

Cablefax Daily™

Tuesday — September 29, 2015

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 26 / No. 187

WICT 2015: Confidence, Change and Christmas Lights

The 2015 WICT Leadership Conference kicked off Mon with **Comcast's David Cohen** talking about the importance of diversity in the workplace and more leadership positions for women. "Women benefit from male allies empowering women, and women leaders empower everyone," he said. "It's all our responsibility to build diverse corporations." Later that day, some of cable's highest-ranking female executives discussed what it means to be confident ala the book *The Confidence Code*. **Cablevision COO Kristin Dolan** said one of her takeaways from *Katty Kay* and *Claire Shipman's* book is that being confident sometimes comes down to making a decision with 80% of the information. If you wait for 100%, "a lot of times the world will have passed you by," she said. **Italia Commisso Weinand**, **Mediacom's** programming & HR evp, said her company expects employees to conduct themselves with integrity and to stay focused. "It's the rudimentary rules of life, not just business," she said, advising attendees to cling to those basics when there's change and your world turns upside down. "The world will go round and round... Keep with the simple things. You'll stay the course and do fine." With **Altice's** pending acquisition of Cablevision on the table, Dolan knows a bit about things up-ending. How do you stay confident amidst rapid-fire change? "For us and for me, it's having core tenets we stick to," she said. "As a company, what made us attractive to the buyer was our ability to deliver really good service... We've all weathered things really well as an industry, and the future is really bright... Keep that mindset, and keep people around you calm." On how to best exhibit confidence, **TV One** content distribution & marketing evp **Michelle Rice** called on women to step up and volunteer. "You don't have to know everything, but you have to know how to get it done," she said. For those looking to obtain confidence (or fake it until they have it), **Scripps Nets Interactive** evp, chief legal officer **Cynthia Gibson** suggested showing up every day with the attitude of doing what's best for the business. "It really does amplify your voice. People know when you speak, you're trying to do what's best for the business, not yourself," she said. **NBC "Today Show"** co-host **Hoda Kotb**, wowed the more than 800 audience members at the day's opening session (1100 for the WICT Touchstones luncheon) with her personal tale of finding a job: She drove from a station in Richmond to Roanoke, then Memphis, and kept getting rejections, albeit with a recommendation to try another station in another state. Finally, in Greenville, MS, a newly promoted news director hired her. Persistence, more than smarts and talent can get you to the top, Kotb believes. She also talked about how get-

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Source: Univision Corporate Research estimates of cross platform usage of TV, Radio and Digital. Based on a ratio from Simmons National Consumer Survey, Winter 2015, six month study; Base 18+. Television: The Nielsen Company, NPM, 12/29/14-6/28/15, Mon-Sun 6a-6a, P2+ (000), 10 UCI broadcast and cable networks, 6+ min qualifier, Live+7; Radio: Nielsen Audio PPM/Nationwide Fall 2014, Unduplicated P2+ Cume M5u 6a-12m incl. Spill (no P.R.). Based on Univision O&Os, plus Ed Rico, Mediabase, BDS, Media Monitors, and Syndication Affiliates; Digital: ComScore (average from Jan - June 2015); Base: Total Audience

CABLEFAX DAILY (ISSN 1069-6644) is published daily by Access Intelligence, LLC ● www.cablefax.com ● 301.354.2101 ● Editorial Director: Amy Maclean, 301.354.1760, amaclean@accessintel.com ● Publisher: Michael Grebb, 323.380.6263, mgrebb@accessintel.com ● Editor: Joyce Wang, 301.354.1828, jwang@accessintel.com ● Cablefax/Screenster Editor: Kaylee Hultgren, 646.764.8267, khultgren@accessintel.com ● Advisor: Seth Arenstein ● Dir. of Business Dev.: Rich Hauptner, 203.899.8460, rhauptner@accessintel.com ● Jr. Acct. Exec: Olivia Murray, 301.354.2010, omurray@accessintel.com ● Dir of Market Dev: Laurie Hofmann, 301.354.1796, lhofmann@accessintel.com ● Production: Joann Fato, jfato@accessintel.com ● Diane Schwartz, SVP Media Comms Group, dschwartz@accessintel.com ● Group Subs: Laurie Hofmann, 301.354.1796, lhofmann@accessintel.com ● Sub Questions, Client Services: 301.354.2101, clientservices@accessintel.com ● Annual subscription price: \$1,649/year ● Access Intelligence, LLC, 4 Choke Cherry Road, 2nd Floor, Rockville, MD 20850

ting ill changed things for her. Referring to her own fight with breast cancer Kotb said anyone who has ever had a cross to bear gets to say four words, “You can’t scare me.” That attitude propelled her to ask for—the first time in her career—a job, co hosting the fourth hour of NBC’s “Today Show.” The lesson, said Kotb, is not to wait till you get sick to ask for what you want: “Men dress up with Christmas lights whenever they want a job!”

Woman of the Year: *Leslye Headland*, playwright, screenwriter and director of the new IFC film “Sleeping With Other People,” shared her personal effort to avoid the traps of pretending to be perfect while fighting her own inner voice that says I’m not good enough. “I have no interest in being perfect or the reason for another little girl to be inauthentic,” she said during the sold-out WICT Touchstones luncheon Mon. As for how she broke in to the biz, Headland said “I didn’t let anyone stop me, including Leslye Headland.” WICT’s Woman of the Year honoree is *Ellen East*, EVP and Chief Communications Officer of **Time Warner Cable**. Women to Watch were *Bernadette Aulestia*, EVP, Global Distribution Operations, **HBO**; and *Rachel Welch*, gvp, government relations, **Time Warner Cable**. East summed up the qualities of all 3 women when she shared a *Teddy Roosevelt* quote: “Do what you can with what you have, where you are.” — *Meredith Berlin*

WICT Notebook: What are execs most excited about for the future? Answers ranged at a WICT panel with tech leaders, but most agreed it was the cloud and the ability to glean information about consumers from all the data out there. Most important, said **Scripps Networks Interactive’s** digital evp *Tamara Franklin*, is to use the data judiciously and act on it. Meanwhile, **Time Warner Cable Media** evp, COO *Joan Gillman* said she’s not worried about ad blocking. “The conflict isn’t necessarily about ads or no ads but the right kind of ads and not jarring the consumer,” she said. *Terry Cordova*, svp/CTO, engineering at **Suddenlink**, talked about the importance of IP and improving the back office. As technology changes, technicians must be better trained and certified, he said. — *Meredith Berlin*

Blackout Alert: Late Wed/early Thurs might see stations from **Tribune Media**, **Tegna** and **Media General** go dark on **DISH**, **DirecTV** and its parent **AT&T U-Verse** as the broadcasters and MVPDs have been unable to reach renewals due to rate issues. The potential blackouts could affect 51 stations from Tegna (fighting DISH), 71 stations from Media General (fighting DirecTV) and 42 Tribune (fighting AT&T) stations. In a statement over the weekend, DISH said Tegna rejected its offer to extend their current retrans pact beyond the Oct 1 expiration date. “Only TEGNA can choose to black out its channels. DISH is actively working to reach a deal before the contract expires. We have offered a contract extension to TEGNA, including a retroactive ‘true up’ when new rates are agreed upon, to keep the channels available to customers in the event that we are unable to reach a deal by the deadline,” said DISH svp, programming *Warren Schlichting*. According to DirecTVPromise.com, “Media General is threatening to block your station’s signal unless they receive more than double the current fee.” Said Tegna: “If both parties remain 100 percent focused on productive, market-based negotiations there is no reason a deal cannot be reached before the contract expires. Tegna remains entirely committed to that goal.”

Broadband Funding Guide: NTIA released a “broadband Funding Guide” to offer a roadmap on how to access federal funding to support broadband planning, public access, digital literacy, adoption and deployment, said the agency in a blog post Mon. The guide includes details on NTIA’s sister agency the **Economic Development Administration’s** funding for projects in distressed communities through its Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance grant programs. The **Department of Housing and Urban Development’s** Community Development Block Grant funds projects aimed at low- and moderate-income people. In the next few weeks, additional information will be released to help communities access the latest broadband technology. NTIA was in charge of the *Obama Administration’s* broadband stimulus broadband.

ACA/NCTA Join Forces: **ACA** and **NCTA** joined forces to support the **FCC’s** newly adopted rebuttable presumption that all cable systems are subject to “effective competition,” a determination that the **NAB** and local franchising authorities (LFAs) have challenged in court. “ACA and NCTA believe the FCC acted correctly in response to dramatic changes in the pay-TV market that persist to this day and in response to mandates in the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act Reauthorization (STELAR) that Congress passed less than a year ago,” ACA pres/CEO *Matt Polka* and NCTA head *Michael Powell* said in a joint statement. The pair said they agree with the FCC that “a presumption of ‘effective competition’ will reduce the regulatory burdens on all cable operators and will alleviate unnecessary burdens on the FCC, without diminishing the rights of LFAs to produce evidence that effective competition does not exist in a particular community.” NAB has asked the court to overturn the FCC’s order.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Nexstar's Bid: Nexstar Broadcasting proposed to acquire Media General for about \$2.4bn Mon. According to Nexstar, the price is 30% more than Media General's closing stock price on Sept 25. "Our proposal would also enable Nexstar and Media General shareholders to participate in the near- and long-term upside of a pure-play broadcasting company with expanded audience reach, a more diversified portfolio, and a significantly stronger financial profile, including substantial free cash flow per share..." Perry Sook, chmn/pres/CEO of Nexstar said in a statement. The proposal came after a slew of broadcaster deals, including Media General's Meredith acquisition and GrayTV's purchase of Schurz Communications.

Comcast's Japan Investment: Comcast NBCU will buy 51% ownership of Universal Studios Japan for \$1.5bn. The move continues Comcast's "ongoing investment strategy for its U.S. parks in Orlando and Hollywood," the company said in a release.

RCN Business Ups Speed: RCN Business upped its speed to 330 Mbps for business customers in NY.

People: Marc Etkind advances to gm, Science Channel, reporting to Rich Ross, group pres, Discovery, Animal Planet and Science. Etkind was most recently gm of Destination America. -- Independent feature film producer Sebastian Dungan joined Lifetime as vp, original movies. He reports to Tanya Lopez, svp, original movies.

Cablefax Daily Stockwatch

Company	09/28 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	09/28 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DISH:	56.53	(2.64)	CONVERGYS:	22.67	(0.12)
ENTRAVISION:	6.55	(0.1)	CSG SYSTEMS:	30.43	(0.2)
GRAY TELEVISION:	12.30	(0.33)	ECHOSTAR:	42.22	(0.83)
MEDIA GENERAL:	13.64	2.49	GOOGLE:	595.71	(16.26)
NEXSTAR:	43.51	(1.01)	HARMONIC:	5.86	(0.03)
SINCLAIR:	25.44	0.16	INTEL:	28.80	(0.01)
TEGNA:	22.24	(0.56)	INTERACTIVE CORP:	64.60	(2.3)
MSOS					
CABLE ONE:	427.98	1.13	LEVEL 3:	41.57	(1.96)
CABLEVISION:	32.51	(0.59)	MICROSOFT:	43.45	(0.5)
CHARTER:	172.17	(11.36)	NETFLIX:	99.44	(2.8)
COMCAST:	54.86	(1.68)	NIELSEN:	45.53	(1.22)
COMCAST SPCL:	55.34	(1.68)	RENTRAK:	43.93	(2.27)
GCI:	17.15	(0.49)	SEACHANGE:	6.03	0.04
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	51.48	(2.51)	SEACHANGE:	6.03	0.04
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	43.11	(4.85)	SONY:	24.05	(1.29)
SHAW COMM:	18.85	(0.43)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	3.98	(0.32)
SHENTEL:	41.97	(1)	TIVO:	8.77	(0.08)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	176.68	(7.11)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	42.88	(1.55)
PROGRAMMING					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	25.21	(0.52)	VONAGE:	5.82	(0.23)
AMC NETWORKS:	70.91	(3.37)	YAHOO:	27.41	(1.72)
CBS:	38.67	(2.1)	TELCOS		
CROWN:	5.01	(0.13)	AT&T:	31.90	(0.43)
DISCOVERY:	27.81	(0.04)	CENTURYLINK:	24.61	(0.75)
DISNEY:	98.49	(1.81)	FRONTIER:	4.76	(0.25)
GRUPO TELEVISIA:	26.00	(1.01)	TDS:	24.99	(0.68)
HSN:	58.23	(1.28)	VERIZON:	43.74	(0.48)
LIONSGATE:	36.82	(1.21)	MARKET INDICES		
MSG:	68.78	(2.03)	DOW:	16001.89	(312.78)
SCRIPPS INT:	48.27	(1.31)	NASDAQ:	4543.97	(142.53)
STARZ:	37.42	(1.44)	S&P 500:	1881.77	(49.57)
TIME WARNER:	66.46	(1.41)			
VIACOM:	44.26	(0.26)			
WWE:	16.53	(0.6)			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADVANTAGE:	2.30	(0.01)			
AMDOCS:	57.17	(0.19)			
AMPHENOL:	49.47	(1.15)			
APPLE:	112.86	(1.86)			
ARRIS GROUP:	25.95	(0.48)			
AVID TECH:	7.93	(0.17)			
BLNDER TONGUE:	0.68	UNCH			
BROADCOM:	50.76	(1.37)			
CISCO:	25.70	(0.32)			
COMMSCOPE:	25.52	(0.03)			
CONCURRENT:	4.75	(0.05)			

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CFX TECH by Joyce Wang

Alarm.com Eyes More Cable Contracts

Alarm.com, the smart home white-label service provider that counts **Suddenlink** as a customer, is going after mostly Tier 2 and some top cable MSOs as they look to reduce churn through smart home bundles. In addition to Suddenlink, Alarm.com also counts a few smaller MSOs and overbuilders as customers, *Roy Perry*, vp of ecosystem alliance told us. Some of the Tier 1 MSOs use **iControl**, a home management company backed by investors including **Comcast Ventures**, as the primary smart home platform. However, the Tier 1 ops have been in talks with Alarm.com about using it as a secondary platform and an opportunity to get into commercial services, Perry said. Major ops are also interested in Alarm.com's health and wellness solution, an offering that combines sensors, mobile notifications and home automation, the former **CableLabs** exec said. Among popular home security packages is bundling it with cable's triple play services (voice, video and data) because it increases the "stickiness" and reducing customer churn, according to Perry. Based on Alarm.com's own data, bundling security with pay-TV's triple-plan can reduce churn by 20%, he noted. "The real excitement starts when you have an interactive subscriber that uses the [smart home] app every day." For these users, churn drops to around 3.5%, he said. "The stickiness is what this is all about... When it comes to interactive security services, once they have it, they never give it up," he said. Depending on customers' needs, broadband isn't required to be part of the package because Alarm.com services run on cellular network with WiFi as secondary channels. Another benefit of having dedicated cellular communication is it's not impacted by damaged phone, Internet or broadband lines or power outages, he said, emphasizing it's important to have a dedicated connection for smart home services. Perry is pitching the smart home as a growth sector for an

industry facing video sub losses and competition from OTT providers. Home automation and security are expected to be new revenue generators as the industry embraces data as its centerpiece, he said. Meanwhile, "the next phase of the smart home market evolution is what I call 'the single product ecosystem,'" he said. He cited research suggesting people quickly get frustrated trying to get all smart home products to work together. The next wave is to buy individual devices as a single product and "be confident that you won't be restrained to that product," he said. The company has developed an automation-only offering that allows cable MSOs to start with a single door lock or other individual home products for people who aren't ready to sign a 2-year contract. Competition in the smart home market has intensified over the last few years. Major tech companies have entered the space, including **Apple** with its HomeKit and **Google** with its Nest Labs. Energy companies like **NRG** are also developing its smart home lineup.

EVOLVE Formed: A mix of mobile and tech companies and associations formed the **EVOLVE** coalition Mon, which seeks to promote "the consumer benefits of unlicensed spectrum and new technologies for unlicensed spectrum like LTE-Unlicensed (LTE-U) and Licensed Assisted Access (LAA)." The founding members include **Competitive Carriers Association**, wireless association **CTIA**, **Alcatel-Lucent**, **AT&T**, **Qualcomm**, **T-Mobile** and **Verizon**. The coalition urged regulators to "reject calls to preemptively interfere with new technologies like LTE-U and LAA that enhance utilization of unlicensed spectrum." It is important for all participants in the unlicensed space, both existing and new entrants, to coexist and play well together," the group said. Cable is worried about potential interference issues with unlicensed LTE.

Got tech news? Reach out to Cablefax Tech editor Joyce Wang at jwang@accessintel.com

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