

CableFAX Daily™

Monday — May 14, 2012

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 23 / No. 092

NBC Sports Net-TWC: Investment in MLS Could Spur League's Growth

Having wrested the rights to air Major League Soccer games from **Fox Soccer Channel**, **NBC Sports Network** is making a home for the league with new production tactics, analysis and amped up marketing. But it's not just the fledgling network that stands to gain from the deal. MLS itself hopes the partnership will grow the league as much as the net's seeking ratings, which are looking up, likely in large part due to NBCSN's distribution advantage over FSC: NBCSN's in 79.3mln homes vs FSC's 41mln. Fox Soccer averaged 68K viewers over the last season, while NBCSN has averaged 109K viewers after 8 telecasts, up 70% compared to the first 8 games on FCS last season. From a production standpoint, NBCSN has been creative. Its new "between the benches" commentary, which involves color analyst *Kyle Martino's* tactical observations at the field level to complement traditional analysis from the booth, has elicited a positive response from the soccer community, fans and the league. "There was a lot of skepticism when we made this deal," said pres, programming, NBC Sports Group *Jon Miller*, namely the league's decision to move from a soccer-dedicated network to one with no experience covering the sport. Moreover, NBCSN's promotional focus on the U.S. played a major factor in the decision, according to an MLS rep. With Fox Soccer throwing support behind international leagues like the English Premier League, Champions League and World Cup, which it scored rights to in 2018 and 2022, MLS had plenty of inter-sport competition. At NBCSN, the opposite is true. Once MLS joined the network, NBC flexed its marketing muscle by running spots in Sunday Night Football pre-season games. Not surprisingly, NBCSN plans to use Olympics coverage as a lead into MLS programming. "We'll have an enormous amount of programming from London, and we're going to put 5 games right up against the end of the Olympic coverage on NBC Sports Network," said Miller. Another major focus is star power. NBCSN plans to exploit the league's stars, like internationals *David Beckham* and *Thierry Henry*, with pre-game specials, modeled after what it's done with hockey's NHL 36 shoulder programming. Meanwhile, **Time Warner Cable** has taken an interest in the league. MLS will get a regional boost in coverage Oct 1 from the MSO, which scored a 10-year deal late last year for LA Galaxy rights for its upcoming regional sports networks in Los Angeles. It's the most extensive partnership among all MLS clubs, according to MLS, and features a package in both English and Spanish (to air on **Time Warner Cable Deportes**), which could help grow the league's Hispanic audience. For its part, Fox Soccer remains committed to the sport, but on an inter-



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CABLEFAX DAILY (ISSN 1069-6644) is published daily by Access Intelligence, LLC ● www.cablefaxdaily.com ● fax:301.738.8453 ● Editor-in-Chief: Amy Maclean, 301.354.1760, amaclean@accessintel.com ● Exec Editor: Michael Grebb, 818.945.5309, mgrebb@accessintel.com ● Community Editor: Kaylee Hultgren, 212.621.4200, khultgren@accessintel.com ● Publisher: Debbie Vodenos, 301.354.1695, dvodenos@accessintel.com ● Assoc Publisher: Amy Abbey, 301.354.1629, aabbey@accessintel.com ● Marketing Dir: Barbara Bauer, 301.354.1796, bbauer@accessintel.com ● Prod: Joann Fato, 301.354.1681, jfato@accessintel.com ● Diane Schwartz/VP and Group Publisher ● Subs/Client Services: 301.354.2101, fax 301.309.3847 ● Group Subs: Amy Russell, 301.354.1599, arussell@accessintel.com

national level. According to Fox Soccer GM *David Nathanson*, the FSC's soccer audience has grown by triple digits in the last 2 years, and though MLS decided to go elsewhere, the success of the league can only be positive. "The more people that are interested in soccer rights, the more people that are viewing soccer content across a variety of platforms, the more people will be interested in Fox Soccer." The MLS contract with NBCSN, **ESPN** and **Galavisión** are up simultaneously in 3 year's time, at which point all league games—including the MLS All-Star game and MLS Cup, currently aired by ESPN—are up for grabs. Whether star power, creative commentary and Spanish-language broadcasts will help grow the league is uncertain—but it will certainly be fun to watch.

Univision Upfront News: With its Upfront set for Tues, **Univision Comm** on Fri announced an Upfront deal with **Starcom USA** and its multicultural agency **Tapestry**, and called the pact "the largest single-agency Upfront deal ever conducted" and "the first to utilize a video neutral approach." The comprehensive arrangement includes all Univision properties, including its bcst nets, cable nets, local TV/radio stations and online, mobile and "social video" properties. "This deal emphasizes that the shift happening in the marketplace is real—one that mirrors the changing demographics of this country and the new American reality the Hispanic boom is driving," said *David Lawenda*, Univision Comm's pres, ad sales & mktg. -- Univision also unveiled the **UVideos Digital Network**, a video platform serving as a single portal for video content from all of Univision's TV nets, made available via game consoles, smartphones, tablets and iTVs. The company made the announcement in a pre-Upfront conference call Fri. Currently in beta and scheduled for a launch this summer, the platform will include TV check-ins, social streams and bonus content. Also airing on UVideos will be 3 new webnovelas, co-produced by **Televisa** and **Univision Studios** and targeted at U.S. Hispanics. There will be "some free content for our audience and users," said Univision Networks pres *Cesar Conde*, "however the majority will require some type of authentication." -- Univision also announced its '12/'13 programming slate, which includes specials, 2 primetime novelas and an outdoor concert series on Fridays. Shows airing on its **Galavisión** cable net include comic adventure series "Los Heroes del Norte 2" (Heroes of the North 2), boxing series "Cloroformo," a docu-series about a UFO blogger called "Mistico" (Mystic) and entertainment news show "Detrás del Saber" (Behind Knowledge).

Earnings: Despite 71% growth in RGUs to 445K and solid 5.5% rev growth to \$2.54bln in 1Q, **Liberty Global** reported a \$25mln net loss vs a net gain of \$342mln in 1Q '11. Management said the dramatic decline "was due largely to higher realized and unrealized losses on derivative instruments." Operating income increased 14% to \$494mln. RGU adds were in broadband and telephony, as the company shed 86K video subs during the quarter. As of 1Q's end, Liberty Global reported 33.4mln subs (18.4mln video, 8.5mln broadband and 6.5mln telephony).

Competition: **DISH** has revamped its DISH Remote Access iPad app, aiming to improve performance and enhance the on-screen dashboard for easier navigation (Subs can watch live/recorded TV using the app in concert with an Internet-enabled set-top and Sling Adapter). The app also offers higher on-device video quality to utilize the iPad 3's retina display.

Programming: **Sundance Channel** greenlit a 2nd season for unscripted series "The Mortified Sessions" and unveiled 5 non-fiction series in development for the '12/'13 season. "Dream School" lets kids learn from top experts in every subject; "Dead & Found" follows Reno investigators piecing together the lives of unidentified dead bodies; "Kenya & Carl" explores open marriage with the aid of counselors; "The Trouble with Love & Sex" turns actual recordings from couples therapy sessions into animated stories; and "Wino" follows self-taught "maverick sommelier" *Brian Kalliel* as he travels the world. -- **Lifetime** picked up 10 eps of "The Houston Family Chronicles" (wt), a docu-series following the lives of the late *Whitney Houston's* family. Exec producers include Houston's sister-in-law/manager, *Pat Houston*. The series is set to premiere in '12. -- **TNT** picked up 2 new unscripted series: "Boston Blue" (wt) following the Boston PD's Gang Unit and "72 Hours," a competition in which teams are dropped into the wilderness and must find a suitcase full of cash. TNT order 8 eps of each series and plans to launch them in '13. -- **TBS** greenlit 2 new series: "*Deon Cole's* Black Box" stars the "Conan" writer/performer as he riffs on "outrageous video clips that pop up across the media landscape." In "Who Gets the Last Laugh?," 2 comedians must compete to unleash the funniest prank upon an unsuspecting public. Both shows premiere in '13.

Editor's Note: Tables are going fast, so get your tickets now for our Digital Breakfast set for May 21 before the Cable Show's opening general session. Start the morning right with your friends and colleagues, including **Comcast's** *Matthew Strauss* and **Turner's** *Jeremy Legg*, who will be on hand to accept their companies' TV Everywhere Leadership awards as well as to discuss the future of authentication. More info: http://www.cablefax.com/cfp/events/bow2012/digit_hot_list.html

CableFAX Week in Review

Company	Ticker	5/11 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
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BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS

DIRECTV:	DTV	47.57	(1.35%)	11.25%
DISH:	DISH	30.83	(1.53%)	8.25%
DISNEY:	DIS	45.56	5.10%	21.49%
GE:	GE	19.01	(1.71%)	6.14%
NEWS CORP:	NWS	20.51	5.23%	12.82%

MSOS

CABLEVISION:	CVC	12.56	(3.9%)	(11.67%)
CHARTER:	CHTR	67.49	9.62%	18.53%
COMCAST:	CMCSA	29.38	(2.97%)	23.91%
COMCAST SPCL:	CMCSK	29.02	(0.65%)	23.17%
GCI:	GNCMA	7.16	(0.69%)	(26.86%)
KNOLOGY:	KNOL	19.52	0.36%	37.46%
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	LBTYA	50.77	1.99%	23.74%
LIBERTY INT:	LINTA	18.34	(0.33%)	13.07%
SHAW COMM:	SJR	19.17	(2.09%)	(1.03%)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	TWC	77.15	(2.06%)	21.36%
VIRGIN MEDIA:	VMED	22.41	(1.1%)	4.82%
WASH POST:	WPO	336.20	(5.99%)	(10.78%)

PROGRAMMING

AMC NETWORKS:	AMCX	41.70	(3.29%)	10.96%
CBS:	CBS	32.80	(1.26%)	20.85%
CROWN:	CRWN	1.51	1.34%	24.79%
DISCOVERY:	DISCA	51.39	(3.84%)	25.43%
GRUPO TELEVISIA:	TV	20.50	(4.12%)	(2.66%)
HSN:	HSNI	36.55	(2.17%)	0.80%
INTERACTIVE CORP:	IACI	48.52	(1.98%)	13.90%
LIONSGATE:	LGF	12.41	8.20%	49.16%
LODGENET:	LNET	1.78	(27.94%)	(25.52%)
NEW FRONTIER:	NOOF	1.51	(3.82%)	46.60%
OUTDOOR:	OUTD	6.84	(5.13%)	(8.31%)
SCRIPPS INT:	SNI	54.17	(0.07%)	27.70%
TIME WARNER:	TWX	35.69	(1.82%)	(1.25%)
VALUEVISION:	VVTV	1.52	(11.63%)	(19.15%)
VIACOM:	VIA	51.39	(1.53%)	(3.64%)
WWE:	WWE	8.79	0.46%	(5.69%)

TECHNOLOGY

ADVANTAGE:	AEY	2.46	1.65%	17.14%
ALCATEL LUCENT:	ALU	1.51	5.59%	(3.21%)
AMDOCS:	DOX	30.09	(2.18%)	5.47%
AMPHENOL:	APH	54.04	(2.37%)	19.06%
AOL:	AOL	26.06	7.46%	72.58%
APPLE:	AAPL	566.71	0.26%	39.93%
ARRIS GROUP:	ARRS	12.51	(0.32%)	15.62%
AVID TECH:	AVID	7.36	(6.36%)	(13.72%)
BLNDER TONGUE:	BDR	1.15	(3.36%)	(5.74%)
BROADCOM:	BRCM	33.79	(2.43%)	15.09%
CISCO:	CSCO	16.50	(13.68%)	(8.71%)
CLEARWIRE:	CLWR	1.26	(17.11%)	(35.05%)
CONCURRENT:	CCUR	3.68	(2.9%)	(2.9%)
CONVERGYS:	CVG	12.66	(1.86%)	(0.86%)
CSG SYSTEMS:	CSGS	16.53	2.99%	12.37%
ECHOSTAR:	SATS	27.65	(2.09%)	32.04%
GOOGLE:	GOOG	605.23	1.38%	(6.3%)
HARMONIC:	HLIT	4.23	(3.86%)	(16.07%)

Company	Ticker	5/11 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
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INTEL:	INTC	27.63	(0.97%)	13.94%
JDSU:	JDSU	10.69	(3.61%)	2.39%
LEVEL 3:	LVLTL	24.28	(3.54%)	42.91%
MICROSOFT:	MSFT	31.16	0.58%	20.03%
MOTOROLA MOBILITY:	MMI	39.23	1.34%	1.11%
RENTRAK:	RENT	17.02	(3.08%)	19.19%
SEACHANGE:	SEAC	8.20	(2.26%)	16.64%
SONY:	SNE	14.18	(7.44%)	(21.4%)
SPRINT NEXTEL:	S	2.49	5.51%	6.41%
THOMAS & BETTS:	TNB	71.97	0.13%	31.81%
TIVO:	TIVO	10.15	(7.56%)	13.15%
UNIVERSAL ELEC:	UEIC	14.87	(2.62%)	(11.86%)
VONAGE:	VG	1.76	(4.86%)	(28.16%)
YAHOO:	YHOO	15.19	0.26%	(5.83%)

TELCOS

AT&T:	T	33.59	2.22%	11.08%
VERIZON:	VZ	41.16	2.24%	2.59%

MARKET INDICES

DOW:	DJI	12820.60	(1.67%)	4.94%
NASDAQ:	IXIC	2933.82	(0.76%)	12.62%
S&P 500:	GSPC	1353.39	(1.15%)	7.62%

WINNERS & LOSERS

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE WINNERS

COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. CHARTER:	67.49	9.62%
2. LIONSGATE:	12.41	8.20%
3. AOL:	26.06	7.46%
4. ALCATEL LUCENT:	1.51	5.59%
5. SPRINT NEXTEL:	2.49	5.51%

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE LOSERS

COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. LODGENET:	1.78	(27.94%)
2. CLEARWIRE:	1.26	(17.11%)
3. CISCO:	16.50	(13.68%)
4. VALUEVISION:	1.52	(11.63%)
5. TIVO:	10.15	(7.56%)

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