

CableFAX Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Wheeler Hearing: Candidate Eyes Retrans, Blackouts, Spectrum Auction

Tom Wheeler told lawmakers at his Senate Commerce confirmation hearing Mon that he would explore the FCC's options on retrans. While he believes in market evolution, "what does bother me is when consumers are held hostage of corporate disputes," he said. Wheeler, President Obama's choice for FCC chmn, was less direct when asked whether the agency has authority to act on retrans without Congressional action. "I look forward to looking into that issue and trying to get my arms around it," particularly in light of recent court actions, Wheeler said. "I am not trying to dodge the questions... but this is a situation that is in flux at the moment." Sen Roy Blunt (R-MO) asked whether recent court decisions have given FCC more authority to which Wheeler replied, "I would hate to second guess a court advance." On sports blackouts, Wheeler noted the FCC proceeding that could eliminate them: "It's an issue ripe for Commission decision." Wheeler also promised to push the expected incentive spectrum auction forward "on an expedited basis," calling it a top priority. Interestingly, Wheeler also said he supports unlicensed spectrum use (the cable industry has advocated freeing up more unlicensed wireless bandwidth for WiFi). "It's noteworthy that unlicensed has been the rescuer of licensed," he said, noting that a significant amount of mobile traffic is covered by unlicensed spectrum, "the home to innovation." Wheeler said his FCC would also review broadband caps and tiered pricing practices. Calling himself "a data centric guy," he said the FCC will collect data on such practices -- At the hearing, Wheeler also told lawmakers that he will push expanding the federal E-Rate program to provide faster broadband to schools and libraries. "It is not good enough for us to have 1996 textbooks in the classroom. I don't think it's good enough to have 1996 connectivity in the classroom," he said. "When 80 percent of the E-Rate schools say they're not getting the proper bandwidth for their instructional needs, something needs to be done," he said. Expanding E-Rate is one of committee chmn Jay Rockefeller's (D-WV) top priorities.

AT&T Shuffle: AT&T U-verse confirmed that it's recasting its top content role. As 1st reported in *MediaPost*, Jeff Weber has left his current position as pres, content and ad sales and "assumed a special project role at AT&T." Replacing Weber is AT&T exec Aaron Slator, previously managing director in corporate development. The news comes only a year after AT&T U-verse's then-content chief Dan York left to join DirectTV and deputy Weber ascended to his spot (*Cfax*, 5/30/12).

M&A: Add to the ongoing Sprint/DISH/Clearwire M&A drama a lawsuit filed by Sprint against DISH, claiming the satcaster tried to "fool" Clearwire shareholders. The lawsuit, filed in a Delaware court, also argued DISH's tender offer violates Clearwire's charter and Delaware corporate law. Sprint's lawsuit is "a transparent attempt to divert attention from its failure to deal fairly with Clearwire's shareholders, as well as to exploit its majority position to block Clearwire's shareholders from receiving a fair price for their shares," DISH said in a statement. Clearwire shareholders are scheduled to vote on June 24, followed by Sprint's vote on June 25. While Softbank is expected to prevail in the battle for Sprint, Clearwire is "an integral piece of the puzzle," S&P analysts said. They expect Sprint to continue to pursue the remaining minority shares at Clearwire.

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TVE: AETN launched its Android TVE apps Tues, making **A&E**, **History** and **Lifetime** network apps available on Android's latest operating systems for free from **Google Play**. The apps allow users to watch full eps, full movies and exclusive clips. They also enable social sharing on **Twitter** or **Facebook**.

Upgrades: Charter completed a 4-month digital upgrade of its North TX network for subs in Fort Worth and 40 surrounding communities. As part of the upgrade, subs can access 141 HD channels, doubling the previous HD lineup. The op also upped its VOD offering to more than 12K content options, including 2.5K HD titles and new Spanish-language selections. The upgrade is part of Charter's \$40mln overall network improvement plan. The company is also replacing aging cable and making other core infrastructure improvements that will continue into next year.

Social TV: Video content discovery solutions provider **Jinni** launched "Watch Together," a social discovery service that recommends content that suits the tastes of multiple viewers. The feature is part of the latest Jinni discovery engine API, which can be used to find friends for group viewing, either via online social viewing apps or at a movie theater.

OTT: Netflix launched "Netflix Families," a new Web portal designed to recommend content for parents during summer. Accessible across platforms, the families page is available for both members and non-members. Family and kids content viewing hours increase during summer, said Netflix chief content officer *Ted Sarandos*. The "Are We There Yet" list includes content ideal for watching on tablets while the "Classic to Share with your Kids" list features content parents may have loved growing up and can introduce to their kids.

Marketing: Nick signed a multi-year master toy license agreement for **Cartwheel Kids** to manufacture, distribute and market a line of toys and products based on the animated preschool series, "Peter Rabbit."

Programming: Reelz Channel premieres police procedural original series "King" on July 5. -- On Aug 6, GSN premieres its original series "The Case," a 1-hour quiz show featuring 3 contestants battling in a quiz competition against opponent, The Beast. -- Hallmark Channel will start filming its original primetime series "When Calls the Heart" this summer in CO.

O'Hara-thon: Cable will soon welcome back ex-TV Guide Net pres *Ryan O'Hara*, who on July 1 becomes pres, content distribution & sales for **The Madison Square Garden Co**. The newly created position puts O'Hara in charge of **MSG Media**, including the **MSG** and **MSG+** regional sports nets and music net **Fuse**, as well as corporate technology and marketing partnerships divisions. MSG pres/CEO *Hank Ratner* said O'Hara brings "decades of leadership and management expertise to enhance the effectiveness and alignment of our operations" as the company seeks out growth opportunities. Most recently, O'Hara was pres/CEO of **The Topps Co**.

On the Circuit: Lifetime gave its "Devious Maids" their due Mon night in L.A., throwing a lavish party at the famed Bel-Air Bay Club, which overlooks the ocean from the PCH. As they say in Hollywood, everyone was there to celebrate the upcoming Sun premiere, including show creator *Marc Cherry*, producer *Eva Longoria* and, of course, the ever-present *Susan Lucci*. After the red carpet ran its course, the party meshed a full salsa band with a "candy bar" (yep, a bar of deviously red treats) and plenty of food and drink stations. We even caught Lucci salsa dancing. Between this and *Jennifer Love Hewitt's* expanding "Client List," has Lifetime developed a naughty streak? We won't tell. -- Hats off to veteran media exec *Donna Thomas*, whose **Thomas Angel Foundation** last night handed out \$8000 in scholarships to women seeking training at L.A.'s famous **Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre**. Thomas, who has worked at **Ascent Media**, **RealNetworks**

June 24, 2013 | Awards Breakfast | 8:30 – 10:30 am | Grand Hyatt in NYC

The CableFAXIES
awards



Join CableFAX for the FAXIES Awards and Sales Executives of the Year event as we salute the industry's top PR, communication and sales initiatives. Register today at www.cablefax.com/events.

Sponsorships: Amy Abbey, aabbey@accessintel.com, (301) 354-1629

Registration Questions: Saun Sayamongkhun, saun@accessintel.com, (301) 354-1694

BUSINESS & FINANCE

and Discovery Comm over the years and now serves as vp, sales within the creative services div of Technicolor, created the foundation in '01 to help women pursue the arts. After taking classes herself at UCB over the last 18 months, she convinced the celebrated improv/comedy training ground to support 4 scholarships at \$2000 each. "I'm extremely excited to support women in what has traditionally been a male-dominated arena," said UCB academic supervisor *Johnny Meeks*.

Research: ZenithOptimedia expects total TV ad spending in the US to jump 2.9% to \$64.3bln this year, with bigger gains expected in '14. Ad spending will increase 3.8% to \$66.8bl in '14m although growth will slow in '15 to 2.5%. "We continue to see TV dollars moving from network to cable, and this trend will likely continue as cable networks continue to add quality programming to their lineups," the company said.

Business & Finance: Digital media firm Fullscreen closed a round of Series A funding with support from Comcast Ventures, Chernin Group and WPP Digital.

People: Fox Sports named vet tech expert *Ben Gerst* svp, platform development at Fox Sports Digital, a newly created position. Gerst will work on the redesign and relaunch of FoxSports.com, the digital hub for Fox Sports 1. -- Social TV provider GetGlue named former Shazam exec *Evan Krauss* pres.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	06/18 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	06/18 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DIRECTV:	63.58	1.71	ECHOSTAR:	39.97	0.09
DISH:	39.09	0.26	GOOGLE:	900.62	14.37
DISNEY:	65.29	0.80	HARMONIC:	6.34	0.10
GE:	24.33	0.56	INTEL:	25.46	0.36
NEWS CORP:	31.71	0.33	JDSU:	14.41	0.21
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	15.30	0.17	LEVEL 3:	21.96	0.34
CHARTER:	117.95	0.23	MICROSOFT:	34.98	(0.02)
COMCAST:	40.39	0.31	RENTRAK:	20.75	0.83
COMCAST SPCL:	38.78	0.26	SEACHANGE:	11.83	0.27
GCI:	8.23	0.12	SONY:	21.40	0.68
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	71.88	(0.15)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	7.32	0.10
LIBERTY INT:	23.01	0.40	TIVO:	11.19	(0.07)
SHAW COMM:	22.85	0.31	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	27.66	0.34
TIME WARNER CABLE:	103.01	1.72	VONAGE:	2.78	(0.01)
WASH POST:	491.66	4.14	YAHOO:	26.66	0.12
PROGRAMMING					
AMC NETWORKS:	64.19	0.48	TELCOS		
CBS:	48.75	0.96	AT&T:	36.17	0.41
CROWN:	1.96	UNCH	VERIZON:	51.55	0.84
DISCOVERY:	77.84	0.80	MARKET INDICES		
GRUPO TELEVISIA:	23.71	(0.11)	DOW:	15318.23	138.38
HSN:	56.37	0.46	NASDAQ:	3482.18	30.55
INTERACTIVE CORP:	49.70	0.31	S&P 500:	1651.81	12.77
LIONSGATE:	28.14	0.42			
SCRIPPS INT:	67.93	0.49			
STARZ:	22.88	0.06			
TIME WARNER:	58.89	0.95			
VALUEVISION:	5.32	0.03			
VIACOM:	68.89	0.90			
WWE:	10.06	0.12			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADVANTAGE:	2.23	0.01			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	1.87	(0.03)			
AMDOCS:	36.40	0.16			
AMPHENOL:	79.28	0.28			
AOL:	36.76	0.10			
APPLE:	431.77	(0.23)			
ARRIS GROUP:	14.89	0.34			
AVID TECH:	6.41	0.19			
BLNDER TONGUE:	1.03	0.01			
BROADCOM:	34.62	0.34			
CISCO:	24.82	0.12			
CLEARWIRE:	4.56	(0.07)			
CONCURRENT:	7.82	(0.17)			
CONVERGYS:	18.50	0.22			
CSG SYSTEMS:	21.97	0.36			

CableFAX PROGRAM AWARDS

Sponsorship Opportunities: Amy Abbey at aabbey@accessintel.com
Entry Questions: Mary Lou French at 301.354.1851 or mfrench@accessintel.com

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.

