# CableFAX Daily...

Wednesday — September 15, 2010

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 21 / No. 178

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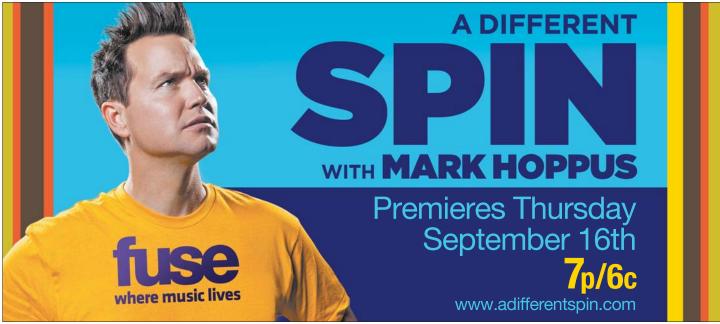
What the Industry Reads First

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### **NAMIC:** Census Will Show Changed America

It was an intelligent move by **NAMIC** to frame its opening session Tues with a presentation about the new **Census** from **UCLA** prof *Dr Leobardo Estrada*. Using preliminary data, Estrada said the Census will show the US is 2 countries: the 16 states that are growing and the rest. And America is graying (by '12 older citizens will be 25% of the population and own 75% of the assets). It's also more diverse. "There's a new base...the ethnic market is becoming the general market...this has huge implications for marketing." The biggest change in the labor force will be the growth of foreign-born workers. And older Americans will keep their jobs longer, reducing opportunities for younger workers, augmenting a gap between the generations. These changes will be resisted in some quarters, Estrada said. Reacting to Estrada, **Univision** pres *Cesar Conde* said, "[The Hispanic market] is not a niche business anymore." **NCTA** chief *Kyle McSlarrow* argued the country's diversity is a fact smart businesses already have accepted. The Census confirms what we already know, he said, adding, cable was built on "letting diversity work for you." **Cox** chief *Pat Esser* agreed. Companies that fail to market to diverse communities, including older Americans, risk their existence, he said. **BET** pres/COO *Scott Mills* agreed that "sophisticated marketers" know how to segment their audience; ethnic groups "are one of those segments." Reflecting on her recent tenure in Hong Kong, **Travel Channel** chief *Laureen Ong* challenged the audience to "get out of your comfort zone" on understanding ethnic markets. "Learn more, even when you think you know everything."

**Business Speak:** Cox Business is on track to be a \$1bln revenue stream this year and on a trajectory to be a \$2bln business in the next 6 years. That was the skinny during a **Sanford Bernstein** conference call with **Cox** execs Tues. **Verizon** and **AT&T** are Cox's 2 largest business competitors. "Neither of them have the...local resources we have in a market. Our localism in that space is a key differentiator," said Cox Business svp *Phil Meeks*. As for **Qwest** and **Century Link**, Meeks expects both companies will be distracted as they go through their merger, while Cox continues to focus on customers. *Kristine Faulkner*, vp, product development and mgmt at Cox, called video for business customers "somewhat of a sleeper opportunity." Cox Business provides video in the expected places—doctor's offices, auto service waiting rooms, etc—but it's also seeing some action in the hospitality space. When it comes to viewing video on the PC and other devic-



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es, "we're definitely seeing some momentum [from educational institutions] wanting that for dorm rooms and other places on campus," Faulkner said. DOCSIS 3.0 is available to about half of Cox' footprint, and she expects it to scale above 2/3 by year-end. -- AT&T intro'd a series of service bundles built for businesses with up to 10 wired voice lines. Starting at \$90/mo, the bundles include phone, HSI and WiFi access while featuring options such as wireless services and shared Web hosting and tech support. -- Verizon now offers SMBs a cloud-based computing service that allows subs to customize the server, storage and network resources required to manage a Web presence or enable company apps.

In the States: Plenty of buzzing Tues over reports that Time Warner Cable and Cox having allegedly held preliminary talks about swapping systems in CA. Reuters reported that the early-stage talks involved systems valued at about \$2bln. Neither MSO is commenting. -- Comcast added 26 new Spanish-language nets including Mexicanal and La Telenova in Central CA, and also launched 5 Hispanic video packages in the area that range in price from \$17-\$77/month. -- Mediacom's warning consumers of a scam using fraudulent checks bearing the MSO's name, and disavowed any involvement in the flimflam that isn't specifically targeting MCCC subs. The scam uses letters claiming that recipients have won prizes in 1 of several lotteries, encloses phony checks purporting to pay for taxes on the prize and directs recipients to call a claims agent who asks for payment of amounts less than the check bears. -- Comcast kicks off Sun a "freeview" of NFL RedZone for digital subs. The stunt follows DirecTV's free offering of Sun Ticket for customers on Sept 12.

On the Hill: NCTA largely supports HR 5828, the Universal Service Reform Act of '10, but like everyone else, it has a few suggestions. According to prepared testimony of NCTA evp James Assey for Thurs' House Communications subcmte hearing, the trade assn will argue that support for broadband deployment should be limited to unserved areas. NCTA has long supported a high cost support cap, but it believes the cost model approach provided in the bill leaves open the question of the ultimate size of the high cost fund. The legislation, introduced in July by Reps Rick Boucher (D-VA) and Lee Terry (R0NE) would declare broadband a universal service and limit universal service support in areas where there is competition among voice and broadband providers.

Over-the-Top Overkill: Like other recent conferences and confabs, lots of chatter and buzz at WICT and NAMIC about alternative video platforms, over-the-top delivery and, of course, authentication. The basic question: What do we do? The basic answer: Keep brainstorming and have faith in consumers' eventual willingness to pay for high-quality content. "The companies that control the content can pretty much set the rules," said Joan Gillman, Time Warner Cable evp, media sales. She added that 99-cent TV eps will soon add up, and consumers will realize that they're better off with the current model. "The more they consume, the more they're going to look for a subscription service." Lisa Choi Owens, evp, digital media at Scripps Nets, said new concepts like Google TV are good in the sense they push cable "to innovate a little bit... Let's come up with a better search solution for television." In another session, panelists were mostly skeptical that Google will succeed where so many others have failed, although Discovery svp, digital media Douglas Craig said "if anyone could pull it off, it's probably them." But he said the industry's "long-term play" is authentication even though parties are still working through complicated business issues.

<u>NAMIC Notebook:</u> NAMIC chief *Kathy Johnson* finessed the return to the Big Apple from a few days in Denver. Opening the NAMIC conference, Johnson deadpanned, "Considering the increased attendance and interest—and the fact that's it's not snowing—I think it was a good idea to bring Diversity Week back to NY." -- We liked **BET** pres/COO *Scott* 



Mills' opening session jest: "I really enjoyed reading the list of The 80,000 Most Influential Minorities in Cable this morning." But his point was excellent. CableFAX: The Magazine's enlarged list illustrates the depth of cable's minority talent pool; the future is bright, he said. -- Sounding a note for change and diversity, FCC commissioner Mignon Clyburn told NAMIC's opening session, "We can't have an analog FCC in a digital world." She said having "opportunities for diversity" in proposed media mergers will be "critical" and noted too many minorities remain "on the wrong side of the digital divide," adding that broadband is no longer "a luxury." She lauded the FCC chief's effort to get investment capital for small and diverse businesses. -- Kudos to CableFAX's Most Influential Minorities in Cable, many of whom gathered with friends and supporters for the CableFAX-NAMIC breakfast Tues. At the event, graduates of NAMIC's Executive Leader Development Program talked about how it has shaped their careers and lives. "There's just something about it," explained Comcast svp, employee engagement Ron Phillips, noting the comradery that develops among ELDP graduates. "We lift each other up."

**WICT Notebook:** Personal stories and life advice dominated a Tues **WICT** morning panel that included **AETN** pres/ CEO Abbe Raven and FCC commish Mignon Clyburn, with a common theme around teamwork as a path to success. "It's really a team that gets it done, and the successful leaders are really the ones who have the smartest people around them," said Raven. Clyburn said she has always "been a leader with a small '!," meaning that she tries to drive consensus rather than micromanage. But in the past, "It was hard for me to ask for help. It was hard for me to accept help." So she urged WICT attendees to avoid trying to do everything themselves despite pressures to be fiercely independent. Raven said good leaders must make it about the team, not themselves, noting that she realized that right after taking over AETN when suddenly everyone started laughing at her jokes and a casual comment in the elevator about a show would make things "start shaking" around the office. That reminds her to keep things in perspective. She recounted how she no longer feels pressure to learn how to play golf after her exclusion from several outings earlier in her career. "I said eventually that I am who I am," she said. "I'm extremely proud that I'm a CEO who doesn't play golf." -- Kudos to Animal Planet pres/gm Marjorie Kaplan, who gave an intensely personal and advice-filled speech to WICT attendees emphasizing how diversity has impacted her life and business adventures. "The case for gender diversity is simple," she said. "It's just good economics." In fact, she opened with a story about an experience early in her career that reminded her of a scene from AMC's "Mad Men," with several cigar-chomping execs ignoring and even denigrating her during a pitch meeting. "There was no scotch on the table, but I really could have used one," she said. After talking to her mom and doing some soul searching, she soon realized that "those guys were completely wrong to leave me out of the discussion," adding with a smirk that in 2010 "almost all of them have no jobs, and I'm here running Animal Planet and talking to you today."

<u>Mobile</u>: The **Open Mobile Video Coalition** said participants in its **Mobile DTV Consumer Showcase** in DC, which since May has provided mobile content through 23 channels from 9 broadcast stations, primarily watched programming during the work week and most often viewed local news. **Rentrak** data also showed that participants have tuned into 2,600 different TV programs and cite convenience of a mobile device as the key reason for watching more TV than before. Broadcasters are also transmitting Mobile DTV signals in NYC, Philadelphia, Chicago, Atlanta and numerous other cities.

<u>VOD</u>: On Demand Weekly, an email newsletter devoted to VOD news, rolls out Wed (www.ondemandweekly.com). The Website was founded in '09 in Silicon Valley by former **Miramax Films** marketing execs *Britt Bensen* and *Doug Turner*. Now, they are aiming for niche email service in the vein of *Daily Candy* that will target young families with kids under 13.

**Ratings:** An estimated 18.3mln people tuned in to watch at least part of the "Stand Up 2 Cancer" special Fri—up 15.1% from '08, **Nielsen** said. The special aired on 4 broadcast and 11 cable nets. -- **TNT**'s "The Closer" and "Rizzoli & Isles," which the net said are now ad-supported cable's top 2 series of all time, closed out their summer runs Mon night with 7.2mln and 6.6mln total viewers (Live+Same Day), respectively. -- The season finale of **HBO**'s "True



Join us as we celebrate the 3rd annual CableFAX Program Awards and honor the Top Operators of the Year. This outstanding event will bring together those who create amazing content and those who excel in bringing it to the viewers. CableFAX will also be inducting eight honorees to CableFAX's Programming Hall of Fame.

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Special Issue: Program Award winners and honorees will be featured in CableFAX: The Magazine's October Programming Issue and distributed in print at the October 4<sup>th</sup> event, Cable Fall Connection and Telco TV.

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## **BUSINESS & FINANCE**

Blood" garnered 5.4mln total viewers despite battling the Cowboys-Redskins game on NBC that became the most-watched "Sunday Night Football" game ever. For the season, Blood averaged a series-high gross audience of 12.7mln viewers (linear plays, DVR and **HBO On Demand**).

Business/Finance: Charter shares returned to trading on NASDAQ Tues, closing at \$35.50 on light volume after opening at \$38. Paul Allen and affils own more than 35% of the combined voting power and have the right to elect 4 of 11 board members, which may impose restrictions on the trading of CHTR shares if an "owner shift" of at least 25 percentage points occurs and Charter's equity value has fallen below \$3.2bln. Miller Tabak's David Joyce initiated coverage with a "buy" and \$48 price target, believing the MSO, which counts 4.7mln subs and 12.9mln RGUs, "exhibits a unique opportunity to invest in a strong free cash flow growth story." -- Of note from **Best Buy**'s quarterly results: the co achieved a low double-digit comparable store sales increase in mobile phones and a mid single-digit increase in mobile computers including tablets, but said the gains were "more than offset" by sales decreases in TVs and ent hardware and software. Also, Best Buy noted a sales increase from customers purchasing connectable devices such as mobile phones, computers, and TVs.

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THIS ONE OF A KIND BOOK, from the publisher of CableFAX, exemplifies how cable programmers, operators and vendors cut through the clutter to mount PR and Marketing efforts that worked, gained revenue, ratings points and industry buzz. Each study demonstrates some facet of ingenuity, innovation or integrated thinking, illuminating communications as a function that has matured with poise and established its indispensability to business practices.





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