

CableFAX Daily™


Monday — October 4, 2010

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 21 / No. 191

Benched: Myriad Sports Nets Join Others in Darkness

Many sports fans that are also **DISH** subs face a disconcerting weekend and possibly additional time. The DBS op's lineup is now devoid of 19 RSNs (and **FX** and **Nat Geo**) after a new distribution deal couldn't be reached with Fox Thurs night, and NY-area RSNs **MSG** and **MSG Plus** are dark as well owing to similar contract dispute with **MSG Nets**. At our Fri deadline, no resolution had been forged in either case. If it drags on, various college football contests and MLB games, some with playoff implications, will be affected by the **DISH-Fox** dispute during the weekend of Oct 2-3, and while **DISH** subs lamented those facts at Fox's GetWhatIPaidFor.com they also expressed concern over the loss of **Nat Geo** and particularly **FX** and its Tues ep of "Sons of Anarchy." In a Fri morning release, **DISH** said Fox is "demanding a rate increase of more than 50 percent" and "has flatly refused... to allow customers to continue to watch these Fox channels during the negotiations." The DBS op's offering more of its side at several related Websites, including FoxShakedownDISH.com. A Fox spokesperson called **DISH**'s rate hike claim "patently absurd," and Fox has even ratcheted up its anti-**DISH** rhetoric by alerting customers at its aforementioned Website that Fox broadcast and **MyNetworkTV**, come Nov 1, could be lost too. "The proposal we've offered **DISH** is fair and in line with the tremendous value we provide," read a Fox statement. "We regret the inconvenience to our viewers, but **DISH** has asserted its subscribers do not value our channels and has made a decision to go forward without them." Similar sentiment came Fri from **MSG Media**, which said **DISH** decided to drop **MSG** and **MSG Plus** despite good faith negotiations. "DISH has rejected numerous fair and reasonable proposals at rates, terms and conditions consistent with our deals with other operators," said **MSG Nets** evp/gm *Dan Ronayne* in a release. **DISH** countered by pointing to **MSG** as the party that pulled the nets "after demanding outrageous contract renewal demands from **DISH** Network, including double digit rate increases and linking renewal of their sports channels to carriage of a low-rated music video channel." **DISH** dropped **MSG's Fuse** in July and replaced it with **MTVN's Palladia (Cfax, 7/6)**. Regardless of who's at fault in these spats, the standoffs illustrate the new era in distribution deal-making defined largely by public spats and deeply dug-in heels. Besides Fox-**DISH** round 2, also on tap is Fox-**Cablevision** and the Oct 16 expiration of a deal covering Fox broadcast,



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Fox Deportes, Nat Geo Wild and MyNetworkTV. Unfortunately for consumers, **Stifel Nicolaus** believes “the FCC is disinclined to intervene in the retransmission disputes, beyond jawboning and, possibly, beefed-up consumer notification rules.” And the firm added that the Fox-DISH dispute “could have ripple effects in the broader programming wars and policy debate, including in the **Comcast-NBCU** review, where it could add to concerns about competitor access to Comcast RSNs.” Added the **American Television Alliance**: “FOX’s blackout of regional sports networks and other cable channels from DISH Network puts consumers in the middle of a business dispute, the same tactic broadcast networks are using in retransmission negotiations with pay-TV providers.” Meantime, the distribution din continues.

Jersey Shuffle: MTV has had a rockin’ year on the ratings front, its turnaround from a challenging ’08 and ’09 aided considerably by the success of “Jersey Shore” and “Teen Mom 2.” Yet rockiness may return, what with the planned departure at year’s end of pres, programming and dev *Tony DiSanto*, who has presided over the juggernaut shows. An MTV spokesperson said DiSanto’s desire to break out on his own—he and svp, dev *Liz Gateley*, who’s also leaving, will run a prod firm under the umbrella of *Ben Silverman’s Electus*—has been known for about a year, and that recent appointments have helped address the expected change. MTV will fill DiSanto’s role but not Gateley’s specifically, said the spokesperson, noting that MTV’s show pipeline is healthy enough to ease the transition.

In the Starz: Following its feature of miniseries “The Pillars of the Earth” this year, **Starz** is hyping 3 additional pillars of a strategy meant to differentiate the net. At the **Liberty Media** investor day Fri, pres/CEO *Chris Albrecht* said Starz will be “completely focused” over the next 18 months on exploring opportunities across new platforms, giving its existing distribution partners the multi-platform products and content they need for growth, and perhaps most importantly, ramp its original programming slate. Starting in ’11, Starz will prod 50-60 hours of original programming per year, compared to approx 25 hours currently, in an effort to achieve critical scale in content, said Albrecht. The goal is to “give Starz a distinctive brand... within the premium tier and the overall cable landscape,” he said, adding that “the premium category as a whole is healthy.” From Jan-June, both Starz and Encore added subs (the latter 500K), said Albrecht, and near-term opportunities for additional growth include the 5mln homes that receive multiple premium nets and 10mln that take 1, but not Starz or **Encore**. Albrecht’s also excited about the burgeoning IP content modes, yet stressed that current distribution partners remain the top priority. “It’s wise for us to look very carefully at the decisions we’re making,” he said. *John Malone* then stepped in to paraphrase: “I think what he’s saying is, have your cake and eat it too, if you take your time.” Albrecht said Starz talks to Netflix all the time, but that a deal with the OTT poster child isn’t a necessity.

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Competition: The new **AT&T** Voicemail Viewers app allows U-verse Voice customers to check and manage their phone messages with visual voicemail on smartphones.

Carriage: **RRsat** agreed to provide uplink, playout and connectivity services for **Fashion TV HD** on its satellite platform across North, Central and South America. -- **Atlantic Broadband** launched **Big Ten Net** in the Penn St territories of Uniontown and Clearfield, PA.

Technology: DVRs and home Internet and WiFi are among the “hot” in-home tech trends, according to a 2-yr trend review by **Nielsen**. Internet and broadband access in the home rose by a respective 2.5% and 3.8% between 1Q and 2Q, and 85.3% of Americans currently have some kind of Internet access through home and/or work, said Nielsen. Home wireless networks increased 8.2% over the same period, and 24% over 8 Qs, and DVR ownership jumped 14.5%. Among the “cooling” trends are satellite radio and DVD players, down 0.6% as US penetration sits at 87.9%.

Advertising/Marketing: In its 4th year and running through Oct 31, **Outdoor Channel's** “Gear Up and Go!” national sweepstakes gives viewers an opportunity to win thousands of dollars from the net’s ad partners including presenting sponsor Dodge (Ram Sportsman). On-air spots direct viewers to OutdoorChannel.com for daily giveaways and info about the sweepstakes. More than 130 cable systems repping more than 14.3mln subs have signed on for the promo. More info at Affiliates.OutdoorChannel.com.

Ratings: In a blog about the lower-than-normal ratings of **USA's** “Monday Night Raw” in recent weeks, longtime **WWE** announcer *Jim Ross* cited an obvious reason—the return of MNF on **ESPN**—and an interesting 1 as well. “Personally, I see WWE going through somewhat of a transition period as it relates to the development of new, top talents,” wrote Ross, intimating a dearth of compelling stars and storylines. “Should wholesale changes be implemented? Not in my opinion. Rebuilding a roster takes time.” WWE shares have been in a slump too, down 26% since Apr 26 and % since Aug 4.

Programming: **ESPN's** newsmag show “E:60” (Tues) returns next week with 6 weekly eps, 1 of which will feature an interview with Washington Redskins owner *Dan Snyder*. -- **Oxygen** greenlit an untitled docu-series that will spotlight *Paris Hilton* and some of her friends, including *Charlie Sheen's* wife *Brooke Mueller*. -- **Syfy's** annual “31 Days of Halloween” programming marathon runs through Oct 31 and features 600 hours of creepy content, including “Ghost Hunters Live” (Oct 31) and original movie “Red: Werewolf Hunter” (Oct 30).

Business/Finance: **EarthLink** agreed to acquire for \$3/share **ITC DeltaCom**, which operates a 16,400-mile fiber optic infrastructure in the SE. EarthLink said the approx \$516mln deal will importantly combine its existing ISP and IP-focused businesses with Deltacom’s integrated comm services.

Editor's Note: Congrats to our **CableFAX Program Awards** honorees. Look for our Special Issue on Mon to coincide with our awards luncheon in NYC honoring top shows and ops. More info: <http://www.cablefax.com/cfp/events/program2010/>

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Deadline:
November 5, 2010

CableFAX's Best of the Web Awards is the industry's top honor in the digital space, recognizing outstanding websites and digital initiatives among cable programmers, operators, vendors and associations.

The CableFAX Best of the Web Awards will also salute the cable executives behind the scenes who make these digital initiatives shine. The awards are presented by the most trusted information source in cable: CableFAX Daily and sister brand CableFAX: The Magazine. The winners and honorable mentions will be saluted during at an awards event in April 2011 in New York City.

Sponsorship Opportunities: Debbie Vodenos at 301-354-1695; dvodenos@accessintel.com
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CableFAX Week in Review

Company	Ticker	10/01 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS				
DIRECTV:	DTV	41.83	(0.26%)	25.43%
DISH:	DISH	19.33	-0.21%	(6.93%)
DISNEY:	DIS	33.34	(0.71%)	3.38%
GE:	GE	16.36	(1.8%)	8.13%
NEWS CORP:	NWS	15.26	(3.66%)	(4.15%)

Company	Ticker	10/01 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
MSOS				
CABLEVISION:	CVC	26.34	2.09%	2.01%
CHARTER:	CHTR	33.10	(2.07%)	0.00%
COMCAST:	CMCSA	17.82	(4.07%)	5.66%
COMCAST SPCL:	CMCSK	16.76	(3.51%)	4.68%
GCI:	GNCMA	10.08	(0.88%)	57.99%
KNOLOGY:	KNOL	13.51	2.35%	23.72%
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	LCAPA	52.87	1.63%	121.40%
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	LBTYA	30.62	(0.39%)	39.88%
LIBERTY INT:	LINTA	14.21	6.76%	31.09%
MEDIACOM:	MCCC	6.68	1.37%	49.44%
SHAW COMM:	SJR	21.86	(0.14%)	6.27%
TIME WARNER CABLE:	TWC	54.66	2.92%	32.06%
VIRGIN MEDIA:	VMED	23.35	2.68%	38.74%
WASH POST:	WPO	403.94	6.30%	(8.11%)

Company	Ticker	10/01 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
PROGRAMMING				
CBS:	CBS	16.38	1.30%	16.58%
CROWN:	CRWN	2.45	6.52%	68.97%
DISCOVERY:	DISCA	43.27	(0.62%)	41.08%
GRUPO TELEVISIA:	TV	18.96	(2.27%)	(8.67%)
HSN:	HSNI	30.49	2.49%	51.02%
INTERACTIVE CORP:	IACI	26.24	(2.09%)	28.13%
LIBERTY:	L	38.02	1.06%	4.59%
LIBERTY STARZ:	LSTZA	65.96	2.26%	42.93%
LIONSGATE:	LGF	7.25	0.55%	24.78%
LODGENET:	LNET	2.38	(27.44%)	(56.96%)
NEW FRONTIER:	NOOF	1.74	1.16%	(7.94%)
OUTDOOR:	OUTD	5.65	1.80%	(2.59%)
PLAYBOY:	PLA	5.14	1.78%	60.63%
SCRIPPS INT:	SNI	47.14	1.07%	13.59%
TIME WARNER:	TWX	30.61	(3.68%)	5.04%
VALUEVISION:	VVTV	1.83	(3.17%)	(61.88%)
VIACOM:	VIA	40.37	1.89%	28.16%
WWE:	WWE	13.97	1.01%	(8.87%)

Company	Ticker	10/01 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
TECHNOLOGY				
ADC:	ADCT	12.66	0.00%	103.86%
ADVANTAGE:	AEY	2.96	(4.52%)	50.25%
ALCATEL LUCENT:	ALU	3.41	1.49%	2.71%
AMDOCS:	DOX	28.87	5.91%	1.19%
AMPHENOL:	APH	49.06	0.70%	6.24%
AOL:	AOL	25.03	7.24%	7.52%
APPLE:	AAPL	282.52	(3.35%)	34.07%
ARRIS GROUP:	ARRS	9.74	(0.71%)	(14.79%)
AVID TECH:	AVID	13.19	3.78%	3.37%
BIGBAND:	BBND	2.83	1.07%	(17.73%)
BLNDER TONGUE:	BDR	2.36	(2.48%)	107.02%
BROADCOM:	BRCM	34.72	2.51%	10.33%
CISCO:	CSCO	21.91	(0.81%)	(8.48%)
CLEARWIRE:	CLWR	7.91	4.49%	17.01%

Company	Ticker	10/01 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
COMMSCOPE:	CTV	23.49	0.09%	(11.46%)
CONCURRENT:	CCUR	6.55	(0.15%)	65.40%
CONVERGYS:	CVG	10.71	2.29%	(0.37%)
CSG SYSTEMS:	CSGS	18.32	(11.28%)	(4.03%)
ECHOSTAR:	SATS	19.01	(1.4%)	(5.61%)
GOOGLE:	GOOG	525.62	(0.32%)	(15.22%)
HARMONIC:	HLIT	7.00	5.58%	10.76%
INTEL:	INTC	19.32	(0.51%)	(5.29%)
JDSU:	JDSU	12.28	(0.73%)	48.85%
LEVEL 3:	LVLT	0.93	(2.82%)	(39.03%)
MICROSOFT:	MSFT	24.38	(1.57%)	(20.01%)
MOTOROLA:	MOT	8.56	(1.38%)	10.31%
RENTRAK:	RENT	25.54	(1.5%)	44.54%
SEACHANGE:	SEAC	7.54	0.53%	14.94%
SONY:	SNE	30.54	(1.48%)	5.31%
SPRINT NEXTEL:	S	4.72	6.31%	28.96%
THOMAS & BETTS:	TNB	41.66	0.82%	16.40%
TIVO:	TIVO	9.07	6.71%	(10.9%)
TOLLGRADE:	TLGD	7.31	(3.56%)	19.64%
UNIVERSAL ELEC:	UEIC	20.47	0.34%	(11.84%)
VONAGE:	VG	2.57	2.80%	83.57%
YAHOO:	YHOO	14.27	(1.59%)	(14.96%)

Company	Ticker	10/01 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
TELCOS				
AT&T:	T	28.81	0.80%	2.78%
QWEST:	Q	6.34	1.44%	50.59%
VERIZON:	VZ	32.89	0.77%	(0.72%)

Index	10/01 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg	
MARKET INDICES				
NASDAQ:	IXIC	2370.75	(0.44%)	4.48%
S&P 500:	GSPC	1146.24	0.13%	0.13%

WINNERS & LOSERS

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE WINNERS				
COMPANY	TICKER	CLOSE	1-WK CH	% CHG
1. AOL:	AOL	25.03	7.24%	7.24%
2. LIBERTY INT:	LINTA	14.21	6.76%	6.76%
3. TIVO:	TIVO	9.07	6.71%	6.71%
4. CROWN:	CRWN	2.45	6.52%	6.52%
5. SPRINT NEXTEL:	S	4.72	6.31%	6.31%

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE LOSERS				
COMPANY	TICKER	CLOSE	1-WK CH	% CHG
1. LODGENET:	LNET	2.38	(27.44%)	(27.44%)
2. CSG SYSTEMS:	CSGS	18.32	(11.28%)	(11.28%)
3. ADVANTAGE:	AEY	2.96	(4.52%)	(4.52%)
4. COMCAST:	CMCSA	17.82	(4.07%)	(4.07%)
5. TIME WARNER:	TWX	30.61	(3.68%)	(3.68%)

CableFAX's Top Case Studies in Cable Marketing & PR Guidebook

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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