

CableFAX Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Change of Plan: Comcast Drops 250GB Cap, Makes Usage-Based Pricing Move

What does **Comcast's** big broadband announcement actually mean? Previously, residential HSD customers who exceeded 250GB bandwidth ran the risk of having their service shut off. Now, the cap is out the window. Comcast is gearing up to launch trials in some markets where all HSD tiers would have a 300GB threshold. Notice how we said threshold and not cap? That's because once a customer hits 300GB, they would be notified and eventually charged for additional gigabytes (prices still being determined, but \$10 for 50GB is being thrown around). Comcast also plans to trial a multi-tier usage approach, which would give 300GB for the lowest speed tiers and would incrementally raise the threshold for faster tiers. No word yet on where and when those trials will take place, but in the meantime, there is no cap for any sub. And there will be no caps in markets where Comcast isn't trialing new data usage management approaches. **Free Press'** characterization of the news: the cap is just being raised, and now there is an overage charge. "While the move to increase its caps are overdue, the notion that Comcast would charge an exorbitant rate for additional bandwidth—while continuing to exempt its own traffic under its **Xbox** deal—illustrates that Comcast is really trying to discourage subscribers from experimenting with online video alternatives. We call on Comcast to drop the caps and these exorbitant overage fees entirely," said Free Press' *Joel Kelsey*. Comcast has said **Xfinity** on Xbox uses its private network, not the public Internet, and thus is not subject to any cap (or threshold). So, does the shift relate somehow to the stink **Netflix** and others raised about Comcast not counting Xfinity on Xbox against the cap? Comcast says not really, it's about the customer. But it's clear one of the messages it wants to send customers is not to worry about exceeding a bandwidth cap by using Netflix, **Hulu**, **HBO GO**, etc (execs noted dozens of times that the vast majority of customers are nowhere near 250GB usage, with most at 8-10 GB). "We don't think 4 years after we put it in place a static, inflexible byte cap is the best way for us to manage data usage on our networks. That said, the 'controversy' over our Xfinity app for the Xbox, the concern, should be dramatically reduced for a number of respects," Comcast evp *David Cohen* told reporters Thurs. He pointed to Comcast increasing the initial thresholds by at least 20% and eliminating the cap. "The legitimate concern here is whether our customers have access to everything lawful on the Internet, and everything they want to do to enjoy their HSD service, and by announcing this philosophical adjustment, I think we are communicating very clear to our customers, including our

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highest valued customers, that we want you, and we don't want to discourage you in any way from using services." **Public Knowledge** said it was awaiting further details on Comcast's plan, but legal dir *Harold Feld* said the MSO "recognized the need to increase the cap on data 'usage' that the company set in 2008 and to experiment with additional flexibility for customers." At the same time, he noted, **Verizon** has eliminated the unlimited data plans which it had previously promised to maintain for existing customers in favor of a plan which covers all of a customer's devices using data. "While this plan may increase flexibility, it also will likely raise rates as a family's devices compete for data usage," Feld said. PK repeated its call for the **FCC** and Congress to examine how caps are set, evaluated and what purpose they serve.

Play Ball: **TBS** will exclusively televise the American League and National League Wild Card games in '12 and '13. The new postseason format will feature the two Wild Card teams in the AL and NL playing in a single-elimination game with each winner advancing to compete with the 3 division champions from its League in the Division Series. **MLB** also announced that 2 Division Series games in each of the '12 and '13 seasons will shift from TBS to **MLB Network**. It marks the 1st time that MLB will air live postseason games.

USA Upfronts: Talent did the talking at the **USA** Upfront this year, with no executives to be seen on stage. So it was fitting that **WWE** superstar *John Cena* announced via a tweet at the event that "WWE Monday Night Raw" will expand to a 3-hour event on USA beginning July 23. The network talent spoke highly of its twitter followers, including them as a part of the family. Speaking of relatives, the net also announced its expansion into comedy with its newest acquisition: "Modern Family." Upcoming half-hour comedies include "Benched," a high-powered attorney has to go work at the public defender's office, and "The Diccio Brothers," a promising dot-com entrepreneur moves to the very politically correct culture of Silicon Valley with dreams of making it big. *Denis Leary's* "Sirens," about a group of Chicago EMTs who are great at their jobs but bad at just about everything else, and *Michael Feldman's* "Paging Dr. Freed" is on the comedy slate as well. New dramas on tap: "Bang Bang," a veteran hitman is saved by a novice hired gun and then teams up; "Rare," about a chef who's good with a knife both inside and outside of the kitchen; and "Fallen," a gruff cop develops a rare condition where he can see emotions. On the reality side, "Bride or Best Man," (wt) has grooms and their best men plan the wedding. *Bruce Campbell* of "Burn Notice" finished off the presentation, unsure whether to be upset or flattered about being last. He went with the latter: "Basically, this whole evening has been leading up to me." He welcomed *Sigourney Weaver*, star of the political drama "Political Animals" premiering this summer, to the family as well, and offered what appeared to be a proposition: "We're gonna be greenrooming." Entertainment pre- and post-show included *Mark Ronson*, *Erykah Badu* and *The Dap-Kings*.

Digital Hot List: Yesterday, we presented a few questionnaire snippets from guest presenters helping us out at **CableFAX's** May 21 breakfast in Boston. Today, we thought we'd share a few insights from fellow Digital Hot Lister *Nomi Bergman*, president of *Bright House Networks*. We couldn't be more honored that Bergman will be giving special Welcome Remarks at the May 21 event. **What's your favorite digital toy and why?** I love my voice-to-text service from PhoneTag; I would fight to keep it! It's a killer time saver for me to receive my voice mail messages in text form. **When it comes to digital trends, what's something the kids are doing today that we'll all be doing tomorrow?** They really like working with Google Docs, so that they can simultaneously edit stories they are writing—with their cousins, across the miles! I think tools like this are an important part of our future. **Without social media, the world would be just a little bit...** gentler. I enjoy using Facebook. The increased transparency and value of connections is terrific, but I can't help but be concerned about the downside of self image and other potential issues it escalates for our youth. **Would you rather own a flying car or a jetpack—and why?** A flying car, certainly. Who would not want a "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" by their side?! **[For more info on the May 21 breakfast: http://www.cablefax.com/cfplevents/bow2012/digit_hot_list.html]**

Mas Upfronts: At its upfront Wed, **ESPN Deportes** announced the launch of several digital initiatives, originals and added sports programming. Later this year the new digital platform "ESPN Deportes+ por ESPN3" will launch and offer more than 200 live sporting events in Spanish, from the Barclay's Premier League, World Cup Qualifiers, college sports and many others. The content will be available on computers, smartphones, tablets and **Xbox**, with a distribution of approximately 7.7mln HHs. Additional soccer programming to air on ESPN Deportes includes 60 matches per season for the next 3 seasons of the UEFA Europe League, nearly 80 qualifying matches and international friendlies and select matches of top Brazilian soccer leagues Campeonato Brasileiro and Campeonato Paulista. 2 news programs will debut: Hosted

BUSINESS & FINANCE

by Carolina Guillen, "Redes #ESPN" will focus on sports topics trending in social media, and "Raza Deportiva," an ESPN Deportes morning radio show, will debut on the network for the first time. On the original programming front, the network announced 3 new series: "El Bar" takes place in various bars throughout the U.S. For each show an ESPN host will engage a sports personality and an entertainment star in a relaxed interview setting. "Capitales del Futbol" is a series of doc-style profiles of soccer legends. And "Born and Raised" is a digital series hosted by radio and DJ personality *Chuey Martinez* targeting young, bilingual Hispanic sports fans. Also announced: ESPN Deportes has expanded its Miami studio to enable HD production. Lastly, ESPN Deportes Radio will soon be available in the top 10 U.S. Hispanic markets, reaching nearly 80% of the Hispanic population via its 42 affiliates.

People: *Yvette Kanouff*, who joined **Cablevision** in Mar as vp, engineering, software design, will now serve as evp, corp engineering & tech. The post was formally held by *James Blackley*, who recently left the MSO. She'll continue to report to *Wilt Hildenbrand*. CVC also announced this week that *Jerry Genova* will return to the company as evp, network mgmt & field ops. He first joined the MSO in '75, holding various positions until departing in '00 and becoming a consultant to various companies (including CVC).

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	05/17 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	05/17 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DIRECTV:	46.06	(0.81)	CLEARWIRE:	1.06	(0.08)
DISH:	29.14	(0.89)	CONCURRENT:	3.46	(0.09)
DISNEY:	44.33	(0.75)	CONVERGYS:	13.22	(0.06)
GE:	18.88	(0.12)	CSG SYSTEMS:	16.62	(0.21)
NEWS CORP:	19.69	(0.3)	ECHOSTAR:	27.70	(0.43)
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	11.12	(0.35)	GOOGLE:	623.05	(5.88)
CHARTER:	63.34	(1.96)	HARMONIC:	4.18	(0.08)
COMCAST:	28.35	(0.5)	INTEL:	26.19	(0.3)
COMCAST SPCL:	28.03	(0.42)	JDSU:	10.00	(0.3)
GCI:	6.89	0.02	LEVEL 3:	22.45	(0.47)
KNOWLOGY:	19.35	(0.16)	MICROSOFT:	29.72	(0.18)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	48.52	(1.7)	MOTOROLA MOBILITY:	39.20	(0.15)
LIBERTY INT:	17.11	(0.78)	RENTRAK:	15.56	(0.63)
SHAW COMM:	18.80	(0.02)	SEACHANGE:	7.99	0.02
TIME WARNER CABLE:	74.48	(1.87)	SONY:	14.24	0.48
VIRGIN MEDIA:	21.65	(0.65)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	2.36	(0.04)
WASH POST:	334.01	(7.99)	TIVO:	9.33	(0.25)
PROGRAMMING					
AMC NETWORKS:	40.00	(2.18)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	14.10	(0.51)
CBS:	30.02	(1.76)	VONAGE:	1.70	UNCH
CROWN:	1.50	UNCH	YAHOO:	14.87	(0.41)
DISCOVERY:	49.08	(2.11)	TELCOS		
GRUPO TELEVISIA:	19.56	(0.21)	AT&T:	33.29	0.10
HSN:	36.84	(0.86)	VERIZON:	41.37	0.49
INTERACTIVE CORP:	45.30	(2.18)	MARKET INDICES		
LIONSGATE:	12.44	0.16	DOW:	12442.49	(156.06)
LODGENET:	1.60	(0.06)	NASDAQ:	2813.69	(60.35)
NEW FRONTIER:	1.51	(0.02)	S&P 500:	1304.86	(19.94)
OUTDOOR:	6.59	(0.27)			
SCRIPPS INT:	51.12	(1.87)			
TIME WARNER:	34.62	(0.65)			
VALUEVISION:	1.62	0.06			
VIACOM:	51.92	0.13			
WWE:	8.39	(0.27)			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADVANTAGE:	2.25	UNCH			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	1.42	(0.03)			
AMDOCS:	29.68	(0.13)			
AMPHENOL:	52.26	(0.43)			
AOL:	26.29	(0.47)			
APPLE:	530.12	(15.96)			
ARRIS GROUP:	11.96	(0.29)			
AVID TECH:	7.09	0.04			
BLNDER TONGUE:	1.09	0.11			
BROADCOM:	31.30	(0.88)			
CISCO:	16.55	(0.14)			



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PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

CableTime, Baby...

Who said the Upfronts were only for content networks? Not **Time Warner Cable Media**, which continues to treat its local and regional advertisers to same kind of swanky, celebrity-fueled frivolity that's usually reserved for Madison Avenue honchos and big national brands. Just last week, the MSO kicked off its own Upfront season with an event at the famed Roosevelt in Hollywood, complete with an open bar, plenty of hors d'oeuvres and facetime with TV personalities like *Ron Perlman* (FX's "Sons of Anarchy") and *Vanessa Marano* (ABC Family's "Switched at Birth"), among many others. The party was pleasant enough, staged around the Roosevelt's pool and bar on a beautiful L.A. evening. But even more striking was how much the mostly small-business clients in attendance seemed to appreciate the attention. Without prompting, one jeweler from Palm Springs told **CableFAX** that no medium—not newspapers, local TV stations or the Internet—has provided more bang for her buck than local cable advertising on TWC. That's a testament to the hard work of Time Warner Cable Media pres, media sales *Joan Gillman* and her team. "Every day we engage with you, you make us better at what we do," she told attendees from a stage built over the pool. "Our job gets easier every year as our partners continue to produce original programming. We get to sell it every day." Even the celebs in attendance couldn't hide their cable love. "I don't think we'd have tested that well on network television," said Marano from the stage. "Go cable! Take risks!" Perlman, meanwhile, wandered up to the stage looking confused. "I'm here tonight because I thought this was where I pay my Time Warner Cable bill," he joked. "I'm a couple months in arrears." On a more serious note, Perlman praised cable's knack for snagging so many top writers and actors. "I think this is where all the greatest talent in the world is," he said. We agree. And kudos to Time Warner Cable Media for giving the Madison Avenue treatment to Main Street. **[Check cablefax.com on Fri for a slideshow from the event]. MG**

Reviews: "Animal Superpowers: Extreme Hunters," Sun, 9:30p, **Nat Geo Wild**. Using computer-generated imagery and excellent footage, Wild and host *Patrick Stewart* dig deep into adept hunters, including the mighty sperm whale, which hunts thousands of feet beneath the sea. And, boy, does it hunt, since its diet consists of 1 ton of food daily. We also loved the "Extreme Killers" ep (May 27, 9:30p), a survey of the best killers in the biz, including the alligator, which holds its breath for up to 15 minutes, augmenting its stealth and whose bite force is tantamount to "a family car falling on your head," Stewart tells us. Also none too shabby as killers are the Peregrine Falcon, which can fly straight down at 200mph and the Army Ant, essentially a blind insect that kills by swarming with siblings, all of whom descend from a single Queen. — "Kiss at Pine Lake," Sat, 8p, **Hallmark Channel**. Ah, summer lovin' done Hallmark style. This story of summer camp romance rekindled 15 years later also pits old-world traditional ways vs modern-day greed. Guess who wins? If your subs are obsessed with *Mia Kirshner* (who seems a bit off here) and *Barry Watson*, who does a very good job, they'll enjoy this mildly entertaining ditty.

Basic Cable Rankings (5/07/12-5/13/12) Mon-Sun Prime			
1	TNT	2.6	2584
2	USA	1.9	1888
3	DSNY	1.6	1538
4	FOXN	1.4	1393
4	HIST	1.4	1352
6	TBSC	1.3	1256
7	DSE	1.1	74
8	ADSM	0.9	939
8	A&E	0.9	898
8	FX	0.9	896
8	ESPN	0.9	844
12	HGTV	0.8	837
12	FOOD	0.8	836
12	SYFY	0.8	748
12	NBCS	0.8	666
12	NKJR	0.8	629
17	DISC	0.7	704
17	TLC	0.7	703
17	BRAV	0.7	656
17	AMC	0.7	647
17	TRU	0.7	625
22	NAN	0.6	630
22	FAM	0.6	617
22	TVLD	0.6	605
22	SPK	0.6	604
22	LIFE	0.6	594
22	MSNB	0.6	587
22	CMDY	0.6	543
22	LMN	0.6	537
22	HALL	0.6	533
22	ID	0.6	507
32	MTV	0.5	520
32	BET	0.5	490
32	APL	0.5	465
35	VH1	0.4	441
35	CNN	0.4	353
35	OXYG	0.4	352
35	NGC	0.4	315
35	NKTN	0.4	225
40	EN	0.3	334
40	ESP2	0.3	314
40	TRAV	0.3	306
40	HLN	0.3	298
40	DXD	0.3	253
40	GSN	0.3	235
40	WGNA	0.3	215

*Nielsen data supplied by ABC/Disney

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