

CableFAX Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Plan Probing: Spectrum, Title II Topics du Jour on the Hill

Not surprisingly, Republicans expressed the most concern over the FCC's National Broadband Plan at Thurs' **House Communications** subcmte hearing, but Dems had some questions too—particularly Rep *John Dingell* (D-MI). He pressed FCC chmn *Julius Genachowski* on whether voluntary spectrum reclamation efforts aimed at broadcasters would in fact be voluntary. The chmn assured him—as well as subcmte chmn *Rick Boucher* (D-VA), Rep *Fred Upton* (R-MI) and Rep *Anna Eshoo* (D-CA)—that they would indeed be voluntary. But he didn't offer Dingell any details on what the Commission would do if the plan's voluntary calls for channel sharing didn't net the needed 120Mhz. "I'd be speculating," Genachowski said. As Congress ultimately must sign off on the plan, it could push to better define what happens to broadcasters and their spectrum. Republicans, while praising the work that went into the plan, expressed concerns over market intervention, net neutrality and Title II reclassification for broadband. "Reclassification is nothing more than a stepping stone for implementing net neutrality, which I believe would be detrimental," said Rep *Marsha Blackburn* (R-TN). Others were wary of the plan's potential for more regulation. "Just the fact that it exists has put a shiver in the investment community," said Rep *Mike Rogers* (R-MI). Rep *Joe Barton* (R-TX) reiterated that 95% of Americans have broadband access without costing the govt a dime. The FCC spent \$20mln on the plan, including \$4mln on temp workers. Most of that money came from stimulus funds, and the remaining \$7mln came from the FCC's budget. The Commission's plan got a strong endorsement from **House Commerce** chair *Henry Waxman* (D-CA), who said the FCC "should take the steps it deems necessary to ensure that broadband consumers are protected." The fun continues Apr 14, the new date for Sen Commerce's review of the plan.

Retrans: **DirecTV**, one of the 14 petitioning the FCC to change the retrans consent process, is embroiled in negotiations with **Citadel** over Citadel-owned **ABC** stations in Lincoln, NE, and Des Moines, IA, and a **CBS** station in Davenport, IA. Its contract with the broadcaster expires Mar 31. *SkyReport* says DirecTV will continue to provide the stations unless Citadel demands they be pulled. "If the stations come down after the deadline, make no mistake, it will be solely and completely the station owner's decision to take the channels away from our customers," DirecTV said. Citadel told viewers that it appeared unlikely a new deal would be reached by Wed's deadline and that viewers could lose the channels on DirecTV. "We

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have sought to retain terms and carriage conditions commonly found in similar agreements successfully negotiated and currently in place with dozens of other cable and satellite providers,” said a message on Des Moines’ WOI Website.

Broadband \$: ACA is asking RUS administrator *Jonathan Adelstein* to not give broadband stimulus money to projects that overlap existing broadband service from rural providers. NCTA already expressed similar concerns, pointing to \$101mln RUS BIP funding for a **Rural Telephone** project that includes well-connected Hays, KS (*Cfax*, 3/4). ACA’s letter Thurs mentioned the KS grant-loan combo in **Eagle Comm**’s backyard, but also informed the agency of a \$33.2mln award to **LBH** to deploy broadband in and around Vinton/Moss Bluff, LA—an area already served by **James Cable**. Adelstein has said projects can offer service in areas with existing broadband offerings as long as at least 75% of the geographical area in the proposed project is unserved/underserved (*Cfax*, 3/11). But with 2nd round apps due last week, cable hopes it can sway the agency. ACA’s *Matt Polka* suggested RUS add a formal review process for any aggrieved party to submit additional evidence of broadband service. The group also wants RUS to review and modify proposals of Round 1 awardees to ensure that no funding will be used to overbuild existing providers.

3DTV: The reviews were generally positive for Wed night’s 3D Rangers-Islanders game on **Cablevision** via **MSG**—the 1st such in-home 3D display of a live sporting event over cable. *Sports Business Journal*’s *Eric Fisher* said the feed appeared noticeably crisper and more polished than other recent 3D productions of sports, but said producers at time struggled with finding the right mix of camera angles. **CNBC**’s *Tom Rotunno* offered a similar view, adding that the overall 3D effect is enhanced at slower speeds, so the speed of the players often reduced the effect. Six cameras, including a robocam were used in the production. How many folks actually saw the 3D version of the game remains a mystery.

Vanguards: **NBCU Cable** and **Universal Cable** pres *Bonnie Hammer* and **Cablevision** pres/CEO *Jim Dolan* are the recipients of this year’s Vanguard Award for Distinguished Leadership. They’ll be recognized with 7 other Vanguard winners at the **Cable Show**, May 13, L.A. Other Vanguard recipients: **Time Warner Cable**’s *Peter Stern* (Young Leadership), **Rainbow**’s *Josh Sapan* (Programmers), **Charter**’s *Marwan Fawaz* (Science & Technology), **Comcast**’s *Cathy Avgiris* (Cable Operations Mgmt), **Cox**’s *Sandy Wilson* (Govt & Community Relations), **AETN**’s *David Zagin* (Marketing) and **Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo**’s *Howard Symons* (Associates & Affils).

Programming: **TV Guide Network** continues to pick up critically acclaimed series, with “Weeds” set to make its basic cable debut on the channel in Sept. The show, acquired through **Lionsgate**’s **Debmar-Mercury** subsidiary, is the 3rd major scripted series picked up by the net in the past 9 months. -- Fresh off record season 2 premieres, “Nurse Jackie” and “United States of Tara” were renewed by **Showtime** for 3rd seasons. -- **HBO** renewed “The Ricky Gervais Show” for a sophomore season slated to debut next year. -- Watch out! *Johnny Weir* is contributing to **Universal Sports**’ World Figure Skating Championships telecast, Fri and Sat. -- **Nick** will honor First Lady *Michelle Obama* with the Big Help Award during the Kids’ Choice Awards, Sat. She’s being honored for her campaign to end childhood obesity. -- It’s official. **Discovery Comm** acquired 8-hr doc series “Sarah Palin’s Alaska” (wt). The series, exec produced by *Mark Burnett*, will premiere on **TLC**. It’s described as Palin telling the story of Alaska and reveling in its powerful beauty.

On the Circuit: **FCC** chmn *Julius Genachowski* will make his 1st **Cable Show** appearance May 13 at the 9am general session. -- **CTAM West**’s Leadership Summit is slated for Apr 1 at Casa Del Mar in Santa Monica (dinner and a panel

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following 7-9pm; cocktails start at 6pm). **Cox** COO *Leo Brennan*, **Sony Pictures** svp *Spencer Stevens* and **Zillion TV** exec chmn *Mitchell Berman* will appear on a panel moderated by PR man *Bob Gold*. Details at CTAMWest.com. -- **ACA's** 17th Annual Summit will include **FCC** Broadband Plan chief *Blain Levin*, **NCTA's** *Kyle McSarrow*, **MSTV's** *David Donovan*, *Sherrese Smith*, media legal adviser to FCC chmn *Julius Genachowski* and *Roger Sherman*, chief majority counsel, **House Communications** subcommittee (Apr 20, National Harbor, MD).

People: *Kyle Chowning* was named vp, marketing and comm for **Inspiration Nets'** new socially-conscious net **Halogen**. -- **Alliance for Women in Media** (formerly American Women in Radio and TV) named branding expert and women's advocate *Cary Broussard* as its new pres, effective Apr 5.

Business/Finance: **Discovery** CEO *David Zaslav's* '09 compensation jumped to about \$11.7mln from \$7.9mln in '08, stated the most recent proxy. No bonus, and his base salary stayed at \$2mln. But he reaped \$3.9mln in his non-equity incentive plan after receiving none in '08. He also received \$5.5mln in option awards, up from \$2.1mln a year ago. -- **NBCU** got the \$9.85bln in financing needed for its \$30bln proposed jv with **Comcast**, according to an SEC filing. Included is a 3-year credit agreement (\$3bln), a 364-day bridge loan (\$6.1bln) and a \$750mln revolving facility.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	03/25 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	03/25 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
BRITISH SKY:	35.33	0.36	AMPHENOL:	41.95	(0.03)
DIRECTV:	33.38	(0.41)	AOL:	25.66	(0.28)
DISH:	20.44	(0.23)	APPLE:	226.65	(2.72)
DISNEY:	35.09	0.70	ARRIS GROUP:	12.16	(0.35)
GE:	18.30	(0.15)	AVID TECH:	13.94	(0.1)
NEWS CORP:	17.04	0.21	BIGBAND:	3.35	0.07
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	23.67	(0.1)	BLNDER TONGUE:	1.05	(0.07)
COMCAST:	18.44	0.26	BROADCOM:	33.55	0.02
COMCAST SPCL:	17.64	0.23	CISCO:	26.43	(0.02)
GCI:	5.64	(0.09)	CLEARWIRE:	7.40	(0.34)
KNOLGY:	13.52	(0.09)	COMMSCOPE:	28.03	(0.37)
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	36.01	0.09	CONCURRENT:	5.35	(0.03)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	28.40	(0.41)	CONVERGYS:	12.60	(0.26)
LIBERTY INT:	15.07	0.32	CSG SYSTEMS:	21.27	(0.12)
MEDIACOM:	6.12	0.12	ECHOSTAR:	19.67	(0.01)
RCN:	15.22	0.00	GOOGLE:	562.88	5.55
SHAW COMM:	19.63	0.09	HARMONIC:	6.43	0.00
TIME WARNER CABLE:	51.07	0.97	INTEL:	22.35	(0.08)
VIRGIN MEDIA:	16.54	(0.35)	JDSU:	11.58	0.39
WASH POST:	445.60	1.42	LEVEL 3:	1.60	(0.07)
PROGRAMMING					
CBS:	13.87	(0.37)	MICROSOFT:	30.01	0.36
CROWN:	1.97	0.01	MOTOROLA:	7.24	(0.01)
DISCOVERY:	33.40	(0.06)	OPENTV:	1.54	0.00
GRUPO TELEVISA:	20.63	0.01	PHILIPS:	33.11	0.37
HSN:	29.95	0.14	RENTRAK:	20.70	(0.19)
INTERACTIVE CORP:	23.29	(0.41)	SEACHANGE:	7.37	(0.06)
LIBERTY:	37.10	(0.15)	SONY:	37.66	(1.04)
LIBERTY STARZ:	52.42	(0.22)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	3.77	(0.17)
LIONSGATE:	6.30	0.05	THOMAS & BETTS:	38.07	(0.08)
LODGENET:	7.04	(0.06)	TIVO:	16.24	(0.35)
NEW FRONTIER:	1.87	0.00	TOLLGRADE:	6.45	(0.31)
OUTDOOR:	6.50	(0.08)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	22.94	(0.11)
PLAYBOY:	3.72	(0.04)	VONAGE:	1.30	(0.04)
RHI:	0.29	(0.01)	YAHOO:	16.32	0.23
SCRIPPS INT:	43.49	0.23	TELCOS		
TIME WARNER:	31.23	(0.02)	AT&T:	26.15	(0.11)
VALUEVISION:	3.47	0.00	QWEST:	5.24	(0.05)
VIACOM:	35.44	0.53	VERIZON:	30.31	(0.15)
WWE:	17.56	0.17	MARKET INDICES		
TECHNOLOGY					
3COM:	7.62	(0.03)	DOW:	10841.21	5.06
ADC:	7.33	0.01	NASDAQ:	2397.41	(1.35)
ADVANTAGE:	2.19	0.00			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	3.19	0.03			
AMDOCS:	30.62	0.17			

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PROGRAMMER'S PAGE with Chad Heiges and Seth Arenstein

All Cable Sports is Local

Tip O'Neill is credited with saying all politics is local. The corollary: all cable is too. Evidence is **Comcast** Houston, competing with **AT&T** in sports-happy Texas. Comcast's VOD channel 1 there features 200 (soon to be 400) short-form pieces about the area's high school (HS) athletes and teams. And these regularly re-freshed pieces are not only about top athletes playing the most popular sport (in TX, that's football). The content covers a slew of schools and sports, including cross-country, women's volleyball and, of course, football. "Many operators show a game of the week in football or basketball and that's great," says **CBS College Sports'** evp *Bob Rose*. "But we wanted a long tail concept made up of many, many pieces." The connection to CBS College Sports is that it acquired **MaxPreps**, a leading HS sports site, in Apr '07. Soon after, Rose, one of cable's best thinkers, and his team wondered about bringing MaxPreps' prowess to cable video. The idea of VOD coverage of 85% of HSs in a cable op's territory tantalized Rose, who explained its appeal to MaxPreps' chief *Andy Beal*. They met with Comcast Houston's dir of product marketing *Anne Stith*, who quickly liked it. With **Clearleap** as the VOD enabler, filming began in Sept '09. Stith acknowledges the PR and competitive benefits (AT&T customers call Stith seeking copies of that piece about my kid's soccer team, 'Well, sure, if you were a Comcast sub...' the answer goes). Yet she seems impressed most by the quality content MaxPreps produces. "It's superior to what I thought it would be... there are camera angles, edits, announcers," she says. Without aggressive marketing, 7% of enabled HHS watched last week. "For regional VOD, that's phenomenal," she says. Other Comcast regions have visited to see for themselves, and Rose says another major market has signed; announcement expected soon. Of course, how this strengthens relations between local ops and CBS CS is phenomenal, too. SA

Worth a Look: "Chandon Pictures," premiere, Fri, 9p ET, **IFC**. Dry, dry Aussie humor about a hapless filmmaker. -- "Amish Grace," Sun, 8p ET, **Lifetime Movie Net**. Kleenex alert, but watch this one for the extraordinary, true story of an Amish community and how it handled the murder of 5 Amish schoolgirls. -- "Kirstie Alley's Big Life," Sun, 10p, **A&E**. Kirstie trying to lose weight. Again. But we think many will identify with her struggle. SA

Notable: What a weekend for PPV. Sat at 10p ET there are two UFC world titles at stake (\$44.99 is **Comcast's** price) and Sun at 7pET **WWE's** "Wrestlemania XXVI" features what might be *Vince McMahon's* last bout (\$54.99). -- And there's mud wrestling on, get ready, **Discovery**. On Sun at 8pm, the excellent nature doc "Life" continues with Mammals, including a great segment on humpback whales mating. "It's all about sex," Oprah coos. We don't see humpbacks, er, in the act (nobody has) and we promise it's family friendly. A fascinating segment on Fish at 9 features the mud wrestling, meerkats, anchovies, plus skin care and makeover tips (honest). SA

Basic Cable Rankings			
(3/15/10-3/21/10)			
Mon-Sun Prime			
1	USA	2.3	2243
2	FOXN	2.1	2054
3	DSNY	1.8	1752
4	TNT	1.6	1558
5	NAN	1.4	1428
6	TBSC	1.2	1251
6	HIST	1.2	1201
6	FAM	1.2	1150
9	DISC	1.1	1144
9	A&E	1.1	1077
11	TOON	1	1033
11	HGTV	1	979
11	TRU	1	887
14	FOOD	0.9	912
14	FX	0.9	870
16	CMDY	0.8	821
16	LIFE	0.8	808
16	TLC	0.8	785
16	SYFY	0.8	772
16	ESPN	0.8	764
16	HALL	0.8	701
16	LMN	0.8	593
16	NKJR	0.8	548
24	CNN	0.7	694
24	AMC	0.7	693
24	SPK	0.7	650
24	MSNB	0.7	641
24	BET	0.7	606
29	TVLD	0.6	620
29	MTV	0.6	591
29	BRAV	0.6	535
29	OXYG	0.6	437
29	NGC	0.6	388
34	EN	0.5	469
34	APL	0.5	458
34	ID	0.5	284
37	HLN	0.4	436
37	VH1	0.4	436
37	ESP2	0.4	426
37	TRAV	0.4	377
37	CMT	0.4	337
37	WGNA	0.4	321
43	SOAP	0.3	262
43	GSN	0.3	247
43	TNNK	0.3	228
43	WE	0.3	212

*Nielsen data supplied by ABC/Disney



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