

CableFAX Daily™

Thursday — December 17, 2009

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 20 / No. 241

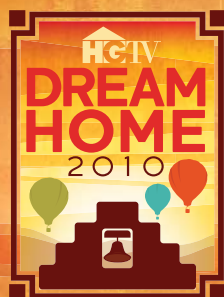
Still Planning: Competition, Set-Tops & 63 Days to Go for FCC Broadband Plan

The FCC's latest status update on a National Broadband Plan has consumer advocacy groups complaining that the policies outlined don't do anything to increase competition. As expected, the update included the need for spectrum for wireless broadband and USF changes. "Reforming universal service and supporting municipal networks are worthwhile goals, but they would do nothing to reverse the slide caused by 8 years of misbegotten telecommunications policies that have crippled most meaningful broadband competition for consumers," said **Public Knowledge** pres *Gigi Sohn*, who called for discussion on opening telecom networks to competitors. Broadband czar *Blair Levin* took umbrage, telling reporters on a conference call that many things under discussion aim to address competition. He rattled off spectrum (reallocating it for a more competitive marketplace), set-top boxes, transparency (consumers need to know exactly what they're getting to compare) and rights of way. Wed's FCC meeting included discussion on encouraging a universal set-top that would work with all providers and could access the Internet. Media Bureau chief *Bill Lake* said it's his understanding that many of the standards necessary already exist, but it would take a Commission act to drive the effort. Admitting that it was an oversimplification, Levin compared the STB issue to Carterfone. While there are significant differences between the two, "we see that kind of innovation" as possible, he said. "As we look at the ecosystem, that's a concern to us that that kind of innovation hasn't taken place." Over the years, cable appears to have had a mixed attitude on set-tops, he said, saying some operators feel burdened by them while others see them as an opportunity. "That's of less concern to us than: how do you have a thriving ecosystem in which consumers are given more choices and innovation?," he said. Cable got a shout-out from **FCC** chmn *Julius Genachowski* for its Adoption Plus program aimed at increasing broadband adoption for low-income middle schoolers and their families. "I hope it's the first of other private sector initiatives to promote broadband adoption in areas that are lagging behind," he said.

Fight on Web Seas: Congress has earmarked \$30mln to combat the growth in piracy of media content. "While it is still a nascent problem, it is one that has potentially significant consequences in terms of its impact on long-term investment in high-quality programming and legitimate distribution media," said **ESPN** evp, administration *Ed Durso* in prepared testimony during Wed's **House Judiciary Cmte** hearing to specifically address piracy of sports content. "Whatever features may

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* Speakers as of 12/07/09, subject to change.

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have in the past distinguished live sports from other forms of content in terms of its susceptibility to online infringement are being rendered increasingly irrelevant by new technological means for misappropriating linear programming.” Durso noted that myriad Websites, many of them based on foreign shores, provide live streams of events and even nets such as ESPN and **ESPN2**. “Some stream dozens of television networks at a time,” added **MLB Advanced Media** svp/general counsel *Michael Mellis*. “The dominant pattern we have seen is piracy occurring through P2P services based in China.” So, what to do? Vice Pres *Joe Biden* convened policymakers and media execs Tues to discuss media piracy, with **Viacom** chief *Philippe Dauman* telling **CNBC** afterward that “it’s not so much about the money [earmarked by Congress]... it’s really a question of having more coordination among the various agencies; it’s coordination between the US and the rest of the world.” Cable nets are among media firms creating awareness through the **Coalition Against Online Video Piracy**.

On the Hill: SHVERA will most likely be back next year, with the **Dept of Defense** appropriations bill extending the sunset from Dec 31 to Feb 38. By our deadline, the bill had passed the House and was headed to the Senate.

In the States: **Hallmark Channel HD** will launch Feb 1. -- **BendBroadband** bowed in Central OR a wireless broadband network that it says is the fastest such network in the US with delivery of 15Mbps “under optimal conditions.” Based on HSPA+ standards and upgradable to LTE, the service offers avg speeds of 6-8Mbps under various price points. Several mobile broadband plans are available with prices starting at \$19.99/month when bundled with home or business fixed modem wireless Internet service. -- **GVTC Comm** launched a 40Mbps Internet service in South TX. Pricing starts at \$90/month as part of a bundled package. -- **Comcast’s** digital upgrade is 75% complete in the “Freedom Region” (greater Philly, NJ and northern DE). More than 445 communities within the region’s footprint have been upgraded, and most have already seen at least 40 to 50 new HD channels launched as a result of World of More, also known as Project Cavalry.

Carriage: **Cox** added 13 new HD channels in Northern VA, including **BET**, **ABC Family**, **Tennis Channel** and **Investigation Discovery**. -- **Knology** struck a deal to begin carrying **NFL Net’s** Thurs night game package, starting this week. The net also announced a multi-year extension with **Grande**.

Spam Trouble: **Mediacom’s** migration to a new email system last week spawned latency and duplicate email troubles that continue for some subs. The cause, said the MSO, has been massive spam email, which caused many ISPs to block or temporarily defer Mediacom mail. Most of those issues were rectified Tues, said a spokesperson. While Mediacom said there was never a loss of Internet service, it has installed new products to improve the system’s perimeter defense and is testing software that will both process email data faster and combat spam. The MSO also beefed up tech support, said the spokesperson, and self-help tools and FAQs were added to the MSO’s Website to help customers access their email.

Programming: “Donald J. Trump’s Fabulous World of Golf,” debuts on **Golf**, Apr 26, 9pm ET. *Trump* will host celebs at his exclusive golf properties as they compete for their favorite charities. -- “Project Runway” returns to **Lifetime** for Season 7, Jan 14, 10pm ET. It will be followed by the 2nd season of “Models of the Runway” (11pm). -- **Comedy Central** ordered a 2nd season of “Tosh.0” (Jan 23). -- **Investigation Discovery’s** 1Q slate features 6 new series, including “America’s Small Town Secrets” (Feb 5), paranormal-focused “Living with the Dead” (Feb 5) and “Prison Wives” (Feb 17), chronicling relationships in which 1 spouse is serving time. -- **TLC’s** “The Imploders” (Dec 30) follows an ID family focused on demolition.

On the Circuit: An upcoming ep of **NBC’s** “30 Rock” features **CNBC’s** newsroom. However, **CNBC’s** newsroom

The CableFAXIES awards

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The CableFaxies Awards salute the year’s most outstanding communications initiatives and programs in the highly competitive and dynamic Cable arena. The coveted awards set the industry benchmark for excellence across all areas of PR and marketing.

The Winners of the CableFAXIES Awards are from networks, operators, PR firms, vendors, corporations, agencies and other entertainment companies who took chances, made tremendous strides and understand the power of PR and marketing in the cable industry. The winners and honorable mentions will be saluted during an awards event in April 2010 in New York City.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

isn't practical for filming. So, on Wed *Alec Baldwin* and crew were at **Time Warner Cable's NY1**, which is doubling as **CNBC**, reports NY1 anchor *Pat Kiernan*. No word if *Brian Roberts* makes a guest appearance.

People: **Charter** appointed as a board member *David Merritt*, who will serve as chair of the board's Audit Cmte. *Christopher Temple* will join Merritt as an Audit Cmte member. -- **Fox Soccer Channel** named as evp/gm *David Nathanson*, a former **Fox Cable Nets** exec who recently served as pres, **TVG**. --

Time Warner Cable extended the term of evp *Carl Rossetti's* employment through '12. -- **ActiveVideo Networks** tapped *Henry Choy* as vp, business dev, responsible for driving the co's Web-connected TV initiative. -- **Style** promoted *Sarah Weidman* to svp, dev and new series and *Merah Chung* to vp, dev and new series.

-- *Brent Haynes* will lead **MTV's** new comedy and animation team as svp, comedy and animation. He has hired *Jason Gwozdz* as vp, comedy and animation. -- **Panasonic's Peter Fannon** and **AT&T's Robert Quinn** were elected to **The Media Institute's** board of trustees Wed.

Business/Finance: **GE** *Jeff Immelt* told investors Tues to expect a decline in **NBC's** operating profit next year stemming from the high costs of broadcasting the Vancouver Olympics. -- **ViaSat** completed its acquisition of **WildBlue**.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

| Company | 12/16 Close | 1-Day Ch | Company | 12/16 Close | 1-Day Ch |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------|-------------|----------|
| BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS | | | | | |
| BRITISH SKY: | 36.99 | 0.05 | AMPHENOL: | 43.40 | (0.6) |
| DIRECTV: | 33.08 | (0.14) | AOL: | 24.23 | (1.56) |
| DISH: | 21.18 | 0.03 | APPLE: | 195.03 | 0.86 |
| DISNEY: | 32.43 | 0.25 | ARRIS GROUP: | 10.68 | (0.07) |
| GE: | 15.69 | (0.06) | AVID TECH: | 12.07 | 0.07 |
| NEWS CORP: | 15.56 | 0.27 | BIGBAND: | 3.48 | (0.02) |
| MSOS | | | | | |
| CABLEVISION: | 25.98 | 0.00 | BLNDER TONGUE: | 0.99 | (0.03) |
| COMCAST: | 17.51 | (0.06) | BROADCOM: | 31.73 | 1.38 |
| COMCAST SPCL: | 16.63 | (0.05) | CISCO: | 23.45 | (0.03) |
| GCI: | 6.29 | 0.04 | CLEARWIRE: | 6.88 | 0.19 |
| KNOLGY: | 10.91 | (0.03) | COMMSCOPE: | 26.40 | 0.40 |
| LIBERTY CAPITAL: | 23.62 | 0.14 | CONCURRENT: | 3.76 | 0.09 |
| LIBERTY GLOBAL: | 20.93 | 0.27 | CONVERGYS: | 10.60 | 0.16 |
| LIBERTY INT: | 10.58 | (0.33) | CSG SYSTEMS: | 18.67 | 0.50 |
| MEDIACOM: | 4.46 | (0.15) | ECHOSTAR: | 19.24 | 0.09 |
| RCN: | 9.78 | 0.34 | GOOGLE: | 597.76 | 4.62 |
| SHAW COMM: | 20.15 | (0.01) | HARMONIC: | 5.84 | 0.14 |
| TIME WARNER CABLE: | 43.50 | 0.44 | INTEL: | 19.38 | (0.42) |
| VIRGIN MEDIA: | 16.93 | 0.10 | JDSU: | 7.88 | 0.05 |
| WASH POST: | 440.50 | 16.25 | LEVEL 3: | 1.42 | (0.02) |
| PROGRAMMING | | | | | |
| CBS: | 14.27 | 0.22 | MICROSOFT: | 30.10 | 0.08 |
| CROWN: | 1.33 | 0.03 | MOTOROLA: | 8.27 | (0.03) |
| DISCOVERY: | 31.42 | (0.26) | OPENTV: | 1.43 | 0.03 |
| GRUPO TELEVISA: | 21.38 | 0.28 | PHILIPS: | 29.17 | (0.28) |
| HSN: | 17.98 | (0.01) | RENTRAK: | 18.61 | 0.26 |
| INTERACTIVE CORP: | 19.24 | 0.23 | SEACHANGE: | 6.03 | (0.15) |
| LIBERTY: | 35.93 | 0.04 | SONY: | 29.01 | 0.02 |
| LIBERTY STARZ: | 47.85 | (0.14) | SPRINT NEXTEL: | 3.93 | 0.03 |
| LIONSGATE: | 5.59 | 0.05 | THOMAS & BETTS: | 36.13 | (0.04) |
| LODGENET: | 5.18 | (0.01) | TIVO: | 9.65 | (0.09) |
| NEW FRONTIER: | 1.84 | (0.04) | TOLLGRADE: | 6.04 | 0.01 |
| OUTDOOR: | 5.87 | 0.03 | UNIVERSAL ELEC: | 23.08 | (0.04) |
| PLAYBOY: | 3.46 | (0.38) | VONAGE: | 1.24 | 0.01 |
| RHI: | 0.72 | 0.04 | YAHOO: | 15.79 | 0.05 |
| SCRIPPS INT: | 40.95 | 0.48 | TELCOS | | |
| TIME WARNER: | 30.04 | (0.1) | AT&T: | 27.52 | (0.08) |
| VALUEVISION: | 4.50 | (0.15) | QWEST: | 4.26 | 0.00 |
| VIACOM: | 32.21 | 0.11 | VERIZON: | 32.71 | (0.3) |
| WWE: | 15.20 | 0.01 | MARKET INDICES | | |
| TECHNOLOGY | | | | | |
| 3COM: | 7.48 | 0.07 | DOW: | 10441.12 | (10.88) |
| ADC: | 6.23 | (0.04) | NASDAQ: | 2206.91 | 5.86 |
| ADVANTAGE: | 2.10 | 0.02 | | | |
| ALCATEL LUCENT: | 3.35 | 0.08 | | | |
| AMDOCS: | 27.46 | 0.24 | | | |

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