

CableFAX Daily™

Wednesday — January 18, 2012

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 23 / No. 010

Four Times A Charm? 3DTV Hype Resilient at CES Despite Emergence of 4K

The newest television technology was also one of the least hyped at this year's CES. Several major electronics manufacturers trotted out 4K sets—which offer four times the picture information as today's top HD sets through 8 million-plus (yes, you read right) pixels—but there was little jumping and shouting. Some companies, including **LG** and **Sharp**, had their 4K sets front and center at their booths. Others, like **Panasonic**, had their 4K screens sequestered in a room behind a curtain, which small groups entered in turn like Dorothy and company lining up to see the Wizard. None cranked the hype-machine that accompanied the launch of 3D a few years ago, despite 4K's stunning picture quality, made even more dazzling when combined with 3D as several manufacturers showed. The reason? For one, most companies we spoke with acknowledged they're unlikely to ever make 4K sets 42 inches or smaller (some said they likely won't go under 84 inches), a potential adoption hurdle despite the fact that consumers are increasingly inching up the size of their sets. Secondly and perhaps most telling, the demos were almost entirely in prototype mode since there is no 4K content to speak of coming any time soon. This differs from a few years back when the CE manufacturers, giddy over 3D, got pledges of support from several big content producers, including **Discovery** and **ESPN**. 3D was still front and center this year, with a few notable achievements: The introduction of a universal standard for glasses that finally quash the interoperability issue, and the entry into the market of veteran eyewear companies like **Marchon**, which are making glasses that look decidedly more hi-fashion than hi-tech. — *Cathy Applefeld Olson*

In the States: **Comcast** and **Verizon's** co-marketing pact kicked off Tues in Seattle and Portland, OR, where subs who order qualifying packages including video, HSD, voice and VZ Wireless services will receive up to \$300 toward the purchase of a new smartphone or tablet. Comcast reps will sell **Xfinity** packages within 8 Seattle-area VZ Wireless stores.

Carriage: A new carriage pact has returned **Tennis Channel** to **FiOS TV** markets including TX, CA, FL, NJ, PA and upstate NY, and the net's expected to hit all FiOS markets by Wed in time for Australian Open coverage. The direct deal replaces previous FiOS carriage of Tennis through **NCTC** that ended in Sept, and calls for the net's feature within FiOS' Ultimate HD and sports packages. -- **Outdoor Channel** launched on additional **Comcast Xfinity TV** systems in MD and VA, including Baltimore, D.C., Alexandria and Howard County.

Comcast-Tennis: **Tennis Channel** filed with the **FCC** a petition to compel **Comcast's** compliance with administrative law judge *Richard Sippel's* ruling that Tennis satisfied its burden of proving that Comcast discriminated against it and unreasonably restrained its ability to compete fairly (**Cfax**, 12/21). The channel disagrees with what it says is Comcast's belief that it need not comply with the ruling until all appellate processes are exhausted, and maintains

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Questions? Contact Awards Coordinator Mary-Lou French at mfrench@accessintel.com.
 Sponsorship Opportunities: Debbie Vodenos at 301-354-1695; dvodenos@accessintel.com.

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Sippel's "as soon as practicable" compliance timetable means now. As such, Tennis wants the FCC to enforce Comcast's compliance. Comcast said it will respond to the filing next week.

Retrans: Despite many South Floridians missing out on watching the Saints-49ers and Packers-Giants playoff games on local **CBS** station **WSVN** this past weekend, no progress yet in the retrans standoff involving **DirectTV** and **Sunbeam TV** that also has deprived the broadcaster's Boston viewers from their local NBC and CW affils. DirectTV said its awaiting a counter-proposal from Sunbeam, which it says is demanding a 300% fee hike. "We can't negotiate with ourselves," said the DBS op.

Golden Globes: Cable enjoyed a fruitful night, earning 9 of the 11 TV awards—its highest total since at least '08—on the heels of 3 wins each by **HBO** and **Showtime**. The latter premium net was particularly proficient, bringing home the Best TV Drama and 2 Best Actor awards for "Homeland," *Claire Danes* ("Homeland") and *Matt LeBlanc* ("Episodes"), respectively. *Laura Dern* ("Enlightened") and *Kelsey Grammer* ("Boss") gave **HBO** and **Starz** Best Actor wins as well, while **ABC's** "Modern Family" and **PBS'** "Downtown Abbey" prevented a Sun night cable sweep. Also earning Globes were **BBC America** (*Idris Elba* in "Luther") and **FX** (*Jessica Lange* in "American Horror Story"). **E!**, meanwhile, garnered nearly 1.7mln total viewers for its dedicated "Live from the Red Carpet" special, which posted gains for a 4th consecutive year, and historical highs for "E! After Party" among demos including P2+ (1.4mln), HH rating (1.13), 18-49s (858K) and 18-34s (511K).

VOD: A welter of MVPDs including **Comcast**, **Cox**, **Charter**, **DirectTV** and **DISH** have signed on to present an on demand free preview of the 1st ep of **Starz** original "Spartacus: Vengeance" (Jan 27) beginning Fri. The ep will also be available for viewing at myriad digital locations such as **Starz.com**, **Facebook** and ops' Websites.

OTT: As **Hulu's** 1st original scripted series, "Battleground" (Feb 14) is set amid political campaigns in WI to explore the behind-the-scenes chaos engulfing an unruly band of campaign workers and volunteers. **G4's** former "Attack of the Show" tech reporter *Alison Haislip* joins the cast of young actors. -- **PMC** and **ION TV** announced the launch of **ENTV's** premium **YouTube** channel to bring 24/7 breaking entertainment news and lifestyle shows to the platform.

Programming: **Lifetime** picked up "Dance Moms: Miami" to grow the franchise. -- **Oxygen** greenlit a 2nd season of "The Glee Project" (summer).

On the Circuit: **SCTE** extended the term of pres/CEO *Mark Dzuban* through the next 5 years. "Over the past three years, we've seen a dramatic transformation of SCTE and the benefits it offers to members and the industry, as well as significant growth of synergistic relationships between SCTE, CableLabs and the NCTA," said SCTE board chmn and **Time Warner Cable** evp/CTO *Mike LaJoie*. -- This year's **CES** iteration marked the event's largest ever with more than 3,100 exhibitors, 1.86mln net sq feet or exhibit space and a record 153K attendees (34K intl). More than 20K products were launched at the confab.

People: **Turner Broadcasting** tapped **Nielsen** vet *Daniel Aversano* as vp, ad sales research. -- *Joseph Matarese* joined **BlackArrow** as CTO, *Tricia Iboshi* as svp, client services and operations and *Dean McCormick* as vp, ad solutions. -- **MLB Net** welcomed *Mark Loomis* as svp, prod. -- **Univision** appointed *Maria Lopez Alvarez* svp, alternative programming.

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Editor's Note: The rest of the issue consists of coverage from TCA. Due to space constraints and the fact that most of the cable panels took place over the weekend, we will continue to feature TCA coverage over the next few days.

Discovery: Discovery Comm pres/CEO *David Zaslav* said the programmer plans to spend more than \$1bln on content in '12, compared to just \$600mln 5 yrs ago. Zaslav also said he's optimistic on OWN despite some mis-steps. "There's a few things we've done wrong," he said. "But I'll tell you right now, as we hit 2012, we hit it with real momentum." Indeed, the net now has *Oprah Winfrey* at the helm full-time. "We're excited about all that Oprah brings," he said. "We still have a lot to learn. It's going to be a journey, but we have some real momentum leading into 2012." Indeed, with "Oprah's Next Chapter" on fire, OWN announced forthcoming series "Lives on Fire," about female CA firefighters, game show "Are You Normal America?" and matchmaking show "Lovetown USA" from Kingsland, GA. But highlighted was "Welcome to Sweetie Pie's," which returns this spring for a 2nd season and continued look at a family-run St. Louis soul food restaurant (plus a new location). "They can relate to us," said matriarch *Robbie Montgomery* in explaining viewers' love of the show that spotlights the "struggles of our family trying to become successful." -- With "Are We Alone" (Mar), **Science Channel** partners with **SETI** (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) and non-profit group *TED* to explore how we might handle 1st contact with alien life—with "Through the Wormhole" veteran *Morgan Freeman* as host. Freeman said he's "very hopeful" that aliens would be benevolent (aren't we all?), and SETI dir *Jill Tarter* tried to put critics at ease by noting that any aliens who could reach us would likely have advanced beyond brutish behavior (again, we hope). "If they've managed to get to be old, probably they've gotten wiser, and they've managed to survive the technological phase that we're in that's so threatening and shows so many signs of doing wrong," she said. "I don't think we have to worry about them. -- **Investigation Discovery** chief *Henry Schleiff* said *Susan Lucci* will join the net as host of "Deadly Affairs" (Sept) about "love gone really, really badly" and told critics to look for a 9/11-related doc by *Meredith Vieira* of "Today" show fame called "The Woman Who Wasn't There" (spring). But at TCA he treated critics to what I.D. does best: Prison. And while some will be repulsed by the idea of giving convicted murderers a platform, curiosity may propel viewers toward "On Death Row" (Mar 9), a TV appendix to *Werner Herzog's* theatrical "Into the Abyss." The first of 4 eps profiles a self-confessed multiple murderer who is articulate and somewhat repentant. The ep is a direct, 1-camera piece, exploring the basics of the death-row experience. "During shooting itself, it's not that emotional," Herzog told critics, noting that he got less than an hour with each prisoner. "The impact, emotional impact, came later when we were editing the film. Both the editor and I started smoking again, which we had given up a long time ago." An opponent of capital punishment, Herzog provides a balanced view of the story through interviews with law enforcement officials and relatives of the condemned. The most chilling aspect of ep 1 is the personality of prisoner *James Barnes*, who, for the most part, seems eminently sane—until he calmly details the murders he's committed. -- Returning to **Animal Planet** for 20 new eps is "Tanked" (spring), which provides an in-depth look at an aquarium-building business run by a colorful family. "If you can dream it, we can build it," said company founder *Irwin Raymer*. Our business "is exploding at this point." The upcoming season includes custom jobs for *Gene Simmons* and *Tracy Morgan*, along with a capacious fish tank built into a bus. -- Dubbed a docu-sitcom, **TLC's** "Leave It to Niecy" (Mar) chronicles the lives involved with *Niecy Nash's* newly blended family and, according to TLC GM *Amy Winter*, comes at a "perfect time to bridge the gap" between docu-series and sitcoms. "Comedy definitely runs in the Niecy Nash family," said Winter. "I class up the joint," said Nash of TLC, adding the series, besides comedy, offers "a look at what trying looks like, about what a second chance looks like." Nash's 3 children are indeed funny. -- In the vein of "Life" comes "Frozen Planet" (Mar), which will bring to **Discovery Channel** viewers "ultimate portraits of our Earth's polar regions," said group pres, Discovery and TLC *Eileen O'Neill*. The filmmakers were subjected to winds of up to 148mph and 48 days with temperatures below zero in unforgiving environments in which cameras had to be treated with bits of coal and blankets. What results is "really a world beyond people's imagination," said prod *Vanessa Berlowitz*. Stories range from the familiar to the new, said dir *Chadden Hunter*, noting the capturing of a brinicle and whales coordinating to wash seals off ice as examples of the latter. *Alec Baldwin* narrates.

Starz: Starz CEO *Chris Albrecht* told critics that the net's comfortable with its current path, which for now includes a number of epics and dramas. As usual, critics asked once again why oh why Albrecht axed the always funny "Party Down" to which Albrecht repeated the stance that he loved the show, which had 20 good eps but never gained enough audience support. "And we hope they do a 'Party Down' movie," he said, addressing reports that producers are shopping a feature. "We're not focusing on half hour comedies right now. 'Boss' is about as funny as we're going to get." Also deadly serious is the Miami-based drama "Magic City" (Q1 premiere), which is very much a pet project of showrunner *Mitch Glazer*. Based in a glamorous Miami hotel in 1959, **Starz's** Magic was

shot at a hotel Glazer worked at as a teen. "It was surreal" when he realized the office he was given on the hotel grounds to do re-writes for *Magic City* was once the broom closet he had used as a youth to escape work. At any rate, *Magic City* appears to combine elements of "The Sopranos," "Goodfellas" and "Mad Men" as protagonist Ike Evans (*Jeffrey Dean Morgan*) has bet everything to acquire the luxurious Miramar Playa Hotel. Unfortunately, he's received some funding from the mob. Like his hotel, Evans appears to be honorable, but both the building and the man have dark sides. While critics were not provided eps of *Magic City* and so couldn't make a detailed evaluation, the series has at least one thing in its favor: The man who helmed **HBO** when "The Sopranos" soared to iconic status, *Chris Albrecht*, now runs Starz. -- Meanwhile, the highly anticipated 3rd season of Starz breakout "Spartacus" will finally take the rebellious band of Roman slaves outside the ludus and into the battlefield, which creators admit raises the production bar on an already large-scale series. "How do we bring this sense of epic... scale and production value to the show, and how do we make it into a show that brings new visual treats to the audience, that doesn't feel like a green screen show?" asked Starz Media managing dir *Carmi Zlotnik*, who then showed critics a 90-sec clip in which an entire arena collapses during the games. It was visually stunning. At the same time, this is the 1st season without original *Spartacus* lead *Andy Whitfield*, who tragically succumbed to cancer last year but who while still alive had encouraged replacement *Liam McIntyre* to own the role. "Part of the triumph of the team... was coming together after a little bit of downtime to say, 'We owe Andy the respect to do this job as best we can. Let's come together, and let's do the best damn show we can,'" recalled McIntyre. "And we pulled ourselves together, and we did excellent work until the end of the season."

AETN: Recession? What recession? **A&E** will join other programmers (**TV One**, for example) in investing more in original programming in '12 than any other season, **A&E** chief *Bob DiBitetto* told TCA critics. Projects include "Bates Motel," a "prequel of sorts" to *Alfred Hitchcock's* "Psycho." On the slate for summer is "Longmire" (premiere date TBD), a series with resemblance to **FX** hit "Justified" (season III debuted Tues) in that both protagonists are modern-day, cowboy-ish law enforcement officers patrolling largely rural territories. Beyond that, *Justified* protagonist *Raylan Givens* and *Walt Longmire* have little in common, argued *Longmire* exec prod *Greer Shephard*. *Givens* is an anti-hero, *Longmire* was conceived as an antidote to anti-heroes, *Shephard* said. *Raylan* derives his power from violence, *Longmire* is "fueled" by loyalty, integrity and honesty: "[*Longmire*] has a moral steadfastness... they're 2 different men." Aussie *Robert Taylor*, who plays *Longmire*, sees his character as hard working, decent and quick to help people. "I like that about him." [Asked later for a ruling on the inevitable comparison, *Justified* showrunner *Graham Yost* declined comment, saying he was unfamiliar with *Longmire*]. While exec prod/writer *John Coveny* admitted he's "a fan" of *Justified*, he refused to say its success was related to *Longmire's* conception and intimated that the idea [for *Longmire*] "was gestating" prior to *Justified's* acclaim. Certainly *Longmire* and *Givens* share another trait—both owe their existence to literature. *Givens* springs from best-selling author *Elmore Leonard's* pen, while *Longmire* is based on novels by *Craig Johnson*. "Battlestar Galactica" icon *Katee Sackhoff* plays *Longmire's* work colleague. Her joy is uncomplicated. This character is "the closest" to who I really am "than any that I've ever played... [plus] it's nice to be out of a flight suit." Having enjoyed *Justified* and the *Longmire* pilot, we'll scramble a cowboy adage and say there's room enough in this town for both of them.

Current TV: Now in 63mln homes, **Current TV** believes it's moving toward becoming the favored net for news and analysis. Once "The War Room with *Jennifer Granholm*" kicks off Jan 30, *Current* will have 3 hours of live weekday prime locked in, a milestone to be underscored by a comprehensive marketing campaign telling how the net "has more than one program, and we really mean business," said pres *David Bohrman*. The new show will feature behind-the-scenes looks at campaign operations, with former MI governor *Granholm* confident she can deliver compelling goods as "the only person on TV or otherwise with office experience." Perhaps more important: *Keith Olbermann*, despite recent tension with *Current* brass, is remaining with the net and has agreed to lead its special election coverage going forward. "That's what we believe will happen now," said *Bohrman*. *Cenk Uygur* marks the 3rd major player in *Current's* live thrust, and the host of "The Young Turks with *Cenk Uygur*" isn't shy about denigrating competitive news nets. "We punch the establishment in the mouth everyday," he said. *Current* has enjoyed some success drawing younger viewers, with *Bohrman* citing 47 as the avg age of its viewership, compared to the 60s avg for all cable news. "If we can mine this and cultivate this," he said, we'll be around for years to come. -- The critics were all over *Karen Gillan*, well known for her role in "Dr. Who." She plays the first supermodel *Jean Shrimpton* in the film "We'll Take Manhattan" (Feb 11, 8p). They nearly ignored *Aneurin Barnard*, who plays fashion photographer *David Bailey*. Our guess is they haven't seen the film yet. *Barnard's* performance as the cheeky London lad who revolutionizes fashion photography is excellent. *Barnard* said he used real cameras during shooting, and they contained film. "We got some good shots," he said. And there was a lot of improv in those scenes, *Barnard*

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and Gillan said, with Gillan adding that 1 scene was completely improvised.

Sundance Channel: Kudos to **Sundance** for bringing “Push Girls” (Apr) to the small screen. The show infiltrates the lives of 4 best friends, attractive women all, who are all confined to wheelchairs. Nothing else, however, seems to confine this vivacious and inspirational group. “They defy you to look at them with pity or sanctimony [and] embody the word independent,” said Sundance evp/gm *Sarah Barnett*. After awaking from a 3-week coma following a head-on collision caused by a drunk driver, *Tiphany Adams* decided “to live my life,” adding she and her 3 best friends want “to be the hope for those in despair.” Also injured in a car crash, former *LL Cool J* backup dancer and outspoken *Auti Angel* did some wheelies on stage. “Basically, we’re four queens sitting on thrones,” she said. *Angela Rockwood Nguyen*, also handicapped in a wreck, refused to have her spirit follow suit, saying “I pushed forward and I haven’t looked back... life is a gift, and what you do with your life is your gift back.” *Mia Schaikewitz*, stricken by AVM as a teenager, is working back to competitive swimming with fortitude. Cynics may complain that all 4 women are beautiful and charismatic, that they’re lucky in that regard. But all that matters is the true inspiration they provide through their indomitable spirits. It resonates.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	01/17 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	01/17 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DIRECTV:	43.50	0.04	CLEARWIRE:	1.84	(0.03)
DISH:	29.10	0.35	CONCURRENT:	3.78	0.20
DISNEY:	38.48	0.08	CONVERGYS:	12.71	0.17
GE:	18.74	(0.1)	CSG SYSTEMS:	15.71	0.08
NEWS CORP:	19.29	0.37	ECHOSTAR:	23.00	0.21
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	13.97	UNCH	GOOGLE:	628.58	3.59
CHARTER:	56.97	0.01	HARMONIC:	5.20	(0.03)
COMCAST:	25.54	0.15	INTEL:	25.04	(0.1)
COMCAST SPCL:	24.95	0.13	JDSU:	11.78	0.31
GCI:	9.65	(0.27)	LEVEL 3:	17.88	(0.4)
KNOLGY:	14.22	(0.08)	MICROSOFT:	28.25	0.01
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	43.07	0.48	MOTOROLA MOBILITY:	38.55	0.10
LIBERTY INT:	17.15	0.09	RENTRAK:	15.36	(0.19)
SHAW COMM:	19.57	0.17	SEACHANGE:	6.63	0.04
TIME WARNER CABLE:	66.26	0.83	SONY:	16.77	(0.36)
VIRGIN MEDIA:	24.05	0.54	SPRINT NEXTEL:	2.21	(0.1)
WASH POST:	388.25	1.25	THOMAS & BETTS:	56.65	(0.03)
PROGRAMMING					
AMC NETWORKS:	39.33	(0.35)	TIVO:	10.33	(0.11)
CBS:	28.09	0.34	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	17.89	(0.18)
CROWN:	1.21	(0.02)	VONAGE:	2.33	(0.05)
DISCOVERY:	43.70	0.36	YAHOO:	15.43	(0.05)
GRUPO TELEVISA:	20.78	0.08	TELCOS		
HSN:	36.60	0.24	AT&T:	30.25	0.18
INTERACTIVE CORP:	41.66	0.01	VERIZON:	39.02	0.10
LIONSGATE:	8.94	0.34	MARKET INDICES		
LODGENET:	2.83	0.04	DOW:	12482.07	60.01
NEW FRONTIER:	1.10	(0.01)	NASDAQ:	2728.08	17.41
OUTDOOR:	7.37	(0.02)	S&P 500:	1293.67	4.58
SCRIPPS INT:	43.81	0.33			
TIME WARNER:	37.31	0.04			
VALUEVISION:	1.65	0.03			
VIACOM:	53.30	0.30			
WWE:	9.46	(0.05)			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADDVANTAGE:	2.19	0.00			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	1.78	0.04			
AMDOCS:	29.20	0.23			
AMPHENOL:	48.27	0.12			
AOL:	15.04	0.11			
APPLE:	424.70	4.89			
ARRIS GROUP:	10.94	(0.01)			
AVID TECH:	8.90	(0.15)			
BLNDER TONGUE:	1.30	(0.02)			
BROADCOM:	32.22	0.39			
CISCO:	19.30	0.24			



Sales Executive
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The CableFAX Sales Executive of the Year Awards recognizes sales forces across cable who work tirelessly behind the scenes to drive revenue and keep our dynamic marketplace growing and business moving forward. The winners and honorable mentions will be saluted during an awards event in Spring 2012 in NYC.

Entry Deadline: February 3, 2012
www.cablefaxsalesawards.com

Questions: Mary Lou French
at 301-354-1851;
mfrench@accessintel.com