

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Sony's Vue: A Mini Cable TV Service?

Despite the absence of nets like **ESPN** and **HBO** as well as **Turner** and **Disney** channels, **Sony's** PlayStation Vue, a cloud-based TV service enabling live and on-demand TV programming, is very much like a mini-version of cable TV. Sony scored deals with major programmers including **CBS**, **Discovery Comm**, **Fox**, **NBCU**, **Scripps Nets Interactive** and **Viacom**, allowing it to offer around 75 channels at market. The beta platform is currently invite-only and will be launched commercially during 1Q15. We'll have to wait until commercial launch for pricing and packaging details. According to Sony, the service will be offered on a month-to-month basis without any penalty for cancellation. There also won't be any equipment or installation charges. All you need is a PS4 or PS3 system and broadband connection. Sony is touting Vue's cable TV-like user interface, which allows viewers to search for live and on-demand TV content based on genre and popularity. It's also playing up the cloud feature, which allows viewers to save content to the cloud without storage restrictions. Once content's saved, users have access for 28 days. Sony's pact with Discovery, which has previously only made a limited number of channels available on secondary platforms such as **Microsoft's** Xbox One and **Apple TV**, is fairly comprehensive. It features 18 nets and services, including all 13 US nets (the rest are digital nets, like **Animal Planet Live**). The deal makes Discovery content available to more than 35mln active PS4 and PS3 devices in the US. The expansive agreement will span the beta preview into the full rollout, *Rebecca Glashow*, Discovery svp of digital distribution & partnerships, told us. "It isn't a matter of choosing one platform over another. Discovery always is pursuing new growth opportunities that combine our networks and content that audiences love with innovative new platforms. Through this partnership, we have the opportunity to reach the millions of PlayStation users in the US who are highly engaged consumers of digital entertainment," she said. Sony's pact with Viacom covers nearly all nets including **BET**, **CMT**, **Comedy Central**, **MTV**, **Nick**, **VH1** and more. The pact with CBS will enable the platform to offer the live linear signal from CBS' O&O stations, in addition to VOD and primetime programming. Fox's portfolio includes **FX**, **FXX**, **FXM**, **Nat Geo** and **Nat Geo WILD**, **Fox Sports 1**, **Fox Sports 2**, **BTN**, as well as Fox's RSNs including **YES** and **Prime Ticket**. The agreement also covers Fox's O&O stations. The NBCU deal covers all local content from NBC, **Telemundo** and RSNs, as well as **Bravo**, **CNBC**, **E!**, **NBCSN**, **Oxygen**, **Sprout**, **Syfy** and **USA**. The deal with Scripps is also comprehensive, covering nearly all Scripps nets.



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It's still possible that Sony will be able to score deals with more programmers before its commercial launch next year, but we hear that HBO, which is prepping its own OTT service, most likely won't be there at launch.

DirecTV Opens 4K Gates: DirecTV is the 1st MVPD to offer up 4K Ultra HD programming direct to customers, but you must have a **Samsung** TV to get it. At least for now. Samsung is DirecTV's initial partner, but other CE makers are expected to come on board throughout 2015. Starting Fri, DirecTV will begin offering 4K PPV content, ranging in price from \$3.99-\$15.99/title. The 4K PPV library kicks off with 20 titles, both films to docs from **Paramount** and **K2 Communications**, with more to come. The initial offering includes "Forrest Gump," "Dolphins" and "Amistad." Customers will need an Internet-connected Genie HD DVR (HR34 and above), and a Samsung UHD TV that is DirecTV 4K Ready. Yes, DirecTV is using the **CEA**-sanctioned "4K Ultra HD" term to describe the service, which offers clarity nearly 4x the resolution of HD (**CFX**, 11/13). While there has been some doubts about consumers' willingness to upgrade to 4K TVs, CEA is optimistic. It recently revised its 4K forecast, predicting shipments will reach 800K this year, up from its initial 485K forecast.

Viacom's View: Viacom pres/CEO *Philippe Dauman* used Thurs' 4Q earnings call to convince investors that the programmer's not on shaky ground with distributors, despite the loss of **Suddenlink**, **Cable One** and some small **NCTC** members. "We now have 70% of our subscribers covered by affiliate agreements that won't expire for at least 3 years and go out for as long as 8 years," he said, noting recent deals with **Time Warner Cable**, **Verizon** and **Frontier**. "We have renewed virtually all of the small distributors other than those 2, and we are quite confident that we have renewals over the next many years with distributors who want to maintain and grow their business," he said. What about ratings? Dauman used much of the call to preach for less **Nielsen** reliance. Today, about 30% of Viacom's domestic ad rev is not dependent on Nielsen ratings, according to Dauman. He wants that to get to about 50% in the next 3 years. "Our young audiences remain on the leading edge of this trend [of digital platform consumption], and we are working toward 2 broad strategic objectives—implementing an industry-standard that appropriately reflects our valuable and rapidly growing multiplatform viewership and aggressively moving towards non-Nielsen dependent advertising monetization," he explained. Dauman believes the existing measurement services will eventually catch up, but in the meantime, Viacom is rolling out video in more places and using 1st part data and other marketing capabilities to work with advertisers. While **HBO** and **Showtime** may be ready to go direct-to-consumers, it doesn't sound like **Epix** is anywhere close. The Viacom chief said the net is still very much in growth mode, having only recently snagged carriage with **Time Warner Cable** and **AT&T**. Original series are in the works for next year. So for now, look for it to take a wait-and-see approach to OTT. **Sony** may have introduced its **Vue** OTT service Thurs, but Dauman was tight-lipped on details of its carriage contract. "As their distribution grows... , we will grow proportionately," he said of Viacom's carriage deal with Sony. "Obviously, much of our audience is using Playstation devices. We think we will acquire a lot of new viewers who may not currently have cable subscriptions, and those may switch over as was the case [with] past emerging distribution partners, like with telcos. We see this as a great opportunity to expand distribution and grow revenues." Viacom reported better-than-expected earnings results, with total rev up 9% to \$3.99bln. Net earnings of \$732mln were down 9% YOY, but ahead of Wall St expectations. Viacom shares closed up nearly 3% for the day.

TWC Completes Maxx: **Time Warner Cable** completed the rollout of its "TWC Maxx" program in L.A. and NYC, which includes higher speeds for more than 7mln HHs in the area and an upgrade to subs' DVR system. Video improvements include more On-Demand content and an all-digital lineup. The upgrade is being rolled out to other TWC markets.

Cable Pushes Tax Freedom: **NCTA** and **ACA** were among Internet access groups calling on lawmakers to extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act before it expires Dec 11. The groups also include **Comptel**, **CTIA**, **USTelecom** and the Internet Tax Freedom Act Coalition. A House bill was already approved in July. "We respectfully request you to take action immediately to protect all Americans from new regressive state and local taxation of Internet access and multiple and discriminatory taxation of Internet commerce," the ISP groups said in a letter to House and Senate leadership. "If Congress fails to act soon, millions of broadband, cable and wireless consumers will be at risk for new taxes in thousands of state and local jurisdictions. Now is the time to provide all Americans with certainty that their Internet access will never be subject to tax."

beIN Sports Carriage: **beIN Sports** is now available to customers of **FrontierTV** powered by **AT&T** U-verse in CT.

SES-In Demand: **In Demand** renewed its capacity agreement with global satellite operator **SES** for continued delivery of programming packages to cable audiences in North America and the Caribbean. In Demand retains two C-band tran-

BUSINESS & FINANCE

sponders on SES's AMC-1 satellite to deliver professional sports packages from MLB, the NBA and the NHL, as well as boxing, MMA, wrestling and entertainment events to nearly 50mln digital cable households across the region. The 2 companies have been working together for nearly 30 years.

Comcast-Boys & Girls Clubs: Comcast NBCU signed a 5-year national partnership with the **Boys & Girls Clubs of America** including "tens of millions of dollars" in cash and in-kind support. Elements include the launch of tech initiative "My Future," designed to ignite kids' passion for technology.

Discovery Ed's Digital Safety: Discovery Education and **Intel** launched a 3-year national education initiative to teach children to make safer decisions when using the Internet. "Intel Security Digital Safety Program" will equip educators, students and parents with tools for cybersecurity. Elements include a national sweepstakes for monetary grants for schools and standards-aligned resources. It is designed for kids 8-11 in the US and Canada. In Year 2, it will expand to reach ages 11-14, and it's expected to expand to the UK and Ireland in Year 3.

People: Turner upped **Dan Aversano** to svp, client and consumer insights, a newly created group he'll lead and that will focus on predicting consumer behavior. -- **FCC** chmn **Tom Wheeler** appointed **David Waterman** as chief economist, effective Jan 2015. Waterman is a professor at Indiana Univ.

CableFAX Daily Stockwatch

Company	11/13 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	11/13 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DIRECTV:	87.50	0.12	CONCURRENT:	6.99	(0.03)
DISH:	64.67	0.85	CONVERGYS:	21.25	(0.14)
ENTRAVISION:	5.24	UNCH	CSG SYSTEMS:	25.82	0.02
GRAY TELEVISION:	9.72	(0.03)	ECHOSTAR:	50.15	1.22
MEDIA GENERAL:	14.53	(0.13)	GOOGLE:	545.38	(1.93)
NEXSTAR:	45.91	0.38	HARMONIC:	6.79	(0.11)
SINCLAIR:	27.35	0.11	INTEL:	33.68	0.30
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	18.28	0.13	INTERACTIVE CORP:	64.81	(0.61)
CHARTER:	152.73	3.72	JDSU:	12.84	(0.4)
COMCAST:	54.30	0.70	LEVEL 3:	48.64	1.42
COMCAST SPCL:	54.03	0.63	MICROSOFT:	49.61	0.83
GCI:	12.30	(0.05)	NETFLIX:	379.41	(4.45)
GRAHAM HOLDING:	793.29	9.25	NIELSEN:	42.40	(0.67)
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	48.52	1.37	RENTRAK:	80.05	1.20
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	47.19	(0.21)	SEACHANGE:	6.75	0.07
SHAW COMM:	26.41	0.21	SONY:	20.41	(0.22)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	141.05	4.57	SPRINT NEXTEL:	5.00	UNCH
PROGRAMMING					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	34.99	0.35	TIVO:	13.07	(0.08)
AMC NETWORKS:	60.87	(0.53)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	58.69	(0.87)
CBS:	51.87	0.30	VONAGE:	3.72	(0.02)
CROWN:	3.39	(0.06)	YAHOO:	50.50	(0.1)
DISCOVERY:	32.86	1.00	TELCOS		
DISNEY:	90.49	0.59	AT&T:	35.61	0.21
GRUPO TELEVISA:	35.58	0.34	CENTURYLINK:	40.92	0.42
HSN:	70.79	0.24	TDS:	25.49	(0.49)
LIONSGATE:	35.22	0.83	VERIZON:	51.20	0.38
MSG:	73.72	(1.02)	MARKET INDICES		
SCRIPPS INT:	73.50	UNCH	DOW:	17652.79	40.59
STARZ:	31.63	0.39	NASDAQ:	4680.14	5.00
TIME WARNER:	78.98	1.30	S&P 500:	2039.33	1.08
VALUEVISION:	5.73	(0.11)			
VIACOM:	71.53	2.00			
WWE:	12.13	(0.66)			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADVANTAGE:	2.53	(0.02)			
AMDOCS:	47.58	(0.12)			
AMPHENOL:	50.71	(0.56)			
AOL:	46.37	0.53			
APPLE:	112.82	1.57			
ARRIS GROUP:	28.43	0.03			
AVID TECH:	10.27	0.02			
BLNDER TONGUE:	1.30	0.01			
BROADCOM:	41.79	0.64			
CISCO:	25.68	0.57			
COMMSCOPE:	25.45	0.04			



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PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

More Than a Woman

Lifetime's biopic on the R&B star *Aaliyah*, tragically killed in a plane crash in 2001 at the height of her career at 22 years old, has been broiling in controversy since day 1. There was the casting of the lead role in **Disney** star *Zendaya Coleman*, who was replaced by **Nick** star *Alexandra Ship* after reportedly leaving due to problems with the production. Then there's the fact that Aaliyah's family was not involved with the film's creation, which threatened its credibility. But perhaps the most talked-about aspect—and will likely reach heightened scrutiny following the film's premiere Nov 15—is the portrayal of Aaliyah's secret, illegal marriage to producer *R. Kelly* when she was just 15. What's more important than all of the controversy, however, is the reason the film was made, says executive producer *Debra Martin Chase*, who originally developed the film "Sparkle" for Aaliyah prior to her death. "We want this to be a celebration about an incredible young woman who was taken from us too soon," she says. Of course, easier said than done when you're dealing with a figure of such influence. "It's hard for people because Aaliyah still is so beloved. It's a movie... We chose not to make a documentary. It's the spirit of the people and we hope it will renew interest in her and keep her legacy even more alive today." One thing she hopes that will resonate with viewers is how much Aaliyah accomplished in such a short time, as well as the strength and support she received from her family. "She had an incredibly strong loving family unit, and they made everybody around them feel a part of that. And I thought that was very interesting and important to portray, because often with young stars we hear to the contrary," Chase says. "For me I think her life was inspirational" and will "remind people to make the time that you have count." - *Kaylee Hultgren*

Reviews: "Paper Angels," Sun, 7p ET, **UP**. Several cable nets began holiday programming weeks ago [see **CFX's** Special Report on Holiday Programming, Nov 3]. Fortunately, they often schedule less overtly holiday fare before Dec 1, like this beautiful piece about a woman (gorgeous *Josie Bissett*) and her teen children who struggle after leaving an alcoholic father. A parallel plotline has a young married (*Matthew Settle* of "Gossip Girl") also having problems. The stories intersect via a non-denominational message and the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program. -- "The Missing," premiere, Sun, 9p, **Starz**. This fabulous 8-ep thriller stars *James Nesbitt* as Tony, obsessed with finding his little son, who disappeared during a holiday in France. A retired French detective (played by *Tchéky Karyo*) aids Tony during his 8-year quest, told via a complicated narrative that is loaded with flashbacks. The word 'gripping' barely describes the intensity of this limited series, which digs deeply into characters' motivations and relationships. -- "Untold Stories of the ER," Fri, 10, **Discovery Fit & Health**. Nine seasons and 100 eps in, this series continues to re-enact wild, interesting stories. This week's centenary ep features a man with a shovel impaled in his—ouch—perineum, an obstinate police officer who eschews treatment for a possible heart attack and a frat boy bleeding from two orifices. - *Seth Arenstein*

Basic Cable Rankings (11/03/14-11/09/14)			
Mon-Sun Prime			
1	ESPN	2.4	2257
2	FOXN	2.0	1930
3	HALL	1.6	1357
4	USA	1.4	1321
5	DSNY	1.3	1255
5	TBSC	1.3	1232
5	AMC	1.3	1192
5	NFLN	1.3	934
5	DSE	1.3	86
10	HIST	1.0	1001
10	DISC	1.0	998
10	HGTV	1.0	913
13	FX	0.9	831
14	TNT	0.8	795
14	TLC	0.8	757
14	ADSM	0.8	750
14	BRAV	0.8	740
14	ID	0.8	665
19	NAN	0.7	705
19	FOOD	0.7	668
19	FAM	0.7	666
19	A&E	0.7	654
23	SYFY	0.6	617
23	MSNB	0.6	604
23	SPK	0.6	564
23	LIFE	0.6	549
23	CMDY	0.6	543
23	DSJR	0.6	481
29	CNN	0.5	490
29	VH1	0.5	425
29	NGC	0.5	401
29	OWN	0.5	392
29	H2	0.5	322
29	HMM	0.5	296
35	TVLD	0.4	405
35	MTV	0.4	398
35	BET	0.4	391
35	APL	0.4	390
35	WETV	0.4	377
35	EN	0.4	334
35	LMN	0.4	309
35	NKJR	0.4	309
35	DXD	0.4	302
35	GSN	0.4	278
35	NKTN	0.4	245
35	NGWD	0.4	202

*Nielsen data supplied by ABC/Disney

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