

CableFAX Daily™

Friday — November 14, 2008

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 19 / No. 222

LAS Distress: What Can You Do For Me?

With local ad sales struggling in this economy, programmers are looking at what they can do to help affiliates maximize local ad sales. **Fox Cable Nets** just wrapped up 6 'mini upfront' dinners for **FX** in various **Comcast** and **Time Warner Cable** markets. The dinners in NYC, LA, Chicago, Dallas, Orlando and Philly proved so successful, Fox is considering adding a couple more markets by year-end and possibly holding multiple network, local upfront events next year, according to *Michael Cooper*, vp, affiliate marketing and ad sales. "We were able to tap talent... all the media agencies and affiliates in the top DMAs... had never really gotten that kind of attention before. Typically, affiliates just end up tagging on to an upfront a network has," he said. "This was customized just for them. With a smaller audience, they could bring their own clients as well as pretty much anybody on their sales team." All told, about 260 people attended the events, which included network execs as well as stars like *Michael Chiklis* ("The Shield") and *Kelly Carlson* ("Nip/Tuck"). Fox realized that while FX's first-run cable movies were selling well nationally, local ad sales weren't always focusing on them as much as originals. Other non-traditional sales channels for Fox Cable affils include exclusive screenings that can be sold to a local advertiser. "That came from a specific request from a local affiliate, and now we've made it a nationwide program that they can do in early January," said *Bonnie O'Donnell*, dir, affil marketing for Fox Cable. Tag-able tips have been very popular in this economy. *Jennifer Dangar*, svp, domestic distribution for **Discovery**, said she thinks it's "back-to-the-basics" for local ad sales—hitting those categories that have long been considered "cash cows" but may have slipped over time. "It's picking those key, core categories where they see potential opportunities for real revenue and providing things like tag-able tips, turnkey promotional opportunities," she said, adding that Discovery is currently overhauling its affiliate Website to put as much info as possible as LAS' fingertips. At **NBCU**, **Bravo's** "Top Chef" tour hit 20 cities this year and included cooking demos for LAS clients. "We're going to expand that on that tour for 2009 because it was so successful, and our affiliates are actually asking for it back," said *Brian Hunt*, svp, marketing & sales strategy TV nets distribution, NBCU. "Despite the challenging economic environment, we're not going to be scaling back." And while the Winter Games aren't until Feb '10, local ad sales will have to take place next year. "I think that's really a great opportunity for local ad sales folks because it attracts a whole different set of advertisers that maybe don't typically advertise locally or regionally," Hunt said. "So, in a

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CABLEFAX DAILY (ISSN 1069-6644) is published daily by Access Intelligence, LLC ● www.cablefaxdaily.com ● fax:301/738-8453 ● Editor-in-Chief: Amy Maclean, 301/354-1760, amaclean@accessintel.com ● Exec Editor, Michael Grebb, 301/354-1790, mgrebb@accessintel.com ● Assoc Editor, Chad Heiges, 301/354-1828, cheiges@accessintel.com ● Asst VP, Ed Director, Seth Arenstein, 301/354-1782, sarenstein@accessintel.com ● Publisher: Debbie Vodenos, 240/753-5696, dvodenos@accessintel.com ● Advertising Mgr: Erica Gottlieb, 212/621-4612 ● Marketer: Doreen Price, 512/934-7857, dprice@accessintel.com ● Marketing Director: Carol Bray, 301/354-1763, cbray@accessintel.com ● Prod: Joann Fato, 301/354-1681, cdaily@accessintel.com ● Diane Schwartz/VP and Group Publisher ● Paul Maxwell/Columnist ● Subs/Client Services: 301/354-2101, fax 301/309-3847 ● Group Subs : Angela Gardner, 757/531-1369, cfaxgroupsub@accessintel.com

HD

HIGHLIGHT

New discoveries can be found anywhere - and for one week in November, National Geographic will explore the ends of the earth and beyond for High Definition expeditions like no other. Whether it's barnacle-encrusted pirate cannons or meteor marks on the moon, the new frontier of HD is calling.

Expedition Week starts Sunday 9P

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

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tough year that I think we're all facing next year, I think the Olympics could be a great opportunity for them."

Competition: The **City of Philadelphia** negotiated a video franchise agreement covering **FIOSTV**, but the City Council must still vote on the measure. As part of the 15-year deal, Verizon will make the service available throughout the city within 7 years of the franchise's effective date. Meanwhile, farther north in NYC, the telco has inked a deal to provide FIOS service to more than 500 units in 3 **Trump** properties. -- **Fox TV Stations** and **NBC Local Media** are set to launch in Jan a local news service in Philadelphia, and plan to roll out the service in other joint markets. The service will gather and distribute general market video coverage to participating stations, thereby allowing them to focus on specialized reporting.

TiVo Doings: When **TiVo** reports 3Q results later this month, expect an update on its progress with **Cox**. Plans had been that Cox would roll out set-tops with TiVo's software in some markets by year-end, but a rep for the MSO says deployments are planned for early '09. Cox has already started testing TiVo-integrated boxes in its New England system. **Comcast** is already offering TiVo-enabled boxes in parts of New England.

Pink Slips: At least the markets rebounded Thurs... **QVC** has joined a litany of firms in announcing plans to slice their work forces. The home shopping net gave pink slips Thurs to 160 US-based employees, plans to lay off 500 from its PA distribution center over time (but will add 200 in SC), and will eliminate approx 250 positions when it closes a PA call center in Mar. Meanwhile, **Sprint** is offering voluntary buyouts to employees in an effort to trim long-term expenses.

Carriage: **ION** keeps racking up the carriage deals, with **Knology** and **Adams Cable** agreeing to launch its channel suite in some systems. -- **DISH** launched **Eurocinema**, an on-demand service with European and global films.

In the Courts: **Richard Davis**, who served as creator/writer/co-prod and star of **A&E** series "Flip This House," was awarded \$4mln in damages by a federal jury. Davis claims A&E failed to honor a 50-50 revenue sharing agreement with him and his company, **Trademark Properties**. The judge in the case must still uphold the jury's verdict. "We are deeply disappointed in the jury's decision," said the net, "and we will follow the appropriate procedures to have the verdict reversed."

VOD: **Cablevision** has launched **Bollywood Hits On Demand** as its 1st intl SVOD offering. The service features more than 25 South Asian movies and 50 music videos each month for a monthly fee of \$10.

Ratings: The Tues Red Wings-Penguins game on **Versus** became the net's most-watched **NHL** regular-season telecast ever among HHs (365K). -- **BET's** "Keyshia Cole: The Way It Is" set a season premiere record for the net by delivering 1.4mln HHs and 1.94mln total viewers. -- The Celtics-Hawks game on Wed night earned a 6.8 HH rating to become the highest-rated regular-season **NBA** game ever on **Comcast SportsNet New England**.

Programming: **ESPN** has inked an 8-yr deal with **The Open Championship** organizer **The R&A** that brings live

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iLifetv

GEB

DAYSTAR

3ABN

FamilyNet

GBN

BYU

20/20

WHT

INSP

BUSINESS & FINANCE

coverage of all 4 tourney rounds to the net beginning in '10. ESPN will televise 34 hours of Championship play over the 4 days and produce 6 hours of encore highlights coverage over the weekend for **ABC**.

People: **BET** tapped co-programming chiefs, making *Loretha Jones* responsible for originals, news, development, planning & acquisitions and putting music programming and specials under *Stephen Hill*. Both have the title of pres, programming and report to CEO *Debra Lee*. Hill previously served as evp, music programming & talent for **BET**. Jones joins from **MTV Films/Paramount** where she has served as evp since July '07. **BET** ent pres *Reggie Hudlin* left the net in Sept. -- *Nathanias Seales* was promoted to vp, production for **Cartoon Net** on-air. **HSN** appointed *Felise Glantz Kissell* svp, investor relations and strategy.

Business/Finance: **Time Warner Cable** commenced an underwritten public offering of debt securities with maturities of 5 and 10 years. To be used in part to fund the MSO's 1-time dividend related to its planned spin off, the securities will be guaranteed by **TW NY Cable Holding** and **Time Warner Ent**. **Fitch** assigned an investment-grade "BBB" rating to the notes. -- **Discovery Comm** founder *John Hendricks* this week bought 1mln shares of **Discovery Holding Co** stock on the open market for nearly \$14mln, according to an **SEC** filing.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	11/13 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	11/13 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
BRITISH SKY:	24.70	1.13	AMDOCS:	18.85	1.14
DIRECTV:	21.39	1.71	AMPHENOL:	23.93	1.69
DISNEY:	21.65	1.49	APPLE:	94.23	4.11
ECHOSTAR:	11.63	0.23	ARRIS GROUP:	6.59	0.72
GE:	16.86	0.57	AVID TECH:	14.47	0.73
HEARST-ARGYLE:	11.64	0.74	BIGBAND:	4.35	0.21
NEWS CORP:	7.61	0.29	BLNDER TONGUE:	0.85	(0.25)
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	14.46	0.95	BROADCOM:	16.35	1.36
CHARTER:	0.39	0.04	CISCO:	17.26	0.71
COMCAST:	16.26	1.29	COMMSCOPE:	11.13	0.14
COMCAST SPCL:	15.75	1.26	CONCURRENT:	3.26	(0.17)
GCI:	7.15	1.24	CONVERGYS:	5.75	0.28
KNOLOGY:	5.13	0.68	CSG SYSTEMS:	15.97	0.77
LIBERTY CAPITAL:	4.14	(0.45)	ECHOSTAR HOLDING:	16.23	(0.23)
LIBERTY ENT:	12.68	(0.37)	GOOGLE:	312.08	21.08
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	15.18	1.30	HARMONIC:	5.32	0.40
LIBERTY INT:	3.39	(0.07)	JDSU:	3.40	0.21
MEDIACOM:	4.17	0.29	LEVEL 3:	0.91	0.13
SHAW COMM:	18.14	1.04	MICROSOFT:	21.25	0.95
TIME WARNER CABLE:	17.98	0.59	MOTOROLA:	4.58	0.63
VIRGIN MEDIA:	5.43	0.54	NDS:	48.25	0.15
WASH POST:	414.20	28.80	NORTELV:	0.78	0.19
PROGRAMMING					
CBS:	6.43	0.36	OPENTV:	1.20	0.13
CROWN:	2.49	0.10	PHILIPS:	18.18	1.62
DISCOVERY:	13.54	1.52	RENTRAK:	10.88	0.08
EW SCRIPPS:	3.18	(0.13)	SEACHANGE:	7.90	0.59
GRUPO TELEVISA:	15.47	1.30	SONY:	22.01	0.90
HSN:	4.77	(0.3)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	2.24	0.29
INTERACTIVE CORP:	16.37	0.68	THOMAS & BETTS:	22.26	2.09
LIBERTY:	29.15	2.61	TIVO:	6.28	0.52
LODGENET:	0.94	0.06	TOLLGRADE:	4.67	0.24
NEW FRONTIER:	1.64	(0.01)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	16.28	1.38
OUTDOOR:	6.15	0.28	VONAGE:	0.88	(0.05)
PLAYBOY:	1.82	(0.1)	YAHOO:	11.15	0.81
RHI:	6.61	0.27	TELCOS		
SCRIPPS INT:	25.47	2.07	AT&T:	28.67	2.49
TIME WARNER:	9.15	0.54	QWEST:	3.01	0.19
VALUEVISION:	0.46	(0.02)	VERIZON:	31.14	2.18
VIACOM:	17.60	1.02	MARKET INDICES		
WWE:	12.72	0.29	DOW:	8835.25	552.59
TECHNOLOGY					
3COM:	1.94	0.17	NASDAQ:	1596.70	97.49
ADC:	6.08	(0.01)			
ADVANTAGE:	1.80	0.02			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	2.45	0.21			

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PROGRAMMER'S PAGE with Chad Heiges and Seth Arenstein

A Shrinking Arena

What could possibly be next? The Mid-Atlantic Ping Pong Channel? The Des Moines Over-40 Men's Basketball League Network? With the **University of Texas** reportedly in distribution talks with **Comcast, Time Warner Cable** and **AT&T** for a network dedicated to UT sports, it seems nothing can be dismissed as out-of-bounds anymore. Niche sports nets may soon nestle into tight, individual cubbyholes. Indeed, the network progression (regression?) gripping the pay-TV industry is overt: from general sports to pro league-specific to those covering individual college conferences to perhaps now single institutions. Just how many more slices of the revenue pie can be appropriated before widespread heartburn sets in? No doubt many cable ops already view what's occurring as far too acidic. As content costs rise, MSOs have been forced time and time again to employ public damage control as new sports channels, particularly **NFL Net** and **Big Ten Net**, often paint the industry as money-grubbing and anti-consumer. Plus, as plant digitization continues to ramp, an increasing number of programmers are seemingly lying in wait, ready to devour any freed-up bandwidth. The bleak economic outlook only exacerbates the situation for MSOs, most of which are engaged in hand-to-hand combat with competitors. True, service price seems consumers' current focus, but I'll wager that content still ranks highly in the shopping equation. Enterprising cable ops, of course, have capitalized on the sports content trend by launching or investing in their own local sports nets (**Cox Sports New Orleans, Comcast SportsNet**, etc), or by featuring local content. **Time Warner Cable**, for example, will broadcast live in NY this weekend high school football playoff games. Still, featuring schoolboy pigskin is a far cry from negotiating a carriage deal for a net exclusively purveying state or even county athletics. Or is it? Soon we may all be aware of a 43-yr-old Iowan with a wicked jump shot. *CH*

Highlights: "The Real George Washington," Wed, 9pm, **Nat Geo**. This is the middle night of Nat Geo's "Expedition Week," which starts Nov 16. The special plants doubt about GW myths, including his saintly character, mediocre battlefield skills and lack of ambition (his marriage might not have been all about love). -- "JFK: Inside The Target Car," Sun, 9pm, **Discovery**. An interesting if brief re-examination of JFK's assassination using modern technology and eyewitnesses. While *Zapruder* footage is purposely blurred, descriptions of the shooting make for difficult TV. *SA*

Worth a Look: "Jon & Kate + 8," special, 9pm, Mon, **TLC**. *Jon & Kate Gosselin* renew their vows in Hawaii as their octet of tikes watch. (Parents of small kids, you didn't believe that sentence, did you?) *SA*

Notable: Fans of Emmy winning "Mad Men" will enjoy an hilarious video featuring noted thespian/**AMC** entertainment chief *Ed Carroll*. In a scene filmed on the *Mad Men* set, complete with lead actors *Jon Hamm* and *John Slattery*, Carroll tries to sell a radical idea for 1960, cable TV. The short video premiered at **CTAM's** Summit to quite a few chortles. Watch the video online at www.CableFAX.com. *SA*

Basic Cable Rankings (11/03/08-11/09/08) Mon-Sun Prime		
1	FOXN	2.7 2576
2	ESPN	2.4 2357
2	CNN	2.4 2333
4	USA	2.3 2217
5	DSNY	1.8 1777
6	MSNB	1.7 1550
7	NAN	1.4 1390
8	TNT	1.3 1309
8	TBSC	1.3 1239
10	TOON	1.1 1093
10	HALL	1.1 985
12	A&E	1 956
12	FX	1 934
14	CMDY	0.9 907
14	LIFE	0.9 877
14	DISC	0.9 875
14	HGTV	0.9 869
14	SCIF	0.9 865
14	SPK	0.9 862
14	AMC	0.9 816
21	FAM	0.8 819
21	HIST	0.8 800
21	TLC	0.8 795
21	TRU	0.8 752
21	NFLN	0.8 335
26	FOOD	0.7 662
26	ESP2	0.7 645
26	LMN	0.7 499
29	VH1	0.6 619
29	MTV	0.6 582
29	TVLD	0.6 578
29	NOGG	0.6 436
33	HLN	0.5 489
33	EN	0.5 465
33	BET	0.5 445
33	BRAV	0.5 435
33	SOAP	0.5 332
38	APL	0.4 421
38	NGC	0.4 296
38	GSN	0.4 253
41	TTC	0.3 328
41	CMT	0.3 289
41	OXYG	0.3 233
41	VS	0.3 200
41	WGNA	0.3 199
41	WE	0.3 187

*Nielsen data supplied by ABC/Disney

CableFAX's Best of the Web Awards

is the industry's top honor in digital space, recognizing outstanding Web sites and digital initiatives among cable programmers (networks and independents), operators, vendors and associations.

To View Categories and Enter: Go to CableFAX.com/cfp/BOW

Awards Timeline

Entry Deadline: December 3, 2008
Late Entry Deadline: December 10, 2008
Award Event: February 26, 2009

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