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WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Game Time: Wireless Providers

Show Up to Celebrate Super Bowl LIX

Super Bowl LIX kicks off Sunday at 6:30pm ET, but this weekend isn't all about football. For connectivity providers, it's about providing connection inside the stadium and throughout New Orleans and showing customers the power of the latest and greatest technologies.

It's been nearly 20 years since Hurricane Katrina caused catastrophic damage to New Orleans and surrounding areas, and **Verizon Frontline** has worked together with satellite communications company **ST Engineering iDirect** to put together an exclusive event for public safety officials in the city showing off new technologies designed to deliver connectivity during emergencies. Among the assets on display are a Tactical Humanitarian Operations Response (THOR) vehicle equipped with private 5G Ultra Wideband, mobile edge compute and a multitude of backhaul options as well as a Satellite Picocell on Trailer (SPOT) supporting up to 400 users with WiFi access as well as satellite backhaul.

The event comes after a particularly tough January for first responders given the wildfires that destroyed more than 12,000 structures, and it's an effort to show that community that broadband providers have their back. In 2024 alone, the Verizon Frontline Crisis Response Team was deployed nearly 900 times across the country.

Verizon has also poured energy into fan experiences in New Orleans and across the country. Its "House of Verizon" located on Fulton Alley is giving the wireless company's customers ap-

pearances by **NFL** athletes as well as DJs and musical artists as well as appointments in a "Glam Suite" with a personalized stylist. There's a shop stocked with NFL apparel from New Orleans-based vintage store Swamp Rags, and guests can participate in challenges to win authentic customer apparel and the grand prize of two tickets to the Super Bowl.

Beyond New Orleans, Verizon is hosting its first Super Bowl FanFest events at stadiums and venues in 30 cities across the country, and all 100,000 free tickets have been claimed. Verizon is donating thousands of tickets to organizations supporting first responders in Los Angeles, who will be honored during the FanFest at SoFi Stadium.

When it comes to in-stadium connectivity, Verizon is also playing a role, but others are stepping up to ensure fans can stay connected. **Cox Communications** has increased its capacity from 10 to 40 gig speeds at the Superdome while also installing more than 1,300 miles of fiber optic cables across the city. Additionally, Cox Contour TV customers with a 4K TV and the company's Contour Wireless 4K box will be able to watch the Super Bowl in 4K on channel 4001.

DirecTV will also be offering the football game in 4K UHD, and this will be a showcase moment for the provider's new MySports package. DirecTV recently announced that an additional 104 **Fox** stations have opted into the package, making it available in all top-50 markets across the country. This week, Comcast announced it is teaming with **Dolby** to deliver the game in both Dolby Vision and Dolby Atmos as part of its Enhanced 4K offering.

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T-Mobile covers 99% of New Orleans with its Ultra Capacity 5G, and upgrades it has made around the Superdome mean peak download speeds inside the stadium can reach 1.2 Gbps. The company boosted its indoor distributed antenna systems to ensure 5G signals reach every inch of the stadium and upgrades were made across all macro cell sites in the areas surrounding it to support any and all tailgates. Download speeds in those surrounding areas are now peaking at 920 Mbps.

AT&T is the neutral host provider at the Superdome, and it noted it has also invested in enhancements for its distributed antenna system. There's also an expanded outdoor antenna system around the stadium to cover parking garages and party decks.

It also put to bed any doubts that it could handle the immense amount of data that will come with Sunday's game, reminding everyone that it was able to manage the challenge of keeping a network strong during three dates of *Taylor Swift's* Eras Tour at the Superdome in October. Those three concerts generated 69 terabytes of data, the most the provider has ever moved at the venue. To put it into perspective, that equates to just about 14 million social media posts with photos included.

SPLIT OPINIONS IN FCC DOCKET ON '60 MINUTES' INTERVIEW

The FCC's [docket](#) on CBS' "60 Minutes" interview with *Kamala Harris* has been open for only two days, but it's already racked up dozens of filings with the agency adding more [video](#) from CBS to the record Friday. Often times, FCC dockets that draw comments from public individuals are littered with form letters repeating the same language (see net neutrality), but this issue has a wide range of feedback that seems personally crafted. And when **CFX** perused the filings, a majority saw no issues with the CBS interview and edits. On Friday afternoon, CFX counted 57 comments against the proceeding (or who felt CBS was not in the wrong) and 43 in favor of the FCC investigating or who felt CBS overstepped. FCC dockets are constantly being updated, so those totals could quickly change. "Rather than addressing the pressing and substantial issues facing our society, this initiative appears to be an unnecessary and poorly-constructed effort to attack perceived enemies of *Donald Trump*," said a comment listed as from *Nathanel Norman*. Tensions were high on both sides with calls for everyone from the CEO of CBS to FCC Chair *Brendan Carr* to resign immediately. A few comments used words we can't print and more than one suggested attention instead be paid to the price of eggs. A commenter going by the name *Elise Nappi* encouraged the FCC to take action against CBS, citing past controversies over its editing of *Katie Couric's* documentary about the Virginia

Citizen Defense League and 60 Minutes' 2013 retraction of its report on the attack on the U.S. diplomatic compound in Benghazi. "I would sincerely hope that the FCC finally takes a stand and imposes the kind of punishment on the program that not only makes a statement for the rest of the activist media, but lets CBS News and 60 Minutes know that this type of deception will no longer be tolerated," Nappi concluded. **One Ministries Inc** (OMI), which has waged an unsuccessful must carry fight with **Comcast** over Fort Bragg, CA, station KQSL, is using the proceeding to once again push for changes that would help it gain carriage. "The new administration gives new hope for independent Christian broadcasters like OMI. I realize that the FCC has limited resources, and so instead of focusing on news distortion with CBS, it may make sense to instead focus resources on unleashing independent broadcasters by helping foster their growth so that they can provide news with a counter viewpoint that is conservative," OMI President *Keith Leitch* wrote in a letter recommending the FCC extend must carry rules to newer vMVPD services, including the "Carry-one, Carry-all" policy which would mean carriage of one full-power station in a market would trigger carriage for all other full-power stations in the market.

MAJOR LEAGUE RUGBY SIGNS MULTI-YEAR ESPN DEAL

ESPN is adding another league to its portfolio. It signed a multi-year media rights deal with **Major League Rugby** to put games on ESPN platforms. All regular-season and playoff games will stream live on **ESPN+**, and a select number of matches will be aired on ESPN2. Replays of each match, highlights and rugby content can be found on The Rugby Network after a 72-hour delay. Additionally, the deal means MLR will be available across Sub-Saharan Africa. MLR begins its season Feb. 15 with five matches on ESPN+ starting at 6pm.

PRIME VIDEO KEEPING WILD CARD GAME, PER REPORT

It appears the **NFL's** streaming Wild Card game will remain with **Prime Video** for a while. *Sports Business Journal* [reports](#) that Prime Video will retain the Wild Card game's rights for another seven years, or when the league's media deal with **Amazon** expires after the 2032 season. Prime Video streamed this year's Steelers vs Ravens game in what was originally supposed to be a one-time gig. That one reeled in an average of 22.1 million viewers, which was down from the Dolphins vs Chiefs Wild Card game on **Peacock** in the previous season.

ANOTHER STARZ OFFER

It's hard to keep track of the new offers and bundles **Starz** has rolled out recently. This time, it's partnering with **Verizon** to offer a year of Starz included for eligible home internet customers. It's initially only available for customers in Philadelphia, Baltimore and D.C. markets who order Fios 1 Gig or 2 Gig Home Internet, or for folks in Atlanta who order 5G Home Plus. Verizon joins **Max**, **YouTube TV** and **BET+** and more as companies Starz is teaming up with as of late.

COMMSCOPE PARTNERS WITH HAAS F1 TEAM

The **Formula 1** fever has hit **CommScope**, with the manufacturer signing a multi-year deal to become the connectivity partner of the MoneyGram Haas F1 team. CommScope will supply race day network operations including trackside car,

garage and pit wall connectivity as well as a high-speed WiFi offering for VIP guests in the team's hospitality suite.

FIBER FRENZY

As part of **Charter's** Rural Construction initiative, Spectrum launched Spectrum internet, mobile, TV and voice services to over 660 homes and businesses in Burke County, North Carolina. It's also expanding to more than 1,500 homes and businesses in Anson County. – **Hiawatha Broadband** is rolling out an additional 3,100 new passings for its symmetrical multi-gig Flight Fiber network in the Winona, Minnesota, area. The expansion is part of Hiawatha's \$4 million goal to replace its existing hybrid fiber coax infrastructure with the Flight Fiber network. Hiawatha encompasses over 5,000 homes and businesses in the Winona area.

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Social Media Hits

FOX Sports: NFL @NFLonFOX

Great futures and football! That's what @FOXSports does

Proud to partner with @BGCA_Clubs and @BGCMetroLA in advance of Super Bowl LIX! #FOXSportsSupports



AT&T Public Policy @ATTPublicPolicy


Our @ATT Network team was honored to spend time with @BrendanCarrFCC and share insights on recovery efforts to support our neighbors and customers in North Carolina's Chimney Rock community. #ATTNorthCarolina

Brendan Carr @BrendanCarrFCC · Jan 31

When flooding took out miles of fiber that ran through North Carolina's Chimney Rock community, Phillip & his team took action.

He got in the river & hiked the 3.6 miles up to Bat Cave (making the trip 7X) to pull conduit through the river....

Show more



Senator Ted Cruz @SenTedCruz

Congratulations to my Telecom Policy Director, @ArielleRoth, for being nominated to lead NTIA!

Arielle led my legislative and oversight efforts on communications and broadband policy with integrity, creativity, and dedication. She has fought to defend the taxpayer, free speech, and kids online.

She'll serve President Trump and future Commerce Secretary Lutnick well in their mission to advance government efficiency, economic growth, and innovation.

Congratulations to Arielle and her entire family on this important nomination.

 **Up Ahead**

- FEB. 11: Fiber Broadband Association Regional Fiber Connect; San Antonio**
- FEB. 23-25: NCTC Winter Educational Conference; Atlanta**
- FEB. 23-26: NTCA's RTIME; San Antonio**
- MARCH 4-6: ACA Connects Summit; D.C.**
- MARCH 10-13: CableLabs Winter Conference; Orlando**
- APRIL 30: CTAM Think; NYC**