

CableFAX Daily™

Friday — May 21, 2010

What the Industry Reads First

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Pole Dance: FCC Looks to Make Attachments Easier

It's a shimmy in the right direction, but more footwork is needed before pole attachment rates get a complete makeover. The FCC adopted an order and a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Thurs aimed at reducing the costs associated with utility poles, one of the elements of the National Broadband Plan and a frequent concern of cable operators. Thurs' order gives cable ops and other attachers a statutory right to timely access to poles and clarifies that they can use the same space- and cost-saving techniques that pole owners use (such as placing attachments on both sides of a pole). But the FCC's goal of lowering rates and making them as close to uniform as possible was reserved for the FNPRM. Among other things, it suggests a 5-part timeline for responding to pole attachment requests that is based on NY and CT pole attachment rules. A utility would still have 45 days to respond in detail to a request, but it would have additional deadlines: 14 days to tender an estimate of charges for any make-ready work; 14 days for an applicant to accept tendered estimate; 45 days to complete make-ready work once payment is made; 30 days (if needed) for any coordination and make-ready work required in the event that some existing attachers fail to move their facilities as directed by the utility (ie, utilities will be able to move incumbent LECs after 45 days if they haven't responded). The reforms won't apply to states that already regulate their pole attachment rates. There are 21, according to an FCC document released Thurs. The Commission also lacks the authority to regulate small utilities that are municipally or cooperatively owned. "Establishing a low uniform rate will lower the cost of broadband deployment and enable more Americans to be connected to this vital service," NCTA's Kyle McSarrow said in support of the vote. "We look forward to working with the Commission to quickly adopt new rules that will achieve these key national objectives." ACA also applauded the move, adding that it hopes Congress will pass legislation recommended in the Broadband Plan and that would eliminate municipalities and electric co-ops' exemption that allows them to "charge excessive fees to rural broadband providers."

Weather Wars: DISH is replacing The Weather Channel with The Weather Cast, blaming TWC's move to a mix of movies and other entertainment-focused programming. Weather Channel said the 2 have been negotiating for months and that DISH is the 1st distributor to drop it rather than pay the "standard industry rates" that others in the industry have already agreed to pay. "The Weather Channel has been serving the American public for more than 28

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years and viewers trust and rely on it as their weather authority," a Weather Channel spokesperson said, urging customers to contact DirecTV or local cable/telcos to continue receiving the channel. DISH is the 1st to carry Weather Cast, a 24-hour weather service featuring live weather reporting, interactive forecasting and real-time national storm tracking. DISH's announcement took a few swings at Weather Channel, saying it is customized for cable and has never offered satellite customers the localization they require. "Our customers always tell us that the only thing they want in a weather channel is weather reporting," said *Dave Shull*, DISH svp, programming. "We believe The Weather Cast is the best available weather service in America."

Just Google It: Connected TV, that is. Buzzed about and trialed by a small number of DISH subs for months now, Google TV officially bowed as an open Android-based platform allowing consumers to watch content from the Internet, mobile apps and personal content libraries through Web-connected TVs. While Sony will include the software (featuring Intel processors) into a line of HD Bravia sets and Blu-ray players, DISH, aided by the aforementioned trials, is the 1st multichannel op to announce launch plans. Beginning this fall, DISH will integrate Google TV with all of its HD DVR receivers, allowing subs to not only search for content across platforms but also hyperlink web content back to multichannel TV and overlay online content related to shows, movies, actors and more. While DISH may be Google TV's initial partner, though, the platform is designed to work with any TV op. Also, Rovi plans to bring its TotalGuide TV navigation solution to Google TV.

At the Portals: In other FCC meeting news Thurs, the Commission adopted the 14th annual report on mobile wireless competition. There was a rift between Dems and Republicans because for the 1st-time ever the report failed to declare that effective competition exists in the space. It didn't say there was not effective competition, but the lack of a call in favor of competition riled Republicans. Staffers said the report focused on data vs conclusions. Some examples: at the end of '08, 90% of Americans had a mobile wireless device, and one measure indicates that concentration has increased 32% since 2003 and 6.5% in 2008.

Competition: In the coming weeks, AT&T will enhance its U-verse DVR by adding features that allow customers to prioritize all scheduled HH recordings and store recordings until a specified date. And to its YP.com TV app, which allows subs to search local businesses by zip code, the telco will add the ability to route calls to home phones. -- DirecTV will add eps of former HBO series "The Wire" (Jul 18) and returns original show "Supreme Court of Comedy" (Jun 17) to the lineup for it's The 101 Network.

In the States: Comcast customers in S-A/Cisco markets will start to get the i-Guide this year, with launches planned on a market-by-market basis this year. Sister pub Communications Technology reports that the guide will



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hit CT first in June. It is already in a majority of Comcast's **Moto** markets. -- **Suddenlink** has expanded the availability of its Max 107.0 HSD service offering speeds up to 107Mbps to include Tyler and Whitehouse, TX. In Mar, the MSO launched the tier in 3 Austin suburbs. -- **Time Warner Cable** on Wed opened a new retail location on Manhattan's Upper West Side; it will serve as the model for TWC stores across the country. Existing local and retail locations will be redesigned throughout '10 and '11 to the more contemporary look. Check it out at 2554 Broadway at the corner of 96th St.

Research: TV remains the top choice of ad agency clients, according to **STRATA's** 1Q ad survey, but while 41.8% of agencies said their corporate clients are more focused on TV than any other medium, that tally nosedived 27 percentage points vs 1 yr ago. Still, nearly 40% of respondents believe it will be at least 5 years until they spend more on digital media ads than traditional media including TV and print. Nearly 88% said they are most likely to use **Facebook** in client campaigns this yr.

Technology: **Nielsen** validated the online video publishing wares of **Comcast Media Center** and **thePlatform** as preserving its audio watermarks, used to measure audiences for both video programming commercials based on C3 ratings. The Comcast properties said the validation is critical to advancing multiplatform programming initiatives such as **TV Everywhere**.

Online: **Fox News** will launch this fall **FoxNewsLatino.com**, featuring breaking news and other stories relevant to the Latino community, in both English and Spanish. Also, special content from the Website will be featured on **FoxNews.com's** live streaming show "Strategy Room."

VOD: **Comcast's** CA Region partnered with the **US Small Business Admin** to provide local SMBs with tools, info and resources via the MSO's VOD platform. Launching Sun as part of Nat'l Small Business Week, the offering features coverage of workshops and seminars conducted by the SBA's San Fran office, as well as videos and sessions from the '10 **Governor's Conference on Small Business & Entrepreneurship** staged recently in Oakland. -- **Armstrong** and **Tribune Media Services** partnered to develop and test a bi-monthly VOD catalog and weekly VOD e-newsletter in an effort to increase awareness of the op's on demand offerings and stimulate trial and repeat usage.

Privacy Patrol: Reps *Joe Barton* (R-TX) and *Ed Markey* (D-MA), co-chairs of the **House Privacy Caucus**, are quizzing the **FTC** after **Google** recently revealed that it collected private email and Web surfing data sent over Wi-Fi Networks. They want to know if the Commission is investigating the matter and whether Google's data collection practices violate the public's reasonable expectation of privacy. They also want to know if the FTC believes it has authority to take action against Google if deemed necessary.

Programming: **Military Channel** will broadcast DC's Memorial Day Parade—the largest in the country—for the 1st time ever, Mon, 2pm ET. -- **VH1** joined with the **National Fatherhood Leaders Group** to promote watch parties surrounding the series premiere of "Dad Camp" (May 31), featuring a licensed psychologist's work with 6 fathers-to-be, along with their pregnant girlfriends, to help prepare the young men for fatherhood. -- **Syfy** will air in Aug crossover eps involving "Warehouse 13" and "Eureka," in which 1 character from each series gains feature in the other show.

Upfronts: **Univision** unveiled a record 20+ new programs across its 3 nets and **Univision Interactive**. "Eva Luna," the 1st **Univision Studios** production in collaboration with **Venevision**, is a novella focused on a successful advertising exec. Other Univision series include "Cuna de Lobos" (Cradle of Wolves), a popular and controversial novella in the '80s from Mexico, and "Mira Quién Baila" (Look Who's Dancing), a Hispanic "Dancing with the Stars." New Galavision shows include "El Peso del Matrimonio" (Back in Wedding Shape), couples get back into the shape they were on their wedding day, and "Zero Hour," a countdown leading up to some of the most historic events as they unfold minute by minute. -- **MTV Tr3s** is rebranding itself as **Tr3s: MTV, Musica y Mas** to widen its appeal among Latinos, and will align and build synergies with **MTVN Intl's** US Hispanic and Latin American ops in Miami to perpetuate the new vision.

On the Circuit: **NAMIC** will accept through Jun 30 submissions for its '10 **Excellence in Multi-Cultural Marketing Awards** recognizing cable campaigns that demonstrate best practices in multi-cultural and ethnic targeted marketing. Honorees will be feted at the org's annual conference, Sept 14-15 in NYC. Info at **NAMIC.com**. -- **GAC** and its cable partners have done mighty good work lately, raising nearly \$2mIn for victims of the flooding in the Nashville area through the **Keep on Playin'** concert/telethon (*Cfax*, 5/19). Pledges will be taken through the weekend as the concert is available On Demand. Cable partners include **Comcast, Cox, Time Warner Cable, Cablevision, Charter, Insight, San Bruno, Wave, Click** and **Shrewsbury**. -- **Expo.SCTE.org** went live to provide details and

BUSINESS & FINANCE

accept registrations for the '10 SCTE Cable-Tec Expo (Oct 20-22 in New Orleans).

People: Big Ten Net upped Michael Calderon to vp, digital and interactive media. -- Rebecca Campbell, the ABC 7 gm who became a familiar face during the Cablevision-Disney spat, was named pres, **ABC Owned TV Stations Group**. She will report to Anne Sweeney. -- Susanne Meixsell, a former PA school superintendent, was named vp, professional dev for **Discovery Education**. She'll oversee in-person and online training ops.

Honors: Richard Ramlall, **RCN** svp, strategic external affairs & programming, picked up 2 Bulldog Awards for excellence in media and public relations—a gold for Corporate PR Professional of the Year and silver for Public Affairs Professional of the Year.

Business/Finance: **RCN** shareholders this week approved the over-builder's proposed \$1.2bln purchase by **ABRY Partners**. As **FCC** and other regulatory approval is still required, **RCN** expects the deal to close in either 3Q or 4Q. -- **FCC** approval of **Verizon's** pending sale of systems in 14 states to **Frontier** may be imminent, according to **Stifel Nicolas**, which said the pair made commitments to the commission yesterday focused on operations support systems, wholesale and interconnection terms and broadband deployment. **WV** recently became the final state to OK the deal.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

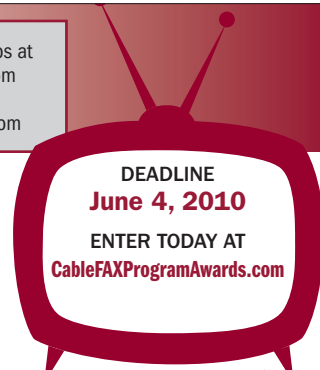
Company	05/20 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	05/20 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DIRECTV:	36.53	(1.26)	APPLE:	237.76	(10.58)
DISH:	20.81	(1.34)	ARRIS GROUP:	11.04	(0.48)
DISNEY:	31.99	(1.4)	AVID TECH:	13.56	(0.53)
GE:	16.26	(1)	BIGBAND:	2.85	(0.01)
NEWS CORP:	14.96	(0.83)	BLNDER TONGUE:	1.28	(0.06)
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	22.22	(1.54)	BROADCOM:	31.78	(0.8)
COMCAST:	16.79	(0.79)	CISCO:	23.31	(0.95)
COMCAST SPCL:	16.03	(0.74)	CLEARWIRE:	7.62	(0.34)
GCI:	5.95	(0.23)	COMMSCOPE:	27.21	(0.74)
KNOLOGY:	12.05	(0.69)	CONCURRENT:	5.29	(0.26)
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	38.45	(2.86)	CONVERGYS:	11.16	(0.35)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	23.34	(1.48)	CSG SYSTEMS:	20.84	(0.86)
LIBERTY INT:	12.29	(0.6)	ECHOSTAR:	19.74	(0.52)
MEDIACOM:	5.16	(0.23)	GOOGLE:	475.01	(19.42)
RCN:	14.06	(0.18)	HARMONIC:	5.53	(0.25)
SHAW COMM:	17.35	(0.61)	INTEL:	20.79	(0.81)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	48.93	(2.26)	JDSU:	10.37	(0.82)
VIRGIN MEDIA:	14.80	(0.82)	LEVEL 3:	1.25	(0.03)
WASH POST:	477.65	(17.94)	MICROSOFT:	27.11	(1.13)
PROGRAMMING					
CBS:	13.88	(1.03)	MOTOROLA:	6.70	(0.11)
CROWN:	1.81	(0.04)	PHILIPS:	29.16	(1.68)
DISCOVERY:	35.79	(1.26)	RENTRAK:	24.00	(0.32)
GRUPO TELEVISA:	18.01	(0.36)	SEACHANGE:	7.89	(0.64)
HSN:	24.68	(1.1)	SONY:	30.67	(1.06)
INTERACTIVE CORP:	21.48	(0.82)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	4.32	(0.26)
LIBERTY:	31.31	(1.81)	THOMAS & BETTS:	37.97	(1.31)
LIBERTY STARZ:	52.66	(2.34)	TIVO:	8.84	(0.75)
LIONSGATE:	6.84	(0.01)	TOLLGRADE:	6.39	(0.03)
LODGENET:	5.11	(0.1)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	20.04	(0.92)
NEW FRONTIER:	1.87	(0.01)	VONAGE:	1.82	(0.16)
OUTDOOR:	6.25	(0.22)	YAHOO:	15.10	(0.69)
PLAYBOY:	3.63	(0.36)	TELCOS		
RHI:	0.23	(0.02)	AT&T:	24.96	(0.61)
SCRIPPS INT:	43.20	(2.15)	QWEST:	5.01	(0.11)
TIME WARNER:	29.74	(1.02)	VERIZON:	27.76	(0.75)
VALUEVISION:	1.93	(0.04)	MARKET INDICES		
VIACOM:	35.80	(1.27)	DOW:	10068.01	(376.36)
WWE:	15.87	(0.54)	NASDAQ:	2204.01	(94.36)
TECHNOLOGY					
ADC:	7.34	(0.22)			
ADDVANTAGE:	2.83	(0.15)			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	2.36	(0.16)			
AMDOCS:	29.72	(1.23)			
AMPHENOL:	41.19	(1.8)			
AOL:	21.42	(1.33)			

CableFAX PROGRAM AWARDS

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Entry Questions: Kate Schaeffer at 301.354.2303 or kschaeffer@accessintel.com

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PROGRAMMER'S PAGE with Chad Heiges and Seth Arenstein

So Many Options, So Few Appealing

With the financial markets spiraling downward and my summer vacation still 2 months away, I've been savoring every laugh, chortle or guffaw that comes my way. Thankfully, the broadcasters' intro of new fall shows is always good for a few (derisive) laughs, and this year is no different—in more ways than one. Before I skewer any of the new series—most of which will end up as back-lot flotsam—there are couple of points that must be addressed. First, the broads continue to churn out comedies at a brisk clip, I imagine due largely to great success with smashes including “30 Rock” and “Two and a Half Men.” Not counting “dramadies,” a surging genre with which **USA** has enjoyed particular and enduring success, the 4 big'uns greenlit at least 9 comedies. That's a lotta laugh tracks. Of note is the dearth of such shows on cable, at least those that qualify as big hits. **TBS** airs quite a few comedies, yet its ratings are down, and the only true laughers that routinely rank among the top cable telecasts air on **Disney Channel** and **Nickelodeon**. Second, who stole the creative minds of Hollywood? A source of disappointment and consternation as well as levity, broads have taken the movie studios' path in regurgitating old or hackneyed ideas. With budgets falling and consumer tastes across a wide range of age groups difficult to decipher, I get the reasons. But c'mon, a **CBS** remake of “Hawaii Five-O” (Hey Danno, book *Moonves!*) and scores of medical, legal and cop shows!?! Cable's not beyond reproach here, of course, but at least the industry infuses some edginess to procedurals. From my eyes, the worst to come: **Fox's** “Lonestar,” which the net calls “a provocative soap” centered on big TX oil, and **NBC's** “sexy” spy drama “Undercovers”...I'm already asleep. I guess I have to choose a promising option too, so I'll go with Fox's family adventure “Terra Nova” since *Spielberg's* involved and it appears inventive, at least. *CH*

Worth a Look: “Svetlana,” pilot, Thurs, 10:30p ET, **HDNet**. Just about anything fits in HDNet's eclectic slate, including “Svetlana,” its initial foray into scripted comedy. It centers on a Russian mail order bride who's departed her dull Midwest husband for the “glamour” of running a house of indiscreet pleasures near Hollywood. Surrounded by a predictable cast (an apathetic teen, a deadbeat husband, kinky clients and leggy Russian sex workers), this premise could have tired quickly. Yet the pilot shows promise, due largely to *Iris Bahr*, who sells Svetlana hard, equipping her with an overdone Russian “excent” that transforms side comments into comedic gems. Bahr's tireless performance and some special “cake” (don't ask) propel what could have been a campy dud into a riotous hoot. – “IFC Media Project,” Mon-Thurs, 8p, **IFC**. A quartet of irreverent 30-min docs about the Tea Party, Afghanistan, Wall St and Haiti. The most interesting might be the finale, which shows how foreign reporters made it to Haiti, including HDNet's *Dan Rather*, whose comments about journalism are insightful. *SA*

Notable: Props to **Fuse** for picking up Gulf AID: Concert for the Coast, which runs Sat, 11p ET/10p CT. The concert is in response to the oil spill in the Gulf and features *Lenny Kravitz* and *John Legend* among others. *SA*

Basic Cable Rankings			
(5/10/09-5/16/09)			
Mon-Sun Prime			
1	USA	2.4	2431
2	TNT	1.9	1906
3	DSNY	1.8	1753
4	ESPN	1.6	1625
5	NAN	1.4	1421
5	FOXN	1.4	1397
7	TBSC	1.1	1111
7	HIST	1.1	1082
9	TOON	1	996
9	A&E	1	975
11	DISC	0.9	905
12	HGTV	0.8	837
12	FX	0.8	815
12	AMC	0.8	770
12	TRU	0.8	730
12	NKJR	0.8	581
17	FOOD	0.7	735
17	FAM	0.7	730
17	SYFY	0.7	729
17	TLC	0.7	699
17	CMDY	0.7	666
17	TVLD	0.7	662
17	LIFE	0.7	662
17	BET	0.7	650
25	MSNB	0.6	592
25	SPK	0.6	575
25	HALL	0.6	555
25	BRAV	0.6	554
25	LMN	0.6	468
25	VS	0.6	461
31	MTV	0.5	506
31	APL	0.5	490
31	EN	0.5	459
31	CNN	0.5	456
31	VH1	0.5	451
36	HLN	0.4	356
36	TRAV	0.4	345
36	OXYG	0.4	341
36	ID	0.4	271
36	NGC	0.4	265
41	TWC	0.3	336
41	ESP2	0.3	289
41	SOAP	0.3	255
41	CMT	0.3	249
41	WGNA	0.3	245
41	GSN	0.3	237

*Nielsen data supplied by ABC/Disney

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