

CableFAX Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Line in the Sand: Broadcasters Set to Battle Cable on Key Issues

An overhaul of the broadcast industry's image, both on Capitol Hill and in the public, is imperative to effectively battling cable going forward, said **NAB** pres/CEO *David Rehr* at the assoc's annual convention in Las Vegas Mon. While welcoming **NBCU** back into the fold as a NAB member (see below), Rehr said the association has beefed up its government advocacy thrust and created a new marketing/communications group to accomplish the task. "We need to reframe and rebrand issues and the perceptions of the broadcast industry itself," said Rehr. "We are set to do battle." Among the cable-related fights on NAB's agenda are the perceptions surrounding 2 critical digital topics: multicast must carry and down conversion. Rehr cited a widespread public assumption that cable will have to cut channels to carry broadcasters' multicast digital signals. But the NAB believes it should be framed as cable withholding vital channels from consumers. "The NAB is anti-stripping. Do not strip out our signals," said Rehr. "People think we want to eat cable's slices [of the TV pie] when we are really adding more slices." In 2005, the FCC voted against forcing cable operators to carry all the multicast streams of a must-carry broadcaster. **FCC** chmn *Kevin Martin* tried to push through a multicast must carry mandate last year but was unable to secure the votes. The down conversion of digital signals is another issue that NAB hopes to spin in its favor. Cable wants the ability to downconvert broadcasters' digital signals to analog so that analog cable subs can view them. While eliciting guffaws from the audience by stating that much of the public believes this topic "has something to do with goose feathers," Rehr was all business in attacking cable. "Doesn't calling it discrimination make more sense than calling it down conversion?," he asked.

NAB Notebook: **NBCU** has befriended **NAB** again, rejoining the broadcast trade group. "We are pleased to rejoin the NAB and help give the broadcast side of our business a powerful and united voice in Washington at a time of incredibly rapid change and numerous legislative challenges," said **NBCU** pres/CEO *Jeff Zucker*. **NBCU** TV stations and network ops pres *Jay Ireland* will receive a seat on NAB's board. **NBC** withdrew from the NAB in 2000 along with the other Big 4 nets over a disagreement surrounding the national ownership cap for broadcast stations (the big guys wanted to own more, the independents were worried about their power). **Disney/ABC** was the 1st of the Big 4 broadcasters to rejoin the NAB, returning to the fold in '05 (*Cfax*, 8/4/05). **Fox** and **CBS** have still not returned.

Martin Sighting: **FCC** chmn *Kevin Martin* has committed to speaking at **NCTA's Cable Show** on May 7. No word on whether NCTA will be handing out tomatoes at the door. The chmn and the industry have clashed on several issues over the past year. At **CES**, Martin announced the Media Bureau's denial of Comcast's set-top waiver ban request. At **NAB**, he was expected to talk up a dual digital carriage item, but a scheduling conflict caused him to miss the show this week in Vegas. Given his track record, many are wondering if he'll be making news in Vegas next month.

Online: **Comcast's** attempt at World Wide Web domination continues, with the MSO announcing a pact that

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 M-Su 8-11pm, 1/1/07-4/1/07, 12/26/05-3/26/06, A18-49 (000), most current data.

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making Comcast.net and Fancast.com key distribution sites for **News Corp** and **NBCU's** recently announced online video venture. Comcast will become the venture's 1st non-equity content provider, offering up non-exclusive content from the Comcast Nets for distribution on NBCU and New Corp's site. The new online venture, set to launch this summer, is also going to use media management and video distribution tech from Comcast subsidiary **thePlatform**. -- **Gemstar-TV Guide** announced the beta launch of its Online Video Guide (<http://video.tvguide.com/>), which lets users "channel-surf" Internet video content from more than 55 major Web sites, including **iFilm** and broadcast and cable affiliated sites (*Cfax*, 3/30). -- Here's a new one: **Bravo** has posted the 1st chapter of *Tim Gunn's* book "A Guide to Quality Taste and Style" exclusively on **BravoTV.com**. The title doesn't hit bookstores until next month. Bravo is currently casting for the upcoming series, "Tim Gunn's Guide to Style."

Competition: **DirecTV** will launch the **Tennis Channel** this summer, nearly doubling the net's distribution. DirecTV is slated to put the channel, currently in 10mln HHs, on tiers reaching about 8mln subs. A sneak peek of the channel will run during the French Open, May 27 to June 10. -- **AT&T** has applied to offer video service in at least 21 municipalities throughout metro Detroit, including Farmington, Canton and Detroit, the *Detroit Free Press* reports.

Deals: **DirecTV** looks close to inking a deal with **Fox Cable** for **FSN Midwest**. Fox told DirecTV and **DISH Network** that they could no longer strip Cardinals games out and offer them to subs via a sports tier. Like cable, Fox said, the DBS ops would have to carry the Midwest RSN if they wanted the Cardinals games. FSN Midwest and DISH are also talking.

Sports Rights: **Fox's Big Ten Network** is the latest sports net to cause cable operators headaches. The yet-to-launch net is seeking close to \$1.10/sub for analog distribution in the 8 states that make up the Big Ten schools, *Sports Business Journal* reported Mon. That price reportedly also includes HD, VOD and broadband applications, as well as an emphasis on local ad sales. Fox is seeking around 10 cents/sub for cable systems not in Big 10 markets. **DirecTV** has already inked an undisclosed deal for the net.

New ESPN: Several changes in Bristol. **ESPN2's** "Cold Pizza" has been reheated and will be renamed "ESPN First Take" as of May 7. It will move from NY to Bristol, where it will originate in HD. ESPN First Take (10am-noon ET) will follow the net's simulcast of **ESPN Radio's** "Mike and Mike in the Morning," which will also move to an HD studio. In addition, **ESPN** "SportsCenter" will introduce new branded updates on both of the ESPN2 shows. ESPN's SportsCenter also will add a "Rundown" constant graphic providing a listing of all the upcoming show elements.

Mobile Video: 8 broadcasters have formed the **Open Mobile Video Coalition**, an alliance aimed at accelerating the development of mobile digital broadcast TV. Members include **Ion, Belo, Fox TV Stations, Gannett, Gray, Sinclair, Tribune** and **NBC & Telemundo TV** stations. Members represent over 280 stations across the country, reaching more than 95mln HHs. The coalition says it wants to provide a unified, technology-neutral voice for broadcast spectrum owners, encouraging development of IP enabling mobile uses for the digital, terrestrial broadcast spectrum.

Research: Some 53% of Americans would replace cable and DBS service with broadband TV if they could get the same channels, says a **Zogby** poll sponsored by **Ericsson's Redback Networks**. Of the 1006 people surveyed, 64% of parents would subscribe to mobile TV in cars to entertain kids.

Programming: **TV Guide Channel** picked up the telecast rights to several celeb reality series including "The Surreal

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g
gospel music channel.

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#1 NETWORK TO ADD**

*Source: Myers Emotional Connections Study, December 2005; among 50 emerging and mid-sized networks.
**Source: 2006 BETA Research Cable Operator Carriage Study; rank among emerging & mid-sized networks based on percent of cable operators with 100K+ & 200K+ subscribers interested in carrying by end of 2007.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Life" and "Flavor of Love" in a deal with **Debmar/Mercury**. The net will air the shows as late night programming beginning in July. -- **Showtime** renewed "This American Life" for a 2nd season and has greenlit 5 eps of new sketch series from *Tracey Ullman*, tentatively titled "State of the Union."

Technology: **CableLabs** announced a 3-tiered program for qualification of DOCSIS 3.0 CMTSs—bronze, silver and full qualification. Bronze and silver will be assigned to equipment that supports a subset of the complete DOCSIS 3.0 suite of specifications; eventually full 3.0 compliance will be the sole certification level. DOCSIS 3.0 modems will have only 1 level of certification. It's expected that 3.0 CMTSs and modems will be submitted as early as 4Q.

People: **Liberty Global's** *Peter Kiriacoulacos* will join **Comcast** as svp, chief procurement officer next month. -- **LATV** hired away **Telefutura's** *Bill Jenkins*, who will serve as vp, ad sales. Slated to launch Mon, the bilingual music/entertainment net has a deal to launch as a multicast channel among **Post-Newsweek** stations.

Business/Finance: **Comcast** has shelled out \$16.2m in licensing and engineering work as part of its development deal with **TiVo**, according to an **SEC** filing Mon. The 2 inked a deal in 2005, with Comcast demoing TiVo software on **Motorola** boxes at CES in Jan. TiVo's filing lists a June 30 target rollout date.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	04/16 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	04/16 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
BRITISH SKY:	45.97	0.04	ALCATEL LUCENT:	12.55	0.13
DIRECTV:	23.96	(0.1)	AMDOCS:	36.56	0.08
DISNEY:	35.02	0.30	AMPHENOL:	34.60	0.80
ECHOSTAR:	46.91	0.44	ARRIS GROUP:	15.07	(0.03)
GE:	35.36	(0.02)	AVID TECH:	36.65	0.74
HEARST-ARGYLE:	27.74	0.02	BLNDER TONGUE:	1.95	0.06
ION MEDIA:	1.30	0.00	BROADCOM:	32.75	0.01
NEWS CORP:	25.27	0.15	C-COR:	14.30	0.24
TRIBUNE:	32.83	0.04	CISCO:	26.62	(0.06)
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	31.58	(0.01)	COMMSCOPE:	44.71	1.70
CHARTER:	3.32	(0.05)	CONCURRENT:	1.48	(0.04)
COMCAST:	27.89	(0.29)	CONVERGYS:	26.21	0.05
COMCAST SPCL:	27.45	(0.25)	CSG SYSTEMS:	25.54	0.43
GCI:	15.04	0.39	GEMSTAR TVG:	4.38	0.08
KNOLOGY:	17.20	(0.08)	GOOGLE:	474.27	7.98
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	117.00	0.64	HARMONIC:	10.87	0.17
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	35.00	0.00	JDSU:	15.55	0.07
LIBERTY INTERACTIVE:	24.70	0.50	LEVEL 3:	6.11	0.01
MEDIACOM:	8.99	(0.03)	MICROSOFT:	28.73	0.12
NTL:	28.22	0.00	MOTOROLA:	17.82	0.08
ROGERS COMM:	36.01	0.61	NDS:	53.70	3.03
SHAW COMM:	40.23	0.93	NORTEL:	23.95	(0.43)
TELEWEST:	24.20	0.00	OPENTV:	2.52	0.07
TIME WARNER CABLE:	39.45	0.13	PHILIPS:	41.83	2.03
WASH POST:	755.50	7.17	RENTRAK:	14.94	(0.03)
PROGRAMMING					
CBS:	31.68	0.23	SEACHANGE:	8.81	0.18
CROWN:	6.02	0.02	SONY:	55.46	0.51
DISCOVERY:	21.13	0.24	SPRINT NEXTEL:	20.20	0.27
EW SCRIPPS:	45.08	0.24	THOMAS & BETTS:	51.42	0.87
GRUPO TELEVISIA:	31.14	0.17	TIVO:	6.57	0.18
INTERACTIVE CORP:	38.36	0.11	TOLLGRADE:	12.29	0.10
LIBERTY:	8.32	0.06	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	27.60	0.02
LODGENET:	33.99	0.22	VONAGE:	3.29	(0.1)
NEW FRONTIER:	8.86	(0.1)	VYYO:	7.20	(0.4)
OUTDOOR:	10.67	0.14	WEBB SYS:	0.06	0.00
PLAYBOY:	10.00	0.00	WORLDGATE:	0.78	0.02
TIME WARNER:	21.14	(0.07)	YAHOO:	31.61	0.20
UNIVISION:	36.23	0.00	TELCOS		
VALUEVISION:	12.40	0.16	AT&T:	39.26	0.42
VIACOM:	41.07	0.95	QWEST:	8.92	(0.02)
WWE:	16.34	(0.27)	VERIZON:	37.87	0.48
TECHNOLOGY					
3COM:	4.21	0.17	MARKET INDICES		
ADC:	17.73	0.38	DOW:	12720.46	108.33
ADVANTAGE:	4.22	0.20	NASDAQ:	2518.33	26.39

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CORPORATE LICENSES



CableFAX Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST.

Symonds Says...

Curtis Mayfield once wrote "People get ready, there's a train a comin.' You don't need no baggage, just get on board." Mayfield sang about riding a train to Jordan, the river of cleansing waters full of peace, hope, freedom and equality.



Curtis Symonds

All I can say is, are we there yet?

I look around and I see Don Imus taking shots at young women whose defining characteristic isn't their nappy

hair, their skin color or their tattoos. It is that, as a bunch of freshman and sophomores, they beat teams thought to be far better than they were, and did so all the way to the NCAA championship game.

Sure, Imus took his shots; made light of their moment. But let's be honest, he has been doing that for years.

That was his job. And when we first hired him we told him to offend us; and that as long as we maintained a comfortable level of abhorrence, he could keep his job. But then he took us out of our comfort zone, so we finally drew a line—and when he looked down to find it, he discovered he'd already crossed it.

I look around too, and I see charges against 3 white kids dropped because the young African-American girl who said they raped her proved to be

less than credible. Granted, the girl takes her clothes off for a living, and granted, she may not be the second coming of a Cosby kid, but I wonder what would have happened if the races were reversed. I have no doubt the rage would have been just as great. What I doubt is that the charges would have simply been dropped.

Like I said, are we there yet?

Look, Imus and those lacrosse players are not the problem. They're a symptom. Maybe they disrespected young black women because we told them it was OK. And I'm not talking to you white males now. I'm talking to my brothers. I'm talking to the African American men among us who for years have shown our women nothing but disrespect; who have treated them as sex objects, getting them pregnant, slapping them around when the mood struck and abandoning them to raise their children alone.

It's OK to call our women "bitches" and "hos." Just don't let us catch a white guy doing it. We're outraged when somebody white treats our women like objects, but that's exactly what some of us do. And make no mistake. When we do it, we're tacitly telling the world, "Go ahead. It's OK."

Meanwhile, there is skyrocketing unemployment among our people, and spiraling pregnancy, obesity and dropout rates among our kids. You

want to rage? Rage against that; not against some windbag living in a high-rise on Central Park.

We African Americans have grown far too comfortable playing the victim. We have to stop pointing fingers and castigating others for behavior we practice all the time. Our women are precious, and they remain the foundation of whatever hope we have for the future.

Believe me, the Imus and Duke lacrosse stories are not just stories of racism. At their core, they're about sexism. And like all hatred, sexism is a learned behavior.

Sixty years ago this week Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color line, and in doing so, did more to kindle hope among my people than just about any African American in history. Jackie showed us what was possible if we were strong and righteous, and if we didn't let mere words distract us. But we've apparently forgotten that. Words bother us now; terribly, in fact.

If we're going to ever inhabit a better world than the one we know today, we are going to get there together; black and white, men and women. And as I type this and contemplate Imus, frat boys, thin skin and other painful reminders of just how rocky the road can get, Symonds says I have one question: are we there yet?

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