

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Data and Outcomes: NTIA Talks 30 Years of Its Internet Use Survey

NTIA and the U.S. Census Bureau have been knocking on doors for more than 30 years to gather the information needed for what's known today as NTIA's Internet Use Survey. The agency's celebrated three decades of collaboration on the U.S.'s longest-running, most comprehensive national survey of computer and Internet use Thursday. They've produced 17 editions of the survey so far, and they don't plan on stopping any time soon.

"Whatever you do in your professional life, almost nothing you do will have the impact or cause you as much satisfaction as looking back and realizing that the work you do connected the unconnected—the poor, the elderly, rural families, people who need educational help," former NTIA Administrator *Larry Irving*, who helped kickstart the initiative, said during the celebratory event. "Thank you for that."

Current NTIA Administrator *Alan Davidson* was also on hand, and he remarked how strikingly similar the conversations had about internet access and technology adoption in 1994 are to the discussions and debates taking place in 2024. "Here we are in 2024 and millions of households don't have access to that basic internet connection, and it's taken on new dimensions," he said. "Just as we did in the 90s, we still see real disparity in basic internet use. We are also finding major divides in the technologies and tools that Americans use to get online." For example, in 2023, 80% of households

in America who made over \$100,000 annually had both fixed and mobile internet connections while that figure was only 54% for households making less than \$25,000.

As for what's next when it comes to gathering even better data and putting it to work, **Information Technology & Innovation Foundation** Director, Broadband and Spectrum Policy *Joe Kane* said much more progress would be made if policymakers took more time to actually look at the information gathered by NTIA and the Census Bureau. In particular, he wishes they would spend more time analyzing data gathered around why households choose not to adopt broadband service.

"I think that's one of the most important questions out there, especially if we look at the main reason which is no need or not interested, which is interesting of itself, but all the way down at the bottom is lack of deployment. And yet, that's what our federal policy seems to be focused on is spending more and more money on deployment when that's not really the main reason for the digital divide anymore," he said. In the future, he'd like to see the survey dive even deeper into the "no need or not interested" response and examine exactly what households mean when they choose that response.

Kane also suggested offering a question around home networking and how much individuals understand about how to orient equipment in their home to unlock the full capacity of the service being delivered to the home.

"I think we're getting to a point where that might be a bottleneck, especially if you're getting to higher frequency of



The Cablefax team is thrilled to announce this year's honorees for The Most Powerful Women Awards, recognizing the distinguished women leaders who are innovating and inspiring in the media and broadband space.

JUST RELEASED

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spectrum, that if your router is in a closet on the other side of the house, it doesn't matter if you have a gigabit coming into your house. You're not going to be getting it," he said. "There's room for I think especially ISPs to try to make that more user friendly."

NTIA is continuing to award grants to states and territories for the growth of broadband expansion and adoption. On Thursday, it recommended the approval of award applications from Florida (\$41.75 million), Iowa (\$8.44 million), Montana (\$6.94 million), the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (\$2.1 million) and Guam (\$2.1 million), giving the entities the ability to request access to funding for the implementation of their Digital Equity Plans.

Those plans outline how the entities will empower communities and offer them both the tools and the skills to benefit from access to reliable broadband service. For example, Florida plans to establish ConnectedFlorida, a program that will subgrant funds for programs encouraging workforce development, device ownership, digital literacy and more. The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands plans to begin discussions with telehealth and telecom providers to build out a robust telehealth network connecting Saipan, Tinian, Rota and the Northern Islands. The funding comes from the \$1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the IJA.

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HACK HITS TELCOS

A U.S. security official confirmed Chinese hackers breached at least eight U.S. telecommunications providers as part of a hacking campaign that spanned several countries. President *Biden's* deputy national security adviser for cyber and emerging technology *Anne Neuberger* said during a press briefing Wednesday that the hackers compromised companies "exploiting vulnerabilities in their systems as part of a global Chinese campaign that's affected dozens of countries around the world." U.S. officials are working with impacted providers to remove the hackers from their networks, however, there's no timeline for when everything will be clear. The Chinese government has denied involvement, though the intrusion is linked to state-sponsored actors. Reports indicate **AT&T**, **Verizon**, **T-Mobile** and **Lumen** are among affected companies. The campaign, which has been dubbed the "Salt Typhoon Attack," is believed by U.S. officials to have obtained access to the communications of senior government officials and high-profile political figures. President-elect *Donald Trump*, Vice President-elect *J.D. Vance*, Biden administration officials and folks associated with VP *Kamala Harris* are of the list of those targeted by the hacks. A large

portion of Americans had cellphone metadata breached as well, but a specific number hasn't been revealed. The **FCC** was quick to respond Thursday. Outgoing chairwoman *Jessica Rosenworcel* affirmed a proposed Declaratory Ruling that would clarify that Section 105 in the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act would create a legal obligation for carriers to secure their networks against unlawful access and interception. The proposal clarifies that it's the carriers' duty to monitor not just the equipment they use, but how they manage their networks. The FCC also issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking suggesting an annual certification requirement for communications providers to create, update and implement cybersecurity risk management plans and certify compliance of these plans with the FCC. The notice is taking public comment on expanding cybersecurity requirements across providers in addition to identifying more ways to enhance cybersecurity defenses. "As technology continues to advance, so does the capabilities of adversaries, which means the U.S. must adapt and reinforce our defenses. While the Commission's counterparts in the intelligence community are determining the scope and impact of the Salt Typhoon attack, we need to put in place a modern framework to help companies secure their networks and better prevent and respond to cyberattacks in the communications sector in the future," Rosenworcel said.

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T-MOBILE ADDS NEW PLANS

T-Mobile is rolling out three new 5G Home Internet and Small Business Internet plans. T-Mobile's Rely Internet plan serves as an entry-level option that comes with unlimited data, a 5G gateway, price lock with taxes and fees included for qualifying accounts. Rely is priced at \$50/month with autopay or \$35/month with autopay and any T-Mobile voice line. T-Mobile Amplified Internet—priced at \$60/month with autopay or \$45/month with autopay and a voice line—offers the benefits that come with the Rely plan as well as advanced cybersecurity and a mesh access point for small business customers. Lastly, the All-In Internet offering runs at \$70/month with autopay or \$55/month with the voice line, coming with everything in the Amplified option, complimentary **Hulu** and **Paramount+** Essential, a mesh access point and live assistance and support. Small business customers get an additional mesh device and live support, and starting in February, Microsoft 365 will be available at no added cost.

FREEWHEEL UNVEILS NEW CONTEXTUAL MARKETPLACE

As contextual advertising looks to be a factor in today's identity challenges within the ad marketplace, **FreeWheel** is introducing a Contextual Marketplace. It'll let publishers activate precise, contextual classification insights within streaming inventory so that advertisers can target media buys based on advanced, video-level insights. Joining as an inaugural member is **KERV.ai**, a video analysis, performance and monetization insights company, as well as Proximic, a division of Comscore that provides audience and content targeting solutions for programmatic activation.

NAMIC'S NEW CAREER CENTER

NAMIC launched a new online resource to help connect diverse professionals with top employers across media, communications and technology. Called the NAMIC Career Center, it's designed to assist organizations with identifying talent while letting NAMIC members explore different career paths. Features include anonymous resume posting, job exposure for passive candidates, social media integration, personalized job alerts, training resources and more.

AT THE COMMISSION

The **FCC** Enforcement Bureau and **Charter Communications** have entered into a consent decree to close out an investigation into whether the operator violated agency rules related to the temporary removal of certain Emergency Alert System encoder/decoder devices to upgrade them. In Sept. 2022, the FCC adopted new EAS rules requiring all participants to use both text and audio from alerts issued in the Internet-based Common Alert Protocol format over the EAS protocol version received over the air. Companies were required to update their equipment to comply with the rule changes by Dec. 12, 2023, and a significant portion of Charter's existing equipment required hardware and software upgrades. Charter worked with EAS device vendor **Digital Alert Systems** to plan for the upgrade in July 2022, and the pair agreed to a rolling process where the operator would take a limited number of devices offline, upgrade them and re-install them. At times, portions of its footprint were operating without more than a dozen devices. Because of the sheer number of devices requiring hardware upgrades, Charter was not able to deploy spare units every time a device was taken offline to receive its upgrade. The Commission's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau reached out to Charter with questions around the process and the operator asserted it was operating in good faith and was given no reason at any point to believe it was not in compliance with EAS rules. The bureau asserted Charter violated rules around defective equipment because the devices taken temporarily out of commission were capable of performing certain required functions. Charter will pay a

\$1.1 million settlement to the U.S. Treasury and implement a compliance plan as part of the agreement.

FIBER FRENZY

Burlington Telecom expanded its fiber network in Chittenden County, Vermont, adding approximately 6,000 new residential and business addresses across the areas of South Burlington, Essex Junction, Winooski and Shelburne. Internet plans start at \$58/month for symmetrical 150 Mbps speeds, with a 300 Mbps option for \$68/month and 1 Gig plan for \$73/month also available. Additionally, BT offers student options that entail 50 Mbps for \$45/month and 200 Mbps for \$50/month. – **GoNetspeed** added more addresses in Granby, Massachusetts. More than 2,200 homes and businesses now have access to the company's internet offerings following a \$2.4 million investment.

DOING GOOD

The Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Indiana (RMHCCIN) will now have TVs in every bedroom following a donation from **DirectTV**. DirecTV is a global partner for Ronald McDonald House Charities, and it'll be hosting RMHCCIN families at another one of its sponsors' events: The Big Ten Championship game and Fan Fest on Saturday in Indianapolis.

PROGRAMMING

"Murder Under the Friday Night Lights" will return with a two-hour season premiere chronicling the downfall of former Patriots tight end *Aaron Hernandez*. The special "Aaron Hernandez and the Untold Murders of Bristol" debuts Jan. 8 at 9pm on **Investigation Discovery**. – **TelevisaUnivision** is teaming up with the nonprofit WorkingNation to present a special edition of "Aquí y Ahora." The one-hour special, titled "Overcoming Obstacles," examines the challenges faced by the Latino workforce such as healthcare shortages and workers' rights. The episode will also spotlight stories of resilience and innovation. It'll air Sunday at 10pm on **Univision**. – **HGTV's** "Fixer to Fabulous" will return Jan. 7 at 8pm. The new season will have 16 episodes. – **Max** renewed its original series "Like Water for Chocolate" for a second season. The show became the most-watched Latin American content on Max across the globe and is among the top three most-watched series on the platform during its premiere month (November).

PEOPLE

Tim Gaughan is the new VP, News Operations at **Newsmax**. Gaughan has previously spent more than a decade a **Fox News** where he became VP, Newsgathering as well as VP, Affiliate Services. He also had a stint with **CBS News**, where he held the titles of Director of Digital Newsgathering and Special Events.

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

Harlem Globetrotters Exploring More Than B-Ball

The Harlem Globetrotters are ready to make their modern television debut with an **AspireTV** original docuseries, "Harlem Globetrotters: Secrets of the City," which is set to premiere in 2025. A preview of the first episode will air tonight at 8pm. The series follows the iconic basketball team as they travel to cities and immerse themselves in different cultures around the world, offering a unique perspective on their interactions with fans and the communities they impact. Although the Globetrotters are known for their entertaining, high-flying basketball, Executive Producer *Ri-Karlo Handy* described the show as more than a sports docuseries, calling it an "action-adventure travel show." Episode 1 features the Globetrotters racing ATVs to the ancient pyramids of Cairo. "One thing that I think people don't realize about the Globetrotters is they are ... not only adventurous, but they like to do things that are fun and exciting," Handy said. "And so I think this show is kind of like a window on how you can be adventurous too ... and I love it because beyond basketball, what it means is they're really showing you how to connect with other cultures meaningfully and responsibly." Secrets of the City highlights AspireTV's dedication to original programming that celebrates Black culture while exploring food, travel and cultural experiences. *Angela Cannon*, General Manager of AspireTV, said the series helps to expand the network's borders. "It can be sports, it can be travel, it can be a docuseries, but ultimately, when you have ... a global brand like the Globetrotters that are kind of helping you solidify a new wave and a new age of programming, it's a win-win for all of us. And it just allows for us as a network to have a property that can scale with us," Cannon said. – *Noah Odige*

REVIEWS

"Black Doves," streaming, **Netflix**. A caveat: The killing Wednesday morning of a United-Health executive outside a New York City hotel might turn viewers off from content like this taut potboiler starring *Keira Knightley*, which begins with a trio of murders in London. While "Doves" doesn't make light of murder, its characters, who are professional assassins, rationalize their 'work' and even justify it. Chief among them is Knightley's character, Helen, a homemaker, mother of young twins and wife of Britain's defense minister, a properly decorous Andrew Buchan, who is clueless about her activities. In addition, he doesn't know about her affair with a civil servant, one of the three poor souls murdered in the series' opening. Perhaps that's because the minister is concerned with the government's fate and is grappling with the killing of China's ambassador to Britain and disappearance of his socialite daughter. Since much of the story occurs around Christmas, viewers will find it relatable. Also helping are several down-to-Earth, waggish characters surrounding Knightley's spy. Among the best is her gun-toting mentor, Sam (an appropriately quirky *Ben Whishaw*), whose personal life, unlike Helen's jackpot of high-level government secrets, is a liability. And even relatively minor players shine, particularly *Sarah Lancashire* and *Kathryn Hunter* as supervisors of the clandestine operators and killers. And there's a fine cameo. Consider that a holiday treat. – *Seth Arenstein*

BASIC CABLE		
P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*		
(11/25/24-12/01/24)		
MON-SUN	MC	MC
	US	US AA
	AA%	(000)
ESPN	0.649	2058
FNC	0.625	1983
HALL	0.341	1081
PRMNT	0.248	788
HGTV	0.154	487
USA	0.147	465
TLC	0.143	454
DISC	0.139	442
MSNBC	0.138	436
HIST	0.135	429
INSP	0.133	421
HALLMYS	0.132	420
ESPN2	0.131	415
FOOD	0.131	414
TBSC	0.129	410
TNT	0.124	394
FX	0.115	364
ID	0.101	321
TVLAND	0.095	300
CNN	0.093	293
FRFM	0.091	290
BRAVO	0.090	286
AMC	0.087	275
LIFE	0.086	274
A&E	0.079	252
GSN	0.078	246
WETV	0.072	228
REELZ	0.071	225
NWSMX	0.065	207
BET	0.065	205
SYFY	0.064	203
CMT	0.059	188
COM	0.057	181
NATGEO	0.057	180
GAF	0.055	174

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

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Contact Ellen Kamhi at 917.626.5574
or ekamhi@accessintel.com

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