

CableFAX Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Shock Waves: Ebersol's Departure Raises Qs Over Comcast's Olympic Interest

It was a given that *Dick Ebersol* would lead all things sports once the **Comcast-NBCU** deal was done. And it was a given he would lead the charge for Comcast to acquire Olympics rights. So, it was a jaw-dropper Thurs when the *NY Times* broke the news that after 22 years as the top exec at NBC Sports, he was leaving over a contract dispute. (Wouldn't you have thought all of that was worked out months ago?) Official word out of NBCU was that Ebersol was resigning, with *Steve Burke* saying the company will miss his "intellect, experience and passion for the television business." NBC Sports Cable Group *Mark Lazarus* is being kicked up to the post of chmn, NBC Sports Group. Former Turner Ent Group pres Lazarus joined Ebersol's team in Feb. Burke called Lazarus an industry vet who has worked with every major sports league. That's true, but he doesn't have Ebersol's Olympic experience—which includes the winning bids for the '10 Vancouver and '12 London Games. But maybe given NBC's \$230mln loss on the '10 Games, Comcast is OK being less aggressive on bidding for the '14 and '16 Games. (Were those champagne corks we heard popping in Bristol?) Ebersol told the Times he won't attend the upcoming rights auction in Switzerland, but Comcast is still expected go after rights. Still, the departure of Mr Olympics has many expecting it to be more of a showdown between **ABC/ESPN** and **Fox**. Ebersol's goodbye statement: "What I have enjoyed most is working so closely with so many truly outstanding and incredibly talented people over decades of producing some of the greatest events in the world. Those relationships are what I cherish most... I simply want to say thank you to all of those people who have touched me so deeply throughout my career."

Baker Backlash: Ripples continue from **FCC** commish *Meredith Attwell Baker's* hire by **Comcast**. **Public Knowledge** asked the FCC Thurs to reinstate a requirement for officials to file a publicly available letter with recusal info. While it said "all available evidence" points to Baker and staff adhering to recusal procedures, PK sees a problem with the procedures as no one in the public, and probably few at the FCC, knew she had talked with Comcast until she announced her departure. Meanwhile, the *Washington Post* reports that Comcast has reached out to WA state non-profit **Reel Grrls** to let them know its funding was never in jeopardy. The group for young women interested in filmmaking told the *WSJ* it had received a letter from Comcast vp, comm *Steve Kipp* pulling its funding after it tweeted, "OMG! @FCC Commissioner Baker voted 2 approve Comcast/NBC merger & is now lving FCC for A JOB AT COMCAST?!? <http://su.pr/1trT4z> #mediajustice."

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Competition: DISH is quickly putting its **Blockbuster** purchase to use, offering new subs 3 months of Blockbuster By Mail. The offer is available to customers who sign up for qualifying packages through Aug 10.

In the States: Comcast partnered with **DreamIt Ventures** to provide seed funding, training, mentoring and other benefits to 5 minority-led startups through DreamIt's accelerator program. It's the 1st investment initiative from the \$20mln fund created by Comcast as part of the **NBCU** transaction. Details on submitting an application can be found at dreamitventures.com. -- Business-before-govt-intervention group **Broadband for America** reports that broadband providers have invested more than \$250bln in the effort to expand broadband since '08. It cites data from **NCTA**, **CTIA** and **US Telecom**. Industry projects put this year's investment alone at \$60bln+.

Carriage: **Outdoor Channel** launched on **Comcast** systems in Charleston, SC, in HD and SD. The SD channel is available on Comcast's Digital Preferred and Digital Sports Ent tiers.

Technology: **CableLabs** hosted an Interoperability Lab Event earlier this month that included participants running their ETV apps across a record number of 12 user agents (players that reside on STBs and graphically present the apps on TV). The user agents range from cable ops to supplier implementations from **Comcast** legacy, Comcast OCAP, **Time Warner Cable** ODN, **Cox** Tahoe, **FourthWall's** Sara, **MOT i-Guide**, **Cisco's** Passport and OCAP agents, **Zodiac Interactive's** Sara and OCAP agents, **Ignite Solutions** and CableLabs' user agent. All 12 were able to demo full return path connectivity functioning across 4 cable plants.

Upfronts: If you haven't got the memo yet that Hispanic TV is super hot, **Univision's** announcement Thurs that it is launching 3 new cable nets next year should seal it. The nets will be focused on sports (particularly soccer), novelas and news (**Cfax**, 4/19). The news came at its upfront Thurs, where it said it has nearly 500 hours of new original productions scheduled for prime and late night. It also plans to order more shows from **Grupo Televisa**. -- **Adult Swim's** slate of new original series include "NTSF:SD:SUV" (National Terrorism Strike Force: San Diego: Sport Utility Vehicle), 15-min eps "ripped from the headlines" and "Black Dynamite," based on the '09 feature film of the same name.

Ratings: TNT's Game 2 coverage of the Heat-Bulls matchup in the NBA finals Wed delivered 10.0mln total viewers and a 6.1 HH. The net said it also out-delivered all of cable and bested the prime average for **CBS**, **ABC** and **NBC** on HHs and key demos. -- **WE tv** original series "Braxton Family Values" on Tues helped propel WE to #1 women's cable net for W18-49 delivery (412K); and #4 for W18-49, #5 for W25-54 (363K) and #7 for W18-34 (226K) among all ad-supported cable networks.

Programming: **CNN** and the Southern Republican Leadership Conference will host a GOP presidential town hall debate in Charleston, SC, Jan 19. -- **BBC World News** will broadcast *Andrew Marr's* interview with *President Obama* Sun, 1pm ET. It was recorded Thurs, on the eve of the president's trip to Europe. -- **A&E** ordered 7 eps of "Flipped," a real estate flipping series starring "Survivor" star *Russell Hantz* (late '11 premiere). -- "The Truth Below," **MTV's** 6th original movie since it launched the initiative 2 years ago, is a psychological thriller (June 16, 10pm). -- **OWN** will debut 4 new series next month: "Unfaithful: Stories of Betrayal," couples struggling to come to terms with infidelity (June 6); "The Dr *Laura Berman* Show," sex talk (June 6); "Visionaries: Inside the Creative Mind," inside the minds of innovators like *Tyler Perry* (June 17) and "Carson Nation," makeover series (June 25). -- **Current TV's** 5th season of doc series "Vanguard" kicks off June 29,



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- Specific steps cable operators and programmers can take to find interested brands and agencies.
- New ideas and techniques from case studies and examples in the industry.
- The best near-term and long-term strategies to take full advantage of advertising model changes.

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

immediately following the premiere of "Countdown with Keith Olbermann."

Research: Time Warner Cable

awarded 4 research stipends of \$20K each to academics as part of its Research Program on Digital Communications. The studies are: "Next Generation Content for Next Generation Networks," by *Eli Noam*, Columbia University; "The Effect of Internet Access on Labor Supply Decisions," by *Christopher Stanton*, U of UT, *Katrina Kosec*, **Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab** and **Intl Food Policy Research Inst**, and *Sara Jo Champion*, Stanford U; "Program Value in the Evolving Television Audience Marketplace," by *Philip Napoli*, Fordham U; and "Assessing the Impact of Broadband on Informal Education," by *Pedro Ferreira*, Carnegie Mellon U.

Business/Finance: Time Warner Cable

is raising \$625mln pounds from a bond sale. Yup, you read that right. It's the MSO's 1st bond sale in the currency and equates to \$1bln US. Proceeds from the sterling denominated notes (20-year maturity) are expected to be used for general corporate purposes. -- 2011 deal volume in the TV station sector totaled \$185mln through Apr 30, marking a 25% increase over the prior-year period, according to **SNL Kagan**. **NBC**, **Nexstar**, **Liberty Media** and **Daystar TV Network** have all been involved in the market this year. Total broadcast deal volume through Apr 30 tallied \$3.1bln, compared to \$363mln in '10.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	05/19 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	05/19 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DIRECTV:	50.21	(0.03)	BLNDER TONGUE:	1.93	0.02
DISH:	29.91	(0.03)	BROADCOM:	33.58	(0.66)
DISNEY:	41.38	(0.04)	CISCO:	16.66	0.01
GE:	19.96	0.20	CLEARWIRE:	4.50	0.01
NEWS CORP:	18.62	0.33	CONCURRENT:	6.09	UNCH
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	34.08	0.35	CONVERGYS:	13.40	(0.01)
CHARTER:	57.62	0.26	CSG SYSTEMS:	19.30	(0.04)
COMCAST:	25.38	0.01	ECHOSTAR:	33.49	0.15
COMCAST SPCL:	23.89	0.02	GOOGLE:	531.25	1.44
GCI:	11.56	(0.1)	HARMONIC:	7.66	(0.03)
KNOLGY:	15.07	(0.04)	INTEL:	23.54	(0.34)
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	89.34	1.26	JDSU:	20.44	0.02
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	45.05	0.20	LEVEL 3:	1.85	(0.03)
LIBERTY INT:	17.97	0.38	MICROSOFT:	24.71	0.03
SHAW COMM:	21.42	0.41	RENTRAK:	20.73	(0.1)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	77.32	(0.31)	SEACHANGE:	9.98	0.04
VIRGIN MEDIA:	32.34	0.14	SONY:	27.22	(0.58)
WASH POST:	420.90	5.11	SPRINT NEXTEL:	5.33	0.10
PROGRAMMING					
CBS:	27.36	0.32	THOMAS & BETTS:	55.60	0.15
CROWN:	1.91	(0.04)	TIVO:	9.47	(0.01)
DISCOVERY:	45.35	0.16	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	26.24	(0.18)
GRUPO TELEVISA:	23.66	0.19	VONAGE:	4.75	0.07
HSN:	33.32	0.03	YAHOO:	16.35	0.39
INTERACTIVE CORP:	35.05	0.53	TELCOS		
LIBERTY:	42.08	0.14	AT&T:	31.40	0.20
LIBERTY STARZ:	76.08	(0.18)	VERIZON:	37.32	0.23
LIONSGATE:	5.95	UNCH	MARKET INDICES		
LODGENET:	3.25	(0.04)	DOW:	12605.32	45.14
NEW FRONTIER:	1.57	(0.09)	NASDAQ:	2823.31	8.31
OUTDOOR:	6.06	(0.16)	S&P 500:	1343.60	2.92
SCRIPPS INT:	51.99	0.23			
TIME WARNER:	36.89	0.12			
VALUEVISION:	6.25	0.05			
VIACOM:	59.99	0.37			
WWE:	10.26	0.09			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADDVANTAGE:	2.72	0.02			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	5.84	(0.1)			
AMDOCS:	30.10	0.22			
AMPHENOL:	54.90	(0.32)			
AOL:	19.14	(0.01)			
APPLE:	340.53	0.66			
ARRIS GROUP:	10.86	(0.08)			
AVID TECH:	17.23	(0.01)			
BIGBAND:	2.29	(0.06)			

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PROGRAMMER'S PAGE with Chad Heiges and Seth Arenstein

A Chat with WE tv's Kim Martin

While "Bridezillas" begins its 8th season June 12, **WE tv** has moved beyond nuptials. It's focusing on families now, the net's pres/GM Kim Martin says. **WE tv isn't just about weddings anymore.** You're exactly right. We've broadened our programming to focus on the modern view of family life. We're looking at families because there are few families that are the old-fashioned, traditional families. Family life today really is undefined. So we're giving viewers an unfiltered look at the drama and chaos of families, along with the big personalities. And we're looking at those families at a moment in time that's so relatable to women. So it could be when someone's getting married, having children, dealing with sibling rivalries or when a parent moves in with you, like [WE tv series] "Joan Knows Best." This all goes to our new tag line, 'Life as we know it.' **Your brand filter seems very defined. When you started with WE, was it as clear as it is now? Was it a journey?** That's a really good question. It's definitely been an evolution. When I got to WE it was primarily a film network; it was chick flicks. We had our first bit of success with the wedding genre. But we recognized that's only one key stage in many women's lives. **How did you evolve?** It was partially as a way to differentiate ourselves from the competition as well as a reflection of what women were telling us they want to see on television. They want to see shows about people they can relate to, who have the same kind of issues and problems as well as joy in their lives that our viewers are experiencing. **How do you differentiate your shows? Do viewers confuse your shows about cakes and cupcakes with those of other networks?** The shows on WE are less about the cakes and more about the characters...The cake is like the icing on the show.... These shows are really about the families. **With the shows being more about families and less about the cake, I guess it's less fattening.** [Laughter] Be sure you put that on anything that women read! SA

[Editor's Note: Martin discusses social media and the appeal of "Braxton Family Values" at cablefax.com]

Highlights: "Too Big to Fail," Mon, 9p, **HBO**. With a slew of details and characters, dramatizing the near collapse of a string of investment banks and possibly the global economy is a vast undertaking. But HBO's mixed economics and entertainment so well and the cast is so strong (*William Hurt, James Woods and Topher Grace*, to name a few), we didn't want this dense film to end. SA

Worth a Look: "Children of Promise," Fri, 8p ET, **Investigation Discovery**. Some will dismiss this as propaganda; fine. They'll miss a terrific story about group homes that treat the most troubled kids. Sagas of the 2 youths profiled, a violent extrovert and a scared introvert, who've lived in multiple foster homes, are unforgettable. – "Area 51 Declassified," Sun, 10p, **Nat Geo**. Forget the hype about aliens, Area 51's best bits are newly declassified photos and footage showing the Cold War's super secret projects. SA

Basic Cable Rankings (5/9/11-5/15/11)			
Mon-Sun Prime			
1	TNT	3.2	3215
2	USA	2.2	2176
3	DSNY	1.7	1650
4	ESPN	1.5	1487
5	FOXN	1.4	1425
5	HIST	1.4	1358
7	NAN	1	1055
7	ADSM	1	993
9	A&E	0.9	941
9	TBSC	0.9	922
9	AMC	0.9	920
9	DISC	0.9	895
9	FX	0.9	882
9	FAM	0.9	867
9	HGTV	0.9	859
16	CMDY	0.8	747
16	TRU	0.8	725
16	NKJR	0.8	587
19	SYFY	0.7	733
19	LIFE	0.7	728
19	MTV	0.7	654
19	MSNB	0.7	653
19	VS	0.7	517
24	FOOD	0.6	633
24	TLC	0.6	620
24	TVLD	0.6	616
24	SPK	0.6	601
24	BRAV	0.6	577
24	CNN	0.6	559
24	HALL	0.6	552
24	ID	0.6	419
32	BET	0.5	497
32	APL	0.5	456
32	LMN	0.5	399
35	EN	0.4	428
35	OXYG	0.4	322
35	NGC	0.4	285
38	TRAV	0.3	334
38	VH1	0.3	308
38	HLN	0.3	305
38	OWN	0.3	272
38	DXD	0.3	260
38	CMT	0.3	254
38	SOAP	0.3	236
38	WE	0.3	230
38	SPD	0.3	209

*Nielsen data supplied by ABC/Disney

CableFAX
PROGRAM AWARDS

Sponsorship Opportunities: Debbie Vodenos at 301.354.1695 or dvodenos@accessintel.com
Entry Questions: Mary Lou French at 301.354.1851 or mfrench@accessintel.com

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