

# CableFAX Daily™

Friday — April 1, 2011

What the Industry Reads First

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## Called Strike? DISH and DirecTV Talking Carriage With NY RSNs

NY area DBS subs may head into the 1st weekend of the **MLB** season without access to either the **Mets** or **Yankees**. As **SNY** and **DISH** are negotiating for a renewal of a carriage deal that expires midnight Thurs, **YES** and **DirecTV** are doing the same while facing a Fri deadline. **YES**, which has never been distributed by **DISH**, has run an on-air spot alerting customers to a potential blackout on **DirecTV**, addresses the situation on its Website and has had its on-air talent mention the matter as well. "We are negotiating in good faith with **DirecTV** in hopes of resolving this matter quickly," said a **YES** spokesperson. "It's nothing more than gamesmanship to try and gain leverage in the talks," said **DirecTV** of the net's messaging. "Obviously their goal is to get our customers to pay as much as possible for their network. This will get resolved if they agree that **DirecTV** should pay the same amount as the other three dominant pay TV providers in the market." **DirecTV** stressed that it plans to keep **YES** on its lineup during negotiations and said to blame the net if darkness occurs, statements about which the net had no comment. **Mum** was also the word from **DISH** and **SNY** concerning their own talks, and from both **YES** and **MSG** about any ongoing negotiations with **DISH**. **MSG** and **MSG Plus** have been dark on **DISH** since Oct 1, illustrating the DBS op's hardline stance against escalating programming costs in general (remember the protracted **Fox** impasse?) and seemingly sports costs in particular. **DISH** declined comment on its programming plays. "My guess is that **Dish** views RSNs as an expense," said **LHB Sports, Ent & Media** pres/CEO *Lee Berke*. "Most other services may argue over the price, but view RSNs as investments that attract and retain subscribers." During a Feb earnings call, **DISH** evp *Tom Cullen* defended the company's dealings with **Fox** last fall even if the impasse, which included 19 RSNs, led to poor 4Q sub performance. *Cullen* said long-term pricing visibility was importantly achieved. Despite this stated goal, a source said "DISH is simply unpredictable. Our affiliate sales folks long ago gave up trying to discern strategic reasons behind their decisions." **DirecTV** evp, content strategy *Derek Chang*, meanwhile, hinted at a little DBS solidarity in Dec. While talking about **DirecTV**'s refusal to carry **Comcast SportsNet NW** because of cost, same as with **DISH**, *Chang* saluted **DISH**'s strong stance against RSNs, saying there are some "pretty smart folks over there." So, will Big Apple baseball fall not far from the DBS tree? Stay tuned.

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**iPaddling:** Time Warner Cable is reversing course on its iPad app, taking down programmers who have voiced objections to the service. “We believe we have every right to carry the programming on our iPad app. But, for the time being, we have decided to focus our iPad efforts on those enlightened programmers who understand the benefit and importance of allowing our subscribers—and their viewers—to watch their programming on any screen in their homes,” read the MSO’s statement. TWC said it will pursue all legal rights. 12 channels, all from **Viacom, Fox** and **Discovery**, were removed from the initial lineup. They include **MTV, FX** and **TLC**. The MSO has received complaints from **Viacom, Fox** and **Discovery**. While Scripps has said it has not granted TWC video streaming rights, none of its channels were removed. A TWC rep said new channels would be added to the service. It sounds far from over, with TWC saying it will “continue to fight to ensure that our customers have access to the content they pay for, no matter which screen in their home they choose to view it on.” **CVC App Ready:** Cablevision says the only thing that’s keeping it from rolling out its iPad app for streaming inside the home is approval from **Apple**. It’s not commenting on whether programmers have reached out to it with concerns over the app, but we’ll go out on a limb and say they probably have. “We have launched our Optimum App for iPad on Cablevision’s campus and in approximately 100 employee homes and it works wonderfully,” a CVC spokesman said. “The application has been submitted to Apple and, upon its approval, will be available to our cable television customers.” Apple did not return calls seeking comment. Cablevision’s app would fully replicate a subs video service, featuring all channels and VOD. -- Given the uproar over this, we had to chuckle at TWC’s ex parte on a recent **FCC** meeting with Media Bureau chief *William Lake* on the “AllVid” proposal. “We explained TWC’s strong interest in ensuring that its subscribers can access video programming on any device, including not only televisions but PCs, tablets, and smart phones,” the MSO said. We bet they do have a strong interest! AllVid is the FCC’s proposal for an open set-top model that would replace the CableCARD system and is intended to enable more set-top competition at retail. -- Everyone involved here is an **NCTA** member company. So, welcome *Michael Powell*! You’ll have plenty to keep you busy when you take over the assoc Apr 25. Thurs marked *Kyle McStarrow*’s last day as NCTA pres/CEO.

**In the States:** Cablevision launches Optimum Link (formerly PC-to-TV Relay) on Fri, charging \$4.95/mo to video and broadband subs who want the service to stream content from their computers to their TVs. -- **Google** will build its 1Gbps broadband network in Kansas City, and pending approval from the city’s Board of Commissioners, plans to offer service beginning in ’12. Google chose Kansas City from 1,100 interested cities and said it will talk to other locales over the coming months about possibly expanding the network. -- **Cox** extended until Apr 10 its free calling program to Japan.

**Rooting Interest:** DirecTV’s rebrand of **FSN NW, FSN Pittsburgh** and **FSN Rocky Mountain** as **ROOT Sports** will take effect Fri when the brand makes its on-air debut with the **MLB** season openers of the **Mariners, Pirates** and **Rockies**. All existing team partnerships and programming will remain intact as will the distribution deals with cable and satellite ops. The new name “reinforces that these networks are grounded in their respective communities and through local sports and local fans, have something to collectively know, embrace and celebrate,” said DirecTV Sports Nets vp, marketing *Geoff Walker*.

**At the Portals:** How many CableCARD-enabled set-tops have the 10 largest incumbent cable ops deployed since the integration ban went into effect nearly 4 years ago? A whopping 27mln. The industry will tout that number as evidence the ban has outlived its usefulness. By contrast, the 5 largest MSOs—**Cablevision, Charter, Comcast, Cox** and **Time Warner Cable**—have deployed more than 536K CableCARDS for use in retail CableCARD-enabled devices.

**Mobile:** IAC intro’d **Hatch Labs**, a tech innovation sandbox devoted to improving mobility for consumers. Multiple products are currently in private beta including **Blu Trumpet**, a monetization platform for app developers and advertisers to marry mobile users’ interests with mobile apps that’s due out in 2Q.

**Ratings:** **ESPN** notched its best 1Q ever through averages of 1.08mln total viewers (+17% YOY) and 854K HHs (+14%). The combined 24-hr avg audience for **ESPN, ESPN2, ESPNEWS, ESPNU, ESPN Classic** and **ESPN Deportes** also set a new 1Q record with 1.24mln HHs (+11%). -- The Season 4 finale of **BET**’s “The Game” notched 4.4mln viewers and a 3.3 coverage rating. The show has reached more than 17mln viewers since its Jan debut and is the #1 weeknight primetime telecast among black viewers each week since its launch. The show helped **BET** score its highest-performing quarter among viewers in history with a 1Q avg of 546K total viewers.

**Programming:** **MSG Nets** and the **NY Red Bulls** have agreed to a new multi-year deal for local telecasts of the

# BUSINESS & FINANCE

Major League Soccer team. -- **Bra-vo** renewed "Bethenny Ever After" for a 3rd season.

**Honors:** Cable was well represented in the 70th annual Peabody Awards announced Thurs. **FX** was recognized for "Justified," **CNN** for its Gulf oil spill coverage. **TNT's** "Men of a Certain Age" got the nod as did **TeenNick's** 2-part, transgender ep of "DeGrassi," **Science Channel/BBC's** "Wonders of the Solar System," and **ESPN's** "30 for 30" series. **C-SPAN's** extensive searchable video library also was awarded a Peabody. **HBO** racked up several honors for various programming, including "The Pacific," and doc "12th & Delaware."

**People:** **Univision** named *Jessica Rodriguez* as svp, **Univision Cable Nets.** -- **Cox Media Group** tapped *Paul Curran* as vp, revenue, effective May 2.

**On the Circuit:** Cable will sponsor the **Internet Engineering Task Force** meeting in Atlanta, Nov 4-9. **Comcast, Time Warner Cable, Bright House, Cablevision, Charter, Cox, CableLabs** and **NCTA** are among sponsors.

**Business/Finance:** Video advertising, optimization, and yield management solutions provider **TidalTV** raised more than \$30mIn in financing with participation from existing investor **Comcast Interactive Capital.**

## CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	03/31 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	03/31 Close	1-Day Ch
<b>BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS</b>			<b>BLNDER TONGUE:</b> .....2.05 .....(0.03)		
DIRECTV:	46.80	0.42	BROADCOM:	39.38	(0.99)
DISH:	24.36	(0.04)	CISCO:	17.15	(0.18)
DISNEY:	43.09	(0.26)	CLEARWIRE:	5.59	0.03
GE:	20.05	(0.06)	CONCURRENT:	6.34	0.09
NEWS CORP:	18.62	0.06	CONVERGYS:	14.36	0.02
<b>MSOS</b>			CSG SYSTEMS:	19.94	0.14
CABLEVISION:	34.61	0.28	ECHOSTAR:	37.85	0.35
CHARTER:	50.63	1.14	GOOGLE:	586.76	4.92
COMCAST:	24.72	0.02	HARMONIC:	9.38	0.08
COMCAST SPCL:	23.22	0.04	INTEL:	20.18	(0.28)
GCI:	10.94	(0.03)	JDSU:	20.84	0.98
KNOWLOGY:	12.91	UNCH	LEVEL 3:	1.47	0.01
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	73.67	(0.8)	MICROSOFT:	25.39	(0.22)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	41.41	(0.46)	RENTRAK:	26.92	(0.01)
LIBERTY INT:	16.04	(0.14)	SEACHANGE:	9.50	0.11
SHAW COMM:	21.07	(0.19)	SONY:	31.83	(0.45)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	71.34	(0.09)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	4.64	0.08
VIRGIN MEDIA:	27.79	0.14	THOMAS & BETTS:	59.47	0.22
WASH POST:	437.56	(5.52)	TIVO:	8.75	(0.2)
<b>PROGRAMMING</b>			TOLLGRADE:	10.08	UNCH
CBS:	25.04	(1.08)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	29.56	0.23
CROWN:	2.32	(0.02)	VONAGE:	4.56	0.19
DISCOVERY:	39.90	(0.1)	YAHOO:	16.68	(0.06)
GRUPO TELEVISA:	24.53	(0.09)	<b>TELCOS</b>		
HSN:	32.03	(0.25)	AT&T:	30.61	(0.1)
INTERACTIVE CORP:	30.91	0.01	QWEST:	6.83	(0.1)
LIBERTY:	43.09	0.06	VERIZON:	38.54	0.08
LIBERTY STARZ:	77.60	0.36	<b>MARKET INDICES</b>		
LIONSGATE:	6.25	(0.06)	DOW:	12319.73	(30.88)
LODGENET:	3.64	(0.07)	NASDAQ:	2781.07	4.28
NEW FRONTIER:	1.77	(0.01)	S&P 500:	1325.83	(2.43)
OUTDOOR:	7.46	0.24			
SCRIPPS INT:	50.09	0.20			
TIME WARNER:	35.70	0.09			
VALUEVISION:	6.36	0.28			
VIACOM:	53.29	0.18			
WWE:	12.57	(0.01)			
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>					
ADVANTAGE:	3.09	0.01			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	5.81	0.09			
AMDOCS:	28.85	(0.34)			
AMPHENOL:	54.39	(0.87)			
AOL:	19.53	(0.12)			
APPLE:	348.51	(0.12)			
ARRIS GROUP:	12.74	0.11			
AVID TECH:	22.30	0.02			
BIGBAND:	2.55	UNCH			

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**PROGRAMMER'S PAGE** with Chad Heiges and Seth Arenstein

**Criminally Good**

**AMC** has done it again. The net's new original "The Killing" (Sun) is one heckuva show. It's brilliantly paced, includes myriad storylines that both enrapture and mesh well, and is guaranteed to elicit visceral reactions from viewers on several levels. But don't take my word for it. "Quite simply...it's one of the most compelling pieces of television I've ever seen," said AMC svp, original programming, prod and digital content *Joel Stillerman*. "It's the only drama series where I've cried at the end of the first episode." Don't worry, no spoiler here. Based on a Danish series, the show's basically a whodunit about the murder of a Seattle teenager, a sort of crime procedural extrapolated across multiple eps. Yet while *Stillerman* believes "there is a procedural element that will make this slightly easier viewing than our other dramas," he characterizes the show as more crime drama than procedural. And dramatic it is...and then some. Perhaps most impressive about the show is AMC's willingness to again push the envelope with its original content. Where many nets use a tried-and-true formula in greenlighting shows, Killing marks the latest link in a chain of compelling AMC series that, at least topically, has nothing in common save for the on-screen watermark. Period piece-drugs-zombies---crime? "We do kind of embrace an eclectic approach," said *Stillerman*. "We're at our best when we find something that has a pocket of passion." He expects Killing to engender passionate responses from the audience much like "Mad Men," "Breaking Bad" and "The Walking Dead" have done, but intimates the new project could attract more viewers than any of them. "It's the broadest thing we've done conceptually," said *Stillerman*, who's confident in the "universal appeal" of crime dramas. Contrast that appeal, he said, to the "polarizing" effects of Killing's 3 primary antecedents. In short, Killing is criminally appealing. *CH*

**Highlights:** "Camelot," premiere, Fri, 10p, **Starz**. This Camelot (as opposed to "The Kennedys" below) is a gorgeous series that had us scrambling for copies of Tennyson and Mallory. It's a tale for today as a young, inexperienced leader attempts to unite a divided country through hope. Sound familiar? -- "The Borgias," premiere, Sun, 9p, **Showtime**. Don't take this Pope-as-Tony Soprano saga too seriously, although many will. It's deliciously devilish storytelling with *Jeremy Irons* as a Holy Father who's actually a father and *Francois Arnaud* as his son. -- "Eating with Cannibals," Sun, 9p, **Nat Geo**. Mmm, mmm, good. Really. Fascinating. *SA*

**Worth a Look:** "Workaholics," premiere, Wed, 10:30p, **Comedy**. This sitcom about recent college grads in the work world contains more sex and drugs than laughs. Still, it's likely to appeal to the young male demo.

**Notable:** The too-hot-to-handle 8-part mini "The Kennedys" finally hits the screen (Sun, 8pm, on **ReelzChannel**), but not our inbox. Reelz failed to send our screener. -- Speaking of too-hot-to-handle, there should be a few hits fitting that description when **ESPN's** "Sunday Night Baseball" returns with a new booth (Giants vs Dodgers, 8p ET, **ESPN2**). -- "WrestleMania 27" with Snooki jams a crowded TV day (Sun, 7p ET, PPV).

Basic Cable Rankings (2/28/11-3/27/11) Mon-Sun Prime			
1	USA	2.4	2424
2	DSNY	1.9	1855
3	FOXN	1.6	1598
4	TNT	1.4	1428
4	HIST	1.4	1385
6	TBSC	1.3	1335
7	NAN	1.2	1174
8	A&E	1.1	1149
8	MTV	1.1	1102
8	FX	1.1	1092
8	ESPN	1.1	1084
12	FAM	1	1027
12	HGTV	1	988
12	ADSM	1	948
15	SYFY	0.9	931
15	LIFE	0.9	911
15	FOOD	0.9	902
15	TRU	0.9	878
15	CNN	0.9	871
15	NKJR	0.9	634
21	TLC	0.8	821
21	CMDY	0.8	816
21	DISC	0.8	788
21	TVLD	0.8	741
21	BRAV	0.8	722
26	AMC	0.7	711
26	MSNB	0.7	707
26	SPK	0.7	659
26	BET	0.7	628
30	EN	0.6	548
30	LMN	0.6	479
30	ID	0.6	464
33	HALL	0.5	480
33	NGC	0.5	346
35	APL	0.4	420
35	VH1	0.4	398
35	TRAV	0.4	387
35	ESP2	0.4	379
35	OXYG	0.4	316
35	GSN	0.4	280
35	SOAP	0.4	262
35	NKTN	0.4	228
35	HMC	0.4	159
44	HLN	0.3	311
44	CMT	0.3	267
44	WE	0.3	263

\*Nielsen data supplied by ABC/Disney

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