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June 17, 2020

*Washington Post*  
The standoff between owners and journalists that's eviscerating Pittsburgh's biggest newspaper

*LightReading Network*  
virtualization poised to seize a bigger role

Three of Pittsburgh's network affiliates — Sinclair Broadcast Group's WPGH (Fox) and WPNT (MyNetworkTV) and Hearst Television's WTAE (ABC)— on Tuesday became among the first in the nation to begin broadcasting with ATSC 3.0, or NextGen TV, which can support a wide range of features currently in development, such as immersive audio and video (up to 4K), broadcasting to mobile devices, personalized viewing tools, and advanced emergency alerts that provide rich media rather than simple text messages. The new technology also allows full integration with 5G and other broadband-delivered Internet content.

The Pittsburgh launch is one of the first in the country and follows a decade of development of the new technology and a year of planning and preparation by the local stations. BitPath, which is developing new data broadcasting

[in cable's post-pandemic era](#)

[Ars Technica  
T-Mobile's outage yesterday was so big that even Ajit Pai is mad](#)

[Philadelphia Inquirer  
Fake crowd noise and social distancing in stadiums: How NBC will televise Premier League's return amid the coronavirus](#)

[The Hill  
Pelosi calls on advertisers to pressure social media platforms over misinformation](#)

[Washington Post  
Instagram is becoming a go-to news source for younger readers](#)

[Associated Press  
Court ordered to look at Pennsylvania State Police social media policy](#)

[Pennlive  
Pa. lawmaker introduces resolution to impeach Gov. Tom Wolf](#)

[Associated Press  
Ex-Pa. House Speaker gets new job in the gas industry, a day after stepping down](#)

[Philadelphia Inquirer  
Philly elections officials caught 40 cases of double voting. It's not fraud, but it's still a problem.](#)

services, led the planning and coordinated efforts across the three stations. The participating stations have cooperated to ensure that all existing programming remains available to all viewers, regardless of whether they receive their television service by antenna, or by cable or satellite. Antenna viewers should simply rescan their TV sets to ensure full service. Rescan instructions are available at: [www.22thepoint.com](http://www.22thepoint.com). Cable and satellite subscribers do not need to take any action.

Kent Crawford, general manager of WPGH and WPNT, said: "Broadcasting started here in Pittsburgh 100 years ago. It's only appropriate then for us to usher in the latest in broadcast innovation. We are excited to continue this legacy and introduce our viewers to an extraordinary new TV experience."

"Pittsburgh continues to re-invent itself and has welcomed well known innovators like Apple, Uber, Facebook and Google," said WTAE President-GM Charles W. Wolfertz III. "At WTAE, we are excited to help write the next chapter in Pittsburgh's storied tradition of innovation by launching the next generation of broadcast television to our viewers throughout western Pennsylvania." John Hane, President of BitPath, said: "BitPath is pleased to help WPGH, WTAE and WPNT take this important first step in bringing transformational new services to Pittsburgh and looks forward to bringing new exciting wireless data broadcasting services to the city's businesses and consumers." – **TVNewsCheck**

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Facebook Inc. aims to register 4 million voters before the November presidential election, as well as offer voting information and political ad controls as the social media giant grapples with ongoing controversy over what to allow on its platforms. Facebook said Tuesday night it would launch a Voting Information Center later this summer, with details on when and how to vote as well as relevant deadlines, ballot specifics and verified information from state and local election officials.

Operators of online platforms are under increasing pressure to curb the spread of misleading or false information in the wake of the 2016 presidential campaign, which U.S. intelligence agencies have said was subject to foreign meddling online. In addition, questions about the coming election continue to grow because of social-distancing guidelines around the coronavirus pandemic.

Voting is "the single most powerful expression of democracy, the best way to hold our leaders accountable, and how we address many of the issues our country is grappling with," Facebook Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg wrote in USA Today. "Facebook has a responsibility not just to prevent voter suppression—which disproportionately targets people of color—but to actively support well-informed voter engagement, registration, and turnout."

While Facebook says these efforts were in the works for months, they follow highly charged discussions among insiders and civil-rights activists over a message President Trump wrote calling recent protesters thugs and warned: "When the looting starts, the shooting starts." Facebook took no action on the post, while Twitter Inc. shielded the same message from public view along with [a label saying it glorified violence](#).

Mr. Zuckerberg has staunchly defended freedom of speech on the platforms. "Free expression is part of the messy process of democracy, and we take our responsibility to protect it incredibly seriously," Mr. Zuckerberg wrote in USA Today. "Everyone wants to see politicians held accountable for what they say—and I know many people want us to moderate and remove more of their content...But accountability only works if we can see what those seeking our votes are saying, even if we viscerally dislike what they say." Representatives of Facebook and other tech giants are scheduled to appear Thursday in a hearing before the House Intelligence Committee on election security and foreign influence.

Facebook estimates more than 160 million people will see information on its platforms, including Instagram, about how to vote in the election, said Emily Dalton Smith, director of social impact product at Facebook. Ms. Dalton Smith, who is leading the Voting Information Center efforts, said Facebook has planned for months to start rolling it out in July and August, gearing up for the November election. Dozens of Facebook employees have worked on those efforts, and Ms. Dalton Smith said they have been in touch with election authorities in all 50 states. To avoid misinformation, an internal team will review information before it goes live.

Facebook registered 2 million voters leading up to the 2016 presidential election and 2 million voters ahead of the 2018 midterm elections, she said. Mr. Zuckerberg wrote in USA Today that Facebook surveyed U.S. adults, and more than half said they think people will need more information on how to vote this November compared with prior elections. Some research has shown that Facebook reminders can play a powerful role in mobilizing voters. An additional 340,000 voters turned out for the 2010 U.S. congressional elections because Facebook reminded them to vote, according to [a 2012 study](#) by Facebook and outside researchers, who ran an experiment involving 61 million people on the platform.

In May 2016, nearly 200,000 people registered to vote on California's Secretary of State website after Facebook prompted users to register, a result that state officials called "stunning." Other states saw a similar bump. Facebook also shared new political-ad transparency features and [previously announced controls](#). On Wednesday it launches the ability for Facebook users to better control whether they see political ads, an initiative it announced in January. It hopes to expand this feature beyond the U.S. this fall.

It is possible users who turn off political ads will still see some, said Sarah Schiff, a product manager overseeing political ads, adding that Facebook spent months building the feature and testing it. "We do know that our enforcement isn't perfect, and we do make mistakes," she said. Facebook's approach contrasts with prior moves by Twitter, which [stopped accepting most political ads](#), and Alphabet Inc.'s Google, which limited targeting of political ads.

Facebook will also track spending for every U.S. Senate and House race and will launch a custom tracker for any advertiser or organization running U.S. or political issue ads in the Facebook ad library, which launched in 2018. It currently shows spending only for presidential candidates. The company will also ensure the "paid for" disclaimer will appear on ads that are being shared, which didn't occur previously. – *Wall Street Journal*

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Google has cut off advertising revenue to one right-wing website and threatened to do so with another because their comments sections contain "derogatory" race-based content, the company said Tuesday. Google said user posts on ZeroHedge and The Federalist failed to meet its standards and that the sites would be blocked from using the Google Ad platform if they didn't remove the offensive comments.

The company has already cut off ZeroHedge and plans to do the same for The Federalist if it does not act soon. "We have strict publisher policies that govern the content ads can run on, which includes comments on the site. If the site remedies the issues with derogatory or offensive comments, they can be reinstated," said Google in a statement. "This is a longstanding policy." That policy prohibits content that promotes race-based violence, hate or discrimination, it said.

Both sites have published articles that are critical of the Black Lives Matter movement and recent demonstrations following the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, but Google said its actions were not related to the sites'

articles. Republican Sen. Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee, who has accused Silicon Valley companies of anti-conservative bias in the past, took aim at the decision in a tweet Tuesday. "Google dominates the search business, they dominate the ad business, and now they want to dominate what you're allowed to think," [Blackburn tweeted](#).

Google's move comes as social media and internet firms increasingly face politically fraught decisions about when to remove or otherwise penalize content from users that promotes violence or spreads misinformation, particularly when those posts come from political figures and institutions. Twitter notably triggered a fight with the White House after taking action against President Donald Trump's tweets in recent weeks, including one that threatened military force against peaceful protesters. For some conservatives, Silicon Valley's slap on the wrist is a "[badge of honor](#)."

Google's choice to punish a site over reader comments also comes at a time when the company is staving off attacks on Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, a law that, in part, protects firms from lawsuits over material shared or created by users. – *Politico*

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Although overall voter turnout was down from the last presidential primary in 2016, Pennsylvania voters made a couple of things clear in this year's primary election: They still want the option of going to the polls to cast their vote, but they are very much at ease with voting by mail.

With this being the first state election in which voters could opt for a mail-in ballot without any restrictions, officials expected an increase in voting by mail. When the coronavirus struck in mid-March and pushed the primary from April 28 to June 2, the state launched a campaign to encourage voters to use the mail option to reduce crowds at polling stations.

More than 1.4 million people chose to vote by mail, which was slightly more than half of the approximately 2.8 million voters who participated in this year's primary. For perspective, the number of people who voted by mail in this year's primary was roughly the same as the total number who voted in the 2018 primary. Voter turnout dropped from 40% in 2016 to 35% this year, but the number could have been far lower without the mail-in option and the ongoing concerns about the coronavirus pandemic. The fact that both parties' presidential candidate had already been decided also likely contributed to a lower turnout.

As has been the case in most presidential elections, turnout in November will likely soar, and there is an expected increase in voting by mail. In the 2016 presidential election, more than 70% of registered Pennsylvania voters — 6.1 million total — went to the polls. This year, turnout will be split between those voting in person and those voting by mail.

Election officials statewide should make decisions now to make voting by mail as efficient as possible for those who want to do so in November, while still planning for in-person voting. Allegheny County, for example, decided to send all registered voters an application for voting by mail prior to the primary election, a move that other counties should follow. That gave voters the choice to apply for a mail-in ballot, or to ignore the application and wait to vote at the polls on election day. It also avoided the task of applying for a ballot online, by mail or in person.

Having seen the surge in mail-in requests during the primary, county election officials need to be prepared to process the thousands of requests for a ballot that will be coming in advance of the November election. The state Legislature also needs to provide assistance to election officials as well in regard to the counting of mail-in ballots. Originally in the primary, the mail-in ballots were not to be counted until after the polls closed, but that was amended to allow counting to begin when the polls opened.

Still, the effort took days in some counties, and that is a warning sign.. Lawmakers should consider measures used in other states that allow counting to begin days or even weeks ahead of the election, with the stipulation that no results can be released until polls are closed. Overall, Pennsylvania voters showed that voting by mail is a preferred choice for many. They were ready. It is not clear the state is. – **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette editorial**

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An Ohio barbecue joint just across the border from Erie named Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf its employee of the month for bringing so much business to the lakefront eatery over the past weeks. The Facebook post from Breakwall BBQ owner Mike Morgan is a wink and a nod to Pennsylvania's slow, gradual reopening process — a process that has nearby Erie County still in the yellow phase, which prohibits restaurants from offering dine-in services.

Ohio restaurants have been open for full-but-socially-distant business since last month. "Also want to give a shout-out to our employee of the month, Pennsylvania's very own Governor Wolf," Morgan wrote in a June 14 Facebook post. "You the man, sir!"

Morgan [told Erie News Now](#) that the comment was meant to be tongue-in-cheek. The Conneaut restaurant is about 2 miles as the crow flies from the state line. "We've broken all kinds of sales records, and we know that big chunk of it is that Pennsylvania is shut down," he told the outlet.

By May 28, Morgan had to change the restaurant's hours because of the booming business it was doing, according to its Facebook page. "I never thought I'd say this, but we just can't handle the volume. We're running out of food almost nightly. Our customer service is taking a hit and that keeps us up at night," he wrote. "Not used to seeing unhappy customers that's for sure. I believe once Pennsylvania opens up their restaurants a lot of the pressure will be relieved and we can go back to business as usual."

Morgan said he feels for Pennsylvania businesses that continue losing money as restrictions remain in place, [according to Erie News Now](#). "We're making a killing, and we're grateful for it," he said. "I wish they could too. People are ready to get out of their houses." – **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**

