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March 3, 2017

**USA Today**  
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**Engadget**  
Netflix learned how to stream good video on bad connections

**Forbes**  
Millennials Are Fine With TV Ads But Focus On Phone Screens

In the Greater Scranton, Pennsylvania, YMCA, there's now one less way to elevate your blood pressure. That's because the gym's board of directors has voted to ban cable news from its building after several locker room and gym disputes over politics and news turned so heated that some members feared for their safety, according to multiple media reports.

In a letter sent out to members, the board wrote that 24-hour news channels like CNN, MSNBC and Fox News have given rise to intense confrontations, which have "raised concerns about the safety, both physically and emotionally, of our members," **per WBRE**. While no physical fights have yet erupted over politics, the center's CEO said several members have reported feeling threatened after political discussions turned "boisterous," **according to the Scranton Times-Tribune**.

One member told the Times-Tribune he was present during a locker room argument over cable news that progressed to the point of raised voices and "colorful" language, but did not go any further. However, that member, along with others interviewed by local television stations, expressed opposition to the decision, saying the board has overexaggerated the problem and is setting a dangerous precedent.

"I think it is probably an overreaction," member David Dimmick told WBRE. "I understand why they did it because there was a lot of controversy with a lot of people talking and arguing," Susan Dimmick told WBRE. "There was a lot of arguing going

[Fierce Cable YouTube TV gets lukewarm reception from analysts](#)

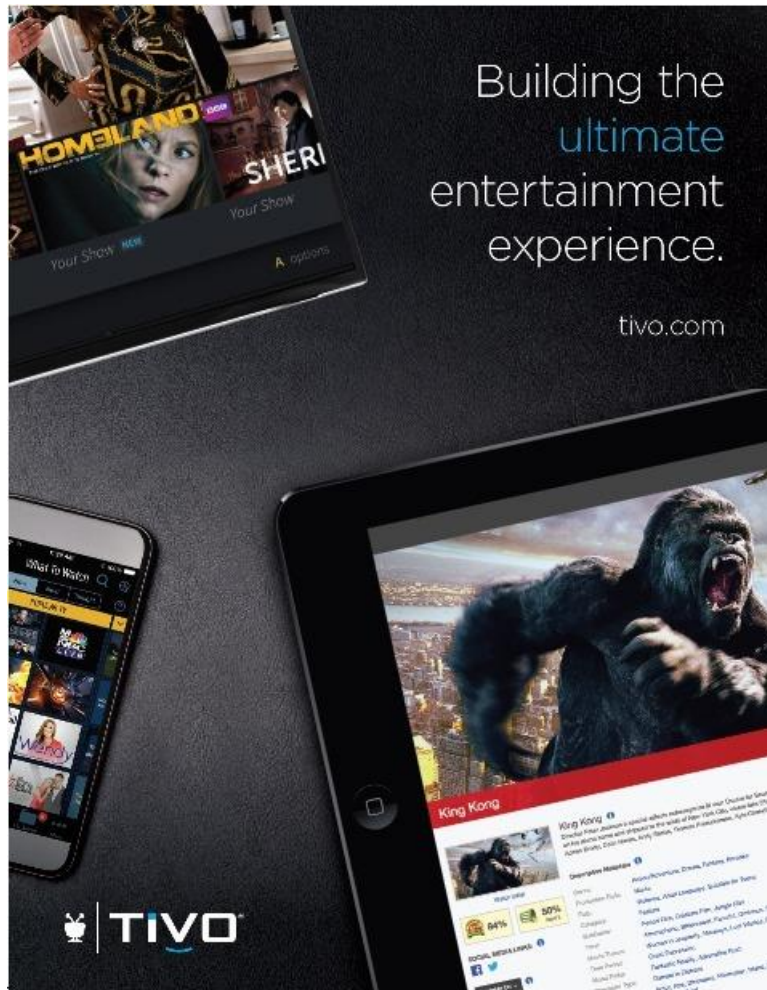
[TVNewsCheck NAB Show To Tackle Next-Gen TV Audio](#)

[AdWeek Hagerstown station off Comcast in Franklin County](#)

[Hollywood Reporter Netflix Preps Reality TV Push: Rivals "Should Be Scared Out of Their Minds"](#)

[Los Angeles Times California lawmakers report accepting \\$518,000 in gifts, including travel and expensive meals](#)

on, but I don't think it was right." "Once you start that precedent, I think it becomes dangerous," Paul Williams, a longtime YMCA member, told the Times-Tribune.



However, YMCA officials said that while the arguments were isolated incidents, they were acting preemptively to prevent things from getting out of hand. They also pointed to the fact that other 24-hour channels devoted to non-political topics and news programs on broadcast channels were still permitted. "I've been here three years now and I really didn't hear much about this until six months ago. So, we just want people to feel welcome here and I think this might help," CEO Trish Fisher [told WNEP.](#)

Many have pointed to the 2016 presidential campaign as the source of the growing acrimony between people of different political beliefs. A poll in September found that 70 percent of Americans thought the election brought out the worst in people, and seven percent reported ending friendships over it, [per Politico.](#)

When Republican Donald Trump won the presidency, there were [widely-reported incidents](#) of hate crime directed at minorities and women, though some have disputed whether these examples actually constituted a statistical rise. Still, according to the most recently available data, hate crimes have been on the rise as of late, [according to analysis by Quartz.](#) – [McClatchy](#)

While some analysts have poured cold water on a speculative acquisition of No. 2 U.S. cable operator Charter Communications by No. 1 wireless company Verizon, the company that has majority control over the MSO isn't too keen on the deal either, at least not publicly. "The market around broadband is fundamentally more attractive than wireless," Greg Maffei, CEO of Liberty Broadband and other companies existing within John Malone's Denver-based Liberty empire, speaking in a fourth-quarter earnings call with analysts earlier this week. "Our currency is going to get more valuable, not less," Maffei added.

The comments represented input from Charter's backers on the issue of a rumored Verizon purchase. In January, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Verizon's top executives are exploring a potential merger—news that has sent investors scrambling for stock in Charter. Indeed, the MSO's stock rose more than 6% to \$330 per share in trading immediately following the release of the WSJ's article.

According to the WSJ, Verizon CEO Lowell McAdam has approached Charter to discuss a possible merger, and has formed an advisory team to look into the potential transaction. According to the report, it's unclear whether Charter CEO Tom Rutledge would be open to the deal—Verizon and Charter officials declined to comment on the report.

While merging with Charter would, to at least some degree, take care of Verizon's cable competition and capacity problems, analysts said it wouldn't benefit the cable company nearly as much. "Verizon has much less capacity than their main wireless competitors, and owning Charter would help them close the gap in 36% of the country," New Street Research analyst Jonathan Chaplin said. "Cable companies will enter the wireless market this year, and by acquiring Charter, Verizon eliminates a potential competitor in the same 36% of the country." – **Fierce Cable**

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Sling TV, the live streaming service owned by Dish, said today that it will add four NBC-CSN regional sports channels on April 2, in time for the 2017 Major League Baseball season. The channels are CSN California, CSN Bay Area, CSN Chicago and CSN Mid-Atlantic and they will be available at no extra cost to all 'Sling Blue' customers who live where the regional nets air without blackouts. (For instance, Chicago subscribers to Sling will get CSN Chicago, but not the other three CSN channels.)

Sling TV offers two basic tier packages — Orange, which starts at \$20-a-month and includes ESPN and roughly 30 cable networks; and Blue, which starts at \$25-a-month, and includes more than 40 channels including live network feeds in select markets as well as several Fox channels. While Sling is promoting the addition of the NBC-owned CSN regional sports channels as a boon for baseball fans, CSN Mid-Atlantic does not have the broadcast rights to the local MLB teams, the Baltimore Orioles and Washington Nationals.

Those teams air exclusively on MASN, an independently-owned regional sports channel in the Baltimore-Washington area. Sling TV does not carry MASN. However, CSN California airs the games of the Oakland A's; CSN Chicago airs games from both the Chicago White Sox and Chicago Cubs; and CSN Bay Area has the regional rights to the San Francisco Giants games. Sling TV already offers Fox regional sports channels in the local markets where they air without blackout. – **tvanswerman.com**



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