

# CableFAX Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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## Walking Proud: AMC Series Returns as #1 Cable Series Telecast Ever

Viewers for **AMC's** "The Walking Dead" are multiplying about as fast as the number of zombies in the series, with Sun's Season 4 premiere ranking as the highest-rated episode in series history. The show delivered 16.1mln viewers and 10.4mln adults 18-49. That makes it the #1 show in *all* of TV for 18-49s this season, outperforming everything for the 2013/14 season-to-date. Even **NFL** football. Oh, but it's bigger than that. Based on live plus same day ratings, Sun's premiere is the #1 cable series telecast **EVER** in total viewers. To give you a better idea of how big that number is, **Disney's** "High School Musical 2" has held the #1 scripted cable TV telecast spot (excluding MNF and sports) for 6 long years with its 17.2mln total viewers back in Aug '07. If a million more zombie fans are generated by ep 2, watch out, *Zac Efron!* "The Walking Dead" premiere easily surpassed the Season 3 finale, which held the previous ratings high for the series (12.4mln viewers, 8.1mln 18-49s). Factor in time-shifted viewing, and the premiere should top 20mln viewers. And a lot of people stuck around Sun to talk about those zombie kills and plot developments, with after show "Talking Dead" totaling 5.1mln total viewers and 3.3mln adults 18-49, making it the show's most-viewed premiere in series history. That's better than the 4.4mln companion series "Talking Bad" drew for "Breaking Bad's" finale last month. Given the success AMC has had with after shows—not to mention ringleader **Bravo** with "Watch What Happens Live"—look for more nets to go this route. They especially make sense given the increase in scripted series across cable. The ep was a hit on social as well, with the opening minute of the East Coast premiere accounting for about 88% of all TV-related tweets (39,994). Overall, the ep garnered a total of 1,171,994 tweets from 570,148 unique authors. On the scheduling front, clever move by AMC to run a 5-min sneak peek of Season 4 four times over the weekend to build anticipation. It was tagged as "new content" so DVRs recording the series picked it up for fans. It's not the first time anyone has done this (AMC did it for "Breaking Bad" most recently), but it's always nice to see something outside an hour-long preview and catch-up special.

**OTT Talk:** Netflix shares closed up nearly 8% on reports that the online video service is in talks with MVPDs, including **Comcast**, to make its content available via set-top boxes. The report in the *WSJ* also mentioned talks with other operators, including **Suddenlink**. It cautioned that talks are in the early stages, with no deal imminent. In Sept, the



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UK's **Virgin Media** signed a deal making it the 1st pay TV operator to carry Netflix on cable set-tops equipped with **TiVo**. It's currently testing a pilot of the service with 40K HHs.

**In the Courts:** **Cablevision** attacked broadcasters' legal arguments in their Supreme Court challenge of online streaming service **Aereo**, complaining that they're going after the legal underpinning of all cloud-based services (including Cablevision's court-approved RS-DVR). "Given that there are much narrower—and more persuasive—legal grounds for invalidating Aereo that do not threaten such underpinnings, the broadcasters' approach can only be seen as a willful attempt to stifle innovation. If Aereo ends up prevailing, it will serve the broadcasters right," the MSO said. Especially big words considering that last fall Cablevision filed a brief in support of **Fox** and other broadcasters suing the start-up, saying that it believes Aereo is seeking an expansion of the MSO's public-performance holding that would extend it far beyond the case's facts.

**Restructuring:** **Comedy Central** announced a restructuring that erases lines between linear and digital. *David Bernath*, evp, programming & multiplatform strategy, now leads all programming for the brand. CMO *Walter Levitt* is responsible for fan outreach across all platforms. Both continue to report to network pres *Michele Ganeless*. As part of the reorg, *Steve Grimes* was named to the new post of svp, multiplatform strategy & dev.

**Rebrand:** **Music Choice** is getting its SWRV on no more, rebranding interactive music video network **SWRV TV** as **Music Choice Play**. The rebrand puts all Music Choice nets under one brand. Music Choice Play lets viewers vote for what videos get played through **Twitter**. Fans can also live tweet with artists.

**5Qs with Blackbelt TV's Larry Kasanoff:** *Blackbelt TV has grown into a global presence with MVPD carriage in 46 countries (and talks with 12 more). We sat down with chmn Kasanoff to discuss the challenges facing indie nets and his strategy for tackling the US market. What do you see as the main mission of Blackbelt TV?* First, to be the best martial arts sports and entertainment network in the world, and to be worldwide. Next, to be one of the top three brands in martial arts sports and entertainment in the world. I foresee a day when we will expand to apps, original movies, video games and more. **Other nets show MMA fights. What's your pitch to distributors on how you're different?** They are all fight networks. We are that plus much, much more. Blackbelt TV is a martial arts oriented sports and entertainment network, appealing to 18-49 year old guys... Thus, our motto: kicks, flicks and chicks... We take the diverse world of martial arts, Hollywood it up, add tons of original programming and have a unique network. **You've just started to focus on original content. Why?** We will have 10 original shows soon. This allows us to satisfy our audience and most importantly helps us be unique. Again, we "Hollywood up" martial arts. As an example, we are about to launch a show called, "The Fight Scene." Everyone knows the best thing about the movie is the fight scene, so this takes the best fights scenes from movies, TV and the web, from all over the world, and shows them to you. **What are the biggest hurdles you face with content gatekeepers in the U.S.?** All around the world, with the kind of action, sci fi and martial arts movies and TV that I make, the challenge is the gatekeepers, often not the audience. No blame. No whining. Just what it is. We appeal to young guys who love kicks, flicks and chicks. People who run distribution MSOs usually are not that profile... Our audience—young guys—are the most likely to expand to triple-play services because they want high-speed internet for online gaming and social networking. **Why are you so focused on linear carriage and authenticated content? And would you consider OTT at some point?** Right now, you have to pick. You can't be free online and then not free on, say, Time Warner Cable. So we provide our distributors with TV Everywhere rights, allowing them the ability to show our content—to their paying customers—anywhere they want. *More from Blackbelt TV at CableFAX.com.*

**Speed Index:** While most major ISPs' ranks in **Netflix's** September speed index remained unchanged, **Bright House** (2.06 Mbps) rose to #9, at the expense of **Mediacom** (2.04 Mbps), which dropped a notch. Excluding **Google Fiber**, **Cablevision's** Optimum service (2.59 Mbps) continues to dominate, followed by **Cox** (2.5 Mbps), **Suddenlink** (2.45 Mbps) and **Verizon FiOS** (2.20 Mbps). The index is based on data from the more than 37mln Netflix subs who view 1bln hours of Netflix content per month. The speeds reflect the average performance of all Netflix streams on each ISP's network.

**Programming:** **IFC** renewed "Comedy Bang! Bang!" for a 3rd season set to debut next year. -- **UP** will televise the

# BUSINESS & FINANCE

44th annual GMA Dove Awards on Mon at 8pm ET, marking the 5th year the net has telecast the Christian music awards show. -- **TNT** greenlit "On the Menu" (wt), the net's 1st cooking show ('14 premiere). *Mark Burnett* is exec producer. -- **21st Century Fox** and the **Deutsche Fussball Liga** announced a series of multi-year deals to deliver Bundesliga football to hundreds of millions of fans across North and South America, Europe and Asia via the company's global portfolio of assets. -- **Discovery Channel's** "Yukon Men" returns with new eps on Sun.

**People:** *Robert Thun*, most recently **Univision** evp of biz operations, joined **DirecTV** as svp of content and programming, reporting to *Dan York*, evp/chief content officer. -- Former **Fox** exec *Jonathan Sarrow* was named svp, TV networks distributions for **CBS Corp.** He'll report to dept pres *Ray Hopkins*, and will focus on the negotiation of carriage fees of CBS-owned properties with cable, satellite and telco companies.

**Public Affairs:** The **Lustgarten Foundation's** 13th annual Long Island Pancreatic Cancer Research Walk took place on Sun, with more than 7500 participants. The event raised \$1.1m, with 100% going directly to pancreatic cancer research due to **Cablevision's** support. CVC chmn and Lustgarten Foundation chmn *Chuck Dolan* spoke at the event and kicked off the walk.

## CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	10/14 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	10/14 Close	1-Day Ch
<b>BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS</b>					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	33.69	0.46	ECHOSTAR:	46.95	0.06
DIRECTV:	61.17	0.53	GOOGLE:	876.11	4.12
DISH:	47.65	(0.23)	HARMONIC:	7.71	0.03
DISNEY:	66.83	0.62	INTEL:	23.45	0.20
GE:	24.38	(0.02)	JDSU:	14.78	0.12
<b>MSOS</b>					
CABLEVISION:	16.41	0.14	LEVEL 3:	27.61	0.27
CHARTER:	137.19	0.96	MICROSOFT:	34.45	0.32
COMCAST:	46.46	0.41	NIELSEN:	37.16	(0.08)
COMCAST SPCL:	45.06	0.41	RENTRAK:	36.34	1.19
GCI:	9.34	0.12	SEACHANGE:	13.23	0.35
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	76.96	(0.17)	SONY:	19.93	(0.03)
LIBERTY INT:	25.74	1.02	SPRINT NEXTEL:	6.03	0.03
SHAW COMM:	24.26	0.14	TIVO:	12.52	0.19
TIME WARNER CABLE:	114.68	(1.11)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	35.58	0.04
WASH POST:	628.41	9.80	VONAGE:	3.51	0.01
<b>PROGRAMMING</b>					
AMC NETWORKS:	66.95	1.00	YAHOO:	34.00	(0.15)
CBS:	57.05	0.80	<b>TELCOS</b>		
CROWN:	3.23	UNCH	AT&T:	33.92	(0.28)
DISCOVERY:	80.16	(0.38)	VERIZON:	46.81	(0.28)
GRUPO TELEVISIA:	29.46	(0.24)	<b>MARKET INDICES</b>		
HSN:	53.39	0.09	DOW:	15301.26	64.15
INTERACTIVE CORP:	55.04	(0.59)	NASDAQ:	3815.28	23.40
LIONSGATE:	35.08	0.31	S&P 500:	1710.14	6.94
MADISON SQUARE GARDEN:	57.72	0.18			
SCRIPPS INT:	78.32	0.60			
STARZ:	29.00	(0.05)			
TIME WARNER:	68.04	0.12			
VALUEVISION:	4.96	0.03			
VIACOM:	83.31	0.95			
WWE:	11.12	0.03			
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>					
ADVANTAGE:	2.48	0.01			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	3.80	0.12			
AMDOCS:	37.29	0.09			
AMPHENOL:	77.10	0.05			
AOL:	33.53	(0.42)			
APPLE:	496.04	3.23			
ARRIS GROUP:	16.91	(0.11)			
AVID TECH:	6.48	0.02			
BLNDER TONGUE:	0.95	(0.01)			
BROADCOM:	26.68	0.17			
CISCO:	23.34	0.06			
CONCURRENT:	7.14	0.03			
CONVERGYS:	19.09	UNCH			
CSG SYSTEMS:	25.40	0.19			

**CableFAX**  
THE MAGAZINE

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# CableFAX TECH

## The New Remote:

### TV-Integrated Social Media

The integration of social media with TV isn't new. Remember all the deals that social TV apps such as **Shazam**, **Viggle** and **GetGlue** inked with major programmers and operators over the past few years? Nevertheless, **Comcast's** deal announced last week with **Twitter** is unprecedented, as it looks to drive direct content consumption, rating improvement and ad revenue. The MSO's social TV play doesn't stop at Twitter, but it's considered a great starting point given the millions of conversations taking place there today. It still is interested in working with other social platforms on its IP-based X1 platform as it continues to roll out the next-generation video system to all of its markets before the end of the year. Comcast and Twitter are also exploring additional opportunities to integrate social TV conversation on the X1 platform. The partnership with Twitter features the "See It" button that will be embedded in tweets referencing TV shows. Clicking the button will take the user immediately to the live program on TV or secondary devices, eventually turning the "See It" app into a remote control. Initially available for Xfinity subs, Comcast said the feature is designed to become an industry-wide tool and the integration of "See It" with other MSOs and programmers is expected to be easy. The app is built on codes that interoperate with other distributors. Programmers, on the other hand, need embed a small, invisible tag on their website, and then Twitter will automatically attach the "See It" functionality to any tweet that references that Website. While Comcast and Twitter talk to additional "See It" partners, other MSOs and programmers might experiment their own version of social TV integrations, said *Jonathan Weitz*, partner at **IBB Consulting**, which advises media and cable companies. "For MSOs, social features that increase usage of linear, TV Everywhere, VOD and DVR promotes subscriber loyalty and helps differentiate pay TV offerings," he said.

**B2B:** **Cablevision** launched the Virtual Receptionist from Optimum, a cloud-based call routing and answering service for small businesses. Designed to help businesses more efficiently manage inbound calls while keeping off-site mobile workers better connected, the system automatically answers incoming calls with a custom recorded message and offers call routing options that can be selected by telephone keystrokes. The options can be configured directly by the customer through the web portal. It also looks to enhance customer rollover hunting with a queue when other lines are in use.

**SCTE:** Video delivery tech firm **Harmonic** will demonstrate its video processing and delivery offerings at the 2013 **SCTE** Cable-Tec Expo. They include Cable Edge, the latest capabilities of the Harmonic's converged cable access platform NSG Pro, which converges high-density universal edgeQAM features with future, integrated CMTS functionality to simplify the cable access network and streamline the transition to an all-IP cable infrastructure. -- Need more bandwidth? **Aurora Networks** will use the tech gathering in Atlanta to debut a full upgradeable return path solution designed to take operators from 5-42 MHz to 5-85MHz.

**Research:** The fixed VoIP services market in the US is expected to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate of 10.15% over the next 4 years, according to firm **Research and Markets**. Key vendors include **Comcast, Time Warner Cable, Cablevision, Cox, Charter, Bright House** and **Vonage**. Driving the growth is the expansion of next-generation IP infrastructure and subs switching from fixed phone services to fixed VoIP. In addition, the convergence of services is developed to support new IP-based services, further driving subs to adopt VoIP, though the research firm warned that security concerns could be a challenge to growth.



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