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CableFAX Daily™

Tuesday — June 11, 2013

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 24 / No. 112

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Still Disrupting: Cable's Place in the Digital Age

Disruptors may have colored the theme of Mon's opening session of the Cable Show, but everyone was very well behaved. "We're still the disruptors," **Showtime Nets** chmn/CEO *Matt Blank* declared, before calling out the media because "their favorite companies are companies with no revenue and no earnings." An obvious reference to press for startups such as **Aereo**, his comment hit a chord, drawing applause from the standing-room-only crowd. **Disney Media Nets** co-chair *Anne Sweeney* agreed that her company is a "disruptor," pointing to apps such as Watch ESPN. "But we're being disruptive in a way that's complementary to this great ecosystem. It's done in concert with MVPDs," she said. **AMC Nets** pres/CEO *Josh Sapan* rejected the word "disruptor," saying new technology is "just this rich, fun opportunity" to do things with the second screen and beyond. The friend vs foe discussion was center stage during a panel with digital media innovators, but the consensus was that everyone can work together. **Roku** gm, content service *Steve Shannon* said his company gets painted with the cord-cutter brush, but the roughly 70% of its customers subscribe to an MVPD service. Talking up **Twitter's** ability to drive tune-in, provide measurement and offer complementary ad models, Twitter COO *Ali Rowghani* said the social media platform was a friend all the way. "Among technology companies of are ilk, I don't think you'll find a bigger fan or supporter of television than Twitter," he said. Noted was a sense that cable needed to move faster, with **Jawbone** CEO *Hosain Rahman* commenting on the different pace of innovation between cable and Silicon Valley (though he was quick to add that **Comcast**, with which Jawbone is announcing a deal tomorrow, has been "great"). *Jim Bankoff*, CEO of online publisher **Vox Media**, said that the industry could move a lot faster. "You can't be afraid to disrupt anyone, especially yourselves," he said. **Charter** pres/CEO *Tom Rutledge*, the lone MSO on the panel, acknowledged that cable needs to move faster with technology. He also warned against thinking you can have ultimate control. "Anything that you put anywhere is going to end up on every screen. You can't control it," he said, adding that if you try to, someone will just break that model. As Sweeney put it, "the consumer has taken control, and they're not giving it back."

Analyze This: At a Cable Show panel Mon, analysts were bullish on cable's prospects with home security/automation and with small-to-medium business services. But they were less excited about the trend of rising programming prices. "It's not going to end well," said **BoA Merrill Lynch's** *Jessica Reif Cohen*, who predicted the next round of retrans

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consent negotiations would be in the \$2-range. “To the extent it becomes abusive, the industry is likely to consolidate,” added **Deutsche Bank’s Doug Mitchelson**. Theoretically, increasing programming costs won’t stop unless cord-cutting gets bad enough or until a cool technology comes in quickly enough to get **Comcast** and **Disney** in a room to renegotiate, **Wells Fargo Securities’ Marci Ryvicker** said. As for any sort of OTT or virtual MSO competition, that should be great for consumers. Reif Cohen said everyone is gaga over **Intel’s** user interface. She hasn’t seen it yet, but believes it will push advancements for cable, similar to how DBS propelled the industry to launch digital set-tops. Back to business services, the analysts stressed that the smaller and mid-size market holds the most opportunity, not the heavily telco-penetrated enterprise market. “The least attractive part of this segment is where you don’t have the assets—national. That’s good news for you,” said **Citigroup’s Jason Bazinet**. The Wall St wonks are especially interested to see if cable can move the needle on home security, which has been stalled at about 20% penetration. Through the addition of home monitoring, most believe it will, though Bazinet cautioned that **ADT** had rolled out a home monitoring product about 2 years ago and hasn’t seen demonstrable sub growth. He wondered aloud if marketing could be to blame.

TVE: Fox expects to bow several new TVE offerings/upgrades over the next 12 months, including regional and sports-related content, evp, distribution **Mike Biard** told Cable Show attendees at a panel Mon. **Comcast**, meanwhile, will continue to build out its in-home video services while working with other distributors to “raise the industry bar to have a more consistent message across the board,” said Comcast svp/gm, video services **Marcien Jenckes**. **Jeremy Legg**, **Turner** svp, business dev & multiplatform distribution, said Turner is working with MVPDs to simplify the authentication process, with NBCU evp, business dev & sales **Ron Lamprecht** adding that once TVE reaches a critical mass, **NBCU** will try to customize its platform to improve customer engagement. And while TVE might be partly a defensive move, Legg said, it’s also about attracting new subs. The content is “out there already,” so it would be “silly” not to put them on multiple platforms, Biard said, adding that financially, TVE content might not be “immediately monetizable” but will be in the long term. TVE’s inconsistent as different distributors have different approaches, said Jenckes, calling TV rights a “multi-tier problem.” Nonetheless, execs said multiplatform rights are increasingly part of TV rights deals but that multiplatform measurement is also critical. “Nielsen’s got to get the solutions out” over the course of next year, Legg said. In the ad world, “you don’t get paid if you don’t get measured,” said Jenckes. Comcast has been working with Nielsen on TVE measurement. The good news is “we are much closer than we have ever been,” said Jenckes.

CTO Party: Oh, those crazy cable CTOs, talking about all those acronyms and whatnot... Cable’s top techies ran through them all at Mon’s CTO session and agreed that DOCSIS 3.1 will not only improve broadband efficiency by 50% but will also “be a Godsend in the upstream,” according to **Comcast CTO Tony Werner**. Noted **Cablevision** evp,



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corporate engineering and technology *Yvette Kanouff* on 3.1: “We’re really excited to be able to do more with what we already have.” **Cox** CTO *Kevin Hart* applauded CableLabs and SCTE for getting the 3.1 spec off the ground, with *Werner* predicting its commercial rollout in late ’14, early ’15. But while CTOs marveled that speeds have increased on average by 40% per year since broadband launched in the mid-’90s, they acknowledged that consumers and app developers just keep figuring out ways to suck it all up. Culprits include video-intensive apps (that will only get more hungry at 4K/Ultra HD rolls out) and, interestingly, the proliferation of Webcams that often don’t use the most efficient compression codecs. **Time Warner Cable** CTO *Mike LaJoie* said device makers should be more “conservative” when they build bandwidth-sucking gadgets and apps, calling “interesting” *Werner’s* idea that the nation implement broadband efficiency standards for devices similar to EPA mileage standards for cars.

Head in the Cloud: Moving content to the cloud enables, “in theory, no restriction on the number of simultaneous recordings,” said **Cablevision** svp, interactive platform dev *Stephanie Mitchko*. “Instantaneously every box in the home becomes a DVR connected to the cloud. And when we move DVR content to the cloud, people use it differently.” No surprise, but based on Cablevision data: customers record primetime content the most, they record way more than they watch, and they tend to watch and delete within 5 days of recording. “We are in the early days. Some people are in the Hoover mode—We’re going to suck up every piece of data we can from everyone,” said *Art Howarth*, **Cisco Systems** dir of engineering. “But without accurate analytics you don’t really know what you’re getting.” The scenario begs the question, he posed, “When does gold turn to lead? A lot of people are struggling with how long to keep data.” *Gua-vas* CEO *Anukool Lakhina* offered an answer. “It turns to lead within 24, 36, 48 hours. What is the value if all this data if I can’t extract it in a timely fashion?” Some of the streamlining will come down to standards. **CableLabs** senior architect *Brian Hedstrom* issued a call to action for all present: “Let’s all align with the TM Forum.”

Carriage: **INSP** added more than a 1mln new HHs thanks to do a deal with **Bright House** for launches in FL, AL, MI and CA. -- **BlueHighways** scored a carriage deal with Bright House, picking up distribution in HD and SD on Mon in FL, Bakersfield, Birmingham and Indianapolis. The net will be available in Bright House Detroit later this month.

WICT Signature Luncheon: Walking down the hallway of the **FCC** and seeing portraits of former FCC chiefs, “you start to detect a pattern,” the agency’s chairwoman *Mignon Clyburn* told the audience at the **WICT** Signature Luncheon Mon. Being named the 1st female FCC chair “ratcheted up the pressure just a little bit,” said the former SC utilities commish. Not too long ago, “the idea that an African American from Chicago would become the most powerful person in the world also seemed improbable, but Oprah did it.” The FCC has been working on expanding opportunities for women internally: about half of its engineers are female and female attorneys outnumber the men, *Clyburn* said. Externally, the agency has been working to remove barriers to entry for women and minority business owners. Meanwhile, winners of the Signature Spirit Accolade include **Comcast**, for its Internet Essential program, and **Time Warner Cable**, for its “Connect a Million Minds” initiative. **Lifetime** was recognized for its “Your Life. Your Time. Your Vote.” campaign to increase women’s voices in election, while **USA Network’s** saluted for its “Characters Unite” effort to combat prejudice and intolerance.

Opening Day: After an *MC Hammer* performance and “Duck Dynasty” cameo kicked off the start of the Cable Show, **NCTA** pres/CEO *Michael Powell* took the stage to praise cable—and if anyone from the Hill happened to hear his remarks, the better. “The very best stories live on cable,” he said, before going on to describe cable’s contributions to the Internet. He heralded the \$200bln cable has invested since the mid-’90s and the 1500% increase in broadband speeds over the past decade. *Powell* also rejected comparisons of US broadband speed to other countries. “There are some nations doing very well, but it is foolish to compare countries like Latvia and France to the United States of America,” he said, noting that the US is 3.8mln square miles and home to 316mln people. “If you compare individual US states to hundreds of foreign countries, 10 of the top 15 fastest regions in the world are here in America.”

Hill Doings: After the Aug recess, look for **Sen Commerce** chmn *Mark Pryor* (D-AR) to hold a hearing related to broadband adoption. Later on, it will get around to a hearing on Satellite Reauthorization. Other insights gleaned from Mon’s Commerce committee staffer panel at the Cable Show: a cybersecurity bill is more likely to pass if it sticks to the info sharing aspect. “The more we stray into critical infrastructure [issues], the harder it is to pass,” said the subcmte’s chief counsel *Neil Fried*. Commerce staffers for both Dems and Republicans also talked up doing something to incentivize govt to let go of some its spectrum. “We need to figure out a way to get Armed Services and Dept of Defense to buy into this process,” *Fried* said.

Smart Home: **Comcast** launched “Xfinity Home Control,” a new product that gives consumers smart home video monitoring (like remote scheduling lighting or thermostat controls) even if they do not choose to take the professional security monitoring that is offered Xfinity Home services (which is now being called Xfinity Home Secure). Home

Control starts at only \$10/month, with a starter pack of Xfinity Home Control available starting at \$99.95. Comcast also announced the launch of EcoSaver, a cloud-based solution that helps determine when to make automatic and incremental adjustments to the thermostat based on real-time weather data, temperature preferences and more. Last week, Comcast and **Sylvania** revealed an agreement to offer energy efficient light bulbs that can be controlled remotely from anywhere through the Xfinity Home platform.

Cable Show Notebook: New technology and business models are converging to make addressable advertising a reality, bringing an end to separate content church and advertising state that made it “difficult to launch addressable products,” said *Andrew Ward*, group vp, **Comcast Media 360**. One challenge, said **Cox Media** svp *Billy Farina*, is “the creativity needed for that asset to be relevant to someone specific. People want the ability to target a specific type of household, so why wouldn’t you embrace” the creative? And, answer, from **GroupM** dir, emerging comm *Michael Bologna*: “Are we prepared to build the creative? If we have use for it, Yes. It doesn’t make sense to build [a campaign with] 10 segments if I can only deploy it in 6 million homes. You have to have economy of scale.” -- With the African American and U.S. Hispanic populations each ranking around No. 15 compared to all world economies—that’s more than countries like Greece and Turkey—advertisers must balance efficiency vs effectiveness, said **BET** evp, market research *Matthew Barnhill*. Data suggests African Americans are seeking relationships with brands, he said, “But the concern is, if you’re not going to get those insights right, you are losing your effectiveness, and it just becomes a general buy.” It’s a tricky balance. **ESPN** svp, multimedia services *Wendell Scott* said 3/4 of ESPN’s Hispanic audience watches the net in English. *Marla Skiko*, evp/dir of innovation at **SMG Multicultural**, said although most marketers have a separate multicultural unit, best results come from an integrated approach. “Multicultural has to be part of what you do on a team-by-team basis. It has to be company-wide, and that way you can make sure you are asking the right questions and getting the right answers,” she said.

Search and Discovery: Though “Imagine Park” on the Exhibit Floor wasn’t the ideal place to demo audio content recognition technology, the message communicated by **Veveo** CMO *Sam Vasisht* came across well enough. The company’s software, now in trials with numerous cable players, aids search and discovery through comprehending natural spoken language and anticipating consumers’ preferences. Vasisht said people are becoming more comfortable with the concept of talking to devices because it solves a key problem: navigating the endless array of content choices. Voice “represents how people think about things most accurately—and it’s also the quickest way,” he said. In a later panel about on advanced user interfaces *Charles Herrin*, **Comcast Cable** svp, product development & design, seemed to agree. Last month, Comcast added voice control to its X1 Remote control app. “In general with voice and gesture you’ll see a lot of that in the next 5 years,” Herrin said. “You will see more customer acceptance.” Yet it’s true that while voice activated products have been available for some time, some users are turned off by the concept following a poor experience. The inability to cancel out sound or receiving information from servers at too slow a pace were some of the technology’s kinks, according to **Nuance Comm** dir, TV & living room *Bill Sheppard*. But his company’s voice navigation product—despite the dull roar on the exhibit floor—responded to voice quickly and allowed for comprehensive search of channels, movies, volume control, commerce and even vocalizing tweets. “TV is a terrific opportunity for voice,” he said, because it cuts through the clutter. In general, the industry is moving much more toward personalization of discovery, according to **ThinkAnalytics** founder/CTO *Peter Docherty*. ThinkAnalytics chmn *Ed-die Young* said the key’s “not be intrusive, but helpful.” Meanwhile, **Time Warner Cable** is focused on combining both metadata and facilitating discovery through a unified data service, said vp, development *Ranga Muvavarirwa*. Demoing its app with **DigitalSmiths** co-founder/CEO *Ben Wienberger*, he noted that all features are dynamically configured, i.e. based on what users consumed before. But “none of that is possible without this underlying infrastructure,” he said. Moving forward, the search and discovery process must get easier, said *Charles Herrin*, **Comcast Cable** svp, product development & design: “What you’re really trying to do is remove steps.” But “cable has an even higher order,” with linear and on demand content being consumed across multiple devices. “You’ll see us push the personalization for a deeper experience.” Comcast’s X1 platform, for instance, facilitates consuming traditional content from additional sources, like 3rd-party apps. “We think it’s a great canvas for other kinds of information,” he said. “The big message in all of this,” according to *Len Barlik*, **Cox** evp, product mgmt & dev, is that “the user behaviors are changing” as new interfaces are making us all “up our game... It’s training users to expect more. And I think that’s good.”

Milestone: **Time Warner Cable** said it has deployed more than 12K WiFi hotspots in and around LA, covering 300 miles of Southern CA. The op launched the 1st phase of its WiFi buildout in Sept ’11. The service is free for Standard Internet subs and available for non-subs on a pay-as-you-go-basis. Additional deployment is underway in Austin, Kansas City, Hawaii, Charlotte and NYC.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Ratings: Season 3 of HBO's "Game of Thrones" wrapped Sun with 13.6mln gross viewers, up from 11.6mln last season. The season finale at 9pm drew 5.4mln viewers, the 2nd most-watched telecast for the series. --

TNT's "Falling Skies" drew 4.2mln viewers for its Season 3 premiere Sun, with more than 2.1mln 25-54s tuning in.

Programming: Nat Geo will follow "The '80s: The Decade That Made Us" with "The '90s: The Last Great Decade?" (wt). Set to debut next year, the '90s will look at the pre-9/11 world.

On The Circuit: Returning to where it started in '07, **Sportsman Channel's** "Hunt. Fish. Feed" initiative fed some 700 homeless citizens lunch and dinner Sunday at two locations as the Cable Show rolled into DC. "Doing this every year gets into your blood... it's primal, it bonds us as a channel," Sportsman chief *Gavin Harvey* told us as he set long tables for lunch. "Suddenlink joined us a few years ago, and they've come back every year," he added. HFF's success in DC has led to a yearly effort of 10 events yearly. In all, homeless in 33 cities have enjoyed 20K meals. Yesterday's lunch featured venison tacos, with meat donated by local hunters. **NUVOTV's** *Berto Guzman* baked brownies for dessert, confiding "they're more like biscotti, from my grandmother's recipe." Sportsman staff and cable volunteers were joined by NFL Hall of Famer *John Riggins*, who showed great dexterity serving beans and brownies.

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Company	06/10 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	06/10 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DIRECTV:	62.09	(0.11)	ECHOSTAR:	40.78	0.43
DISH:	38.86	(0.28)	GOOGLE:	890.22	10.49
DISNEY:	63.83	(1.02)	HARMONIC:	6.26	(0.09)
GE:	23.78	(0.08)	INTEL:	25.01	0.42
NEWS CORP:	32.08	(0.21)	JDSU:	14.75	0.10
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	14.31	(0.34)	LEVEL 3:	22.39	0.82
CHARTER:	112.53	(1.38)	MICROSOFT:	35.47	(0.2)
COMCAST:	40.67	(0.51)	RENTRAK:	23.40	0.08
COMCAST SPCL:	39.39	(0.21)	SEACHANGE:	11.09	0.14
GCI:	8.79	0.02	SONY:	20.11	0.55
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	74.18	(2.06)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	7.18	(0.06)
LIBERTY INT:	22.93	0.08	TIVO:	11.02	(0.08)
SHAW COMM:	22.46	0.23	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	26.81	0.37
TIME WARNER CABLE:	95.74	0.81	VONAGE:	2.93	0.08
WASH POST:	463.41	0.92	YAHOO:	26.74	(0.3)
PROGRAMMING					
AMC NETWORKS:	65.39	0.01	TELCOS		
CBS:	47.79	(0.24)	AT&T:	35.99	0.54
CROWN:	1.93	(0.07)	VERIZON:	50.53	0.29
DISCOVERY:	74.35	(2.04)	MARKET INDICES		
GRUPO TELEVISA:	23.67	(0.39)	DOW:	15238.59	(9.53)
HSN:	56.10	(0.5)	NASDAQ:	3473.77	4.55
INTERACTIVE CORP:	50.18	0.24	S&P 500:	1642.81	(0.57)
LIONSGATE:	29.05	(0.22)			
SCRIPPS INT:	66.13	(0.67)			
STARZ:	22.40	(0.47)			
TIME WARNER:	57.70	(1.07)			
VALUEVISION:	4.90	0.01			
VIACOM:	68.22	(0.24)			
WWE:	9.93	0.10			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADDVANTAGE:	2.23	0.01			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	1.82	(0.02)			
AMDOCS:	35.89	(0.24)			
AMPHENOL:	77.82	0.20			
AOL:	35.61	0.03			
APPLE:	438.89	(2.92)			
ARRIS GROUP:	14.71	(0.02)			
AVID TECH:	6.65	0.03			
BLNDER TONGUE:	1.05	0.02			
BROADCOM:	34.89	(0.5)			
CISCO:	24.36	(0.13)			
CLEARWIRE:	4.27	(0.13)			
CONCURRENT:	7.95	0.20			
CONVERGYS:	17.87	(0.02)			
CSG SYSTEMS:	21.11	0.13			

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GUEST COLUMNIST

From Brooklyn to Belarus

By Michael D. Armstrong

A friend once pointed out that as head of BET International, I help shape the world's perception of African Americans. Couple that with my role at NAMIC, and you can bet I think a great deal about the entertainment industry's representation of diversity and how content featuring U.S. ethnic minorities is being created and received globally. Bottom line: more diverse U.S. content is a significant opportunity for the industry and one that we can help influence.

A Sundance panel once examined why Black films not starring Will Smith or Denzel Washington were unsuccessful outside the U.S. The same applied to television. Black actors have long been integrated into U.S. TV shows syndicated internationally, but few featuring predominantly Black casts made the cut. Some successful outliers include "The Cosby Show," "Everybody Hates Chris," "My Wife and Kids" and "Girlfriends." The ubiquity of these shows stand in stark contrast to the reality that today's showrunners and executives face when choosing to produce content with a predominantly Black, Hispanic or Asian cast.

Around the world, viewers fondly know Cliff Huxtable (or Cliff Robinson in Italy – "Huxtable" proved hard to pronounce). More recently, *Alle Hassen Chris*, a.k.a. Everybody Hates Chris, gave German millennial nerds a relatable heroic figure. Cosby, Nielsen's no. 1 rated show in 5 of its 8 seasons, portrayed an upper middle class, Brooklyn Heights family, which was relatable to a global audience unfamiliar with other aspects of Cosby's otherwise normal Black American cultural lifestyle. Produced against the same 1980s backdrop, Chris presented a different view of the Black cultural experience, focusing on a working class family in the then less affluent Bedford Stuyvesant neighborhood. Chris achieved a Nielsen best rating of 120th in its first of four seasons.

How then do viewers in Belarus, Ecuador and other coun-

tries relate to and enjoy *Chris*? Single camera sitcoms with no laugh tracks are supposedly a no-no for global exports. Also, Chris Rock's narration is often dubbed locally, and the series has no international stars and uses Black music and cultural vernacular of the time. These factors should have doomed it from being greenlit and certainly from making it into a NATPE or MIPCOM sales deck.



Michael
Armstrong

However, Chris, like Cosby, is a well-produced, funny series depicting themes of family, love and life lessons. They illustrate common humanity, using Black U.S. families as the vehicle. Behind their resonance in Europe, Asia and Latin America alike were TV executives endeavoring to debunk the myth to convince global buyers to go against convention. Today's swinging pendulum favors taking a chance on diversifying content for international TV and film audiences who represent the majority of global content consumers. Cosby, Chris and, recently, the movie *The Fast & The Furious* are powerful examples of the rewards of such efforts.

At MIPTV this past April, Kevin Hart joined us to promote the BET hit, "Real Husbands of Hollywood." Unsurprisingly, many global buyers found the show, and Kevin, hilarious, engaging and relatable. Though success is not guaranteed, I believe it will be another step to embracing more shows led by ethnic minorities. Wendy Williams airs weekdays in more than 50 countries on BET's international channel. Shonda Rhimes is redefining the formula for success with "Grey's Anatomy," "Private Practice" and "Scandal." Execs need to take the chance on being indifferent to the color of the cast and more focused on telling great, universal stories. However, these shows will require the same writing, marketing and sales investments afforded their more "mainstream" counterparts. Myths should be tested, and the best way to debunk this particular myth is to put global economics to work. Because in the end, the color that will matter most is green.

(Armstrong is chmn of NAMIC's board and svp/gm, BET International & Paramount Channel).



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Cable Show: TVE, Next-Gen Broadband Technology Shines

Lots of 2nd screen products and services basked in the Cable Show spotlight this week, with major vendors like **Cisco** and **Arris** drawing large crowds and smaller vendors like **Entropic** and **Veveo** seeing good traffic. With cloud tech's "huge momentum," Cisco svp, service provider video *Jesper Anderson* touted the company's cloud-based videoscape unity IP video platform. Highlighting the platform's open API framework that spans the cloud and network client, he argued that "this industry has been subject to proprietary technology for too long... It's important that we open up the cloud platform. That gives us a better ecosystem... That's the way we combat the OTTs." Powered by Cisco cloud infrastructure framework and OpenStack support, the cloud DVR services seek to enable large recording concurrency and multiscreen delivery. **Cox**, which is integrating the Cisco platform to its TVE systems, will launch the service in the summer, said *Mark Gathen*, Cox's sr director, video product management. This "personalized video experience" seeks to allow subs to access live, VOD, and recommendations from iPad devices. It is expected to be free to eligible video subs and will be expanded to other operating platforms, said *Steve Tranter*, sales dir, Cisco Service Provider Video Technology Group. In addition to its roll helping the MSO better engage subs, Gathen said, the service also represents "an evolution" of the Cox Connect TV offerings. And it wouldn't be a cable show if we weren't talking about broadband. Cable's WiFi alliance, which includes **Comcast**, **Time Warner Cable**, **Cox**, **Cablevision** and **Bright House**, announced they have deployed 150K WiFi access points across the country, about 1 year after the ops formed a partnership to do WiFi sharing. In addition, Comcast launched its home-based neighborhood hotspot initiative, which seeks to create "millions of WiFi access points" for its Xfinity Internet subs for no additional cost.

Partnerships: Rovi has its eyes on 4K now that it's partnering with **Broadcom** to enable device makers and service providers to take advantage of HEVC as they seek to offer enhanced entertainment services. The idea is to drive 4K content creation and the availability of compatible devices through its DivX HEVC Certification program. And Broadcom plans to support the playback of DivX HEVC streaming and downloadable content in the company's recently announced BCM7445, an UltraHD home gateway chip. According to Broadcom, the chip quadruples the resolution of today's 1080p HDTV displays, and HEVC provides the necessary efficiencies to reduce the bandwidth required by up to 40% vs the previous H.264 standard. -- **Amdocs** is working with **SeaChange** to offer multiscreen wares that aims to enable easier integration of Amdocs' services and speedy deployment of SeaChange software, allowing service providers to expand their next generation video services such as personalized, multiscreen video and targeted advertising.

IP Technology: **Comcast** will launch the **Arris XG1** gateway in 3Q to offer its X1 TV platform. The gateway is based on Comcast's RDK platform, which seeks to simplify the development of 3rd-party apps and tools. The Arris XG1 is designed to serve new IP-connected home, delivering multiscreen services while reducing energy use and maintenance.

International: VOD and PPV distributor **In Demand** inked an agreement with Chinese media firm **Seven Stars Media Ltd.** Initial content includes sports, music and extensive lifestyle content. In Demand will license, process and deliver content to Seven Stars' MSO and IPTV partners in China, targeting some 80mln HHs.

(Enjoy more CableFAX tech coverage at www.cablefax.com/tech. And we'll see you at our CableFAX Tech Breakfast on Wed morning in the convention center).

Who's The Top Woman Techie In Your Group? She should be honored!

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For an online nomination application, click here or go to **www.wict.org**. Contact *Parthavi Das* at 703-234-9803 or *Cathy Oakes* at 610-594-7328 with questions.

GUEST COLUMNIST

Our Wi-Fi Future: The Spectrum Imperative

By Rob Alderfer, Senior Strategic Analyst at CableLabs

Expanding broadband access is rightly an important national goal. As the FCC's National Broadband Plan observed, "broadband is a foundation for economic growth, job creation, global competitiveness and a better way of life." Cable is a leader in broadband access, connecting more than 50 million households in the US, so this is a key area of interest for the industry.

But the world is going wireless. Mary Meeker's closely watched annual Internet Trends report, released in May, observed that there are 219 million smartphone subscribers in the US. What may have been overlooked is that nearly all of these smartphones have Wi-Fi. In fact, Wi-Fi is the network of choice for a range of connected devices—think tablets, TVs, gaming consoles, you name it.

Cable is rising to the wireless challenge, adding value to broadband services. The CableWiFi partnership enables subscribers to take their home broadband service with them on the go, and has tripled the number of hotspots since last year's launch. That's more than 150,000 hotspots—not counting the millions deployed in homes by the nation's cable operators.

That's a lot of Wi-Fi growth, and a lot of value for consumers and the economy, enabling everyone to do more, faster, saving time and money. But with this growth, our nation's Wi-Fi networks risk becoming bogged down.

Can Wi-Fi continue to grow? Cable thinks so—if adequate wireless spectrum is made available. Spectrum is the lifeblood of Wi-Fi. As CableLabs recently noted, the increased use of connected devices puts a strain on capacity. Ongoing improvement to Wi-Fi's efficiency is unlikely to keep up with growth in devices and usage,



Rob Alderfer

putting our Wi-Fi future at risk.

What could that future look like? The latest Wi-Fi technology provides a perspective. 802.11ac, the newest mass-market Wi-Fi standard, enables Wi-Fi at gigabit speeds. That's fast and could deliver a step increase to consumer value. At more than three times the speed of Wi-Fi as we know it today, the tasks that may now take minutes—like downloading a HD movie—will only take seconds.

802.11ac is coming online this year, and by some estimates will be in nearly two billion devices by the end of next year. With wide adoption and consumer empowerment in an open device ecosystem, gigabit Wi-Fi can be a general-purpose technology with broad economic benefits. But these benefits can only be realized if more spectrum is made available, because the gigabit speeds of 802.11ac depend on wider channels—more spectrum.

The need for more spectrum for wireless broadband is not a new or controversial idea. In 2010, President Obama observed that "America's future competitiveness and global technology leadership depend, in part, upon the availability of additional spectrum." Last year, Congress directed the FCC and the Commerce Department to work toward making more Wi-Fi spectrum available in the 5 GHz range—the same frequencies used by 802.11ac.

We can enable our Wi-Fi future. The time is now to move forward with making more Wi-Fi spectrum available. Doing so won't be easy, and will require working with many stakeholders, but our wireless world is depending on it.

(Rob Alderfer is a Strategic Analyst for CableLabs. He served as Chief Data Officer of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau at the FCC from 2010 to 2012. Prior to that, he was responsible for communications policy at the White House Office of Management and Budget).

CableFAX

PROGRAM AWARDS

From the most outstanding cable programs to the best surprise ending, the annual CableFAX Program Awards honor the best in cable programming, content and people. This unique awards program from the industry's most trusted brand, CableFAX, raises the bar on what's good on and about cable. Now's your chance to win a CableFAX Program Award and get recognized for bringing value to your viewers.

It's simple to compete, as your content and people speak for themselves. But you have to enter to be considered, so don't let your competitors steal the show. We'll be honoring the winners and honorable mentions in September.

Sponsorship Opportunities: Amy Abbey at aabbey@accessintel.com

Entry Questions: Mary Lou French at 301.354.1851 or mfrench@accessintel.com

DEADLINE

June 21, 2013

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