

CableFAX Daily™

Wednesday — April 28, 2010

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 21 / SPECIAL

All Hail Our Best of the Web and CableFAXIES Honorees

We say this every year, but the entries for our “Best of the Web” and CableFAXIES awards were beyond stellar. The level of creativity, innovation and expertise out there in the cable world is astounding. Enjoy!

Best of the Web

When it comes to digital activities ranging from the Web to mobile applications and beyond, cable just keeps getting better. We hope the following rundown begins to explain why we consider these campaigns, executives and initiatives among the best.

Best Ad/Series of Ads Video

Winner

Fancast - Comcast Interactive Media - See It For Yourself Campaign

With the start of the Fall TV season, Comcast's Fancast set lofty goals, including getting 7.5mln monthly unique visitors by year-end. By the time we were singing “Auld Lang Syne,” Comcast had reached 11.3mln monthly uniques and exceeded other goals as well. Comcast went full throttle. And in the end, the campaign created huge awareness for Fancast, which obviously faces tough competition these days from Hulu (We'll have to see what happens after Comcast absorbs Hulu partner NBCU). Tactics included everything from traditional ads on TV to interactive bus shelter ads outdoors to email marketing, one-click banner ads and social media. Commitment equals success, folks. It's that simple.

Honorable Mention

Turner Sports/NASCAR.COM - “Off the Track w/Tony Stewart”

Best Overall Websites: Cable Network – Large

Winner

AMC - AMCtv.com

Put simply, AMC's Website combines simple navigation, video-rich features, user interaction and a social media sensibility to catapult it to the top of our heap

this year. What's truly incredible is that AMCtv.com shines so brightly despite an extremely high bar of excellence set by so many other amazing cable network Websites. For fans, AMCtv.com is heaven: Show bibles posted, minisodes for big linear hits, innovative contests like “Mad Men Yourself.” The list of fan-friendly features goes on. In 2009, AMCtv.com saw a 130% increase in monthly uniques, a 50% jump in video streams and a whopping 300% estimated rise in ad sales revenue. That's success by any measure. AMC is doing it right.

Honorable Mentions

Discovery Digital Media - Discovery.com

G4 - G4tv.com

Scripps Networks - HGTV.com

Scripps Networks - FoodNetwork.com

Best Overall Websites: Cable Network - Small and Midsize

Winner

Current Media - Current.com

When 2 of Current's news correspondents spent months in a North Korean prison in 2009, it became clear that this small but dogged network was willing to take risks and go the extra mile to get the story. And that focus on hard-nosed investigative journalism—while fleeting on some other news networks—remains a mainstay of Current's mission. Its Website continues that tradition, letting users dive even deeper with exclusive content, social media integration and plenty of lighter activities such as video submission contests—even one that lets users create commercials for their favorite brands. Current's online reach has increased 20 fold in only the last 3 years. Considering Current's commitment, that doesn't surprise us.

Honorable Mention

Discovery Networks International -

Discovery Kids Latin America

17 CableFAX Faxies Nominations

**13 CableFAX Best of the Web
Award Nominations**

3 Digital Hot List Winners

Rainbow Media has at least 33 reasons to be proud.

Congratulations

AMC • IFC • Sundance Channel • WE tv

and all of the CableFAX award honorees.



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Best Overall Websites: Regional/Local Programmers

Winner

Bay News 9 - Baynews9.com

With its Bay News 9 24-hour local TV news network in the Tampa Bay area, Bright House Networks has demonstrated first hand how to run a first-rate news operation that competes handily with local broadcasters. And with the evolution of Baynews9.com, the MSO has also shown that cable can create an equally compelling online presence around local or regional programming. It's hard to muster anything but praise for this excellent site. Its recent integration of social media and other features allowing customization and a high degree of user interaction makes this an exemplary site for any cable operator looking to solidify its local presence.

Honorable Mention

YES Network - YESNetwork.com

Best Overall Websites: Technology & Other Vendors

Winner

Eclipse Marketing Services, Inc. - Eclipse Marketing Services, Inc. Website Re-Design

Direct marketer Eclipse Marketing Services wanted to strengthen its brand to the cable and entertainment industry community—so it set out to create a user-friendly, B2B site that would set it apart in the marketplace. The result was a well-designed and visually intriguing site that's easy to navigate and focused wholly on its specific audience. The results speak for themselves: Eclipse got roughly 50% more "Contact Us" requests than before the redesign, which by the way was done on the cheap entirely by staff members. Kudos.

Honorable Mentions

ActiveVideo Networks - Launching Cloud TV

Metaswitch Networks - Metaswitch Networks

Blog or Series of Blogs

Winner

Travel Channel - Anthony Bourdain's Blog

If you thought quirky foodie Anthony Bourdain was entertaining on television, check out his blog. It's often packed full of entertaining anecdotes and relevant info for the traveling food addict. And every now and then,

Bourdain just goes off about random subjects that have nothing to do with any of that. It's all part of Travel's strategy to extend Bourdain's brand beyond the screen, employing a savvy mix of social networking tools to push the blog to more than 250K views per month. Linking to Bourdain's muses is everyone from niche food bloggers to larger media outlets like *New York* magazine.

Honorable Mentions

AMC - "Mad Men" Blog

Motorola - Motorola MediaExperiences2Go Blog

Corporate Social Responsibility/ Education

Winner

Discovery Communications Planet Green - Planet Green Blue August Campaign

When Discovery sets its mind on something, it doesn't mess around—and that certainly was the case with Planet Green's "Blue August" campaign, which fused grassroots activism with multiplatform marketing power to create an impressive initiative to raise awareness of the plight of our ocean and water resources. What Planet Green describes as a "true 360-degree content initiative" included short-form content with Phillippe and Alexandra Cousteau, the premiere of the "Blue Planet" series, integration with its TreeHugger.com property, and even coordination with the United Nations Environment Programme. The initiative led to Planet Green's highest rated month since its launch and coverage in dozens of major media outlets.

Honorable Mention

Comcast and Discovery Education -

Discovery Education on Demand by Comcast

Email Newsletters

Winner

WEtv and Wedding Central - WEtv.com's WETreat Newsletter

Sometimes simplicity works. And sometimes, it comes down to knowing your audience. In both cases, WE tv found much success with WE Treat, its bi-weekly email newsletter that combines timely topics, useful tips, recipes, videos, quizzes, info on pets... you name it. And it's all smartly targeted to its loyal following of women 18-49. Started in Apr 2009, the newsletter's readership has grown to well over 300K registered users, with more than 12mln total emails sent. The open rate tracks at 12%,

compared to the 8% average for other sites. Yep. Email may seem so 1990s, but it works. And WE tv deserves credit for connecting with its audience.

Honorable Mention

Turner Sports/NBA Digital -
NBA Daily Playoffs Newsletter

Games

Winner

A&E Television Network - The 5 Lives of Criss Angel Augmented Reality Experience/A&E

For our money, few online games are as creepy as the ones A&E devises around its magic man Criss Angel, whose freaky, mind-bending illusions always create plenty of water cooler conversation. In Aug 2009, A&E outdid itself with its "5 Lives" mini-site, which gave fans several ways to either kill or save a virtual Criss in some kind of danger. One amazing game involved printing out a piece of paper with the Criss Angel logo on it, and then using the computer's webcam to actually play the game. The intent was to promote Season 5 of "Mindfreak," and made the site one of A&E's top premiere-focused sites in recent years.

Honorable Mentions

A&E Television Network - Kill Criss Angel - The Game/
A&E Television Network

Discovery Networks International - Helium 3

SPEED - SPEED Fantasy Bid

Mobile Application

Winner

The Weather Channel Interactive - The Weather Channel Interactive iPhone Application

When it comes to iPhone apps, The Weather Channel's multi-functional yet user-friendly addition is among the most useful for people who just want to find out what's going on with the weather. But the app doesn't just stop there (as does Apple's native weather app). In fact, this isn't just the weather; it's weather immersion—complete with interactive radar maps (you can add radar and cloud layers to a local map and even store relevant locations with customized names to check the weather on the fly). And the weather advisory function adds a vital safety component. With more than 6mln downloads to date, this is one awesome app. Check it out.

Honorable Mentions

AMC - AMC iPhone App

Discovery Communications -
Discovery Channel iPhone App

Turner Sports/NBA Digital - NBA Game Time

PBS KIDS Sprout - Dress Chica Mobile Application

Travel Channel - Travel Channel GO

Online Community

Winner

Ovation Artist Community - www.ovationTV.com/community

Bringing together artists is never easy because they are such a diverse bunch. But Ovation has found a way to do it by emphasizing their common interest in preserving the arts itself. As part of the effort, Ovation launched the "MY ART" contest, which invites both established and aspiring artists to showcase their art on Ovation's Website. At year-end, one lucky artist gets a 1-min spot on Ovation TV as well as a gallery showing in their local market. It's a nice integration between the Web and TV, and it also fulfills Ovation's overall mission to serve as an advocate for the arts in general. So far, more than 9K members have uploaded 100K pieces of art, with traffic jumping 145% in the first years (page views were up 311%). In 2010, the net plans to expand the effort with more on-air integration and on-the-ground events for local artists. A standing Ovation is in order.

Honorable Mentions

RAPP/Travel Channel - Hungry for More

Turner Sports - NASCAR.COM Community

WEtv and Wedding Central - WEtv.com's "The Locator"

Original Content

Winners

Discovery Communications Planet Green - Planet Green Short Form Program

For some cable networks, putting short-form programming online amounts to promo reels for their linear shows, not exactly the most exciting and innovative use of the medium. But Planet Green takes the view that short-form content should be as compelling as long-form and stand on its own 2 feet. With modest budgets, the net created 6 original short-form series ranging from "Organic A to Z," in which chef Gregory Schaefer cooks his way through the world of organic food, to "My Place," which follows a woman trying to lead a greener life. With new online short-form series launching in 2010, Planet Green continues to exploit the power of the Web to extend its brand.

ESPN - "Mayne Street"

It's hard to resist ESPN personality Kenny Mayne, and if you tried, he would simply stare you down until you acknowledged his quirky sense of humor. There's just something about this guy and his dry delivery that make him perfectly suited for the Webisode universe where

he roams as royalty. His fictionalized “real-life” vignettes dubbed “Mayne Street” are always fun and sometimes downright hilarious. The videos revolve around Mayne and his fictional production crew, who are stuck dealing with his intolerable behavior and mishaps. Just go online and watch them. You won’t be sorry.

Honorable Mentions

BET Networks - “Buppies”

ESPN - 30 for 30 Website

Scripps Networks -

FrontDoor.com’s First-Time Homebuyer’s Guide

Univision Interactive Media - Vidas Cruzadas

Social Media Campaign

Winner

Discovery Channel - FrenziedWaters

Talk about pressure. Discovery’s famous “Shark Week” franchise just finished its 22nd year, so the company’s crack marketers must continually come up with new ways to market this often creepy but always compelling ode to our man-eating comrades of the sea. In 2009, the theme was psychological fear and anxiety (fun!), so Discovery walked the line as it invoked fear without veering into blood-curdling horror. The net hit bloggers, along with other traditional media, and posted 2K tweets with a reach of 2.2mln followers and 4.4mln impressions. Tweets from high-profile celebs included Drew Barrymore, Elizabeth Banks and Rainn Wilson. The www.frenziedwaters.com site also included massive Facebook integration, with nearly 20mln impressions and an average time on site of more than 3 minutes per user. Fear sells? Guess so.

Honorable Mentions

AMC - “Mad Men Yourself”

Bravo -

Ultimate Virtual Viewing Party/Bravo Digital Media

CBS College Sports Network -

POWERADE College Intramurals Program

Motorola (DesignKitchen) -

Share the Experience Microsite/Social Media Campaign

RAPP/Travel Channel - Kidnap! on Facebook

Supplemental Web Content

Winner

Travel Channel - “Ghost Adventures” Live

For years, cable networks have tried to figure how to organically marry the excitement of a live TV event with the interactive elements of the Internet. But Travel Channel may just have found a sweet spot with its “Ghost Adventures” franchise and its live event at the Trans-Allegheny

Lunatic Asylum in Weston, WV, to investigate reported paranormal activity on Oct 30—just in time for Halloween. The audience at home could interact via video chat with the hosts and producers as the investigation progressed and even track every corner of the Asylum through webcams positioned around property. The event drew 250K unique visitors, 69K simultaneous webcam viewers and 2.3mln page views. And get this: time spent per visit was 20 min. Scary! In a good way...

Honorable Mentions

AMC - “Mad Men” Website

AMC - AMC’s Summakor.com - Supplemental Web Content

Discovery Communications - Discovery News

National Geographic Channel - Expedition Week Website

WWE - SummerSlam Microsite

Use of Twitter

Winner

E! - Celebri-Tweet

So many celebrity tweets. So little time to waste on them. We’re being facetious, of course. Celebrity tweets are our window into the sordid lives of those club-hopping, Rodeo-Drive-shopping stars who, unlike us, never seem to endure a dull moment. Launched in May 2009, E!’s Celebri-Tweet consolidates the best celebrity tweets into one feed with a handy widget at E! Online. And the net also holds celebrity Twitter parties where fans can virtually interact with their favorite stars in real-time via Twitter. One Twitter party with the Kardashians to promote the premiere of “Kourtney and Khloe Take Miami” averaged 1 tweet per second and ranked #1 among Twitter trending. Celebri-Tweet has helped E! Online grow its average views by 57% year-over-year.

Honorable Mentions

Fuse - Twt-a-palooza/Fuze

National Geographic Channel -

On Board Air Force One Twitter Campaign

Travel Channel -

Travel Channel’s “Man vs. Food,” Social Media/Room 214

Video: Overall Use of Video

Winner

AMC - AMCtv.com

AMC’s AMCtv.com has taken video to the next level. It rightly describes its online video strategy as “a DVD-like video extension of AMC’s original programs.” Amazingly, viewers can access new clues, writers’ insights

and video sneak peeks into next week's episode only 60 seconds after the linear show airs! And that's not all: When AMC was building buzz for its mini-series remake "The Prisoner," it streamed the entire 1960s original series on its site. And it put a dedicated multimedia producer on location in South Africa to bring video exclusives to the Web audience. And who could resist all the behind-the-scenes footage on "Mad Men" and "Breaking Bad"? This stuff works: In 2009, AMCtv.com traffic was up more than 50%.

Honorable Mentions

Discovery Digital Media - Discovery Digital Media
 GSN.com - GSN's Newlywed Question of the Day
 Turner Sports/NBA Digital - LEAGUE PASS Broadband
 Travel Channel - "Ghost Adventures" Live

Web Marketing Campaign

Winners

**Buckeye Cable System - Buckeye Cable System
 Cash Code Investigation Sweepstakes**

With tough competition on all sides—especially from well-funded satellite firms—smaller operators must run smart marketing campaigns that feature plenty of elbow grease. Buckeye did just that when it partnered with sister company *The Toledo Blade* newspaper to run a 25-week Web-based contest that gave customers a chance to win \$100K. Of more than 7K contestants, something north of 1K expressed an interest in subscribing to Buckeye or The Toledo Blade, and follow-up led to a 2% conversion rate on those prospects and exceeded Buckeye's goal by 50%. Meanwhile, Buckeye lost fewer than 1% of its subs to AT&T's U-Verse during the contest.

Oxygen Media - "Dance Your Ass Off"

Oxygen worked off its bum to create an impressive online promotion for its "Dance Your Ass Off" premiere, pulling out all the online stops to make sure this two-step led to a successful launch. It worked. Oxygen blanketed the Web with awareness-fetching takeovers of popular sites, created a custom YouTube channel, urged people to submit dance videos for a chance to win a trip to Universal Orlando resort (288 people entered) and even hosted a 5-city "Dance Your Ass Off" mobile tour. The show became Oxygen's biggest-ever premiere and most watched freshman season for 18-49s. Whew. Dancing's tough. Need some Oxygen.

Honorable Mentions

Acento Advertising/Time Warner Cable -
 Fall Interactive Campaign
 Outdoor Channel - Spring Fever

Web Page/Section Design

Winner

**National Geographic Channel -
 Waking the Baby Mammoth Interactive**

What could be more cool than a 3D computer model of a baby mammoth that Internet users could manipulate and explore? Well, maybe there are cooler things. But still... We found this pretty darned awesome! NatGeo touts high traffic numbers from the interactive platform, with some 50K page views and an average of 5.75 minutes spent on the site. The entire Baby Mammoth site actually ended up with well over 1mln page views to boot. Meanwhile, strong linear ratings followed for the Baby Mammoth special that spurred the promo site, averaging 1.66mln viewers and a 114% rise from NatGeo's previous 6-week time period.

Honorable Mention

Buckeye Cable System -
 Buckeye Cable System Football Central

Website Design

Winner

**World Wrestling Entertainment -
 "SummerSlam 2009" Micro Site**

Leave it to WWE to wow us with its attention to detail and willingness to soar to new promotional heights—whether the world it's creating is real or "virtual." In this case, WWE created a stellar microsite that it posted only 3 weeks in advance of its 2009 SummerSlam pay-per-view event. Buzz was palpable, with WWE's 2nd highest number of page views for one of its microsites in 2009. And wow, did the site look good! So good, in fact, it almost felt alive. It *breathed* excitement. And not only did the site sport an edgy and modern feel, but the navigation never detracted from the overall graphic style. Virtual event tickets represented tabs that led users exactly where they needed to go and always remained artistically connected to site design. This isn't easy to pull off. And few have done it this well. Bravo, WWE.

Honorable Mentions

National Geographic Channel - Human Family Tree
 PBS KIDS Sprout - Sprout Online Website Design
 Turner Sports - NASCAR.COM
 Univision Interactive Media – Cocina

Best of the Web People Awards

Blogger/Tweeter

Winner

AMC - Blogger - John Scalzi

We have to admit that AMC is gaining a lot of recognition in this year's Best of the Web awards, but the truth is that the net is really firing on all cylinders when it comes to its online efforts. That's certainly true of blogger and novelist John Scalzi, whose insightful and often very funny sci-fi-focused posts speak for themselves. In one blog, he ponders why R2-D2 has jets to fly but no voice synthesizer to talk. Darn good question. The interesting thing about Scalzi's blog is that it's not simply a promo tool for AMC. It's just an entertaining blog that draws fans to the site and helps bolster brand awareness. That's the essence of a good blog and a measured, respectful corporate strategy.

Honorable Mentions

ACA - Ross Lieberman - @ROSSatACA

His tweets speak to indie operators nationwide—in 140 characters or less. And the posts are always insightful and relevant. We follow him. Do you?

Zatz Not Funny - Zatz Not Funny blog - David Zatz and team

This intriguing blog dissects the connected home but isn't afraid to post a funny YouTube video or review an interesting gadget. Always a good read.

Web Content Director

Winner

Drew Pizarra, AMC Content Director - AMC

We've praised AMC for its online effort in other categories, and now it's time to give credit where credit is due. Drew Pizarra's leadership in strengthening AMC's on-air brand online deserves recognition on many levels. And his ability to do such a stellar job overseeing massive amounts of content is amazing, not least of which because he must cater to both die-hard fans and curious prospects who have yet to discover AMC's well of critically acclaimed shows. Meanwhile, Pizarra's editorial oversight has helped AMC's blogs land on several annual "Best Of" lists for *PC Magazine*. Many impressive candidates submitted in this category, but the scope of Pizarra's job and his deft management of its many details put him over the top this year.

Honorable Mentions

Andrea Macey, Director of Multiplatform Content WEtv and Wedding Central

In 2009: Uniques up 34%, page views up 47%. Video streams up 40%. She also oversees VOD, which is up

80%. We're up on Macey.

YES Network - Web Content Director - Kevin Sullivan, YESNetwork.com

Oversaw a huge site redesign in Mar 2009, making an already fabulous site even better. Traffic is up 300%, with 17mln message board views. And this is a regional site?

Video Editor/Producer

Winner

YES Network - Video Editor/Producer

Joe Auriemma, YESNetwork.com

Talk about a jack of many trades, Joe Auriemma not only produces all the video at YESNetwork.com (and it's a lot), but he also writes for the site as well. His video work is impressive, with recurring segments like "Post Game Plus" offering highlights, interviews and analysis after each Yankees and Nets game; "SportsLife NYC" about "under the radar" local sports stories; and "Yankees Rumor Mill," which keeps fans up on Yankees intrigue during the off-season. Meanwhile, he also produced hundreds of one-off videos per year, including Yankee interviews and Spring Training segments. He even works both in front and behind the camera, and edits much of the content himself. OK. We're impressed. Really.

Honorable Mention

Mary Novak, AMC Video Editor/Producer - AMC

Like "Inside Mad Men" and "Inside Breaking Bad"? Thank Novak, who creates those and other gems at AM-Ctv.com. Incredible site. And Novak helps make it sing.

Digital Hot List Class of 2010

Each year, we select an elite group of digital executives who possess a unique mix of creativity, innovation and influence, and help to shape the cable industry's digital future. The following list represents some of the best and brightest in cable's digital realm.

Amy Banse

President, Comcast Interactive Media

The point person at Comcast for Fancast and many multi-platform efforts. And one of the smartest people in cable.

Christopher Barry

SVP Digital Media & Business Strategy Sundance Channel

He has awards galore. But uniques and video views keep going up, up, up. We think he deserves another nod.

Derek Cheng

EVP Digital Media, Disney/ABC

A powerhouse name in cable's digital arena. Mentored by Bob Iger himself, Cheng continues to impress far and

wide both within and outside the cable universe.

Greg Clayman**EVP Digital Distribution & Business Dev, MTVN**

The digital and mobile content guru. With big iPhone apps and the co's WAP traffic at an all-time high, there's no telling what Clayman will think of next.

Steven Copertino**Sr Director Digital Marketing, Time Warner Cable**

He oversees digital strategy from e-commerce to online advertising and Web analytics. A vital asset.

Rebecca Glashow**SVP Digital Distribution, Discovery Communications**

Discovery's expert on all things digital when it comes to affiliate needs and beyond. Bill Goodwyn's right hand on digital matters. And a great person to boot.

Scott Hatfield**SVP Technology, Cox Communications**

An integral member of Cox's team as it continues to create a seamless technology platform. He knows his stuff.

Rob Hayes**SVP/GM Digital Media, Showtime**

Bagged one Emmy for cross-platform storytelling and still going strong. An asset to the stellar Showtime team and one of the reasons the net keeps getting better.

Jason Kilar**CEO, Hulu**

No one needs to ask why. Hulu's a phenomenon, and Kilar is largely responsible for its runaway success. We can't wait to see how the Comcast-NBCU deal changes the game.

Marc Klatzko**Managing Partner, MAUDE NY**

Works with everyone from MTV to Miramax. If multiplatform ads are on the wish list, this guy should be in your Rolodex.

Suzanne Kolb**President, Marketing, News and Online, E! and Style**

Digital is only a part of this marketing guru's slate of duties. But she does it well. Numbers up all over the place.

John Kosner**SVP/GM Digital Media, ESPN**

ESPN's digital guy and one of the big trendsetters out there for multiplatform strategy and products. Want to know what's next? Ask John.

Peter Levinsohn**President, Fox Interactive Media**

A powerful force driving Fox's digital strategy, which continues to gain steam year after year.

Mac McKean**VP, Digital Media, AMC**

He's behind "The Mad Men Avatar," "The Prisoner Virtual Graphic Novel" and "Breaking Bad Webisodes." Another asset in AMC's impressive slate of digital gurus.

John Najarian**EVP Digital Media & Business Development****Comcast Entertainment Group**

Heads all digital production and creates digital products across platforms. A big part of E! and G4TV's online success.

Jean-Briac Perrette**President Digital Distribution, NBCU**

A big man on the NBCU campus. Integral to the digital Olympics strategy. We're betting he'll continue to be a key exec after Comcast takes over.

Damon Phillips**VP, ESPN3.com**

A sports enthusiast bringing his passion to newly re-named ESPN3.com—and loving every minute of it.

Jennifer Robertson**SVP Digital Media & Business Development****WE tv / Wedding Central**

Digital know-how and a consumer marketing background are a powerful combination for this vital exec.

Mike Rosen**President/SMV MediaVest, General Motors**

MediaVest's GM man. With the car maker starting to get its books in order, we bet Rosen's star will rise even higher in 2010.

Neal Scarbrough**VP, Digital Media, VERSUS**

Versus continues to make digital strides, and this is the guy making it all happen. A hot name getting hotter.

Michael Spirito**VP, Business Development and Digital Media****YES Network**

The guy behind the big Yankees-Cablevision online streaming deal and much more. Get in the Spirito!

Doug Stevenson**CEO, Vibrant Media**

A lot of buzz out there about Vibrant's "contextual" online ads. And Stevenson's the one keeping things so "vibrant."

Ritu Trivedi**Managing Director, Mindshare**

Drove the much-praised Unilever/Dove partnership with Discovery. A connected and knowledgeable force.

The CableFAXIES

One of our oldest awards programs, the *CableFAXIES* recognizes cable's best marketers and PR professionals, whose tireless advocacy for the industry and its many initiatives and products helps keep it strong amid a shaky economy. Each category below represents specific types of campaigns and executives we feel deserve recognition.

Marketing & PR Program Awards

Advertising Campaign for a Network

Winner

FEARnet - FEARnet Rebrand

FEARnet rebranded itself in the fall for the first time since its 2006 launch—always a risky and difficult prospect for any network, especially one that relies wholly on VOD, mobile and online platforms. The goal: Appeal to a more mainstream audience (ie, beyond traditional horror fans) and by extension major advertisers and affiliates. It launched a new look at geek hipster convention Comic-Con with a blood-splat logo and plenty of social media integration to follow. The campaign built to a crescendo as the net inserted on-air branded bugs, lower thirds and bumpers, all designed to reinforce its new brand message. The result was a well-executed campaign that largely transformed FEARnet from a horror destination to a movie hub, albeit one specializing in fear. It's a fine line but one that FEARnet walked well.

Honorable Mentions

CBS College Sports Network

Outdoor Channel - Don't be Fooled by a Decoy

Sportsman Channel -

Sportsman Channel 2009 Rebranding Campaign

truTV

Advertising Campaign for a Single Program

Winners

A&E Television - Criss Angel Season 5

A&E set out to hit all consumer touch points as it plotted its advertising strategy for season 5 of its popular "Criss Angel Mindfreak" series. One challenge: Season 5 consisted of 5 specials rather than the usual 13 eps, so A&E worked hard to position it as a 5-week television event—albeit one in which Angel would constantly face supposed doom through his death-defying stunts.

The net pulled out all the stops. Innovative online marketing. A 3D billboard on Sunset in L.A. (featuring 5 massive coffins). "Funeral procession" street teams handing out Angel obituaries. Very creative. And effective.

WE tv - Bridezillas - Season 6

"Bridezillas" is just one of those phenomena that hits a sweet spot within the female audience: A natural interest in weddings and all the chaos surrounding them and, of course, the inevitable breakdowns experienced by their harried brides. For season 6, WE tv used humor to great effect, juxtaposing Nat King Cole's "Unforgettable" over scenes of bride-fueled mayhem in its various concept spots to promote the new season (One even ran on the Madison Square Garden jumbotron). The net also created online viral apps, and partnered with GSN and Clearview Cinemas to increase the promo punch. The result: HH ratings were up 5% over last season, and season 6 became the highest rated ever.

Honorable Mentions

A&E Television - "Steven Seagal Lawman"

Big Ten Network - The Big Ten Quad

WE tv - "My Fair Wedding" with David Tutera

Community Relations

Winners

A&E Television - The Recovery Project

Inspired by its Emmy-winning series about addictive behavior "Intervention," A&E created an outreach program to raise awareness that addiction is a treatable disease and recovery is possible. Some 22mln Americans struggle with addiction, yet fewer than 10% receive treatment. A&E attacked that gap with PSA, online assets and local events, but also staged a rally where more than 10K people—many were addicts and family members—crossed the Brooklyn Bridge, raising awareness and creating a human bridge of recovery. The net, cable affiliates and the Partnership for a Drug-Free America still hold Town Halls across the country, bringing together health professionals, educators, addicts, teens and parents.

Honorable Mentions

Comcast - Michigan Mobility & Accessibility Partnership

Mediacom -

Mediacom Presents The Haven Pet Adoption Series

RCN Corporation - RCN Dream Come True Telethon

Corporate Social Responsibility/ Green Campaign

Winner

ESPN - Team ESPN 30k Challenge

One of ESPN's great corporate virtues is that its top executives really encourage employees to get involved and contribute to their communities. So to commemorate ESPN's 30th anniversary, the company launched an initiative to increase employee participation in volunteer activities and log up to 30K hours of total service. Internal promo included a "Sports Barometer" to measure progress and plenty of other team-building activities to keep everyone motivated. Guess what? ESPN well exceeded its goal with 35K hours logged in, and more employees now volunteer on a regular basis. In this economy, it's nice to see a net celebrate a milestone not with a big, expensive party... but by just giving back.

Honorable Mentions

Canoe Ventures - Canoe Ventures Introduces the Next Generation of TV Advertising

Comcast - Stand Up 2 Cancer On Demand Partnership

Cox Communications - Cox Conserves Heroes

Mediacom - Mediacom EcoBilling

Direct Response Marketing

Winner

Charter Communications -

High-Speed Internet Campaign

Speed kills when it comes to highway driving, but it's critical to traversing the information superhighway. That was the thinking behind Charter's campaign to get DSL users to switch to Charter high-speed Internet. From clever TV spots that "zap" Internet directly into customers' homes to expert use of social media tailored to audiences with hi-tech giveaways—instant gratification has never seemed so attainable. No surprise the high-speed campaign reached stratospheric heights. In target markets St. Louis, MO, and Greenville, NC, the RGU average lifted 23% for Internet during campaign time and 10% for overall package (Cable, Internet and Phone). Strong numbers continuing into the following 3 weeks signaled that Charter's strategy hit the mark.

Honorable Mentions

Comcast - Welcome Back Campaign

Cox Business -

2009 COX Business Acquisition TV - "Furniture"

Cox Business -

Cox Business Metro Ethernet Sales Promotion

Integrated Marketing Campaign - Distributors

Winner

Time Warner Cable Los Angeles - DTV Marketing Campaign

Time Warner's comprehensive transition campaign filled a void in the confusion leading up to the digital transition—proving that education really does lead to rewards. By targeting Hispanic and bilingual markets with straightforward ads and Q&A sessions held in English and Spanish, the campaign generated off the chart results. In the first phase, the English DTV Basic Broadcast spot generated an increase of 2K calls in one week, the Spanish spot led to 4K calls. Educational events—which made DTV seem as easy as 1, 2, 3—held in Dearden's and Walmart saw cable and Internet sales increasing up to 120% from the month prior.

Honorable Mentions

Charter Communications -

Charter Communicating Commitment Campaign

Comcast - Comcast Local Heroes

Cox Business -

2009 Campaign 2 COX Business Acquisition

Integrated Marketing Campaign - Networks

Winner

WE tv - WEtv 2009/2010 Upfront Materials and Trade Campaign

How do you catch the eye of advertisers and show that your viewers are tech-savvy? Build your own app? The slick B2B "WEtget," the first in the cable industry, was not only easy to use, but useful. Features included industry news, an advertising calculator and, of course, the latest in programming updates. This strategy of placing a treasure trove of well-designed, customized information in advertisers' hands worked: WE tv Ad Sales acquired 82 new advertising clients during the upfront, yielding a 20% increase in upfront revenue. It's not easy to differentiate oneself during the busy and competitive upfront season. But it's possible when a great team puts their heads together.

Honorable Mentions

A&E Television - "Steven Seagal Lawman"

Cartoon Network - Scooby Doo! The Mystery Begins

Tennis Channel - 2009 US Open on Tennis Channel -
Consumer Campaign

Marketing Campaign

Winner

IFC -

“Monty Python: Almost the Truth (the Lawyers Cut)”

And now for something completely different... Yes, it's IFC that brought together one of the most globally recognized and successful comedy troupes of all time. And we're all quite impressed down here, we can tell you. OK... Enough with the Python references. The real truth is that IFC did a wonderful job to market this incredible documentary in which surviving Python members retell the story of their legendary rise. Billboards, painted murals, a Web marketing onslaught at targeted sites, on-air spots all over cable... and, of course, a big reunion event in NYC that garnered lots of press and attention. Well done. Its press strategy also generated many positive reviews of this iconic group of comedy geniuses. Nigh! OK, we're done now.

Honorable Mentions

BayNews 9/Brighthouse Networks -
Klystron 9 Marketing: Launch Campaign

Comcast - Comcast Local Heroes

Comcast Interactive Media -
Fancast - See it for Yourself

FEARnet - “Fear Clinic,” a FEARnet original series

Oxygen Media - “Dance Your Ass Off”

Marketing of a Continuing Series

Winner

Bravo/NBCU - “Top Chef: The Tour 2”

Coordinating a 21-city promo tour ain't easy—even if Bravo makes it look that way. In fact, its biggest challenge was making it even bigger and more interactive than the 1st tour. Affiliate perks abounded, including meet-and-greets with on-air talent and even private cooking demos (Each city also got 3 public demos for fans). The tour garnered 6K impressions per day of each stop, with sold-out venues and often wait-listed fans camping out for the chance to get into a cooking demo. Affiliates raved about the tour, with plenty of press coverage, including coverage on the local TV news. Bravo made it look easy. We know it wasn't. Just like cooking.

Honorable Mentions

A&E Television - “The Cleaner” Season 2

BBC America - “Torchwood: Children of Earth”

WE tv - “Bridezillas” - Season 6

Marketing of a New Series or Show

Winner

TBS - “Lopez Tonight” on TBS

Conan may be on the way to TBS, but “Lopez Tonight” was already surpassing its goals—perhaps part of the reason Lopez was willing to move to midnight to make room for CoCo at 11pm. Team Lopez used extremely creative cross-platform promotions to build its tune-in for the show's premiere in 2009. And the innovative marketing strategies and tactics could even be considered “best practices” in a multiplatform environment. The bottom line: TBS' excellent early marketing efforts will make it all the more easy to integrate Conan and keep Lopez hot.

Honorable Mentions

A&E Television - “Steven Seagal Lawman”

Animal Planet - “Jockeys” Season One Campaign

Marketing of A Special or Documentary/ Documentary Series

Winner

Sundance Channel - “Brick City”

As Sundance puts it, the idea behind promoting its “Brick City” documentary series about Newark local politics was to make some “noise” to raise awareness of the 5-night event. To do so, the net highlighted series “star” Newark Mayor Corey Booker with social media initiatives, star-studded screenings, a mini-site featuring actor and exec producer Forest Whitaker, branded taxi tops and subway posters and local TV ads in the NY tri-state and DC areas. The series has since won acclaim from the NAACP, garnered healthy amounts of press and seen strong VOD and digital traffic. The success of the show led Sundance to announce a 2nd season for 2011.

Honorable Mentions

IFC - “Bollywood Hero”

IFC - “Monty Python: Almost the Truth (the Lawyers Cut)”

Retirement Living - RLTV “Not Fade Away”

Media Event

Winner

ESPN - ESPN's 2009 Upfront Event

Upfronts are tough. You have to keep advertisers engaged while highlighting your best shows and talent—all within a short time window lest anyone become restless. Few do it as well as ESPN, whose 2009 Upfront took an even more novel approach by structuring the

event itself as if it were a series of shows on ESPN. The net ran the entire event as if it was an episode of its popular "SportsCenter," squeezing an enormous amount of "news" into a tight one-hour slot. The format, in which execs and on-air talent mixed it up on the stage, was a hit with advertisers and led ESPN to exceed its own internal sales goals and outperform many other nets. They. Could. Go... yeah, we'll stop.

Honorable Mentions

CMT - 2009 CMT Music Awards Red Carpet

IFC - "Monty Python: Almost the Truth (the Lawyers Cut)"

USA Network - Character Project

Media Relations Campaign

Winner

IFC - Monty Python:

Almost the Truth (the Lawyers Cut)

Reunite the original living members of Monty Python? What a coup, and IFC was just the cable net with the promotional chops to generate media interest. IFC smartly and effectively focused its campaign on the cultural significance of this legendary comedy troupe. That strategy enabled a red-carpet gala and reunion of Monty Python membership to commemorate the troupe's 40th anniversary, reinvigorating interest in Monty and ultimately driving buzz about the feature. When dabbling in legendary comedy troupes with a rabid fanbase, it's easy to screw things up. IFC did the opposite: It created buzz with both the public and the media for what became a once-in-a-lifetime event. Wow.

Honorable Mentions

The Style Network - "Ruby"

Discovery Channel - "Shark Week"

National Geographic Channel - "On Board Air Force 1"

Mobile Marketing Campaign

Winner

Travel Channel - Travel Channel Mobile Messaging

Despite all the talk about social media, apps and other fancy ways to reach viewers and customers, sometimes simplicity works. And nothing's more simple than texting. Because Travel's audience skews older than the texting teen crowd, it settled on only 1 or 2 texts per week, created a strong opt-out and avoided anything that could be considered spam. Promo included tie-ins with "Ghost Adventures" and "Man vs Food," as well as social media. Since starting the campaign in early 2009, SMS subs have since grown an average of 37% each month, with 7 mobile alert clubs totaling 104K unique users.

Multicultural Marketing – Distributors

Winner

Comcast Cable -

Comcast Carefree Minutes Worldwide 300

When Comcast launched its "Carefree Minutes Worldwide 300" international voice calling plan in Apr 2009, the company took on a mammoth task: Target 13 different ethnic groups in major U.S. markets with a culturally relevant multimedia initiative. Despite the challenge, Comcast pulled it off, smartly integrating an "International Postcard Stamp" theme that resonated across cultures accustomed to sending postcards to relatives and friends outside the U.S. In addition, Comcast used culturally relevant images and other smart tactics to reach its audience, resulting in a campaign that exceeded internal goals by 40% within the first 90 days of launch. Acquisition costs were only \$12.42 per sub. Nice.

Honorable Mentions

Charter Communications/cruz/kravetz:IDEAS - Paquete Alcance Mas (Bundle and Save with Charter)

Comcast Cable - Channel One Russia Launch

RCN Corporation - RCN Global Passport Program

Time Warner Cable Los Angeles -

DTV Marketing Campaign

Multicultural Marketing – Networks

Winner

mun2 - The Chicas Project Season 4

The popular "Chicas Project" franchise has helped put mun2 on the map, and the network's marketing strategy for the 4th season demonstrates part of why the show has become such a success: Great characters. Well marketed! The "on-the-road" theme of the 4th season lent itself to plenty of out-of-home advertising. And who couldn't love great marketing stunts like "Tacos vs Hot Dogs" in Hollywood where real-life Chicas competed to see who could give out more tacos or hot dogs to the crowd. Get this: The season 4 premiere brought in 4 times more 18-34 viewers than the season 3 premiere. That's marketing that works, folks.

Honorable Mentions

Gospel Music Channel - Gospel Music Heritage Month

IFC - "Bollywood Hero"

TNT - "Hawthorne" on TNT

TuTv - Bandamax Grassroots Initiative

PR Stunt

Winner

ION Media Networks - "Durham County" & ION Television World's Largest Moving Box Stunt

The cable industry has some of the best PR stuntsters on the planet, but ION showed them all up with this stunt designed to generate buzz for its 1st original series "Durham County." Quite simply, ION set out to break the Guinness World Record for "World's Largest Cardboard Moving Box." Uh, yeah... there's a record for that. After a week of NYC radio promo to find 20 "winners," the 20 dove into the massive box to find a key worth \$100K toward a mortgage payment (Get it? Moving?). After much press, Durham County bumped by 50% ION viewership in its time slot and has continued to set viewing records since. Now that's thinking outside the box. Wow. Sorry.

Honorable Mentions

A&E Television - Hoarders - Taxi Tops

Cartoon Network - Cartoon Network GET ANIMATED Campaign

Central Florida News 13 - Go Magic!

Oxygen Media - Feed the Models Stunt

Press Kit

Winners

Showtime Networks Inc - "Nurse Jackie"

In general, Showtime puts out excellent press kits (believe us, we're experts when it comes to these things). And its various kits surrounding the new Edie Falco show "Nurse Jackie" have been among the best of the best. In this case, the introductory Nurse Jackie kit contained everything a busy journalist would need to understand the show. Character backgrounds, production notes, episode breakdowns and more—all packaged beautifully in a lengthy but well-organized folder. And already we've started receiving new press kits from Showtime that are equally fantastic. We can't ask for much else.

Starz Entertainment - "Party Down" Season 2

We've been "Party Down" admirers for some time (the loss of Jane Lynch to "Glee" was tragic, but we digress). It's a great show worthy of press buzz. And Starz gets a gold, uh... star for its Party Down press kit. Unlike co-winner Showtime, Starz kept its kit extremely brief. But get this: The succinct package came in a folder shaped like a folded shirt with a genuine pink bow-tie fastened to the top. We love the creativity, simplicity and use of show props to create buzz. And this kit just seemed to fit the show's personality. Oh, and

about Jane Lynch... we'll admit that Megan Mullally is a darned good replacement.

Honorable Mentions

Discovery Channel - Shark Week

ESPN - NASCAR on ESPN

FX - "Archer" Media Guide

FX - "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia" Media Guide

Programming Stunt

Winner

G4 - G4's "E3 '09 Live"

There's a certain scrappiness to G4, and that's never better on display than when it goes on the road to cover events important to its young, technorati-hipster audience. In this case, G4 spent a whopping 22 hours of air time covering E3 Expo 2009, the premiere convention for hard-core gamers. At the same time, it smartly leveraged the event to promote its relaunch of G4tv.com. In the process, the net broadcast press conferences live, conducted several high-profile interviews, roamed the show floor and demoed countless games. Viewership reached 4 times G4's average, with several specials and events from the convention breaking internal records. G4 knows its audience. And this stunt was the perfect marketing tool to reach it.

Honorable Mentions

Discovery Communications/Science Channel - Science Channel's "Punkin Chunkin" 2009

FEARnet - FEARtober

IFC - Live: "Arrested Development"

IFC - "Monty Python: Almost the Truth (the Lawyers Cut)"

Public Affairs Campaign

Winner

Syfy - Battlestar Galactica: A Retrospective

We've made no secret of our opinion that "Battlestar Galactica" was an incredible TV watershed. It takes a series of great depth to get itself discussed at, of all places, the United Nations. But Battlestar Galactica, which was loaded with social messages and political commentary, was such a series. So on St Patrick's Day 2009, actors Edward James Olmos and Mary McDonnell joined UN officials with responsibility for things like human rights and the security of children for a discussion of social and political issues raised by the show. Whoopi Goldberg moderated. In addition to UN staff and press, the audience included some 100 lucky NYC high school students, hosted by Syfy's Visions for Tomorrow, a pro-social initiative, and ThinkQuestNYC,

a non-profit dedicated to learning and technology.

Honorable Mentions

CMT -

CMT One Country at the 2009 CMT Music Awards

WE tv - WE Volunteer 2009, part of WE Empowers Women

Tchotchke

Winner

National Geographic Channel - Mad Libs/Shrunken Head

We may be many things at *CableFAX*, but tchotchke amateurs we are not. We know tchotchkes. We have worked with tchotchkes. And you, sir, are no tchotchke... But we digress as usual. More important is describing our absolute horror, followed by confused delight, after receiving NatGeo's shrunken head tchotchke. Sent to promote Expedition Week and apparently tap the Indiana Jones adventurer clearly trapped inside every reporter's body, the head spurred much office debate over whether "it was real." We hope it wasn't, but we're still not sure. In any event, the stunt earned NatGeo plenty of press buzz and helped Expedition Week reach 38% more viewers than in 2008. Indy would be proud.

Honorable Mentions

Buckeye Cable System -

Buckeye Cable System VIP Bundle-Up

CBS College Sports Network -

Armed Forces Football Paperweight

FEARnet - "Fear Clinic," a FEARnet original series

Fox Cable Networks - Nat Geo Wild Stamps

Trade Show Marketing and PR

Winner

Fox Cable Networks - Nat Geo Wild Luncheon

Anyone who attended Nat Geo Wild's luncheon at CTAM Summit left with a clear understanding that the new network (which replaces Fox Reality Channel) was here to stay. Good attendance was assured because a luncheon panel included Comcast EVP Matt Bond and other luminaries. And Fox took full advantage of the opportunity, decking out the room with elements from the Earth, Jungle, Air and Sea, and running an impressive sizzle reel that showcased the new channel's lineup. It was an unusually dramatic and grand sponsorship for a CTAM event. By its spring launch, the net had secured commitments from nearly every major distributor despite its vastly different content vs Fox Reality.

Honorable Mention

Fox Cable Networks - CTAM Video

Video: Use of Video or Moving Image

Winner

Motorola - GPON Always On Video

Often, conveying the benefits of cutting-edge technology can come down to convincing people that it has real application in their lives. So Motorola, working with Design Kitchen, created a video showing a young millennial using ultra-fast broadband in ways that could stress capacity limits. Of course, the video wasn't directed at millennials; it was directed at broadband providers that must serve the needs of this bandwidth-hungry generation. The result was an entertaining piece that conveyed a serious B2B message to Motorola's customer base. Motorola has used it at trade shows, on its Website and even posted it to YouTube. As anyone in this industry knows, video is a powerful medium. Motorola has harnessed it well.

Honorable Mentions

Big Ten Network - The Big Ten Quad

ESPN - Upfront Survival Tips with Scott Van Pelt

International Media Distribution - Rebrand Campaign

Viral Marketing Campaign

Winner

G4 - G4's Attack of the Show

Olivia Munn's National Pie Week Initiative

G4's National Pie Week initiative was perfectly baked for its audience—combine a comely lady and an all-American desert, and you achieve viral gold. The aim was to get enough people to sign a petition, and "Attack of the Show" host Olivia Munn would jump into a giant cream pie. The petition netted 63,376 signatures, thousands more than enough to satisfy the goal. The resulting pie jump video achieved more than 262K views on G4tv.com alone and led to a boost in ratings for the show: by the end of the episode viewing had nearly tripled among men 18-34. It's not often that we can give an award for jumping into a pie. But, uh... well, wow. Guess we're doing it.

Honorable Mentions

A&E Television - Hammertime

Animal Planet

"Whale Wars" Season Two Viral Marketing Campaign

FUSE - Hip Hop Invasion

People Awards

Marketer of the Year, VP Level and Above

Winner

Tom Carr, SVP, Marketing-Strategy/Amy Winter, SVP, Marketing-Creative - TLC

This dynamic duo has been turning heads at TLC since they came on board in late 2008, and the pair spent most of last year overhauling the net's marketing and branding machine. By mid-year, the results were already paying off, with prime ratings up a whopping 45% and 6 returning series posting double-digit gains. In addition, they supported the launch of another 6 series that all got 2nd-season pickups, all while reducing creative costs by 50%. Carr and Winter also streamlined TLC's promo strategy, focusing on a smaller number of on-air promos per week to maximize impact, and they supercharged the net's brand integration strategy to increase ad revenue. There's more, but we don't have space to list all of their accomplishments. And remember, most of this has happened in their first year on the job. No telling what's in store for the future.

Honorable Mentions

**Kenetta Bailey, SVP, Marketing
We tv/Wedding Central**

A fabulous marketer and person. Her vision has helped create big brands like "Bridezillas" and "My Fair Wedding." Not only that, but she launched WE Volunteers and has spearheaded other socially conscious initiatives.

Bill Bergofin

SVP, Marketing And Promotion - VERSUS

Since overseeing the rebrand of OLN to VERSUS, his efforts have helped put VERSUS on a growth bonanza. In many ways, this net's on fire. And fire's gotta start somewhere.

Denise Conroy-Galley

SVP, Marketing & Research - Outdoor Channel

She wields a keen sense of how to catapult a brand to the next level, and Outdoor's recent strides prove it. This net is lucky to have Conroy-Galley on its team.

Marketing Team of the Year

Winner

AMC – Rainbow

The runaway success of AMC's "Mad Men" is now legend, but part of the show's success stands on the shoulders of marketing giants. AMC's marketing mavens have

worked tirelessly over the last couple of years to turn a critically acclaimed show about 1960s Madison Ave into a bona fide sensation. Whether it's promos with Banana Republic, online games like "Mad Men Yourself" or wildly creative consumer marketing like "New York Mets Gone Mad".. this team deserves enormous credit for all it does on Mad Men as well as other shows like "Breaking Bad" and the upcoming "Rubicon." When Jon Hamm turns up hosting "SNL" not once, but twice, it's clear this team deserves a lot of the credit for the pop culture force it helped create from scratch.

Honorable Mentions

Big Ten Network

Holograms of Eddie George. 8-foot-tall bobbleheads. Fan interaction. A risk-taking team with great instincts and a sense of what it takes to win.

Discovery Communications - TLC Marketing Team

It was a rebuilding year at TLC, and this marketing team really took the reigns in several areas. No telling what's next.

Fox Cable Networks

This affiliate marketing team is among the best, navigating a tough retrans deal with Time Warner Cable in 2009.

NBC Universal

The Olympics, USA's excellent "Character Project" and countless other initiatives. A top-notch crew year after year.

Tennis Channel

Despite a bad economy, this lean-and-mean team stepped up with big partnerships and hard work to find success.

PR Executive of the Year, VP Level and Above

Winner

**John Solberg, SVP of Media Relations
FX Networks**

It's no secret that FX is on a roll with some of the best shows on TV, including "Damages," "Rescue Me" and the promising new addition "Justified." And interestingly, FX has maintained a diverse programming lineup that also includes plenty of comedies. Managing this wonderful madness from the communications cockpit is John Solberg, who has been with FX since its inception and doesn't get enough credit for the significant and complicated job he does every day. As FX chief John Landgraf puts it, Solberg "has been deeply involved in decision-making across all divisions, offering valuable insight and helping us reach new heights." We've been

long impressed with FX's PR operation, including its attention to detail and fabulous press materials. Solberg faced tough competition for this title, as he was up against the incredible Theano Apostolou and Richard Licata in the finals... But this has been FX's year. And it's also Solberg's.

Honorable Mentions

Theano Apostolou, SVP, Publicity, Talent Relations and Promotional Events - AMC

Apostolou has been a key force behind the success of AMC shows like "Mad Men" and "Breaking Bad," with an innate skill for corralling talent, running awesome events and inspiring everyone around her. We're fans.

Richard Licata, EVP, Corporate Communications Showtime Networks

Licata has been a staple of Showtime's PR operation for some time, and he has been integral to its rise in recent years out of HBO's shadow and into its own glory.

PR Team of the Year

Winner

National Geographic Channel

We're just suckers for a great PR team, and few can match the folks over at Nat Geo, who understand the needs of the press, and who also know when to push, when to let go and when to just shoot the breeze. In addition to PR chief Russell Howard and co's excellent relationships with important trade and consumer press, the Nat Geo crew also puts together some of the best press kits and has a zen feel for how to appropriately market new shows and initiatives to a busy media often bombarded by too much information. That the team does so much with only 6 staffers is truly amazing. Steve Schiffman and all the top execs at Nat Geo are lucky to have this team singing the network's praises. And we're here to lend our applause as well.

Honorable Mentions

Big Ten Network

Elizabeth Conlisk, Mike Vest and Janel Blanchard forge great press relationships and wield social media know-how to boot.

Bravo

Cameron Blanchard, Johanna Fuentes and the rest of Bravo's PR team are pros, launching 14 returning and 8 new series in 2009.

Canoe Ventures

Vicki Lins, Dana Runnells and the whole gang over at Canoe have weathered scrutiny and come out smiling. What a smart, passionate group.

Public Affairs & Communications Executive of the Year

Winner

A&E Television

Michael Feeney

SVP, Public Affairs and Corporate Communications

Talk about someone who has come a long way since his days as an NBC page. Feeney now oversees the entire AETN PR operation, including all the strategic outreach for its many and diverse networks. But we were also impressed by his incredible efforts in coordinating educational and community outreach efforts, which have received praise from the White House to communities around the country. Often, Feeney must coordinate such programs with affiliate partners. It's hard to argue with success, and Feeney's deft oversight of the AETN brand has been a major contributor to AETN's overall success. Just ask AETN chief Abbe Raven, who calls him a "key member" of her team. We agree.

Honorable Mentions

NBCU - Susan Haspel

Executive Producer, "The More You Know"

We can't think of a public-affairs campaign more well known than, well... "The More You Know." What a legacy.

RCN - Richard Ramlall

SVP, Strategic External Affairs and Programming

RCN is a scrappy overbuilder, and Ramlall may be one of the most versatile and hard-working strategists out there.

Thanks...

We can't extend enough thanks to the hundreds of PR folks, marketers, digital gurus and others who submitted nominations for this year's Best of the Web and CableFAXIES awards programs. We know it takes time to put these nominations together, and as such we always take the judging process very seriously. Furthermore, learning about all the great things you're doing helps *CableFAX* stay connected and well-informed. So on top of supporting our awards programs, you're also ensuring that our coverage of the industry remains top notch. We couldn't do it without you. Many thanks!

--Seth Arenstein, Editorial Director, and Michael Grebb, Executive Editor