

CableFAX Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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5Q: For SundanceTV's Sarah Barnett, It's All About Auteur Television

SundanceTV has made a push for original scripted programming in the past few years, most recently with 8-episode "The Honorable Woman" (premiered July 31). We spoke with network pres/igm Sarah Barnett about the show, the miniseries format and OTT. **Is the shorter series format working for SundanceTV?** We're actually pretty agnostic about how long our series are. [It's about] cutting the cloth to suit the creator, so "Rectify" was 6 episodes for season 1 and 10 episodes for season 2. "The Red Road" was 6 episodes, and then we greenlit 6 for season 2 because we felt that plays best to the strengths of [creator] Aaron Guzikowski. He writes like it's a long film. Then some of these close-ended pieces... like "Top of the Lake" or "One Child," which will air in Q4, they're all slightly different shapes. It's really putting the material first rather than putting the business model first. Regarding your programming slate moving forward, how important to the network is scripted versus unscripted? We honestly don't think about it being one versus the other. We feel that these things fit together very nicely. There are some stories that are better told in the unscripted form rather than the scripted form. I feel like [with] a lot of networks these days you no longer need to be so pure in how you define your programming... I feel, as a programmer, less pressure really to define too much, whether I'm more one than the other. **Creator Hugo Blick has said that the show follows more of a UK model, in that one person worked on it from start to finish. Will you continue to work in this capacity for scripted programming?** We really embrace this idea of auteur television. Certainly Top of the Lake was an example of that, where Jane Campion co-wrote it, co-directed it, but conceived of the whole thing and shot it like a film. But I'd also say an ongoing series like Rectify is an example of how we really like to work with showrunners like Ray McKinnon, who aren't only the creators and writers but also have a real vision about every aspect of how the story is told—not just what the story is being told. Our roots are in independent film, which was really about moving away from more of a studio system and embracing the idea of a very singular vision. **How does SundanceTV programming on OTT platforms factor into the network's business model?** Like every other network we navigate this relationship with SVOD partners, where they're both complementary and increasingly we compete for share of viewer time for projects. There are many of us who are circling around these highly creative quality projects. Our shows are on Netflix... We hope to see some of complementary viewing on linear... And that's obviously the symbiosis everybody craves, at least on the

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network side. Nothing is ever static or easy in our industry. **Would you agree that the miniseries is increasingly important in cable television today?** There are a couple of reasons why. One is, it's a great canvas for filmmakers, because it's closed-ended... I also think that as TV viewing fragments and we move toward time-shifted viewing, in ways that a TV network should always monetize, there's something about an event—which I think every network is craving, and looking for their version, some kind of event that has some sort of urgency to it. Sports is the most consistent and powerful expression of that, but I think "Sound of Music" on NBC was another one, and miniseries can build a head of steam around them.

At the Portals: One thing that **FCC** Republican commish *Ajit Pai* and Rep *Brian Higgins* (D-NY) agree on is the need to end sports blackout rules. Joining the lawmaker at an event at the Anchor Bar (birthplace of Buffalo wings), Pai said "I don't believe the government should intervene in the marketplace and help sports leagues enforce their blackout policies. Our job is to serve the public interest, not the private interests of team owners." The time has come for the Commission to repeal the rule, he said. The FCC voted in Dec last year to eliminate the rules, which prevent cable and satellite ops from importing distant TV signals carrying an **NFL** game that has been blacked out on broadcast TV in a local market due to insufficient stadium ticket sales. NFL and the broadcasters have fought hard against the proposal to drop the rules. -- The **FCC** denied **ACA** and **NCTA's** joint petition requesting reconsideration of the wireline bureau's USF Phase II challenge process guidance public notice. Under the Phase II plan, the agency proposed that funding shouldn't be provided in areas "already served by an unsubsidized competitor." The agency stated that for a party to certify that it serves a census block, it must offer service in the area, have plant in or adjacent to the area and have current or former customers in the area. NCTA and ACA argued that requiring current or former customers as an element of "to serve" is inconsistent with the Commission's delegation of authority to the bureau to conduct the challenge process. The FCC's response: The USF Order contains multiple references that support the wireline bureau's interpretation that something more than "offering" service should be required to exclude an area from Phase II support.

Carriage: One World Sports scored a multi-year, multiplatform carriage pact with **Charter**, bringing the net's footprint to nearly 30mln homes. The deal entails around 3K hours of sporting events annually to Charter subs. The net will be available in the MSO's all-digital markets by Sept.

Energy Efficiency for Cable: Comcast chief network officer and evp *John Schanz* will partner with **SCTE** to develop the next phase of the "Energy 2020" plan, a collaboration of cable ops and vendors to maximize operational efficiency. They will release a framework during a 90-min session at the SCTE Cable-Tec Expo in Denver on Sept 24. The framework is expected to align standards and best practices, drive design and implementation of equipment, and create SCTE training resources to enable workforce teams to optimize technology for energy efficiency.

Ballmer Gets Clippers: Former **Microsoft** exec *Steve Ballmer* is officially the owner of **LA Clippers**. Following a CA court's approval, **NBA** said the deal, reportedly worth \$2bln, was closed on Tues.

CSG Scores Contract Extension: Mediacom renewed its partnership with **CSG**, which provides transaction support service for cable ops. Under the terms of the multiyear contract, the MSO will broaden the customer care and billing solutions provided by CSG to expand beyond voice, video and data into home automation and other services. New services, as part of the agreement, aim to offer a centrally managed communication and data platform across billing, customer relationship management, and third-party applications aimed to reduce call times, improve customer experience and decrease churn.

TWC Adds Amber Alerts: All of **Time Warner Cable's** 18K cable technicians now have tech to receive **AMBER Alerts** when in the area of an active alert. The effort is part of a deal with the **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children**.

Comcast Funds Deal Platform: Axial, which helps private companies find investment resources, raised \$11mln in Series B funding from an investor group led by **Comcast's** investment arm **Comcast Ventures**. Other backers include **Redpoint Ventures** and **First Round Capital**. Axial previously raised \$9mln.

Programming: Comedy Central debuts "*Heather McDonald: I Don't Mean to Brag*" on Aug 29. -- **USA** will premiere the 2nd season of half-hour comedic reality series, "*Chrisley Knows Best*," on Oct 14. -- Judges *Ve Neill*, *Glenn Hetrick* and *Neville Page* will compete for charity in an episode of "*Face Off*" premiering on **Syfy** Sept 2. -- **NatGeo Wild** will air the internationally touring live stage show "*Cesar Millan: Viva Las Vegas!*" in 2015. The special will run in conjunction with the 2nd season premiere of "*Cesar 911*" -- **NatGeo WILD** booked new miniseries "*Animal Search & Rescue*" (wt), which

BUSINESS & FINANCE

follows a team of weather and animal experts as they rescue trapped and injured pets. It will debut next year.

Appreciation: Visit cablefax.com for some thoughts and laughs about *Robin Williams'* intersection with cable and why viewers might associate a pashmina with his quick comedic mind.

Obit: We were sad to learn that HDTV pioneer and **AXS TV/HDNet** Chief Engineer *Glenn Valenta* passed away July 28 at the age of 53. He died in his Denver home after an 8-year battle with cancer. Valenta had been at AXS TV since its inception 14 years ago and previously worked for CO Studios, KUSA-TV and Ceavco in Denver; KODE-TV (Joplin, MS); KVOX AM/FM (Moorhead, MN); and WSAU-TV (Wausau, WS). Survivors include his wife Carol, step-son Jesse, parents John and Sandra, brother Mike, sister Kerry, mother-in-law Violet, sister-in-law Jeanne and many nieces and nephews. A memorial service will take place Sat, Aug 23 at CO Studios in Denver.

People: **SundanceTV** upped *Rob Friedman* to svp, programming & scheduling, continuing to report to *Sarah Barnett*, pres/gm. He was previously vp of programming & scheduling. – **Scripps** tapped *Melissa Mick* as svp/corporate controller. She will report to *Lori Hickok*, evp of finance. – Video advertising firm **Comporium** upped *Jack Holladay* to svp of the company's wireless and Internet group effective Nov 1. He will report to **Bryant Barnes**, pres/CEO.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	08/12 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	08/12 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DIRECTV:	84.09	0.29	CONVERGYS:	18.60	(0.8)
DISH:	62.53	(0.37)	CSG SYSTEMS:	27.54	0.04
ENTRAVISION:	4.31	(0.15)	ECHOSTAR:	49.38	(0.13)
GRAY TELEVISION:	11.25	(0.6)	GOOGLE:	562.73	(5.15)
MEDIA GENERAL:	16.88	(0.77)	HARMONIC:	6.08	(0.15)
NEXSTAR:	46.62	(2.09)	INTEL:	33.13	0.11
SINCLAIR:	30.76	(1.53)	INTERACTIVE CORP:	64.38	(0.59)
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	17.98	(0.04)	JDSU:	11.91	(0.06)
CHARTER:	152.71	0.28	LEVEL 3:	41.33	(0.14)
COMCAST:	53.80	0.05	MICROSOFT:	43.52	0.32
COMCAST SPCL:	53.56	0.07	NIELSEN:	47.34	(0.06)
GCI:	11.03	(0.13)	RENTRAK:	47.28	(1.7)
GRAHAM HOLDING:	712.48	2.75	SEACHANGE:	7.33	(0.21)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	41.77	UNCH	SONY:	17.36	(0.01)
LIBERTY INT:	27.83	(0.03)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	5.86	0.12
SHAW COMM:	24.60	0.02	TIVO:	13.51	(0.23)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	145.87	(0.12)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	51.88	(0.56)
PROGRAMMING					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	35.11	0.34	VONAGE:	3.38	(0.03)
AMC NETWORKS:	59.62	(0.23)	YAHOO:	35.52	(0.27)
CBS:	58.91	(1.27)	TELCOS		
CROWN:	3.43	(0.02)	AT&T:	34.64	0.17
DISCOVERY:	42.32	(0.18)	CENTURYLINK:	40.77	0.50
DISNEY:	87.21	(0.29)	TDS:	25.30	0.63
GRUPO TELEVISA:	36.05	0.34	VERIZON:	48.84	0.17
HSN:	58.85	0.10	MARKET INDICES		
LIONSGATE:	31.74	(0.6)	DOW:	16560.54	(9.44)
MADISON SQUARE GARDEN:	59.99	(0.18)	NASDAQ:	4389.25	(12.08)
SCRIPPS INT:	78.23	(0.15)	S&P 500:	1933.75	(3.17)
STARZ:	27.60	(0.34)			
TIME WARNER:	73.04	(1)			
VALUEVISION:	4.82	(0.19)			
VIACOM:	80.61	(0.58)			
WWE:	13.71	0.01			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADVANTAGE:	2.45	0.15			
ALCATEL LUCENT:	3.26	(0.04)			
AMDOCS:	45.32	0.10			
AMPHENOL:	99.85	0.62			
AOL:	42.33	(0.74)			
APPLE:	95.97	(0.02)			
ARRIS GROUP:	30.64	0.39			
AVID TECH:	7.45	(0.03)			
BROADCOM:	37.59	0.04			
CISCO:	25.15	(0.08)			
CONCURRENT:	7.28	(0.11)			

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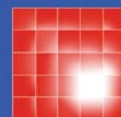
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