

# Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

## Call Drop: AT&T Struggles With Outage Across Network

U.S. residents woke up Thursday to an unpleasant surprise with Down Detector reporting all three major wireless operators—**AT&T**, **Verizon** and **T-Mobile**—were experiencing network outages.

The disruption was apparent far and wide, from impacted customers complaining on social media to a line of people outside a Maryland AT&T store waiting for it to open so they could get answers on the outage. Two of the three providers quickly worked to put out information that effectively declared “It wasn’t me.” Verizon spoke out first, stating that its network remained fully operational.

“Some customers may have experienced issues this morning when calling or texting those served by another carrier. Our network continues to function normally,” the operator said in a statement.

T-Mobile echoed Verizon’s sentiment, putting its hands up and declaring that its network had nothing to do with the issues some subscribers were having making calls. “We did not experience an outage. Our network is operating normally,” it said. “Down Detector is likely reflecting challenges our customers were having attempting to connect to users on other networks.”

Cable operators were among the other mobile providers that did not experience disruptions Thursday. **Spectrum Mobile** and **Xfinity Mobile** both saw their networks stand up reliably Thursday morning. Xfinity Mobile also stepped in to offer backup service to those who were impacted, opening its Xfinity WiFi network to non-customers.

Unfortunately, AT&T had to sing a different tune in its mes-

sages to the public. AT&T offered periodic updates on its website and social media accounts, having three-quarters of its network restored by 11:15am ET and saying its engineers were working as quickly as possible to completely restore service to all subscribers. At 3:10pm ET, AT&T said it had restored wireless service to all affected customers.

“Keeping our customers connected remains our top priority, and we are taking steps to ensure our customers do not experience this again in the future,” the operator said.

Rep. **Ed Markey** (D-MA) used the outage to talk about net neutrality, taking to X to share why he believes the FCC designating broadband as a Title II service would be a benefit at a time like this. “Today’s cell service outage is another reminder of why we need #netneutrality. The FCC rulemaking would strengthen its authority to require Internet Service Providers to report and fix network outages. It’s exactly what we need on mornings like this one,” he said in a post.

**House Commerce** Chair **Cathy McMorris Rodgers** (R-WA) and Communications Subcommittee Chair **Bob Latta** (R-OH) also spoke out. They’re working to assess the disruption and hope to gain a complete understanding of what occurred and how it can be prevented in the future. “As we learn more, Energy and Commerce will continue to encourage transparency and accountability for those affected and ensure that appropriate steps are taken to strengthen our communications networks, which are vital for nearly every aspect of our economy and daily lives,” they said in a joint statement.



**AMERICAN BROADBAND CONGRESS**

**BEAD & BEYOND IN 2024**

**JUNE 13, 2024 • WASHINGTON, D.C**

PRESENTED BY  
**Cablefax**

## YOU'RE INVITED

Join innovators at the Cablefax American Broadband Congress, tackling issues in U.S. broadband. Key themes include: partnerships, BEAD compliance, profitability and low-cost access. Join us June 13, 2024 in Washington, D.C.

Use code **BOG02024** with a colleague to get **50% off your second pass**

**REGISTER NOW**



## How I got **HERE**

**JONATHAN  
Allen**  
GENERAL COUNSEL  
MORGAN MURPHY MEDIA



It's no easy task following in the footsteps of a media attorney veteran whose career spans four decades, but Allen is eager to take on the challenges that come with being Morgan Murphy Media's new general counsel. He succeeded Richard Burns at the turn of the year after Burns embraced a new role of retirement, putting a cap on a 45-year journey and 40-year stint with MMM.

After graduating from the University of North Carolina with a degree in Journalism and Mass Communication, Allen headed north to get his JD from the University of Virginia before fully diving into the field of law. He learned the ropes from his early days as a contract associate and law clerk, initially focusing on antitrust, telecommunications and related issues regarding short- and long-term contract projects. But it was just the beginning of Allen's personal process. "I'd tell 'recent graduate me' to trust the process. You've developed skills in college and law school that will serve you in your entire career, but it will take time and experience to fully see them in practice," he says, adding that the learning doesn't stop with a degree. "You'll be surprised how often your 'non-legal' skills (e.g., in journalism and in business) will be useful in your legal career."

Case in point: Allen's journalism side is on display when he showcases his leadership style, doing so by telling stories to colleagues and striving for authenticity to convey a theme or lesson. "Storytelling is a common thread in my work because it can be a powerful communication tool," he says. "News stories, business case studies, or law school hypotheticals all have roots in storytelling, and I hope that I can tell stories to better communicate legal advice and information in an understandable way."

Allen fuels that storytelling ability by consuming as much knowledge as possible. He subscribes to industry publications, government resources, blogs and other legal-related sites in addition to relying heavily on networking. Communication is key, and it's what keeps Allen ahead of the curve to best serve clients. "As a corporate client increases revenue, adopts new technologies, enters markets, adds lines of business or otherwise evolves, your legal advice to that client still is only as good as the lines of communication that you develop and maintain," Allen says. "Your client's key decision makers will help you determine where the company fits into the curve, and they are key to understanding the company's current and future needs."

AT&T also operates **FirstNet**, America's network for first responders and the public safety community, and county authorities also took to social media challenges to alert residents that 911 calling and texting was not working during the outage. The Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security in Montgomery County, Maryland, outside of D.C. took to X to ask residents who need to contact 911 for emergencies to use a landline or an alternative carrier as texts and WiFi calling to 911 were not consistently working.

The **FCC** is keeping an eye on the reported outages. The agency's official account on X posted an official statement indicating that its Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau is actively investigating the situation. "We are in touch with AT&T and public safety authorities, including FirstNet, as well as other providers," the account posted.

The outage comes less than two weeks after AT&T and the **FirstNet Authority** announced a 10-year, \$8 billion investment into the network evolution of FirstNet. The terms of the agreement specify that public safety officials on FirstNet will receive always-on priority and preemption across all AT&T 5G commercial spectrum bands starting in March, and 1,000 new FirstNet cell sites will be built across the country within the next two years. AT&T will also create a standalone 5G core to enhance 5G functionality to support the transition of public safety's Band 14 spectrum off of LTE, and ready the network to evolve beyond 5G.

.....

## ORGS OFFER FCC BROADBAND DATA COLLECTION SUGGESTIONS

Take a look at the commentary regarding fixed wireless rivals on earnings calls or the increasing number of advertising complaints telecom providers are filing against one another, and it's clear that competition among broadband operators is extra fierce right now. More evidence can be seen in the challenge process for the **FCC's** Broadband Data Collection that is used to inform the National Broadband Map. "Challenges by competitors that also offer service at the challenged location are much more likely to be nuisance filings designed to distract or disparage the challenged provider," **NCTA** told the FCC this week. The cable association gave the example of a member provider that received challenges from a competitor that claimed its rival's website showed thousands of challenged addresses were not included in its service areas, even though that was not the case. "The challenger did not submit any evidence to substantiate its claim, and the burden of proof then shifted to the member provider to rebut the claim, which required it to spend time and resources to collect and submit evidence showing that the addresses were served," NCTA said, adding that some of these "baseless challenges" have been granted. For the most part,

NCTA has found the FCC's Broadband Data Collection challenge process works well for fine-tuning the accuracy of the National Broadband Map, but it thinks there's room for improvement. It suggested the FCC reiterate that its established higher evidentiary standard will be applied rigorously when one competitor challenges another competitor and that such challenges should be summarily dismissed when not accompanied by credible evidence. Customer complaints are another area of focus in the challenge process. **USTelecom** said its members have experienced situations where a consumer filed a challenge and the provider followed up to confirm availability and offer service, but the consumer declined to order the service thus making it impossible for the provider to be able to report that the dispute was resolved. To avoid such situations, the association urged the FCC to allow providers to demonstrate service was available and offered, and if the challenger declines or is unreachable, the resolution should go in favor of the provider.

## CABLE ONE 4Q23 REPORT

Cable One revealed its 4Q23 earnings report after market close Thursday, and it ended the year with approximately 15,800 fewer residential customers than it had at the end of 2022. On December 31, the operator had 994,400 residential customers. About 960,500 of those are data PSUs (-0.3% YOY), 134,200 are video PSUs (-21.6% YOY) and voice PSUs were 79,200 (-13.3%). Residential data ARPU rose \$2.24 from 4Q22 to \$83.95, and 4Q23 revenues fell 3.2% YOY to \$411.8 million due primarily to declines across residential video, residential voice and other revenues. Residential data revenues increased 2.1% YOY.

## USDA GIVES MORE RECONNECT GRANTS, READIES FOR ROUND 5

**USDA** okayed another \$42 million in ReConnect program grants to bring high-speed internet to remote and underserved communities in Florida. Among the providers supported through the grants is **IBT Group USA LLC** that will use \$24.2 million to benefit more than 8,600 people, 230 businesses, 11 farms and 34 educational facilities in DeSoto County. USDA is also preparing to open the fifth round of the ReConnect program. It will begin accepting applications on March 22, and it is taking steps to ensure that ReConnect funding does not overlap with that being awarded as part of **NTIA's** BEAD program. USDA's **Rural Utilities Service** will notify NTIA and the state at least 30 days in advance of any award within that state and request that the state notify RUS of an objection based on any pending subgrantees. If any objection is unresolved, the ReConnect application may be rejected to avoid duplication of funding. USDA is also providing \$9.7 million under the Broadband Technical Assistance Program to assist 24 organizations in delivering or receiving technical assistance to expand broadband access for individuals in rural and Tribal communities across 17 states. The funding will also be used to develop and expand broadband co-ops in rural areas.

## COMSCORE EXPANDS CAMPAIGN RATINGS TO LOCAL LEVEL

It's another major election year in 2024, and **Comscore** is helping advertisers get ready. The media measurement and analytics company is extending its Comscore Campaign Ratings (CCR) to cover deduplicated audience measurement at the local market level, meaning the ratings will integrate national and local linear TV, digital, streaming and social channels for the first time. The update means advertisers can find what's needed for true reach and frequency optimization across the top 100 U.S. local markets. Full coverage of all other local markets is to follow. Tech company **The Trade Desk** will be the first demand-side platform to integrate CCR Local reporting.

## NCTI OFFERING ELECTRICAL TRAINING VIA BNS PARTNERSHIP

**NCTI** and engineering services firm **BNS** are partnering to bring a number of electrical safety training courses to NCTI's online curriculum. The first course from the partnership will be titled Electrical Safety Training for Non-Electricians. NCTI and BNS are developing it as a modular, self-paced online experience to improve electrical safety awareness and offer a foundation of life-protecting procedures, knowledge that is imperative for technicians in the broadband, telecom and wireless industries.

## SPORTSTECH ACCELERATOR

The 10 companies accepted into **Comcast NBCUniversal's** SportsTech Accelerator were unveiled Thursday. The six-month program is entering its fourth year of operation and will kick things off on March 4 in Florida. Over 1,500 applicants came in from 52 countries this year. The chosen companies will be able to collaborate with top sports and technology brands from around the globe such as the **Premier League**, **NBC Sports**, **Sky Sports** and the **PGA Tour**. The program's capstone will commence at Rally Innovation in Indianapolis come Aug. 27-28, where this year's participants can showcase their innovations. Among this year's SportsTech Accelerator class includes **Mobii Systems**, which enhances the way video streams are synchronized, encoded and distributed in real-time; **Dizplai**, which uses audience engagement for live news, sports and entertainment to turn broadcasts into two-way experiences and **Mantis-AI**, a company that uses AI to turn raw footage and noisy data into organized video clips.

## FIBER FRENZY

**Google Fiber** is primed for more growth in Missouri after the Jefferson City Council approved a right-of-way license agreement to allow the company to start building a fiber optic network. Google Fiber will begin the engineering and permitting process before it turns to construction, which is slated to start later this year. It hopes to connect its first customers in 2025.



# PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

## Apple Captures Messi's Chase for World Cup Glory

Lionel Messi had everything an athlete could want to accomplish. He's won eight Ballon d'Or trophies, four Champions League titles and an endless list of honors from his time at FC Barcelona. But the grey cloud hanging over Messi's career was the absence of a World Cup for his homeland of Argentina. With his career approaching the finish line, the opportunities to conquer that dragon were dwindling. **Apple TV+** was on hand to chronicle Messi's journey in the 2022 FIFA Men's World Cup for "Messi's World Cup: The Rise of a Legend" which premiered Wednesday. It wasn't known if it would be Messi's last hurrah at a World Cup, but the production crew was willing to roll the dice and document whatever pandemonium would happen in Qatar. Spoiler: Argentina won the World Cup in dramatic fashion. But there are many documentaries and features about Messi winning trophies. It makes it hard to create something different. Executive Producer *Jenna Millman* told **CFX** it starts with a lot of hours in the editing room, but what this production team looked for was tapping into the raw emotion of who Messi is to differentiate this piece. "These are superstars, but they are what makes these stories so great," Millman said. "With Leo, in this documentary, he really did something I think that's pretty unprecedented: he let us in. He really shows his full range of emotions." Messi is unlike most global stars. His private life isn't always blasted for all to see. With the inclusion of interviews from family members, teammates (both old and young to provide a true array of Messi's influence) and coaches, we hear from those who truly know one of soccer's all-time greats on a deeper level. That includes a pair of interviews with Messi himself, one before and one after the tournament. "Through these interviews and also through the intimate access that we had during the World Cup, to see how he faces the challenges of such an amazing and difficult situation, I think there's a privilege that we had. Through those little moments, we were able to communicate who he is," fellow EP *Juan Camilo Cruz* said. — *Noah Ziegler*

### REVIEWS

"One Day," streaming, **Netflix**. Sometimes art—be it visual, musical or a combination—that is popular also is a quality product. Other times, at least in TV, a series' popularity has little relation with its quality. Certainly, "One Day" is popular, rising through the Netflix most-watched-series chart. That's understandable. The pilot grabs many viewers' attention immediately as nerdy Emma (*Ambika Mod*) and her pals celebrate university graduation with a night of drinking. Dashing Dexter (*Leo Woodall*) enters, rescuing a mate who's sprawled drunkenly across Emma. Soon the slightly unlikely couple leave the festivities and spend the night, talking mostly, though the attraction is clear. Still, Dexter's a cad and Emma's insistent on avoiding a one-night stand and getting to know him first. Ep 2 reinforces the duo's characters: Emma is touring gloomy, one-stoplight towns in Britain as a small-time actor, while Dex is in sunny Italy teaching English but also enjoying the country's comely female cohort. Years on the two remain friends, though Emma would like more. Eventually, both find companionship with others, though love seems elusive. Dex becomes a TV celebrity and Emma finally loses interest. It's at this point that Woodall excels, he's terrific at playing a vacuous, inebriated celeb. Mod is excellent throughout. So, is it quality TV and how does it end? See for yourself. — *Seth Arenstein*

BASIC CABLE		
P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*		
(02/12/24-02/18/24)		
MON-SUN	MC	MC
	US	US AA
	AA%	(000)
<b>FNC</b>	<b>0.657</b>	<b>2071</b>
<b>MSNBC</b>	<b>0.462</b>	<b>1456</b>
<b>TNT</b>	<b>0.460</b>	<b>1450</b>
<b>HGTV</b>	<b>0.253</b>	<b>799</b>
<b>TBSC</b>	<b>0.221</b>	<b>695</b>
<b>ESPN</b>	<b>0.215</b>	<b>676</b>
<b>CNN</b>	<b>0.214</b>	<b>673</b>
<b>HIST</b>	<b>0.212</b>	<b>669</b>
<b>HALL</b>	<b>0.193</b>	<b>609</b>
<b>INSP</b>	<b>0.192</b>	<b>604</b>
<b>FOOD</b>	<b>0.188</b>	<b>591</b>
<b>DISC</b>	<b>0.177</b>	<b>558</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>0.164</b>	<b>518</b>
<b>ID</b>	<b>0.135</b>	<b>427</b>
<b>TLC</b>	<b>0.134</b>	<b>423</b>
<b>TVLAND</b>	<b>0.134</b>	<b>422</b>
<b>PRMNT</b>	<b>0.130</b>	<b>410</b>
<b>GSN</b>	<b>0.121</b>	<b>382</b>
<b>BRAVO</b>	<b>0.107</b>	<b>337</b>
<b>HMM</b>	<b>0.104</b>	<b>328</b>
<b>A&amp;E</b>	<b>0.103</b>	<b>326</b>
<b>OXY</b>	<b>0.101</b>	<b>319</b>
<b>BET</b>	<b>0.099</b>	<b>312</b>
<b>SYFY</b>	<b>0.095</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>FX</b>	<b>0.094</b>	<b>295</b>
<b>LIFE</b>	<b>0.093</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>AMC</b>	<b>0.091</b>	<b>287</b>
<b>WETV</b>	<b>0.091</b>	<b>286</b>
<b>NWSMX</b>	<b>0.088</b>	<b>278</b>
<b>NAN</b>	<b>0.082</b>	<b>260</b>
<b>ADSM</b>	<b>0.082</b>	<b>257</b>
<b>APL</b>	<b>0.080</b>	<b>253</b>
<b>FS1</b>	<b>0.079</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>TRAVEL</b>	<b>0.071</b>	<b>224</b>
<b>COM</b>	<b>0.070</b>	<b>222</b>

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

**THE FAXIES**  
RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE IN PR & MARKETING

The FAXIES awards recognize excellence across all areas of marketing, communications, and PR within the industry, seeking groundbreaking, engaging, interactive and creative campaigns. Help us celebrate the people who keep our industry flourishing.

**NOMINATE NOW**