DirecTV Stream Completes PBS Rollout

DirecTV Stream completed its nationwide rollout of PBS roughly nine months ahead of schedule. It began the process in October and has now added nearly 250 PBS member stations in 198 Nielsen DMAs. It’s in small company. YouTube TV is the only streamer to have announced a deal to launch PBS affiliates. As of late 2019, more than 100 PBS stations were streaming live on YouTube TV, but we haven’t seen any updates from either company on additional launches. Under the multi-year deal, DirecTV Stream is providing each stations’ full broadcast channels as well as the free PBS VOD library. It’s also the presenting sponsor of documentary films “*Becoming Frederick Douglass*” and “*Harriet Tubman: Visions of Freedom*,” which be broadcast nationwide this fall.

Safety First in the Metaverse

Over the years, Sen Ed Markey (D-MA) has sounded the alarm over threats to children online, on television and through advertising. So, it’s hardly surprising the co-author of the Children’s Online Privacy and Protection Act is joining with Reps Kathy Castor (D-FL) and Lori Trahan (D-MA) to raise similar concerns about the metaverse and VR platforms. The trio of lawmakers wrote to the FTC Wednesday to ask that the agency ensure children are protected from threats of manipulation and privacy invasions in the virtual and augmented reality environment. “Children’s increasing use of VR warrants serious concerns about new threats to young users’ wellbeing. Many VR platforms and headsets currently do not have basic parental controls, and reports point to harms such as harassment and unsafe content in the metaverse,” they wrote. “While policymakers, parents, and pediatricians would all benefit from increased understanding about the effects—positive and negative—that VR may have on children, sufficient information exists to warrant the FTC’s vigilance in this area.”

Comcast Asks Why WiFi?

Nearly 347 million smartphones were connected on Xfinity home WiFi in the past year, a 23x increase compared to 2018, while overall Comcast connected nearly a billion devices to Xfinity WiFi. The company’s first-ever “WiFi Trends Report” found that fitness trackers and other health & wellness devices were the fastest rising connected device, with 49 million connected—a 39x increase from 2018. Other stats: More than 10% of WiFi connected devices (119 million) were streaming video, 14x more than 2018; and gaming consoles connected to WiFi rose 15x to 36 million. Comcast said nearly 59% of Americans improved their WiFi connectivity last year with 28% upgrading equipment and 27% increasing connection speed. The survey was conducted by Wakefield Research among 1,000 U.S. adults in November.

People

Sue Kelly joined Hotwire Communications as the Regional EVP & GM overseeing all business development across North Carolina and South Carolina. She’s spent more than 20 years in the industry, including various roles at Time Warner Cable, Spectrum and Cox. She most recently was SVP, Enterprise Sales for fiber optic network designer FiberLight. Hotwire also added Roddy Broadnax as VP, Business Development for the Carolinas Region, tasking the former Logix Fiber Networks and Spectrum Enterprise exec with identifying new opportunities in the area and building the Business Development Enterprise Team. -- Ashley Kline Shapiro was elevated to VP, Communications for Unscripted, Alternative & Slate Publicity for ABC Entertainment and Walt Disney Television.

On the Circuit

The Fiber Broadband Association is hosting a series of regional workshops, beginning on March 23 in Baton Rouge. Another is planned for April 19 in Providence, Rhode Island, with three more in the works to help prepare operators, public officials and community leaders for fiber deployments.

**The WICT Network Announces 2022 Chapter Presidents and Advisors**

**Washington, DC** - The WICT Network has announced the esteemed volunteer leaders who will serve as its 2022 Chapter Presidents and Advisors.

“The WICT Network's 24 domestic and international chapters are an essential touchpoint for our members across the globe, enabling them to foster the relationships and lasting connections that support their career growth every step of the way," said **Kristin Edwards,**The WICT Network's Global VP of Member and Chapter Development. "The dedicated industry leaders who volunteer their time and expertise to ensure our members have access to robust local resources are exemplary representatives of The WICT Network and its mission."

PRESIDENTS:

* Carolinas - **Diana Monk,** VP, Learning Solutions, Charter Communications
* Europe -**Marta del Peso,** Corporate Affairs Management Assistant, Liberty Global
* Florida - **Sadie Molinet,**Strategic Account Manager, SLED, Spectrum Enterprise
* Great Lakes - **Darralyn Griffin,** Finance Supervisor, Comcast
* Greater Chicago - **La Tarsha Simmons,** Project Manager, Comcast
* Greater Ohio - **Zaki'ya Black,** Customer Operations Manager, Charter Communications
* Greater Philadelphia - **Carol Ann Sweeney,** Sr. Manager, Business Operations, CommScope
* Greater Pittsburgh - **Sherry Ott,** Director, Business Partner Project Management, Comcast
* Greater Texas - **Juli Blanda,** Vice President - West Division, Cable One
* Heartland - **Terri Rice,** Sr. Manager, Marketing, Cox Business
* Latin America - **María Lizarraga Iriarte,** Former Titular de la Unidad de Medios y Contenidos Audiovisuales, Instituto Federal de Telecomunicaciones
* Midwest - **Lisa Neuwirth,** Sr. Director, Strategic Readiness Office, Charter Communications
* New England - **Sara Nizzardo,** Manager, Quality Assurance, The Walt Disney Company
* New York - **Stefanie Nimick,** SVP, Distribution, STARZ
* Northern California - **Jenn Banta,** Recruiter 2, Talent Acquisition, Comcast
* Pacific Northwest - **Abbie O'Dell,** Senior Director Learning Services: Field Operations, Charter Communications
* Rocky Mountain - **Barbara Nelms,** Global Portfolio & Reporting, Paramount+
* Southeast - **Gimette DeLaughter,** Senior Manager, Field Operations, Cox Communications
* Southern California - **Jennifer Miles,**Executive Director of Brand Marketing, The Walt Disney Company
* Southwest - **Monica Cole Evans,** Sr. Manager, Technical Project Management, Cox Communications
* United Kingdom - **Lauren Dolan,** Managing Director, Global Head of Talent & Development, Liberty Global
* Virginia - **Shinese Collins,** Corporate Marketing Strategy Manager, Consumer Product Marketing, Cox Communications
* Washington DC/Baltimore - **Svetlana Gans,** Vice President and Associate General Counsel, Legal & Regulatory Affairs, NCTA

ADVISORS:

* Carolinas - **Seth Feit,** Group Vice President, Talent, Charter Communications; **Meredith Garwood,** Group VP, Tax, Charter Communications; **Jonica Hartman,** Director, Strategic Initiatives, Spectrum Reach; and **Sandra Howe,** Technology Executive, S. Howe & Associates
* Florida - **Marva Johnson,** Group VP, State Government Affairs - South Region, Charter Communications
* Great Lakes - **Michelle Gilbert,** VP, Public Relations, Comcast
* Greater Chicago - **Debra Piscola,** Sr. Director, Government Affairs, Comcast
* Greater Ohio - **Jeff Gehrig,** Director of Finance, Comcast
* Greater Philadelphia - **Kristy Blaise,** VP, Learning Engagement, Comcast
* Greater Pittsburgh - **Danielle Erringer,** Sr. HR Director , Comcast
* Greater Texas - **Tara Whitehead Stotland,** Strategy Lead, Cognizant Digital Business & Technology
* Heartland - **Anne Harris,** Director, Marketing & Client Solutions, Cox Media
* Latin America - **Claudia Varela,** Former General Manager, Playstation LATAM North, Viacom
* Midwest - **Sally West,** Sr. Director, Reporting & Analytics, Charter Communications
* New England - **Lori LeBas,** SVP, Platform Distribution Operations, The Walt Disney Company
* New York - **Mary Susan Schilling,** Empowerment & Engagement Coach & Consultant
* Northern California - **Anju Ahuja,** VP, Product Strategy & Insights, CableLabs; and **Keith Turner,** Vice President, Sales and Marketing, California Region, Comcast
* Pacific Northwest - **Megan Bishop,** VP, Finance & Accounting, Comcast
* Rocky Mountain - **Keely Buchanan,** Director, Employee Experience, Charter Communications
* Southeast - **Laura Dames,** EVP/GM, WarnerMedia Studios; **Sujata Gosalia,** EVP and Chief Strategy Officer, Cox Communications; **Kimberly Kleinhans,** SVP, Finance, Comcast; and **Sheri McGaughy,** Founder, McGaughy Law
* Southwest - **Shawn Duncan,** Vice President, SWR Field Ops, Cox Communications
* Virginia - **Toni Stubbs,** VP, Technology, Engineering & Operations, Cox Communications
* Washington DC/Baltimore - **LaTanya Butler,** Vice President, Marketing and Partnerships, TV One

**About The WICT Network**

The WICT Network is a nonpartisan organization whose mission is to create women leaders that transform our industry. We do this by providing unparalleled professional development programs, commissioning original gender research, and supporting a B2B network that helps advance women. For more than 40 years, The WICT Network has partnered with media, entertainment and technology companies to help build a more robust pipeline of women leaders. Founded in 1979, and now over 10,000 members strong, The WICT Network is the largest and oldest professional association serving women in media. **Charter Communications**and **Comcast NBCUniversal**are The WICT Network’s Strategic Touchstone Partners. [Please visit www.wict.org](https://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001WPkNGyYKKOGD6qG8bBfKkiYZpVOnptuHuHuQDHd_jj6eiL0wloqyh-uLCjxqC_WiSeeT42EhTTcmUDubDSQbTbE8l7d9W4jSQ6EXYO2jB0l9NOOUfgyIEi73hJyWHRhuv9eCXLbzO2g=&c=1YPIiE1Q-cKIEG81T_utkQiZlnh0Iytmv8MvnVGnm_VE6zhl8ZQCNg==&ch=FsTpkPFaqPO18VXHwYmnGbut9Qvx3T8fsDY4yLtRtcyqMIS9nC_I4A==) or follow @WICTHQ on Facebook/Instagram/LinkedIn/Twitter for more information.