

UNCAPPED POTENTIAL CABLE ACADEMY 2017

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The 29th annual Cable Academy, presented by the Pennsylvania Cable & Telecommunications Foundation, heads to the Poconos to highlight the direction our industry must embrace to prosper during the most competitive environment in its history. Cable Academy 2017 will showcase the “Uncapped Potential” that exists today, and how it can further expand in the near future.

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Panels and presentations featuring:



Charlie Gerow
President & CEO
Quantum Communications
“Grading the Election”

Tony May
Partner
Triad Strategies

Wendy Hartman
General Manager
Adams Cable Service

Jaime Mendes
Vice President, Operations
PenTeleData

Michael Starner
President
Access Fiber Solutions

“Marketing to MDUs & Business Customers”



Steve Goldmintz
VP, Media & Telecom
Marcum Search
“Recruiting Broadband Leaders”

Peter Kiley
VP Communications
C-SPAN

Jeremy Art
Social Media Sr. Spec.
C-SPAN

Dr. Thomas Baldino
Prof. Political Science
Wilkes University

Brian Lockman
President & CEO
PCN

“The Role and Impact of the Media in the 2016 Elections”



Rick Cimerman
 VP, Ext. & State Affairs
 NCTA
"Inside the Beltway & FCC"

Steve Effros
 Cablefax columnist
 Pres., Effros Communications
"State of the Industry Update"

Jake Katz
 VP Audience Insights
 REVOLT Media & TV
"Generational Difference in the Workplace"

Ralph Butera
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Kalahari Resorts in the Poconos is now home to America's largest indoor waterpark!
 Take a tour of all there is to do at Kalahari on the [resort website](#)...and watch this [recent feature on ABC's "Good Morning America"](#) highlighting the 220,000-square feet of wet fun for the entire family!

Centre Daily Times (State College)
Op-ed from Nittany Media: Repeal of FCC regulations will result in win for consumer, industry

Washington Post
Should broadband be included in the Trump infrastructure plan?

Associated Press
YouTube TV has nifty features — and big drawbacks

Motley Fool
Verizon vs. AT&T: Which Is Spending Smarter?

New York Times
For Internet Privacy, VPNs Are an Imperfect Shield

Bloomberg
Amazon Takes Voice Battle With Apple TV Outside U.S.

Washington Post
The future of net neutrality in Trump's America

Philadelphia Inquirer
Convicted Ex-Pa. House Speaker Perzel won't have to pay \$1 million to state

Comcast Corp. is entering the fiercely competitive wireless phone market, just as big carriers like AT&T Inc. and Verizon Communications Inc. **are pushing unlimited data plans** and jockeying for a piece of Comcast's television turf.

The nation's largest cable-TV company by subscribers unveiled Thursday details of a service, dubbed Xfinity Mobile, that it has been preparing to launch for years. The service will be sold to existing Comcast customers or those that bundle wireless with the company's home internet service. Comcast will offer unlimited calling, texting and data plans which cost either \$45 or \$65 a month per line, depending on how many other Comcast services are bundled together. Comcast also has a unique offer—the ability to pay just \$12 a gigabyte, meaning some customers who don't use a lot of data can opt for a much cheaper plan than what is offered by major carriers.

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Comcast's \$65-per-line option is \$15 or \$25 less than what Verizon and AT&T, respectively, charge for a single unlimited line. Also, customers can only get the \$45 option if they have one of Comcast's high-end internet and cable bundles, which start at \$150 a month. Comcast **hopes that by offering a "quad play"**—cable TV, home internet, home phone and wireless service—customers will be more likely to stick with Comcast and less likely to cut the cord. While AT&T and Verizon have the ability to bundle all four services in some markets, neither company has done so aggressively.

Wireless carriers are contending with slowed growth and a cutthroat price war for mobile customers, while cable companies like Comcast are navigating a saturated pay-TV business under assault from cord-cutting and inexpensive online video options. For both, the other's turf looks ripe for disruption. "The view is completely different if you're an incumbent versus if you're a challenger," said MoffettNathanson analyst Craig Moffett. "For a challenger, all you can see is green grass and wide open spaces."

AT&T, which bought DirecTV in 2015, has been aggressive in going after cable. In November, it started selling **a streaming-video service called DirecTV Now**. AT&T lets its wireless customers stream unlimited amounts of video from the service without counting against data caps. Verizon is also laying the groundwork for a **similar streaming-video service** that could compete with cable TV bundles, people familiar with the matter said. It has also touted plans to build ultra-high-speed wireless connections, known as 5G, that could one day compete with home broadband services.

Comcast views the wireless phone service as an opportunity to create a business that will help it retain customers and sell more of its other products into homes. Charter Communications Inc., the second-largest cable company, has said it will follow suit with a mobile offering in 2018. Comcast's wireless service will have nationwide coverage but is only expected to be offered to customers in its cable

footprint who buy at least Comcast's internet service. Its least expensive home service is a \$40 monthly broadband plan. The company's cable network passes about 50 million homes.

It will deliver the service using Verizon's cellular network, under a reseller agreement that the companies struck more than five years ago. Comcast will also rely on millions of Wi-Fi hot spots it has built to help manage data traffic. Comcast will use its hundreds of remodeled retail stores to sell the wireless service. Seeking to get away from the negative stereotypes about cable companies' customer service, Comcast plans to mail new customers personalized phones already signed in to access Comcast's TV streaming apps and Wi-Fi hot spots.

"This is about changing perceptions around our brand," said Greg Butz, president of Comcast Mobile. Many analysts and investors are skeptical such a partnership can work long term, since Verizon can potentially raise costs if Comcast is successful in winning cellular customers. Similar offers from other cable operators in the past [have failed](#).

Comcast executives have played down such concerns, saying their Verizon agreement is "perpetual" and gives them access to all future technologies and upgrades Verizon makes to its network. "The economics really work," Comcast Chief Executive Brian Roberts said in January. "The goal of the business is to have better bundling with some of our customers who want to save some of their bill and get a world-class product."

Similar to telecom carriers' policies, Comcast will slow download speeds for unlimited customers after they use 20 gigabytes in a month. It says about 3% of customers go over that limit. The company plans to market the service heavily but said it won't have as high per-user acquisition costs as wireless carriers, since it would be marketing just to customers in its cable service area. Cable investors have concerns over Comcast's wireless plans longer-term, said Morgan Stanley analyst Ben Swinburne, given that the wireless industry has become increasingly competitive due to the move toward unlimited data offerings from the likes of Verizon and AT&T.

But New Street Research analyst Jonathan Chaplin said investors are missing the potential opportunity for cable. The wireless industry generates \$82 billion of earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization, while cable generates \$35 billion, he estimates. Cable companies have the potential opportunity "to attack that profit pool using the same infrastructure that they have today."

Verizon, which has more than 114 million retail customers, has downplayed that Comcast is a competitive threat. Like other carriers, Verizon has been selling wholesale network access to other brands for decades. "We are happy to have those arrangements with Comcast and others," Verizon finance chief Matt Ellis said in February. "I'd much rather have them on our network, and paying us to be on our network, than paying it on somebody else's." – *Wall Street Journal*

MGM Holdings Inc. is taking full ownership of pay-television network Epix, buying out partners Viacom Inc. and Lions Gate Entertainment Inc. in a more than \$1.03 billion deal.

The Wall Street Journal [last month reported on negotiations](#) for MGM to buy Viacom and Lions Gate's nearly 81% combined stake, noting that it was part of MGM's move to expand its television business. Under the terms of the deal, expected to close this month, Viacom's Paramount Pictures and Lions Gate would continue to provide first-run theatrical releases to Epix "under multiyear agreements." The agreements had been slated to expire in 2019. MGM declined to comment Wednesday on whether the expiration dates had been extended.

Best known for its roaring lion and classic film brands, MGM traces its roots to the 1924 merger of Metro Pictures, Goldwin Pictures and Louis B. Mayer Productions. The movie studio—home to the "James Bond", "Rocky" and "Hobbit franchises—was forced to [file for bankruptcy in 2010](#), as it struggled with a heavy debt load taken on in a 2005 leveraged buyout and declining revenue from its film library.

In a move similar to the Epix deal, MGM last year [took full control of United Artists Media Group](#), named after the storied company founded in 1919 by a group of actors that, in its new incarnation, became home to television producer Mark Burnett's [television and film production ventures](#). Mr. Burnett, whose credits include "Survivor" and President Donald Trump's "The Apprentice," stayed on as president of MGM's global television and digital creative and production business operations. In 2016, television content accounted for nearly one-quarter of MGM's total revenue, up from about 12% a year earlier. – *Wall Street Journal*

[U.S. Rep. Kevin Yoder](#) (R-KS) is fighting the good fight to keep private the websites you visit, the apps you use and the content you view online.

Yoder broke ranks last week and sided with 190 Democrats (and 14 Republicans) when he voted against allowing internet providers to snoop on users and sell their personal online history. The Kansas Republican rightly favored requiring broadband companies to get a person's permission before profiting off intimate data, including browser searches, use of apps and a user's location.

While the vote broke down largely along party lines, Yoder resisted playing partisan politics and instead tried to do right by his constituents. The majority of Yoder's GOP colleagues supported the use of a congressional maneuver that allows for a fast-tracked vote to undo the previous administration's policy shortly after a new president takes office. Some members of Congress surely acted without thinking about the ramifications for the people they represent. Too often, that's a reflexive GOP response when considering anything labeled with the poison tag "Obama-era policy."

Here's the rub: Yoder lost this battle. The measure passed 215-205 in the House and 50-48 in the Senate. The Obama administration's internet privacy regulations hadn't gone into effect. That was scheduled to happen later this year. The rule was passed by the Federal Communications Commission last October on a 3-2 vote.

The FCC was trying to protect consumers from the targeted marketing that unleashes a deluge of advertisements for similar products anytime you search for something online. Well, brace for more. Without the constraints envisioned by the FCC, providers such as AT&T, Comcast and others can gobble up data, package it without your permission and sell it to advertisers who want to reach you. They're already doing some of this.

Now, without restrictions on gathering personal data, the practice likely will escalate. Just because people use broadband technology doesn't mean that all of their information should be up for grabs. Yoder understands this. He has become a reliable advocate for protecting consumers' digital privacy, and he has sought to update laws to reflect changing technology.

In February, Yoder was successful in getting the House to unanimously pass the Email Privacy Act, a bill he's been pushing for several years. The legislation would require government agencies to obtain a warrant to search people's emails, regardless of when the email was written. It is intended to close a loophole in a 1986 law that gave the government the right to search without a warrant if an email was older than 180 days and was stored on a third-party server, like Google or Yahoo. In pitching the legislation, Yoder conjured up his 10-year-old self, noting that was his age when the original law passed.

A young Yoder couldn't fathom how vast the World Wide Web would grow or imagine his privacy concerns as a member of Congress. Back then, Yoder said he was "hoping to get a new Nintendo game console for Christmas so I could play Super Mario Bros. You could buy a ticket to see 'Top Gun' for \$2.75. In the tech world, 1986 marked the debut of the first laptop computer. It was 12 pounds. A mobile phone was the size of a small pet." Fortunately, that Nintendo-loving kid is now a member of Congress focused on protecting your online privacy. – **Kansas City Star** editorial



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