

# CableFAX Daily™


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What the Industry Reads First

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## Not Bored Yet: One Year In, CNN's Zucker Strives to Entertain, Inform

With *Anthony's Bourdain's* "Parts Unknown" ranking as CNN's most-watched program, it's no wonder that CNN Worldwide pres *Jeff Zucker* showed up as a keynote speaker at RealScreen Summit on Mon. The confab, aimed at nonfiction and reality TV producers, was perhaps the perfect place for CNN to mine new ideas as it continues to push for more non-fiction storytelling. "I learn more about Israel [from Bourdain's show] than I do from most of our reporting coming out of there," Zucker told the crowd, quickly clarifying that he's not belittling CNN's reporting. Rather, he said there's power in entertaining and informative programs. "Just because you learn something, it doesn't mean it has to be boring," he said. And when news breaks, CNN will be there. "We're never going to stray from that. That is the core of who CNN will be—to be essential in the news world and breaking news world," Zucker said. "But we also have to recognize there are many ways for people to get their news these days. If we rely on just news and breaking news, it's not a long-term game. We want to broaden out our offerings." That includes "The Sixties," a 10-part original series that will debut on CNN in May (a special hour-long "The Sixties: The British Invasion" debuts Thurs at 9pm). But Zucker emphasized that he'll always pull planned programming to make room for breaking news, such as when the net scuttled a heavily marketed movie when *Nelson Mandela* died and most recently devoting most of Sat's programming to a mall shooting in Columbia, MD. "We can walk and chew gum at the same time," he said. That sounds a little bit like **Weather Channel's** model of providing weather news with a mix of non-fiction programming—something **DirecTV** is attacking in its contract dispute with Weather. **CableFAX** asked Zucker if he fears a similar showdown as CNN broadens its lineup, and he quickly rejected the notion, citing the net's live newscasts from 5am to 10pm. "I don't think there's any lack of commitment or confusion," he said. "If anything, in this era where other cable news channels have become so highly partisan, CNN has become more essential." Also present at RealScreen—but as an attendee, not a speaker—is newly named **HLN** chief *Albie Hecht*. It remains to be seen how Hecht will reinvent the net, but Zucker said to look for more info in the coming months. "The idea of headline news and HLN is something that doesn't resonate as strongly when you get all those headlines on a smart phone," Zucker said. Ye he said HLN can't stray entirely from its mission of news and headlines. Back to CNN's programming plans... Just because it is opening the gates to nonfiction, don't look for competition reality or unscripted reality shows a la "Real



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\*Rentrak, TV Essentials. Market Data, 2010-2013, All Day. \*\*Nielsen NPM. 12/31/12 - 12/05/13 vs 12/26/11 - 12/30/12. Live. US AA% estimates. M-Su 6a-6a. HH. Subject to qualifications upon request.

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Housewives” to find a spot on the schedule. What about Jay Leno? “It’s funny. Anybody who I knew [in his former job as NBC Ent pres] is rumored to be coming to CNN with me,” laughed Zucker, who is celebrating his 1-year anniversary with the new org this week. “It’s not something in the cards... It’s not something we’re thinking about right now.”

**In the Courts:** The US Court of Appeals in DC granted broadcasters’ request to delay a decision on a DC Circuit’s injunction against **FilmOn**, which offers an **Aereo**-like service, until the highest court rules on Aereo. The DC Circuit granted broadcasters a preliminary injunction against FilmOn earlier, preventing it from redistributing the nets’ signals over the Internet. The U.S. Supreme Court recently issued an order granting the petition to hear the Aereo suit filed by several bcstrs. A decision is expected in June, meaning the FilmOn parties would have 30 days following the ruling to file motions.

**M&A:** **21st Century Fox** upped its stake in **YES Network**, raising its ownership to 80% from the current 49% it acquired in ’12. The deal is expected to close by the end of 1Q, pending regulatory and other approvals. YES pres/CEO **Tracy Dolgin** will remain in his role after the acquisition. **Yankee Global Enterprises** will continue to hold the remaining 20% stake. The deal will make YES Network a consolidated entity of 21st Century Fox. -- **Liberty Global** agreed to acquire the remaining interest in Dutch cable op **Ziggo** in a \$13.7bln cash and stock deal set to close in the 2nd half of ’14. The company already owns 28.5% of Ziggo. Liberty will combine its Dutch unit, **UPC Netherlands**, with Ziggo, reaching a combined 7mln homes.

**Weather Pilot:** **The Weather Company** started a pilot program with the **US Conference of Mayors** to help cities improve local emergency management communication during severe weather events. The pilot will begin with 5 cities. Info and alerts will be sent via The Weather Channel TV network, The Weather Channel smartphone and tablet apps, weather.com and Weather Underground.

**Rebranding:** **Sundance Channel** will rebrand itself as **SundanceTV**, featuring a streamlined logo and a new website, www.sundance.tv. The rebranding aims to “stand out in today’s multi-platform TV ecosystem,” the net said. The change will roll out in the weeks leading up to the Feb 27 premiere of the net’s original series “The Red Road.”

**Realscreen Notebook:** Ah, focus group. That dirty f-word, at least sometimes in producers’ eyes. It was mentioned a few times Mon during the Realscreen Summit in DC. But nets may not be as tuned in to focus groups as producers think. **Lauren Lexton** of **Authentic Ent**, the company behind “Flipping Out” and “Ace of Cakes,” suggested neither show would have gotten on the air in today’s climate. “The network is looking for further development now. There’s more at stake. They focus group it, audience test it... My feeling is a focus group would have looked at [Flipping Out star] Jeff [Lewis] and said, ‘We hate him.’” she said. If so, they’d be wrong. The **Bravo** show is now in its 7th season. But **HGTV/DIY** head **Kathleen Finch** said she doesn’t personally trust a focus group with a pilot any more. Instead, she and **Food Net’s Bob Tuschman** pushed for a pilot or 1-hour special to really get a taste for whether viewers will stay with a show. “Sometimes we might run a small focus group while something is airing. But the best focus group we can get is putting it on air and having millions watch it, instead of 6 people in a mall in Sausalito,” said Tuschman. Instead of focus groups, the **Scripps Networks Interactive** crew is big on pilots, saying it’s rare they order 13 eps of anything. Instead, they want to get that pilot perfect. **Travel** gm **Andy Singer** and other network chiefs said they’re not that concerned with a pilot’s ratings. “What I’m always looking to see is does it retain an audience,” said Singer. “Do new viewers find it in the last quarter hour? A lot of time, it doesn’t live or die on that one number.” All three emphasized that they are always looking for good talent—asking producers to bring them interesting personalities even if the format for a show isn’t in place. Travel’s Singer said his net needs more women and people of color. Citing HGTV’s upscale female viewership, she’s especially interested in upscale moms, about 38 years old. “You bring the talent. We’ll figure out how to use them,” Singer said.

**Outage:** **AT&T U-verse** experienced a major broadband outage Mon across multiple states. U-verse TV and voice services weren’t affected. AT&T blamed a 3rd-party web hosting service issue. Services have been restored.

**Advertising:** **DirecTV** teamed with **DISH** to offer an ad platform letting political campaigns target their TV ads at the HH level within 20+ mln DirecTV and DISH homes. Sales are expected in the coming weeks. The platform will focus on political ads only. **S&P** sees potential long-term upside, with the move giving parties “a base to build nascent addressable ads businesses, with several major corporates already notably on board,” it said in a research note.

**Press Clippings:** About 2 weeks after **Charter** publicly announced its bid for **Time Warner Cable**, the company reportedly hired **Innisfree M&A**, which specializes in proxy takeovers, to prepare for a proxy fight aimed at replacing TWC’s board. In

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addition, Charter was reportedly close to a deal with **Comcast** to join forces to bid for TWC. The potential joint bid increases the probability that TWC's board would enter into "constructive negotiations" with the combined Charter/Comcast bidder, **Moffett Nathanson** analysts said. "Put simply, this would make it a whole lot harder for TWC's board to 'just say no'" they said.

**On the Circuit:** FCC chmn **Tom Wheeler** will share his outlook for communications policy in the coming years in a Q&A session with the group's pres/CEO **Matt Polka** during **ACA's** Washington Summit on April 2.

**Ratings:** The Sat premiere of "Black Sails" became the most watched new series debut in the history of **Starz** original programming. More than 2.6mln viewers watched the series debut Live+Same Day during its opening weekend on the net's linear channels. Some 1.7mln Live+SD total viewers watched the combined Sat telecasts, making it the best Starz new series premiere night ever. -- **Lifetime** original movie "Lizzie Borden Took An Ax" drew 4.4mln total viewers in its Sat premiere. -- **HGTV's** "Rehab Addict" saw a series high rating of 0.75 among 25-54 Thurs and was the #1 cable program in its time period (25-54 and W25-54). HGTV was #1 among W25-54 and #2 among 25-54 in Thurs prime.

**People:** **Suddenlink** upped **Mike Pflantz** to svp, corporate finance and accounting. He joined the company in '03.

## CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	01/27 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	01/27 Close	1-Day Ch
<b>BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS</b>					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	31.05	(0.22)	GOOGLE:	1101.23	(22.6)
DIRECTV:	69.31	(0.04)	HARMONIC:	6.59	(0.01)
DISH:	54.78	0.18	INTEL:	24.72	(0.09)
DISNEY:	72.25	(0.47)	JDSU:	11.94	0.16
GE:	25.07	0.12	LEVEL 3:	32.23	(0.11)
<b>MSOS</b>					
CABLEVISION:	16.51	0.64	MICROSOFT:	36.03	(0.78)
CHARTER:	136.92	5.50	MOTOROLA MOBILITY:	15.72	0.74
COMCAST:	52.49	0.09	NIELSEN:	42.76	(0.48)
COMCAST SPCL:	50.74	0.15	RENTRAK:	54.11	(0.89)
GCI:	10.14	(0.18)	SEACHANGE:	11.61	(0.54)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	81.42	(1.85)	SONY:	16.23	(0.49)
LIBERTY INT:	27.07	(0.46)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	8.87	0.47
SHAW COMM:	22.29	(0.11)	TIVO:	12.22	(0.01)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	133.45	(0.25)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	35.98	(0.15)
<b>PROGRAMMING</b>					
AMC NETWORKS:	65.61	(0.05)	VONAGE:	4.38	0.07
CBS:	58.18	(0.21)	YAHOO:	36.65	(1.26)
CROWN:	3.05	(0.03)	<b>TELCOS</b>		
DISCOVERY:	77.30	(1.69)	AT&T:	33.51	0.09
GRUPO TELEVISA:	28.73	0.04	VERIZON:	47.69	0.06
HSN:	56.53	(0.36)	<b>MARKET INDICES</b>		
INTERACTIVE CORP:	70.46	(0.09)	DOW:	15837.88	(41.23)
LIONSGATE:	30.96	0.45	NASDAQ:	4083.61	(44.56)
MADISON SQUARE GARDEN:	55.94	(0.14)	S&P 500:	1781.56	(8.73)
SCRIPPS INT:	72.94	(0.67)			
STARZ:	27.70	(0.32)			
TIME WARNER:	62.88	(0.44)			
VALUEVISION:	5.81	(0.17)			
VIACOM:	81.11	(0.64)			
WWE:	21.41	0.57			
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>					
ADVANTAGE:	3.13	(0.04)			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	3.96	0.15			
AMDOCS:	42.17	(0.23)			
AMPHENOL:	85.34	(0.55)			
AOL:	46.19	(0.97)			
APPLE:	550.50	4.43			
ARRIS GROUP:	25.46	(0.11)			
AVID TECH:	7.19	(0.06)			
BLNDER TONGUE:	0.93	(0.06)			
BROADCOM:	29.28	(0.11)			
CISCO:	22.00	(0.2)			
CONCURRENT:	8.44	0.21			
CONVERGYS:	20.59	(0.22)			
CSG SYSTEMS:	30.05	(0.57)			
ECHOSTAR:	47.27	0.23			

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# CableFAX TECH

## Cable Study Defends 5 GHz WiFi Use

With cable pushing to free up the 5150-5250 MHz portion of the Unlicensed National Information Infrastructure (U-NII) band for more WiFi use, the **FCC** has started a proceeding to assign additional WiFi frequencies. The initiative faces opposition from **Globalstar**, the satellite company currently using the band. Citing “substantial harmful interference” to its mobile satellite service, Globalstar in Nov asked the FCC to maintain its current restriction of unlicensed operations in the band to lower wattage and indoor operations. The **NCTA** has responded with a new study from experts from **CableLabs** and the **U of Colorado**. It finds that WiFi and Globalstar can share the 5 GHz band under updated technical rules that remove current outdoor use and power limitations on WiFi. It’s the 2nd study by CableLabs and the U of CO experts. They first disputed Globalstar’s interference claim in July. The Commission must account for Globalstar’s “exceptionally light use” of U-NII-1—the company uses the huge 100 MHz band for only 4 feeder links in the US serving around 85K duplex customers worldwide, said NCTA svp *Rick Chessen* in a letter to *Julius Knapp*, chief of the FCC’s Office of Engineering and Technology. Since U-NII-1 is already designated for unlicensed use, service providers could bring it online very quickly through modest changes to existing equipment, he said. He noted much of the existing consumer equipment ecosystem already contains U-NII-1-enabled Wi-Fi chips, meaning consumers would see the benefits of updated rules almost immediately. In addition, the band is “ideal for rapidly adding 100 MHz to the President’s commitment of 500 MHz of new broadband spectrum.” “The Commission must not allow Globalstar to refuse to share and to hoard 100 MHz of valuable spectrum in such an inefficient manner,” Chessen said. Other backers of the initiative include companies like **Google**, **Cisco** and **Broadcom**.

**Sports Streaming:** **NeuLion**, which delivers live and on-demand content to secondary devices, recently sealed a deal with **Microsoft** to stream live sports content for the Xbox One. Through NeuLion’s cloud-based platform, video will stream at 60 frames per second, which the company claims as the highest quality of live video to be delivered on Internet-connected devices. The company reached an agreement with the **NFL Network** to stream content to the new gaming system, *Chris Wagner*, evp and co-founder, told us. NeuLion plans to stream other professional sports to Xbox One “in the near future,” he said. In addition to live streaming, the company offers features like instant replay, slow motion live highlights, time line markers of top plays and stats for games. The company already works with various cable ops and nets on OTT content, including **Univision**, **Rogers**, **Bright House**, **Big 10 Network** and **Pivot TV**, Wagner said.

**Comcast Homerun:** With the Super Bowl just a week away, **Comcast** scored a homerun last week as it inked a 10-year, wide-ranging deal with the **San Francisco 49ers**. As part of the partnership, the MSO will offer 10-Gbps, fiber-based Ethernet Internet access and video services throughout the 49ers’ Levi’s Stadium, free WiFi for fans, and cloud-based voice and unified communications services for employees at the stadium and at the team’s corporate offices. The video offering includes an in-house video feed to all TV monitors in the stadium and feed programming to the venue’s video boards. In addition, **Comcast SportsNet Bay Area** will build a new TV studio—**CSN Bay Area Studios** at Levi’s® Stadium—for gameday broadcasts and other 49ers-related programming on **CSN Bay Area** and **NBC Bay Area**.

**Kudos:** Congrats to all the finalists in **CableFAX’s** Tech Awards and Digital Awards. Find out who made the cut and how to attend the Mar 13 event here: <http://www.cablefax.com/cfp/awards/digitaltech14/>



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\*Coming soon from CableFAX.