

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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ACA Summit: Snowed Out, But Not Giving Up

For a conference themed “Solving the Puzzle,” it kind of felt like **ACA Summit** was that jigsaw with the last piece missing from the box. As the weather forecasts came in Wednesday, predicting anywhere from 6-10 inches of snow for the Washington, DC, region, ACA pres/CEO *Matt Polka* held out hope. Even if members of Congress went home ahead of the storm, the Hill offices will be open and staff will be there, Polka told attendees after a morning panel on Wednesday. Members visiting the Hill to tell their personal stories as small cable operators is a huge part of the annual conference, now in its 22nd year. And it’s an important part, with Rep *Greg Walden* (R-OR) telling the group Wednesday to “never believe we understand how your business works.” But as the day progressed, it became clear that there would be no scheduled lobby visits. DC turned into a bit of a ghost town Thursday—the federal government and schools shut down, while ACA attendees kept a wary eye out for flight cancellations. It’s hard not to draw comparisons to ACA’s push for exemption of small operators from key sections of Title II right up until the last minute, despite the inevitability of a 3-2 vote at the **FCC** last week. But don’t think for a minute Polka and his crew are down. “We are certainly disappointed that we can’t make our Hill meetings today, but we are not discouraged in any way shape or form,” Polka said by phone Thurs. With the storm, Rep *Steve Scalise* (R-LA) canceled his morning speech to the operators, but 150 members (those that didn’t try to beat the storm themselves) gathered Thurs morning to talk about issues and how they can follow up with members of Congress back home. “We had a really good session on how to build relationships with Congress. Our jobs are long-term with Congress,” Polka said. “The fight goes on to tell independents’ cable story.” In years past, much of the Summit was devoted to concerns over rising retrans costs. The fact that it was barely mentioned this week is a sign of how significant Title II weighs on members’ minds. A session on the issue saw a half dozen or so members ask questions or make comments, as they struggle with how the complaint process will work and associated expenses they may have under the regulation. Not helping calm fears was **Precursor** pres *Scott Cleland*. “It’s the most expensive regulation you can imagine. Light touch Title II is an oxymoron,” he said. “80% of the regulatory power lies in Section 201. It’s the motherhood of regulatory authority.” With the order not public yet, there’s a lot of uncertainty. Will ACA be lining up to sue? “All of our options are on the table,” Polka said, explaining that includes pushing for reconsid-

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eration at the FCC and working with Congress on legislation as well as potential litigation. “We’re all just hearing snippets [of the order]. None of us really know what’s in it. We’re going to study it, and then determine the best course.”

Rocco’s Turn: Tune in to **C-SPAN’s** “Communicators” Sat at 6:30pm ET to hear why **Mediacom** pres/CEO **Rocco Commisso** really, really doesn’t like Title II. “I’m just concerned that if I can’t make the return [on investment]... I’m not going to be able to keep up with the dramatic need to invest money in our network so that we can deliver the stuff that’s coming down the pike,” Commisso said, noting his company has spent \$1.1bln on cap ex in just the last 4 years. Who benefits from this? The lawyers, who he said will be able to afford to take long vacations. He expects consumers will see price increases as operators have from new taxes and regulatory fees. The CEO said Mediacom is a strong proponent of net neutrality—no blocking, no paid prioritization, no throttling—and doesn’t understand why the govt feels the need to impose Title II regulation on him when he’s done nothing wrong. Commisso also weighed in on President **Obama’s** visit to Cedar Falls (the biggest state in Mediacom’s footprint), saying the commander-in-chief “went to a monopoly to talk about how I’m a monopoly.” He said **Cedar Falls Utility** is a municipal utility that was put in place long before Mediacom entered Iowa and “had a monopoly with water, sewer, electric and gas. And they used that monopoly status to basically go out and compete with private enterprise,” he said. Mediacom’s employees were upset that Obama didn’t talk to them about their work on broadband. As for the idea Mediacom could be a monopoly, Commisso said his company has lost 650K customers in the last 12 years. “Monopolies don’t lose customers. I have,” he said.

Blackburn Launches Internet Bill: Less than a week after the **FCC’s** approval of the Title II net neutrality order, Rep **Marsha Blackburn** (R-TN) introduced the Internet Freedom Act to block the agency’s rules. The bill would prohibit the FCC from reissuing net neutrality rules. “There is nothing ‘free and open’ about this heavy-handed approach... My legislation will put the brakes on this FCC overreach and protect our innovators from these job-killing regulations,” Blackburn, vice chair of the **House Commerce** committee, said in a statement late Wed. She introduced similar legislations in the 112th Congress and 113th Congress. The FCC’s order won’t take effect until it’s published in the Federal Register in 60 days.

Pay-TV’s Support for Same Sex Marriage: Several media companies are among the 379 companies and groups asking the Supreme Court to lift state restrictions on gay marriage, according to a friend-of-the-court brief. They include **Comcast, Verizon, AT&T, Viacom, Disney, CBS** and **DirecTV**. Vendor **Cisco** is also on the list. “Employers are better served by a uniform marriage rule that gives equal dignity to employee relationships... Allowing same-sex couples to marry improves employee morale and productivity, reduces uncertainty, and removes the wasteful administrative burdens imposed by the current disparity of state law treatment,” reads the brief.

Green Cable: Cable MSOs continue to make efforts to achieve energy efficiency. **Time Warner Cable’s** “Go Green” initiative has reduced the company’s carbon intensity by 38% over the past 2 years, the company said. The reduction was due to increased energy efficiency and improved waste and vehicle management, and promotion of sustainability within the supply chain. The MSO has also been building employee “Green Teams” to get more employees involved in its green initiative.

SCTE Committee Update: Cable’s standard group **SCTE** expanded the Engineering Committee (part of the SCTE Standards Program) to 15 members, including the chairs of each of the 5 standards: Data; Digital Video; Interface Practices; Network Operations; and Energy Management, which develops standards that are aligned with the SCTE Energy 2020 program. The group also announced the reaccreditation under new SCTE Standards operating procedures by the American National Standards Institute. Independent third-party accreditation by ANSI demonstrates that the SCTE Standards Program meets the stringent quality requirements for standards development organizations. A key component of the reaccreditation is inclusion of a ballot cycle that has been halved to 2 weeks from 4 to accommodate the pace of cable telecom technology development.

Weather Carriage: In addition to **NCTC’s** multi-year renewal with the **Weather Company (CFX, 3/5)**, the programmer recently inked agreements with **Cox** and **Time Warner Cable**. Terms weren’t disclosed.

TWC Gets on Xbox One: **Time Warner Cable** joined the lineup of pay-TV providers streaming on **Microsoft’s** Xbox One platform. The op launched its TWC TV app to the platform, allowing its video subs with Xbox Live account to access to

BUSINESS & FINANCE

7K on demand titles. Subs can view content from any room without an additional set top box.

Nielsen Acquires eXelate: Nielsen has completed the acquisition of eXelate, which provides data and technology to assist the buying and selling of advertising across programmatic platforms. The deal aims to allow Nielsen clients to gain real-time audience insights as well as eXelate's aggregated consumer segments from more than 200 data providers.

People: NBCUniversal upped *Ndidi Oriji* to svp, ad standards. Reporting to *Alan Wurtzel*, pres of research and media development, she will renew advertising airing on the NBC broadcast net and 15 cable nets. She was most recently counsel in the NBCU West Coast Entertainment group.

TiVo Earnings: TiVo posted revenues of \$114m in 4Q, much better than investor guidance of around \$89m. Total TiVo subscriptions were up 30% YOY, which includes a 40% YOY increase in MSO subscriptions, bringing total annual subscription additions of almost 1.3m. The company has 5.5m subs by the end of the quarter. This week, TiVo CEO *Tom Rogers* told the *New York Post* that the company plans to use the assets it acquired from **Aereo** to beef up the Roamio over-the-air service. The offering combines OTA services with SVOD and OTT services.

Cablefax Daily Stockwatch

Company	03/05 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	03/05 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DIRECTV:	87.92	(0.36)	COMMSCOPE:	26.38	0.06
DISH:	75.80	0.20	CONCURRENT:	6.64	0.52
ENTRAVISION:	6.64	0.06	CONVERGYS:	22.15	(0.1)
GRAY TELEVISION:	12.31	1.40	CSG SYSTEMS:	30.10	(0.06)
MEDIA GENERAL:	15.07	0.18	ECHOSTAR:	53.55	0.12
NEXSTAR:	55.98	0.78	GOOGLE:	575.33	1.96
SINCLAIR:	27.17	(0.01)	HARMONIC:	7.65	(0.06)
MSOS					
CABLEVISION:	18.59	(0.38)	INTEL:	33.72	(0.4)
CHARTER:	184.48	(1.26)	INTERACTIVE CORP:	69.36	0.90
COMCAST:	60.33	(0.1)	JDSU:	13.32	0.13
COMCAST SPCL:	59.85	(0.05)	LEVEL 3:	55.46	0.76
GCI:	12.92	(1.34)	MICROSOFT:	43.11	0.06
GRAHAM HOLDING:	1049.29	(4.15)	NETFLIX:	467.65	(2.12)
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	52.79	(0.11)	NIELSEN:	44.79	0.12
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	55.00	0.14	RENTRAK:	56.52	(0.8)
SHAW COMM:	23.17	(0.2)	SEACHANGE:	7.30	(0.05)
SHENTEL:	28.94	(0.36)	SONY:	28.06	0.17
SHENTEL:	28.94	(0.36)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	5.38	0.17
TIME WARNER CABLE:	157.84	0.35	TIVO:	11.12	(0.43)
PROGRAMMING					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	34.86	(0.11)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	55.86	(0.53)
AMC NETWORKS:	73.19	(1.03)	VONAGE:	4.55	0.01
CBS:	61.55	(0.91)	YAHOO:	44.16	0.17
CROWN:	3.42	0.01	TELCOS		
DISCOVERY:	33.56	(0.24)	AT&T:	34.00	UNCH
DISNEY:	105.03	(0.54)	CENTURYLINK:	36.13	(0.12)
GRUPO TELEVISA:	34.74	0.28	TDS:	25.12	0.63
HSN:	67.53	(1.32)	VERIZON:	48.92	(0.15)
LIONSGATE:	33.51	0.47	MARKET INDICES		
MSG:	76.99	(0.55)	DOW:	18135.72	38.82
SCRIPPS INT:	73.53	(0.1)	NASDAQ:	4982.81	15.67
STARZ:	34.07	0.03	S&P 500:	2101.04	2.51
TIME WARNER:	83.26	0.18	TECHNOLOGY		
VIACOM:	70.50	(0.7)	ADDVANTAGE:	2.36	0.01
WWE:	17.09	(0.07)	AMDOCS:	52.37	0.07
TECHNOLOGY					
ADDVANTAGE:	2.36	0.01	AMPHENOL:	58.72	0.48
AMDOCS:	52.37	0.07	AOL:	40.55	(1.58)
AMPHENOL:	58.72	0.48	APPLE:	126.39	(2.15)
AOL:	40.55	(1.58)	ARRIS GROUP:	29.00	(0.22)
APPLE:	126.39	(2.15)	AVID TECH:	15.74	0.23
ARRIS GROUP:	29.00	(0.22)	BLNDER TONGUE:	1.77	(0.03)
AVID TECH:	15.74	0.23	BROADCOM:	44.91	(0.29)
BLNDER TONGUE:	1.77	(0.03)	CISCO:	29.30	(0.03)
BROADCOM:	44.91	(0.29)			
CISCO:	29.30	(0.03)			

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PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

Conspiracy in Jerusalem...

If you mistakenly thought **USA** was still the “blue sky” network, the premiere of its new event series “Dig” Thurs night will change your mind as *Jason Isaacs* portrays an FBI agent whose dogged investigation of a seemingly random murder uncovers a vast conspiracy stretching from Jerusalem to New Mexico. And, as is always the case, all of this involves a red cow. If you're confused, that's because of the mysterious web weaved by co-creators *Gideon Raff* of **Showtime's** “Homeland” and *Tim Kring* of **NBC's** “Heroes” fame. Dig is a little bit *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, a dash of *The Da Vinci Code* and a whole lotta paranoia and intrigue as it sucks us down a rabbit hole involving the intersection of fanatical religious prophecies with modern geopolitics. It's a dark, wild ride to be sure. “Both Gideon and I were really in love with the '70s paranoid thrillers like Three Days of the Condor and Paralax View—that idea of a little guy against a very big story where no matter where he turns, he isn't sure who to trust,” Kring told us. “So I guess if there's a kind of stamp to the franchise it's that. It's kind of one man against the world.” Notice he used the word “franchise.” That's because even though Kring and Raff conceived the series as a one-off, the idea of an FBI agent investigating the murder of an American in a foreign land obviously lends itself to multiple seasons if USA so decides to bring Dig back for another run. “To the extent that we thought of things going forward, we kind of liked the idea of uncovering fanatical ideas that have a conspiracy element attached to them,” he said. “In the world as it is today, it gives a pretty broad landscape.” Of course, USA hopes its cable audience will be especially willing to tackle the serialized puzzle of Dig. “It is a conundrum for the broadcasters to figure out how to capture that same kind of passionate fanbase that a lot of these cable shows have,” said Kring. “But there's a sensibility to both Gideon and myself that I feel is fairly broad. I like to appeal to a lot of people.” — *Michael Grebb*

Reviews: “Who Do You Think You Are?” Season 2 premiere, Sun, 10pm, **TLC**. We entered this series skeptically—we love everything about *Angie Harmon*, but do we care about her ancestors? As it turns out, we do, particularly since her roots stretch to the American Revolution. The trick, of course, is getting viewers to relate to a stranger's family tree. Based on the eps we saw (*Harmon* 3/22; *Sean Hayes* 3/29;), TLC does this well. -- “American Canvas,” premiere, Wed, 10pm ET, **Ovation**. You could argue this series is what an arts network should be doing 24/7. It's not fancy, but this foray into cultural tourism, hosted by *Dave Holmes*, and featuring interesting sights of a city, San Francisco in the premiere, could become addicting. True, the Bay City is rich with culture and history, but *Ovation* avoids the obvious, treating viewers instead to off-trail attractions, including a whacky mechanical museum, a troupe that dances on buildings and unusual walking tours of Chinatown and Beat hangouts. -- “Broadchurch,” Season 2, Wed, 10pm ET, **BBC A**. It will be tough to follow Season 1, which was excellent. Yet 2 eps in, Season 2 of this seaside-based murder mystery seems strong, as are leads *David Tennant* and *Olivia Colman*, now joined by *Marianne Jean-Baptiste*. Can it be sustained? — *Seth Arenstein*

Basic Cable Rankings (2/23/15-3/01/15)			
Mon-Sun Prime			
1	FOXN	1.5	1425
2	USA	1.4	1371
3	AMC	1.3	1256
3	DSNY	1.3	1245
3	DSE	1.3	83
6	DISC	1.2	1161
6	TBSC	1.2	1144
6	HIST	1.2	1110
6	HGTV	1.2	1107
10	TNT	1.1	1008
11	ESPN	1.0	904
12	ADSM	0.9	880
12	TLC	0.9	860
14	FOOD	0.8	771
14	ID	0.8	677
14	BET	0.8	669
17	LIFE	0.7	716
17	A&E	0.7	698
17	FAM	0.7	694
17	NAN	0.7	688
17	BRAV	0.7	654
17	FX	0.7	648
17	HALL	0.7	610
24	TVLD	0.6	595
24	SYFY	0.6	590
24	SPK	0.6	555
24	DSJR	0.6	474
28	VH1	0.5	498
28	MSNB	0.5	497
28	CMDY	0.5	471
28	APL	0.5	466
28	CNN	0.5	439
28	OWN	0.5	396
28	HMM	0.5	273
28	DFAM	0.5	30
36	MTV	0.4	416
36	NGC	0.4	392
36	EN	0.4	380
36	WETV	0.4	356
36	GSN	0.4	349
36	TRAV	0.4	344
36	TRU	0.4	326
36	SCI	0.4	322
36	LMN	0.4	321
36	H2	0.4	312
36	DXD	0.4	293

*Nielsen data supplied by ABC/Disney

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