

CableFAX Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Done Deal: Wilmington Stations Report a Handful of Calls After DTV Switch

The digital switch was flipped in Wilmington, NC, Mon at noon. And so far, there is no word of an angry mob with non-working TVs swarming and throwing analog sets out the windows. Five Wilmington broadcasters stopped telecasting in analog at noon ET, opting to put up a slide on their analog feeds about the transition. **FCC** chmn *Kevin Martin*, Democratic FCC commissioner *Michael Copps* and other dignitaries were in Wilmington Mon for the pomp and circumstance surrounding the switch, which came 5 months before the national transition. As the crowd counted down, Martin and Wilmington Mayor *Bill Saffo* flipped a symbolic switch, shaped like a giant light switch, to mark the transition. "First in flight, and now first in digital," declared Saffo. The analog message directed people to the FCC's call center, but broadcast stations still received a few calls following the analog cutoff. **CBS** affil WILM had received 6 calls as of 4:30pm ET, according to GM *Connie Knox*. Over at **ABC** affil WWAY, there had been "a few calls," with most callers needing to scan their channels or adjust antennas, said GM *Andy Combs*. A team of students from Elon University are actually in the stations to help take troubleshooting calls. They are also surveying residents who call to complain, with their professor planning to share the data before the upcoming national transition. Messages to the FCC about the volume of calls to its hotline weren't returned by press time. **Time Warner Cable**, the dominant cable operator for the area, said it had received no complaints as of Mon afternoon. "So far, so good," said a spokeswoman. Some will argue that Wilmington—the country's DTV transition test market—is a different case than the rest of the country because of the amount of special attention it has received. The FCC is trying to give some extra TLC to 80+ markets identified as high risk for the Feb 17 national DTV transition, but it won't be as intense as the efforts in Wilmington, which included having FCC staffers on the ground for 4 months. Speaking at Mon's event, **NAB** chief *David Rehr* said the organization was conducting a poll on transition day to help the nation better prepare. "While we wait for those results, there is one immediate lesson learned from this experiment that we will carry through to next February. A revolutionary change such as this would not be possible without partnership and coordination," he said. "Especially technical coordination among broadcasters and cable and satellite systems." **C-SPAN 2** will air a broadcast of the news conference and official switch at 8pm ET, Mon (9/8).

Deals: **Mediacom** will buy back all of its Class A shares owned by an affiliate of **Morris Comm**. **Shivers Investments** will exchange about 28.3mln shares for 100% of the shares of stock in a new division of Mediacom and \$110mln in cash. The deal, which involves a tax-free split off, lets MCCC repurchase 30% of outstanding shares at \$6.50/share, a healthy discount to Fri's close. The transaction is expected to close in 4Q, at which time Morris' *William Morris* and *Craig Mitchell* will resign from the board. **RBC Daniels** served as financial adviser to Morris; **Banc of America Securities** acted as a financial adviser to Mediacom. Mediacom's stock jumped up more than 5% to \$7.85.

At the Portals: Over the weekend, the **FCC** granted **AT&T**, **Verizon**, **Qwest** and other incumbent telcos conditional relief

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from some reporting requirements, including on service quality and infrastructure deployment. "Today, we take another step to remove unnecessary regulatory burdens and ensure a regulatory level playing field," said FCC chmn *Kevin Martin*.

Competition: AT&T has launched **U-verse TV** in Bakersfield, CA, and Lubbock, TX.

In the States: **Cox** has launched media storage and sharing apps from **Casero** for HSD subs in certain markets. The MSO's Premium and Preferred data subs will receive enough storage space for approx 5K photos, 1K songs or 6 full-length films. -- Backed by **Cablevision's** *Chuck Dolan* and **Computer Associates** founder *Charles Wang*, IPTV service **KyLinTV** has added a kids-focused channel and VOD content to its Chinese programming lineup. -- **Midstate Comm** is using **RGB Networks** tech to deploy more standard- and high-def programming in SD.

Retrans: Things were indeed looking up Fri (**Cfax**, 9/8) as **DISH** and **Citadel** reached a carriage agreement that restored over the weekend 4 Midwest stations to the DBS op's lineup and ended a month-long impasse. The stations: **WOI**, an **ABC** affil for Des Moines, IA; **WHBF**, a **CBS** affil in Davenport, IA; **KCAU**, an **ABC** affil in Sioux City, IA; and **KLKN**, an **ABC** affil in Lincoln, NE.

Makeovers: **ION TV** launched Mon a "Positively Entertaining" rebranding campaign to augment its new fall lineup and featuring a contemporized on-air look and revamped Website **IONTelevision.com**. New net advertisers include **Walgreen's**, **Western Union** and **Hotels.com**. -- **Go!TV** kicked off last week on its English and Spanish-language channels a new on-air look including the replacement of words with symbols and a correlation of colors with different types of programming.

Online: **Invision.TV** launched Mon offering a Web-based IPG for online video, as did a related app on **Facebook**. Founded by CEO *Derrick Frost*, formerly a **Time Warner Cable** broadband exec, the service locates, indexes and organizes millions of videos from a variety of video sites [**For more, go to www.cablefaxcontentbusiness.com**]. -- **CBS** and **iWidgets** are partnering to allow viewing of the broadcaster's programming directly within social networks, and to socially engage the viewers with engaging such features as sharing, polls, ratings, and contests.

Advertising: **NCC** launched "eOrders," a tool that streamlines the process of transmitting orders and revisions between media and stewardship systems. It eliminates the manual input from NCC and the cable systems ensuring accuracy.

Mobile: **Transpera** began Mon delivering mobile video services for **VH1**, available at **M.VH1.com**. Included are targeted mobile advertising and clips from shows such as "On This Day in Music" and "Best Night Ever." **Discovery Comm** will use Transpera to deploy mobile video services for many of its nets and shows, including **Discovery Channel's** "Dirty Jobs."

Research: North American cable ops' capex totals will reach \$14bln this year and \$15bln in '09 as the industry competes with telcos and satellite, according to **Heavy Reading**. Industry shipments of digital set tops will nearly double next year, and HD/DVR box shipments are expected to keep rising steadily.

Ratings: **Nat Geo's** "Dogtown: Saving the *Michael Vick* Dogs" averaged a 1.05 HH rating. It's the highest-rated season 2 series premiere in net history and the top Fri night premiere ever. The show had 4.33mln total viewers over 2 showings.

Programming: **NBA TV** is celebrating its 10th anniversary with 96 live games this season (starting Nov 1) and a new interactive Fan Night, which will allow fans to vote for the games they want to see televised nationally on



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BUSINESS & FINANCE

NBA TV each Tues night. -- **WE tv** has agreed to serve as the exclusive title sponsor of The Great Bridal Expo '08/'09 season national tour, an alliance the net will use to highlight its bridal programming block and as casting calls for upcoming series. -- **ReelzChannel's** planned coverage of the **Toronto Film Festival** includes a dedicated ep of "ReelzChannel Spotlight" (Sept 18). -- **CSN West's** "Thursday Night Football" Presented by Farmer's Insurance returns Thurs with the 1st of 20 games slated for this season. -- **Fuse** inked a deal with **Target Ent**, marking the 1st time the **Rainbow** net's programming will be available outside N America. Target will represent Fuse's catalog internationally and will have more than 40 hours of titles available at **Mipcom**.

People: **Versus** appointed *Neal Scarbrough* vp, digital media. -- *Nicole Nichols* is having an Oprah moment, opting to leave **Disney/ABC** to join **Discovery's** yet-to-launch **OWN: The Oprah Winfrey Network**. She reports to OWN pres *Robin Schwartz* and will be a chief member of the net's senior team as it prepares for launch. -- **MSG** upped *Jeff Filippi* to vp, production.

Obit: **Avalon Cable TV** founder *Joel Cohen* has passed away, his funeral planned for Wed in New Brunswick, NJ. **The Cable Center** named *Cohen* a Cable Pioneer this year.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	09/08 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	09/08 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
BRITISH SKY:	32.29	0.62	AMDOCS:	29.41	0.11
DIRECTV:	26.96	0.39	AMPHENOL:	45.00	0.51
DISNEY:	32.92	1.56	APPLE:	157.92	(2.26)
ECHOSTAR:	27.88	0.13	ARRIS GROUP:	8.92	0.04
GE:	29.09	1.21	AVID TECH:	25.72	2.68
HEARST-ARGYLE:	21.09	0.64	BIGBAND:	3.08	(0.1)
ION MEDIA:	1.44	0.00	BLNDER TONGUE:	1.31	0.06
NEWS CORP:	14.45	0.75	BROADCOM:	21.80	(0.53)
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	30.87	0.33	C-COR:	11.00	0.00
CHARTER:	1.05	0.01	CISCO:	23.37	1.11
COMCAST:	21.32	0.71	COMMSCOPE:	44.65	0.52
COMCAST SPCL:	21.20	0.72	CONCURRENT:	6.75	(0.18)
GCI:	10.63	0.15	CONVERGYS:	16.38	0.32
KNOLGY:	10.14	0.35	CSG SYSTEMS:	18.84	0.39
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	15.80	0.16	ECHOSTAR HOLDING:	31.50	0.27
LIBERTY ENTERTAINMENT:	26.99	0.34	GOOGLE:	419.95	(24.3)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	33.65	(0.02)	HARMONIC:	8.47	0.44
LIBERTY INTERACTIVE:	13.86	0.16	JDSU:	9.87	0.28
MEDIACOM:	7.85	0.40	LEVEL 3:	3.33	0.12
SHAW COMM:	21.67	0.18	MICROSOFT:	26.12	0.47
TIME WARNER CABLE:	27.75	0.78	MOTOROLA:	9.31	0.25
VIRGIN MEDIA:	11.55	0.11	NDS:	60.57	(0.03)
WASH POST:	617.30	38.50	NORTEL:	5.60	(0.13)
PROGRAMMING					
CBS:	17.09	0.53	OPENTV:	1.64	0.04
CROWN:	4.95	0.29	PHILIPS:	31.54	0.12
DISCOVERY:	19.70	0.18	RENTRAK:	14.31	(0.23)
EW SCRIPPS:	7.23	0.34	SEACHANGE:	8.13	0.28
GRUPO TELEVISA:	23.89	1.13	SONY:	36.98	0.92
HSN:	14.68	(0.36)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	7.94	(0.05)
LIBERTY:	43.39	1.10	THOMAS & BETTS:	44.19	1.54
LODGENET:	4.11	(0.01)	TIVO:	7.83	(0.02)
NEW FRONTIER:	3.80	(0.04)	TOLLGRADE:	6.31	(0.46)
OUTDOOR:	7.80	0.13	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	26.97	1.34
PLAYBOY:	4.09	0.05	VONAGE:	1.21	(0.06)
RHI:	13.67	(0.47)	WEBB SYS:	0.04	(0.02)
SCRIPPS INTERACTIVE:	40.38	0.14	WORLDGATE:	0.30	0.00
TIME WARNER:	15.72	0.47	YAHOO:	18.26	0.18
VALUEVISION:	2.24	(0.23)	TELCOS		
VIACOM:	29.17	0.90	AT&T:	32.55	1.05
WWE:	16.53	0.47	QWEST:	3.90	0.10
TECHNOLOGY					
3COM:	2.20	0.07	VERIZON:	35.12	1.04
ADC:	10.19	0.01	MARKET INDICES		
ADVANTAGE:	3.23	0.11	DOW:	11510.74	290.43
ALCATEL LUCENT:	5.28	(0.1)	NASDAQ:	2269.76	13.88



CableFAX Webinar

Going Green: How to Do It, Communicate It and Sell It

Thursday, September 25, 2008
1:30-3:00pm (ET)

We'll emphasize how to green your company, your programming slate and your operations. We'll also tell you how to avoid the pitfalls of greenwashing. If your company hasn't yet gone green, how can it start? If your company has been involved in some green projects already, what more can it do to be eco friendly while contributing to the bottom line? A 90-minute Webinar from CableFAX will answer these questions and more.

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