

# Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

## Survey Says: Fiber Was on Fire in 2024, Hits Record High

Those regular “Fiber Frenzy” headlines in **Cablefax** detailing the latest fiber builds really add up. A new **Fiber Broadband Association** report found that 2024 set a record for the highest annual fiber-to-the-home growth, with 10.3 million homes marketed to. That compares to 9.1 million in 2023 and 7.2 million in 2019 (all data is through 3Q of each year). Since 2020, all-fiber availability has grown from less than 40% of U.S. households to almost 60%, and all-fiber connectivity has grown from approximately 15% to approximately 30%.

According to the FBA study with **RVA Consulting**, fiber now passes 76.5 million unique homes (the number jumps to 88.1 million passings when homes with more than one passing are included). The report found that 35.1 million U.S. homes are connected to all-fiber infrastructure—an average take rate of 45.2%. The study is based on an analysis of company reports, FBA/RVA surveys, reviews of **FCC** mapping, interviews with vendors and engineers and other sources, including data from other associations.

FBA revealed the new report in a letter to the FCC on Friday. “All-fiber’s remarkable success has been largely driven by investment by private broadband providers. Recent announcements of additional, substantial deployments by **AT&T** and other providers, as well as other market events, buttress the conclusion that all-fiber technology is the critical communications infrastructure for the 21st Century,” the association said.

It went on to quote AT&T chief *John Stankey*’s recent [analyst day](#) remarks, in which he said the company expects to reach 50 million+ locations with fiber by the end of 2029. **Optimum**, a brand of **Altice USA**, has also been on a fiber tear. Late last month, the provider [said](#) it had reached the milestone of 500,00 residential customers on its 100% fiber network. In 2024, it’s invested more than \$40 million in fiber for Long Island alone, with additional multi-million-dollar network spends across its Northeast footprint.

Fiber has been given preferred treatment in some of the government’s broadband funding efforts, notably BEAD. It’s something FBA fought hard for and doesn’t want to lose as some raise concerns that the incoming administration could give satellite broadband a larger role in these programs. It’s uncertain what sort of weight *Elon Musk* could have, with the tea leaves even murkier following a *NY Times* [report](#) Tuesday that Musk and **SpaceX** have repeatedly failed to comply with federal reporting protocols aimed at protecting state secrets and have triggered at least three federal reviews.

FBA’s filing didn’t weigh in on LEO satellite, instead subtly making its fiber is better point. “We recognize that government funding, including support provided by the Commission’s Universal Service Fund Programs, has been a key factor in driving all-fiber deployments to unserved and underserved locations, enabling residents and businesses in more remote locations to have the same high-quality broadband performance as enjoyed by urban and suburban users,” FBA wrote. “Moreover, new grants that will further propel fiber builds—for instance,

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by the U.S. Department of Treasury pursuant to the Capital Projects Fund program and the State of Louisiana for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment program—highlight that government agencies are learning the lessons of the ‘market’ and prioritizing fiber availability and connectivity.”

**FOX NEWS WINS '24 RATINGS RACE**

Fox News found itself atop the cable network ratings mountain once again. There are a few weeks to go in 2024, but no linear net is poised to catch it. The news net averaged 2.41 million viewers in primetime during 2024, a 31% improvement compared to 2023, while also averaging 298,000 viewers A25-54 in the 8-11pm window. In total day, Fox News came in at 1.46 million viewers—up 21% YOY—and 187,000 A25-54. Following Fox News was **MSNBC**, which will end the year No. 2 in both total day and primetime with 807,000 and 1.3 million viewers, respectively. MSNBC also defeated **CNN** in average minute viewership with 807,000 total viewers compared to 488,000.

**LIV TO FOX?**

There’s been relative uncertainty for **LIV Golf** and its broadcasting situation since the entity was founded in 2021, but it might have a new home soon. *Sports Business Journal* writes that LIV Golf has had “high level discussions” with **Fox Sports** over a possible deal that would put LIV Golf’s events on Fox Sports platforms starting next year. It’s still to be determined if that means tournaments on **Fox**, **FS1** or a combination of both. LIV Golf is currently in its second year airing events on **CW Network**,

also putting live content on **Facebook** and **YouTube**. LIV Golf’s deal with CW included a third-year option that wasn’t triggered.

**‘YELLOWSTONE’ FINALE SCORES BIG**

The Season 5B finale of “Yellowstone” was the biggest episode in series history with 11.4 million viewers on **Paramount** Sunday night. That helped the Season 5B average beat Season 5A’s by 4% (10.3 million), also out-performing it on socials with a 103% improvement on viewers (575 million) and a 68% increase on engagements (22 million) across platforms.

**BACK ON THE BLOCK**

Allan Block has returned as CEO of **Block Communications, Inc.**, the parent company of **Buckeye Broadband** and *The (Toledo) Blade*. He was actually reinstated back in October after the dismissal of a lawsuit he had filed to prevent his brother, *John Robinson Block*, and other members of the family from selling the businesses. We’re just catching up on the news. “BCI is pleased to announce that its shareholder dispute regarding the ongoing exploration of strategic alternatives has been amicably resolved,” said a company statement at the time. According to *The Blade*, *Karen Johnese* and *John Robinson Block* will serve as BCI’s chairman and vice-chairman, respectively.

**SYNDEO INSTITUTE SEEKING WOMEN IN CABLE STORIES**

**Syndeo Institute** is working to curate a targeted collection of

**Most Powerful Women Cablefax**

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**

[www.CablefaxWomen.com](http://www.CablefaxWomen.com)

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women's stories that highlight the cable industry contributions of female entrepreneurs, technologists, content creators and operational leaders. With the support of the Durtza Charitable Remainder Fund, Syndeo will collect individual oral histories and host panel discussions that will be preserved in the Barco Library. "When we talk about mavericks, visionaries and industry trailblazers, women have always been a vital part of that narrative. The cable industry has long been a place where women have found not only opportunities but the freedom to innovate, lead and thrive," Syndeo President & CEO *Diane Christman* wrote in a [blog post](#) (with a nice tip of the hat to **Cablefax's** Most Powerful Women). "As a woman leader, this effort is not just a responsibility for me—it's a passion. Preserving and sharing these stories ensures that future generations understand the remarkable role women have played in shaping our industry and inspires them to continue breaking barriers."

## CARRIAGE

**Sinclair** sealed a network distribution deal with **Fox Television Stations** to add the OTA network **TBD TV** to Fox O&O affiliates beginning Jan. 15. The agreement includes 22 million total TV households and spans New York (WNYW), LA (KTTV), Chicago (WFLD), Atlanta (WAGA) and Phoenix (KSAZ). TBD TV, which focuses on comedy and added previous iterations of "Saturday Night Live" to its lineup this year, had its highest-rated month ever in November, including a 114% YOY increase in total day ratings for P25-54. – **Cineverse** launched the **Dog Whisperer** channel on **Samsung TV Plus**. Cineverse has held the global rights to "Dog Whisperer with Cesar Milan" since August 2023, including the distribution of all nine seasons and 160 episodes. Since debuting on Cineverse last January, Dog Whisperer has recorded 204 million minutes viewed. – The **Crunchyroll** app has launched on **Comcast's** Xfinity X1, Xfinity Flex and Xumo Stream Box. The anime streamer is also available on Xumo TVs, currently sold across the U.S. in over 8,000 retail locations. Crunchyroll is bringing more than 40+ new anime series to fans this fall, including "Dragon Ball DAIMA" and the 25th anniversary season of "One Piece."

## FUSE MAKES ADDITIONS TO AD SALES SOLUTION

**Fuse Media** signed a deal with the global multi-platform entertainment company **Hartbeat** to be the exclusive seller of all advertising inventory on Hartbeat's **LOL! Network** and **LOL Stand-Up!** FAST channels. The two channels will be added to Fuse Media's proprietary ad sales solution Culture Collective, a portfolio of owned-and-operated diverse-focused channels and premium partner channels that streamline access to multicultural youth audiences on streaming platforms. Both LOL! Network and LOL Stand-Up! Over-index in Black and Hispanic audiences.

## FIBER FRENZY

**Lumos** unveiled a \$246 million project for its inaugural expansion in DuPage and Cook Counties, Illinois. Engineering work is already underway and marks the company's entrance into the Chicago metro area.

## AWARDS

The WiFi NOW Awards 2024 were unveiled Tuesday. This year saw a record 74 entries from 46 companies across 10 categories. **Cisco** was among the honorees for Best Enterprise WiFi Solution with its AI-RRM tool, while **Plume's** HomePass was crowned Best In-Home WiFi Product. **Charter** won Best WiFi Service Provider following its new WiFi 7 routers and overall service. **Helium Mobile** took home two categories—Best WiFi Innovation and Best WiFi Startup—and **Amazon's** eero was awarded the Best Consumer WiFi Router. WiFi Now is a community and media company focused on all aspects of wireless networking.

## PROGRAMMING

**BET** will have a one-hour special "BET Year in Black 2024" that'll air Dec. 29 at 7pm. **CBS News** anchor *Jericka Duncan* will host the show along with a roundtable discussion with various Black celebrities like actor/comedian *Ms. Pat* and *Michael Blackson*, *Hollywood Unlocked* founder *Jason Lee* and entertainer *Pretty Vee*. They'll revisit unforgettable moments in 2024 across pop culture, entertainment, sports and news. An encore presentation will run Dec. 30 at 10pm on BET and **BET HER**. – The **NCAA Women's Volleyball Tournament** semifinals are taking place this weekend. Louisville vs Pittsburgh will begin Thursday at 6:30pm, followed by Penn State vs Nebraska at 9pm. Both matches will be on **ESPN** and **ESPN+**, with the latter offering a traditional simulcast and high-end zone coverage. The championship will take place Sunday at 3pm on **ABC**, **ESPN+** and **Disney+**. – "The Joe Schmo Show" will make its triumphant return Jan. 21 at 9pm on **TBS**. – **Disney** and **BBC Studios** unveiled plans to release the first-ever animated feature film for "Bluey." Disney acquired the global theatrical rights for the film, which will arrive in theaters in 2027 before being available to stream on **Disney+**. – **Apple** comedy series "Bad Monkey" was handed a second-season renewal. Season 1 is available on **Apple TV+**.

## EDITORS' NOTE

Make sure to get those **Cablefax 100** nominations done before the holidays. We're looking for the most influential executives who have shown excellence in the media, cable and broadband industry. It's free to enter through Jan. 13 (an extended entry deadline will be available through Jan. 17 for a late fee of \$399 per entry). Visit our [CFX 100 website](#) to submit nominations and find more information.