

CableFAX Daily™

Tuesday — March 17, 2009

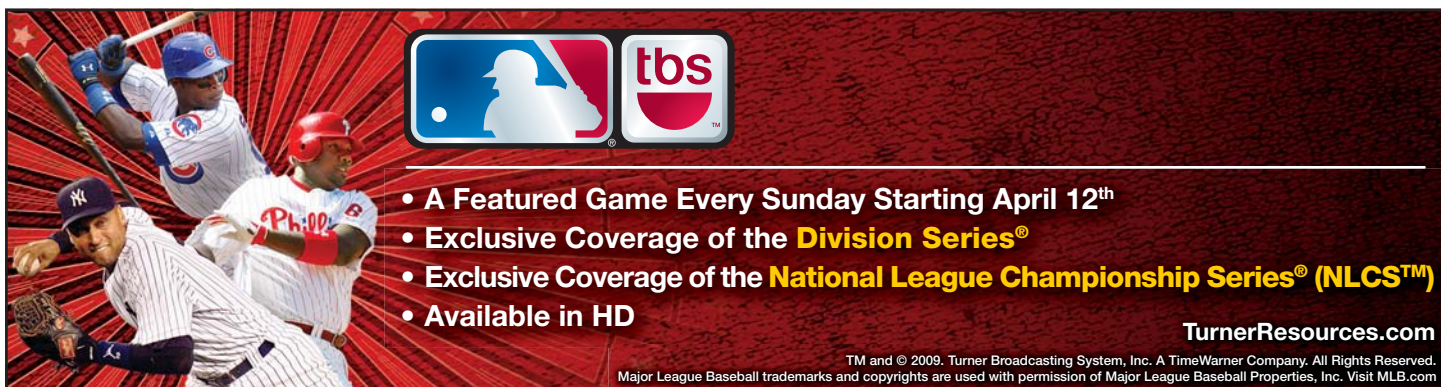
What the Industry Reads First



Volume 20 / No. 049

Semper Fie? Faithful Sci Fi Fans Panic Over Name Change

The good news is **Sci Fi Channel** has one of the most passionate fanbases out there. The bad news is Sci Fi Channel has one of the most passionate fanbases out there. So when the network revealed Mon that it's renaming itself **SyFy** on July 7, the same fans that have mounted petitions over the years against the cancellations of "Stargate SG-1" and "Farscape" had plenty to say. And most of the comments posted on Sci Fi's Website weren't positive, with fans likening the new moniker to the "Syphilis Channel" and fretting that it signals more reality shows and **ECW: Extreme Championship Wrestling** for the net. A couple years ago, a fake press release made its way onto **PR Web**, presumably from fans unhappy with the addition of wrestling to Sci Fi's lineup, claiming that the channel was changing its name to **SurgeTV** and "shifting away from the so-called 'nerd' demographic." **Cfax** caught up with Sci Fi pres **Dave Howe** Mon, fresh off the net's upfront presentation. He sought to assure us that Sci Fi is not dramatically changing direction. "Clearly, they think we're going to do be doing more ECW and stuffing 'Law & Order' on our air. We're not doing that," he said. Instead, the rebrand gives the **NBCU** net the opportunity to have ownership of a brand that it couldn't have with the generic abbreviation of science fiction, he said. That's particularly important in a digital world when it comes to differentiating sci fi content from Sci Fi content as consumers search iTunes, Hulu and other sites. Howe also said the new name broadens the appeal of the channel and opens it up to new viewers. And he dismissed the idea that there is even such a thing as "hard core" sci fi fans, saying that Sci Fi's strongest fans also watch shows like "Lost," "Heroes" and "Ghost Whisperer." "These people are not just interested in 'Star Trek.' That's the dichotomy we often face here," he said. "People just assume that there is this hard core fan base that only wants the more traditional, space age sci fi. It's just not true." Sci Fi has already expanded its viewership. It is coming off its best year ever among 18-49s and 25-54s, and has made huge strides in growing the female audience. But this name change, which came from a brainstorming of 200-300 suggestions, is about building on that success. OK, but "Battlestar Galactica" ends its run on Fri—will there be rioting in the streets? "I think it's a very sad end to an amazing ride, but having said that, I think all us are thrilled and proud of Battlestar Galactica. It totally put us on the map," Howe said. "I think it speaks loudly to our ambition from a programming perspective... We're going to go out with a bang, and we're obviously going to continue with the prequel 'Caprica,' which launches in Jan."

Charter Earnings: Although achieving service rev growth in 4Q across video (+2.1%), HSD (+7.1%), phone (+44.4%), commercial (+15.7%)—and even ad sales (+3.7%)—**Charter** wrote down the value of its franchises by approx \$1.52bln, leading to a net loss of \$1.26bln in the Q compared to net income of \$85mln a year ago. The MSO added approx 43K RGUs in 4Q (approx 651K in '08) while logging the following net sub gains/losses: basic (-75K), digital (+22K), HSD (+23K) and phone (+75K). 4Q ARPU increased 10.2% to just over \$108. Pres/CEO **Neil Smit** cited increased bundle penetration as the key driver of operational gains. Meanwhile, Charter said its **CCH II** subsidiary would not make its Mon



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CableFAX PROGRAM AWARDS

Saluting Cable's Top Shows, People and Entertainment Icons

www.cablefaxprogramawards.com



From the most outstanding cable programs to the best surprise ending, the Annual CableFAX Program Awards honor the best in cable content and people. This unique awards program from the industry's most trusted brand, CableFAX, raises the bar on what's good on and about Cable. Now's your chance to win a CableFAX Program Award and get recognized for bringing value to your viewers.

Are you ready to enter? It's simple to compete, as your content and people speak for themselves. But you have to enter to be considered, so don't let your competitors steal the show. We'll be honoring the winners in September at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York, NY, and in the annual CableFAX Program Awards Issue.

We look forward to seeing your entry and saluting cable's top shows and people of the year.

Categories:

Platinum/People Categories:

- Best Actor in Cable
- Best Actress in Cable
- Best Cable Program
- Best New Cable Program
- Best Producer
- Best Writer
- Best Director
- Hall of Fame: Open to actors, writers, directors and producers for a body of work

By Genre: Best Show or Series In The Following Genre

- Animals/Nature
- Animated
- Children's
- Comedy
- Documentary
- Drama
- Education/Instructional
- Family Friendly
- Fitness/Health
- Food

- Music
- News
- Public Affairs
- Reality/Game Show
- Sci Fi
- Sports
- Talk Shows
- Best Regional Program
- Other: enter your best in a genre not mentioned above

By Genre: Best Actor/Actress/ Host In The Following Genres

- Animals/Nature
- Animated
- Children's
- Comedy
- Documentary
- Drama
- Education/Instructional
- Family Friendly
- Fitness/Health
- Food

- Music
- News
- Public Affairs
- Reality/Game Show
- Sci Fi
- Sports
- Talk Shows
- Best Regional Program
- Other: enter your best in a genre not mentioned above

Special Categories:

- Best Opening Sequence
- Best Surprise Ending
- Most Unrealistic Scene That Was Most Entertaining

Tech Categories:

- Best Use of HD Technology
- Best Online/Mobile Extras for a Linear Show
- Best Online-Only/Mobile-Only Show
- Best Video on Demand Program/Special

Timeline:

Entry Deadline: May 1, 2009

Late Entry Deadline: May 8, 2009

Luncheon: September 16, 2009

Location: Grand Hyatt New York, NY

www.cablefaxprogramawards.com

For questions or additional information, please contact awards coordinator
Mary Lou French at (301) 354-1851, mfrench@accessintel.com

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scheduled interest payment on certain outstanding sr notes, and that its voluntary Chapter 11 filing, slated for on or before Apr 1, will occur before the payment-related 30-day grace period expires. Under the bankruptcy agreement-in-principle, Charter can pay trade creditors in full while continuing operations with cash on hand and cash flows from operating activities. No word on the cancellation date of the MSO's common shares, holders of which will receive no remuneration.

Go Phish? A Comcast user alerted the MSO Mon to a list of what appeared to be about 8K Comcast.net user IDs and passwords posted on document sharing site **Scribd**. After analysis of the document, which has been removed from the site, Comcast identified only about 700 real accounts. "The list was likely generated as the result of a phishing scam or some kind of malware that affected customer computers. We have no reason to believe that any Comcast systems have been compromised," a spokeswoman said. Comcast froze accounts of any customer on the list and is contacting them about the situation and educating them on prevention, such as downloading free security software through Comcast.

Upfronts: Univision nixed its formal NY upfront presentation for regional "Partnership Forums" next month in NYC, L.A., Chicago, Miami and Dallas. It says the forums let it to go directly to its customers to reach as many marketers as possible. "In this financially challenging environment, the Hispanic consumer may be the only bright spot poised to deliver growth marketers can count on today," said *David Lawenda*, pres of advertising sales and marketing.

Stewart vs CNBC: After *Jon Stewart's* week-long deluge on **CNBC**, a petition has started at <http://fixcnbc.com>, asking the financial net to hire some new economic voices to hold Wall St accountable. It's from the **Progressive Change Campaign Cmte PAC**. Listed as signers are *The Nation* Washington editor *Christopher Hayes* and Columbia Univ journalism prof *Todd Gitlin*. Meanwhile, Thurs' showdown between "Daily Show" host Stewart and **CNBC's Jim Cramer** was Comedy Central's 2nd highest rated program of the year, drawing 2.3mln total viewers. It also goes down as one of the top 10 most-watched eps in show history.

Competition: Erstwhile **ESPN** anchor *Dan Patrick* will host a TV show exclusive to **DirectTV**. The series—based on but slated to expand on the format of Patrick's weekday radio program—premieres this summer on The 101 and air Mon-Fri (9am-noon ET). The deal calls for 250 shows/yr. -- **Gray TV** said it completed in 4Q agreements in principle or long-form retrans pacts with nearly all cable ops in its footprint, deals it expects will yield \$15-\$16mln in rev this year vs \$3mln in '08.

In the States: In Philly at the base of the **Comcast Center**, **Sony** and **Comcast** will open Tuesday **Sony Style Comcast Labs**, a retail store showcasing both company's products plus a preview of future offerings from the MSO. Included is a live demo of Web surfing and downloading functions using 100Mbps. -- Now serving more than 1mln HSD customers in its 16-state footprint, **Windstream** said it added approx 21K new HSD subs this Q after signing up 16K new subs in 4Q.

VOD: **Comcast** is jumping on the "Twilight" band wagon, making the popular vampire romance available on VOD at 12:01 Mar 21—the same day it hits DVD. -- We all know **Comcast's** intent on helping businesses save money by offering its commercial services, but the MSO's also set to "help" American employees by sponsoring a Boss Button within **CBSSports.com's March Madness On Demand** that instantly conceals game streams with a faux spreadsheet. On close inspection the spreadsheet features tourney records and touts the MSO's related VOD offerings.

Carriage: **RCN** added **TV Japan** and **Munwha Broadcasting Corp** to its **Global Passport** program tier, now inclusive of more than 495 intl channels. -- **ION TV HD** debuts this week on **SES Americom's** HD-Prime delivery platform. **ION Life**

CORPORATE LICENCES

CableFAX Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST.

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

and **qubo** will launch later this year.

People: Outdoor Channel appointed *Douglas Langston* as its chief accounting officer. He previously served as controller. -- **Lifetime Nets** appointed **Danielle Carrig** svp, advocacy and public affairs and *Amanda Crumley* vp, advocacy and public affairs. -- *Harold Feld* of **Media Access Project** is joining **Public Knowledge** as legal dir, serving as lead attorney in issues before the **FCC** and courts.

On the Circuit: **CTAM** announced **Time Warner Cable** evp *Joan Gillman* and **Nat Geo** evp/gm *Steve Schiffman* as co-chairs of **CTAM Summit '09** (Oct 25-27). **Time Warner Cable** pres/CEO *Glenn Britt* and **Fox Networks Group** chmn/CEO *Tony Vinciguerra* will serve as honorary co-chairs. -- **NCTA's The Cable Show** (Apr 1-3) will include "Broadband Nation," an interactive exhibit focused on cable's innovative broadband infrastructure. The 20K sq ft centerpiece will feature tech from 35 companies and showcase broadband uses in urban, suburban and rural settings. Included in the exhibit are a retail/coffee shop, a rural school and suburban home.

Business/Finance: Internet-enabled HDTV platform developer **Any-Source Media** has secured \$3.2mln in additional funding from **Next-Stage Capital**, **Murex Investments** and who the company describes as individual investors from the cable TV and VOD industries.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	03/16 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	03/16 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS			AMDOCS:	16.97	(0.35)
BRITISH SKY:	25.82	0.62	AMPHENOL:	26.76	(0.11)
DIRECTV:	20.86	(0.14)	APPLE:	95.42	(0.51)
DISH:	10.42	(0.46)	ARRIS GROUP:	7.04	(0.08)
DISNEY:	17.21	0.08	AVID TECH:	9.58	(0.07)
GE:	9.66	0.04	BIGBAND:	5.72	0.54
HEARST-ARGYLE:	2.02	0.11	BLNDER TONGUE:	0.98	0.00
NEWS CORP:	6.80	0.03	BROADCOM:	18.33	(0.78)
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	12.06	(0.74)	CISCO:	15.45	(0.06)
CHARTER:	0.02	0.00	CLEARWIRE:	4.03	0.44
COMCAST:	12.57	(0.46)	COMMSCOPE:	8.25	(0.23)
COMCAST SPCL:	11.79	(0.46)	CONCURRENT:	3.30	0.00
GCI:	5.15	(0.13)	CONVERGYS:	6.55	(0.15)
KNOLOGY:	4.02	(0.05)	CSG SYSTEMS:	12.61	(0.38)
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	5.26	0.09	ECHOSTAR:	14.91	(0.03)
LIBERTY ENT:	17.19	(0.33)	GOOGLE:	319.69	(4.73)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	10.91	(0.38)	HARMONIC:	5.48	(0.23)
LIBERTY INT:	2.81	(0.21)	INTEL:	14.25	(0.45)
MEDIACOM:	4.15	(0.11)	JDSU:	2.90	(0.01)
SHAW COMM:	14.92	0.22	LEVEL 3:	0.66	0.04
TIME WARNER CABLE:	25.90	0.38	MICROSOFT:	16.25	(0.4)
VIRGIN MEDIA:	4.93	(0.07)	MOTOROLA:	3.65	(0.1)
WASH POST:	349.00	4.66	OPENTV:	1.40	0.06
PROGRAMMING					
CBS:	3.83	(0.05)	PHILIPS:	16.02	0.00
CROWN:	1.82	0.05	RENTRAK:	9.00	0.00
DISCOVERY:	16.66	(0.26)	SEACHANGE:	5.45	(0.14)
EW SCRIPPS:	1.43	0.07	SONY:	19.49	0.11
GRUPO TELEVISA:	12.98	0.00	SPRINT NEXTEL:	3.57	(0.57)
HSN:	4.64	(0.21)	THOMAS & BETTS:	22.95	(0.05)
INTERACTIVE CORP:	14.48	(0.11)	TIVO:	6.33	(0.36)
LIBERTY:	20.16	(0.16)	TOLLGRADE:	5.80	0.17
LODGENET:	0.75	0.03	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	16.12	(0.79)
NEW FRONTIER:	1.27	0.01	VONAGE:	0.40	0.01
OUTDOOR:	6.13	0.02	YAHOO:	13.22	(0.29)
PLAYBOY:	1.53	0.04	TELCOS		
RHI:	1.52	(0.08)	AT&T:	24.36	0.09
SCRIPPS INT:	20.66	(0.13)	QWEST:	3.37	(0.02)
TIME WARNER:	8.15	(0.07)	VERIZON:	28.55	0.15
VALUEVISION:	0.38	0.03	MARKET INDICES		
VIACOM:	16.48	(0.11)	DOW:	7216.97	(7.01)
WWE:	10.38	0.06	NASDAQ:	1404.02	(27.48)
TECHNOLOGY					
3COM:	2.43	(0.22)			
ADC:	3.57	0.00			
ADVANTAGE:	1.39	0.02			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	1.57	0.01			

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Robert Greenblatt
President
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EYE ON DIGITAL

Is There a Flight to Quality in Online Video?

While much of the content at **Hulu** (the **NBCU/News Corp** joint venture) is repurposed network programming, its meteoric rise could be good news for all professionally produced video online.

In the newly released **Nielsen Online** metrics for Feb, Hulu vaulted five slots to the number two position in raw numbers of videos streamed. Hulu features full-episode content from **NBC**, **Fox** and cable properties as well as scores of partners.

While "Saturday Night Live" clips and "Family Guy" episodes typically top the most-popular charts at Hulu.com, **Comedy Central** standbys "The Daily Show" and "The Colbert Report" as well as **USA's** "Burn Notice" and "Psych," and **Sci Fi's** "Battlestar Galactica" are top performers from the cable side.

AdAge reports that Hulu has over 130 deals with TV networks and studios and that the portable player has been embedded over 4mln times on 100K Web sites. Just a few years ago, user generated video dominated the online video landscape, but the penetration of major TV brands into the charts in just the last year or so is a testament to the power of professionally produced media and the growing appeal for longer form entertainment online.

In various **comScore** reports in recent month, average time-spent for Hulu visitors ranged from 79 min in Jan to 119 minutes in Nov.

Nielsen's public metrics for the month of February do not offer time-spent breakdowns for individual brands, but it shows a February total time spent per viewer on video as 169.3 min, down from 178.6 in Jan. All of the Feb metrics for video are lower than Jan, according to Nielsen, but that is as much a function of a shorter month than of a noteworthy trend.

Top Online Brands by Video Streams for Feb 2009 (U.S.)

Brand	Total Streams (000)	Uniques (000)
YouTube	5,158,727	88,136
Hulu	308,806	9,473
Yahoo!	250,425	24,085
Nick Kids/Family	209,465	6,039
Fox Interactive	194,255	14,376
ABC.com	187,128	6,716
MSN	162,900	12,198
Turner	125,067	5,961
MTV	100,076	4,410
CNN Digital	99,846	8,377

Source: Nielsen VideoCensus



The power of the cable brands is evident in the Nielsen rankings, with **Nickelodeon**, **Turner**, **MTV** and **CNN** all charting well in terms of videos served. This puts branded, professionally produced media ahead of familiar Web endemic brands like **DailyMotion** and **Metacafe**.

But also absent so far from the Nielsen chart are other contenders: **Joost**, **CBS-owned TV.com**, **Veoh**, and **Comcast-owned Fancast**. Both TV.com and Fancast embed Hulu video to expand their own offerings. A key hurdle going forward will be differentiation and market share among the aggregators. Increasingly, aggregators use much the same content from the same TV and Web video sources. But no one site seems to "own" the customer. If a viewer on TV.com accesses a Hulu video, Hulu can serve the ad and claim the traffic, but it is not accessing critical data around that user (demographics, viewing habits, etc). Advertisers need that to serve more targeted advertising with higher CPM rates. If no one video portal can distinguish itself in this eco-system, then no one brand can amass the scale of audience and data it needs to underwrite the model. Ultimately, the battle over Web video is not just about streams served but also about who owns the customer and who collects and makes the best use of the data.

(Steve Smith is a lapsed academic turned media critic and consultant. He is the Digital Media Editor for Min, conference programmer for Mediapost, and longtime columnist for eContent Magazine).

CableFAX Awards Luncheon

March 30, 2009
Washington, DC

CableFAX Awards Luncheon

Celebrating: The Faxies Finalists, Women on the Move, and CableFAX's 20th

Don't miss this year's Awards Luncheon where we honor top marketing and PR in cable. Plus we'll celebrate Women on the Move and CableFAX's 20th. A can't miss event!

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