

CableFAX Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Retransapalooza: Big Deals Getting Done With Little Noise

Where is all bickering and nastiness that's come to be associated with retrans? Two high-profile and closely watched agreements were announced Tues with nary a peep of distress. Hours after **CBS** announced **Time Warner Cable** had signed a multi-year pact, **Univision** announced it had scored its 1st retrans deal with a major operator, **Comcast**. Time Warner's pact, which includes all CBS-owned broadcast stations and Showtime through '13, is interesting because the MSO's retrans deal wasn't set to expire until Dec 31, '10. Add that TWC had nearly 2 years to work out a deal with recent comments from CBS CEO *Les Moonves* that he's guardedly optimistic about negotiations with major ops, and it seems that retrans deals with the broadcaster may not be the nightmare many feared back when CBS and **Viacom** split. Remember all the headlines Moonves made for suggesting CBS pull in a rate similar to top-rated **USA Network**? While no one's talking financials, the *WSJ* reports that CBS didn't get any cash but that a cash increase went to premium net **Showtime**. Meanwhile, CBS and Showtime will participate in Time Warner Cable's Start Over and Look Back services, as well as provide extensive VOD offerings—including primetime programming from CBS. Moonves has said that most of CBS' major distributor deals expire in '09-'10, so no word on when we might see another agreement. But Moonves said Tues that CBS is now in talks with **Cablevision**. Meanwhile, Univision quietly reached its 1st major retrans pact since its decision not to elect must carry. Comcast's multi-year deal includes carriage of the Spanish-language broadcaster's O&O stations and affiliated stations owned and operated by **Entravision Comm**, as well as **Galavision** and **TeleFutura**. It covers 20mln of its 24.7mln subs. With Univision initially tossing around requests for \$1/sub, some—including **Pali's Rich Greenfield**—expected MSOs to have a real battle on their hands. As is usually the case, financials weren't disclosed. But seeing that there was no Viacom-Time Warner Cable New Year's Eve showdown, it seems fair to think negotiations were give and take over several months. And the vibe is that Time Warner Cable may not be far behind Comcast in striking a deal. Hmmm... How is all this goodwill going to help cable convince Congress to overhaul retrans?

Sold (Again): Macrovision opted not to complete its previously announced deal for **TV Guide Network** and **TV Guide Online** and will instead sell the properties to **Lionsgate** for \$255mln. That sinks a deal announced last month with producer *Allen Shapiro* and private equity firm **One Equity Partners** that included an additional \$45mln in contingencies. The transaction, expected to close Feb 28, greatly expands Lionsgate's cable presence. It has a stake in VOD offering **FearNet** and is a partner with **MGM** and **Viacom** in a yet-to-launch movie net, but this is the 1st net it will own solely—and it's a net with 83mln HHs. TV Guide pres *Ryan O'Hara* has extended his contract. "Lionsgate is the perfect partner. We've had great success in building our distribution and infrastructure—the piece we've been striving for is the elusive potion to provide great content," O'Hara said. Lionsgate is the company behind **AMC's** hit "Mad Men," **Showtime's** "Weeds" and other shows. O'Hara said meetings have already began, and he



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Nielsen Media Research 1/22/08 - 12/28/08. Live plus same day coverage area ratings. 8p-11p average vs. competitive programming in the time period (Sa-Su 8p-11p). Ranked among all ad-supported networks. Subject to qualifications upon request.

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feels there is a lot of synergy between the 2 (think promotions for Lionsgate theatricals). “We will get more aggressive in original productions,” he said. “We’ll stay in the acquisition game and actually grow that.” And eventually, when the analog market dissipates, TV Guide will drop the scroll. TV Guide’s previous deal allowed it to solicit and enter into other agreements. “We believe this transaction improves the probability and the timing of closing the transaction, while providing for non-contingent consideration comparable to our previously announced transaction,” said Macrovision pres/CEO *Fred Amoroso*.

At the Portals: An administrative law judge is going ahead with his timetable for program carriage complaints, despite an order from the **FCC Media Bureau** on Dec 24 that takes back the cases filed by **NFL Net**, **MASN** and **Wealth TV**. Tues’ order required the parties to submit various filings by 4pm ET on Wed. The cases involve complaints NFL filed against **Comcast**; Wealth against **Bright House**, Comcast, **Cox** and **Time Warner Cable**; and MASN against Comcast. The Media Bureau took the MASN and Wealth cases away from the ALJ 2 weeks ago because the judge had not met a 60-day deadline for issuing rulings. NFL Net’s case was moved to the Bureau in a New Year’s Eve order. Comcast has filed an emergency petition to stay the Bureau’s decision to reclaim the cases.

WiMAX: The **Sprint/Clearwire**/big cable wireless broadband service now known as **Clear** officially bowed Tues in Portland, its 1st market. The service is also available in Baltimore, although still under the old Xohm brand. Mobile plans start at \$30/month for speeds up to 4Mbps, and \$10 day passes are also available. According to **Clear.com**, the service will soon launch in Las Vegas, Atlanta and Grand Rapids, MI. More than 140mln US consumers will pay for mobile broadband service by ’13, according to **Parks Associates**.

Competition: **AT&T** has bowed in El Paso **U-verse TV**, U-verse Voice and U-verse HSI. -- **DISH** has terminated 9 additional retailers for alleged illegal activity, including 3 in CA and 2 in TX and FL.

In the States: **FEARnet** is moving from Philly to L.A. to become part of the **Comcast Entertainment Group** led by *Ted Harbert*. *Diane Robina* continues to serve as pres of the VOD channel, a jv among Comcast, **Sony Pictures Television** and **Lionsgate**.

Telco Value: Survey results featured in the Feb issue of *Consumer Reports* claims consumers view **FIOS** and **U-verse** as the best options when looking to trim costs for comm services without sacrificing satisfaction. Consumers see **DirectTV** as the best of the rest, according to the pub, and rate **Cox**, **Cablevision**, **Bright House** and **WOW!** as the “better cable companies.” Results did show, however, that cable ops offering service bundles had fewer customer service problems overall.

Online: **AMC** will premiere all 17 eps of 1960s series, “The Prisoner,” in full screen on **amctv.com**. This leads up to AMC’s debut of its reinterpretation of the series, slated to launch in Nov.

Mobility: **NBCU** has signed on to use **Rentrak**’s Mobile Essentials service, which analyzes trends and tracks data related to mobile content such as video clips, SMS messaging and video games. **NBCU Mobile** had been trialing the service since early ’08. -- **MobiTV** now delivers to mobile phones **CBS** content including full eps of “CSI” and “Numb3rs.”

Technology: **Motorola** has bowed an access device that combines a WiMAX modem with a Wi-Fi router, VoIP ports and an Ethernet port.

From The CableFAX 100: Greatest Hits of 2008

★ Best Advice Series

the best business advice Melinda Witmer has received...



Melinda Witmer
Executive Vice President/Chief Program Officer
Time Warner Cable

“One that always keeps me grounded: If you ever get to feeling important, never forget, it’s the chair they come to see — you’re just the body keeping it warm. (You can all guess who the wise man was that passed that one along).”

15109

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

Programming: Fox Sports Houston will launch a 24/7 local feed on Mon to complete its transition to a standalone FSN affil separate from Fox Sports SW. -- A&E greenlit "Paranormal Cops," which follows a team of Chicago-area police officers who also work as paranormal investigators. Continuing the theme, "Paranormal State" returns to the net Jan 19 for a 3rd season. -- Bravo brings back "Real Housewives of NYC" for a 2nd season, Feb 17, 11pm ET, after the finale of its Orange County counterpart. It moves to Tues at 10pm on Feb 24. -- mun2 said it will rebroadcast WWE's ECW series on Fri nights (10pm) beginning Jan 9. The show airs Tues nights on Sci Fi. -- Live coverage of the 56th presidential inauguration begins on C-SPAN Jan 17 as Pres-elect Obama makes his way to D.C. by train, including rallies in Philly, Wilmington, DE, and Baltimore. In addition to live coverage, C-SPAN will telecast archival speeches from past inaugurations on Jan 19. -- ION will launch its 1st original series this year, securing all US TV, digital media, Internet streaming and VOD rights for "Durham County." The 11-ep series stars Hugh Dillon ("Flashpoint") and is about a homicide detective who discovers his neighbor might be a serial killer. -- A new 1-hour WWE program will debut on WGN America in Apr. The weekly's scheduled to air Thurs nights at 8pm and 11pm with an additional weekend run.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	01/06 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	01/06 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
BRITISH SKY:	28.76	0.28	AMPHENOL:	27.02	1.90
DIRECTV:	23.47	0.30	APPLE:	93.02	(1.56)
DISHNEY:	24.31	0.81	ARRIS GROUP:	8.23	0.66
ECHOSTAR:	11.98	0.49	AVID TECH:	11.84	(0.05)
GE:	16.86	0.23	BIGBAND:	6.42	0.30
HEARST-ARGYLE:	6.56	0.30	BLNDER TONGUE:	1.02	(0.01)
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	16.93	0.25	BROADCOM:	18.77	1.19
CHARTER:	0.10	0.00	CISCO:	17.79	0.68
COMCAST:	17.23	0.20	COMMSCOPE:	17.49	1.01
COMCAST SPCL:	16.76	0.24	CONCURRENT:	3.75	0.44
GCI:	8.56	0.31	CONVERGYS:	7.73	0.67
KNOLOGY:	5.51	(0.05)	CSG SYSTEMS:	16.50	(0.27)
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	5.59	0.33	ECHOSTAR HOLDING:	14.98	1.06
LIBERTY ENT:	18.40	(0.23)	GOOGLE:	334.06	6.01
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	18.04	1.38	HARMONIC:	6.54	0.40
LIBERTY INT:	3.72	0.25	JDSU:	5.25	0.72
MEDIACOM:	4.62	0.39	LEVEL 3:	0.92	0.09
SHAW COMM:	18.32	(0.46)	MICROSOFT:	20.76	0.24
TIME WARNER CABLE:	22.65	0.71	MOTOROLA:	4.64	0.16
VIRGIN MEDIA:	4.98	(0.05)	NDS:	57.66	(0.24)
WASH POST:	421.98	7.98	NORTEL:	0.29	0.01
PROGRAMMING					
CBS:	8.92	0.22	OPENTV:	1.23	0.01
CROWN:	2.73	(0.02)	PHILIPS:	20.42	(0.06)
DISCOVERY:	14.99	0.19	RENTRAK:	11.58	0.12
EW SCRIPPS:	2.28	0.18	SEACHANGE:	6.94	0.07
GRUPO TELEVISA:	16.66	0.47	SONY:	22.85	1.42
HSN:	7.24	0.14	SPRINT NEXTEL:	2.32	0.20
INTERACTIVE CORP:	16.35	0.24	THOMAS & BETTS:	25.25	0.09
LIBERTY:	29.92	0.11	TIVO:	7.31	0.05
LODGENET:	1.02	(0.01)	TOLLGRADE:	4.99	0.24
NEW FRONTIER:	2.09	0.08	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	16.53	0.00
OUTDOOR:	7.49	(0.01)	VONAGE:	0.65	0.00
PLAYBOY:	2.53	0.10	YAHOO:	13.00	0.14
RHI:	8.39	(0.56)	TELCOS		
SCRIPPS INT:	24.37	0.34	AT&T:	28.30	(0.13)
TIME WARNER:	10.98	0.48	QWEST:	3.61	0.13
VALUEVISION:	0.43	0.02	VERIZON:	31.96	(0.52)
VIACOM:	21.98	0.34	MARKET INDICES		
WWE:	11.57	0.18	DOW:	9015.10	62.21
TECHNOLOGY					
3COM:	2.64	0.18	NASDAQ:	1652.38	24.35
ADC:	5.94	0.30			
ADVANTAGE:	2.34	0.07			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	2.29	0.00			
AMDOCS:	21.46	0.91			

20th Anniversary of CableFAX Daily 

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March 30, 2009 – DC

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