

# Cablefax Daily™

Monday — November 3, 2014

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 24 / No. 213

## Tom Rutledge: Programmers' OTT Moves Could Be Good for Cable

HBO and CBS' recent moves to offer OTT services signal opportunities for cable MSOs like Charter to "put more specific customer-oriented packages together or packages that meet customer needs," pres/CEO Tom Rutledge said during the company's earnings conference call Fri, 2 days after it released financial results. "To the extent that programmers voluntarily break up the very fat basic bundle that they have put together contractually, would be an opportunity for us to actually build a more compelling product," he said. That would be especially beneficial when the biggest strain on the video business is financially driven cord-cutting, he said. If cable can offer programming packages for specific segments of the population, "we could actually have a better, more successful video product," said the exec. Regarding reports that the FCC is putting together a hybrid net neutrality proposal, Rutledge like other ISP execs believes "there are solutions that don't require Title II regulation... We would like to see the FCC come up with a conclusion that doesn't include Title II." FCC chmn Tom Wheeler is reportedly considering a net neutrality approach that would separate broadband services into the retail category and back-end or wholesale category. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, the FCC would reclassify the wholesale broadband provider as a common carrier under Title II regulation. The agency has already received millions of comments on the net neutrality proceeding. ISPs generally oppose any use of the common carrier framework for broadband services so the proposal, even if it was approved by the Commission, might face legal challenges from service providers. As for the proposed **Comcast-Time Warner Cable** merger, "we are making good progress on the regulatory process, long-form documents and the necessary carve-out financial statements and filings," Rutledge said. He expects Charter's asset transfer to close about 30-45 days after the closing of Comcast-TWC. And apparently Charter has an appetite for more M&A activities. "While M&A is not a necessity for Charter to be successful, future acquisitions could be added to our opportunity set. We continue to believe that attractive opportunities may present themselves," Rutledge said, noting recent transactions such as the Bresnan integration and pending asset transfer with Comcast provide "a good framework for future activities."

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IN CABLE** PRESENTED BY **Cablefax**

November 20, 2014 ■ Grand Hyatt, NYC

Join us for Cablefax's Most Powerful Women in Cable Breakfast on November 20, 2014 from 8:30–10:30 a.m. in NYC, as we salute the women who have made their mark on the industry with leadership, innovation and community.

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**CableCARD Report:** The 9 largest cable MSOs have deployed more than 623K CableCARDS in retail devices since the integration ban became effective in 2007. By contrast, those 9 companies have more than 50mln operator-supplied set-top boxes with CableCARDS currently deployed, **NCTA** said in its latest CableCARD report filed with the **FCC**. The numbers are up from 48mln CableCARD equipped set-tops and 620K in retail devices in July. NCTA used the report to continue to push for an elimination of the ban, which “prevents cable companies (and cable companies alone) from deploying devices that have decryption technology integrated into the box,” the grade group said in a blog post. “Instead, they’re compelled to use these plug-in CableCARDS that waste money and energy, not to mention hinder innovation by making it more difficult to improve cable box technology.” In addition, the 50mln CableCARDS have cost consumers more than \$1bln and 500mln kilowatts of energy each year, NCTA claimed.

**ACC Moves:** **ACC**, which has been housed within the **NCTA**’s offices in DC since shortly after its founding, has relocated to Burke, VA, according to exec dir *Steve Jones*. With its staff expanding, NCTA needs more space. “The ACC staff and board greatly appreciates NCTA’s hospitality and support over the years and looks forward to a continued close relationship between the two organizations,” Jones said. The new ACC office address is 9259 Old Keene Mill Road, Suite 202, Burke, VA 22015. ACC will continue to maintain for the foreseeable future its current DC mailing address. All current association phone numbers will be forwarded to the new ACC number, 703-372-2215, by Nov 3.

**ID Lands in Denmark:** **ID** will launch in Denmark on Nov 1. The addition means ID now has more than 185mln viewers across the globe. The net started its international rollout in 2009, launching in countries including UK, Ireland, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Greece, and Latvia.

**TVE: Fox Sports’s** TVE app Fox Sports Go will live stream the Big East’s production of the women’s college basketball game between Mount St. Joseph University and Hiram College on Sun at 2pm. The app is available for iOS, Android, Kindle Fire tablets and Fire phones, as well as select Windows devices.

**RSN Ruling:** A federal bankruptcy judge OKed a Chapter 11 restructuring plan that is expected to allow **AT&T** and **DirectTV** to acquire **Comcast** SportsNet Houston and relaunch it as Root Sports Houston before the end of the year. Earlier this month, the judge ruled that Comcast’s decision to play the Houston Regional Sports Net into Chapter 11 last year (including more than \$100mln in lost rights fees to the Astros and Rockets) rendered without value a key Comcast contract, the *Houston Chronicle* reported.

**Roku Adds Google Play:** **Roku** beefed up its content offering with the addition of **Google** Play Movies & TV in the US, UK, Ireland and Canada. Google’s service features a mix of new releases, some of which are available before DVD release, as well as classics.

**Ratings: beIN Sports** scored nearly 1.5mln viewers with its broadcast of the Real Madrid vs FC Barcelona match. The Spanish service of the international sports net drew an average of 823K total viewers for the duration of the match, making the telecast the #1 soccer telecast for the week, month of Oct, and season-to-date among Spanish language cable nets.

**Programming: Reelz** booked 2 new original reality series, “Extreme Escapes,” which debuts Nov 29, and “Screen Machines” on Dec 2.

**Editor’s Note:** Go to cablefax.com to get the skinny on all of our upcoming events and opportunities, including our Nov 18 webinar “Selling TV Everywhere: How to Market TVE Initiatives for Profit,” which will dissect the challenges around educating consumers about their TVE options. Then on Nov 20, seats are going fast for **Cablefax**’s Most Powerful Women breakfast that will feature a few surprises—and one of the best networking opportunities in cable—as we honor the top female executives in the business. Finally, we recently opened nominations for the annual Tech Awards (entry deadline Nov 7). This is your chance to nominate the best tech initiatives from cloud solutions to WiFi deployments to TV Everywhere software/services and more. It’s all part of an exciting Nov in Cablefax-land. Hope to see you there!

**CableFAX Week in Review**

Company	Ticker	10/31 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
<b>BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS</b>				
DIRECTV:	DTV	86.79	3.14%	25.67%
DISH:	DISH	63.65	2.33%	9.89%
ENTRAVISION:	EVC	5.16	7.50%	(15.27%)
GRAY TELEVISION:	GTN	9.24	7.07%	(10.9%)
MEDIA GENERAL:	MEG	14.94	4.92%	(33.89%)
NEXSTAR:	NXST	45.12	7.68%	(19.04%)
SINCLAIR:	SBGI	29.05	3.82%	(18.7%)

Company	Ticker	10/31 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
<b>MSOS</b>				
CABLEVISION:	CVC	18.62	0.16%	3.85%
CHARTER:	CHTR	158.39	0.37%	15.82%
COMCAST:	CMCSA	55.35	2.01%	6.50%
COMCAST SPCL:	CMCSK	55.14	1.81%	10.55%
GCI:	GNCMA	11.73	8.21%	5.20%
GRAHAM HOLDING:	GHC	783.60	6.16%	18.13%
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	LBTYA	45.47	1.22%	(27.78%)
SHAW COMM:	SJR	25.68	6.16%	5.51%
TIME WARNER CABLE:	TWC	147.21	2.96%	8.64%

Company	Ticker	10/31 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
<b>PROGRAMMING</b>				
21ST CENTURY FOX:	FOXA	34.48	3.39%	(1.96%)
AMC NETWORKS:	AMCX	60.65	2.59%	(10.95%)
CBS:	CBS	54.22	1.31%	(14.94%)
CROWN:	CRWN	3.49	10.09%	(1.13%)
DISCOVERY:	DISCA	35.35	(3.44%)	(60.9%)
DISNEY:	DIS	91.38	3.13%	19.61%
GRUPO TELEVISIA:	TV	36.14	10.05%	19.43%
HSN:	HSNI	66.07	1.04%	6.05%
LIONSGATE:	LGF	33.13	0.39%	4.64%
MSG:	MSG	75.76	16.99%	31.57%
SCRIPPS INT:	SNI	77.24	1.39%	(10.61%)
STARZ:	STRZA	30.90	1.38%	5.68%
TIME WARNER:	TWX	79.47	0.89%	13.98%
VALUEVISION:	VVTV	5.66	8.85%	(19.03%)
VIACOM:	VIA	73.06	1.49%	(16.76%)
WWE:	WWE	12.35	(6.93%)	(25.51%)

Company	Ticker	10/31 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>				
ADVANTAGE:	AEY	2.41	(0.86%)	(10.44%)
AMDOCS:	DOX	47.54	2.83%	15.28%
AMPHENOL:	APH	50.58	3.58%	(43.28%)
AOL:	AOL	43.53	4.21%	(6.63%)
APPLE:	AAPL	108.00	2.64%	15.26%
ARRIS GROUP:	ARRS	30.02	9.36%	23.34%
AVID TECH:	AVID	10.05	0.00%	23.31%
BLNDER TONGUE:	BDR	1.05	(30.92%)	5.00%
BROADCOM:	BRCM	41.88	5.49%	41.25%
CISCO:	CSCO	24.47	2.90%	9.09%
COMMSCOPE:	CTV	25.57	2.20%	(3.62%)
CONCURRENT:	CCUR	7.10	(3.4%)	(13.1%)
CONVERGYS:	CVG	20.17	6.33%	(4.18%)
CSG SYSTEMS:	CSGS	26.51	4.29%	(9.83%)
ECHOSTAR:	SATS	46.73	0.89%	(6.01%)
GOOGLE:	GOOG	559.08	3.58%	(50.11%)
HARMONIC:	HLIT	6.67	7.06%	(9.62%)
INTEL:	INTC	34.01	2.50%	31.01%
INTERACTIVE CORP:	IACI	67.69	8.72%	(1.4%)

Company	Ticker	10/31 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
JDSU:	JDSU	13.46	11.24%	3.62%
LEVEL 3:	LVL3	46.91	11.11%	41.42%
MICROSOFT:	MSFT	46.95	1.78%	25.50%
NETFLIX:	NFLX	392.77	2.01%	6.68%
NIELSEN:	NLSN	42.49	0.45%	(7.41%)
RENTRAK:	RENT	76.87	(0.94%)	102.88%
SEACHANGE:	SEAC	6.76	4.00%	(44.41%)
SONY:	SNE	19.82	11.85%	14.63%
SPRINT NEXTEL:	S	5.93	(2.47%)	(44.84%)
TIVO:	TIVO	13.05	2.03%	(0.53%)
UNIVERSAL ELEC:	UEIC	56.89	5.90%	49.28%
VONAGE:	VG	3.48	3.26%	46.84%
YAHOO:	YHOO	46.05	5.86%	13.87%

Company	Ticker	10/31 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
<b>TELCOS</b>				
AT&T:	T	34.84	2.86%	(0.91%)
CENTURYLINK:	CTL	41.48	3.88%	30.24%
TDS:	TDS	25.64	3.39%	(0.54%)
VERIZON:	VZ	50.25	3.03%	2.26%

Index	Value	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg	
<b>MARKET INDICES</b>				
DOW:	DJI	17390.52	3.48%	4.91%
NASDAQ:	IXIC	4630.74	3.28%	10.87%
S&P 500:	GSPC	2018.05	2.72%	9.18%

**WINNERS & LOSERS**

<b>THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE WINNERS</b>		
COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. MSG:	75.76	16.99%
2. SONY:	19.82	11.85%
3. JDSU:	13.46	11.24%
4. LEVEL 3:	46.91	11.11%
5. CROWN:	3.49	10.09%

<b>THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE LOSERS</b>		
COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. BLNDER TONGUE:	1.05	(30.92%)
2. WWE:	12.35	(6.93%)
3. DISCOVERY:	35.35	(3.44%)
4. CONCURRENT:	7.10	(3.4%)
5. SPRINT NEXTEL:	5.93	(2.47%)

**Cablefax Webinar**

**Nov. 18 • 1:30 - 3 p.m. ET.**

**Selling TV Everywhere: How to Market TVE Initiatives for Profit**

This webinar will provide specific tips, tactics and strategies to hone your TVE message, attract new users and ensure that your TVE-related efforts result in higher viewership, better customer retention and ultimately a better return on investment.



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Holiday Special Report

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## NOBODY CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS LIKE HALLMARK

*This November and December, Hallmark Channel and Hallmark Movies & Mysteries will deliver 2,600+ hours of non-stop holiday programming with no duplication between networks.*

CrownMedia

FAMILY NETWORKS

Countdown to Christmas

Hallmark CHANNEL  
The Heart of TV



**Hallmark Channel is the Most Watched Cable Network in November & December!**

Nielsen (11/2-12/22/13), Sat-Sun 8p-11p, L+SD total viewers (P2+) impressions. Subject to qualifications upon request.



MOST WONDERFUL  
**MOVIES**  
OF CHRISTMAS

CONNECT WITH  
HALLMARK HOLIDAY CLASSICS  
AND NEW PREMIERES  
ALL SEASON LONG

Hallmark  
MOVIES & MYSTERIES

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## For Some, It's Christmas All Year

It is a warm evening in July, the Sun is slowly descending over Los Angeles and a large contingent of the nation's television critics and reporters have left their weeks-long **TCA** encampment at the Beverly Hilton for an evening 'activity' at a gorgeous, mountaintop mansion in Bel Air with a view of the Hollywood Hills that the word breathtaking only begins to describe. Adjoining the first floor, where a marble expanse surrounds a glistening indoor pool, is a massive lawn with dinner tables tastefully overflowing with flowers, candles, wine and elaborate place settings. Dodging between waiters and guests is a parade of veteran actors, including *Alan Thicke, Morgan Fairchild, Jon Voigt* and *Andie MacDowell*.

Yet something at this party of dreams seems off. The evening's hosts, **Hallmark Channel** and Hallmark Movie Channel (now **Hallmark Movies & Mysteries**), have invited the TV scribes here to celebrate... Christmas? Didn't we just do July 4th? Yes, sprinkled throughout are symbols of a holiday some 5 months out. Carolers, dressed in Dickensian costumes, sing and ring bells. At a photo booth, guests grab large, Styrofoam snowflakes and adorn themselves with woolen mittens, mufflers and caps

before pictures are snapped. Over there is Santa's sleigh, dead center on the lawn is a 60-foot-high Christmas tree, perfectly trimmed.

While Hallmark's 'Christmas in July' party was a fun stunt, its underlying rationale is serious: For networks like Hallmark, **ABC Family, UP** and others, the holiday season is big business and has become a year-round activity. While some of us have visions of sugar-plums dancing in our heads the evening of Dec 24, it's a regular nightly occurrence for content execs at these networks. "We're constantly in the market for great holiday stories," UP's programming svp *Sophia Kelley* said. Hallmark's programming and publicity svp *Michelle Vicary* added, "Christmas is 12 months a year for us. We're working on scripts all the time and frequently filming holiday movies in the summer. We make a lot of artificial snow." Celebrating its 17th season, "25 Days of Christmas" on ABC Family "is easily our highest-rated period of the year," evp, strategy & programming *Saalam Coleman Smith* said, noting during 25 Days last year the net was basic cable's #1 in W18-49, W25-54, W18-34, F12-34, P18-34 and P12-34. The stunt drew 100mln viewers and roughly twice as many as any other month.

# Countdown to Christmas

  
Hallmark  
CHANNEL  
The Heart of TV



On November 30, the Hallmark Hall of Fame Moves from Broadcast to Hallmark Channel for the First Time in Over 60 Years with the New Premiere of

## One Christmas Eve



## TURKEY TROT NO MORE: FULL SPEED AHEAD

But what of the unwritten rule that merchants eschew holiday decorations and music until after Thanksgiving? “That’s gone by the wayside,” said **Crown Media** president/CEO *Bill Abbott*, who heads Hallmark Channel and Hallmark Movies & Mysteries. Indeed, in some malls this year, Black Friday will begin before dinnertime on Thanksgiving Thursday, the implication being that Real Shoppers gobble their turkey at lunch and are shopping by dinnertime. Similarly, waiting until November to kick off holiday programming is for amateurs. Hallmark Channel primed the Christmas pump in July. In concert with parent Hallmark’s annual Christmas Ornament Preview Weekend in its 3,000 Gold Crown stores, Hallmark ran Christmas films in July as part of a “Christmas Keepsake Weekend” stunt. Ratings jumped 40% vs the same period the year before. In August, the season finale of ABC Family’s “Pretty Little Liars” series got a head start on seasonal programming. While the episode dealt with Thanksgiving, one character went all out, outfitting a home with Christmas decorations [see photo]. It served as a teaser for the fan-driven series’ Christmas special months in advance.

Closer to the holidays, Hallmark kicked off its “Countdown to Christmas” programming stunt this past Friday evening, the last day of October, the earliest start in its 13-year history. It will deliver 2600+ hours of holiday fare, including 14 originals each weekend over its two networks, making Hallmark’s slate its largest to date. Ditto for UP’s 500+-hours holiday stunt, “Everything You Love About Christmas,” which the Atlanta-based network began yesterday, Nov 2. Even ABC Family, whose 25 Days of Christmas title would seem to lock in its start date, will get a jump on Dec 25



**DECKIN’ THE HALLS:** ABC Family got a headstart on the Christmas spirit with ‘Pretty Little Liars’ Season 5 finale in August, with Emily (Shay Mitchell-right) going all out with Christmas decorations and a shirt that describes how her character and the net feel about the holiday.

with “Countdown to 25 Days of Christmas,” starting Nov 23. This week-long stunt features a slew of extremely popular holiday and non-holiday films designed to go beyond ABC Family’s millennial demo and encourage family viewing. Titles include “The Hunger Games,” “Elf,” “National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation,” “Finding Nemo,” “Dark Shadows” and versions of Cinderella.

## DIFFERENT PATHS TO DECEMBER 25

For Hallmark Networks’ chief Abbott, one of the hooks of this special report—that Hallmark rolled out its holiday slate earlier than ever this year—is a technicality only. The network traditionally begins holiday programming the Friday night before the first weekend in November. With Nov 1 falling on a Saturday this year, it started festivities last Friday, Oct 31, one day earlier than in 2013. Far more important, Abbott said, is that this year’s holiday programming marks the start of the channels’ full collaboration with parent Hallmark and its venerated retail brand. Yet to be fully finalized or announced, the cross-promotion strategy will encompass marketing opportunities during various holidays, combining the reach of the TV networks with Hallmark’s retail properties. It will significantly change Hallmark’s cable business, Abbott promised. The hope is that by emphasizing other holidays and events, the percentage of Christmas revenue, which represents roughly one-third of Hallmark Cards’ business today, will fall a bit.

The first piece of that strategy can be seen in Countdown to Christmas. “We’ve really tried to tie the channels’ calendar with the retail calendar so we’re promoting the stores and they promote back to the channel,” he said. “That’s our secret sauce for our success at the holiday.

MOST WONDERFUL  
**MOVIES**  
OF CHRISTMAS

NON-STOP HOLIDAY FAVORITES  
ALL SEASON LONG  
FEATURING CLASSIC MOVIES EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT  
AND TWO WORLD PREMIERE ORIGINALS

Hallmark  
MOVIES & MYSTERIES

We produce great content, but a lot of other people do, too. But... there's only one Hallmark brand and only one brand with 3,000 Gold Crown retail store opportunities."

An example of the collaboration is this year's Hallmark Channel original film "Northpole" (premiering Nov 15, 8p, starring *Tiffani Thiessen* and *Bailee Madison*, with *Robert Wagner* and *Jill St. John* as Mr. and Mrs. Claus). It's the first co-production of Hallmark Cards and Hallmark Channel. Beyond the film, however, there will be Northpole merchandise

and signage in Gold Crown stores promoting the film and Countdown to Christmas. In addition, there will be signage and merchandise at Hallmark partners **Walmart**, **Walgreens** and **CVS**, as well as other retailers, Abbott says. The collaboration will last. Work is underway on "Northpole II" for 2015 and a 2016 Valentine's Day movie. Last year, Hallmark Channel's 12 original films averaged 3.3 HH, up 27%

over 2012, pushing it to #1 among HHs, W25-54 and total viewer rating for weekend prime time.

Also new this year will be an emphasis on creating a distinct viewer experience for each of the two channels. For the first time, Hallmark Channel and Hallmark Movies & Mysteries will each go 24-7 with holiday programming, including Hallmark Channel's daily "Home and Family" show. But the two channels will carry different kinds of holiday programming, Vicary says. Hallmark Channel will feature lighter holiday entertainment, spirit-of-the-season fare. Heavier holiday dramas, like those seen on The Hallmark Hall of Fame, will reside at Movies & Mysteries. An exception to the light-fare rule will come Nov 30, at 8pm, when Hallmark Hall of Fame's "One Christmas Eve," starring *Anne Heche*, premieres exclusively on Hallmark Channel. The 62-year-old Hall of Fame franchise previously premiered its productions on broadcast channels and PBS. The deal uniting Hall of Fame and its 81 Emmys with Hallmark Channel was announced last month.

Despite its name and emphasis on holiday themes like family, humor, love, kindness and giving, many of UP's stories include a realistic edge that you might not expect

from the programmer. "We're not a one-note network... not everything is joyful and wonderful," UP's Kelley said. "Some of our stories include tears... there are a lot of families suffering out there, and that's part of the holiday, too," she says. Still, "there's always hope at Christmas" and UP's realistic dramas always include inspirational elements. "You'll have tears, sure, but also tears of joy," she promised.

One such story is an UP original called "Paper Angels" (Nov 16, 7p ET), which revolves around a one-parent family that must move to

a new town to avoid an abusive, alcoholic father. Starring *Josie Bisset* as a single parent, Paper's plot shows how love and acts of kindness can make a bad situation better. In the film, a newly married couple (*Matthew Settle* and *Kendra Anderson*) that is experiencing problems decides to forgo exchanging Christmas presents and instead sends gifts to children in need through a Salvation Army program. One of their gifts



**NOT A SELFIE, AN ELFIE:** *Bailee Madison* (right) plays a magical elf (is there another kind?) and *Max Charles* is the child of a skeptical journalist (is there another kind?) in "Northpole," the first co-prod of Hallmark Channel and Hallmark Cards.

makes a big difference to Bisset's character's son, who was bullied by his father. The storyline is adapted from a song and novel by singer *Jimmy Wayne* called "Paper Angels."

For ABC Family, this year marks the first time several of its scripted series and comedies will have special holiday eps during 25 Days, Coleman Smith says. The extra effort seems worthwhile. In Sept, ABC Family posted a "100 Days till Christmas" countdown graphic on **Facebook**, which was shared nearly 250K times, becoming its most-popular posting. That is until an Oct 13 posting detailing its 25 Days of Christmas schedule of more than 300 hours of programming. That post has more than 300mln shares and growing.

After 17 years, you'd assume 25 Days might become formulaic. Not so, Coleman Smith insists. "We approach each year differently, based on the titles we have available," she said, noting the weekends are key because that is where "our key holiday titles" are scheduled "so families can watch together." The net is "always focused on... our core millennial audience," she says, "but 25 Days creates an opportunity to bring in a wider audience who enjoy watching our tent pole movies together as well as allow them to sample our original series."