

# Cablefax Daily™

Wednesday — June 24, 2015

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 26 / No. 120

## TV's Reincarnation: From Sling TV to HLN, It's Not Grandma's Telly

Winter is coming, **HLN** evp, gm *Albie Hecht* warned at the TV of Tomorrow conference Tues, predicting that there will be a "Game of Thrones-"like war with **Facebook**, **Apple** and **Google** battling it out. "One of these guys is going to make a content play. They'll feel the need for a big stream of videos to feed those platforms," he predicted. When that happens, "the platform wins," he said. "TV will officially become a screen and probably the 3rd screen." His predictions for traditional TV's lessened importance were supported by **Sling TV** CEO *Roger Lynch*, who made it clear that **DISH**'s \$20 month streaming service isn't meant to compete with the Comcasts and DirecTVs of the world. "We certainly want to continue to add more content, but we don't want to replicate the traditional pay TV model over the Internet," he said at TVOT conference, suggesting that's what separates Sling from something like **Sony**'s OTT Vue service with its \$50 entry level price point. "They [Sony] are attacking a mature, well-served, very competitive and declining market," he said. One way Sling is trying to differentiate itself is with its deal with **Maker Studios**. "Maker has 11bln views a month. It's an unbelievable amount of viewership and virtually all of it is from millennials," he said. But given that it's never been packaged with a pay TV service before, there are a lot of discussions underway on how to do this—who pays who, how it's shown, etc. So, it's trying different models. **DISH** still isn't releasing numbers yet for Sling, but Lynch said that it's not a service exclusive to millennials. "We're seeing a pretty wide age group (a lot of people in their 40s and 50s) and a surprisingly high income," he said. "It's not people who can't afford [traditional pay TV]. It's people who choose not to afford it." Back to Hecht's Game of Thrones analogy, he warned that as TV becomes just another screen, programmers will need to think about programming content not for a channel on a cable system, but for any and every kind of screen. His recommendations included reversing the content pipeline. Instead of spending mega money on a program, then marketing it and hoping people will watch—start with viewers. That's the idea behind **HLN**'s "The Daily Share," whose content is dictated by what's trending on social media instead of producers. Hecht said social content generates 2bln impressions and gets higher impressions than some bigger players, such as **BuzzFeed**. Hecht's other recommendations included nixing the 30-sec spot. "Ads are content. Content are ads. It doesn't matter as long as it's good. The best spots are good storytelling," he said, suggesting

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advertising creative should be let loose to create “Academy Award, HBO-like great short content.” Hecht also lobbied for letting go of the programming guide, and putting VOD first and linear second. “This would signal to viewers we understand their [desires].”

**FCC Opens Charter Docket:** And we’re off... The **FCC** opened up the docket for its review of **Charter’s** proposed **Time Warner Cable** and **Bright House** transactions, assigning it docket number 15-149. Remember all those thousands of pages of submissions in the Comcast-TWC-Charter transaction? Well, they don’t transfer over. New docket, new documents, new issues, new review. Charter announced a \$55bln deal to buy TWC on May 26. As part of the transaction, it will merge with Bright House in a deal valued at \$10.4bln.

**Transparency Rules:** Should small businesses be exempt from the transparency rules in the **FCC’s** net neutrality order? The agency’s **Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau** is seeking comments on that very question in responding to concerns from smaller providers about the compliance burden. The Commission temporarily exempted providers with 100K or fewer broadband subs. At the same time, the agency stated that both the exemption and the subscriber threshold require “further deliberation” and directed the Bureau to adopt an order announcing whether to maintain the exemption and at what level by Dec 15. The agency is seeking specific comments on questions including the burden of the disclosures to smaller providers and how the burden is disproportionately experienced by smaller providers. In addition, the agency wants to know the benefit to customers of smaller providers of the information contained in those disclosures and whether rural customers are likely to be affected by the exemption.

**Hulu Gets Showtime:** **Hulu** inked a deal with **Showtime** to allow Hulu subs to add the Showtime streaming service to their Hulu subscription. Showtime will become the 1st premium service to be offered to Hulu’s 9mln subs nationwide starting in early July, the same time that the stand-alone service will be available through **Apple** and **Roku**. The Hulu/Showtime partnership allows new and existing Hulu subs to sign up for Showtime on Hulu.com. In addition to Hulu, viewers can also subscribe to the service via **Sony’s** PlayStation Vue.

**More Fox Management Shakeup:** *David Hill*, senior evp of **21st Century Fox**, is stepping down next month to launch production company **Hilly**, which will be backed by Fox. The company will focus on live production, creating reality shows and providing production services to organizations, and digital investment. The move came after the company announced that *James Murdoch* will become the CEO, replacing his father *Rupert*, effective July 1. Hill, who joined Fox in 1988, helped launch Fox Sports and the RSNs, among other businesses. He was also chmn of the **NatGeo Channels**.

**Verizon Completes AOL Deal:** **Verizon** completed its \$4.4bln acquisition of **AOL** Tues. After the closing, AOL CEO *Tim Armstrong* continues to lead AOL operations. *Bob Toohey*, pres of Verizon Digital Media Services, will report to Armstrong. Armstrong will report to *Marni Walden*, Verizon evp and pres of product innovation and new businesses. While the telco is expanding parts of its business, it’s selling other parts, such as the CyberTrust SSL certificate business. The telco sold the unit to **DigiCert** Tues, a provider of enterprise security applications with an emphasis on authentication and encryption. Verizon will continue to offer SSL Certificates as a reseller of DigiCert.

**Cablevision Ups Speed:** **Cablevision** increased the speed of its core Optimum Online Internet service to 25 Mbps downstream, a more than 60% increase from the previous speed of 15 Mbps. The speed boost is available to both new and existing residential and business subs at no additional cost.

**Netflix Stock Split:** **Netflix’s** board has approved a 7-for-1 stock split to be effected in the form of a stock dividend of 6 additional shares for each outstanding share of stock. The dividend will be payable on July 14 to stockholders of record at the close of business on July 2. Netflix stock will start trading regular way at the post-split price on July 15. Earlier this month, Netflix OKed an increase (to 5bln shares from 170mln shares) in the number of shares the company is authorized to issue, the initial step toward a stock split. The move means the stock price will be a lot cheaper, which could help raise capital for potential acquisitions and expansion. As execs indicated in recent earnings calls, the company is eyeing international expansion/growth this year.

**Comcast Shore Outages:** Some **Comcast** customers in the Shore communities of central and northern NJ suffered outages Tues affecting all service (video, HSD, VoIP). A spokesperson said a software issue impacted the net-

# BUSINESS & FINANCE

work feeds to systems. Outage times varied, with some reports stating that some experienced problems as early as 9:30am. By Tues afternoon, Comcast said many areas were coming back online.

**thePlatform Tackles Video Sourcing:** Comcast's white-label video publishing unit **thePlatform** launched its Unified Ingest Service to centrally manage video and related metadata files. The service is expected to provide a streamline system for pay-TV providers to manage direct feeds from all sources. Go to [Cablefax.com](http://Cablefax.com) for the full story.

**July 4 Celebration:** Destination America partnered with USA Today for the 3rd annual "Red, White and You" contest, awarding 2 communities, Waveland, MS, and Oroville, CA, a special July 4th celebration. Activities taking place in both towns include carnivals, festival foods, live performances and fireworks displays. The contest asked Americans to share stories about why their towns deserve an all-American Independence Day celebration.

**People:** Turner promoted *Rachelle Savoia* to vp, communications, reporting to svp and domestic communications officer *Sal Petruzzi*. -- **OWN** upped *Maitee Ceuva* to svp, programming and development, overseeing the net's Sat night programming and other content development initiatives. She was previously vp, programming and development.

## Cablefax Daily Stockwatch

Company	06/23 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	06/23 Close	1-Day Ch
<b>BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS</b>					
DIRECTV:	93.52	0.66	CONCURRENT:	6.33	0.09
DISH:	70.66	0.28	CONVERGYS:	26.05	0.45
ENTRAVISION:	8.38	(0.01)	CSG SYSTEMS:	31.95	0.37
GRAY TELEVISION:	15.61	(0.15)	ECHOSTAR:	50.60	0.18
MEDIA GENERAL:	17.43	0.18	GOOGLE:	540.48	2.29
NEXSTAR:	57.24	0.15	HARMONIC:	7.29	0.06
SINCLAIR:	28.75	(0.05)	INTEL:	32.09	(0.18)
<b>MSOS</b>					
CABLEVISION:	24.66	0.15	INTERACTIVE CORP:	78.67	0.89
CHARTER:	170.09	(0.22)	JDSU:	12.69	0.02
COMCAST:	60.76	(0.21)	LEVEL 3:	55.54	0.27
COMCAST SPCL:	60.51	(0.14)	MICROSOFT:	45.91	(0.32)
GCI:	16.83	(0.22)	NETFLIX:	681.19	6.29
GRAHAM HOLDING:	1073.13	3.26	NIELSEN:	45.72	(0.18)
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	51.77	(0.3)	RENTRAK:	71.60	(0.28)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	57.25	0.12	SEACHANGE:	7.65	0.09
SHAW COMM:	22.34	0.23	SONY:	31.01	0.51
SHENTEL:	34.10	0.61	SPRINT NEXTEL:	4.58	(0.11)
SHENTEL:	34.10	0.61	TIVO:	10.72	0.03
TIME WARNER CABLE:	178.44	0.44	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	51.48	0.72
<b>PROGRAMMING</b>					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	33.42	0.15	VONAGE:	4.93	0.06
AMC NETWORKS:	81.13	(0.89)	YAHOO:	40.65	(0.08)
CBS:	58.09	(0.25)	<b>TELCOS</b>		
CROWN:	4.62	0.12	AT&T:	35.91	0.87
DISCOVERY:	34.04	0.10	CENTURYLINK:	32.55	(0.1)
DISNEY:	114.41	0.88	TDS:	30.09	0.45
GRUPO TELEVISA:	39.29	0.04	VERIZON:	47.77	0.24
HSN:	70.90	0.64	<b>MARKET INDICES</b>		
LIONSGATE:	37.84	0.01	DOW:	18144.07	24.29
MSG:	85.35	(0.19)	NASDAQ:	5160.09	6.12
SCRIPPS INT:	67.25	0.09	S&P 500:	2124.20	1.35
STARZ:	43.59	0.16			
TIME WARNER:	87.69	(0.33)			
VIACOM:	67.90	(0.65)			
WWE:	16.77	0.52			
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>					
ADVANTAGE:	2.36	0.02			
AMDOCS:	56.43	(0.06)			
AMPHENOL:	57.73	(0.2)			
APPLE:	127.03	(0.58)			
ARRIS GROUP:	32.87	0.25			
AVID TECH:	15.16	0.22			
BLNDER TONGUE:	0.77	(0.04)			
BROADCOM:	53.66	(0.28)			
CISCO:	28.79	(0.16)			
COMMSCOPE:	26.18	(0.02)			

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Special Report – Summer Programming Strategies

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## Programmers See Summer Gold As TV Offers Sunny Disposition

By Cathy Applefeld Olson

Ahhh summer. The lapping of the waves. The sizzling of the grill. The magnetic pull of the television.

While viewership tends to dip as the thermometer rises, savvy programmers are increasingly populating the season with content and promos aimed at gathering viewers around the small screen like ants at a picnic. Read on to learn about some of this summer's hottest offerings—no sunscreen required.

### Warming Trend

For some time now, summer has been shedding its fallow-TV-season status, particularly in the cable realm. While the season used to be “competitively more quiet, it’s gotten louder because our competitors are seeing more summer opportunities,” says **MTV** evp, marketing *Tina Exarhos*. “And if more people are watching TV, it’s good for everybody. There’s more reason to flip around the channels.”

Of course, smart nets are looking to capitalize on every summer angle. “While there is less viewing during the summer months, cable historically has been stronger in summer. It’s still a little less competitive, so we view that as an opportunity,” says **Crown Media Family Networks** pres/CEO *Bill Abbott*, whose **Hallmark Channels** handily branded ratings winner *Christmas in July* in 2012 as a way to keep viewers in the spirit year-round. This year Hallmark is super-sizing its holiday cheer with *Keepsake Christmas* content airing July 3-12 to coincide with the launch of this year’s Hallmark Keepsake ornament collection.

*Keepsake Christmas* features the premiere of the first-ever Hallmark original Christmas in July movie, “*Family for Christmas*,” starring *Lacey Chabert* and premiering on July 11. “There’s such a huge appetite for original movies, especially at the holidays, so it reinforces our messaging around *Keepsake Christmas* and our summer Christmas event to have original content in there,” Abbott says.

The event also returns a new “*Paw Star Games*” July 12, and will feature previously aired original holiday movies including “*Christmas Under Wraps*,” “*Debbie Macomber’s Mrs. Miracle*” and “*A Royal Christmas*.”

Celebrating Original Content  
All Year Long  
with Returning Favorites

## Cedar Cove

Season 3 Premiere July 18 8/7c





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Holiday fare airs 11am-11pm weekends, 2pm-10pm weekdays. The network is bookending its cold-weather fare with the return of June Weddings programming this month and a back-to-school programming event around Labor Day, which will segue back into Countdown to Christmas content in the fall.

In addition and for the first time, **Hallmark Movies & Mysteries** is also getting into the Christmas spirit during the summer with holiday movies “that celebrate the more dramatic side of the brand,” Abbott says. The network’s Gold Crown Christmas promo, which also runs July 3-12, will showcase classics from the Hallmark Hall of Fame library and a collection of holiday family films.

Speaking of drama, **Turner Classic Movies** is already deep into the second year of its “Summer of Darkness” programming event, which brings 24 hours of noir films every Friday in June and July. The network is enhancing the movie experience this year with a free nine-week online course that probes the means, motives and opportunities that led Hollywood studios to make these hard-boiled crime dramas.

**Summer Is As Summer Does**

On the other side of the coin, summer offers the perfect opportunity to stack up programming that goes hand-in-hand with sun and surf. It’s no coincidence Shark Week surfaces during the beachiest months of the year. **Discovery Channel’s** perennial ratings beast is getting even meatier this year, with 19 hours of new primetime content (the most in its 28-year history), an earlier in the season debut (July 5-12) and an additional weekend of themed programming in August.

“Sharks have such a hold on our collective imagination,” says *Howard Swartz*, Discovery’s vp, documen-

taries and specials. “We want to inspire people to care about sharks and educate them, and what better time to do that than when people have a closer proximity to sharks? More people are at the beach, more people are in the water.”

Among a multitude of baited-breath moments to come this year, Swartz hints, “We were off the coast of Guadalupe this year. They went there to find out, ‘Is this where the biggest mature females tend to go?’ I’ll just say we filmed if not the biggest, one of the biggest there is.”

Similarly, summer offers boundless opportunity for the calendar-conscious **Scripps Interactive Networks**. As *Allison Page*, gm of Scripps’ home category including **HGTV**, **DIY Network** and **GAC** puts it, “We’re basically bringing viewers inside to celebrate what they love outside.” Although Page says viewers love to celebrate hot spots during both warm- and cold-weather months, the vicarious beach-goer led the network to amp up in-season summer content.

“We noticed some trends. With certain episodes of ‘House Hunters’—which obviously cover a huge variety of [locales]—some of the episodes that featured locations near the beach were particularly highly rated,” she says. This led to new summer entries including HGTV’s “Beach Flip,” which premieres July 5, and “Treehouse Guys” and “Lake Life” on DIY.

**Food Network** is launching an unprecedented 11 new primetime series this summer, including *Michel Symon*-hosted “Burgers, Brew & Que,” “Chopped Grill Masters,” *Alton Brown*-hosted “Camp Cutthroat Kitchen,” and a series tentatively titled “Carnival Fare,” hosted by “Black-ish” leading man *Anthony Anderson*.

“Summer is a big opportunity for us; people are



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**COMPELLING CONTENT.**  
**STRONG RATINGS.**  
 CABLE'S NEW HOME FOR SOUGHT AFTER DRAMAS AND MYSTERIES.

really excited about food and vacationing,” the network’s gm/svp and on-air personality *Bob Tuschman* tells **CFX**. “We try to create appointment viewing at the end of the day so it feels like an extension of the summer fun they are having,”

Tuschman also points to a growing trend in summer programming. “We’re very conscious about creating things that are family-friendly. With the kids out of school, we want to create a destination kids can happily watch with their parents.” As such, summer newbies also include “*Rachael Ray’s Kids Cook-Off*,” the evolution of last year’s kids competition featuring *Ray* and *Guy Fieri*, and “*Chopped Teen Tournament*.”

At **Travel Channel**, “much the way the movie industry does popcorn blockbusters in the summer and more serious Oscar fare in the winter, we generally do fun eye candy in the summer months, and in colder months we have a more serious programming,” says Travel svp, programming *Ross Babbit*.

Travel is focusing on unleashing new seasons for an array of returning series, plus new primetime additions including “101 Amazing Thrills” and “Epic Attractions.”

### Dude, Pass the Remote

For some networks, particularly those targeting the younger set, summer offers something no amount of marketing can buy: free time.

“The MTV audience is generally more available in the summer, so it’s been our strategy to have fresh episodes of our biggest shows in summertime,” says Exarhos. “We’ve for a long time been told that there’s a fall season. But that’s not the way people watch television, certainly not the way younger people watch television, so the summer’s been a big play for us.”

MTV chose summertime to launch its televised treatment of horror film franchise “*Scream*.” The series will bow on June 30, preceded by a slew of promotional fanfare including an over-the-top promo that featured 12 stars from the network’s series including “*Teen Wolf*” and “*Finding Carter*” appear on-air as bloodied corpses.

The end of the school year also has become a traditional launch window for **ABC Family**, with a new season of “*Pretty Little Liars*” leading the charge toward eagerly awaiting fans.

“We have a habit built up of focusing a lot of our big releases around the summertime,” says *Nigel Cox-Hagan*, ABC Family’s svp, marketing, creative & branding. “It’s often when we release our most provocative and compelling new material.”

This summer the net is piggybacking new procedural series “*Stitchers*” with “*PLL*.” Up next is the unscripted “*Becoming Us*,” about teenager whose father is transitioning into a woman.

“For us, the fact that young people have more pockets of time during the summer is an opportunity. They need something to fill their time, and we are happy to provide compelling entertainment,” he says.

### Being An Original

As the cable summer heats up, one thing’s for certain across networks and target demographics: the value of airing originals cannot be overstated.

As well as returning pop culture frenzy “*Sharknado*” for a third year on July 22 with new havoc-wreaking and a slew of new guest cast members, **Syfy** is broadening the franchise with an entire *Sharknado* week, July 18-25, to include seven original movies. The network is also premiering three new series this summer, including “*Dark Matter*” and “*Killjoys*,” and bringing back new seasons of several others.

The “**E!** Summer Here” programming lineup packs new series including “*Hollywood Cycle*,” “*Sex With Brody*,” “*Stewarts & Hamiltons*,” “*I Am Cait*,” “*The Comment Section*” and “*WAGS*.” The network is also rolling out new seasons of returning series, “*Botched*” and “*Total Divas*” among them.

ABC Family elected to launch a widespread sampling program this summer to provide viewers a taste of its new original fare. premiere dates. The strategy includes exclusive digital premieres on sites including **EW.com**, **Facebook** and **Tumblr**, screening events and previews of full episodes on the WATCH ABC Family app, VOD and a designated ABC Family website.

“We’ve launched shows in summer before but never this many shows across this many formats,” says Cox-Hagan. “It created the opportunity to eventize the entire summer.”

Among other benefits, airing original fare in summertime can provide alternative viewing models. “Whenever we put original content on it’s consumed a little differently with DVR and VOD,” Hallmark’s *Abbott* says of Christmas in July. “We get a big lift off of those platforms, yet at the same time on our channels that holiday feel changes the behavior. Viewers are there for the holiday; they are not there for that binge-viewing. They’re in the mood for a Hallmark movie they can sit down and watch, know what they’re going to get, and then get back to what they were doing.”