

# CableFAX Daily™

Wednesday — September 24, 2008

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 19 / No. 185

## DTV Doings: Sen Commerce Looks Again at Transition Before Congress Adjourns

The panic over Wall St outranked the panic of the Feb 17 DTV transition, with only a few senators popping in and out for the Sen Commerce Committee's DTV hearing Tues afternoon. Nonetheless, a fair amount of hand-wringing ensued over the impending analog cutoff. Declaring that "neither a President *Obama* nor a President *McCain* should have to deal with a failed transition so soon after coming into office," Sen Commerce chmn *Daniel Inouye* (D-HI) once again voiced concern over the transition's implementation. He said members of Congress are already getting calls, and suggested millions of calls could roll in based on the results from Wilmington, NC. Both **FCC** chmn *Kevin Martin* and **NTIA's Meredith Attwell Baker** have requested more money for transition efforts. **GAO's Mark Goldstein** had reservations about the current state of affairs. "We're still concerned that we'll have a lot of people who need coupons that won't get one in time," he told the committee, noting that govt converter box coupon expiration rates are higher among seniors than the general population. Similarly, he said only 8.7% of seniors have requested coupons vs 12.5% of the general population. Tues' hearings differed from last week's House Telecom Subcmte hearing in that the witness list included Wilmington, NC, mayor *Bill Saffo*. The mayor had early concerns about being home to the country's early DTV switch (Sept 8) but said those worries quickly diminished as the FCC addressed them "almost immediately." One takeaway from Wilmington: use fire depts. When citizens had more technical problems with installing converter boxes than just channel scans, members of the fire dept were dispatched to help—and while they were there, check smoke detectors. Saffo said residents were more open to allowing a member of the fire dept into their homes. The next big DTV milestones on deck include NTIA's written, formal plan to deal with the expected spike in requests and the flurry of activity expected around Nov 10—when the transition is exactly 100 days out. In other DTV doings, Martin wrote **CEA** and the **Consumer Electronic Retailers Assoc** Tues asking for help in encouraging battery-powered DTV converter boxes, noting that many Americans rely on battery powered TV receivers for information when power outages occur. To date, only 1 manufacturer has made a battery pack for use with its converter, Martin said. He also lamented the limited number of battery-powered receivers available.

**DBS-Bell Relations:** **DISH Network** and **AT&T** will stay partners a little longer, each agreeing to a 1 month extension of their marketing contract to expire Jan 31 instead of Dec 31, according to an **SEC** filing late Tues. DISH in July announced it would terminate its agreement to market and sell DISH satellite service at the end of the year (**Cfax**, 7/2), putting the contract in play. AT&T previously ended a marketing deal with **DirectTV**. Tues' filing provided no info on why the 2 were extending the contract for another month, and DISH declined comment. An AT&T rep confirmed the extension, saying, "we appreciate DISH Network/Echostar cooperating with us as we continue to evaluate our DBS options going forward."

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**Competition:** The fall lineup on **DirectTV's** ent channel **The 101** kicks off Oct 1 with season 3 of "Friday Night Lights." Beginning Oct 15 the show will be followed by companion series "Live From Dillon," featuring various Friday cast members discussing their characters, plot lines and answering live viewer questions. Also, the satcaster's original series "Rock & A Hard Place" and "Supreme Court of Comedy" both return for a 2nd season Oct 21. -- **AT&T's** Total Home DVR is now available in Dallas-Fort Worth, L.A., Fresno and St. Louis, providing DVR playback on any household TV. Separately, the telco now offers for purchase in 9 cities HomeManager, a portable device featuring a digital cordless handset, a touch screen "frame" with access to an interactive address book, email and video clips, and a base station providing a wireless voice/data connection between the frame/handset and AT&T networks. A HomeManager bundle runs \$500 (a \$200 discount is available to existing AT&T customers). -- **FiOS TV** added 19 HD nets and 39 overall in MD and Northern VA.

**New Media:** Nielsen data shows the typical wireless sub sends and receives more text messages than phone calls. As of 2Q, the avg number of text messages for a sub was 357 vs 204 for phone calls. Not surprising to parents, teens had the highest level of text messaging at 1742 messages/month. -- Following the success of its "Convention Hub" Website, **C-SPAN** is launching "Debate Hub." The online resource for its coverage of the upcoming presidential and veep debates will launch later this month at [ww.c-span.org/politics](http://ww.c-span.org/politics). Features include an interactive timeline that lets visitors watch questions they find most interesting. -- Encoding and rights management firm **Anystream** acquired **Voxant Media**, a vendor with a video news and information syndication service. Financials weren't disclosed.

**At the Portals:** The **FCC** has terminated an '01 order seeking information related to ITV services. The order had been triggered by the **AOL/Time Warner merger**. The Commission was especially interested in the **AOLTV** service, which has since been discontinued following "dismal consumer response." Saying that there's no clear consensus on how the ITV market might develop, the Commission said it would be inappropriate to commence further regulatory action at this time. However, it added that it would be keeping an eye on the space and would step in if appropriate.

**Carriage:** **ReelzChannel** launched recently on **Time Warner Cable** in Kansas City, KS; on systems in **Charter's** Vancouver, WA, area and Sierra Nevada area; and on **GCI** in AK.

**Online:** **Netflix** has inked separate pacts with **CBS** and **Disney-ABC** to stream online eps of TV shows including **Disney Channel's** "Hannah Montana" (Nov). The net's "The Suite Life on Deck" and "Wizards of Waverly Place" will be available 24 hours after each ep's initial broadcast. Overall, the deals cover approx 500 Disney Channel eps and 350 eps from CBS shows. -- Segments from **ReelzChannel's** "Secret's Out" are now available through **Border.com's** new "Backlot" feature offering film trailers, clips, behind-the-scenes reports and exclusive interviews about upcoming book-to-film releases.

**In the States:** *Working Mother* magazine named its 100 Best Companies, showing that not all employers are cutting back on family-friendly policies during the sluggish economy. In fact, 57% of the winners increased budgets for work/life programs. 100% of this year's winners have on-site lactation rooms vs 25% for companies nationwide, while 88% offer backup child care. **Discovery**, **Turner** and **Verizon** were among the companies making the grade.

**Technology:** **GE** and **Tatung** have formed **General Displays & Technologies**, a jv that will design, market and service GE-branded HDTVs with Internet capabilities for content delivery without the need for a PC. The 1st series of products

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is slated for spring. Also, GDT will partner with **NBCU** to develop an open platform capable for delivering Web and other digital content directly through the TV. -- **C-SPAN, Golf Channel** and numerous **Comcast** RSNs have signed up for **Comcast Media Center's** suite of disaster recovery services. When needed, CMC will originate the nets' broadcasts, including scheduled advertising and promotions, until service at a primary facility can be restored.

**Mobile: Sprint** has tapped **Ciena's** Carrier Ethernet platforms as 1 of the backhaul solutions for the planned WiMAX network.

**Ratings:** Cable news nets' success with this year's political convention coverage thrust the genre into the industry spotlight, but **Fox News** has stumped effectively for viewership all summer long. The net's runner-up finish (2.3/2.16mln) in cable prime last week extends a string of top-5 finishes that dates back to early Jul, and **Nielsen** ratings place the net 4th in the category for the entire summer. Last week, 5 Fox News telecasts hit the top 20, including 3 eps of "The O'Reilly Factor" and 2 eps of "Hannity & Colmes" that collectively averaged a 3.42/3.22mln. -- Paced by its record-shattering **MNF** telecast, **ESPN** won the prime title with a 3.3/3.27mln. Following Fox News and completing the top 5 are **TNT** (2.0/1.94mln), **USA** (1.9/1.88mln) and **Disney Channel** (1.8/1.73mln). -- **Brag Book:** Counting Mon night's Jets-Chargers game that delivered an 8.9/8.64mln, **ESPN's** "MNF" is averaging a 9.8/9.55mln and 13.3mln total viewers to date, up a respective 18%, 19% and 27% over last season. -- A Phillies game last week on **ComcastSportsNet** scored a season-high 9.4 (279K HHs), helping the net's team coverage earn 43% viewership growth in Sept. -- Viewership of **FSN FL's** Tampa Bay Rays coverage is up 95% YOY, delivering a season-to-date HH avg rating of 3.5 (63K homes).

**Programming: TV One** debuts doc series "Murder in Black and White," four, 1-hour specials that were filmed in cooperation with the FBI and designed to examine civil rights murders from the '40s and '50s, Oct 5-8, at 10pm ET. -- **ION TV** has inked with **Warner Bros** a film acquisition deal that runs through summer '10 and will bring 27 feature films to the net's lineup, beginning Wed with "Grumpier Old Men." -- **Lifetime's** "Rita Rocks," the net's 1st original prime comedy series in 10 years, premieres with 5 nightly (8:30pm) eps from Oct 20-24. The show spotlights an overworked wife and mother in the middle of a full blown identity crisis. -- The 1st Spanish-language film from **ESPN Films**, "JC Chavez" (Sat) will feature on **ESPN Deportes** and **ESPN Classic** the boxing feats of *Julio César Chávez*. -- Starring *Stacy Keach*, **Spike** original movie "Ring of Death" (Oct 17) features an ex-cop who goes undercover as a prisoner to investigate a string of mysterious and violent prisoner deaths.

**Hurricane Ike: Time Warner Cable, Comcast, Suddenlink, Charter** and **Cable One** have committed to air PSAs to raise awareness and encourage donations to the **TX Disaster Relief Fund**. The **TX Assoc of Broadcasters** is working to secure donated airtime from its members throughout the state. The fund already has \$4mln, according to the governor's office. Visit [www.TexasDisasterReliefFund.org](http://www.TexasDisasterReliefFund.org) for more info.

**Public Affairs: BET** will host a voter registration day on-air, online and in communities on Sat. *Queen Latifah* will host a special on BET from 11am-2pm dubbed, "Stand Up, Sign Up, Be Heard." -- **Farmers Insurance Group** has signed on as the presenting sponsor of **FSN's** year-long diversity awareness campaign, slated to be woven through Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept 15-Oct 15), Black History Month (Feb), and Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (May). Included are original programs and a series of vignettes honoring the achievements and contributions of Americans with diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

**Honors:** Cable picked up 9 **News & Doc Emmys** Mon night, a haul highlighted by **History's** Outstanding Historical Programming-Long Form win for "A Distant Shore: African Americans of D-Day" and **Cinemax's** "Have You Seen Andy?"

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Source: Beta Research Cable Subscriber Interest Study, high interest in services by index, rankings among emerging networks, June 2008.

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# BUSINESS & FINANCE

which won for Outstanding Investigative Journalism-Long Form. Cable's tally: **Nat Geo 3**, History 2, and with 1 each **Discovery Channel**, HBO/Cinemax, **HDNet** and **Smithsonian Channel**. -- **USA** evp, original programming *Jeff Wachtel* will be honored by the **Zimmer Children's Museum** next month with a Discovery Award. The honor goes to individuals who are "builders, creators and leaders in their fields and communities."

**People:** **Atlantic Broadband** CEO *David Keefe* and **WOW!** pres/CEO *Colleen Abdoulah* were elected to **C-SPAN's** board. **Advance/Newhouse's** *Bob Miron* was elected to serve a 2nd consecutive 1-year term as chmn of the exec committee. -- **CMT** named **Virgin's** *Dee McLaughlin* svp, brand marketing. -- *Roger Henry* was named **Science Channel** vp, programming and development. -- **MTVN** tapped *Joshua Dern* as svp/gm, social media. -- **Ascent Media** appointed *Erika Callahan* vp, global marketing and comm. -- **YES** promoted *Michael Spirito* to vp, business development and digital media. -- **TLC** named *Rita Mullin* vp, development. -- **Speed** named *Rick Snyder* pres, creative services. -- *Antonio Campo Dall'Orto* becomes evp, music brands for **MTVN Intl**.

**Business/Finance:** **OpenTV** has acquired **Ruzz TV**, an Australian provider of tech platforms enabling broadcasters to optimize play-out operations.

## CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	09/23 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	09/23 Close	1-Day Ch
<b>BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS</b>					
ALCATEL LUCENT:	4.30	0.02	AMDOCS:	26.38	(0.75)
BRITISH SKY:	31.49	(0.54)	AMPHENOL:	44.43	(0.97)
DIRECTV:	25.05	0.36	APPLE:	126.84	(4.21)
DISNEY:	32.53	(0.38)	ARRIS GROUP:	8.31	(0.5)
ECHOSTAR:	23.64	(0.83)	AVID TECH:	24.68	0.29
GE:	24.95	(1.2)	BIGBAND:	3.52	0.09
HEARST-ARGYLE:	22.23	(0.23)	BLNDER TONGUE:	1.25	(0.15)
ION MEDIA:	1.44	0.00	BROADCOM:	18.39	(1.41)
NEWS CORP:	13.00	(0.04)	C-COR:	11.00	0.00
<b>MSOS</b>					
CABLEVISION:	26.54	0.79	CISCO:	22.73	(0.38)
CHARTER:	0.87	(0.02)	COMMScope:	37.56	(1.83)
COMCAST:	19.26	(0.62)	CONCURRENT:	5.91	(0.09)
COMCAST SPCL:	19.17	(0.72)	CONVERGYS:	14.74	(0.26)
GCI:	9.63	(0.08)	CSG SYSTEMS:	17.26	0.13
KNOLGY:	9.45	(0.31)	ECHOSTAR HOLDING:	26.99	(0.06)
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	13.77	(0.34)	GOOGLE:	429.27	(0.87)
LIBERTY ENT:	24.76	0.50	HARMONIC:	8.38	(0.41)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	29.50	0.10	JDSU:	8.26	(0.35)
LIBERTY INT:	13.48	(0.28)	LEVEL 3:	3.00	(0.04)
MEDIACOM:	6.70	(0.47)	MICROSOFT:	25.44	0.04
SHAW COMM:	20.55	(0.63)	MOTOROLA:	7.38	(0.2)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	25.03	0.20	NDS:	56.75	0.15
VIRGIN MEDIA:	8.19	(0.28)	NORTEL:	2.75	(0.21)
WASH POST:	582.80	4.29	OPENTV:	1.48	(0.01)
<b>PROGRAMMING</b>					
PHILIPS:	28.74	(0.9)	RENTRAK:	14.00	(0.09)
CBS:	14.85	(0.54)	SEACHANGE:	9.51	0.05
CROWN:	5.12	(0.1)	SONY:	31.34	(0.95)
EW SCRIPPS:	7.05	(0.32)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	6.77	0.27
GRUPO TELEVISA:	21.66	(0.65)	THOMAS & BETTS:	39.56	(0.83)
HSN:	11.37	(0.02)	TIVO:	6.95	(0.23)
INTERACTIVE CORP:	16.60	(0.32)	TOLLGRADE:	4.43	(0.05)
LIBERTY:	40.19	0.14	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	26.76	(0.11)
LODGENET:	2.70	(0.5)	VONAGE:	1.05	(0.09)
NEW DISCOVERY:	16.74	(0.02)	YAHOO:	18.93	0.25
NEW FRONTIER:	3.00	(0.12)	<b>TELCOS</b>		
OUTDOOR:	8.30	(0.13)	AT&T:	28.75	(0.46)
PLAYBOY:	4.05	(0.19)	QWEST:	3.38	(0.07)
RHI:	12.23	0.12	VERIZON:	31.05	(0.98)
SCRIPPS INT:	39.90	(0.02)	<b>MARKET INDICES</b>		
TIME WARNER:	13.83	(0.06)	DOW:	10854.17	(161.52)
VALUEVISION:	2.20	(0.04)	NASDAQ:	2153.34	(25.64)
VIACOM:	25.64	(0.01)	<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>		
WWE:	15.40	(0.48)	3COM:	2.16	0.07
			ADC:	9.50	(0.21)
			ADDVANTAGE:	2.83	(0.12)

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