

# CableFAX Daily™

Friday — January 5, 2007

What the Industry Reads First

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## Early Bird: Oxygen Opens Cable's Upfront Season

The cable upfront kicks off earlier than we can ever remember, with **Oxygen** holding its 1st ever upfront presentation on Jan 23 at NY's Cipriani. Part of the reason behind the early start is that the selling season has changed, said **Oxygen** pres/COO *Lisa Gersh*. "We're open for business 52 weeks a year. Why not talk to our advertisers when they have time to hear us," she said, noting how last year's cable upfront stretched from May until Sept as opposed to being jammed into just a few weeks. But is it too early? "They're making a statement to the community that they are the 1st to do it. There is some creative licensing that they can do with that so that they get a little more buzz about it," said *Harry Keeshan*, evp, national broadcast for media buyer **PHD**. "I don't know at the end of the day that it will impact their intake of ad dollars. There are a lot of cable nets to get through." So, does Oxygen run the risk of being forgotten about in May or June when the broadcast upfront breaks? Probably not, because as Keeshan notes, pretty much every net will have experienced sales people coming back a number of times to call on buyers. *Larry Novenstern*, evp, dir of NewCast at **Optimedia**, said timing can always be a factor. "They're going to have less to tell you as far as programming. They're going to be further away from the action, but their voice will be heard by the people who will attend," he said. Gersh doesn't seem worried about the timing, pointing to the number of launches the net has on tap for Jan (returning series "Janice Dickinson Modeling Agency," new series "Tease," and an original movie) and the desire to keep the presentation close to its Dec milestone of reaching 70mln subs. "We wanted to have a big party and celebration. We think size matters, and we're the first women's net to admit it," she quipped. Plus, there's the scatter market. "One of the reasons we've seen such tremendous growth in our upfront CPMs (+10% last year, she said) is because we have such incredible growth in the scatter marketplace," said Gersh. Oxygen's keeping its plans for its inaugural upfront under wraps, but expectations are high (tongues are still wagging over *Fabio* riding in on a white horse during the net's annual women's lunch at the **Cable Show** 2 years ago). "We have lots of special things planned," Gersh promised.

**No Go:** **Mediacom's** options are running out. The **FCC** denied its emergency petition to intervene in the MSO's retrans dispute with **Sinclair**, which means some 700K subs could lose the broadcaster's stations as early as Sat. The 2 agreed to an extension last month to keep negotiating, but that pact expires at midnight Fri. Mediacom argued to the Commission that Sinclair has not negotiated in good faith. It also has an antitrust suit pending against the broadcaster. "This decision represents a resounding victory not just for Sinclair, but for all broadcasters in their efforts to be fairly compensated by cable companies," Sinclair gen counsel *Barry Faber* said, adding the company was particularly pleased the FCC concluded that marketplace considerations for the value of broadcast stations can take into account the prices cable companies pay for nonbroadcast, cable channels. Mediacom could not be reached by press time.

**Do Over!:** **NCTA** wants the **FCC** to correct its recently released 2005 cable price report. "The public has the right to

ANOTHER SEASON  
TO EVEN THE SCORE.

HIGH STAKES POKER  
THE THIRD SEASON

PREMIERES JANUARY 15, MONDAYS AT 9PM/8C

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expect that the agency will collect and disseminate data in a way that is transparent, impartial and credible,” NCTA CEO *Kyle McSparrow* wrote in a letter to FCC chmn *Kevin Martin* Thurs and cc'd to Sen and House Commerce leadership. Among McSparrow's concerns is the decision not to disclose data showing the pricing of cable on a per-channel basis—data that would show that the price per channel has gone down over 10 years, not up. NCTA also said the FCC should use a consistent pricing metric, such as price per viewing hour, when making judgments about different services. Under a price per viewing hour model, expanded basic cable has dropped from 28.4 cents/hour in '02 to 26.3 cents, NCTA said. The assoc says that the FCC's conclusion that the prices for every communications service except cable have declined since '96 is false because different metrics were used to measure different services.

**CES Preview:** **Showtime** and **ExtendMedia** will showcase next week a consumer video download service designed for Microsoft Windows Vista. Scheduled to launch later this month, the pay service will allow consumers to download eps of net shows such as “Weeds” and “Sleeper Cell” from the Web and play them on their home PC, or transfer to a portable player. -- **Zodiac Gaming** has assumed a new moniker, **Zodiac Interactive**, to reflect a focus on wide-ranging iTV apps such as video games and middleware. **S-A** will help demonstrate some of the new products next week.

**Deals:** First Look Pictures will distribute **Adult Swim's** “Aqua Teen Hunger Force Colon Movie Film for Theaters” (Mar). -- **Comedy Central's** “Chappelle's Show” and “Reno 911!” will be syndicated by **MGM** through a strategic relationship with **New Line TV**. -- **NBC** joined with **Netflix** to offer the service's subs access to a DVD that includes a recap of the 1st 11 eps of the net's “Heroes,” the initial ep of upcoming series “The Black Donnellys,” and a sneak peek at “Raines,” starring *Jeff Goldblum*. After Jan 15, the content will be available at nbc.com.

**Another Hot Cable Stock?:** Since the **Adelphia** creditor plan approved Wed includes payments from the former MSO's 16% stake in **Time Warner Cable**, public trading of TWC shares may become a reality before Valentine's Day. Once the shares are distributed, Time Warner is expected to register them with the **NYSE**, leading to public trading without a typical IPO.

**In the States:** **Clear Channel** and **NBCU** will begin this year offering content from nets such as **MSNBC** and **CNBC** within 5K NYC taxicabs.

**Award Noms:** **HBO** (10) led all nets in **SAG Award** noms and helped cable (21) earn more nods than broads (19). **AMC**, **TNT** and **Showtime** each earned 3, with **Hallmark Channel** and **USA** notching 1. HBO's “The Sopranos” led cable with 3 noms, and will battle sibling series “Deadwood” for best ensemble performance in a drama series. The net's “Entourage” and Showtime's “Weeds” are contenders for best ensemble performance in a comedy series.

**Programming:** The Sun (9:30pm) ep of **INHD's** “Geared UP” will exclusively feature **Sony** products. The ep will also be featured at the Sony “Backstage Theatre” at the CES. -- *Chevy Chase* will share and discuss his favorite films as co-host to **TCM's** *Robert Osbourne* (Jan 15), including “Lawrence of Arabia” and “The Gold Rush.” -- **ESPN** struck a multi-platform deal with Little League Baseball, an 8-yr extension through '14 for all 8 baseball and softball world series events and all 32 games of the Little League Baseball World Series in Williamsport, PA. -- **MTV** bills “Wrestling Society X” (Jan 30, 10:30pm) as the dirtiest and most dangerous wrestling competition on TV, and each ep will feature musical guests such as *Good Charlotte* and *Three 6 Mafia*.

# WANT SOME PERSPECTIVE?

CABLE  NET

# BUSINESS & FINANCE

**Ring My Bell:** Tune into CNBC Fri morning at 9:30am ET, and you'll notice cable's own *Henry Schleiff* ringing the opening bell at the NY stock exchange. Schleiff, pres/CEO of **Crown Media**, also serves on the board of the **Martin Luther King Foundation** and will get bell-ringing assistance from fellow board members *Russell Simmons* and former Congressman *Harold Ford*.

**People:** **EchoStar** appointed *Tom Cullen* evp, corporate development. -- **Oxygen** upped *Michelle Niven* to svp, affil ad sales. -- **Comcast** promoted *Tony Spiller* to svp, Houston region; *Darren Rish* to sr dir, financial planning and analysis, Southern Division; and *Kirk Dale* area vp, Knoxville and Chattanooga, TN. -- **Comcast Spotlight** named former **Yahoo!** dir *Adrienne Skinner* vp, online strategic sales. -- Interim **Vonage Network** pres *Tim Smith* has assumed the post on a permanent basis.

**Business/Finance:** **JDSU** agreed to purchase **Casabyte**, a provider of service quality monitoring solutions for mobile network ops, in a deal that expands JDSU's service assurance capabilities to cover quad plays. -- IPTV firm **Next New Networks** received \$8mIn in funding from **Stark Capital** to further product development. Former **MTVN** vice chmn and **Nickelodeon** pres *Herb Scannell* will lead the partner group as CEO.

## CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	01/04 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	01/04 Close	1-Day Ch
<b>BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS</b>					
BRITISH SKY:	41.08	(0.52)	AVID TECH:	37.03	(0.04)
DIRECTV:	24.73	(0.27)	BLNDER TONGUE:	1.71	0.00
DISNEY:	34.47	0.27	BROADCOM:	33.57	1.10
EHOSTAR:	38.21	(0.16)	C-COR:	11.64	0.19
GE:	37.75	(0.22)	CISCO:	28.46	0.73
HEARST-ARGYLE:	25.21	(0.37)	COMMSCOPE:	30.28	1.30
ION MEDIA:	0.52	(0.02)	CONCURRENT:	1.86	0.05
NEWS CORP:	22.16	(0.09)	CONVERGYS:	24.98	0.44
TRIBUNE:	30.89	(0.11)	CSG SYSTEMS:	26.50	0.44
<b>MSOS</b>					
CABLEVISION:	28.94	0.30	GEMSTAR TVG:	3.93	(0.04)
CHARTER:	3.09	0.04	GOOGLE:	483.26	15.67
COMCAST:	43.05	0.39	HARMONIC:	7.48	0.20
COMCAST SPCL:	42.49	0.24	JDSU:	17.93	0.73
GCI:	15.85	(0.25)	LEVEL 3:	5.57	(0.08)
KNOLOGY:	10.69	0.22	LUCENT:	2.55	(0.02)
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	98.12	0.63	MICROSOFT:	29.81	(0.05)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	29.11	(0.24)	MOTOROLA:	20.55	(0.02)
LIBERTY INTERACTIVE:	22.13	0.89	NDS:	46.95	(0.2)
MEDIACOM:	7.54	(0.31)	NORTEL:	25.62	0.07
NTL:	24.49	(0.36)	OPENTV:	2.47	0.00
ROGERS COMM:	60.25	(0.28)	PHILIPS:	37.59	(0.05)
SHAW COMM:	32.55	0.10	RENTRAK:	15.39	(0.26)
TIME WARNER:	22.42	0.39	SEACHANGE:	10.61	0.05
WASH POST:	758.88	9.38	SONY:	43.80	0.89
<b>PROGRAMMING</b>					
CBS:	31.33	(0.27)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	19.65	0.61
CROWN:	3.92	0.11	THOMAS & BETTS:	47.29	(0.13)
DISCOVERY:	16.42	(0.07)	TIVO:	5.25	0.17
EW SCRIPPS:	50.03	0.14	TOLLGRADE:	10.55	0.05
GRUPO TELEVISA:	27.55	0.11	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	21.03	(0.35)
INTERACTIVE CORP:	37.90	0.35	VONAGE:	6.61	(0.09)
LODGENET:	25.66	0.37	VYYO:	4.28	(0.02)
NEW FRONTIER:	9.77	0.00	WEBB SYS:	0.04	0.01
OUTDOOR:	12.97	(0.1)	WORLDGATE:	1.36	0.07
PLAYBOY:	11.61	0.00	YAHOO:	26.85	1.24
UNIVISION:	35.64	0.08	<b>TELCOS</b>		
VALUEVISION:	12.65	(0.27)	AT&T:	34.50	(0.45)
VIACOM:	41.28	(0.29)	BELLSOUTH:	47.11	0.00
WWE:	16.29	0.11	QWEST:	8.29	(0.12)
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>					
3COM:	4.12	0.00	VERIZON:	38.03	0.21
ADC:	15.42	0.64	<b>MARKET INDICES</b>		
ADDVANTAGE:	2.80	0.09	DOW:	12480.69	6.17
AMDOCS:	38.52	0.40	NASDAQ:	2453.43	30.27
AMPHENOL:	65.82	2.07			
ARRIS GROUP:	13.01	0.31			

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**PROGRAMMER'S PAGE** with Chad Heiges and Seth Arenstein

**Dreamy Series**

CNN's "American Morning" will next week (Mon-Fri) strive to add new depth to the selfless, enduring, and world-changing legacy of *Martin Luther King, Jr.* Through 5-part series "Words That Changed a Nation," anchor *Soledad O'Brien* will uncover and explore some of King's private writings and teachings, part of a 10K-document collection owned by an Atlanta contingent led by city mayor *Shirley Franklin*. "With this exclusive look at some of these documents, we tried to bring the words of Dr. King alive," said series co-exec prod *Jeffery Reid*. The series focuses on important stanzas in MLK's life, from his 1st public speech in '54 in Montgomery, AL, to the historic march on Washington, to his last days in Memphis. Interspersed with interviews of MLK confidants such as activist *Dorothy Cotton* and former UN Ambassador *Andrew Young*— who weeps when asked if he still misses the reverend— are largely unknown facts. For example: perhaps the greatest oration ever, King's "I Have a Dream" speech, had been delivered prior to Washington, D.C., and was to be passed over on that fateful day by another speech. In fact, King began with "Normalcy Never Again," written the prior night, before scrapping it and ultimately imploring: "Let Freedom Ring!" As his well-deserved holiday approaches, here's wishing that King's sonorous ideas and ideals will never be silenced. *CH*

**Highlights:** "The Sopranos," Wed, 9pm, **A&E**. Purists may reject Tony clean mouth (will advertisers?), but the series remains great, particularly seasons 1&2 with *Nancy Marchand* as Tony's mother Livia, who rivals J.R. Ewing's talent for duplicity. – "Gunslinger Girl," Fri, 11pm ET, **IFC**. A curveball—an anime cartoon with an incendiary name that's soft and poignant, at least when the bullets aren't flying. – "The Return," – "The Return," Mon, 9pm ET, 10, PT, **BBC America**. It's a mystery with multiple plot twists, but it's also a rare TV look at middle-aged folks in love. *SA*

**Worth a Look:** "To Be Fat Like Me," Mon, 9pm, **Lifetime**. The best Lifetime original in years; the tale of a svelte teen posing as an obese one should be required viewing for HS students. -- "Lincoln Heights," Mon, 7pm, **ABC Family**. It's too early to know where "Lincoln Heights" is headed. Will it remain the rare, realistic look at a middle-class African-American family life that its initial eps promise or will it devolve to a sappy melodrama about an interracial teen relationship?—"Top 10 Game Show Hosts," Sun, 8pm ET, **GSN**. Camp, yes, but great camp; prepare the night before with 3 special "Family Feud" eps (8pm ET) featuring game show hosts playing the Feud. – "Rob & Amber," Thurs, 8pm ET, 9PT, **Fox Reality**. Having no idea who Rob & Amber are (am I the only one?), this new show about their fledgling marriage piqued my curiosity only slightly. – "Tease," Wed, 9pm, **Oxygen**. C'mon, the "Iron Chef" concept applied to hair styling? But it's entertaining, a cut above the rest (sorry), and will disprove the adage 'hair today, gone tomorrow.' – "Gay, Straight or Taken?" Mon, 8pm, Lifetime. Fun idea, nicely done: single female decides who's who among 3 hunks. *SA*

Basic Cable Rankings (12/25/06-12/31/06)			
Mon-Sun Prime			
1	ESPN	4	3677
2	USA	2.4	2191
3	DSNY	2.2	1993
4	LIFE	1.5	1405
5	TNT	1.4	1321
5	TBSC	1.4	1249
5	HALL	1.4	1038
8	A&E	1.2	1107
8	NFLN	1.2	468
10	TOON	1.1	988
10	NAN	1.1	980
10	CORT	1.1	955
13	FOXN	1	933
13	HIST	1	914
13	FX	1	858
16	SPK	0.9	855
16	FAM	0.9	853
16	SCIF	0.9	827
16	TVLD	0.9	815
16	CMDY	0.9	777
16	HGTV	0.9	776
16	AMC	0.9	768
23	DISC	0.8	778
23	CNN	0.8	747
25	TLC	0.7	677
25	MTV	0.7	617
25	BET	0.7	590
28	FOOD	0.6	508
28	LMN	0.6	318
30	VH1	0.5	472
30	BRAV	0.5	417
30	APL	0.5	407
30	CMT	0.5	380
30	NGC	0.5	307
30	SOAP	0.5	294
36	EN	0.4	391
36	ESP2	0.4	380
36	MSNB	0.4	360
36	TTC	0.4	323
36	WGNC	0.4	277
36	OXYG	0.4	249
36	GSN	0.4	232
43	TWC	0.3	259
43	HLN	0.3	243
43	TVGC	0.3	224
43	DHLT	0.3	200

\*Nielsen data supplied by ABC/Disney



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