

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Interpretations: SCTE Panel Talks AI Models, the Data That Feeds Them

The cable industry's embrace of artificial intelligence isn't all about what the technology does. It's also about ensuring that AI is able to interpret the wealth of knowledge gathered by the industry's finest and use it to help the next generation of workers and networks.

Comcast Fellow *Larry Wolcott* said during an **SCTE**-hosted panel discussion Tuesday that he and others are rethinking how they write materials to make them easier to interpret by large language models that feed into AI tools. For instance, some models are unable to interpret pictures or other multimedia that may have been used in SCTE papers to quickly explain a technological concept to humans.

"So you have to write alt text around the images and videos and do a much more textually descriptive job at how we offer these papers. And there are certain writing styles that are more effective than others with large language models as well," Wolcott said. "We're really taking this seriously, and the idea is not to replace humans. It's to make us better."

The panel discussion, which was largely focused on the idea of preventative network maintenance, was part of the SCTE Golden Gate Chapter's Fall Technology & Training Summit. **CableLabs** Distinguished Technologist *Jason Rupe* was on hand to present on the business case around preventative network maintenance and the efficiencies it provides organizations while **OpenVault** Chief Product Officer *Brady Volpe* examined

the already realized benefits of machine learning and what's next for artificial intelligence.

Rupe and Volpe both discussed how cable providers can already use machine learning and preventative network maintenance to predict outages, identify impairments in the network and more. And while Volpe understands that some may have concerns about the unknowns that surround AI, he is a firm believer that sitting back and waiting for more answers is a mistake for technologists.

"I think it's equally as dangerous as all the other technologies that we have in our arsenal. You know, we talk about taking a pause with AI, but our enemies will not take a pause," OpenVault Volpe said. "So we really have to look at how, as a world, we're going to control and manage AI. But one thing is not going to happen—AI is not going to stop moving forward. Once Pandora's box is unleashed, it's going to keep moving forward."

He took a deep dive into the large language models that feed tools like ChatGPT and establish the knowledge base it uses to answer prompts. He argued that tools like that could be powerful for field technicians that may be attempting to diagnose a problem or interpret data or a reading they don't fully understand.

But rather than using ChatGPT or other models owned by other companies, Volpe recommended using open source models that are hosted locally. That gives individuals more control over what data that AI model will be trained on, allow for proper sourcing of that information and ensure data being input into these tools is being held on a secure network.



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MOST POWERFUL WOMEN

DECEMBER 6, 2023

Have You Heard The News?

Emmy Award winning journalist, **Alicia Quarles**, is the 2023 Keynote Speaker for The Most Powerful Women Luncheon.

Where: The Edison Ballroom • 240 W 47th St, New York, NY

When: Wednesday, December 6, 2023

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“Every piece of information the model has been trained on, we know where it came from and we can reference that model and we can give accreditations to all the authors who have been part of the model we’ve provided. And then these open source AI models can be securely hosted,” Volpe said. “Any data that you put in, any subscriber data that has gone in, these are going to be locked down and we know that they’re not going to be used nefariously by any third-party companies.”

He added that these models are being directly integrated into applications, meaning the possibilities around them aren’t limited to preventative network maintenance or similar use cases.

“We could integrate it into WiFi networks, into 5G and now we can start to really expand our AI models into other networks,” he said. “It’s sort of a technology convergence.”

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C2HR SHOWS SALARY CHANGES

It’s been a tough year for companies and their alignment of finances, but **C2HR** research indicates salaries are continuing to rise despite looming concerns. Salary adjustment budgets rose to 4.4% for the general industry, with connectivity providers coming in at 3.8% and content developers at 3.3%. That’s an increase of 0.3% and 0.2% for the industry and connectivity providers, respectively, compared to 2022. Content developers saw a 0.3% drop. Next year isn’t expected to follow suit considering softening markets and labor disruptions in the latter half of 2023. Projections for 2024 indicate general industry compensation budgets will fall back to 4.1%, and for connectivity providers, they’ll fall to 3.4%. Content developers are slated to increase to 3.5%. Data also showed changes to salary structures, with content creators seeing the biggest adjustments. Those companies propose raising executive salaries by 3.9%, exempt employees by 3.4% and hourly employees by 3.4%. For connectivity providers, respondents propose raising executive salaries by 1.7%; exempt employees by 2.1%; and hourly employees by 2.1%. It should be noted those proposals can change before being finalized. Data was collected by **The Croner Company**.

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NAD MAKES CHARTER RULING

The **National Advertising Division** (NAD) is recommending **Charter** modify or discontinue claims made regarding its Spectrum home internet service and **T-Mobile’s** wireless home internet services. The challenge—originally submitted by T-Mobile—includes two commercials and online web pages. The first is Charter’s “Game Time” commercial, in which NAD suggests the company discontinue the statements that T-Mobile’s wireless home internet is “glitchy” and supplies “spotty service.” It also recommends Charter modify the commercial to avoid stating that T-Mobile’s home internet is

unusable and customers should switch to Spectrum to get reliable service. NAD did however approve the claim Spectrum Internet users won’t experience glitches since it utilizes a hybrid fiber/coaxial network. The second commercial in question was Charter’s “Move Out” ad that NAD said to modify to limit the sense that T-Mobile’s home internet can be too slow for five people to use simultaneously at peak times. Additionally, NAD recommended changes to the claim “There’s not enough speed for all of us” and “T-Mobile Home Internet slows down when you need it most” to specify they’re referring to peak times. T-Mobile also challenged four areas of Charter’s “Home Internet Facts” web page. NAD recommended Charter discontinue the “Lag that Makes Gamers Rage” banner and change the “Buffering Will Test Your Patience” banner to clarify the claim is limited to the peak hours of 7-11pm and that buffering could happen. It also says to modify the speed reliability chart that uses **Ookla** data to avoid displaying a misleading message about comparative speed reliability, and to modify the Home Internet Facts page to avoid stating T-Mobile home internet users—not 5G home internet users—can’t stream in 4K or use multiple devices uninterrupted. Regarding Spectrum’s “Compare Internet Speeds” web page, NAD determined comparing internet speed goes beyond describing differences between the services, thus suggesting Charter discontinue the claim “Whereas 5G Home Internet is known for slow speeds during peak times and unreliable connections” to avoid implying T-Mobile has a reputation for slow speeds during peak times in addition to the claim T-Mobile home internet “Fails to meet the demands of today’s average consumer usage.” Lastly, NAD recommended the “What’s worse, ‘5G’ Home Internet customers don’t always get the ‘5G’ network they’ve been promised and may end up surfing the web on a slower, 4G LTE network” claim to be discontinued. Charter said it will comply with NAD’s recommendations.

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KYRIO BECOMES FIRST OPENSYNC TESTING LAB IN AMERICAS

The **CableLabs** subsidiary **Kyrio**, which focuses on software and testing solutions in the broadband industry, became the first vendor test lab in the Americas authorized to test **OpenSync** integrated hardware. The move will allow Kyrio to certify OpenSync implementations on WiFi equipment. OpenSync’s certification is made up of three test cycles: functional testing, customer experience testing and security testing. Kyrio’s testing labs will help facilitate the certification process by utilizing network equipment, cable modem termination systems and a test house.

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THANKSGIVING’S TV FEAST

Thanksgiving is a time for feasts and relaxation, which can mean

time spent around the TV. However, the streaming analytics provider **NPAW** found an [increase in VOD consumption per user](#) by 17% when comparing average effective play time from Nov. 23-26 to Nov. 1-22. The metric accounts for minutes each user spends watching content, deducting ads and other interruptions. VOD viewers exceeded the seasonal average on each day of the holiday period. Thanksgiving and Black Friday saw the biggest spikes at 21% and 20%, respectively. When it comes to linear's average effective playtime during those two November periods, the medium saw a 7% decrease, with drops across all days in the holiday and a 12% fall on Thanksgiving.

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NEWSMAX SCORES EARLY WINS

Newsmax paid streaming offering **Newsmax+** has gained 150,000 subscribers since its Nov. 1 launch, the company said. The offering includes unlimited access to the network's news programming as well as documentaries, comedy specials and more. With the introduction of Newsmax+, the company stopped streaming content for free on OTT platforms including Roku, YouTube and the Newsmax app.

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RATINGS

Spectrum News garnered 1.9 million daily viewing households across its linear and digital platforms in November. That beat out **Fox News, MSNBC, CNN, ABC, Fox** and **NBC** in average daily viewership for the month. Buffalo and Cleveland had the highest month-over-month increases in Nielsen viewership than all major broadcast and cable news networks at 31% and 16%, respectively.

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CARRIAGE

Maybe video and the radio star can work together. **Fubo** is teaming up with Super Hi-Fi, a company that specializes in AI-powered radio services for broadcast and digital media platforms, to launch 10 FAST channel radio stations on the vMVPD in the U.S. The 10 channels are labeled "Fubo Radio" and will feature a variety of genres including **Hits Radio, Top Country, Éxitos Latinos, The 80s, The Holidays** and **Dinner Party**. They'll have a TV-focused interface combined with music programming designed for audiences. Fubo Radio is available on the vMVPD's base channel plan Fubo Pro. - **Xumo Play** is adding **Cox Media Group's** local streaming channel **Neighborhood TV** to its lineup starting Friday. The hyper-local channel launched in August and now spans 70 neighborhoods in Atlanta and 30 in Charlotte, with hundreds more set to be added across the U.S. soon.

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FIBER FRENZY

UTOPIA Fiber wrapped up its FTTH build in Cedar Hills, Utah. The \$5.9 million project began in June 2022 and adds 2,656 residential addresses to UTOPIA's footprint. Customers have access to speeds of up to 10 Gbps, while businesses can get

up to 100 Gbps. UTOPIA (Utah Telecommunication Open Infrastructure Agency) Fiber is a group of 11 Utah cities that joined together in 2004 to build, deploy and operate a FTTH Network.

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DIDDY STEPS BACK AT REVOLT

Sean "Diddy" Combs is temporarily stepping aside from his role as Chairman of **Revolt**. "While Mr. Combs has previously had no operational or day-to-day role in the business, this decision helps to ensure that Revolt remains steadfastly focused on our mission to create meaningful content for the culture and amplify the voices of all Black people throughout this country and the African diaspora," the company said in a statement on [Instagram](#). The news comes after accusations of sexual assault were made against Combs last week, which his representatives denied.

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TALKING MENTAL HEALTH WITH JOURNALIST ALICIA QUARLES

Journalist and "Good Morning America 3" contributor *Alicia Quarles* will keynote next week's **Cablefax Most Powerful Women luncheon**. She has a powerful story to share about how she navigated a mental breakdown that she livestreamed after receiving unexpected pregnancy news. Today, she's back at work, sharing her experience and a mother to twins. "When my mental health suffered in such a public way, my initial reaction was to feel embarrassed, but I shouldn't have. The amount of love and support I received from people in our industry was overwhelming in the best possible way," she told **CFX** in a wide-ranging interview that delved into ways companies can support mental health and how the entertainment beat has changed. Check out entire conversation with Alicia [here](#).

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ON THE CIRCUIT

Nice to see **The Syndeo Institute at The Cable Center** add former **NCTA** President/CEO *Robert Sachs* to its esteemed Gus Hauser Oral History project. And especially fun to see his interview conducted by his former communications chief, *Rob Stoddard*, who also worked with Sachs at **Continental Cablevision**. Sachs shepherded NCTA from 1999-2005, a key time for the introduction of broadband and how it would be regulated. "Following the landmark '96 Telecom Act, the challenge over the next decade became how to establish a deregulatory environment for our new broadband service," Sachs said in musing about that period. View the entire interview [here](#).

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PROGRAMMING

Guy Fieri is going nowhere after signing a three-year exclusive deal with **Food Network**. That means more episodes of "Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives," "Guy's Grocery Games" and "Tournament of Champions." Fieri will also continue to work in the development and production of his own series through the Knuckle Sandwich banner.