

Philadelphia Inquirer
Op-ed: Disney and Verizon have Philadelphia sports fans in a choke hold

WHYY-TV/FM, Philadelphia
As it eyes fee hike, N.J. spends most of what it collects for 911 upkeep on other things

New York Post
DOJ may allow Disney to spin off Fox's regional sports networks

Fierce Video
Sling TV launching free experience for Roku users

Reuters
Facebook to invest \$300 million to help local news survive

CNBC
The government shutdown could prevent some companies from advertising at the Super Bowl

Washington Examiner
Rethinking politics: Pennsylvania GOP already taking 2018 lessons into 2020

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Wolf inauguration

Atlantic Broadband said it is offering flexible payment options to customers affected by the partial government shutdown that began Dec. 22. According to ABB, customers who are also affected government employees can receive payment extensions and the adjustment of late fees to stay connected.

Due to the shutdown, now the longest in U.S history, more than 800,000 employees in nine federal departments and other agencies are working without pay or have been furloughed without pay. "We realize that it may be a difficult time financially for affected government employees," said Atlantic vice president of customer care Courtney Long in a statement. "Our customer care teams will work with these customers to find a payment solution that works, as we always strive to do when our customers are in critical need." – **Multichannel News**

Comcast Corp.'s NBCUniversal said it plans to launch an ad-supported streaming video service that will be free for pay-TV subscribers, adding to a plethora of coming options for consumers from big media companies. The as-yet unnamed service, which NBC plans to launch in 2020, will include content from the company's TV and film franchises, in addition to original and acquired programming, NBCUniversal said Monday.

NBC said the service would be offered free to about 52 million customers that subscribe to Comcast Cable and Sky, Comcast Corp.'s recently acquired European pay-TV unit. The company plans to offer the service to subscribers of other U.S. pay-TV companies that have NBC channels in their packages, including Charter Communications Inc. and Cox Communications Inc., for no additional fee, according to a person familiar with the matter.

NBC is making the service available to many different cable providers in part because maximizing its distribution will make the advertising more valuable, said Steve Burke, chief executive of NBCUniversal, in an interview. "We believe that the best way to gain scale quickly is to leverage our partnership with cable and satellite companies and to offer our premium product free to consumers," Mr. Burke said.

NBC will allow people who don't have traditional pay-TV packages to subscribe to the service for a price comparable to Netflix, upward of \$10 a month, according to a person familiar with the matter. The service will initially debut in the U.S., but NBC plans to roll it out to international markets, adjusting its approach to accommodate its existing licensing agreements, the person said. NBCUniversal won't adopt a one-size-fits-all approach while deciding whether to license its programming to other streaming services or keep content exclusively on its own streaming service, Mr. Burke said. He added that the company may consider moving "The Office," which has been a hit on Netflix, to its as-yet unlaunched service once the existing licensing agreement expires in 2021.

The service will launch in an increasingly crowded market for streaming video, with services from Netflix Inc., Amazon Prime Video and Hulu jockeying for market share. Traditional media giants, including Walt Disney Co. and AT&T Inc.'s WarnerMedia, have also announced plans to enter the streaming fray. They join several TV providers, including Dish Network Corp., and AT&T's DirecTV, which have launched streaming options to forestall the continued loss of traditional pay-TV subscribers who are cutting the cord and switching to lower-cost alternatives.

In tandem with its coming streaming service, NBC announced a corporate reorganization. The streaming service will be overseen by Bonnie Hammer, chairman of NBC Cable Entertainment, who has been named chairman of direct-to-consumer and digital enterprises for NBCUniversal. Mark Lazarus, the chairman of NBC Broadcasting and Sports, will assume responsibility for most of the company's East Coast-based content businesses, including NBC News, MSNBC and CNBC. Andy Lack, the chairman of NBC News, will report to Mr. Lazarus. Jeff Shell, currently chairman of Universal Filmed Entertainment Group, will become chairman of NBCUniversal Film and Entertainment, in charge of NBC Entertainment, Telemundo and NBCU's international operations. – **Wall Street Journal**

price tag: \$1.7 million and counting

The Amazon Alexa Voice remote, which can control most manufacturers TVs, is now being bundled with the Fire TV Stick streaming player. The remote itself was available as a \$29.99 item, while the Fire TV bundle, with a remote that didn't control other TVs, was \$39.99. The original Fire TV remote's list price has been slashed to \$14.99, "while supplies last," says Amazon.

The Amazon universal remote has power and volume controls, and can also control other audio video equipment, like sound bars and receivers, says Amazon. Caveat: The devices need to be IR-enabled. The bundle begins shipping on Jan. 23. The remote is compatible with Fire TV Stick, Fire TV Stick 4K and Fire TV Cube products. Beyond controlling TVs, the device uses Alexa to find and control TV shows and movies with voice.

There are more than 30 million active users on Fire TV; its rival Roku has a lower entry price, \$24.99, than Amazon. Roku, the maker of the most popular video streaming box has about 32.4 percent market share, according to market researcher eMarketer, compared to 26.6 percent for Amazon and 13.2 percent for Apple TV. – **USA Today**

