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September 30, 2016

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*The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual. ~ Vince Lombardi*

## TEAMWORK



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fiber networks

Atlantic Broadband has announced the completion of its \$1.5 million FastForward Bradford initiative. Comp any officials said the initiative, which began in May, provided new and existing customers with improved digital picture quality and sound plus High Definition (HD) channel additions in Bradford and the surrounding service area. As part of the investment, customers now have access to 24 additional HD channels, bringing the total number of HD channels to 85.

Officials said the following new channels are now available on Atlantic Broadband's line-up: CMT HD, Disney Junior, Hallmark Movie and Mysteries HD, HLN HD, Investigation Discovery (ID), Lifetime Movie Network, Nick Jr. HD, StarzEdge, The Weather Channel

looking for  
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Wall Street  
Journal  
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“Our customers in Bradford now have access to not only improved digital picture quality and sound as part of Atlantic Broadband’s “FastForward Bradford” initiative, but also a suite of new HD channels to improve their overall viewing experience,” said Atlantic Broadband’s Senior Vice President and General Manager Curt Kosko. “We’re proud to continue to deliver superior service and entertainment offerings to Bradford and the surrounding communities we serve.” Atlantic Broadband is the nation’s ninth largest cable operator. – *Bradford (McKean Co.) Era*

Federal regulators Thursday delayed a vote on a proposal to overhaul the market for TV set-top boxes, dealing a setback to Federal Communications Commission Chairman Tom Wheeler on one of his top priorities for the year. The delay, coming so close to a presidential election that will usher in a new administration, represents a major blow to the proposal. But FCC members pledged to keep trying, and there were indications an agreement remained possible, if less likely.

In a joint statement, Mr. Wheeler and fellow Democratic Commissioners Jessica Rosenworcel and Mignon Clyburn said they had made “tremendous progress” on the issue and are still working toward an agreement. Mr. Wheeler’s planned overhaul is aimed at opening up the market for set-top boxes, dominated for years by cable TV companies. He would require the companies to make their television feeds available as apps to other potential device manufacturers, such as Apple Inc. and Alphabet Inc.’s Google, as well as smart-TV makers. Supporters say the plan could save consumers hundreds of dollars a year in rental fees. It also could give a boost to internet-based video alternatives to cable by allowing consumers to easily search and access both at once.

Cable TV companies, as well as media companies, have waged a major campaign to defeat the plan or scale it back significantly. Many of their objections have been narrow and technical. But often underlying those concerns has been a broad fear that Mr. Wheeler’s proposal could disrupt their longstanding, lucrative pay-TV business model. Worse for Mr. Wheeler, he has so far failed to win the support of Ms. Rosenworcel, a fellow Democrat. That made it impossible for him to secure a majority on the five-member FCC, given Republicans’ opposition.

Some public-interest groups say a compromise can still be struck. But in practice, the delay could signal that approval will be held up until after the November election, when the transition to a new administration could further sap momentum for Mr. Wheeler’s plan. Several big industry players called for a more deliberate approach to the complex rule-making.

“We share the goal of providing consumers more options to access their video services without the need for a set-top box,” said David Cohen, senior executive vice president of Comcast Corp. “But heavy-handed government regulation, based on questionable legal authority in a fast-moving marketplace, will stop the apps revolution dead in its tracks and delay consumer choice.” In effect, Thursday’s standoff underscores the difficulty of merging the old cable-TV realm with the new online streaming world.

Cable companies worry about having to share their customers’ subscription information and other data with other set-top box or device makers. They also object to the potential of new FCC oversight of their deals with media companies and the new device makers. Media companies such as The Walt Disney Co., Time Warner Inc., CBS Corp. and 21st Century Fox Inc. also worry about the FCC’s potential meddling in their deals, saying the commission lacks legal authority to force licensing terms.

Mr. Wheeler and his aides appeared to take several steps toward the media and cable firms in recent weeks by, for example, scaling back their plans for government oversight of licensing deals. The FCC also has struggled to configure a standards-setting body for

building the cable apps. A leading congressional critic of the current set-top box market, Sen. Edward Markey (D., Mass.), said he was “extremely disappointed” by the delay. “Consumers have waited for more than two decades for the promise of a robust set-top box marketplace to be fulfilled; they should not have to wait one more billing cycle,” he said. — *Wall Street Journal*

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Facebook Inc. plans a major ad campaign, including TV spots and billboards, to encourage more of its 1.7 billion users to stream live video on the social network, according to people familiar with the matter. Facebook Live, launched in April, has been adopted by many major publishers and public figures, some of whom are paid millions of dollars by Facebook to produce a specified number of live videos every month.

With this ad campaign, Facebook hopes to win over ordinary users, who don't live-stream as often, the people said. The campaign, developed by Facebook's in-house ad studio called The Factory, will incorporate clips of live videos posted by the social network's users to explain how the feature works. The idea is to “show people what's possible” on Live, one of the people familiar with the campaign said. Facebook rarely advertises on TV. Its last campaign took place last year.

The new ads underscore the importance of live video to Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg's effort to refashion the social network into a “video-first” company. It isn't clear how much Facebook plans to spend on the ad campaign or when it will begin. The Factory is run by Scott Trattner, a former Apple ad executive who worked on some of that company's major campaigns, including those for the iPod and iPhone.

With Live, Facebook allows its users to broadcast their lives with a tap of a button. To ensure a steady flow of live videos after launch, **Facebook agreed to pay** more than \$50 million to 140 publishers and public figures to broadcast live, The Wall Street Journal reported in June. Users are automatically notified when a friend or publisher they follow goes live and those videos appear higher in their news feeds while they are broadcast.

Live videos also have thrust Facebook into controversy. Facebook briefly removed, then restored, video from a Minnesota woman showing her boyfriend, Philando Castile, dying after being shot by a police officer. It also aired videos of the fatal shooting of Dallas police officers and a French terrorist holding a child hostage. — *Wall Street Journal*

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For the first time, the debate for the 122nd District will feature three podiums: a Democrat, a Republican and a Libertarian.

Matthew Schutter, 46, a member of the Libertarian Party and former Penn Forest Township auditor, is touting himself as the third candidate in the 122nd District state representative race, and he was recently given the chance to debate his challengers at the upcoming televised debate at Penn's Peak on Oct. 20. “I am the third voice in this race, and with this election, why should there just be a Coke and a Pepsi in our politics? Why can't there be a 7-Up? That's what I aim to be, an alternative,” Schutter said.

The debate — which is being hosted by Penn's Peak, **Blue Ridge Cable TV-13** and the Carbon County Chamber of Commerce — will be Carbon County voters' first chance at seeing Republican incumbent Rep. Doyle Heffley, R-122, Lower Towamensing Township, and his Democratic challenger, attorney Neil Makhija, go face-to-face on some of the primary issues plaguing the county. Schutter's platform — which centers on eliminating taxation and focusing entirely on a laissez faire, free-market mentality — puts Carbon County at the center of a revitalization effort that he believes focuses on a reimagination of resources.

Despite his visions for reinventing the region, Schutter's visions could all come up short due to an impending court case hanging over his head. Schutter, although running for office, is currently out on bail on felony aggravated assault charges from a March

incident where police claim that he “injured Chief Detective Tim Nothstein of the Carbon County District Attorney’s office.”

According to court records, authorities were attempting to remove Schutter from the courthouse for causing a disturbance when the incident occurred. The case is being prosecuted by the state Attorney General’s office. If convicted, Schutter’s campaign could quickly fall apart — state law prohibits felons from holding elected office. Despite the pending charges, Schutter remains hopeful. “Our area is starving for jobs and the current two-party system has put a chokehold over small business,” he said. “I would like my voice heard.” – *Hazleton Standard-Speaker*



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