

CableFAX Daily™

Thursday — April 17, 2008

What the Industry Reads First

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Sitting It Out: Comcast Passes on Stanford FCC Hearing

Having been grilled already at Harvard, **Comcast** opted to pass on what would likely have been another barbecue when the **FCC** holds its 2nd hearing on network management practices at Stanford Thurs. After the MSO and P2P firm **Pando Networks** announced plans Tues to develop a "P2P Bill of Rights and Responsibilities," the FCC invited execs from both companies to participate. Comcast deemed a trip to the West Coast unnecessary. "Comcast has already appeared before the Commission on network management issues and has made extensive filings at the FCC both on our past and current practices as well as our recent announcements," the company said in a statement. "We felt issues specific to us were well covered at the first hearing and the focus of this event should be broader than any individual company's issues." Feb's hearing at Harvard focused almost entirely on Comcast, with the MSO facing tough questions from FCC chmn *Kevin Martin* and negative campaigning from groups like **SavetheInternet.com**. "At this point, the most productive course is to continue our business-to-business discussions and to pursue the process that was outlined in our announcement with Pando. We will look forward to briefing the Commission and other interested parties as we make reportable progress," Comcast said. Meanwhile, **Pando** CEO *Robert Levitan* said he would love to participate in future FCC proceedings, but the Tues evening invite didn't provide enough notice for him or anyone on his 23-member staff to make the trip from NY. Thurs' lineup of speakers features several net neutrality proponents, including **Media Access Project's** *Harold Feld* and *Michele Combs* of the **Christian Coalition**. Also on the list is independent consultant/former **ZDnet** blogger *George Ou*, *Robb Topolski*, the software quality engineer who worked with *AP* on its story suggesting Comcast delayed some P2P traffic, **Sling Media** CEO *Blake Krikorian*; and **Lariat.net** CEO *Brett Glass*, who will provide the perspective of a small wireless ISP. Ou will talk up the need for network management and the problems with bandwidth hogs. According to testimony obtained by **Cfax**, he compares the P2P bandwidth problem to a 100-seat airplane that has 10 passengers taking up 75 seats and forcing the other 90 passengers to share the remaining 25. "On the airplane, the obvious thing to do is to tell those people to take their feet and bags off the other seats so that other passengers may sit down," he said in prepared testimony. "Yet on the Internet because it isn't easy for everyone to see what is really going on, the P2P bandwidth hogs yell 'discrimination' and persuade activists to portray them as the victims of evil corporations who are being deprived of their civil rights." The hearing's slated to start at noon PT and adjourn at 7pm, with a live audio cast available on the FCC's Web site, as well as at the **Von TV** site (<http://www.vontv.net/events/080417/>).

Competition: **DISH** is expanding HD local into Baltimore, Columbia, SC, and Green Bay, WI. It now offers HD locals in 46 markets. -- **DirecTV** has launched local programming in Bangor, ME.

HD: **Lifetime** has launched a high-def version of its flagship net, signing deals with **AT&T U-verse** and **Verizon FiOS**. The 2 telcos already carry **Lifetime Movie Net HD**.

Applications for Classes XVIII & XIX Now Available

Applications for the Betsy Magness Leadership Institute's (BMLI) Classes XVIII and XIX are now being accepted through Friday, May 23, 2008.

BMLI is recognized as the flagship leadership development program of the cable telecommunications industry.



For more information or to download an application, visit www.wict.org.

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DTV Doings: Every commercial broadcast station in NC will simultaneously air the same DTV transition educational program on Sat. The statewide roadblock is set for 7:30pm, with the program running for 30 mins on 27 stations.

At the Portals: Add **ACA** to the voices chiming in with concern over the **FCC** Enforcement Bureau's decision to continue to allow **Verizon** to use info from competitors for retention marketing efforts. "Verizon has made a practice out of operating in the grey area of the law in an effort to stymie the growth of new entrants in the marketplace," said **ACA** pres/CEO **Matt Polka**, adding that the group hopes the full Commission will look at the issue and reach their own conclusion.

Technology: **Pace** shareholders on Wed approved the acquisition of **Philips Electronics'** set-top and connectivity business. The acquisition is expected to be complete on Apr 21.

Upfronts: **WE's** plethora of wedding-themed programming seems to be just what its viewers want. A viewer research study conducted by **Frank Magid** found that more than 86% of its segmented audience profile has a strong affinity for all things wedding related. These so-called "I-Doers" are in a major life stage, such as getting engaged, buying a new home or having a child—all events that increase a woman's spending. No surprise then to hear that **WE** keeps adding to its wedding guest list. The latest new series, "Amazing Wedding Cakes," debuts in Sept.

Carriage: **Charter** will add the following HD nets in St. Louis next month: **AMC HD, CNN HD, TLC HD, Animal Planet HD, The Science Channel HD, Smithsonian Channel HD, TBS HD** and **The Movie Channel HD**. -- **ReelzChannel** has launched on **Time Warner Cable** in northeastern OH, and **Time Warner Cable** of WI in the Green Bay area. -- **RCN** customers in Lehigh Valley, PA, now have **The Style Network**. -- **Comcast** is launching **Sci Fi HD, Food HD, Animal Planet HD, TLC HD, CNN HD** and **AMC HD** in the Bay Area.

Online: **NBCU** has redesigned its VOD/PPV site **UniversalVOD.net** to include interactive features such as a video rating app and clip-sharing functionality.

Advertising/Marketing: **History** will sponsor **CINE's** Golden Anniversary Awards Gala (Apr 24) in D.C. **Edward James Olmos** of **Sci Fi's** "Battlestar Galactica" will receive **CINE's** Lifetime Achievement Award at the event. -- **IAC** and **The HealthCentral Network** have launched an online ad network for pharmaceutical and health and wellness marketers.

Research: US Internet users viewed more than 10bln online videos during Feb, representing a 3% sequential gain and a 66% Y-over-Y surge, according to comScore. Nearly three-quarters of the total US Internet audience viewed online videos. **Google** sites led all Websites/groups in viewed videos with 3.6bln, while **Fox** (586mln), **Viacom** (218mln), **Time Warner** (133mln), **Disney** (131mln), **ABC** (98mln) and **Comcast** (93mln) secured top 10 spots. All except Comcast also ranked highly in monthly uniques, as did **ESPN**.

Intl: Australia's **Foxtel** got rights to **Bravo** content such as "Top Design" and "The Real Housewives of Orange County."

Ratings: The Tues premiere of "Deion & Pilar: Primetime Love" netted the largest audience ever for an **Oxygen** series, delivering a 0.6 HH rating and 579K total viewers. Additionally, the airing was the highest rated and most watched series premiere among all key demos including W18-34 (250,000), P18-49 (438,000) and W18-49 (334,000). -- The success of **Lifetime's** movie adaptation of popular novel "The Memory Keeper's Daughter" (4.7 HH rating) propelled the women's net into the top 5 prime cable nets last week. **Spike** also made it into the

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

elite circle of 5 thanks to a week-end of original "Star Wars" movies. Also notable: Sun's "Rock of Love" finale on **VH1** scored a 4.0 HH rating, while **ESPN's** Masters coverage garnered a 3.1. **USA** won the prime ratings race (2.0 HH rating/1.94m), followed by **Disney** (1.9/1.76m), Lifetime (1.6/1.52m), **TNT** (1.6/1.52m) and Spike (1.6/1.52m).

Programming: **HBO** will feature a new doc every Mon night from Jun 9-Aug 25, including "Roman Polanski: Wanted and Desired" and "Heidi Fleiss: The Would-Be Madam of Crystal." -- New **History** series "Tougher In Alaska" (May 8) spotlights unique state activities such as gold mining and salmon fishing.

On the Circuit: **Cable Positive** is again making its Natl HIV Testing Day (June 27) PSAs available for free. Order yours at <http://www.cablepositive.org/PSAOrderForm.html>.

Public Affairs: The "CableCares" initiative to assist recovery efforts in New Orleans during **The Cable Show** has assumed new components, including **qubo/ION Media Nets'** funding of an elementary school playground and **Gospel Music Channel's** partnership with **Cox New Orleans** and others to feed families and provide musical instruments for school kids.

People: **Discovery Channel** appointed former **MTVN** exec *James Hitchcock* marketing and branding officer.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	04/16 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	04/16 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
AMDOCS:	28.00	0.41	AMPHENOL:	42.45	1.37
BRITISH SKY:	43.45	0.36	APPLE:	153.70	5.32
DIRECTV:	25.74	0.38	ARRIS GROUP:	6.35	0.22
DISNEY:	30.32	0.39	AVID TECH:	24.44	0.14
ECHOSTAR:	31.56	1.07	BIGBAND:	6.86	0.23
GE:	32.19	0.21	BLNDER TONGUE:	1.46	0.05
HEARST-ARGYLE:	20.47	0.19	BROADCOM:	21.74	0.95
ION MEDIA:	1.45	0.00	CISCO:	23.83	0.72
NEWS CORP:	18.32	0.25	COMMSCOPE:	37.83	1.89
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	22.57	0.04	CONCURRENT:	0.71	(0.01)
CHARTER:	0.92	(0.02)	CONVERGYS:	15.84	0.60
COMCAST:	19.93	0.22	CSG SYSTEMS:	11.37	0.19
COMCAST SPCL:	19.65	0.21	ECHOSTAR HOLDING:	28.55	0.26
GCI:	6.24	0.08	GEMSTAR TVG:	4.74	(0.04)
KNOLOGY:	13.79	0.09	GOOGLE:	455.03	8.19
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	15.83	(0.04)	HARMONIC:	8.13	0.48
LIBERTY ENTERTAINMENT:	24.83	0.56	JDSU:	13.86	0.67
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	34.51	1.19	LEVEL 3:	2.13	0.10
LIBERTY INTERACTIVE:	15.60	0.15	MICROSOFT:	28.95	0.70
MEDIACOM:	4.27	(0.13)	MOTOROLA:	9.20	0.22
ROGERS COMM:	42.97	0.00	NDS:	47.71	0.56
SHAW COMM:	20.35	0.74	NORTEL:	7.06	0.21
TIME WARNER CABLE:	26.30	(0.2)	OPENTV:	1.11	(0.03)
VIRGIN MEDIA:	12.18	0.17	PHILIPS:	38.14	0.77
WASH POST:	693.29	15.62	RENTRAK:	13.05	0.05
PROGRAMMING					
CBS:	21.24	0.35	SEACHANGE:	7.25	0.32
CROWN:	4.67	0.10	SONY:	41.90	2.10
DISCOVERY:	21.70	0.17	SPRINT NEXTEL:	6.43	0.12
EW SCRIPPS:	42.42	1.22	THOMAS & BETTS:	39.20	0.08
GRUPO TELEVISA:	24.69	0.95	TIVO:	8.90	0.31
INTERACTIVE CORP:	20.30	0.15	TOLLGRADE:	5.02	0.10
LIBERTY:	1.00	0.00	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	27.77	0.75
LODGENET:	5.55	0.03	VONAGE:	1.83	0.05
NEW FRONTIER:	5.17	0.05	YAHOO:	28.31	0.14
OUTDOOR:	7.43	0.07	TELCOS		
PLAYBOY:	8.52	0.35	AT&T:	37.61	0.28
TIME WARNER:	14.35	0.14	QWEST:	4.65	0.15
UNIVISION:	36.23	0.00	VERIZON:	35.89	0.78
VALUEVISION:	5.00	0.01	MARKET INDICES		
VIACOM:	39.41	0.30	DOW:	12619.27	256.80
WWE:	19.00	0.01	NASDAQ:	2350.11	64.07
TECHNOLOGY					
3COM:	2.38	(0.01)			
ADC:	12.66	0.27			
ADVANTAGE:	3.65	(0.09)			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	6.03	0.25			

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Think about that for a minute...

Creative Federal Thinking

Is that an oxymoron?

Can't we at least hope, regarding the DTV transition, that instead of endless bickering, power games and righteous speeches as well as the obligatory "hearings" without listening, we could get on with the real business of getting things done?

I have yet to understand what the panic is about regarding the so-called transition. Yes, some folks will not be able to tune in digital signals with their analog-only sets come February 18, 2009.



Steve Effros

The analog transmitters have to be turned off by midnight on the 17th. And then? Well, the folks who are not connected to cable, or not subscribers to satellite distribution that has the local broadcast signals, or who haven't bought a new set that tunes the digital signals or hasn't

gotten the converter the government is subsidizing will be without local television! A calamity? I don't think so.

Why don't we just declare the 18th "turn off your television day"? We have one of those every year. Seems like that would be the perfect day to let everyone get acclimated to the new regime. Do you really think the folks who are still clueless about the transition by then will just throw up their hands and fulminate until the next election to penalize their representatives for making them miss an episode of whatever they were watching? Don't be silly. They'll quickly figure out how to get their television working again. To that end, there should be some rules to make sure there is no price gouging for televisions or converters when that day hits.

But there are plenty of other things that can be done now, and it just defies my imagination as to why the government is so focused on everyone else "getting the message out" but not taking responsibility them-

selves as well. Well, it doesn't really defy my imagination... here are some examples of opportunities already missed, and some we can still potentially get done:

Why wasn't there a big poster in every post office hosting long lines of folks mailing their taxes this week? There should be a notice, hopefully in a bright, iconic color which could be carried through the entire campaign, in every piece of "official" mail going out this year. Why wasn't one (shocking pink?) in the letter we all got telling us to be on the lookout for our "stimulus" check? How about making sure it (neon green?) is in with the checks, and in the IRS refunds too?

What about all the free "franking privileges" that Congress gets? They certainly have powerful mailing lists of all their constituents. And since everyone is concerned about "at risk" populations, why not include those notices for the next year in all the Medicare and Medicaid correspondence that is sent out?

Of course cable has to, and is actively participating in the transition preparations. So are the broadcasters and the CE folks. Hopefully, as I have said before, the programmers will integrate the message right into the most popular shows. That's how you will really target the information for those not yet aware.

But my point here is that it is time, especially for our elected and appointed officials, to stop just pointing their fingers at others and opining that there is going to be a disaster next February, and instead start thinking creatively about what they, too, can do to avoid any significant dislocation. Will folks still miss a show or two? I'm sure some will. But it shouldn't be because of a lack of creative thinking... and doing.

Steve

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