the former knows where fiber is.

"One thing in Puerto Rico that happened, there was a lot of fiber that was cut, even by [**Luma Energy**] personnel because they did not have specific data and information on where some specific lines were," Puerto Rico Deputy Secretary on Innovation, Information, Data and Technology **Enrique Volckers-Nin** said. "It's a very confidential matter that we need to handle, but it is imperative that we have that specific communication to know where things are so we can plan ahead."

Other panelists echoed the need for more to be done preventatively during the "blue sky" days to ensure processes are in place for when disaster strikes. Power sector representatives also cited the establishment of emergency operations centers as the central meeting point for officials and providers in the aftermath of a storm as a step in the right direction.

"I think the improvements that we have seen in recent years are on the one hand because we are going through that activity of planning so effectively and collaboratively between these two critical sectors and then, when the incident happens and the rubber is meeting the road, at those emergency operation centers, we're able to kind of deconflict and address challenges in real time," **Edison Electric Institute** SVP, Security and Preparedness **Scott Aaronson** said.

The hearing followed the Commission's November open meet-

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ing where the agency adopted a Report and Order updating its rules for determining a station's local market for carriage purposes in light of **Nielsen's** decision to no longer publish its annual Station Index. The agency also unveiled new rules Thursday that will require broadband providers to display labels that allow consumers to comparison shop across different services and plans. The Report and Order requires that providers display key information including prices, speeds, fees and data allowances at the point of sale. The labels also must be easily accessible to each consumer on their online account portal. The FCC is going to continue to workshop the labels, adopting a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on ways it can refine and improve the rules in the future. The effective date of the label will be announced at a later time.

HOPE FOR SOHN, NEW VOICES POST-MIDTERMS

Results from the midterm elections continue to trickle out, and the outcome of the Georgia Senate runoff could spell the certainty of a *Gigi Sohn* confirmation to the **FCC** or make the road to a full Commission that much more difficult. "If I were to lay odds right now, I would give *Sen. Warnock* a narrow advantage of winning that and the Democrats going from 50 to 51, which makes nominations and confirmations in the Senate much easier either in the lame duck session or in the first quarter of next year," **INCOMPAS** CEO *Chip Pickering* said during a webinar Thursday. "If we see on December 6 *Sen. Warnock* winning, it may create momentum to go ahead and move in the lame duck as many nominees as possible." Should Sohn's nomination not be confirmed during the lame duck session, Pickering believes she will need to be renominated in order to be considered by

the next Congress. His comments came as Dems prepared for a number of changes in their longstanding Congressional leadership structure. House Speaker *Nancy Pelosi* (D-CA) is not seeking re-election to Democratic leadership in the next Congress, opening the door for the next generation of leaders in the chamber. It is widely expected that Rep. *Hakeem Jeffries* (D-NY) will become the party's next leader in the house, making him the first Black congressional leader in the nation's history. Pickering believes this will be the start of a new wave of leadership changes that will lead to younger voices having more prominent positions across the Senate and the House. "We've never had, on the House side and the Senate side, leadership all in their mid-70s to 80s [like we do today]," Pickering said. "As you look at all the different public polling, I think that you'll see a shift and a demand to go to a new set of leaders for the country and hopefully a new generation of leaders as we go to 2024."

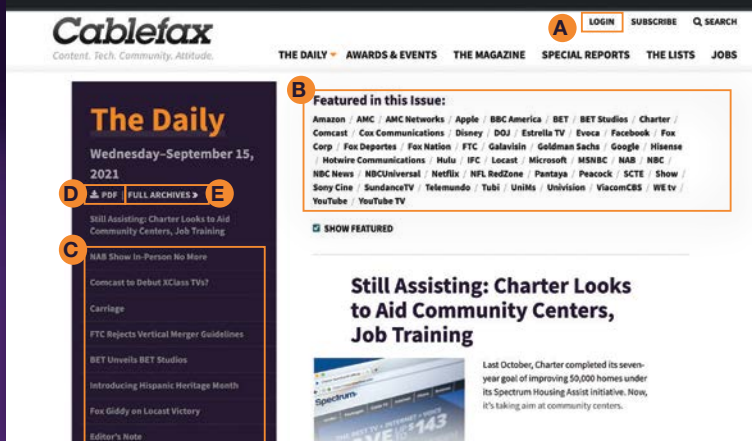
ROKU LAYS OFF 200 EMPLOYEES

Roku is reducing its headcount expenses by 5% in a move triggered by the nation's declining economic conditions, the company said in an **SEC** filing. The decision will impact approximately 200 U.S.-based employees. Roku estimates that it will incur non-recurring charges of approximately \$28-31 million as a result of the cuts, primarily due to severance payments, notice pay, employee benefits contributions and other related costs. The majority of the restructuring charges are expected to be incurred in 4Q22, and most of the layoffs will be completed by the end of 1Q23.

DISH ROLLS OUT PRICING GUARANTEE

DISH is responding to the decline in the nation's economic outlook, unveiling a three-year price guarantee Wednesday on

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its video pricing plans. The deal will be available on packages starting at \$79.99/month, and the guarantee will require signing up for a two-year commitment.

MORE COX MOBILE LAUNCHES

Cox is still on track for its **Cox Mobile** service to launch in all markets by year-end. It rolled out this week to markets in Louisiana, Gulf Coast, Central Florida, Middle Georgia and Northern Virginia. The first Cox Mobile markets went live in late August in Hampton Roads, Virginia; Omaha, Nebraska; and Las Vegas. Cox offers customers a Pay As You Gig option (\$15/GB per month) and a Gig Unlimited option (\$45/month).

TV VIEWING UP IN OCTOBER

Nielsen's monthly total TV and streaming snapshot "The Gauge" revealed overall TV consumption saw a 2.2% monthly increase in October. That was aided by the broadcast category improving to 26% of total TV usage after a 1.8-point bump in market share. However, broadcast viewing volume decreased 6.2% YOY and the category was down 2.5 share points. The Gauge found that broadcast sports viewing in October was up 19% compared to September and accounted for 25% of broadcast usage. Cable continued its downward trend and made up 32.9% of TV watching in October, but did see improvements in the genres of news (3.3%) and sports (25%). Streaming had a 3.3% monthly viewing volume increase, bringing it to 37.3% of overall TV viewing. Out of the streaming services, **YouTube** (including **YouTube TV**) made up 8.5% of overall TV, followed by **Netflix** at 7.2% and **Hulu** (including **Hulu Live**) at 4%. **Prime Video** and **Disney+** checked in at 2.8% and 2%, respectively. MVPDs and vMVPDs represented 5.7% of total TV usage and 15.4% of streaming usage for the month.

AMC NETWORKS PARTNERS WITH RNIFF

To promote and provide Native American stories and storytellers with mentoring and professional development initiatives, **AMC Networks** is teaming up with the Red National International Film Festival. RNIFF will screen the premiere episode of "Dark Winds" and **IFC Films'** "Catch the Fair One" at the 27th annual festival Friday. The partnership also includes two programming tracks for Native women and students, where AMC Networks will provide mentorship, script pitching opportunities and educational sessions.

FIBER FRENZY

Comcast Business is investing \$3 million to grow its fiber network in Charlottesville, Chesterfield, Fredericksburg, Reston, Sterling and Woodbridge, Virginia. The expansion will bring Comcast Business' ethernet, internet, advanced voice solutions and more to over 250 businesses and organizations in those areas, with the project set to wrap up by the end of 2022. The announcement comes after the company committed \$28 million to expand its network in Maryland, Virginia, D.C., Delaware and West Virginia. Once finished, it'll bring speeds of up to 1.2 Gbps or more for small- and medium-sized businesses. Larger enterprises can get up to 100 Gbps as well.

NTIA GREENLIGHTS MORE GRANTS

NTIA awarded 18 more grants Thursday totaling more than \$224 million as part of the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program.

Tribes in Alaska, Arizona, California, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, New York, South Dakota will utilize the funds for projects directly connecting 21,468 unserved Native American households as well as businesses and anchor institutions. Approximately 137 new jobs will also be created as a result of the grants. The largest winner is Arkansas-based **NANA Regional Corporation** which will use more than \$68 million to install fiber to connect 1,379 unserved households, 451 businesses and 212 institutions including libraries and schools. – NTIA OK'd its first Internet for All grants for Nebraska this week, awarding the state nearly \$5.6 million for broadband infrastructure planning and digital equity initiatives. Approximately \$5 million will come from the BEAD program and support needs like capacity building of the state's broadband office, identification of unserved and underserved locations in the state and community outreach. The remaining grants will be pulled from the Digital Equity Act and be directed to the development of Nebraska's digital equity plan, surveys to understand barriers to internet adoption and subawards to Nebraska's economic development districts to support regional digital equity plans.

COMCAST ADDS WORLD CUP FEATURES

As the clock counts down to kick off from Qatar, **Comcast** will roll out interactive and bilingual viewing experiences for the 2022 FIFA World Cup on its Xfinity X1, Xfinity Flex, Xfinity Stream and XClass TV platforms. All English- and Spanish-language coverage from **Fox Sports** and **Telemundo** will be curated into one destination to be available live and on-demand. Customers with eligible X1 set tops can say "World Cup" or "Copa Mundial" into their voice remotes to access matches in 4K, a personalized experience where viewers select their favorite teams, interactive brackets and DVR highlights.

PROGRAMMING

Local Now, the FAST channel owned by **Allen Media Group**, partnered with actor *Jamie Kennedy* to launch the "Jamie Kennedy Channel." It's the first channel on Local Now to be dedicated to one particular comedian. – **ESPN** will have the NCAA Division I Men's Soccer tournament on its platforms. The first round begins tonight on **ESPN+**, which will also carry the second round (Sunday), third round (Nov. 26-27) and quarterfinals (Dec. 2-3). The semifinal matches on Dec. 9 will be on **ESPNU**, with the championship match also on ESPNU on Dec. 12. – To celebrate the 50th anniversary of hip hop, **Paramount** is expanding the Hip Hop 50 initiative that began in late 2021. Starting in 2023, **Showtime's** slate of Hip Hop 50 programming will include a doc on *Biz Markie*, a series highlighting stories of women in hip hop and feature on the creation and troubles of the SoundCloud music scene. **BET** will have a documentary on the series "Rap City," and **MTV Entertainment Studios** will make new eps of "Behind the Music" as well as multiple docs. A special music event commemorating the genre will cap the 65th Grammy Awards, and **Paramount+** will continue to stream 50 of the most popular episodes of "Yo! MTV Raps." – **Disney Branded Television** extended its overall development deal with writer/producer *Craig Gerber*. Gerber is credited with writing "Sofia the First," "Elena of Avalor" and "Firebuds." As part of the agreement, Gerber will develop a spinoff of Sofia the First.

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

A 'Spirited' Attempt at Marketing


The closing of various **Regal Cinemas** theaters around the country in the wake of its parent company **Cineworld** filing for Chapter 11 is a stark reminder that the movie theater business is a tough one. The shift to streaming, hastened by pandemic lockdowns, has made it tougher to convince folks to venture out to see a film. So, I give Regal credit for a marketing promotion that hit my inbox earlier this month. For \$5, I could visit the theater on a Monday night and see a "Mystery Movie"—an upcoming box office release. I just wouldn't know what it was. The holidays are blockbuster season, so I felt pretty good rolling the dice. I showed up on the appointed evening and sat through the requisite 20 minutes of trailers before my movie's identity was finally revealed: Will Ferrell and Ryan Reynolds' Christmas flick "Spirited." And here's where the figgy pudding was spoiled for me... After a limited one-week theatrical run, "Spirited" makes its **AppleTV+** premiere on Friday, Nov. 18. I already subscribe to Apple's SVOD, so I'm out \$5 plus concessions for a film I would've been able to see for no additional charge. I don't mean to be a Scrooge, but what's more costly to Regal is that the experience has me more convinced that there's not much of a reason to head to the theater. As for Ferrell and Reynolds' new take on "A Christmas Carol," it's definitely worth the watch. It's not going to be the next "Elf," and I seriously question why it is a musical since neither the singing nor the lyrics are very good (one exception: the funny and catchy "Good Afternoon"). However, there's enough laughs and holiday merriment to make this a family movie night. Just save it for your home theater. — Amy Maclean

REVIEWS

"Namaste, Bitches," premiere, Season 2, **YouTube**. OK, our first YouTube series review. Who'd a thunk it? Seriously, viewers don't need much yoga knowledge to enjoy these 3-4-minute spoofs of the yoga scene. Just think of all the things yoga is supposed to release: stress, jealousy, arrogance, competitiveness. Well, maybe they're not present during class, but afterward, all bets are off. It's the teachers who are the worst in this behind-the-scenes romp. And, remember, there's no smoking in yoga, right? Well... — "Blackbird," streaming, **Apple TV+**. This delicious character study masquerades as a prison story, but the work of *Paul Walter Houser* as Larry, a troubled prisoner. He's apparently committed several murders, though, at times, we feel for him, having been raised in an environment that if you described it as morbid, you'd be far understating the truth. The story is simple. The authorities want to keep Larry in prison, but haven't located his victims. They reason Larry, the kid without friends when he was in school, will warm to Jimmy (*Taron Egerton*), the good-looking, athlete, and spill where those he killed are buried. If Jimmy can obtain the evidence, he'll be released from a 10-year sentence. Only problem is Larry is housed in the roughest prison around. A bonus: *Ray Liotta*, as Jimmy's father, makes one of his final screen appearances. — Seth Arenstein

| BASIC CABLE | | |
|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| P2+ PRIME RANKINGS* | | |
| (11/07/22-11/13/22) | | |
| MON-SUN | MC | MC |
| | US | US AA |
| | AA% | (000) |
| FNC | 1.009 | 3151 |
| ESPN | 0.654 | 2041 |
| MSNBC | 0.545 | 1702 |
| CNN | 0.383 | 1194 |
| HALL | 0.359 | 1120 |
| PRMNT | 0.337 | 1051 |
| HGTV | 0.232 | 724 |
| TLC | 0.225 | 704 |
| FOOD | 0.221 | 689 |
| INSP | 0.195 | 609 |
| TBSC | 0.185 | 579 |
| USA | 0.179 | 560 |
| ESPN2 | 0.176 | 550 |
| DISC | 0.174 | 542 |
| HMM | 0.169 | 528 |
| HIST | 0.153 | 478 |
| TVLAND | 0.146 | 455 |
| A&E | 0.138 | 430 |
| ID | 0.131 | 408 |
| AMC | 0.112 | 351 |
| FX | 0.111 | 348 |
| LIFE | 0.111 | 345 |
| FRFM | 0.107 | 336 |
| REELZ | 0.104 | 325 |
| TNT | 0.104 | 324 |
| GSN | 0.103 | 321 |
| COM | 0.101 | 315 |
| BET | 0.099 | 310 |
| WETV | 0.097 | 302 |
| NATGEO | 0.094 | 293 |
| NWSMX | 0.089 | 278 |
| CMT | 0.087 | 272 |
| OXY | 0.083 | 260 |
| FXX | 0.083 | 260 |
| BRAVO | 0.083 | 258 |

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






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