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INNOVATION /
LEADERSHIP /
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APRIL 2026



Influence Index

The people behind the industry's biggest bets and boldest strategies.

AI's Next Wave

Why broadband and media companies are betting on artificial intelligence.

Cablefax100.com



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Stephanie Mitchko
CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER &
GLOBAL HEAD OF MEDIA OPERATIONS

And all the 2026 CFX 100 Honorees

CFX

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Above It All

It's possible to shine so bright you transcend our annual CFX 100 rankings. Meet this year's executives who have risen above the rest. They are, unmistakably, Above It All.

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The 100

These are the dealmakers, builders and visionaries shaping what comes next for media and broadband—sometimes unlocking new ways for both sides to grow together.

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AI Playbook

AI isn't just hype—it's quickly becoming embedded across the industry. While most companies are still experimenting or in the early stages, momentum is building fast. Here are five key AI trends shaping what comes next.

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Survey Says

The CFX State of AI Adoption in Cable and Media Survey digs into how the industry is putting AI to use, from operational improvements to assisting in marketing and creative, and what's next for the industry.

SAY HELLO TO CFX

For many years, folks would ask me if we ever thought about rebranding Cablefax.

First, it was over having the word “fax” in our name. But over time, fax morphed into an acceptable substitute for “facts.” Case in point, no one seems too bent out of shape over Carfax keeping its brand identity.

Then it was the word “cable” that became more of an issue. Calling it “cable” undersells an industry that powers multi-gig broadband, runs streaming platforms, competes in wireless, produces top-tier content and serves enterprise and SMB customers. A wave of name changes occurred, with organizations replacing cable with words like connectivity, internet or broadband.

We certainly thought about joining The Great Rebrand many times over the years. But we also understood that there is a lot of pride and innovation built on those cable roots. And while the operator and content sides of the business have grown in different directions, we’ve consistently focused on being the connective thread—keeping a finger on the pulse of both. Plus, do we really need a ConnectivityFax?

Instead, we began using the acronym CFX more and more. You’ll see it frequently in the Daily. It’s the name of our podcast, “CFX Download.” And now, it’s officially our name, which we’re rolling out with a new look and logo.

What does CFX stand for? We are the business journal for convergent media. We are the definitive voice covering connectivity, streaming, FAST, audience monetization, AI, ad tech, sports rights and distribution economics. Like many of the companies we cover—ESPN, GCI, CSG—we hope the acronym CFX will transcend its literal meaning and come to stand on its own as a mark of quality.

While our annual 100 list is more than two decades old, this marks the inaugural CFX 100. We’re excited to profile the brightest leaders shaping the future of an industry that has transformed time and again—and will continue to do so. Thank you for your trust and support.



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Mediacom proudly congratulates our Chairman and CEO

Giuseppe B. Commisso

on being named to the **CFX 100.**

Across Mediacom, from network operations to customer care, and from engineering to marketing, your leadership continues to guide our company forward.

We are proud to be part of a company that believes in innovation, operational excellence, and an unwavering commitment to the communities we serve.

Thank you for continuing your father, Rocco B. Commisso's, legacy. We look forward to your leadership as you lead the way and inspire all of us who help make Mediacom stronger every day.

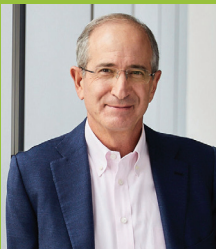
The men and women of

Mediacom[®]



Above It All

Every year, we single out a few executives who have soared so high that they transcend our 100 list. There are several perennial wave makers, such as Liberty Media's John Malone and Comcast's Brian Roberts, but we have some newcomers for 2026. T-Mobile and Verizon both have new blood in the CEO seat. Disney not only has a new CEO, but longtime 100 honoree Dana Walden moved into the Above It All stratosphere after being tapped as President and Chief Creative Officer. These standouts set the agenda for where the industry goes next.



Brian Roberts

It's been a big year for Comcast's Roberts, who made room for a Co-CEO at the business his father helped build. With the spinoff of legacy cable networks, Comcast can now focus on connectivity and streaming, with

plenty of innovation sprinkled in along the way.



Michael Cavanagh

Cavanagh took the Co-CEO spot at Comcast in January. The move followed several wins, including his seamless transition to head NBCU following Jeff Shell's exit. It's been a meteoric rise for the exec who

joined Comcast as CFO in 2015 after more than 20 years in financial services.

David Zaslav

Zaslav was this season's belle of the ball, as Netflix and Paramount fought over Warner Bros. Discovery. He's also shaping up for a \$700 million windfall at the close of the WBD-Paramount merger. Assuming it passes muster with regulators, any guesses on the new company name?



Dana Walden

Bob Iger's retirement cleared the way for new leadership at Disney. While Josh D'Amaro was tapped as the new CEO, Walden grabbed the No. 2 spot with oversight of all creative decisions as President and Chief Creative Officer. Bets are on that the two will combine for a powerful one-two punch.



Charlie Ergen

Investors are trying to figure out what the new EchoStar is. We're never one to discount Ergen. November saw the formation of EchoStar Capital to invest the new money from the spectrum deals to SpaceX and AT&T. And Ergen

has ended up back in the President/CEO role. We're watching closely.



David Ellison

We're still trying to wrap our brains around Ellison's plans for Paramount. Now we're factoring WBD into the equation. We're not the only ones with questions. The Paramount chief is in for an extended

grilling from lawmakers and regulators as he tries to get the \$110B takeover of WBD to the finish line.

Ted Sarandos

Netflix didn't win WBD's hand, but Co-CEO Sarandos is holding his head high, maintaining that the streamer kept its pledge to be disciplined. And it just means the behemoth has even more money to play with. Reports are already swirling that it's looking to beef up its NFL rights.



Greg Peters

Peters wants Netflix to be a global powerhouse and is continuing to expand its borders. In April, the streamer opened an office in Warsaw that hosts its only technology hub outside the U.S. Like his Co-CEO, he maintains that walking away from WBD was the right decision once Paramount increased its bid.



Dan Schulman

Schulman wasted no time writing a new playbook for Verizon after becoming CEO in October. He immediately implemented an aggressive customer-centric plan while slashing costs. With Frontier now in the fold, he has a blank slate for bolstering Verizon's fiber presence.



Yvette Kanouff

Kanouff is an engaged technologist who understands cable's remarkable impact, serving on the boards of various groups, including the SCTE Foundation and Cable TV Pioneers. The industry can thank her for preparing next-gen leaders as co-founder of the Tech Connect mentoring program.



John Stankey

AT&T made a pledge in 2026 to spend more than \$250 billion over five years to support the future of U.S. advanced connectivity. It's personal to CEO Stankey, who has spent his entire career at Ma Bell. Fiber will be an integral part, evident by the recently closed Lumen acquisition.



Srini Gopalan

Gopalan proudly donned the magenta CEO sports jacket in November and has set out to make sure T-Mobile is leading the way. He's serious about integrating AI into its network and growing the uncarrier's broadband base while maintaining a high NPS score.



Josh D'Amaro

It ain't easy replacing Bob Iger. Just ask Bob Chapek. But a lot of people are rooting for D'Amaro, who has held a variety of roles at Disney since 1998 and led theme parks into record expansion. He'll need to sprinkle some of that Disney magic on a shifting content landscape while embracing technological innovation.



Lachlan Murdoch

In September, the succession drama was put to rest as Murdoch gained long-term control of Fox Corporation. The news immediately drew speculation over whether Fox Corp. and News Corp. might recombine as well as how hungry Murdoch is for other M&A.



John Malone

A book tour and transition to Liberty Media Chairman Emeritus didn't slow down the good doctor. Malone has asked regulators to let him assume majority voting control of Alaska's GCI Liberty. And as a major WBD shareholder, you can bet he had plenty of thoughts on the Paramount-Netflix saga as it unfolded.



Nomi Bergman

Bergman serves as President of Advance/Newhouse Investment Partnership, with an eagle eye for investments to grow the portfolio. She grew up with coax in her veins and has kept close ties to the cable industry, including as Vice Chair of the Sydeo Institute board, where she helped with the sale of The Cable Center building earlier this year.



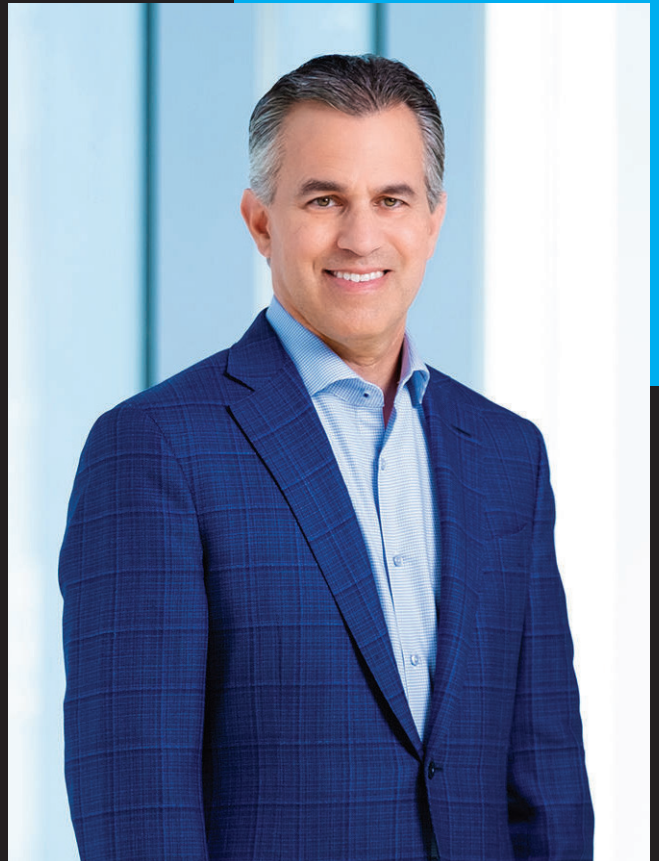
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ARCHITECT OF CHANGE

Steve Croney

CEO, Connectivity & Platforms, Comcast

Croney has only been in the CEO seat at Comcast's Connectivity & Platforms for a few months, taking over the role in January from Dave Watson, who moved to Vice Chairman. But he started making his big moves early last year when he was promoted from CFO to COO Connectivity & Platforms, accelerating wireless and expanding the nation's largest converged footprint, which reaches 65 million homes and businesses in the U.S. In 2025, he implemented a new go-to-market strategy that included national consumer-friendly packaging and pricing that simplified how customers do business with the operator. This new structure included five-year price guarantees for Xfinity Internet, a free mobile line and the introduction of national all-in video packages. During Comcast's 1Q26 earnings call, we got a better glimpse of the blueprint he's mapped out, which revolves around three core pillars: network, product and customer experience. Under Croney's direction, the Connectivity & Platforms unit is working to simplify operations internally and externally. "When I think about what success looks like, it starts with being honest with ourselves and clearly defining our reality. The market is going to remain intensely competitive. Success isn't about waiting for the environment to change. It's about how we perform inside of that environment," Croney said during his first earnings report as CEO.



Q&A

Last TV series I binged: Milan Cortina Olympics, of course!

What skills will the next generation of industry

leaders need most? Adaptability. The pace of change isn't slowing down, so leaders have to challenge legacy thinking, move quickly and stay relentlessly focused on the customer while constantly innovating.

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? AI has moved from experimentation to real execution. We're embedding it across our network and customer interactions to proactively resolve issues and deliver more personalized, seamless experiences.



SPECTRUM EXPANSION

Chris Winfrey

President & CEO, Charter Communications

With a landmark merger looming, Winfrey has Charter firing on all cylinders—ready to welcome Cox Communications and create a 70 million+ home footprint. He’s blazed a new trail for video, inducing a drastic shakeup in how distributors and programmers approach carriage negotiations. The coronation of that overhaul came at the end of 2025 when Charter posted quarterly video subscriber gains for the first time in 5.5 years, adding to a quarter that boosted Spectrum Mobile’s customer base to 11.77 million total lines, a 19.4% improvement compared to the year prior. Winfrey is making sure Charter’s focus on customer experience is felt by Spectrum customers, with the operator set to have half of its network upgraded to symmetrical and multi-gig service by the end of 2026 and the remaining 50% to follow suit in 2027. Winfrey’s also been part of Charter’s charge to bring attention to broadband vandalism, an effort the company has worked on with other industry organizations.

Q&A

What would a radically better customer experience actually look like? It is our top focus: How do we continue to improve our service, demonstrate the utility of our products and show our customers they are valued. Over a year ago, we launched our industry-leading Customer Commitment, which guarantees transparency, reliability and same-day installation and service. Internally, we’ve since moved that service window target to two hours and one hour for businesses. In addition to backing our customer service guarantee with credits, we’re now guaranteeing new customers \$1,000 of savings per year when they switch their mobile service from the big three telcos to two Spectrum Mobile lines and transfer their internet service to Spectrum. Our goal is to be America’s Connectivity Company, with guaranteed products backed by hyperlocal service delivered by our 100% U.S.-based employees.

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? We’ve seen rapid improvements in AI capabilities, and we are focusing our efforts with a few key partners to use AI in making the job of our frontline employees easier and more effective. It’s clear there is a real opportunity to improve the quality of customer service based on the knowledge we already have from the significant number of transactions we do every year. Meeting customers how they want to be serviced and providing better tools, job satisfaction and tenure for our employees is clearly a significant opportunity.

3 REWRITING ESPN'S PLAYBOOK

Pitaro's fingerprints are on the most sweeping transformation in ESPN's 46-year history. This past year, he oversaw the launch of ESPN's highly anticipated direct-to-consumer platform, a fundamental repositioning that protects its pay TV presence in a cord-cutting world. Pitaro added to that with a landmark deal with the NFL that gave the league a 10% equity stake in exchange for NFL Network, NFL RedZone, NFL Fantasy and other NFL-controlled media assets. Plus, the agreement extended ESPN's Monday Night Football rights through 2033. Reinvented partnerships with MLB and WWE rounded out a year defined by a bold mission to grow audiences and keep the worldwide leader's brand unified in a fragmented environment. With DTC in its early innings, ESPN and Pitaro are gearing up to put on their biggest show yet: Super Bowl LXI in 2027.



Jimmy Pitaro

Chairman, ESPN

Q&A

What role do MVPDs play in your long-term strategy? They're incredibly important to us and have been for decades. We launched our DTC product last year but at the same time are making the new features and functionality within the enhanced ESPN App available to all MVPD subscribers and over time are making all DTC content available to them as well.



Justin Connolly

VP, Global Head of Media & Sports, YouTube



Christian Oestlien

VP, Subscription Products, YouTube

TICKET TO THE TOP

4

YouTube's presence is felt across the greater media ecosystem, and given Connolly and Oestlien's leadership, its share has continued to grow throughout 2025. Connolly steered multiple YouTube TV carriage negotiations in recent months, striking renewals with the likes of Fox, Disney, NBCU and TelevisaUnivision that led to enhancements to the vMVPD's lineup and YouTube Primetime Channels offering. On the field, YouTube's sports strategy reached a pinnacle when its stream of the Chiefs-Chargers duel in São Paulo drew an average minute audience of 17.3 million viewers from over 230 countries and territories. Oestlien, who began overseeing YouTube's subscription product portfolio in addition to YouTube TV, navigated the company's entrance into the skinny bundle game after introducing various plans that are centered on sports, news and/or entertainment, with prices ranging from \$54.99/month to \$71.99/month. Oestlien also has YouTube TV users getting ready for the long-awaited, fully customizable multiview option soon.

5 TURNING THE PAGE

It's a new era at Paramount, with Cheeks sticking around after the Skydance merger to oversee a wide range of broadcast, cable and studio businesses. And he may get more to play with if Paramount's combination with Warner Bros. Discovery crosses the finish line. Cheeks made plenty of headlines with the cancellation of "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert," a move blamed on economics rather than the content. He's also restructuring and looking to reinvent the linear networks, with MTV, BET, Comedy Central and Nickelodeon among the brands added to his portfolio in November. Cheeks is also taking a larger role in the overall industry, joining NCTA's board as corporate programmer director this year.



George Cheeks
Chair of TV Media, Paramount

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INDUSTRY FORWARD**

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NCTI
TRAIN UP.

6

A THREE-HEADED FOX

Scott grew the news division to new heights and ratings gold, helping FOX News expand its audience in 2025 as “Special Report with Bret Baier” challenges broadcast network newscast ratings and “The Five” routinely draws 3-4M live viewers. At FOX Sports, Shanks scored massive ratings with a record-breaking 127.7M viewers (across all platforms) for the Super Bowl, plus the most-watched Indianapolis 500 in 17 years and a seven-game World Series that averaged 15.71M viewers. Wade integrated Bento Box Entertainment, MarVista Entertainment and Studio Ramsay Global under the company’s portfolio of studios, invested in incubators like HolyWater and Chair to champion next-gen storytellers and launched the food-content-focused FOX Creator Studios in a push to make it a fully independent, creator-led studio ecosystem.



Suzanne Scott
CEO, FOX News Media

Rob Wade

CEO, FOX Entertainment

Q&A

Has your view of AI changed in the past year?

My core belief hasn’t changed: AI is a tool that should support and strengthen human creativity and



decision-making, not replace it. But what has changed is the speed and scale of adoption. AI isn’t just something we talk about as the future anymore, it’s a real, present-day competitive advantage. In today’s world, where we’re working across broadcast, streaming, social media and live events, AI is becoming a normal part of how things get done.

What’s the biggest risk of moving too slowly—or too quickly—on AI? Without a strong AI policy in place, IP holders risk losing control of how their brands show up in the outputs that reach consumers, creating confusion and brand dilution. We also risk falling behind creatively, in data-driven storytelling and in new ways of working with advertisers. At the same time, moving too fast has its own risks. If we rush in without being thoughtful, we risk sacrificing the creativity that drives our industry, and we can lose trust with audiences, creators and brand partners. The sweet spot is somewhere in the middle.



Eric Shanks
CEO & Executive Producer, FOX Sports

7 A RELIABLE GUIDE

Greatrex has built the foundation of Cox's convergence future since succeeding Pat Esser a few years ago, but it means he's the one to carry the flag through the company's mega merger with Charter that's expected to close in mid-2026. Greatrex has guided the operator's expansion of its mobile base while continuing to invest in video benefits and network enhancements, all in an effort to close the digital divide throughout Cox's more than 30-state footprint. When the 15-year Cox veteran isn't leading Cox, he sits as the Chair of NCTA's Board and serves as a Board Member for American Rivers, a nonprofit dedicated to restoring rivers and clean water projects.



Mark Greatrex

President, Cox Communications

Q&A

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? Yes. Agentic and robotic AI are having a broader and faster impact than I anticipated.

What's the biggest risk of moving too slowly—or too quickly—on AI? Biggest risk is moving too slowly. It is necessary to embrace for business benefit today and to upskill the whole workforce to be confident in leveraging AI-enabled tools.

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? Boundless curiosity, desire to adopt new approaches and (importantly) forget the legacy ones, along with a strong moral compass.



Gunnar Wiedenfels

CFO, Warner Bros. Discovery

TRANSFORMATION CRUSADER

8

Warner Bros. Discovery is in a period of transformation, first navigating a potential spinoff of its linear portfolio and now negotiating a proposed merger with Paramount. At the negotiating table alongside CEO David Zaslav is Wiedenfels. WBD's CFO was tapped to lead Discovery Global as its CEO-elect and shape the new company's vision, including the digital expansion of legacy brands. Now he'll be instrumental in preparing WBD for the PSKY combo. Of course, Wiedenfels has accomplished quite a lot at WBD already, including reducing the company's debt load by roughly \$20 billion, securing multiple sports rights deals and launching a CNN DTC streamer.

Q&A

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most?

Adaptability, above everything else. The people I've seen succeed over the past decade are the ones who are genuinely comfortable with uncertainty and can make sound decisions without having a complete picture.

Last TV series I binged: I got sucked into "Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives" again a couple of weekends ago. There's a reason that show has been on the air for almost 20 years. Guy has an incredible way of spotlighting and celebrating these mom-and-pop restaurants while bringing the audience in for every bite.



Gabe Spitzer

VP, Sports, Netflix

SHAKING UP SPORTS

9

Netflix has become one of the louder players in the sports media ecosystem, and that's thanks largely to Spitzer. One of the streamer's guiding pillars in live sports is its NFL Christmas Day slate, and the most recent edition set the record for most-streamed NFL game in U.S. history with 27.5 million viewers. Viewers from more than 200 countries also tuned in to one of the two Christmas games. Netflix's sports prowess extends beyond football, with the streamer striking a deal with MLB for one Opening Night game per year, in addition to becoming the exclusive home of the annual Home Run Derby. And Netflix is winning in the ring with its new WWE and MMA properties.

Q&A

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? Any sushi restaurant on Ventura Blvd. in Studio City.

Last time you went to a movie theater? I took my daughter to the "KPop Demon Hunters" sing-along (I'm a company man!).

What app(s) have you deleted to reclaim your time? Instagram.

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? WiFi!

What does 67 mean to you? According to my kids, 67 died at the end of 2025.

10

THE FAVORITE

Under Dungey's leadership, managing a slate of more than 80 series for over 20 platforms across live-action scripted, unscripted and animation, WBTVG has become the home for some of the industry's most-lauded series. In 2025, this included the launch of hits "The Pitt," "Running Point," "Untamed," "Leanne" and "IT: Welcome to Derry." At the Primetime Emmys, "The Pitt" became the first WBTV series to win the Outstanding Drama Series prize since "The West Wing" in 2003 and led WBTV in 60 nominations—the most of any studio. WBTV's recent successes under Dungey's leadership also include landing an official Season 4 renewal for audience favorite "Ted Lasso."

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? I find the idea very unsettling, but I have friends who swear by them, so...

Last TV series you binged: I'm in the middle of watching (and singing) "Glee" with my 13-year-old daughter.

What apps have you deleted to reclaim your time? I didn't delete any—I installed Opal, which is a very effective distraction management tool.

What's the most retro item on your desk? A notebook. I'm still a believer in pen and paper notetaking.



Channing Dungey

Chairman & CEO, Warner Bros. Television Group & WBD U.S. Networks

11

SPORTING SUCCESS

Prime Video is known for original series like “The Summer I Turned Pretty,” which had over 70M viewers worldwide in its second season, and an increasingly impressive slate of films—“The Accountant 2” and “Heads of State” were among Prime Video’s four most-watched movies of all time. But sports have become a priority for Hopkins. He built on the success of “Thursday Night Football” by launching “NBA on Prime,” which spanned 67 regular-season games and playoff coverage. At Amazon MGM Studios, Hopkins is building on the momentum of the studio’s first CinemaCon presentation by releasing 15 theatrical films in 2026.



Mike Hopkins

*Head, Prime Video & Amazon
MGM Studios*

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SHAPING PAY TV'S SKINNIER FUTURE



Bill Morrow

CEO, DirecTV

Q&A

What's the single regulatory change that would most accelerate innovation?

Modernizing the retransmission consent framework would have the greatest impact. Blackouts and rapidly escalating per-subscriber fees show the current system is broken, and lifting ownership caps would only increase consolidation, raise prices and harm local journalism.

Must-have item for a cross-country flight?

A pair of NextSense smart buds. They have adaptive noise cancellation, are incredibly comfortable and monitor key biological functions to ensure you're getting adequate rest.

Long past its days as a satellite-only pay TV provider, DIRECTV is full steam ahead as a streaming-centric distributor across devices. Morrow has led this shift while positioning the vMVPD as a leader in more flexible and affordable packaging that gives customers more choice. DIRECTV now offers a growing lineup of genre-based skinny bundles. This re-bundling strategy requires a skilled negotiator to get programmers on board, so it's a good thing Morrow has Thun on the team. From a carriage showdown with Disney in 2024 to continuing to navigate complicated retrans consent negotiations at a time when broadcasters are growing in size via consolidation, Thun is focused on getting the deals done.



Rob Thun

Chief Content Officer, DirecTV

Q&A

What's the most retro item on your desk? The Beatles Yellow Submarine LEGO set my son put together for me when he was three.

What role does video play in your long-term strategy? Well...it's sort of our entire strategy, and we have a lot of reasons to keep playing.

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? Giorgio Baldi and SugarFISH

13 OPTIMUM ALL THE TIME

Out with Altice USA, hello Optimum. Mathew led the rebrand of the company as it continued in its larger transformation efforts, creating a united identity across its product lines and decreasing customer confusion. His strategy for a new Optimum continues to bear fruit with its wireless division seeing a 39% rise YOY in mobile lines on the back of a fresh converged product strategy, and he's embraced localized pricing structures and revamped video tiers that make sense for the modern content consumer. Through it all, he has kept an open communication policy that has seen him participate in small roundtables with frontline employees and listening sessions with larger groups.



Dennis Mathew

Chairman & CEO, Optimum

Q&A

What role does video play in your long-term strategy? Video still matters, but the job has changed. It's not about competing formats anymore. It's about making it easier for customers to get the content and value they want, with choice and transparency. For an operator like Optimum, video should strengthen the broadband relationship, drive loyalty and increase lifetime value—especially when it's packaged simply and integrated well. That also means creating an interface that makes it simple and intuitive for customers to find and watch the content they want, in the way they want to watch it. That's why we've leaned into a hybrid approach: traditional video where it fits, strong streaming partnerships and FAST options, all delivered over a broadband foundation built for performance. Long term, it's less about volume and more about relevance, smarter packaging and ease of use. Video works best when it complements connectivity, not when it complicates it.

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? Noise-canceling headphones, no question. It's the difference between a long flight and real reset time.



Matt Strauss

Chairman, NBCUniversal Media Group

LIVE TV AIN'T DEAD YET

14

Following his first full year as Chairman in 2025, Strauss—who heads business operations for NBC, Bravo and Peacock while also overseeing much of NBCU's media portfolio—started the new year strong with the company's comprehensive coverage of the Milan Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics, Super Bowl LX and the NBA All-Star Game. And that was just in February. This is due to Strauss's ambitious strategy to draw live viewers by cornering the market on major live events like last year's "SNL 50: The Anniversary Special," which had nearly 23M viewers and won eight Emmys, and also includes the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup in North America, in Spanish.



ERIC SHANKS
FOX SPORTS



SUZANNE SCOTT
FOX NEWS MEDIA



ROB WADE
FOX ENTERTAINMENT



JEFF COLLINS
FOX ADVERTISING



DAVID ESPINOSA
FOX CORPORATION



JAY WALLACE
FOX NEWS MEDIA



ADAM LEWINSON
TUBI

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CFX 100 HONOREES**





Kristin Dolan
CEO, AMC Global Media

FOLLOW THE STREAMER 15

In 2025, Dolan led AMC Global Media’s transformation from a cable networks business to a global streaming and technology-focused content company. Recent wins included a streaming revenue growth of 14% in the most recent quarter, solidifying streaming as the company’s largest single source of revenue in 2025. As part of the company’s strategy of super-serving fans of specific genres through specialty streaming services, Dolan and team oversaw the introduction of the service’s first “Murder Mystery May,” a new programming event that delivered Acorn’s biggest viewership month ever and the launch of All Reality, offering the best in unscripted content on Prime Video and Roku.

Q&A

Last TV series I binged: “The Night Agent” on Netflix and “The Night Manager” on Amazon Prime Video

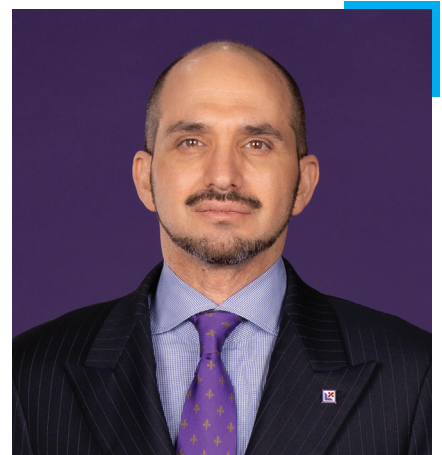
What’s the most retro item on your desk? A desk phone

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? Show downloads, particularly screeners of our upcoming series and films.

16

CONTINUING THE LEGACY

Commisso assumed the role as chief of Mediacom—and president of Italian soccer club Fiorentina—after the passing of his father, company founder Rocco B. Commisso earlier this year. Those unfamiliar with the younger Commisso got a glimpse of his eloquence when he delivered his father’s eulogy at St. Patrick’s Cathedral, describing his dad’s business philosophy as “profit mattered, but people mattered more.” Commisso is committed to continuing his father’s legacy, and that starts with meeting the goal of offering multi-gig and symmetrical speed services to 1 million households and businesses by the end of 2026. Most recently, Commisso served as Mediacom’s Vice Chairman and Interim CEO as well as GVP, Corporate Finance.



Giuseppe B. Commisso
Chairman & CEO,
Mediacom Communications

Q&A

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? Yes. In the cable and broadband industry, AI has quickly moved from being mostly theoretical to having practical applications. We are seeing opportunities, for example, in network optimization, predictive maintenance of plant and equipment, customer service automation, fraud detection and analyzing usage patterns to better manage network capacity. The focus now is on applying these tools in ways that improve reliability, efficiency and overall customer experience.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

17

When Feist was named CEO of C-SPAN in 2024, a few industry vets predicted privately that the public affairs network would make big strides within a year or so of him on the job. They nailed it, with Feist bringing C-SPAN into the modern era without compromising its nonpartisan mission and “democracy unfiltered” promise. With long-time distribution head Kiley leading the charge, C-SPAN finally scored carriage for its three linear networks on Hulu + Live TV and YouTube TV. Feist promoted Kiley, who is in his fourth decade at C-SPAN, with part of his job to expand the net’s relevance among young people. He’s helped drive significant growth for C-SPAN on Instagram and TikTok. Feist upped Weinstein to his new role last year, and he’s also delivered. C-SPAN added 27% more hours of live public-affairs television over the past year and he launched two original series, “Ceasefire,” which brings together political figures from opposite sides of the aisle for respectful, solution-focused conversations, and the weekly “America’s Book Club,” featuring authors, policymakers and cultural leaders.



Peter Kiley

SVP & Chief Revenue and Product Officer, C-SPAN

Q&A **What role do MVPDs play in your long-term strategy?** Consumers want simplicity, and with the incredible work our operator partners are doing to modernize the bundle experience, I’m convinced the pendulum swings back—and C-SPAN will be right there with them when it does.

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? A stack of newspapers.

Sam Feist

CEO, C-SPAN

Q&A **Has your view of AI changed in the past year?** I’ve evolved from AI neutral to AI enthusiast. **Last TV series I binged:** C-SPAN’s “America’s Book Club” **What’s the most retro item on your desk?** A landline telephone. But I have yet to use it.

Richard Weinstein

SVP & Chief Content Officer, C-SPAN

Q&A **What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need?** Having learned from leaders such as Brian Lamb and Sam Feist, I believe they need three core strengths: the ability to navigate constant change without losing sight of mission; strong editorial and ethical judgment in a polarized environment; collaborative leadership.

What’s the most retro item on your desk? My C-SPAN 20 Years anniversary coffee cup.

18 CHANGEMAKER

Buccieri has steered A+E through a pivotal digital transformation. Under his guidance, it continues to attract top-tier talent, including Kevin Costner, Tom Hanks, Henry Winkler, LeBron James and Queen Latifah, across its portfolio. He has expanded A+E’s footprint with direct-to-consumer streaming services—Crime 360, History Vault and Lifetime Movie Club—while bolstering each brand’s digital presence. And he has transformed A+E into a content supplier to third parties, including Netflix, Hulu, Apple and Amazon. In 2025, Buccieri was awarded the NATPE North Star Award, which recognizes individuals whose strong leadership has had a bar-raising impact and provided guidance as the industry navigates change.



Paul Buccieri
President & Chairman,
A+E Global Media

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in.

Last time you went to a movie theater? Always go to the theater. Love that experience.

What’s the most retro item on your desk? Pen and paper.

19

THE BACKBONE OF IT ALL



Rich DiGeronimo

President, Product & Technology,
Charter Communications

Q&A

What does “good enough” broadband speed look like for most customers?

Broadband is about speed and reliability. The need for speed varies by individual and application, and we are delivering the best connectivity experience—wired, wireless and mobile—for every use case. We recently displayed what our network is capable of by working with Apple, the Lakers and the NBA to launch Spectrum Front Row, delivering the first-ever immersive live NBA games on the Apple Vision Pro with a stream of up to 150 Mbps.

What’s the most retro item on your desk? Red Swingline stapler.

PROGRAMMING TITANS

In March, Dana Walden outlined her executive team, upping OConnell to Chairman of Disney Entertainment Television, where she oversees TV brands across ABC, Hulu, NatGeo and 20th Television. It comes after her successful run as President of ABC News Group and Disney Entertainment Networks, where she was the architect behind uniting ABC News and ABC Owned Television Stations. It positioned the news operation incredibly well to broadcast critical news and information during the 2025 L.A. fires. Meanwhile, FX is keeping the hits coming under Landgraf's leadership, including last year's "Alien: Earth," which received over 9 million views globally in its first six days. This followed the previous year's big win, which saw "Shogun" become the first Japanese-language program to win the Emmy for Outstanding Drama Series.



20

Debra OConnell

Chairman, Disney Entertainment Television



John Landgraf

Chairman, FX

Congratulations to all 2026

CFX 100

Honorees

Recognizing Industry Leadership



Congratulations to the 2026 CFX 100 Honorees whose collective innovation and leadership continue to move the broadband industry forward.

A special congratulations to

MARK TRUDEAU
CEO & Founder of **OpenVault**

At OpenVault, we're proud to support the broadband industry with cutting-edge, AI-driven, platform-agnostic solutions that elevate, optimize, and future-proof the networks powering our connected world.




CARRYING THE TORCH

Holanda bade Astound adieu after more than 15 years for his new seat, where Cable One faithful Johnson showed him the ropes in his first couple of months on the job. Holanda has a playbook to pull from when it comes to managing the decline in Cable One's broadband subscribers and maximizing opportunities to sell converged offerings in the markets in which it faces the least amount of competition. Johnson, who will be exiting the company in May, played a key role in the launch of Sparklight Mobile in December. He'll stick around as a senior advisor to help ensure Cable One is on the right path. Meanwhile, we'll be watching to see how Holanda puts his personal sparkle on Sparklight and Cable One's family of businesses.



Jim Holanda

CEO, Cable One

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hard pass, but I may not have a choice in Phoenix soon!

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation: Eddie V's—they are popping up all over the country now!

Last time you went to a movie theater: The last time I went to a movie theater was in 2018 and I don't miss it.

21



Ken Johnson

Outgoing COO, Cable One

Q&A

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? Realized traditional governance models alone can't keep pace with the speed of AI innovation. Large, multi-year technology projects risk becoming outdated before they even reach deployment. Instead of big-bang rollouts, we're leaning into rapid experimentation, shorter development cycles and iterative scaling. The key lesson for me: success with AI isn't about building the perfect framework first. It's about building the muscle to learn, deploy and adapt continuously.



Mark Lazarus

CEO, Versant

SPINOFF STAR

As NBCUniversal spinoff Versant Media sets its own course, it's Lazarus steering the ship. Under his leadership, the linear-heavy company moved quickly to expand its OTA and FAST portfolio through the acquisition of Free TV Networks and is now focused on building up its DTC streaming offerings sans Peacock. This year, Lazarus will lead the launch of an MS Now streamer, a Fandango AVOD and a CNBC DTC service tailored for retail investors. This DTC push is key to Lazarus' plan to further diversify the company's revenue streams beyond linear pay TV distribution and direct it toward sustainable growth.

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in.

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? Chick-fil-A

Last time you went to a movie theater? In February to see "Marty Supreme." I'm a huge ping-pong fan.

What's the most retro item on your desk? Landline telephone.

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CELEBRATING LEADERS

MOVING THE INDUSTRY FORWARD

2026 CFX 100 HONOREES

Lou Borrelli, NCTC

Grant Spellmeyer, ACA Connects

Brad Moline, Allo Fiber

Greg Wheeler, altafiber

Jeff Ross, Armstrong

Toni Murphy, Astound

John Feehan, Astound

Sean Cohan, Bell Media

Patty Boyers, BOYCOM Vision

Jim Holanda, Cable One

Ken Johnson, Cable One

Dinni Jain, GFiber

Melani Griffith, GFiber

John Keib, GFiber

Rocco Laurenzano, GFiber

Kristin Johnson, Hotwire Communications

Jonathan Bullock, Hotwire Communications

Giuseppe Commisso, Mediacom

John Pascarelli, Mediacom

Italia Commisso Weinand, Mediacom

Ben Dold, Midco

Stacey Slaughter, NCTI

John Reardon, Schurz Communications

Ken Dixon, TDS Telecom

Drew Petersen, TDS Telecom

Andy Parrott, Vyve Broadband

Melanie Hannasch, Vyve Broadband

Frank van der Post, WOW! Internet, TV, & Phone

NCTC and ACA Connects proudly recognize the independent operators shaping the future of our industry. Together, more than 650 members are driving innovation, expanding connectivity, and strengthening communities!



THE CONNECTORS

23



Charlie Herrin

President, Technology & Products, Connectivity & Platforms, Comcast Corporation



Sam Schwartz

Chief Development Officer, Connectivity & Platforms, Comcast Corporation



Jon Gieselman

Chief Growth Officer, Connectivity & Platforms, Comcast Corporation



Tim Nester

CFO, Connectivity & Platforms, Comcast Corporation

There's no technological advancement at Comcast that Herrin doesn't have a hand in. He led the development and launch of XER10 gateway powered by WiFi 7, the deployment of Full Duplex DOCSIS 4.0 and so much more. Schwartz has taken lessons learned from his time in converged products and brought them to a new role focused on sourcing and developing partnerships that lead to the development of products Xfinity customers will come to love. Gieselman has been a connector of brand and product over the last year in his current role, launching the "Xfinity. Imagine That" campaign to grow awareness of the MVPD's research and next-gen ideas. Ensuring the dollars make sense is Nester's responsibility, and he oversees a segment of the company with more than \$80 billion in revenue. He's also been a key voice at the table during the launches of products like Comcast's NOW portfolio.



Dinni Jain

CEO, GFiber

FAST AND THE FIBER-OUS **24**

Jain has kept his foot on the gas pedal, expanding GFiber to cities like Las Vegas while also making multi-gig speeds the standard in markets like Des Moines. Then there's that deal that will merge GFiber with Astound later this year. Ensuring customers get the most out of the GFiber network is his mission, and that led to the introduction of the provider's Multi-Gig Wi-Fi 7 Router and its inclusion in its Home 3 Gig and Edge 8 Gig plans at no additional cost. He hasn't left MDUs behind, striking partnerships with the likes of Quext to ensure property managers have a unified platform that makes access control, IoT and managed internet as simple as possible.

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in all day and all night. I didn't expect it, but I love using Waymo.

What would a radically better customer experience actually look like? It's not something you can just describe in words. Move to Kansas City, Salt Lake City, Austin or any other GFiber city and find out!

What apps have you deleted to reclaim your time? Facebook, Insta, TikTok, X... everything but YouTube.

25

MONEY TALKS

Fischer's eagle eye and sharp mind are major contributors to Charter's M&A successes in recent years. She helped negotiate not only Charter's acquisition of Liberty Broadband in 2024, but also the combination of Charter with Cox Communications that is set to close later this year. She's passionate about using AI to unlock efficiencies and synergies across the business and sees opportunity in leveraging the technologies to enhance the customer experience for all Spectrum customers. Fischer continues to manage capital planning for Charter's ongoing \$7 billion rural construction initiative while ensuring there's plenty left in the tank for infrastructure upgrades to multi-gig speeds.

Q&A

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? The value story for AI continues to become clearer. The AI tools we are leveraging are evolving and improving, and they are helping our agents and technicians provide better service for our customers. In addition, we continue to see AI applications being integrated into tools we use every day and spread across all areas of business.

What is the most retro item on your desk? A traditional, large-button, 10-key calculator. Sometimes you just have to do the math.



Jessica Fischer

CFO, Charter Communications



Priya Aiyar

Chief Legal Officer, Warner Bros. Discovery

Q&A

Last TV series I

binged: “The Pitt.” Even when it’s gory or sad, it’s comforting to watch people being really great at their jobs for a few hours.

Must-have item for a cross-country

flight: My Kindle—even though I’m usually catching up on emails, a flight can be a rare chance for uninterrupted reading.

LEADING THROUGH CHANGE

26

Preparing to separate WBD into Warner Bros. and Discovery Global while also facing a pending acquisition by Paramount has kept Campbell and Aiyar busy, especially on top of a year with blockbuster hits like “Superman,” “Sinners” and “One Battle After Another.” Campbell’s team bolstered revenue streams for those films with cross-portfolio promotions that leveraged the company’s IP. His organization is responsible for driving over 60% of the company’s overall revenue. Aiyar meanwhile safeguarded the company’s IP by joining copyright infringement suits against the AI companies Midjourney and MiniMax.



Bruce Campbell

Chief Revenue and Strategy Officer, Warner Bros. Discovery

Q&A

Last TV series I binged: “IT: Welcome to Derry” and “Pluribus” (concurrently).

What’s the most retro item on your desk? A pencil holder that my daughter made in pre-K over 20 years ago.

27

WINNING WOMEN

Not only is this dynamic duo driving NBCU’s business, they’re shaping pop culture. Igbokwe led NBC—the only broadcast network to grow year-over-year for the first week of the 2025-2026 season—to retain its position as the top network in Primetime, but her influence also extends to streaming and cable with lauded series like “Hacks,” “The Gilded Age” and “All Her Fault.” Berwick is the brains behind the company’s reality fare including Peacock’s Emmy-winning “The Traitors” and Bravo’s iconic “The Real Housewives” franchise, currently celebrating 20 years of watercooler moments, and oversees the annual BravoCon fan experience that draws thousands of fans; BravoCon 2025 content was streamed by 3M Peacock accounts and generated over 385M social media engagements.



Frances Berwick

Chairman, Bravo & Peacock Unscripted



Pearlena Igbokwe

Chairman, Television Studios, NBC Entertainment & Peacock Scripted

28 INNOVATION STATION

At a time when traditional broadcast is often underestimated, Mitchell is leaning into innovation to deliver historic growth at CBS. As president, she led the rollout of AR/VR technology across CBS Stations in nine major markets. Flagship streaming program “CBS News 24/7” integrates AR/VR technology to deliver immersive, real-time news at scale. The first-of-its-kind initiative, the program has achieved 14% year-over-year growth in minutes viewed (as of Nov. 2025) and held the No. 1 ranking on Pluto TV’s news channel rankings for 17 consecutive months.



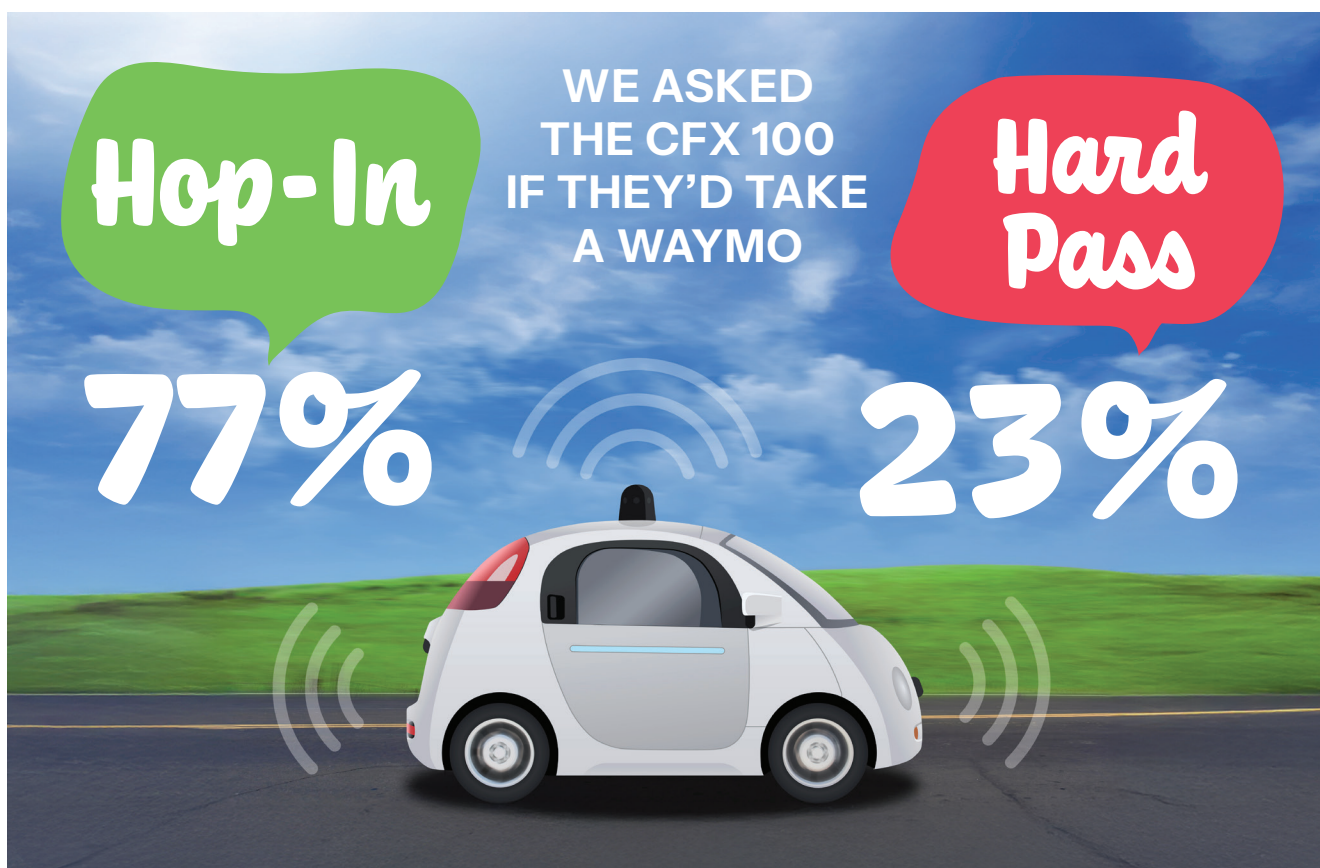
Jennifer Mitchell

President, CBS Television Stations

Q&A

Last TV series you binged? As someone who has long been fascinated by the Kennedy legacy, I cannot get enough of “Love Story.” It feels like I’m stepping into history with all the fanfare and expectations playing out against a very public backdrop. And you can’t ignore the fashion era it portrays through its timeless silhouettes that defined a generation and still influence style today. I’m obsessed!

What must-have item for a cross-country flight? My iPad is my in-flight command center for last-minute deck edits, catching up on emails and shows I’ve been meaning to watch. It keeps me productive and entertained at 35,000 feet. Second is lip balm—it protects me from that not-so-friendly cabin air. Finally, my phone charger because nothing says poor planning like landing with 2% battery and a long ride ahead.



29 VISION AND VELOCITY

It's hard to find anyone more passionate about the cable industry than Commisso Weinand, who is in her 49th year of working in the industry. "I believe that what is old is new," she says, in reference to some of the creative video packages out there, "but what has evolved is how the cable industry has served people in ways that were once unimaginable, including AI. As my late brother and CEO Rocco stated on numerous occasions, all the present sciences, businesses, etc. take a ride on our broadband networks." That same enthusiasm carries over to Mediacom, where she champions employees across the company and helps solidify its standing as the fifth-largest cable operator in the U.S. She has a fitting partner in Pascarelli, who ensures that vision is matched with disciplined execution. That was on full display in September with Mediacom's first live DOCSIS 4.0 deployment in Moline, Illinois. He's committed to making sure Mediacom delivers on a promise to upgrade its network to multi-gigabit, symmetrical broadband speeds to 1 million homes and businesses by year-end.

John Pascarelli

EVP, Operations, Mediacom

Q&A

Has your view of AI

changed in the past year? I think AI has moved into a more functioning role as part of day-to-day activities. Safely used as a tool, it can quickly give a well-summarized answer to complex questions.

Which has the longer life expectancy—regional sports networks or late-night talk shows?

Late-night talk shows will last longer based on the cost to produce the content vs. the cost of the sports rights fees and the sports teams' need to monetize them.

What role does video play in your long-term strategy? The current model for linear TV or over-the-top apps does not work for many consumers. The average consumer wants a more simplified way to enjoy their TV experience. Especially with sports content being so fragmented year by year. MVPDs have a relationship with the consumer and can help content players drive penetration in existing linear customers and broadband-only homes.

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? My iPad, headphones and lots of water.

What does 67 mean to you? The 1967 "Impossible Dream."



Italia Commisso Weinand

EVP, Human Resources & Programming, Mediacom

Q&A

How can operators best

serve their customers? We will best serve the needs of our customers by giving them a whole house solution that is simple and flexible while keeping price consistent. Think of the success of Costco, yearly membership fee, and buy as you want. The cable industry lost sight that during a world pandemic we were America's saviors and ultimate connection to navigating the difficult world at our feet. Personally, I would like to transform the reference we use "MVPD" to mean we offer multiple choices of entertainment, communication, security and telephone services to our customers. Customer satisfaction and loyalty are therefore enhanced.

What's the single regulatory change that would most accelerate innovation? The regulatory change that would assist the industry is to have parity with over-the-top offerings and its removal of mandated tiers while unshackling choice.

Last TV series I binged: I love history, world history which helps me understand people and their motives. In the last five years the two shows that have made a lasting impression on me have been "Tehran" and "Pachinko."

CELEBRATING

VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

Congratulations to our DIRECTV leaders named in the **2026 CFX 100** for their vision, leadership and lasting impact on our industry.



Bill Morrow
Chief Executive Officer
2026 CFX 100 Honoree



Amy Leifer
Chief Advertising Sales Officer
2026 CFX 100 Honoree



Rob Thun
Chief Content Officer
2026 CFX 100 Honoree



Vince Torres
Chief Marketing Officer
2026 CFX 100 Honoree

DIRECTV



Jenny Storms

Chief Marketing Officer, NBCUniversal Television & Streaming

A COMPLEMENTARY APPROACH

30

While Jenkins oversees the business strategy for NBCU’s unified content hub, Storms heads strategy, integrated marketing, media and consumer engagement for all of the company’s entertainment and sports content, including Peacock. Guiding the greenlight process, Jenkins started 2026 strong with scripted fare including “PONIES,” “The ‘Burbs” and “The Fall and Rise of Reggie Dinkins,” a strong unscripted slate and theatrical releases like “The Super Mario Galaxy Movie” and “Minions 3.” Storms led the creation of an immersive, multi-faceted streaming event that resulted in “Wicked” becoming Peacock’s biggest Pay-One film and the #1 film across all streaming in its debut week and oversaw a marketing campaign celebrating “SNL” 50th anniversary programming, which generated over 45M views across NBC and Peacock.



Liz Jenkins

Chief Business Officer, NBCUniversal Entertainment

31

MEETING THE MOMENT

No task has been too tall for Feehan during his stint as interim CEO of Astound, but it helps having an industry stalwart in Murphy at his disposal—even when a merger with GFiber gets revealed. Murphy’s credited with fostering enhanced leadership practices at Astound, which has translated into tangible success as the company continues to grow. Over the past 12 months, Astound expanded its fiber network in Oregon, California, Illinois and elsewhere, bolstering its 11-state footprint that serves eight of the top-10 metropolitan markets in the U.S. Murphy was a focal point in Astound bringing back its “Price for Life” promotion, allowing eligible new customers to choose between a lifelong price commitment of \$40/month for 1 Gbps speeds or \$60/month for 1.5 Gbps.



Toni Murphy

EVP & COO, Astound Broadband



John Feehan

CFO, Astound Broadband



Luis Silberwasser

Chairman & CEO, TNT Sports

BRACE FOR IMPACT

In recent months, Silberwasser proved that innovative thinking combined with premium sports programming can create massive cultural impact. That's precisely how he attracted a younger and more diverse audience to TNT Sports. By securing key rights deals he tripled TNT Sports' college basketball and football slates and doubled its women's live sports offerings. He also oversaw an NFL and Bleacher Report partnership that resulted in new digital storytelling opportunities and delivered 30M video views in its first month alone. Through acquiring rights and elevating talent and production standards, Silberwasser has reshaped TNT Sports' position in all areas.

32



Anthony Wood

Founder & CEO, Roku Media

HOWDY, PARTNER

Under the leadership of Wood, Roku further cemented its reputation for affordable, accessible entertainment with the launch of Howdy, an ad-free premium subscription streaming service priced at an industry-low \$2.99. While other companies saw an advertising fall from last year's political campaign-heavy ad spending, Roku scored a fifth-straight quarter of double-digit growth. Collier, who joined the company as president in 2022, was the driving force behind Roku's integration with Amazon DSP that allows Amazon advertisers to connect with users on the Roku platform across major streaming apps. Under their leadership, Roku has been the most-watched FAST Channel in the country for more than a year.

33

Q&A

What's the biggest risk of moving too slowly—or too quickly—on AI? If you move too slowly, you risk falling behind competitors who are using AI to better understand viewers and improve their experience.

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? They will need to expertly navigate emerging technology's impact on data, product and storytelling. The leaders who win will be the ones who can understand AI deeply enough to ask the right questions, stay close to consumers and still make clear long-term decisions in a very noisy, quickly evolving landscape.



Charlie Collier

President, Roku Media

Q&A

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? A CFX subscription, or: The next generation will need to be part strategist, part therapist and part air-traffic controller. Only, these days 'AIR' likely means AI, Information and Reorganization. We'll be managing AI that produces infinite ideas,

spreadsheets that eliminate half of them and organizations that reorganize before the first draft is finished anyway. So... focus on the viewer, stay nimble, protect elite creative talent and remain calm as they buzz the tower.

WINNING THE LONG GAME 34

While Durant shapes ESPN’s strategic direction, Magnus focuses on creating engaging content for today’s sports fans. Significant media rights deals with the NFL, MLB, the WWE and other premier sports organizations form the cornerstone of Durant’s success, and those agreements help Magnus deliver programming that drives huge ratings. Combining sports with Disney IP for events like “Monsters Funday Football,” which was telecast on ESPN+ and Disney+, and premiering series, including “SC+” and the female-led “Vibe Check” on Disney+, elevated the brand to new audiences. The ESPN App hit 29M unique monthly users, ESPN Social surpassed 1 billion engagements and ESPN.com saw 63M monthly visitors.



Rosalyn Durant

EVP, Programming & Acquisitions, ESPN

Q&A

What skills will the next

generation of industry leaders need most? The ability to adapt to change (not be intimidated by it) and lead a dynamic workforce through it.

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Still deciding.

Last TV series I binged: “Pole to Pole” (Nat Geo).

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? WiFi.



Burke Magnus

President, Content, ESPN

Q&A

Last TV series I

binged: “High Potential.”

Your most reliable restaurant

recommendation? Emilio’s Ballato in New York.

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? Empathy and decisiveness.

35 NEW DIGS IN DENVER

Former Breezeline CEO van der Post is still getting used to the view from his new seat at WOW!, but he’s ready to go with lessons learned from his transformation of other cable systems. He’s well-versed in the aspects of a typical WOW! market, having led Breezeline’s \$1.13 billion effort to acquire WOW!’s Cleveland and Columbus markets in 2021. Van der Post is a fan of converged offerings, meaning it’s likely we’ll see WOW! continue to invest in network enhancements and FTTH deployments while also taking a closer look at the mobile product it launched in partnership with Reach in 2022.



Frank van der Post

CEO, WOW!

Q&A

What would a radically better customer experience actually look like? Product performance and reliability are so exceptional that customers rarely need to contact their broadband provider. When it isn’t a proactive notification, an AI-driven solution will deliver all relevant information, but when they do, it is a personalized digital-first customer experience that is easy and intuitive.

Last TV series I binged: “The Pitt” and “The Beast in Me.”



**SETTING THE STANDARD FOR
OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

THE 2026 CABLEFAX TOP OPS AWARDS

Across cable and broadband, operational leaders are redefining what performance looks like—driving transformation, expanding fiber, elevating the customer experience, and navigating a landscape shaped by constant change.

The Top Ops Awards recognize the operators, providers, and teams delivering real impact across the industry—through innovation, execution, and leadership at scale.

**ENTRIES OPEN THIS MAY
EARLY ENTRY ACCESS NOW AVAILABLE**

Start your submission →



36

DOWN TO THE DETAILS

It's been a busy 12 months and beyond for Gupta and Bonnell as Comcast moved through transformation efforts and decided to spin off a number of its cable and digital properties. They had something to celebrate in January as the effort to craft Versant Media Group made it across the finish line. Meanwhile, Kiriacoulacos has continued to negotiate all procurement deals and found synergies across all Comcast NBCU properties. He can answer all your questions on everything from software licenses to service level agreements and point you in the direction of suppliers that are sure to get the job done.



Rocky Gupta

EVP & Treasurer, Comcast Corporation

Peter Kiriacoulacos

*EVP & Chief Procurement Officer,
Comcast Corporation*



Lisa Bonnell

*EVP, Comcast Global Audit & General
Auditor, Comcast Corporation*

37

DIRECT HIT

After stepping into one of the most influential leadership roles in entertainment, Holland has made an immediate, industry-wide impact as Paramount's Chair of Direct-to-Consumer, overseeing both Paramount+ and Pluto TV and steering Paramount's streaming business through a groundbreaking merger and broader corporate restructuring. Under Holland's leadership, Paramount+ secured exclusive streaming rights to UFC events, including numbered events and "Fight Nights," marking one of the most prominent sports streaming deals in recent years. On the scripted content side, she guided a four-year exclusive film, television and streaming deal with "Stranger Things" creators the Duffer Brothers.



Cindy Holland

*Chair of Direct-to-Consumer,
Paramount*

DYNAMIC DUO

With the perspective of a businessman and a performer, media titan Byron Allen leads Allen Media Group through a changing mediascape. Following the successful refinancing of AMG's \$100 million revolving credit facility in early 2025, the company's television networks are some of the fastest-growing among all basic cable network portfolios, with seven AMG cable networks boasting year-over-year ratings growth. As Allen's longtime de facto chief of staff, Arouh spearheads worldwide distribution growth and revenue, retransmission consent and network renewals, streaming negotiations, content licensing deals, partnerships and business development. Recent wins include successfully negotiating an incremental distribution deal with Cox to launch five Allen Media Networks on its new OTT service, Cox TV Light.

38



Janice Arouh

*President, Network Distribution,
Allen Media Group*

Q&A

Do you watch any FAST channels (not owned by your company)? CBS News 24/7.

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? Emotional intelligence and empathy.

What's the most retro item on your desk? Sterling-silver paper holder once owned by Robert Taylor. I picked it up years ago at an estate sale at his former Mandeville Canyon ranch in Brentwood.



Byron Allen

*Founder, Chairman & CEO,
Allen Media Group*

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in.

Which has the longer life expectancy—regional sports networks or late-night talk shows? Now that “Comics Unleashed with Byron Allen” is on CBS, late-night talk shows.

39 FAST BALL

Jenckes' journey leading Xumo continues to be full of wins, and everything is coming up FAST. It now touts more than 2,000 FAST channels across 30 platforms worldwide as the Xumo Stream Box continues to gain traction with subscribers. The segment's enterprise division was trusted by Hisense to launch and monetize the initial offering of Hisense Channels, a FAST service crafted specifically for Hisense smart TVs. You can find Rigdon burning the midnight oil as he negotiates programming agreements for Comcast's cable systems and sets the content strategy for the future. Agreements with RSNs continue to be among the toughest to hammer out, but he found a path to making Chicago Sports Network available in June for the area's subscribers.



Marcien Jenckes

President, Xumo



Greg Rigdon

*President, Content Acquisition,
Connectivity & Platforms, Comcast
Corporation*



David Espinosa

President of Distribution, Fox Corporation

INNOVATIVE DISTRIBUTION

40

Espinosa's vast industry knowledge, strong negotiating skills and unifying leadership are valuable assets that help fuel Fox Corporation's sustained revenue growth. He's constantly encouraging his team to find innovative ways to strengthen and modernize relationships with national distribution partners across all of the company's brands—FOX Entertainment, FOX News Media, FOX Sports, Tubi and FOX One—while securing high-profile carriage renewals with major distribution partners. Espinosa is also focused on nurturing strong relationships with FOX affiliates at TV stations serving over 200 U.S. markets.

Q&A

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? My view on AI is constantly shifting. Just a couple of years ago, AI felt theoretical. Now, it's operational. The biggest jump for me has been watching it move from a "future" headline to an everyday tool. The efficiencies are undeniable and the focus now is just making sure we're using it intentionally and responsibly.

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in! Actually, I'm waiting for them to roll out a parent-approved version for teens in L.A. Between work and the kids' schedules, I'm ready to let the robots take over the carpool lane!

What's the most retro item on your desk? An HP 12C calculator my dad gave me in college. My friends mocked how old it was even back then!

41

IT'S MILLER TIME

Miller's strategic dealmaking for the Warner Bros. Discovery portfolio helped it land bragging rights as the most-watched TV portfolio in 2025, reaching over half of television households per week, or an average of 36 million. This past year, Miller and his team were pivotal in negotiating critical multi-year distribution agreements, including renewals with Verizon and Philo. He has a reputation for working hard to maximize value to all parties across streaming, linear networks, advertising sales, business affairs, news and sports within WBD.



Scott Miller

President, Networks & Streaming Distribution, Warner Bros. Discovery

Q&A

What apps have you deleted to reclaim your time? All social media— Facebook, Instagram, etc.—except LinkedIn.

What's the most retro item on your desk? A landline phone. I used it daily pre-COVID, and not once since.

What's your most reliable restaurant recommendation? I Sodi in NYC. Simple Italian food. It's a home run every time.

42 GOING GLOBAL

As Disney Entertainment and ESPN's chief negotiator and dealmaker, Zasowski and his team have strategically crafted agreements that not only reflect a deep understanding of the evolving media landscape but also anticipate the evolving needs of consumers and the industry as a whole. His visionary approach has driven direct-to-consumer subscriber growth and brought Disney's portfolio of networks to the widest audience possible. Appointed as President of Platform Distribution in January 2026, he now leads global distribution across Disney's entertainment and sports media businesses.



Jimmy Zasowski

*President, Platform Distribution,
Disney Entertainment and ESPN*

Q&A

Last TV series you binged? "Paradise" season 2 on Hulu.

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? It's more of a quality than a skill, but intellectual curiosity will be key to the success of our future leaders. Given the constant rate of change in our industry, our leaders will have to question the status quo and drive the next wave of innovation.

Last time you went to a movie theater? We're a big movie theater family. Our kids found a way to see "Zootopia 2" three times in theaters (with the help of a few snow days) and we have our tickets to see "Hoppers" on opening weekend.

What's the most retro item on your desk? I still have the handwritten notes from my first roles with the company in my desk drawer.

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? A good book—pre-flight/early flight before cruising altitude is a favorite time to catch up on some reading. And then it's WiFi.

What does 67 mean to you? It means that my 10-, 6- or 5-year-old are somewhere nearby and about to lose their minds!

43

THE DEALMAKER



Matt Schnaars

*President, Platform Distribution and
Partnerships, NBCUniversal*

In 2025, Schnaars' leadership was crucial in securing a long-term distribution agreement between NBCUniversal and Google. The multiyear carriage agreement expanded the reach of NBCU's media portfolio to millions of YouTube TV subscribers. He also oversaw an extended agreement between Comcast NBCUniversal and Amazon, spearheaded the launch of 24/7 linear network NBC Sports Network and led NBCUniversal in a new partnership with Walmart, bringing Peacock Premium to Walmart+ subscribers at no additional cost. In 2026, Schnaars looks forward to launching Peacock on YouTube's primetime channels.



Ray Hopkins

President, U.S. Distribution, Paramount

A BRIGHT RAY

44

Hopkins added another chapter to his distribution success playbook last year when after several days of negotiations, YouTube TV reupped its carriage of CBS stations nationwide along with the cable network portfolio. He’s been an integral part of helping to develop the new distribution model, with the YouTube deal including the right to bundle Paramount+ to select customers. Hopkins’ philosophy has been to work with distributors to stem cord cutting and keep the video business as robust as possible—something that takes on even greater importance as Paramount looks to acquire WBD’s vast portfolio.

Q&A

Last TV series I binged: “Mayor of Kingstown” on Paramount+, another Taylor Sheridan masterpiece—a brutal, dark, brilliant series.

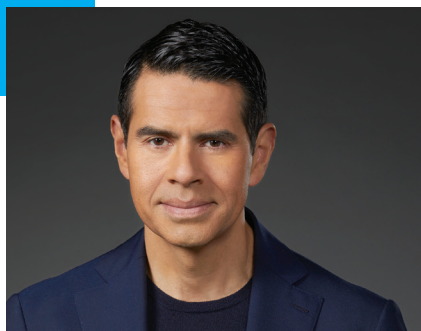
What’s the most retro item on your desk? A 1994 TCI Cablevision—Puget Sound Cable TV Marketing co-op metal coaster.

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? Apple AirPods Pro 3 for great noise cancellation.

45

A UNIFIED FORCE

Under Fernández, Telemundo’s wins keep piling up—from Sunday primetime dominance to “Dinastía Casillas” leading Spanish-language dramas among 18–49s and topping Peacock. Its NBA All-Star Game broadcast was also the most-watched Spanish-language NBA game in 20 years. Over at NBC News, Blumenstein is championing “NBC Nightly News,” which saw strong 1Q26 gains (+12% in total viewers; +23% in 25-54s) while guiding the org through the spin-off of MSNBC and CNBC into Versant. Both report to Conde, who has driven cross-platform collaboration that has paid off in viewers and journalistic impact. He’s working to drive even more collaboration with the midterm elections and Telemundo’s Spanish-language rights to the FIFA World Cup this summer.



Cesar Conde

Chairman, NBCUniversal News Group

Luis Fernández

Chairman, NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises



Rebecca Blumenstein

President, NBC News

GFIBER CITY, USA

This trio is powering the explosion of GFiber's growth story. Keib has mandated automatic upgrades to new 20 Gig optical network terminals while driving a migration of 90% of GFiber's footprint to infrastructure capable of 25G speeds. Laurenzano has pushed GFiber to continue growing while optimizing, tripling the company's rate of expansion over the last six years while overseeing the largest systems overhaul in the provider's history. As GFiber's first CGO, Griffith has focused on removing friction points frustrating customers. That led to the launch of a new GFiber app, which delivered a 50% drop in support calls. She's also partially to thank for the company's new lifestyle-based product portfolio, designed to easily match families with the performance they need.

46



Melani Griffith

Chief Growth Officer, GFiber

Q&A

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? Absolutely, it changes daily...

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in!

Last TV series I binged: "Bridgerton"

What does "good enough" broadband speed look like for most customers?

I think customers deserve at least 3 Gig broadband speed. With the proliferation of devices at home, 3 Gig is at least good enough...

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? AI, big data, digitally native

What's the most retro item on your desk? A notebook

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? An actual "hold in my hands" paper-bound book.

What does 67 mean to you? Something I say to drive my kids crazy.



John Keib

Chief Product & Technology Officer, GFiber

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in.

What would a radically better customer experience actually look like? Customer controls without supporting every facet of their experience.

Which has the longer life expectancy—regional sports networks or late-night talk shows?

Neither

What's the single regulatory change that would most accelerate innovation? Give customers full control of their personal identity and data.

Last TV series I binged: "Mayor of Kingstown"

What's the biggest risk of moving too slowly—or too quickly—on AI? The risk depends on the size and scale of your business. You move at the speed your business requires to be successful. No artificial efforts. The exposure of going too slow is that you pay license fees for capabilities you could home-grow.



Rocco Laurenzano

COO, GFiber

Q&A

What would a radically better customer experience actually look like? It starts with knowing what they need before they do, service vigilance is a must. Next, meet the customer where they are when they need to communicate: app, text, phone, web; don't force a customer to your terms. Ultimately, customer experience is about culture. It starts with the CEO and goes all the way to the technician and representative. It needs to be a point of pride for everyone in the company; with a tireless pursuit of continuous improvement.

Last TV series I binged: "The Pitt"

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most?

Emotional Intelligence. I have always believed it is very important for leaders. In a future of expanding AI, I think it will be even more important!

What's the most retro item on your desk? A letter opener. It belonged to my late father.

47

MONEY TALKS

Comcast CFO since January 2023, Armstrong oversees all financial functions for one of the most profitable companies in the U.S. Under his leadership, Comcast reported consolidated adjusted EBITDA of \$37.4 billion for 2025, with \$19.2 billion in free cash flow for the year. Over on the NBCUniversal side, Culbertson oversees the finance and strategy functions across the company, working closely with leadership teams across the Media, News, Studio and Universal Destinations & Experiences divisions. In 2026, Culbertson looks to use his expertise in financial strategy to push NBCUniversal's continued success during a landmark 100th anniversary year.



Jason Armstrong

CFO, Comcast Corporation



Randy Culbertson

CFO, NBCUniversal



Jeff Breaux

EVP & Chief Commercial Officer, Cox Communications

SMOOTH OPERATORS

48

Breaux and Langner have kept a steady hand as Cox works toward its \$34.5 billion merger with Charter. For Breaux, that included installing 6 GHz WiFi at the Honda Center in Anaheim, making it the first indoor venue in the U.S. to do so. At CES 2026, he made sure Cox shined by providing the Vegas Convention Center with 5 GHz wireless and redundant, dedicated fiber that brought dual 40 Gig connections. On the residential side, Langner oversaw the introduction of subscriber authentication into DTC apps like ESPN, Fox One and HBO Max. She also ushered in StayConnect WiFi, a backup internet service equipped with unlimited 4G cellular data and a four-hour battery.

Q&A

- Most reliable restaurant recommendation?** Cianghale Bianco in Florence, Italy
- What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most?** Human connection, empathy and real communications competency.
- What's the most retro item on your desk?** Stapler.
- Your must-have for a cross-country flight?** Laptop, water, comfortable shoes.



Colleen Langner

EVP & Chief Residential Officer, Cox Communications

Q&A

- Waymo: hop in or hard pass?** Hop-in. Short trips only.
- Last TV show I binged:** "Landman" on Paramount+.
- What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most?** Agility in fast-paced environments and a love of learning to keep up!



Howard Lee

Chief Creative Officer, U.S. Networks,
Warner Bros. Discovery

REAL LIFE ADVENTURES

Programming on WBD's domestic networks reflects Lee's mission to prioritize content that depicts and celebrates marginalized people and groups. Ratings indicate that mission is succeeding. One of TLC's newer series, "Baylen Out Loud," about a young woman with Tourette Syndrome, became cable's number one freshman series in all key demos and drew over 28M total viewers across all platforms. Annual events like "Puppy Bowl" and "Shark Week" continue to bring in viewers and social impressions, and WBD's U.S. Networks nabbed five Primetime and 13 Daytime Emmy nominations, with Discovery's adventure series "Expedition X" winning a Daytime Emmy.

49

TWO HANDS ON THE WHEEL

These two are the left and right hands of the cable industry—with Gardner lobbying for more spectrum for WiFi and McKinney helping deliver on all the innovative ways it will be put to use. Gardner joined NCTA in September and just days later found himself on stage with McKinney at CableLabs subsidiary SCTE's TechExpo. He didn't miss a beat, walking his former Congressional colleagues through NCTA's Continuum exhibit on the floor, showcasing cable's innovations. McKinney was right there too, championing DOCSIS 4.0. The CableLabs chief had a successful year that included rallying the industry around the R&D lab's Technology Vision and Innovation Roadmap for guiding the evolution around seamless connectivity, platform evolution and pervasive intelligence.



Cory Gardner

President & CEO, NCTA - The Internet
& Television Association

Q&A

What does 67 mean to you? It means endless ribbing from my kids when they hear me talking about WiFi in 6 and lower 7. "Dad..., you said 67"....and then they do the thing!
Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in... can't be worse than my driving.
What's the single regulatory change that would most accelerate innovation? Shot clocks—and if a project isn't approved within that time frame, it's automatically deemed approved.

Phil McKinney

President & CEO, CableLabs

Q&A

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? A fully charged Anker Prime power bank and my everyday carry satchel. It holds my cords, pens, notebooks and iPad Mini—everything I need to stay productive at 35,000 feet. I learned a long time ago that if you can't count on airport outlets or seatback power, you better bring your own.





Keeping an Eye on AI

By John Saavedra and Noah Ziegler

AI is here to stay and the TMT industry is leveraging it at every level, whether it's for content creation, diagnosing problems with a network or streamlining workflows behind the scenes. Most cable and media companies are either in the experimental phase or in the early stages of deploying AI into their businesses. As adoption grows, here are five major AI trends we're seeing across the industry.

Predictive AI Helps Smooth Network Operations

For years, cable operators have relied on sophisticated monitoring tools to keep networks running. AI is now pushing providers to be more intelligent in the digital ecosystem by offering visibility and autonomous capabilities. Operators have been increasingly applying AI-powered tools to internal task management, marketing and customer service, and they're also implementing agentic features into their networks for maintenance and optimization considerations. Though AI tools may recommend corrective actions, in many cases, they're built to address issues on their own, resolving issues with minimal human intervention.

Equipping networks with autonomous abilities is an investment Comcast has been studying for years, and it's easy to see why. In September, Comcast said its AI and machine learning technology analyzes 10,000 data points across

30 million devices on its network per hour to improve WiFi performance, and embedded AI tools helped the company resolve more than 3/4 (77%) of network software issues before the complication affects the user.

However, with 40% more major sports being streamed YOY and live streaming growing at around 25% in 2025, Comcast recognized the AI tidal wave isn't slowing down. The operator formed an initiative with D-Wave Quantum Inc. and Classiq to examine how quantum computing can improve internet delivery and management. The companies are testing quantum's ability to handle traffic management on Comcast's infrastructure. Comcast thinks the technology can eventually solve computationally complex problems that today's traditional systems aren't able to.

Comcast is also working with NVIDIA to experiment with real-time AI applications at the edge of the operator's network. NVIDIA is making network edge improvements with

fellow cable giant Charter as well, deploying the RTX Pro 6000 Blackwell GPU to support latency-sensitive applications and computer-heavy use cases.

But while Charter sees AI overhauling the customer experience, it doesn't want to take away from the human aspect. The company has been rolling out proprietary AI tools designed to support frontline employees in their interactions with customers. That includes automated note-taking, search tools and more, leading to faster response times and improved efficiency.

It's not just operators themselves leaning in on AI. Vendors have been installing agentic tools into their respective broadband platforms, with the goal of creating task-based agents that can perform workflows.

Taming a Regulatory Beast

As AI becomes more integrated into the digital infrastructure, regulatory scrutiny is expanding. Policymakers

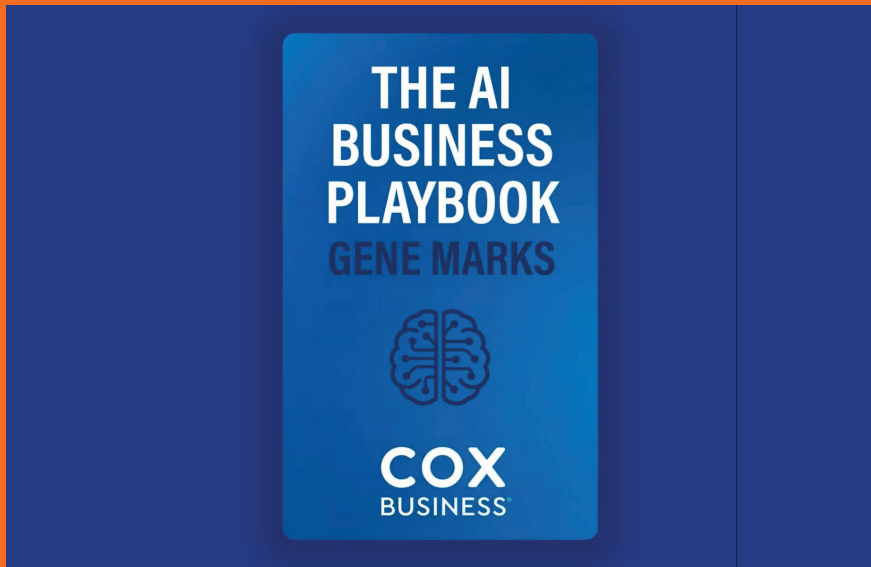
have been grappling with AI governance while questions around data privacy, network management and accountability start to intertwine with telecommunications. At the same time, a fragmented regulatory landscape sees some states pursuing their own approaches alongside federal initiatives.

The White House released a six-pronged AI policy framework in an attempt to add clarity. Among the issues that the Trump administration focused on were intellectual property rights, First Amendment protections, data centers and workforce development. The goal is to keep the U.S. at the forefront of the AI race and create a regulatory environment that fosters innovation, but another objective was to encourage Congress to preempt state-level AI regulations. With a handful of states like California and Utah set to move forward with their own guidelines, it sets the stage for yet another showdown on Capitol Hill—and it gets trickier with the \$42 billion BEAD program involved, considering the White House has encouraged NTIA to withhold \$21 billion in BEAD nondeployment funds from states that have enacted “onerous AI laws.”

Organizations have voiced support for the widespread federal approach to enacting AI legislation. NCTA’s CORE AI playbook takes the stance that a state-by-state method would hinder companies’ abilities to develop technology. Additionally, the association wants to see an effort to ramp up R&D initiatives pertaining to dynamic spectrum sharing, network management and other AI matters.

Handling the Bandwidth Boom

If there’s one area where AI’s impact is unmistakable, it’s infrastructure. Training and deploying AI models require enormous amounts of data movement, driving demand for high-capacity, low-latency connectivity. For cable operators, that demand aligns with ongoing investments in fiber expansion, mid-split and high-split upgrades and the rollout of DOCSIS 4.0. But as the AI boom resonates, it’s



Cox Business Shares AI Wisdom

Cox Business leaders partnered with columnist and business management expert Gene Marks to create “The AI Business Playbook,” a no-nonsense guide for small businesses that want to move past the hype and implement a realistic, revenue-driven AI strategy. Cox Business tells *CFX* what it wanted to achieve with the book.

Why did you decide to create this playbook?

We saw a real need for practical, unbiased guidance as businesses navigate AI adoption. Many leaders are hearing bold promises about AI but are unsure how to separate what’s actionable today from what’s still emerging, or how to turn experimentation into real business impact. The goal was to deliver a grounded, credible resource that helps leaders make smarter, more confident decisions about AI without the hype.

What are the biggest takeaways you hope your customers will be able to act on?

AI success starts with the right foundation. AI is only as effective as the connectivity, cloud infrastructure, security and data behind it. Another takeaway is that AI adoption is

as much about people and process as it is about technology: helping employees understand how AI fits into their roles, providing training and reducing uncertainty so teams can use AI confidently and productively rather than viewing it as a disruption. Finally, AI value doesn’t come from tools alone, but from pairing the right strategy with the infrastructure and expertise needed to put it into action.

How is Cox applying the ideas shared in the playbook to its own approach to AI?

The principles shared in the playbook closely align. Our philosophy starts with business outcomes, not tools; identifying where AI can meaningfully improve operations, customer experience or decision-making, and ensuring the right infrastructure, data and governance are in place to support it. Cox also believes AI only delivers value when it’s paired with reliable connectivity, strong security and a trusted partner that can guide organizations from strategy through execution. That mindset shapes both how we deploy AI across our own business and how we help customers responsibly operationalize AI in ways that create measurable, long-term impact.

AI Snapshot

There are currently 4,149 active data centers across the United States, with another 2,788 announced or under construction, according to the American Edge Project. When completed, the U.S. will have **nearly 7,000 data centers, a 67% increase from today.**

By 2035, Deloitte estimates that **power demand from AI data centers** in the U.S. could grow more than thirtyfold, **reaching 123 gigawatts**, up from 4 gigawatts in 2024.

A McKinsey & Company analysis projects that **approximately \$10 billion of forecast U.S. original content spend in 2030 could be addressable by some form of AI.** The firm, citing interviews and past historical lessons, suggests content distributors are positioned to capture the majority of value delivered from AI-driven increases in workflow speed and capacity.

Goldman Sachs economists estimate that generative **AI will raise the level of labor productivity** in the U.S. and other developed markets **by around 15%** when fully adopted and incorporated into regular production.

reshaping where infrastructure gets built.

According to a report from the American Edge Project, companies are expected to invest nearly \$3 trillion in U.S. AI infrastructure to power the next generation of computing. Approximately 4,149 data centers are active, with another 2,788 announced or under construction. AEP's estimates indicate that the new data centers will have a minimum combined capital expenditure of \$134 billion, in addition to generating approximately 4.7 million temporary construction-related jobs and 697,000 permanent operating jobs.

Fiber manufacturer Corning is set to upgrade its facilities in North Carolina after signing a partnership with Meta that's worth up to \$6 billion. While Corning will supply optical fiber, cable and connectivity solutions, it's part of Meta's vision to build data centers throughout the U.S. and source technology from domestic builders.

Recent research from the Fiber Broadband Association disclosed that data center network infrastructure alone could become a \$20 billion market over the next few years. That increase is also leading to a higher demand for fiber between facilities. FBA projects the U.S. needs to increase fiber route miles from 95,000 to 187,000 by 2029 in order to scale efficiently.

The AI Content Revolution

The recent shutdown of OpenAI's generative video app Sora may have brought more attention to how Disney is thinking about automated content creation, but it's just one of many media companies turning to this technology to make more content and iterate faster. One only needs to look at two DTC streaming services to see what's ahead.

ESPN's "SportsCenter for You" and Peacock's "Bravoverse" are using AI to create short-form vertical videos, personalized to users' interests, featuring AI-generated commentary using the voices of their on-air talent. Peacock is even launching an AI avatar of Bravo host Andy Cohen to guide users across Bravoverse's library of content.

Notably, AI avatars aren't restricted to the entertainment world—they could soon pop up in your weather reports. At NAB Show NYC last fall, meteorologist Amy Freeze demoed a "personalized weather hub" hosted by her "digital twin." But that's perhaps a more extreme example of how newsrooms around the country are using tools for research, identifying stories and video editing—and AI isn't just being adopted at national networks but also at the local level.

Broadcaster Sinclair began testing real-time live translation for newscasts at several of its stations last year, while Nexstar is adopting Taboola's DeeperDive gen AI answer engine on its sites to better respond to readers' questions. Scripps said recently that it sees AI tools as a way to free up its journalists to do more on-the-ground reporting and less menial content creation tasks.

Local Ads Meet AI

We probably don't have to tell you that the programmatic ad world is now full of AI-powered solutions designed to help advertisers find that precious premium CTV inventory, but equally noteworthy is what's happening at the ground level with small businesses trying to tap into their local TV markets.

For example, both Charter's Spectrum Reach and Comcast Advertising offer creative platforms, in partnership with gen AI firm Waymark, that make it easier for local businesses to generate affordable but premium-looking commercials. Spectrum Reach recently announced that over 15,000 ads had already been created using those ad-creation tools. Those ads in turn help businesses create stronger connections with their communities.

Comcast also highlighted how these tools are a great way to introduce new advertisers to multi-screen TV. In other words, at its best, AI is allowing businesses to do more with less, vital in times when purse strings are being tightened.

THE CFX READER SURVEY: The State of AI Adoption in Cable & Media First Quarter 2026

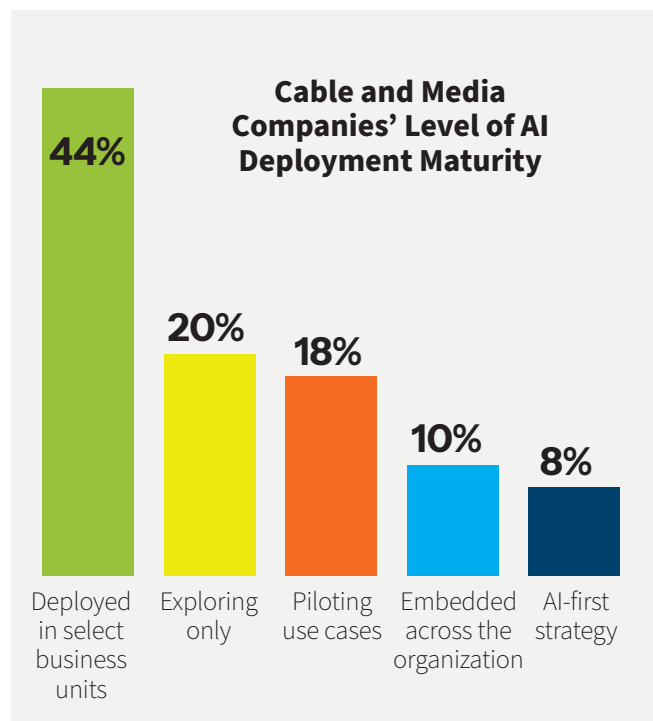
The fast-moving transition from AI experimentation to use cases is covered in-depth in the CFX Reader Survey

After a number of years of AI testing and learning, the cable and media industry has entered the phase of use cases deployment. Most AI activity is being applied to operational improvements, internal management task efficiency, assisting marketing and creative and automating the customer communication experience. But, overall, the industry's adoption of AI is still in the early stages. There are still few industry standards and best practices established, and there's a range of different adoption levels within industry segments and even within specific industry-leading companies. The CFX State of AI Adoption in Cable and Media Survey covers a range of AI-related strategic and tactical trends and issues impacting the industry. The survey was conducted in the first quarter of 2026 and received responses from a diverse group of industry professionals in various segments of the industry.

Most cable and media companies are moving from experimenting with AI to deployment, but it's still early in the process

SURVEY QUESTION: How would you describe your company's overall AI maturity?

The bulk of cable and media companies, but not the majority, say AI is being deployed in select business units. Twenty percent are still in the exploration and testing phase, while 18% have launched pilot programs. And only 18% say they have AI embedded across their organization or they are pursuing an AI-first strategy. Better understanding and deploying AI is seen as very important to most organizations, and a number of use cases are working, but it's still early in the process. The industry is entering the later part of the first stage of AI testing and adoption phase.

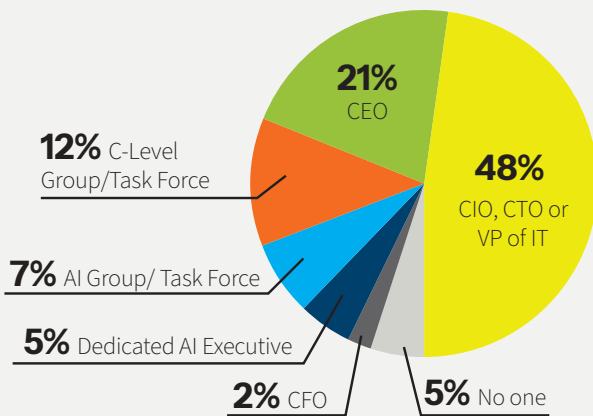


Internal tech leaders and CEOs are mainly setting AI strategy

SURVEY QUESTION: Who is primarily responsible for leading AI strategy at your organization?

AI strategy is set and managed by technology leaders such as CIOs and CTOs at close to half of the industry. CEOs are running AI strategy at 21% of the industry.

Who's Leading AI Strategy at Cable and Media Companies

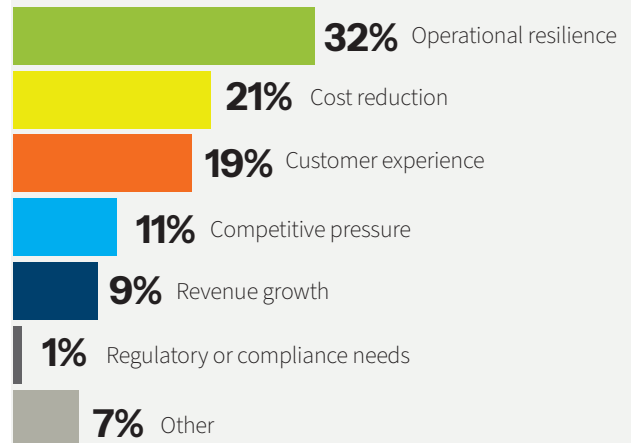


Operational resilience and cost control are the focus of more than half of AI investment

SURVEY QUESTION: What is the primary driver behind your AI investments today? Select one only.

AI platforms and services are mostly being deployed to improve operations, according to 32% of the industry, and reduce costs, selected by 21%. Another key finding is that AI isn't currently seen as a revenue stream as only 9% of industry executives say AI is impacting revenue growth.

What's Driving AI Investment



Despite many use cases, there are no industry standards established yet for AI impact measurement

SURVEY QUESTION: Which AI use cases are delivering the most measurable value today?

Where AI Is Delivering the Most Value

This was an open-ended question that asked for written responses. Some of the key themes include:

- » Task and process automation and efficiency
- » Customer service communications
- » Consumer insights and marketing
- » Idea generation and research
- » IT management and software development

Select executive comments:

"Automation and personal assistance." – *Manager with Technology Vendor*

"Applying AI to technical requirements requiring specific inputs and choices based on operational experience." – *VP with Broadband/Connectivity Provider*

"Pilots running are churn reduction, truck roll reduction, customer experience and network management."

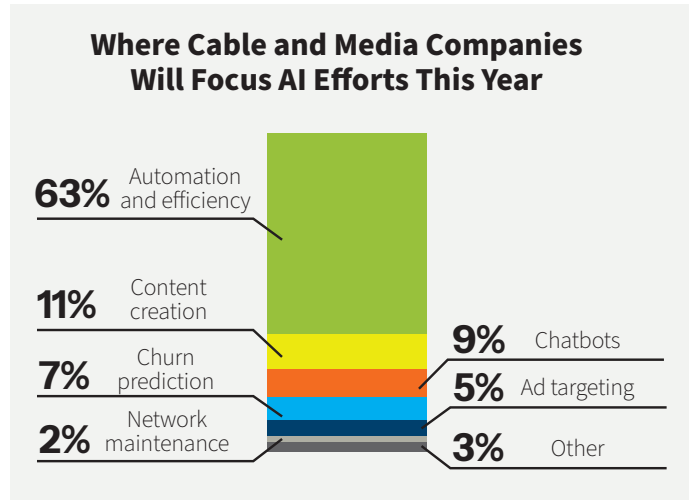
– *C-level with Industry Association*

"Too early to tell." – *Director with Programming/Content Company*

Automation and efficiency are the primary focus of AI initiatives this year

SURVEY QUESTION: Where is your primary focus with AI over the next 12 months? Select one only.

By far, cable and media companies say automation and efficiency will be the main focus of AI initiatives over the next year. All other usage areas are secondary in terms of prioritization.



Most cable and media companies are evaluating consumer sentiment around AI but there's concern about privacy and balancing with human interaction

SURVEY QUESTION: How is consumer sentiment toward artificial intelligence shaping your organization's strategic decisions, including investment, product development and go-to-market plans?

Impact of Consumer Sentiment Toward AI

This question asked for written responses. Common themes include:

- » Privacy and data security concerns remain key issues
- » Customers are often split into two groups, those embracing AI-enabled customer service and others that still want human interaction
- » A few executives noted they are prioritizing deploying AI for back-end internal systems uses over customer-facing areas of the business
- » There were a few executives who said consumer sentiment has no impact on their AI strategy, while a number of others said the opposite

Select executive comments:

"Consumer attitudes toward AI are mixed, people are excited about productivity benefits but concerned about privacy, bias and job displacement. Because of this, many companies are shifting investment toward trust infrastructure, not just models." – *Director with Broadcaster*

"Consumer sentiment isn't playing a role in our AI development. It's more of finding efficiencies within our business models." – *VP with Broadband/Connectivity Provider*

"Consumer sentiment makes me a little cautious using AI in certain areas such as customer identification and acquisition." – *C-level with Broadband/Connectivity Provider*

"Customers are OK with augmented support for the tool but still rely on a human centric interaction with our support teams." – *Manager with Tech Vendor*

"Growing consumer reliance on AI is driving continued investment." – *Manager with Broadband/Connectivity Provider*

"Reliability is our primary use case." – *VP with Broadband/Connectivity Provider*

"There's a split between those who embrace it and those who refuse to understand or examine its usefulness." – *Manager with Broadband/Connectivity Provider*

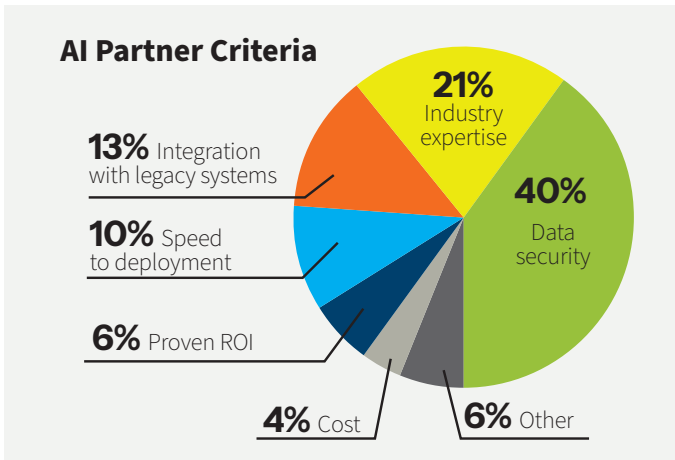
"We are emphasizing more backend uses vs. customer facing. We are restricting uses that could upset consumers." – *VP with Broadcaster*

"We are treading carefully because we feel there's still a trust issue with AI." – *Director with Industry Association*

Data security safeguards are the key when selecting AI partners and vendors

SURVEY QUESTION: What matters most when selecting AI partners? Select one only.

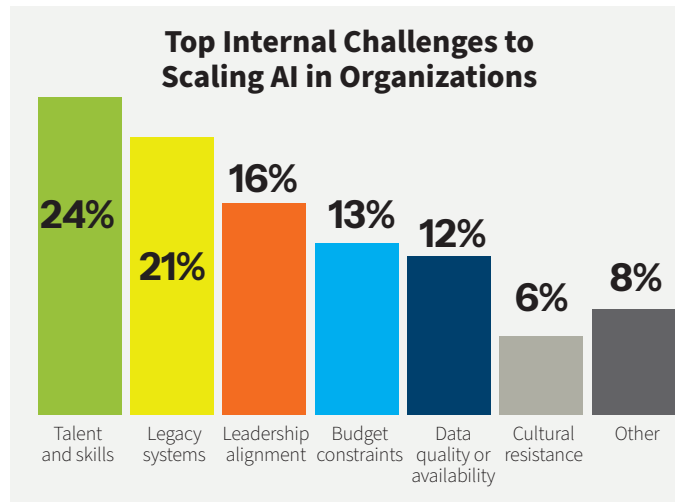
The top criteria when selecting AI partners and vendors are their data security protocols and procedures. The second factor is industry expertise selected by 21% of the industry. Interestingly, ROI and costs are less important partner selection criteria in this early phase of AI testing and deployment.



The top challenges to scaling AI are talent and skills gaps along with legacy tech systems

SURVEY QUESTION: What is the biggest internal challenge to scaling AI? Select one only.

There are a number of challenges limiting AI adoption and scaling, but the top three areas are related to talent and skill levels, legacy technology systems and getting company leaders aligned.



Internal task forces are setting AI policies and guidelines that are often revised due to rapid change and new use cases

SURVEY QUESTION: How is your organization currently establishing policies or guidelines for employee use of AI tools, e.g., governance, training, approved tools, guardrails or oversight?

AI Policies and Guidelines

Key themes in the written responses to this question include:

- » Internal task forces and committees
- » Vetting and approving lists of products, tools and platforms
- » Setting and communicating usage guidelines and policies
- » Providing training and information
- » A number of executives noted these policies and practices are still being developed

Select executive comments:

“Creating governance rules and having them in employee handbooks and in webinars throughout the year reminding employees of the importance of consistent human oversight and essential controls.”

– VP with Broadband/Connectivity Provider

“Developing structured AI usage frameworks for employees that balance innovation with risk management. The typical approach combines governance policies, tool approvals, training programs and oversight mechanisms.”

– Director with Broadcaster

“In-house legal counsel, IT along with consultants and vendors building all the tools to ensure security, performance measurement and success.”

– C-level with Industry Association

“Just beginning to collect data to put policies and guidelines together.”

– C-level with Broadband/Connectivity Provider

“Overall governance team, security steering committee and consistent training.”

– VP with Industry Association

“Slowly, carefully and conservatively.”

– Director with Broadband/Connectivity Provider

“Still establishing instructions and governance.”

– Manager with Tech Vendor

Executives' biggest concerns around artificial intelligence relate to data security, accuracy and uncertainty about how technology and industry strategies will evolve

SURVEY QUESTION: My biggest question/concern about developing an AI strategy is:

This question asked for written responses and a number of the comments mentioned:

- » Data security and privacy
- » Accuracy issues and hallucinations
- » Impact on jobs
- » Lack of clear strategy
- » Uncertainty about how AI will evolve

Select executive comments:

"AI is a moving target and is embraced differently in various lines of business. The discussion and strategy as well as deployment are entirely based on the process or group that is leveraging the AI." – *Manager with Broadband/Connectivity Provider*

"How do we adapt it to a model that can operate within a world with lots of uncertainty." – *VP with Broadcaster*

"How to prioritize among all of the opportunities for deployment." – *Director with Broadband/Connectivity Provider*

"I must be able to trust the ideas and/or data AI provides." – *C-level with Programming/Content Company*

"It is being pushed from the C-Suite without providing ample time for the users to provide input." – *Director with Agency*

"Its high up-front cost/investment with no guarantee of return." – *Director with Broadband/Connectivity Provider*

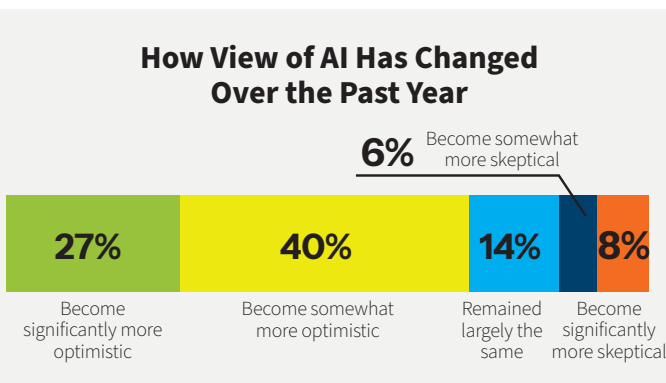
"No clear direction from executives." – *Manager with Broadcaster*

"Trying to make sure that the company and staff are updated on AI developments and the consistent need to maintain ultimate human monitoring and decision making and not becoming complacent about what AI can do or seem to do." – *VP with Broadband/Connectivity Provider*

Overall, the industry has become more optimistic about the impact of AI

SURVEY QUESTION: How has your view of AI changed over the past 12 months?

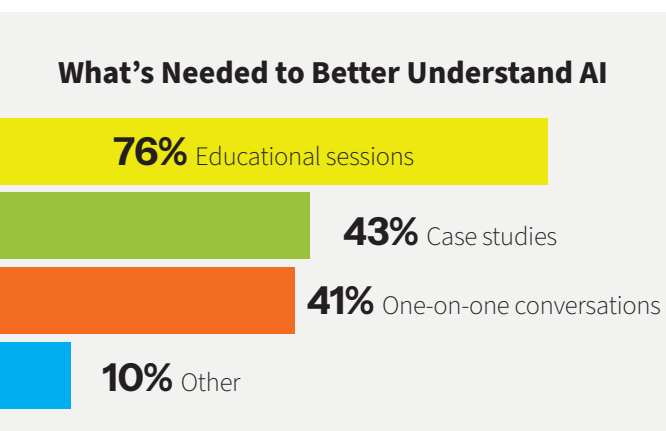
A total of 72% of the industry say they have become more optimistic about the impact of AI over the past year. Only 14% have become more skeptical.



A large percentage of industry professionals say they need more AI-related education

SURVEY QUESTION: What do you need to better understand applications for AI? Check all that apply.

More information about AI applications and functions is needed in the industry. Three-quarters of industry professionals say they need more education on AI, and 43% would like to see more case studies.



Methodology and About the Respondents: In Q1 2026, CFX conducted a poll of leading cable and media industry professionals. The respondents work for broadband/connectivity providers (33%), programming/content companies (15%), tech vendors (10%), broadcasters (9%), associations (8%), streaming/OTT service providers (6%), agencies (4%) and other segments (15%). The respondents' job roles are C-level (21%), VPs (17%), Director (21%), Manager (25%) and Other (16%). The survey received 90 responses.

BALANCING ACT

51

Bohigian has been on the road for the last 12 months, guiding her federal and state teams through the review processes needed to get the Charter-Cox merger across the finish line. Ray was not only a key player behind the launch of The Spectrum App Store in 2025, but also developed marketing bundles to inform prospective customers on how they could save when pairing Spectrum Mobile with connectivity and content offerings. Underpinning everything Charter undertakes is Haughton's legal expertise. He supports major transactions like the Cox combo, but also takes a fine-tooth comb to every regulatory matter and product or programming happening that crosses his desk.

Catherine Bohigian

EVP, Chief Government Affairs & Public Policy Officer, Charter Communications



Q&A

What's the single regulatory change that would most accelerate innovation?

Make more spectrum available to entrepreneurs and companies other than Verizon, AT&T and T-Mobile.



Adam Ray

EVP, Chief Commercial Officer, Charter Communications

Q&A

Has your view of AI changed in the

past year? It continues to evolve. In sales and marketing, we're using AI to personalize tens of thousands of campaigns to reach the right audience. AI lets us test, learn and adapt faster than ever, which helps us connect with customers where they are and drive measurable results across channels.

Jamal Haughton

EVP, General Counsel & Corporate Secretary, Charter Communications



Q&A

What does "good enough" broadband look like for most customers? If you aim for good enough

broadband, your broadband will never be good enough. At Spectrum, our network evolution is about always having more than enough.

52

INTO THE UNKNOWN

This trio fuels Comcast innovation. Nafshi guided the launch of a dedicated Quantum Lab aimed at exploring how quantum computing can address traffic management and other problems. Rioboli is an agentic AI pro, finding ways to introduce the tech into the Xfinity Assistant while also injecting all forms of AI into the software development lifecycle. Introducing fresh products to Comcast customers is Stirling's game, and his year has been marked by the launches of the company's first WiFi 7 and DOCSIS 4.0 gateway as well as Sky Glass Gen 2.



Elad Nafshi

EVP, Chief Network Officer, Connectivity & Platforms, Comcast Corporation

Rick Rioboli

EVP, Chief Technology Officer, Connectivity & Platforms, Comcast Corporation



Fraser Stirling

Global Chief Product Officer for Connectivity & Platforms, Comcast Corporation



Val Boreland

President, Entertainment, Versant

MAKE IT RAIN

Since being named President of Entertainment for Versant in early 2025, Boreland has had a direct hand in taking the company public. In just over a year, she has created a high-performing leadership team that oversees content strategy, creative development, production, marketing and acquisitions across USA Network, Oxygen, E! and Syfy. Under her leadership, legal drama “The Rainmaker” launched to become USA Network’s most-watched freshman original series in seven years and was the #1 new cable original scripted series on linear television in 2025.

53

Q&A

Last series you binged? I just re-binged all three seasons of “The Diplomat.” I love that show.

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? Yes, my view of AI has evolved over the past year. I’m more excited than ever about the opportunity it presents and the impact it can have on our business. The pace of innovation is accelerating rapidly, and we need to move beyond debating whether to use AI. Now, the real work and opportunity are in determining how to incorporate it thoughtfully and responsibly. The focus is no longer on adoption alone, but on strategic, ethical integration that drives meaningful value.

54 HALLMARK HOLIDAYS, PLURAL

Given the Hallmark brand’s pedigree as a greeting card company, building the network’s brand around Christmas movies made perfect sense, but Abbott is expanding holiday content to include year-round occasions. Last year, he capitalized on the popularity of their “Haul Out the Holly” franchise with “Haul Out the Halloween.” The company’s distribution footprint has grown domestically and internationally, and Abbott has created fun fan events like the Hallmark Christmas Cruise and the Hallmark Christmas Experience. Right now, Hallmarkers are busy preparing to celebrate Hallmark Channel’s 25th anniversary in 2026.



Darren Abbott

President & Chief Brand Officer,
Hallmark Media

Q&A

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? Yes. I see AI as an accelerant, not a replacement. Its real value is freeing teams to do more meaningful work when it’s guided by purpose.

What would a radically better customer experience actually look like? It feels human. It’s intuitive, relevant and emotionally resonant, showing up naturally in people’s lives instead of demanding attention.

What’s the biggest risk of moving too slowly—or too quickly—on AI? Move too slowly and you lose relevance. Move too fast and you lose clarity. The sweet spot is thoughtful experimentation rooted in who you are as a brand.

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? Anywhere that serves authentic Kansas City barbecue. Bonus points for a good bourbon Manhattan.

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? Curiosity, cultural fluency and the ability to connect creativity to real business impact.

A MORE RELIABLE FUTURE 55

Ramos is future-proofing Optimum, signing partnerships with Google Cloud, Cresta and Amdocs while also developing new platforms like OneAgent to give frontline workers the tools they need to attract and retain subscribers. Edwards is transforming customer perception of the brand by enhancing network reliability. Thanks to his efforts, 40% fewer customers experienced degraded service compared to 2023. He's also on track to meet the company's goal of delivering 1 Gig speeds to 100% of its footprint by the close of 2027.



Luciano Ramos

Chief Product & Technology Officer, Optimum

Q&A

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? Adaptability will be a critical skill as technology continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace. Leaders need to be comfortable navigating constant change, making smart decisions and rethinking traditional approaches as new capabilities emerge. Just as important is leading collaboratively.



Nate Edwards

COO, Optimum

Q&A

What would a radically better customer experience actually look like? One the customer barely notices—because their service simply works. Disruptions are seamless and self-resolving. Achieving this means moving beyond reactive support to a predictive model.



Grant Spellmeyer

President & CEO, ACA Connects

Q&A

What's the single regulatory change that would most accelerate innovation? Eliminate retransmission consent!
Last TV series I binged: "The Pitt."
What app(s) have you deleted to reclaim your time? Facebook.
Must-have item for a cross-country flight? Aisle seat!

ALL OPERATORS GREAT AND SMALL 56

Spellmeyer carries the torch of America's small- to mid-size operators, delivering messages of affordability to Capitol Hill. He advocates for policies that keep the cost of providing broadband and video low and that would lead to the repeal of retransmission consent. Borrelli keeps expanding initiatives that give NCTC members competitive toolsets. NCTC's AI Center for Excellence has four pilot projects underway and his work to expand mobile through a partnership with Reach means operators can evolve their product offerings and offer refreshed bundles at a reasonable rate.



Lou Borrelli

CEO, NCTC

Q&A

What role does video play in your long-term strategy? An essential product in the bundle.
What's the most retro item on your desk? Paul Maxwell Bobblehead.
Must-have item for a cross-country flight? First-class seat.

57 BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Ross is committed to bringing the finest service to every location within Armstrong's footprint. He led the way as the company surpassed a 70% milestone in the company's FTTP upgrade and expansion initiative. At the same time, he's been dedicated to providing locally produced content to customers 24/7 via the revitalized Armstrong Neighborhood Channel. Available on YouTube and to Armstrong subscribers, the channel shines a light on everything from local events to original music from across the provider's service area. Armstrong is set for continued growth over the next 12 months after announcing a deal to acquire MCTV. The acquisition, which will add more than 96,000 passings to the Armstrong footprint, is set to close in 2Q26.

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Not there yet!

Last TV series I binged: "Landman."

Do you watch any FAST channels? No.

What role does video play in your long-term strategy? Less of it.

Last time you went to a movie theater? November 2025, "Deliver Me From Nowhere."

The most retro item on your desk? Picture of my wife holding our now-26-year-old baby daughter.



Jeff Ross

President, Armstrong

READING THE FINE PRINT

There's no rock left unturned for Charytan and Reid as she covers the full range of legal affairs for Comcast's product and services portfolio and he manages all corporate governance functions. It is all gas, no brakes, for Harris. She not only paved the way for the grand opening of Universal Epic Universe in May, but was also a key player in the signing of the agreement that saw NBA games return to NBCU platforms in October. There has been no time to breathe for this trio as it was all hands on deck when Comcast NBCU executed the spinoff of cable networks and digital assets into Versant in January.

58

Lynn Charytan

EVP & Senior Deputy General Counsel/EVP & General Counsel, Connectivity & Platforms, Comcast Corporation



Kim Harris

EVP, Comcast Corporation & General Counsel, NBCUniversal, Comcast NBCUniversal



Tom Reid

Chief Legal Officer & Secretary, Comcast Corporation





Seth Van Sichel

SVP, Product & Operations, Sling TV

STREAMING MAVERICK 59

It's safe to say Sling TV's most recent pay TV innovation—the short-term subscription pass—has both its fans and detractors, but there's no question that the vMVPD is driving a different way of thinking about video. Van Sichel is the champion of this new “Day Pass” strategy, guiding the development of a product designed to attract cordless viewers with plans that offer more flexibility than even Sling's standard no-contract packages, while focusing marketing around challenging norms. Sling also recently launched a skinny bundle that packages live news, sports and entertainment as well as local broadcasters.

Q&A

Do you watch any FAST channels? I like the Westerns Plus channel.

Watching old John Wayne movies reminds me of growing up in a small town in Iowa. My dad and grandfather are strong influences in my life and they taught me to love the classics.

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? We enjoy Yutaka, a local sushi spot in Parker. It's casual and consistent, with a wonderful staff.

60 DIFFERENT, YET SIMILAR

Two of Fox Corporation's top platforms, Tubi and Fox News Media, cater to different demos by adapting to ever-changing audience behaviors. Wallace helped FOX News buck linear decline and spur growth across all eight of its platforms while Lewinson keeps expanding Tubi Originals by taking creative risks—from the YA romcom “How to Lose a Popularity Contest” to the animated comedy for grown-ups “Breaking Bear”—that are based on data-driven insights. In 2025, Wallace led FOX News to its highest-rated non-election year in history and generated over \$500M in revenue. Meanwhile, Lewinson positioned AVOD Tubi, already boasting 100M+ monthly active users, as a leader in discovering new talent.



Jay Wallace

President and Executive Editor, FOX News Media

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in and find the right music.

What would a radically better customer experience actually look like? Anything that equals the Apple Pay experience in its simplicity.

Do you watch any FAST channels (not owned by your company)? Letterman TV.

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? Langan's on 47th Street. The beer is reliably cold.



Adam Lewinson

Chief Content Officer, Tubi

Q&A

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? The Grill on the Alley is the quintessential lunch spot for the Westside.

Last time you went to a movie theater? To see “Wicked: For Good.” I still love a theater and a box of popcorn.



Kenneth Dixon

President and CEO, TDS Telecom

QUICK OFF THE BLOCKS

Dixon is nearing one year at TDS, but he's already helped the organization navigate the full launch of TDS Mobile while continuing to grow its footprint and reinvest in its network. He's guiding a complete upgrade of its Michigan and Kentucky area footprints to speeds of up to 8 gigabits symmetrical as well as fiber expansions in areas like southeast Wisconsin. He has the support of veteran Petersen, who has been on the ground for everything from scholarship award events to disaster relief efforts following events like Hurricane Melissa. Petersen puts a face to the TDS name while also helping the company achieve milestones like the surpassing of one million fiber addresses.

61



Andrew Petersen

SVP, Corporate Affairs, TDS Telecom

Q&A

Which has the longer life expectancy—regional sports networks or late-night talk shows? Having just come off March Madness, where every year our customers refamiliarize themselves with TruTV, TNT, ESPN and CBS, I think marquee sports programming generally, and regional sports networks specifically, still provides consumer value and drives subscriber stickiness. It will be interesting to see if the FCC or Congress engages in sports programming and streaming.



Keith Bowen

President, Business Services, News, and Programming, Optimum

Q&A

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? Great leaders in our industry will be the ones who can build high-trust, high-performance teams: cultivating safe spaces, communicating transparently and investing in growth through coaching and feedback.
Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hard pass, especially if you're going over 50mph.
Last TV series I binged: "Landman."

HOLE IN ONE

Optimum customers are getting more options thanks to Parker, who was able to finally make seamless subscription billing for OTT partners like Disney a reality. He also led the launch of Whole Home WiFi while driving a 39% YOY rise in lines at Optimum Mobile. Bowen represents Optimum at the carriage negotiation table, most recently going toe-to-toe with TEGNA and fighting back against oversized price hikes. In his time outside the ring, he led a multi-faceted campaign around September's Ryder Cup at Bethpage Black. He had a hand in everything from subscriber watch parties to retail activations and special features across News 12.

62



Mike Parker

President, Consumer Services, Optimum

Q&A

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? Simplify, simplify, simplify! They will need to master simplicity, focus and the ability to prioritize fewer things and execute them exceptionally well, all while operating with real ownership and urgency.

63 AD MAN

Over the past year, Marshall has led NBCUniversal through one of its most successful and transformative periods in advertising. As Chairman of Global Advertising & Partnerships, he delivered record-setting results across every major tentpole, strengthened the company’s leadership in live sports and accelerated innovation that is reshaping the future of premium video. Marshall closed NBCUniversal’s 2025–26 Upfront with the highest ad sales volume in company history, fueled by demand across news, entertainment and sports.



Mark Marshall
Chairman, Global Advertising & Partnerships, NBCUniversal

64

MEASURING UP



Rita Ferro
President, Global Advertising, The Walt Disney Company

During a transformative time in advertising, Ferro has leaned into the shifting landscape. Her leadership has modernized how brands engage audiences by advancing AI-driven creative solutions, data-led planning and real-time measurement capabilities. As Disney’s ad-supported footprint expands, Ferro remains focused on simplifying the buying experience, deepening fan engagement and delivering measurable, long-term value for advertisers. Outside of the office, she serves on the boards of The Ad Council, the American Advertising Federation, The V Foundation for Cancer Research and the Hispanic Scholarship Fund.

Q&A

Last TV series you binged? FX’s “Love Story.” I binged it and have watched the entire series again. I am obsessed with the show and how it’s driving the cultural conversation. It’s my favorite Ryan Murphy series and I feel he did an extraordinary job telling that story to those of us who remember John and Carolyn’s love story as well as making the show a compelling series to want to binge for a younger generation who didn’t know them. And I’m fascinated by my social feeds being filled with brands jumping on Carolyn’s fashion.

What would a radically better customer experience look like? A great customer experience starts with trust—transparency around data and the value we deliver. From there, it’s about creating meaningful, seamless ways for audiences to engage with our stories across every platform. The best experiences are intuitive, personal and intentional. That’s exactly what we’re focused on—designing products that make it easier for people to discover and enjoy the content they love.

Last time you went to a movie theater? I believe it’s the best screen and experience. I went to see Pixar’s “Hoppers.” Seeing people react to a Pixar movie is always a reminder of how powerful that shared experience can be.



Greg Wheeler

COO, altafiber

WHEEL AND DEAL

Altafiber is making moves and, with his promotion to COO in July 2025, Wheeler is a vital part of the leadership team making the company's fiber market buildout across the Midwest and Hawaii so successful. As President of Business Markets, Wheeler oversaw business practices and sales across all of altafiber's operating territories, business market expansion and product, customer care and operations. Now, as COO reporting directly to President and CEO Leigh Fox, his focus is on continued business simplification and accelerated network transformation.

Q&A

What does "good enough" broadband speed look like for most customers? It's about the experience, not speed. The number of smart devices in homes and businesses grows every year. Customers immediately know if there is a connectivity issue. That's why fiber is so important—it's built for what's next. Altafiber currently offers up to 6 gigs in our operating areas, with the ability to increase that speed exponentially in the future thanks to our investment in fiber.

65

POWER TRIO

Good things come in threes, including this power trio leading AMC Global Media in an evolving industry. McDermott oversees the development, production, acquisition, scheduling and release of series and films, including the launches of "The Audacity" and "Anne Rice's The Vampire Lestat," as well as the return of "Dark Winds." Kelleher builds and maintains strong relationships with the company's key affiliate partners. In 2025, this included the extension and expansion of AMC's successful first-of-its-kind distribution partnership with Netflix. Mitchko is the whiz behind all technical and engineering aspects of AMC, working closely with her fellow senior leaders to grow the company using technology resources.

66

Kim Kelleher

President & Chief Commercial Officer, AMC Global Media



Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in!
Last TV series I binged: "The Audacity"
What's the most retro item on

your desk? A stapler that has traveled with me from the early '90s.

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? Headphones and a charger

Dan McDermott

Chief Content Officer & President of AMC Studios, AMC Global Media



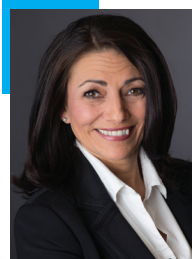
Q&A

Last TV series I binged: "Dark Winds" on AMC and AMC+
What role do MVPDs play in your long-term strategy? MVPDs

are critical partners to our strategic initiative of making our content available to anyone who wants to watch it, through any delivery system in the marketplace.

Stephanie Mitchko

EVP, Global Media Operations & Technology, AMC Global Media



Q&A

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need? The uniquely human ability to pair empathy with

discernment. They must understand AI and data deeply enough to ask the right questions, combine creativity with systems thinking and lead through constant change.



Jeff Collins

President, Advertising Sales, Marketing and Brand Partnerships, Fox Corporation

ONEFOX, DOUBLE DIGITS 67

It's no fluke that Collins and his team delivered double-digit revenue growth in back-to-back upfronts. He inspires and empowers team members to achieve strong results for advertisers, be it on linear FOX channels or streaming on Tubi. Last year, Tubi's volume grew over 35% YOY; FOX Sports experienced record-breaking growth and over \$2B in upfront revenue, excluding the World Cup; FOX News saw double-digit volume growth and category-leading pricing growth; and FOX Entertainment had sell-out levels. Collins keeps his team ahead of the curve and simplifies the ad-buying process for advertisers by continually improving the OneFox media platform.

68 DOUBLE-TEAMED

Voltaggio's analytical rigor and operational discipline perfectly complement Gould's collaborative and forward-thinking mindset. As joint leaders of Warner Bros. Discovery's full U.S. sales portfolio, Voltaggio focuses on maximizing value of the company's networks and streaming services while Gould unifies those networks and streamers under a data-driven go-to-market strategy. Together—through innovative advertising solutions like NEO and DemoDirect and via strategic partnerships with tech leaders including FreeWheel and Magnite—they've streamlined the ad-buying process and maintained WBD's reputation as a premier advertising destination in an increasingly fragmented industry.



Ryan Gould

President of U.S. Advertising Sales, Go To Market, Warner Bros. Discovery



Robert Voltaggio

President of U.S. Advertising Sales, Platform Monetization, Warner Bros. Discovery

Q&A What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need?

Future leaders won't be the ones claiming to have all the answers; they'll be the ones asking better questions. They'll stay open-minded, listen closely and won't be afraid to challenge assumptions. They'll lean into disruption, seeing it as an opportunity to rethink how value is created. They will build cultures where learning and experimentation are the standards.

Q&A Last TV series I binged:

"Succession" (rewatch). Still the best master class in power, leverage and dysfunction.

Last time you went to a movie theater? October 2025: "One Battle After Another."

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? WiFi. Staying connected, even at 35,000 feet, is non-negotiable.

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? Absolutely. I have shifted from viewing AI as job replacement to seeing it as job enhancement. Those that integrate AI to augment creativity, speed and decision-making will create disproportionate advantage.

THE COLLABORATORS 69

In February 2025, Rice and Strong both stepped up as Co-Presidents and now jointly oversee all distribution operations for A+E Networks' domestic, Caribbean and Canadian portfolios, including platform distribution, partnerships and marketing. In her new role, Rice has been instrumental in broadening A+E's reach on emerging platforms and spearheading new distribution partnerships. Meanwhile, Strong has led several high-profile distribution deals and strategic initiatives that have reinforced A+E's market position. Together, they are steering A+E through the next wave of distribution evolution.



Michelle Strong

*Co-President, Distribution,
A+E Global Media*

Q&A

Last time you went to a movie theater? I was last in a theater at TIFF in September 2025 with our Canadian distribution partners, watching "Tuner" and "The Smashing Machine." Being in that environment—surrounded by creators, talented actors and engaged audiences—reinforced how communal and impactful the theatrical experience continues to be.



Jane Rice

*Co-President, Distribution,
A+E Global Media*

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hopped in with my daughter in LA and loved it, although I missed chatting with a real driver, as to me those micro moments of human connection can be little treasures.



John Reardon

*President & CEO, Schurz
Communications*

Q&A

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? Yes, I believe that AI is fundamentally changing how work is performed and the structure of organizations. We will increasingly see efficiencies of data collection, optimal statistical analyses and improved business planning. I believe that the strategic planning of CEOs will be enhanced using these tools.

RAISE YOUR VOICE 70

Boyers acts as a megaphone for the issues ACA Connects members face each day, speaking out against rising costs tied to retrans consent, barriers to broadband buildout and federal policy objectives that could harm investment. Reardon is her right-hand man as Vice Chair of ACAC, but he's also had his hands full managing the launches of Flight Fiber multi-gig internet speeds. Schurz has also begun offering managed cloud and data protection services through its sister company, Otava, keeping customers safe from ransomware events and other cybersecurity risks.



Patricia Jo Boyers

*President/CEO/Co-Founder,
BOYCOM Vision*

Q&A

Which has the longer life expectancy—regional sports networks or late-night talk shows? Regional sports, hands down! Are there still late-night talk shows?
What's the most retro item on your desk? A Rolodex!!! (And I still use mine!)

71

MORE THAN MID

In his first year as president and his 15th year at Midco, Dold's leadership of Midco's Fiber Forward initiative continued to transform the company. In 2025, this included the launch and scaling of symmetrical gig services that offer 1GB upload speeds to more than 100,000 homes and businesses across five states. The growth of Midco's 400G wavelength service positioned the company as a leading service provider for hyperscalers and data centers. Dold also became the first person at Midco to port his wireless number to Midco Mobile, the company's new mobile service.



Ben Dold

President & COO, Midco

Q&A

Has your view of AI changed in the past year? Yes, I've seen firsthand how we can improve the internal tools our team members use to support our customers, and I'm excited to continue on this journey to work smarter and more efficiently.

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in! I've been really impressed with the autonomous driving experiences I've had.

Last TV series you binged? "Pluribus" on Apple TV. I had to see what the buzz was all about!

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? Collaboration.



Gina DiGioia

Chief Legal Officer, Fubo

Q&A

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need?

A growth mindset. This means prioritizing continuous self-evolution that incorporates grit to endure pressure and work ethic to move forward. They must learn to adapt and pivot when inevitable setbacks occur, embrace new technology and welcome diverse voices. Futurist Alvin Toffler summed it up best: "The illiterate of the 21st Century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn."

BUILDING FUBO'S FUTURE 72

Content and corporate strategy converge in the work of Mathers and DiGioia. They have been the quiet architects behind Fubo. Mathers spearheaded the launch of Fubo Sports—the vMVPD's first-ever skinny sports offering—assembling ESPN, FS1, local broadcast affiliates and a bundled ESPN Unlimited plan, while also rolling out standalone premium subscriptions via the Fubo Channel Store. DiGioia also plays an instrumental role in carriage negotiations, but was tasked this past year with helping close the biggest deal in Fubo's history. Its combination with Disney's Hulu + Live TV created the sixth-largest pay TV provider in the U.S.



Todd Mathers

EVP, Content Strategy & Acquisition, Fubo

Q&A

Last TV series I binged: "Chernobyl."

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? Reynaldo's in Carpinteria, California.

What's the most retro item on your desk? A Swingline stapler.

73 TRUE STORY

Under Sharenow's purview, A+E's flagship networks all ranked among Nielsen's top 15 entertainment cable channels, and boasted three of last year's five most-watched nonfiction miniseries among total viewers: "Sitting Bull" "The West" and "The Judd Family: Truth Be Told." Scott's A+E Factual Studios is a key part of the company's winning formula, remaining the #1 provider of unscripted series for A+E's own networks while also becoming a go-to supplier of hits for major platforms. The studio's partnership with Hulu has yielded six series to date, including "Cold Case Files: The DNA Speaks" and "Rachael Ray's Rebuild."



Rob Sharenow

President, Programming,
A+E Global Media

Q&A

Has your view of AI

changed in the past year? From a creative perspective, I've grown more excited by the possibilities of AI as a storytelling tool. From the POV of the future of humanity and what work will look like, I've grown more concerned, as it is a very powerful genie that we will not be able to stuff back in the bottle.



Sharon Scott

President, A+E Factual Studios,
A+E Global Media

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? On first blush, it's a hard pass. The cars are terrifying. BUT, if I press myself, it might be fun to lie down on the back seat and nap through traffic (seat belted, of course). And since I'm never sure how to interact with machines, do I say thank you when I get out of the car alive?

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TOPS OF THEIR GAMES

74

With cooking competition shows like “Tournament of Champions: All-Star Christmas” and the kid-focused “Baking Championships: Next Gen,” Ayala led Food Network to be 2025’s number two ad-supported non-news, non-sports cable network in prime. At OWN, Perry created more opportunities for Black storytellers and maintained OWN’s position as the destination for African American women. “Ready to Love” celebrated its 150th episode, OWN for the Holidays had another strong Christmas movie event and the new series “Heart & Hustle: Houston” grabbed viewers. TNT and TBS are thriving under Sarlanis’ care—TNT’s “The Librarians: The Next Chapter” debuted as 2025’s top new original cable drama series—and ID’s “docbuster” “The Fall of Diddy” saw nearly 10M viewers across linear and streaming. Page is expanding Magnolia’s programming in unexpected ways that stay true to the network’s brand, from the cooking show “Magnolia Table: At the Farm” to the reality series “Back to the Frontier,” where three families forsake modernity to live like 1880s homesteaders.

Betsy Ayala

President, Food Network

Q&A

What app have you deleted to reclaim your time?

I should probably delete my weather app. I spent way too much time on it this year.

What’s the most retro item on your desk? A stapler.

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? Noise-canceling headphones.

What does 67 mean to you? It exemplifies the power of social media and how something so nonsensical can quickly become part of the global zeitgeist.



Tina Perry

President, OWN

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in.

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? AI

literacy, emotional intelligence, strong communication and storytelling skills.

Last time you went to a movie theater? “Wuthering Heights.”



Allison Page

President, Magnolia Network

Q&A

Which has the longer life expectancy—regional sports networks or late-night talk shows?

Late-night talk shows, but on different platforms.

Last TV series I binged: I’m hopping on a full train here, but I just finished “Heated Rivalry.”



Jason Sarlanis

President, Turner Networks, ID & HLN, Linear and Streaming, Warner Bros. Discovery

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in.

I Waymo all the time and hope our industry is already cutting deals to put screens in the back of every single one of them. I can’t wait for the day when all that time our society wastes driving is instead spent watching great TV.

Last time you went to a movie theater? I go all the time but mainly to see the Nicole Kidman AMC intro. Somehow, heartbreak really does feel good in a place like this.





Vincent Torres

Chief Marketing Officer, DIRECTV

Q&A Has your view of AI changed over the past year?

Absolutely. The shift has gone from something we were exploring to a tool we use every day to drive results. At DIRECTV, AI has become integral to how we operate, from how we plan campaigns to how customers discover content. We're using it to make smarter decisions, reach audiences more effectively and simplify the viewing experience.

BUNDLE UP

Torres and his teams have had a defining impact on the broader industry by helping establish genre-based packaging. This vision first came to life in 2025 with the launch of MySports, a contract-free pack designed to deliver the content fans care about most. Concurrently, Leifer has led the digital transformation of DIRECTV Advertising with the programmatic enablement of its linear satellite inventory. Powered by the company's proprietary ad tech stack, DIRECTV Axis, it gives buyers access to increased inventory, scale and untapped audiences across satellite and streaming.

75

Amy Leifer

Chief Advertising Sales Officer, DIRECTV

Q&A Do you watch any FAST channels? Lionsgate Collection on MyFree DIRECTV!

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? Live TV! It enhances the in-flight experience in a way few other amenities can, especially during major tentpole events like the Super Bowl and the Olympics. I just saw a great video of a Delta flight where the passengers were all watching USA hockey on their seatbacks, and the whole plane went wild when the winning goal was scored.



Jane Wiseman

EVP, Head of Originals, Paramount+

STREAM QUEEN

Boarding Paramount in 2025, Wiseman has hit the ground running to usher in a new era of exciting original content at Paramount+. Working alongside longtime colleague Cindy Holland, Wiseman's major greenlit projects include "9/12," a six-episode limited series starring and executive produced by Jeremy Strong, and the Anne Hathaway limited true crime series "Fear Not." Under Wiseman, Paramount+ also announced that it will be the exclusive new home of all animated content from Avatar Studios and its fan-favorite "Airbender" universe.

76

Q&A Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in! It's my favorite mode of transportation!

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? My daughter's TikTok.

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most? The ability to return phone calls.

What app(s) have you deleted to reclaim your time? I haven't deleted any, but I have set one-hour limits on Instagram, X, TikTok and Facebook.

What's the most retro item on your desk? A pen and notebook.

What does 67 mean to you? Laughter with my family and a hilarious episode of "South Park."

SIGNAL AND STRATEGY

77

It's difficult to talk about the broadcast industry without mentioning the U.S.' largest station owner: Nexstar. Biard and Zimmer have the behemoth functioning at a high level, with the tandem helping navigate the uncertainty swirling around its Tegna deal while overseeing the complex web of retransmission and carriage negotiations. In 2025, distribution made up over 52% of Nexstar's full-year net revenue (\$4.95 billion), and Zimmer led the charge on growing Nexstar's TV assets like NewsNation and the CW Network. She'll have her hands full planning for a company that could grow to own 265 stations across 44 states, but Zimmer remains prepared, given she and her team already juggle hundreds of contracts each year in an era where the economics of TV are being rewritten.



Michael Biard

President & COO, Nexstar



Dana Zimmer

President, Distribution & Strategy, Nexstar

Q&A

Which has the longer life expectancy—regional sports networks or late-night talk shows? Late-night talk shows.

Last TV series I binged: "Landman."

What's the most retro item on your desk? Notebook with dates to capture handwritten notes.



Alison Hoffman

President, STARZ Networks



Kathryn Busby

President, Original Programming, STARZ Networks

MAKING IT ON THEIR OWN

78

Busby and Hoffman both played key roles in STARZ's 2025 transition from being a Lionsgate property into its own standalone publicly traded company. In a push to prioritize STARZ-owned IP that represents women and underserved audiences, Busby opened four writers' rooms within two months of the separation and completed production on Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson's new high-stakes boxing drama, "Fightland." Meanwhile, Hoffman expanded the "Outlander" universe with the prequel series "Outlander: Blood of My Blood," while also positioning the company as a leader in partnership bundles with deals with Hallmark+ and Prime Video.

79 TEAM PLAYERS

After nearly eight years of development, Aguiar led the successful launch of ESPN's full direct-to-consumer streaming service in 2025. Her role in the service's development spanned from early-stage research and financial modeling to pricing, tier structure and long-term profitability planning to rollout. On the marketing side, Thornton generated momentum for ESPN DTC with a multi-month, multiplatform campaign anchored by celebrity talent, including John Cena as the face of the campaign; immersive experiential activations; and cross-industry brand partnerships with Walmart, Lyft, Samsung and Complex.



Tina Thornton

EVP, Creative Studio and Marketing, ESPN

Q&A

What role do MVPDs play in your long-term strategy?

Consumer choice is very important to ESPN, so we take a holistic approach to our distribution. MVPDs remain an important part of our ecosystem, alongside DMVPDs and our own DTC offering. All three can unlock the full ESPN App experience and our approach connects to our mission, "To Serve Sports Fans Anytime, Anywhere."

Last TV series you binged? Most recently, I binged "Stranger Things."



Chara-Lynn Aguiar

EVP, CFO Research, Strategy & Office of the Chairman, ESPN

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in.

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? Scarr's

What's the most retro item on your desk? Bic four-color pens

80 MESSAGE RECEIVED

This duo is spreading the message of Comcast's strategic priorities from Wall Street to Washington, D.C., ensuring the company's efforts to push connectivity and content to new heights are known far and wide. Ryvicker has been busy fielding investor questions around the spinoff of a majority of Comcast's media properties into Versant, a separation that was completed earlier this year. Meanwhile, West has been leading Capitol Hill conversations around everything from spectrum policy to the ways broadband and content providers can be active participants in the evolution and implementation of advanced AI technology.



Marci Ryvicker

EVP, Investor Relations, Comcast Corporation



Lance West

EVP, Federal Government Affairs, Comcast Corporation

81

HITMAKERS

Amazon MGM Studios is in the business of making star-studded hits for screens big and small. On Valenti's film side, the Will Ferrell-Reese Witherspoon comedy "You're Cordially Invited" drew over 50M viewers, Viola Davis' "G20" hit the top of Nielsen's Movie Chart in its debut week, as did Ben Affleck and Jon Bernthal's "The Accountant 2," which also nabbed SXSW's Audience Award. Former Netflix exec Friedlander brought his A-game when he joined Amazon MGM Studios in September. He's currently supporting the studio's scripted and unscripted originals like "Fallout," "The Boys" and "The Summer I Turned Pretty," while seeking additional premium programming that will resonate with viewers around the world.



Courtenay Valenti

Head of Film, Streaming, and Theatrical, Amazon MGM Studios



Peter Friedlander

Head of Global Television, Amazon MGM Studios

82

WESTWARD HO!



Dale Ardizzone

COO, INSP, LLC

Ardizzone has shaped INSP into a premier brand in the Western and Western-adjacent space. Over the past year he's helped expand INSP with its very first FAST Channel, Western Bound, and launch two international FAST Channels, a pair of mobile apps and the ShopINSP retail store. Of special note, INSP's original series and movies are gaining traction as well, with "Elkhorn" and "Blue Ridge: The Series" entering their second seasons while "Wild West Chronicles" is already in season four. In early 2025, INSP received a Will Rogers Medallion Awards' Golden Lariat award for its dedication to Western storytelling.

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in. I'm in favor of anything that allows me to multitask. Also, the horses I ride are essentially driverless and I still get to my destination with only minor bruises.

What would a radically better customer experience actually look like?

Someone actually answering the phone.

Which has the longer life expectancy—regional sports networks or late-night talk shows? Regional sports nets, provided they find a way to effectively integrate advertising and gambling. RSNs provide a better opportunity for reinventing the customer experience.

What role do MVPDs play in your long-term strategy? Substantial as it's still a consistently reliable way to reach mass audiences.

83



Kristin Johnson

Co-founder & CEO, Hotwire Communications

Q&A

Last TV series I binged:

“The Diplomat”

What does “good enough”

broadband speed look like for most

customers? Futureproof broadband delivered over fiber that will scale with the customer’s and household’s needs over time.

Must-have item for a cross-country

flight? Noise-cancelling earphones.

BULKING UP

Hotwire’s unique strategy of striking bulk billing agreements that supply fiber to entire homeowner associations is built on a long-term, inflation-linked contractual framework with an astounding renewal rate. Not long ago, Johnson and Bullock fought an FCC proposal concerning bulk billing that could have undercut their proven strategy. That effort, combined with significant growth potential (over 12M homeowner association units exist under the company’s current footprint), helped draw the attention of Brookfield Infrastructure, which made a strategic investment in the provider last year.



Jonathan Bullock

Chief Strategy Officer, Hotwire Communications

Q&A

What would a radically better customer experience actually look like? Just ask a Hotwire customer.

What does 67 mean to you? Am I moving up on this list?

What’s the most retro item on your desk? My HP 12c calculator.

POWER TRIFECTA

84

This powerhouse trio helped turn WBD into the company that spurred a historic bidding battle. Verveer represents WBD in all governmental interactions; her team proved vital in paving the way for HBO Max’s recent expansion in multiple international markets. Bronzo’s strategic branding efforts delivered over 141M total viewers per month in 2025, thanks to events like Discovery’s “Shark Week” and Animal Planet’s “Puppy Bowl XXI.” Last year, long-time WBD vet Girdwood brought a people-first approach to her new role as Chief People & Culture Officer by instituting new programs while planning for the impending acquisition and the transition of Warner Bros. and Discovery Global into separate companies.

Karen Bronzo

Chief Global Marketing Officer, U.S. Networks & News, Warner Bros. Discovery



Q&A

Last TV series I

binged: After learning of Catherine O’Hara’s passing, I finally sat down to watch “Schitt’s

Creek.” I loved it! It exceeded all my expectations and too quickly became one of my top five favorite series of all time.

Amy Girdwood

Chief People & Culture Officer, Warner Bros. Discovery



Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in. **Must-have item for a cross-country flight:** #1

Powerbank, #2 iPad with downloaded WBD movies and TV.

Alexa Verveer

EVP, Global Government Affairs & Public Policy, Warner Bros. Discovery



Q&A

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need? They will need to be highly adaptable and flexible, with a

strong ability to navigate disruption, pivot quickly and lead teams through ongoing cycles of reinvention.

85

UNCHARTED TERRITORY

Universal Ads has been Rooke's passion project over the last 12 months. The cross-publisher buying platform has continued to evolve and now more than 15 publishers have inventory on UA. Those that utilize the platform can also access AI tools to fast-track ad development, and Zimmermann has championed agentic AI as a technology that could automate media buying in the near future. Since the closing of the acquisition of network-as-a-service firm Nitel in April 2025, Zimmermann has done all he can to ensure Comcast Business is a leader in its space. Secure networking and cloud services solutions have received meaningful upgrades and he has begun rolling out symmetrical speeds powered by Full Duplex DOCSIS 4.0 in select markets.



James Rooke

*President, Comcast Advertising,
Comcast Corporation*



Edward Zimmermann

*President, Comcast Business,
Comcast Corporation*

A SAFE BET

Marine's fan-first philosophy helped him prove that Prime Video can match, if not exceed, linear television's ability to reach sports viewers with premium content. In the past year, Thursday Night Football had its most-watched season ever, reaching 122M unique viewers; he brought NASCAR to Prime with the sport's first exclusive streaming package, resulting in NASCAR's youngest audience in over a decade; and he launched a new global NBA package complete with interactive features. Marine also debuted opt-in personalized bet tracking with FanDuel and other customizable functions to further enhance fans' experiences.

86



Jay Marine

*Head of Prime Video U.S., Global Sports
and Advertising, Prime Video*

87 THE PREMIER PUSH

In 2025, Granito and her team spearheaded promotional and marketing campaigns for AMC Global Media's most successful series and films, including "The Walking Dead Universe" franchise extensions "Dead City" and "Daryl Dixon," IFC Entertainment Group's smash hit film "Clown in a Cornfield" and "Anne Rice's Talamasca: The Secret Order." Meanwhile, Juvelis continued to be a key architect of AMC's corporate story, culture, brand and reputation. She oversaw the campaign for the third season of "Dark Winds," helping to boost premiere viewership on AMC+ by more than 50% and doubling subscriber acquisition over the previous season.



Georgia Juvelis

Chief Communications Officer,
AMC Global Media

Q&A

Last TV series I binged:

"Love Story: John F. Kennedy Jr. & Carolyn Bessette" on FX

Your most reliable restaurant

recommendation? Pylos, an excellent Greek restaurant in New York City's East Village

Last time you went to a movie

theater? Pre-Oscars, I went to our IFC Center in NYC for their annual showcase of all the Oscar-nominated short films.



Kim Granito

CMO, AMC Global Media

Q&A

What's the biggest risk of moving too slowly—or quickly—on AI?

There's risk in both. Too slow and you risk falling behind. Move too fast and you risk losing control of things like brand and data. We think of it as a creative sparring partner.

88 THREAT CONTAINED

Davis is responsible for setting up frontline cyber defenses for the MVPD, crafting the Comcast Threat Research Lab to quickly detect and address large-scale threats early. She's sharing her findings at conferences like AWS re:Inforce and via publications like the newly launched Comcast Business Cybersecurity Threat Report. Meanwhile, all questions AI head to McMeley, who examines the subject with a focus on responsible data use and risk governance. She's also a connector, bringing together stakeholders across government affairs, public policy and legal to ensure all sides of the business are aligned in their operational goals and addressing roadblocks that may stand in the way of achieving them.



Noopur Davis

EVP, Chief Information Security &
Product Privacy Officer, Comcast
Corporation



Christin McMeley

SVP, Chief Privacy & Data Strategy
Officer, Comcast Corporation



Toby Byrne

President, A+E Media Solutions, A+E Global Media

Q&A

Last TV series you

binged? “A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms.” It was surprisingly funny for a “Game of Thrones” series.

Your most reliable restaurant rec-

ommendation? Uncle Bill’s Pancake House in Stone Harbor, N.J. Pancakes, eggs, bacon, hash browns, coffee and fast service with a smile—it never disappoints!

THINK FAST

In 2025, Byrne and his team expanded A+E’s advertising reach beyond traditional TV into streaming, social media and direct-to-consumer. Their custom campaign with Chili’s generated five billion impressions and 34M TikTok views. On the content side, MacDonald has guided A+E Global Media’s continued evolution into a multi-platform content provider and IP factory. He helped A+E push further into FAST with the launch of multiple international channels in markets including the U.K., Canada, Germany, Australia and the Netherlands.

89



Steve MacDonald

President, Global Content Licensing & International, A+E Global Media

Q&A

Your most reliable

restaurant recommendation? The Grill on the Alley in Beverly Hills.

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need most?

What’s old is new—listening and asking the right questions.

90 TAG TEAM

Lins and Popo lead associations that keep the industry a step ahead. At CTAM, Lins is focused on challenges such as piracy and customer retention. CTAM’s consumer education initiative StreamSafely.com and ByeScammer.com are responsible for \$1.75 million in protected revenue across the industry. Its long-running SmartMove marketing co-op generated almost 5M leads in the last year. At SCTE, Popo ensures the workforce is highly skilled and ready for what’s next. Accomplishments include forging a complimentary broadband education program with NCTI so members can explore courses and founding an executive-level coalition to address network sabotage and cable-cutting incidents.



Vicki Lins

President & CEO, CTAM

Q&A

Last TV series I

binged: “Palm Royale” and “The Studio.” Apparently, I relax by either totally escaping work or laughing out loud about it.

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need?

Aside from being adept at leading change, they will need a mix of capabilities to ask the right questions, make informed decisions and hone instincts for identifying what’s next and determining how to get there.



Maria Popo

President & CEO, SCTE

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard

pass? Hard pass but not for safety reasons. We’re automating jobs before we’ve figured out what replaces them. Ride-share driving isn’t just a gig for a lot of people, it’s the economy. And we keep treating workforce displacement as a downstream problem to solve later.

TELEMUNDO'S STARTING LINEUP

91

Telemundo is hitting the pitch this year as the exclusive Spanish-language broadcaster of the biggest FIFA World Cup ever—more national teams will compete in more matches than any previous edition of the tournament, and it's all happening on the network's home turf. Pons Tubio, Gil and Duro make up the dream team driving the programming and marketing strategy in 2026, which includes over 700 hours of World Cup content across broadcast, cable, streaming and FAST channels, experiential activations, a thought leadership platform about the future of sports and impactful cultural storytelling across the network's daytime and primetime blocks.

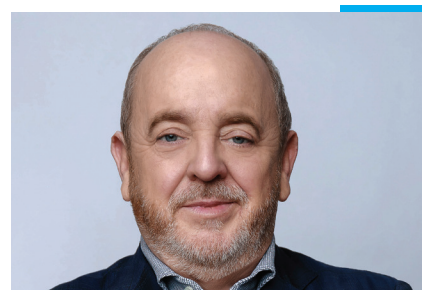


Mónica Gil

Chief Administrative & Marketing Officer, NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises

Joaquin Duro

EVP, Sports & Head of Streaming, NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises



Javier Pons Tubio

Chief Content Officer & Head of Telemundo Studios, NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises

We asked the CFX 100 to name the last TV series they binged. The most popular answers—and where to stream them:



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STRATEGIC BACKING

The CFX 100 is primarily made up of operator and content executives, but there are a few vendors that show up in such a big way, we had to find a place for them. Whether it's volunteering for association boards, sponsoring industry events or showing up on exhibit floors and industry panels, these four stand out. Their impact goes beyond participation—they help shape the conversations and momentum driving the industry.



Nimrod Ben-Natan

CEO, Harmonic

With Ben-Natan at the helm, Harmonic's wins are racking up. In 2025, Charter signed a footprint-wide deployment agreement for Harmonic's virtual CMTS and operational tools and Comcast broadened its partnership to support fiber buildouts reaching 1.2 million additional homes. Harmonic is doubling down on virtualized broadband, with Ben-Natan orchestrating a \$145M December cash deal for its video business to sharpen that focus.

Q&A Which has the longer life expectancy—regional sports networks or late-night talk shows?

Definitely, regional sports networks. The urgency of live sports remains irreplaceable. As a massive sports fan, I applaud how advanced video processing has elevated sports viewing, making fans feel as if they're right in the pit lane, on the sideline or courtside. This is a major differentiator, but it also raises the stakes for reliable always-on, high-speed connectivity.

What does "good enough" broadband speed look like for most customers? Good broadband isn't just about speed, but about the overall experience. Whether streaming a game or joining a video call, a gigabit connection matters most when it delivers low latency, high reliability and the ability to support multiple devices, applications and real-time services without interruption.

Sean Casey

SVP, Product Management, CSG

Casey is tackling fragmentation head-on, giving operators a single layer to unify product catalogs, pricing, billing, CRM and even network orchestration. He's extended that vision to video, shaping CSG's cloud-native SaaS platforms to deliver a flexible, connected experience that blends live TV and streaming. He's equally comfortable bringing disciplined AI innovation to market as he is expanding into new vertical markets.

Q&A Has your view of AI changed in the past year?

Yes! We've spoken about AI for decades at CSG, but I've been impressed by how quickly the technology has matured in just the past year. AI will remain critical to deliver personalized, easy customer experiences and reduce operational costs. Meanwhile, agents will become key to a new world of implementations, replacing manual process mapping with discovery and learning. The caveat: The breakneck pace of AI advancements will cause quite a bit of technical debt. This further reinforces the importance of SaaS, cloud and DevOps in the tech stack to uphold high standards of quality as we unlock newfound operational efficiencies.

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? Pequod's deep-dish pizza in Chicago... don't eat for the day (or week) before you go!



Stacey Slaughter

CEO & Owner, NCTI

NCTI's killing it with Slaughter in charge. The past year saw her broker a strategic partnership with SCTE that delivers NCTI's specialized curriculum on 5G, fixed wireless, network construction and more directly to members via the SCTE portal. Slaughter directed the launch of a new Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Administration degree option with Arapahoe Community College, elevating an NCTI program that previously focused on associate degrees. And she created a new instructor-led training division to create a hybrid approach to field skills.

Q&A

Last TV series I binged: "The West Wing"

What's the biggest risk of moving too slowly—or too quickly—on AI? If we move too slowly in integrating AI, we will, quite simply, be left behind. Particularly when it comes to innovation and bringing to life new (or improved) ideas, processes, production and products. With the acceleration of AI growing exponentially, it will be extraordinarily difficult to acclimate even a year from now if we stay on the sidelines of this movement. However, if we move too quickly in our adoption it will be all too easy to delegate the judgment needed to most effectively maximize the power of this technology. We as humans must likewise accelerate the growth of our ability to exercise critical thinking and discernment.

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation?

Shanahan's

Last time you went to a movie theater? Oh heavens, I had to look that up in my AMC app. Christmas Day 2024

What app have you deleted to reclaim your time? TikTok

What's the most retro item on your desk? Phone connected to a landline.



Mark Trudeau

CEO & Founder, OpenVault

Trudeau doesn't just talk about AI—he puts it to work, with OpenVault in the market with access network-agnostic AI solutions that speed detection and resolution of issues that improve subscriber experiences, reduce churn and optimize performance. He's driven the creation of AI tools that feature guardrails to generate answers specific to cable. Quarterly OpenVault Broadband Insights reports have become industry must-reads, with Trudeau a master at explaining usage trends—such as how the migration to DOCSIS 3.1 and higher is resulting in greater broadband consumption.

Q&A

Has your view of AI changed in the past year?

While we used to view AI as another tool in our arsenal, it has quickly become clear that our product suite is the toolkit that AI, specifically Agentic AI, can leverage. It's a subtle shift in thinking that can reshape what proactive network maintenance really means!

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in and trust!

What's the biggest risk of moving too slowly—or too quickly—on AI? I believe moving too slowly presents far more risk. While it's tough to keep up with the speed of change, I believe those companies that make the effort to leverage the latest and greatest capabilities will thrive over those that sit still and wait!

What does "good enough" broadband speed look like for most customers? Good enough speed is the speed that operators advertise, which is not always the speed provided! It's really important that operators maintain a healthy network to consistently deliver the speeds advertised. By doing that, the speeds offered today are more than "good enough."

Must-have item for a cross-country flight? At 6'4", hopefully leg room!

SPREADING THE WORD

93

If you heard about the Winter Olympics across Peacock, NBC and more, you have Khoury to thank. She's a communications powerhouse with a hand in everything from advertising and corporate marketing to financial and government functions. Strahan has been doing his part to build the next generation of Comcast leaders, leading the expansion of the company's partnership with Drexel and creating an MBA in Artificial Intelligence for Executive Leaders. Wilson-Scott's commitment to Project UP is unwavering, and she experienced another milestone in November when the program dedicated to giving back committed \$2.5 million to growing digital opportunity in rural communities.

Jennifer Khoury

Chief Communications Officer,
Comcast Corporation



Bill Strahan

EVP, Human Resources, Connectivity & Platforms, Comcast Corporation



Q&A

What's the most retro item on your desk? Box for binder clips and paper clips that my son hand-painted for me when he was in kindergarten.

Dalila Wilson-Scott

EVP & Chief Impact & Inclusion Officer,
Comcast Corporation

President, Comcast NBCUniversal Foundation



94 STRONGER TOGETHER

Hannasch has made re-energizing Vyve's technical field operations her mission since being elevated to COO last year. She's getting results with a 97% technician satisfaction score and a 50% drop in outages compared to the prior year. She's a proponent of proactive customer service, and she and Parrott have worked together to be guiding lights internally as Vyve prepares to become a part of Cable One later this year. Parrott has been dedicated to bolstering Vyve's infrastructure ahead of the deal's closing, striking an agreement with fiber infrastructure company Accelecom to bolster its network across Georgia.



Melanie Hannasch

Co-President, Vyve Broadband

Q&A

What would a radically better customer experience actually look like? It would be invisible. No truck roll unless absolutely necessary. Predictive maintenance before a customer feels disruption. Clear pricing. Immediate answers. Real-time transparency. Radically better means the customer does not have to think about us. The service simply works, consistently.



Andy Parrott

Outgoing President & CEO,
Vyve Broadband

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hopped in once and was told to get out after it started driving for a few minutes due to having someone sitting in the driver seat.

95 YES, AND?

Through his efforts at YES, Litner is changing how executives, leagues and stakeholders perceive premium sports production and fan-centric distribution strategies. His redefinition of what a modern regional sports network can be resulted in YES winning 10 New York Emmys last year, and he's investing in exclusive app programming for YES's Gotham Sports App. Last year Litner launched two new linear series, "The Stadium" and "Sportico Sports Business Presented By Genius Sports," and even gave fans a fresh perspective on Yankees' home games via drone coverage.



Jon Litner

President & CEO, YES Network

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in. I hate driving in traffic!

Last TV series I binged: "The Pitt."

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? La Tour d'Argent, in Paris.

Last time you went to a movie theater? Last Saturday night! (February 2026, saw "Crime 101").

What's the most retro item on your desk? Written calendar.



Lisa Anselmo

EVP, Communications and Head of the Office of the CEO, Optimum

Q&A

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need?

Empathy. As AI accelerates automation and personalization, the human element becomes more valuable. The best leaders will know how to listen beyond the data, translate complexity into clarity and make people feel understood. Customers want connection. Employees want purpose. That requires emotional intelligence as much as technical expertise.

OPERATION RESET

96

Cone's first year at Optimum has been marked by metamorphosis as she set the stage for the company's next era. She took a hard look at staffing, crafting a refreshed employee value statement and rethinking the organization to ensure it aligned with those expectations. Cone and Anselmo have partnered on cultural reform, hosting employee engagement surveys and CEO roundtables to ensure team members feel heard. Anselmo has also spread the word of Optimum's transformation far and wide, and her work has elevated Optimum's brand awareness. The results? Increased engagement on social platforms and a rise in earned media coverage and positive brand sentiment.

Colleen Cone

EVP, Chief Human Resources Officer, Optimum

Q&A

What would a radically better customer

experience look like? It starts internally, fueled by teammates who are empowered, informed and confident. When our teams have clarity, smarter tools and real-time insights, customers feel the difference. Externally, that experience should be simple, transparent and reliable. Customers shouldn't have to work hard to do business with us. We believe the best customer experiences are built on three foundations: strong connectivity, simplified products and a culture where teammates feel ownership. When employees feel empowered to "Do What's Right" and "Make It Happen," the customer experience improves naturally.





Zach Leonsis

President of Media & New Enterprises,
Monumental Sports & Entertainment

PLAY THE GAME

Through a unique combination of HBCU programming, DC-area high school and college sports and events like the Hoop Culture Capital Classics, Leonsis propelled Monumental to new heights. Viewership of Capitals NHL games rose 37% locally in its 2024-25 season while streaming unique users were up 90% YOY, and MNMT's local broadcasts frequently outperformed national networks and earned 12 Capital Emmys. Leonsis also launched the interactive Monumental Game Center viewing experience that integrates real-time sports betting data and gamification into live streams on the Monumental+ app.

97

Q&A

What would a radically better customer experience actually look like? One that's personalized to make the customer feel like the most important person in the room.

Which has the longer life expectancy—regional sports networks or late-night talk shows? The framing of the question creates a misleading comparison. Live, local sports will always matter. The format and distribution will evolve, but the demand for live sports won't disappear.

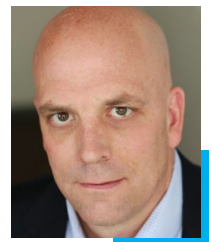
Last TV series I binged: "Stranger Things."

Your most reliable restaurant recommendation? Café Milano.

Last time you went to a movie theater? Pre-pandemic.

98 SCHOOL SPIRIT

Moline has had to make tough staffing calls over the last year to keep ALLO's bottom line stable, but that doesn't mean he hasn't found ways to continue growing the company's connectivity offerings and community connections. He led the creation of the Smart Schools initiative designed to allow Lincoln Public School students in Nebraska to connect their school-issued devices to thousands of access points across ALLO communities, eliminating barriers to broadband access. ALLO also provides a free first year of service to participating school districts to encourage program expansion. The broadband provider has also continued expansion efforts, growing its network to Colorado's Frederick, Fort Lupton and Dacono, among other locations.



Brad Moline

Founder &
CEO, ALLO
Communications

Q&A

What does "good enough" broadband speed look like for most customers? In a world of digital-first living, "good enough" is a myth. Much like a mediocre meal or basic car, "good enough" only appeals to providers who have stopped innovating. Exceptional broadband is defined by the customer's actual demand: seamless upload/download speeds and ultra-low latency. Settling for "adequate" doesn't just hurt the customer experience—it stalls investment and erodes long-term equity value.

What skills will the next generation of industry leaders need? Vision, ethics and communication remain the gold standards, but the medium and the speed of leadership are evolving. Tomorrow's leaders must be able to translate timeless strategy into a digital-first world.

99 MARRYING PAST & PRESENT

Christman and Formica are guiding the Syndeo Institute through a time of transition as The Cable Center is sold to the University of Denver. Through it all, they've continued to give back to the larger cable community. They teamed up for the development and hosting of two Customer Experience Collaboratives for Cox and CSG, kickstarting discussions about the intersection of innovation and customer care. Christman is also continuing to celebrate the industry's history with "Hotwired," an upcoming documentary, while Formica has grown the influence of Syndeo internationally.



Camilla Formica

Chief Program Officer, Syndeo Institute at The Cable Center

Q&A

What's the most retro item on your desk? Probably myself. I started in this industry in 1988, and I've had a front-row seat to decades of transformation—from the early days of cable to today's connected, digital-first world. In an industry that evolves as quickly as ours, having lived through multiple waves of innovation gives me both appreciation for how far we've come and excitement for what's next.



Diane Christman

CEO & President, Syndeo Institute at The Cable Center

Q&A

Last TV series I binged: "How to Get to Heaven from Belfast" by Lisa McGee, the brilliant creator of "Derry Girls"—and I loved it. Quirky, funny, a little spooky and full of unexpected twists.

100

POWER PLAY

Cohan had the world talking about hockey this year, and it wasn't because of the Milano Cortina Winter Olympic Games. Bell Media's "Heated Rivalry" is among the company's most widely licensed series after catching the world by storm, and it was Cohan who took the leap to fully finance the series. The success of originals across Bell Media's CTV, Crave, TSN and the company's FAST channels comes on the back of its 2025 acquisition of a majority stake in content distributor Sphere Abacus. Cohan led the deal to its finish line, building a combined catalog of more than 5,500 hours of premium content.



Sean Cohan

President, Bell Media

Q&A

Waymo: hop in or hard pass? Hop in.

What's the single regulatory change that would most accelerate innovation? Regulatory change at pace. In Canada, we are asking for regulators to move quickly to resolve open questions and manage to even the competitive playing field.

Last TV series I binged: "Heated Rivalry," of course. When you trust great creators and their vision, and back it fully, sometimes you get something special. Very bingeable, over and over.

What's the most retro item on your desk? A paper notebook and pen. My to-do list is still handwritten. Old school, but it works!

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Talking AI with AOI

Todd McCrum, SVP and GM of AOI's Broadband Unit, weighs in on the role artificial intelligence can play for broadband providers and how they should prepare in this Q&A with CFX.

How do you see AI reshaping network infrastructure over the next decade?

AI is shifting network infrastructure from being reactive to predictive and increasingly autonomous. Over the next decade, we'll see networks that can self-monitor, self-optimize, and in some cases, self-heal based on real-time data.

This transformation will require much deeper visibility into the network—more telemetry, and more granular performance data. It also places new demands on infrastructure performance, particularly around latency, reliability, and upstream capacity.

From our perspective, the biggest change isn't more traffic—it's more intelligent traffic. Modern networks will need to support AI workloads that are dynamic, and highly sensitive to performance, which raises the bar for both HFC and optical infrastructure.

Where do you see broadband providers fitting into the AI ecosystem—as connectivity providers for AI data centers, edge inference sites, or both?

It's clearly both, and that's what makes this moment so important for broadband providers. On one end, they play a critical role in connecting hyperscale and regional data centers that are powering AI model training. On the other, they're equally important at the edge, where AI inference is happening closer to the consumer—whether it be in homes, enterprises, or mobile.

What's changing is that the edge is becoming more intelligent and more distributed. That creates an opportunity for providers to move beyond connectivity and become enablers of low-latency, high-reliability AI services. Those who invest now in capacity, segmentation, and network intelligence will be best positioned to capture that value.

Do you see any convergence between the needs of your hyperscale data center customers and cable operators, particularly as both deal with rising traffic and more automated networks?

Yes, we're definitely seeing convergence—especially around scalability, automation, and reliability. Hyperscale data centers have been operating highly automated, software-driven environments for years. Now, cable operators are moving in that same direction as they evolve their networks with DOCSIS 4.0 and Distributed Access Architectures.

Both groups are dealing with exponential traffic growth and increasingly complex networks, which makes automation and real-time visibility essential. There's also a shared focus on minimizing downtime and optimizing performance at scale. Where they differ is in the physical environment—outside plant versus controlled data center—but even that gap is narrowing as operators bring more intelligence and software control into their networks.

As operators upgrade their HFC networks for DOCSIS 4.0, do you see an opportunity to add more telemetry or intelligence into products so that AI-driven proactive network maintenance tools have better visibility into the plant?

Absolutely. DOCSIS 4.0 upgrades are a natural inflection point to embed more intelligence directly into the network. As operators push to 1.8 GHz and beyond, the complexity of the plant increases, and traditional reactive maintenance models don't scale. That's where enhanced telemetry and remote management become critical.

By integrating more sensors, performance monitoring, and remote configuration capabilities into amplifiers and nodes, operators can feed AI-driven systems with the data they need to identify issues before they impact customers. The goal is to move from troubleshooting to prevention—and that requires both smarter hardware and better data.

What types of optical infrastructure upgrades should operators plan for to support AI-related traffic growth?

Operators should be planning for sustained growth in both capacity and flexibility. On the optical side, that means higher-speed transceivers (800G and 1.6T), more efficient use of spectrum, and architectures that can scale without requiring constant rebuilds. We're also seeing increased interest in tunable optics and solutions that simplify inventory while supporting multiple deployment scenarios. Equally important is aligning optical upgrades with overall network architecture—whether that's deeper fiber, node segmentation, or integration with DAA strategies.

AI-driven traffic is not just increasing volume; it's changing traffic patterns. Operators need optical infrastructure that can adapt to that—delivering high throughput, low latency, and operational efficiency at scale.

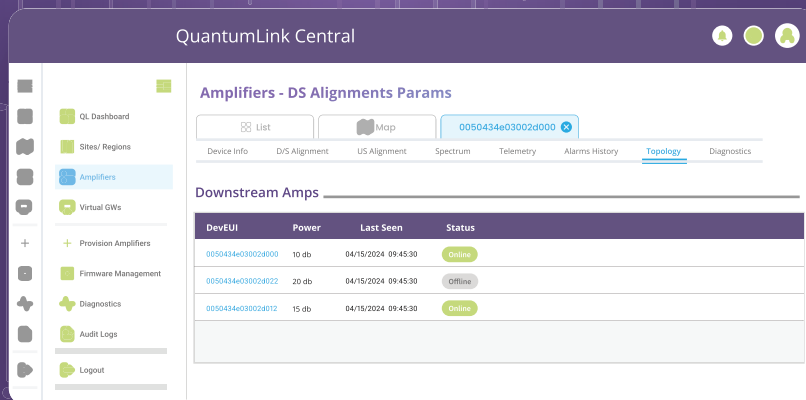
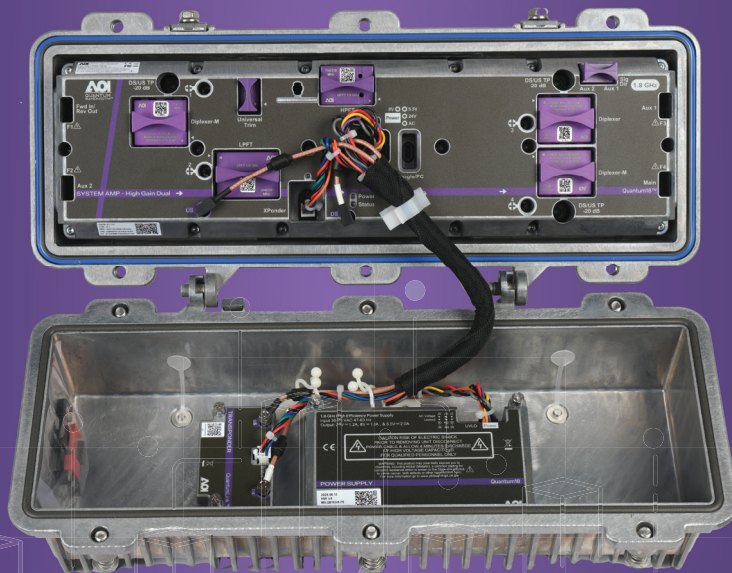
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