

CableFAX Daily™

Wednesday — February 3, 2010

What the Industry Reads First

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Star Power: More Depth Into Oprah's Anticipated Move to Cable

Turns out "The *Oprah Winfrey Show*" will be a part of **OWN** when it launches in Jan, though only as part of a program called "Behind the Scenes: Oprah's 25th Season," which will spotlight the groundbreaking series' final bow. And with that enduring question answered at last, net CEO *Christina Norman* told Realscreen Summit attendees in DC Tues a bit more about what to expect from the Oprah/**Discovery Comm** jv. "I totally love OWN and what it is we're doing," said Norman, calling human potential the net's key thrust as people are in a "perpetual state of trying to get a little bit better... to figure out that extra 10 percent and get into awesome." She added that "Oprah's all over the net in every way" through creative ideas and enthusiasm, as cable allows Winfrey a new playground on which to try new ideas and delivery methods. Norman said she wants the net "to be as expansive as possible" in scope and positioning. It's about inspiring and empowering change, she said, not inciting it. This "action ecology" will suffuse the net, including its multi-platform initiatives, which Norman said will be defined by "really connecting people who are moved" by particular stories and issues. Other announced linear shows include "Kid-Napped" (wt), in which kids "kidnap" workaholic parents to promote quality family time; "Miracle Detective" (wt), featuring 2 investigators travelling the globe to address mysterious incidents; "Search" (wt), chronicling 3 persons' search for a lost love; and "Sentenced" (wt), which tracks the personal journeys of incarcerated women. OWN's target audience skews female and younger than 50, said Norman, but the net will use various storytelling methods to "spin topics to many age groups," including kids. Docs are a big focus because they "expose new ideas and new thinking and new talent," she said, and feature films will also help fill the slate. Scripted projects will emerge on the net later, said Norman, but initially OWN will be non-fiction oriented. Also, personalities such as *Suze Orman*, *Lisa Ling* and *Peter Walsh* will figure prominently.

Comcast-NBCU in DC: The day before back-to-back hearings on the Hill about the Comcast-NBCU jv, several groups will outline their problems with the deal in a conference call Wed. **ACA**, **Media Access Project**, **Free Press** and **Wealth TV** will be represented. The groups have complained that the conditions recommended by Comcast and NBCU don't go far enough. -- **C-SPAN 3** will carry the House Communications subcmte hearing on the Comcast-NBCU jv live Thurs, 9:30am. It also will be on www.C-SPAN.org. The Sen Judiciary Antitrust subcmte holds a hear-

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characters welcome. 

Source: The Nielsen Company. #1 Claims: (12/28/08-12/27/09), (12/31/07-12/28/08), (1/1/07-12/30/07), L7, (000), P2+, A18-49, A25-54, M-Su 8P-11P vs. All Ad-Supported Cable. Original Series Claims: (12/28/08-12/27/09), L7, (000), P2+, A18-49, A25-54, vs. All Basic Cable. Premiere trackage averages. Subject to qualifications available upon request.

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ing on the issue later in the day. No word yet if it will be on **C-SPAN**.

Jan Ratings: 2010's initial monthly prime title goes to consistency king **USA** (2.4/2.42mIn), which won by a surprisingly healthy margin when considering it notched just 2 of the month's top 20 telecasts. Runner-up **ESPN** (1.9/1.82mIn) delivered 4 of the top 6, including top dogs the Vikings-Bears MNF matchup (12.1/11.94mIn) and the NFL Pro Bowl (8.2/8.12mIn). And those top USA telecasts? No, they weren't popular originals "Burn Notice" or "White Collar"—which did return in Jan to nice audiences—but airings of "NCIS." **Fox News** (1.9/1.82mIn) took the bronze among nets, with big help from coverage of the pivotal MA Senate race and *President Obama's* State of the Union address. Top 5 stalwart **Disney Channel** (1.8/1.78mIn) was next, followed by **TNT** (1.7/1.64mIn). Completing the telecast top 5 were **Nick at Nite's** "iCarly" (6.9/6.89mIn), a college bowl game (5.6/5.59mIn) on ESPN and Fox News' "Hannity" (5.0/4.87mIn). -- Ep 2 of **Starz's** "Spartacus: Blood and Sand" notched a 2.8 HH rating, up from its 2.1 premiere.

Broadband \$\$\$: The hope was that new **NTIA** and **RUS** broadband stimulus/grant rules would make it easier for small cable operators to apply, but **ACA** said the rules would further advantage certain segments of the telecom industry over small cable ops. The group noted that RUS increased from 5 to 8 the number of points out of 100 automatically awarded to applicants that have borrowed funds under Title II of the Rural Electric Act, which are overwhelmingly traditional phone companies. It also complained that RUS set aside \$100mIn in grants specifically for satellite broadband and targeted at rural unserved areas. The news is especially rough for small ops seeking funding for last mile projects because NTIA said most of its \$2.6bn will go to middle-mile projects. ACA said NTIA and RUS had responded to some of its concerns, including NTIA's elimination of a prohibition on the sale of funded facilities within 10 years and RUS eliminating the definition of "remote" so that more areas could access grants in lieu of loans. The 2 agencies have \$7.2bn in funding to dole out by Sept 30. More than 80 ACA members applied last year for more than \$1.3bn, with only 1 receiving funding thus far.

Dishheads: **DISH** and **DirectTV** are airing attack ads, but unlike years past they are aiming their guns at each other rather than cable. DISH's latest anti-DirectTV ad (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCQQZPz71Rk>) takes a swipe at DirectTV's payment for celebrities, suggesting that's why DISH's prices are lower. "Both companies are making price, and more specifically, price relative to each other, the primary basis of competition. It is hard to view this as a positive development for either one," a **Sanford Bernstein** research note said. Meanwhile, the firm raised DirectTV's price target to \$32 and DISH's to \$18, but maintained its "neutral" stance on the stocks. "DirectTV offers a compelling cash generation and cash return story. But its operating performance appears to be deteriorating, at least to a degree. Its valuation is not compelling, in our view," Bernstein said. "Dish Network offers a less attractive cash return story, and its operating performance—despite some nascent signs of improvement—remains decidedly uneven. It remains modestly overvalued, in our view."

5Qs: Investigation Discovery will announce Wed a deal with **CBS** to bring "60 Minutes" segments to ID in July, making ID the only cable net with 3 broadcast news magazine series: "Dateline on ID" and "48 Hours: Hard Evidence." CFA asked ID's pres/gm Henry Schleiff about his strategy: **What's the thinking behind this acquisition?** You build a brand brick by brick, show by show. What we're saying with 60 Minutes is ID is more than just crime and justice central, we're really investigation central. **But you want to build the ID brand with originals, right?** Absolutely. What I've learned from *Brandon Tartikoff*, maybe the best scheduler ever, is that you take a proven brand or property, play it early in your prime time. That gets sampling, because people know it's something of quality. Then the audience stays for your new, unknown original programming... We've mixed 48 Hours with (ID original "On The Case With) *Paula Zahn*" and last month we had a record each week and each week with a different show. **What acquisitions or originals are coming?** I'd be wary of further acquisitions. We want good, compelling storytelling. An investigation is really a story. [60 Minutes legend] *Don Hewitt* always said 4 words were crucial: 'Tell me a story.' **Care to comment on Martha Stewart-Hallmark deal?** I, for one, can't wait for that first show, 'How to Retile Your Tub with Used Holiday Cards.' That wouldn't violate a non-disparagement clause, would it?

At the Portals: The **FCC** Media Bureau is seeking comment on **TiVo** and **Motorola's** request for a waiver of the IEEE-1394 output requirement. Comments are due Feb 22; replies Mar 4.

In the States: The **Open Mobile Video Coalition** is teaming with **Harris Interactive** and **Rentrak** to study consumer usage habits during its DTV Consumer Showcase in D.C, through which 8 local stations will transmit up to 20 channels of broadcast TV programming to hundreds of mobile devices such as netbooks, WiFi receivers and handsets. Partici-

BUSINESS & FINANCE

pating station affils include NBC, ION Media Nets and Univision.

Research: More than two-thirds of US pay TV subs are willing to switch providers if offered a 20% price discount, according to **Strategy Analytics**, which said cable customers are the most likely to churn while half as many telco/IPTV subs would opt out. Telco/IPTV subs reported 95% overall satisfaction with their service, compared to 78% for satellite and 67% for cable. Irrespective of platform, fewer than 22% of customers felt they're receiving "value for money" that exceeded expectations. -- Despite recent lamentations of heavy pressure on the commercial sector, **AT&T** and **Verizon** are still the top business Ethernet service providers in the US based on retail port installations as of Dec, according to **Vertical Systems Group**. In 4th behind **Time Warner Telecom**, **Cox** is the highest-ranked MSO. **Time Warner Cable** notched 7th, falling 1 spot versus the Jun '09 data as **XO Comm** moved into 6th. Completing the top 9 were **Qwest** (5th), **Cogent** (8th) and **Level 3** (9th). Vertical said cable MSOs and competitive providers took share from incumbents in the 2nd half of '09.

People: **Cablevision** promoted **Charles Schueler** to evp, comm and community relations. -- **IFC** tapped **Dan Pasternack** as vp, dev and prod.

Oops: We misidentified the net behind the show "Web Soup," which is on **G4** and will return for a new season on Mar 3.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	02/02 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	02/02 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS			AMPHENOL:40.57.....0.00		
BROADCASTERS/DBS/.....			AOL:.....	24.65.....	0.72
BRITISH SKY:.....	34.33.....	(0.13)	APPLE:.....	195.86.....	1.13
DIRECTV:.....	31.61.....	0.17	ARRIS GROUP:.....	10.21.....	(0.08)
DISH:.....	18.89.....	(0.12)	AVID TECH:.....	12.90.....	0.22
DISNEY:.....	29.98.....	0.46	BIGBAND:.....	2.97.....	(0.07)
GE:.....	16.85.....	0.60	BLNDER TONGUE:.....	1.07.....	(0.02)
NEWS CORP:.....	15.04.....	0.33	BROADCOM:.....	28.03.....	0.52
MSOS			CISCO:.....	23.02.....	0.29
CABLEVISION:.....	26.86.....	0.48	CLEARWIRE:.....	7.04.....	0.19
COMCAST:.....	16.29.....	0.35	COMMSCOPE:.....	27.52.....	(0.03)
COMCAST SPCL:.....	15.55.....	0.23	CONCURRENT:.....	4.56.....	0.27
GCI:.....	5.59.....	(0.27)	CONVERGYS:.....	11.01.....	0.28
KNOLOGY:.....	11.12.....	0.26	CSG SYSTEMS:.....	19.78.....	0.30
LIBERTY CAPITAL:.....	28.70.....	1.47	ECHOSTAR:.....	19.29.....	0.15
LIBERTY GLOBAL:.....	26.11.....	0.10	GOOGLE:.....	531.12.....	(1.9)
LIBERTY INT:.....	10.78.....	0.21	HARMONIC:.....	6.07.....	0.03
MEDIACOM:.....	4.27.....	(0.05)	INTEL:.....	19.91.....	0.30
RCN:.....	10.03.....	(0.1)	JDSU:.....	8.37.....	0.21
SHAW COMM:.....	19.14.....	0.30	LEVEL 3:.....	1.37.....	(0.04)
TIME WARNER CABLE:.....	44.99.....	0.56	MICROSOFT:.....	28.46.....	0.05
VIRGIN MEDIA:.....	15.08.....	0.04	MOTOROLA:.....	6.55.....	0.22
WASH POST:.....	438.95.....	(1.25)	OPENTV:.....	1.54.....	0.00
PROGRAMMING			PHILIPS:.....	31.17.....	0.27
CBS:.....	13.15.....	(0.14)	RENTRAK:.....	15.85.....	(0.16)
CROWN:.....	1.44.....	(0.06)	SEACHANGE:.....	6.50.....	0.03
DISCOVERY:.....	29.51.....	(0.28)	SONY:.....	35.41.....	1.20
GRUPO TELEVISA:.....	20.24.....	0.61	SPRINT NEXTEL:.....	3.67.....	0.33
HSN:.....	19.57.....	0.30	THOMAS & BETTS:.....	35.63.....	1.19
INTERACTIVE CORP:.....	20.35.....	0.06	TIVO:.....	9.17.....	0.08
LIBERTY:.....	37.06.....	0.65	TOLLGRADE:.....	6.45.....	0.20
LIBERTY STARZ:.....	47.98.....	0.14	UNIVERSAL ELEC:.....	24.07.....	0.15
LIONSGATE:.....	5.11.....	(0.17)	VONAGE:.....	1.56.....	0.12
LODGENET:.....	5.46.....	(0.05)	YAHOO:.....	15.17.....	0.12
NEW FRONTIER:.....	2.05.....	(0.01)	TELCOS		
OUTDOOR:.....	5.06.....	(0.07)	AT&T:.....	25.69.....	0.31
PLAYBOY:.....	3.23.....	0.04	QWEST:.....	4.43.....	0.21
RHI:.....	0.36.....	(0.01)	VERIZON:.....	29.73.....	0.12
SCRIPPS INT:.....	44.24.....	0.61	MARKET INDICES		
TIME WARNER:.....	28.51.....	0.46	DOW:.....	10296.85.....	111.32
VALUEVISION:.....	3.98.....	(0.01)	NASDAQ:.....	2190.06.....	18.86
VIACOM:.....	31.43.....	0.36	TECHNOLOGY		
WWE:.....	16.31.....	0.11	3COM:.....	7.47.....	(0.01)
TECHNOLOGY			ADC:.....	5.59.....	0.13
3COM:.....	7.47.....	(0.01)	ADVANTAGE:.....	2.16.....	0.01
ADC:.....	5.59.....	0.13	ALCATEL LUCENT:.....	3.62.....	0.11
ADVANTAGE:.....	2.16.....	0.01	AMDOCS:.....	29.67.....	0.97
ALCATEL LUCENT:.....	3.62.....	0.11			
AMDOCS:.....	29.67.....	0.97			



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 Marketing of a Special or Documentary/Documentary Series
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