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It's no secret that cable operators and telcos of all sizes have adopted a "broadband-first" stance that emphasizes high-margin, high-speed Internet service and effectively relegates pay-TV to the back seat. But streaming video services, a market that's now teeming with dozens of virtual multichannel video programming distributors (vMVPDs) and subscription VoD services, remain a key reason why many consumers are connecting to speedy broadband offerings in the first place. At the same time, though, the sheer volume of OTT video service options on the market makes it a challenge for consumers to figure out which ones best suit their entertainment needs as well as the size of their pocketbooks.

MyBundle.TV, a privately funded company started in 2019, has been keying on this trend, initially targeting it with a free algorithm-driven recommendation tool that helps consumers figure out which streaming services best fit their needs according to their personal preferences and locations (based on zip codes). The company has since expanded its business to include a streaming marketplace and subscription management platform that's been customized for a growing group of cable operators and other broadband service providers.

[them for the coronavirus?](#)

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Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

[President Biden to visit Pennsylvania today to tout his \\$1.9T COVID-19 rescue plan](#)

Baltimore Sun

[As Biden hits road to sell landmark relief package, it's time to question his use of media](#)

The company's relatively new streaming marketplace is being used to power websites run by cable operators and ISPs that help broadband customers pick and choose which streaming services appear to be the best fit. MyBundle.TV's platform can also be configured to factor in results from the operator's own pay-TV service. That idea has already caught on with more than two dozen US broadband service operators that, together, serve about 5.7 million customers. That group spans the board from tier 1 on down, including CenturyLink, C Spire, WideOpenWest, EPG, MetroNet and Copper Valley Telecom, among others.

Of that group, WOW, which has adopted a broadband-first strategy, recently acknowledged that it [expects to shed more than half its pay-TV subscriber base in the coming years](#). MyBundle.TV's streaming marketplace "is about going beyond live TV and a world beyond Netflix, Amazon and Hulu," Jason Cohen, CEO and co-founder of MyBundle.TV, explained. He estimates that the company's platform generates results from an array of more than 150 streaming services. MyBundle.TV also has affiliation agreements, along with a few more direct relationships, with a group of roughly 40 streaming services. But Cohen stresses that MyBundle.TV strives to be fiercely independent, noting that agreements with various OTT video players don't affect the streaming service combinations that are presented to users based on their preferences and other elements that underpin their personal profiles. "Our view is ... it's about being agnostic," Cohen said. "It shouldn't matter what kind of device you signed up for. The consumer comes first."

While MyBundle.TV's consumer-facing recommendation tool is free, the company gets paid a monthly technology fee by its service provider partners and receives a share of the revenues generated by their customers who subscribe to services via the streaming marketplace. Cohen said the system also helps its service provider partners generate leads and add new broadband customers. "The future is all about that streaming marketplace and subscription management platform," he said.

Other operators seem to agree with this notion. Comcast, for example, is ramping up its role in the aggregation and subscription management areas with X1 and Flex, its streaming platform for broadband-only customers. Additionally, Charter Communications [envisions playing a similar role](#) with its IP-capable Worldbox platform. Cohen notes that MyBundle.TV's partnerships program has been picking up steam in the last four to five months as operators continue to size up their role in an evolving pay-TV and premium streaming landscape. While some are seeking help to provide broadband subscribers with streaming options, others are looking to transition off their existing pay-TV services. "Everybody is thinking broadband-first," he said.

MyBundle.TV isn't the only company focused on this idea or this segment of the market. While there are key differences in how they use their respective tech and tools to help consumers navigate the streaming marketplace, other players include CobbleCord, Suppose.TV and Reelgood. – *LightReading*

Signaling it was FCC policies under Republican chairman Ajit Pai that "secured" leadership in 5G, Republican commissioner Brendan Carr has unveiled his plan for maintaining that leadership, though with a Democratic chair and, eventually, majority, Carr has only the power to propose, not impose.

In a speech to the American Enterprise Institute, Carr said that back in 2016 (under former FCC chairman Tom Wheeler), the FCC was at serious risk of ceding the race to 5G to "overseas competitors, at the risk of millions of jobs and trillions of dollars in economic growth. Enter Pai, and Carr as his designated point man on streamlining cellular infrastructure buildouts, and the Republican FCC turned things around he said.

Carr said it was time to build on that legacy not roll it back with "heavy-handed policies that would turn back the clock on the progress we've made." Those

include, he said, efforts to subsidize overbuilds with government money--something likely to happen with the billions Congress has allocated to an effort to achieve universal broadband, with Democrats emphasizing that affordability should be in that definition of universal access. "We should also see the push for a return to Title II 'net neutrality' for what it is—a push for rate regulation," he said. "Those backing this misguided policy simply refuse to accept the reality that the Internet has flourished since we repealed the ill-advised Title II regulations."

He suggested that had Democrats been in charge, the 5G picture would be far less rosy. "We would still be hundreds of megahertz behind and stuck in neutral while our global counterparts passed us by if we had heeded the calls for inaction by some in Washington and on the Commission," he said. Of the infrastructure reforms Carr spearheaded, he said that "nearly every one of our infrastructure decisions included calls from some of my colleagues for the agency to slow down or stop entirely.

Changes to environmental and historic preservation reviews that Carr and the Republicans said were streamlining the process were criticized by the Democrats as potentially running roughshod over local government protections for the environment and history. The FCC also set shot clocks on siting decisions by localities. Billing it as a plan to extend 5G leadership, Carr proposed the current and future FCC do the following:

"On the spectrum front for 2021:

- o ["Auction 100 MHz of spectrum in the 3.45 GHz](#) band at 5G power levels*
- o "Auction the 100+ MHz of spectrum in the 2.5 GHz band
- o "Adopt an order that permits very low power devices to operate in the 6 GHz band
- o "Seek comment on increasing the power levels for CBRS operations in the 3.5 GHz band

"And for 2022 and beyond:

- o "Auction the 50 MHz of spectrum between 1300-1350 MHz in 2022
- o "Auction another millimeter wave band in 2022, with the 42 GHz as a prime candidate
- o "Auction spectrum in the lower 3 GHz, 4.8 GHz, and 7 GHz bands after 2022

"On infrastructure and policy:

- o "Produce targeted broadband maps by this fall, not next year
- o "Start the 5G Fund auction early next year to support rural builds
- o "Create a Federal Lands Desk at the FCC to address permitting delays on federal lands
- o 'Act on pending infrastructure reforms to drive down the costs of reaching rural areas
- o 'Expand the tower crews needed to complete 5G builds through Carr's 5G jobs initiative
- o 'Reject heavy-handed policies that would turn back the clock on the progress we've made"

* Carr did point out that the FCC is scheduled to vote this week [under Democratic acting chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel] on an order to auction that spectrum, adding: "So I am almost ready to give us as checkmark on this one." — **Next TV**

Sen. [Richard Blumenthal](#) (D-Conn.) slammed Facebook and Twitter on Monday over their handling of anti-vaccination content specifically targeting pregnant women after the platforms responded to the senator's letter pushing them to clamp down on the misinformation campaigns. "Facebook and Twitter's playbook is out-of-date, worn-out, and woefully inadequate toward addressing the horrifying abuse and disinformation that continues to spread like wildfire on their platforms," Blumenthal said in a statement.

The senator [wrote to the social media giants](#) last month calling for them to follow through on commitments to remove coronavirus vaccine misinformation in light of reported incidents of anti-vaccine campaigns targeted and harassing

pregnant women with false information. Blumenthal said the platforms' "vague content moderation policies, ineffective fact checking, inconsistent enforcement, and meaningless labels are cold comfort to the women continuously assailed by vile anti-vaccine hate and life-threatening falsehoods." Blumenthal's letter cited a [Daily Beast report](#) about online anti-vaccine misinformation and the related harassment of pregnant women. In one case, users told a woman who shared she got the coronavirus vaccine when she was 14 weeks pregnant and later miscarried that she "got what she deserved," according to the report.

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccine causes miscarriage, and the nation's top infectious diseases expert, [Anthony Fauci](#), last month said about 20,000 pregnant women had been vaccinated against the virus with "no red flags." In response to the senator, the platforms touted their policies and efforts to combat coronavirus vaccine misinformation. Twitter's head of U.S. public policy, Lauren Culbertson, noted the platform removed more than 8,483 tweets and challenged at least 11.4 million accounts "that were targeting discussions around COVID-19 with potentially manipulative behaviors," according to a copy of the company's response to Blumenthal. Regarding abusive behavior, Culbertson said users can report harassment and the platform aims to "proactively take action on violative content before it is seen."

But Culbertson's response did not specifically address Blumenthal's question as to why identified accounts in reports "preying on women who have been vaccinated" were not removed. Facebook similarly highlighted its policies around removing coronavirus and coronavirus vaccine misinformation.

As for why accounts were not removed, Facebook's vice president of U.S. public policy, Kevin Martin, told Blumenthal enforcement of its standards "relies on information available to us." "In some cases, this means that we may not detect content and behavior that violates these standards, and in others, enforcement may be limited to circumstances where we have been provided with additional information and context," Martin wrote, according to a copy of the response.

Blumenthal said he sees "little in their responses that demonstrates these profitable and powerful companies are going to stop treating victims of this abuse like an afterthought." Facebook on Monday announced expanded efforts to combat coronavirus misinformation, including plans to [launch labels for all posts](#) that discuss COVID-19 vaccines. In Facebook's Monday post, it said 2 million pieces of content from Facebook and Instagram have been removed since expanding its policy to remove all debunked claims about the coronavirus and vaccines in February.

Nonetheless, the platforms have both faced intense scrutiny from officials over the handling of false claims especially as the U.S. ramps up the vaccine rollout amid [President Biden's](#) pledge that all adults over 18 will be eligible for the vaccine by May 1. Facebook CEO [Mark Zuckerberg](#), Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey and Google CEO Sundar Pichai will likely face questions from lawmakers next week on the handling of such false claims [when they testify](#) during the House Energy and Commerce Committee hearing on the spread of online misinformation. – *The Hill*

