

CableFAX Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Nice Rebound: Cable Sports Ad Market on the Upswing

Whether through hitting, dribbling, driving, passing or skating, cable's sports properties—rarely lacking in viewership—have achieved solid if unspectacular ad sales figures this year after enduring a very difficult '08-'09 stretch that saw male-skewing auto makers and financial firms reign in spending. Both data and anecdotal evidence point to this fact: any cable nets that report ad shortcomings during the current earnings season won't be able to blame the sports genre. "There's a very healthy scatter market right now," said **Turner Sports** pres *David Levy*. "We are selling [playoff] baseball extremely well... it's way ahead of where we thought we would be." Moreover, the net's regular-season baseball inventory sold out, said Levy, and its **NBA** playoffs delivered handsomely this spring. '09 ad rev across Turner Sports' portfolio is flat to slightly ahead of '08 numbers, he said—a performance that should be considered a win. To wit: **Nielsen** data covering Mar-July shows that overall national cable ad spending during the period was flat versus '08 while ad spending across cable sports programming slipped 1% (for more ad data, see pg 4). In other words, par for a tricky ad course is a good score. And with several Wall St analysts predicting gains in 3Q cable ad spending and the sports industry amid a generous fall/winter full of **NFL**, **NHL**, and **NBA** action—plus the healthier economic outlook now versus in July—it's safe to assume that sports ad spending has improved over the last 2 months. Not surprisingly, spending across **ESPN's** college and pro football slate is "very strong," said *Ed Erhardt*, pres, **ABC Sports** and ESPN Ad Sales and Marketing, who also noted a strong scatter market. "In this kind of marketplace, people want security, [and] sports has that." Other nets are noting improvement in the ad market as well. "We are clearly seeing an uptick in the amount of money being spent across multiple categories," said **Comcast Nets** svp, marketing solutions and sports sales *Steve Margosian*. Volume has notably increased in the last 30-60 days, he said, adding that **Versus'** college football slate will meet its financial goals for advertising, as did its **Tour de France** coverage. And then there's the net's flagship sports property, the **NHL**. "There's a clear amount of energy building against the NHL by advertisers and marketers... a lot of interest," said Margosian. As for hot categories and firms, **TBS** counts **Anheuser-Busch**, **BlackBerry** and **Chase Card Services** among its lead MLB playoffs sponsors, ESPN notes growth in men's grooming, insurance, non-Detroit autos and telecom, and Versus is enjoying success through autos, distilled spirits, movie studios and insurance companies.

WealthTV-Comcast: An FCC administrative law judge denied **WealthTV's** program access complaints against **Comcast**, **Time Warner Cable**, **Cox** and **Bright House**, finding the operators did not discriminate against the network, according to a source. ALJ *Richard Sippel's* recommendation comes after a similar finding from the FCC Enforcement Bureau in July, which recommended against mandated carriage of the net. It's not the end of the matter, though. WealthTV has said it wants to present its case to the full Commission, which still has to vote on the ALJ recommendation. Sippel heard arguments from both sides in the case in Apr. Last year, Wealth filed program access complaints against the MSOs claiming they favored now-defunct **MOJO**, an HD channel operated by **In Demand** in which they all have ownership.

Be Hailed As a Hero

—Atlas by Lee Lawrie and Rene Paul Chambellan

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On the Hill: A bill that would require cable and broadcast to keep the volume for commercials the same as for programs made it out of subcmte Thurs. Rep *Anna Eshoo's* (D-CA) Commercial Advertisement Loudness Mitigation (CALM) Act was referred to the full House Commerce cmte on a voice vote. Small cable ops have expressed concerns it could create an undue hardship, saying some systems just pass through ads and don't have the power to alter them like bigger operators do. **ACA** is looking for an exemption for smaller companies that don't insert their own ads and that will give small ops that perform ad insertions a reasonable time to come into compliance. Subcmte chmn *Rick Boucher* (D-VA) and Rep *Zack Space* (D-OH) pledged to address ACA's concerns with Eshoo.

In the States: **Comcast** added 40 new HD nets, including **Bravo HD, CMT HD, ESPNU HD** and **Nick HD**, in Plainfield, NJ. -- **Sprint** launched a turnkey back-office solution allowing interested cable ops and telcos to sell post-paid wireless services under their own private label. The solution includes activation, provisioning and billing support. -- **Time Warner Cable** will deploy **BigBand's** switched digital video solution in L.A., NYC and Dallas.

Online: **Comcast** announced "Constant Guard," a security program designed to protect HSD customers from bots, viruses and other online threats. As part of the multi-year effort, Comcast started trialing in Denver an in-browser notification "Service Notice" that will alert customers whose computers seem infected with a bot or virus and request they go to the anti-virus center for help to remove the problem. This feature and the other components are provided at no additional cost.

At the Portals: **Intel** is seeking an **FCC** waiver of the IEEE 1394 interface requirement for set-tops that incorporate its "system-on-a-chip" media processors supporting IP. "The marketplace has shifted away from the little-used and very expensive 1394 technology to the widely-deployed IP technologies. The regulation requiring 1394 stands as a technological 'bridge to nowhere,' and should be waived," Intel told the FCC. Without a waiver, Intel said it would be cost-prohibitive to manufacture and sell these high performance systems-on-a-chip (CE3100 and CE4100) for use in cable-operator-sourced STBs. In '05, FCC rules went into effect requiring that cable's HD set-tops include the 1394 output (aka Firewire). -- The Wireline Competition Bureau adopted an order to protect the confidentiality of some documents and materials filed with the **FCC** regarding its development of a National Broadband Plan.

No Joe Schmoes: **Free Press** is complaining about the **FCC's** field hearings to solicit public input on a National Broadband Plan. The group said details of the hearings (including location and schedule) have been made available only a few days in advance, adding that Thurs' hearing in San Diego was announced less than 48 hours before its start time. What's more, Free Press doesn't like that all 4 hearings have been held on workdays. An FCC spokesman said in a statement that the Commission will release a schedule of upcoming hearings to provide greater advance notice, but

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he also defended the process. “The process of developing the National Broadband Plan has been the most open in the Commission’s history and has provided more opportunities for public participation than ever before. Attendance by the public at the FCC’s 27 staff workshops and 4 hearings has been strong. Nearly 1,500 people have attended the staff workshops in person, and over 6,600 have attended online,” his statement read.

Programming: HBO will bow “Terror in Mumbai,” Nov 19, 8pm—one week before the 1st anniversary of terrorist attacks on the city. Co-produced with the UK’s Channel 4, the doc recounts the 60-hour period in which 10 Pakistani men unleashed coordinated attacks that left 170 dead. It features exclusive phone intercepts between the gunmen and their controllers in Pakistan.

Honors: The **Assoc of Cable Communicators** announced the following as nominees for its highest honor, the **Golden Beacon Award: Lifetime Nets’** “Every Woman Counts,” **MTV’s** “GYT: Get Yourself Tested” and **Nickelodeon’s** “Nickelodeon’s The Big Green Help.” The award recognizes a communications and public affairs initiative that has made an impact within the cable industry while enhancing cable’s image nationwide.

People: Jerry Avery is returning to **Insight** from **Comcast** as gm of its Bowling Green, KY, district.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	10/08 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	10/08 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
BRITISH SKY:	37.19	(0.02)	AMPHENOL:	37.88	0.33
DIRECTV:	27.24	(0.29)	APPLE:	189.27	(0.98)
DISH:	20.02	0.33	ARRIS GROUP:	11.62	(0.06)
DISNEY:	28.67	0.50	AVID TECH:	14.76	0.40
GE:	16.22	0.06	BIGBAND:	4.08	(0.15)
NEWS CORP:	14.03	0.35	BLNDER TONGUE:	1.22	0.01
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	24.14	0.80	BROADCOM:	28.54	(1.4)
COMCAST:	15.65	0.12	CISCO:	23.67	0.06
COMCAST SPCL:	14.95	0.21	CLEARWIRE:	8.07	0.08
GCI:	6.63	(0.11)	COMMSCOPE:	27.22	(0.15)
KNOLGY:	10.90	(0.08)	CONCURRENT:	4.43	0.01
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	21.82	0.24	CONVERGYS:	10.53	0.15
LIBERTY ENT:	30.77	(0.28)	CSG SYSTEMS:	15.98	(0.11)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	21.95	0.39	ECHOSTAR:	19.51	0.13
LIBERTY INT:	11.81	0.37	GOOGLE:	514.18	(3.36)
MEDIACOM:	5.37	(0.23)	HARMONIC:	6.32	0.07
RCN:	9.31	(0.18)	INTEL:	19.88	0.13
SHAW COMM:	19.03	0.10	JDSU:	6.92	0.02
TIME WARNER CABLE:	41.53	(0.46)	LEVEL 3:	1.35	0.02
VIRGIN MEDIA:	13.76	0.28	MICROSOFT:	25.67	0.57
WASH POST:	466.88	6.08	MOTOROLA:	8.38	(0.23)
PROGRAMMING					
CBS:	12.57	0.46	OPENTV:	1.56	(0.02)
CROWN:	1.67	0.04	PHILIPS:	25.10	0.53
DISCOVERY:	30.92	0.70	RENTRAK:	17.73	(0.06)
EW SCRIPPS:	7.37	(0.02)	SEACHANGE:	7.92	(0.06)
GRUPO TELEVISA:	18.50	0.39	SONY:	28.20	0.11
HSN:	16.66	0.15	SPRINT NEXTEL:	3.68	(0.05)
INTERACTIVE CORP:	18.99	(0.35)	THOMAS & BETTS:	31.59	0.83
LIBERTY:	34.92	0.12	TIVO:	10.40	0.23
LODGENET:	7.56	(0.02)	TOLLGRADE:	5.66	0.01
NEW FRONTIER:	2.01	0.00	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	20.74	0.33
OUTDOOR:	6.44	(0.01)	VONAGE:	1.73	(0.27)
PLAYBOY:	2.94	0.07	YAHOO:	17.58	0.09
RHI:	2.87	(0.05)	TELCOS		
SCRIPPS INT:	37.76	0.05	AT&T:	25.94	(0.24)
TIME WARNER:	30.54	0.49	QWEST:	3.77	0.00
VALUEVISION:	3.03	(0.2)	VERIZON:	29.16	(0.22)
VIACOM:	30.35	0.07	MARKET INDICES		
WWE:	13.95	0.14	DOW:	9786.87	61.29
TECHNOLOGY					
3COM:	5.54	0.18	NASDAQ:	2123.93	13.60
ADC:	7.38	(0.03)			
ADVANTAGE:	2.19	0.02			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	4.67	0.07			
AMDOCS:	27.12	0.43			



Deadline: December 4, 2009 • Enter At: www.CableFAX.com/BOW

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 an awards event in April 2010 in New York City.

Deadline: December 4, 2009

Sponsorship Opportunities: Debbie Vodenos at 301-354-1695; dvodenos@accessintel.com
 Entry Questions: Saun Sayamongkhun at 301-354-1610; ssayamongkhun@accessintel.com

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE with Chad Heiges and Seth Arenstein

Marketing Mania

As noted on pg 1, the sports genre's helping cable fight back in the still-dicey yet apparently improving cable ad market. Only the next few weeks will tell for sure, but **Wells Fargo**, **UBS** and **Sanford Bernstein** all foresee improved ad results for most cable nets and have upgraded the sector accordingly. Owing to **Nielsen** research, what we know for sure is that various genres have been leading the charge while others have been notably lagging. After all, a virtually flat YOY national cable ad market from Mar-July (per Nielsen) means several genres were mired in negative territory during the period—and likely still are. 1 of those is children's programming, which during the period was down 27% YOY, including an awful -36% in May. Many companies including **Disney** and **Turner** have lamented this genre's underperformance in recent months. Another is reality (perhaps because there's just too darn much of it!). The genre lost 16% in the period, although a 96% uptick in June must be noted. As for a shooting star or teacher's pet, look no further than dramas. Cable's impressive run of original dramas helped the group post a 12% increase in ad sales from Mar-July, and that number was even surprisingly tempered by lukewarm results in May (-2%), June (flat) and July (+6%), when the genre arguably shines brightest in terms of viewership. Add Aug to the data set, though, and likely watch the overall avg soar. As for top nets in ad spend during the period, **USA** led with 14 top-10 monthly spots, while **Nickelodeon** notched 6 and **ESPN**, **Comedy Central** and **Lifetime Movie Net** earned 5 each. And (drum roll, please), the monthly telecast winners, in order from Mar-July, are: a USA movie, **NBA** playoffs on **TNT** for 2 consecutive months, another USA movie and **Nickelodeon's** "SpongeBob SquarePants." Perhaps Bob is soaking up all the ad spend in the children's genre. *CH*

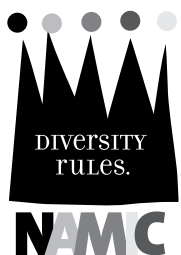
Highlights: "JFK: 3 Shots That Changed America," pt I, Sun, 9pm, pt II, Mon, 8pm, **History**. Producers of triple Emmy winner 9/11 doc, "102 Minutes That Changed America," use the same formula—amateur and professional footage, no narrator—to examine JFK's assassination. The evocative video begins with a young *Dan Rather* covering one of JFK's "non-political political" trips and JFK's last speech. The film is as riveting as the 9/11 piece. -- "A Portrait of Maurice Sendak," Wed, 7pm, **HBO**. Just days before the premiere of *Spike Jonze's* film "Where The Wild Things Are," Jonze provides an intimate look at Wild Things author/illustrator *Maurice Sendak*. The offbeat Jonze captures well the offbeat Sendak. Creator of 100+ children's books, the 81-year-old never had children, doesn't think he'd have been good at raising kids and blasts his parents, "they never should have had children." Then why his obsession with childhood? "I guess that's where my heart is," he says. -- "Discovering Ardi," Sun, 9pm, **Discovery**. Besides huge scientific implications, this is a terrific story well told. Scientists working in Ethiopia find the skeleton of a 4.4-mln-year-old female hominid, *Ardipithecus*, 1mln+ years older than the famous *Australopithecus* skeleton known as Lucy. SA

Worth a Look: "Zombieman," Tues, 10pm, **Starz**. Clever, half-fun, half-serious look at the un-dead in film. SA

Basic Cable Rankings (9/28/09-10/04/09)			
Mon-Sun Prime			
1	ESPN	2.6	2613
2	DSNY	2.1	2094
3	USA	1.9	1858
4	FOXN	1.7	1693
5	NAN	1.4	1403
6	TBSC	1.2	1215
6	TNT	1.2	1143
8	A&E	1.1	1082
9	SYFY	1	987
9	TOON	1	952
11	SPK	0.9	917
11	HGTV	0.9	899
11	LIFE	0.9	862
11	FX	0.9	829
15	FOOD	0.8	838
15	TLC	0.8	774
15	HIST	0.8	746
15	TRU	0.8	741
15	HALL	0.8	678
20	FAM	0.7	737
20	DISC	0.7	672
20	ESP2	0.7	668
20	CMDY	0.7	668
20	NKJR	0.7	498
20	LMN	0.7	497
26	AMC	0.6	586
26	CNN	0.6	581
26	BRAV	0.6	565
26	MSNB	0.6	521
26	BET	0.6	514
31	MTV	0.5	501
31	VH1	0.5	489
31	TVLD	0.5	454
34	HLN	0.4	444
34	EN	0.4	433
34	APL	0.4	419
34	CMT	0.4	336
34	NGC	0.4	299
34	WGNA	0.4	278
34	OXYG	0.4	278
34	GSN	0.4	271
34	SOAP	0.4	263
43	TRAV	0.3	315
43	WE	0.3	229
43	VS	0.3	184
43	ID	0.3	171

*Nielsen data supplied by ABC/Disney

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