

# Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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## Charter Moves: TWC's Meeks to Head Business Services

While integration meetings have been in full swing, there haven't been a lot of public details yet on who will be doing what when/if Charter's acquisitions of Time Warner Cable and Bright House are approved. On Mon, we got a glimpse of New Charter, with the MSO announcing that Time Warner Cable evp, COO of business services *Phil Meeks* will oversee all aspects of Charter's business enterprise unit when the merger with TWC is complete. He'll report directly to pres/CEO *Tom Rutledge*. *Don Detampel* currently oversees Charter's enterprise business as evp and pres, commercial services. He has decided to leave the organization, but has agreed to remain in his current position to help with the transition and integration of TWC and Bright House. Before joining TWC in June 2013, Meeks led business services for **Cox**. Under his leadership, Cox Business was the fastest-growing organization within the MSO, surpassing \$1bn in revenue in 2010. Cox Business has been a leader in the business services space among operators, and is on track to hit \$2bn in annual sales by 2016. Commercial services is seen as a huge opportunity in Charter's acquisition of TWC, particularly in terms of larger opportunities to serve multi-site tenants in the media and enterprise markets. The merged company has pledged to invest at least \$2.5bn in the build-out of networks into commercial areas within its footprint beyond where it currently operates. In 2Q, Charter added 31K commercial PSUs vs 19K in the prior year. The upswing was attributed to the launch of Spectrum pricing and packaging to SMBs in early March. Charter announced a few other appointments on Mon. It's bringing former **Visible World** pres/COO *David Kline* on board to run advertising and media sales as evp, president of media sales. *Paul Marchand*, most recently **PepsiCo's** svp of HR, also has joined Charter as evp, HR—an especially important role given the pending mergers. Both will report directly to Rutledge.

**Distribution:** **Viacom** nets won't be disappearing from **AT&T U-verse** and **DirectTV's** lineups, with a new distribution agreement now in place. It's a sign of the programming costs benefits AT&T has reaped from its acquisition of the satellite provider. "In recognition of AT&T's status as the largest pay TV provider in the world, this agreement entitles AT&T's satellite and IPTV platforms to the best deal in the industry for Viacom's leading portfolio of television brands," AT&T said. -- **DISH** reupped carriage with *Glenn Beck's TheBlaze*, with the 2 reaching a multi-year

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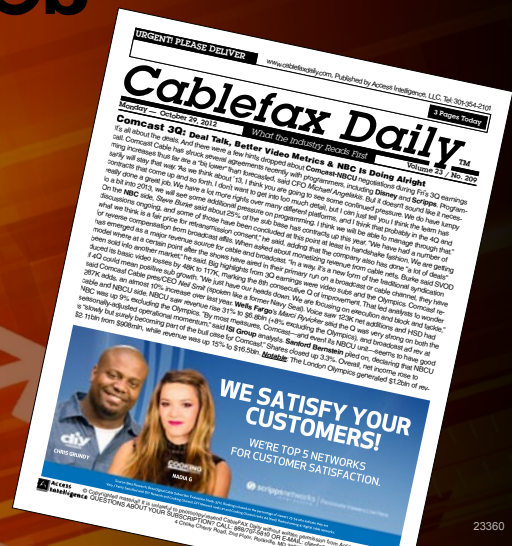
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renewal. DISH was the 1st MVPD to offer the net, launching it in Sept '12. TheBlaze is available to DISH viewers on channel 212 as part of DISH's America's Top 250 package or a la carte for \$5 a month.

**Retrans Comment Deadline:** Comments are due Dec 1 on the **FCC's** proposed rulemaking on whether it should update the totality of circumstances test for evaluating whether broadcast stations and MVPDs are negotiating retrans in good faith. Reply comments—much like many retrans negotiations deadlines—are set for Dec 31. The FCC released its NPRM Sept 2, but had to wait until publication in the Federal Register to set comment deadlines. The NPRM also seeks comment on whether there are specific practices the FCC should identify as bad faith.

**Neutrality Watch:** **NCTA, US Telecom, ACA, AT&T** and much of the gang challenging the **FCC's** Title II order filed a joint reply brief with the DC Circuit Mon. The groups argue that the FCC's brief justifying the order has several flaws, including that it overturns years of consistent decisions classifying Internet access service as an info service and ignores the Verizon-FCC ruling on net neutrality by extending Title II to Internet interconnection. "This is not the exercise of 'expertise,'" the brief declared. "To the contrary, the fact that the FCC has suddenly discovered that so many longstanding statutory interpretations and prior orders, adopted on independent rationales over several decades, are now simultaneously "incorrect" precludes any deference and exposes the FCC's about face for what it is: an effort to enact by regulatory fiat a Title II 'for the 21st Century' that Congress expressly foreclosed." Oral arguments are set for Dec 4.

**TWC Customer Service:** We've changed. Really. That was the message of **Time Warner Cable's** open letter published this past weekend in major newspapers, including the *NY Times* and *Dallas Morning News*. "We know how you feel about cable companies. We've seen where Time Warner Cable falls on customer satisfaction surveys and we know the 'cable guy' jokes by heart," the missive begins. It goes on to highlight changes TWC has made over the past 2 years—including 1-hour appointment windows, improved products and faster call response. The MSO highlighted its efforts on the 1st day of national "Customer Service Week," noting that in NYC the number of calls from customers dropped by nearly 600K in the first half of 2015 compared to the same period in 2013. It is joining a growing list of MSOs, including **Cablevision** and **Comcast**, in launching "TechTracker, which lets customers track their technician and receive appointment notifications. It will launch companywide by year-end. "Some may question why we would do this now, when we are in the middle of a pending merger with Charter," CEO *Rob Marcus* said in a statement. "Merger or not, our customers expect and deserve the best customer experience we can deliver."

**Hallmark Loves a Parade:** **Hallmark Channel** takes Christmas seriously. So much so that this year it's debuting its own signature float in the **Macy's** Thanksgiving Parade, the unofficial starter pistol for the holiday season. The "Heartwarming Holiday Countdown" float will featuring a live performance and a life-sized advent calendar theme. The net is gearing up for its "Countdown to Christmas" campaign, which kicks off Oct 31. It will feature 17 new original movie premieres this year.

**Money for YouNow:** **Comcast Ventures** joined a round of \$15mIn in new financing for **YouNow**, a live social network that connects audiences and broadcasters in real time. Current backers **Venrock** and **Oren Zeev** led the round. Anyone can stream whatever they want on YouNow, which also lets the audience chat with the broadcaster and each other.

**Programming:** **SundanceTV** has joined **Zodiak Rights** as the co-production partner on **RTÉ** drama "Rebellion," a 5-part serial on the birth of modern Ireland. It will air on SundanceTV and RTÉ One in early 2016. -- **FXM** will marathon " Fargo" on Oct 11, the day before the Season 2 premiere on **FX**. -- **Travel Channel's** '16 slate includes new series "I Adventure," celebs travel around the world to take viewers on an intimate adventure of discovery, and "Meter's Running," a look at off-the-grid dives with *Andrew Zimmern*. -- **Ovation** acquired US premiere rights to *Idris Elba's* "Mandela, My Dad and Me" from Content Television. The 1-hour documentary special is set to debut on Ovation on Feb 11. -- **Starz** signed Starz original series "Power" producer *Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson* to an exclusive overall deal. Under the 2-year pact with **G Unit Film & Television**, Jackson will develop new projects for the net and continue as exec producer on Power. -- *Khloé Kardashian's* new **FYI** series "Kocktails with Khloé" debuts Dec 9. The 8 1-hour ep series will air over 8 consecutive Wed nights.

**Lifetime's Broad Focus:** **Lifetime** will expand "Broad Focus," its initiative focused on supporting and developing

# BUSINESS & FINANCE

female writers, producers and directors, to its channels globally. The initiative first launched in the US in Apr. The formal kick-off of the global launch came Mon at the Women in Global Entertainment luncheon at **MIPCOM**.

**People:** *Phil Craig* is stepping down as evp, chief creative officer for **Discovery Nets Intl** and will go back to his roots as an independent producer. During his 8 months at the net, he has worked on natural history series “Life of Dogs” and bringing the film “Sherpa” to Discovery. In a statement, DNI thanked Craig for his work and said it looked forward to working with him in the future. It’s TBD what will happen to the role, with newly named DNI content head *Marjorie Kaplan* to evaluate it.

**Bullying Prevention:** In support of National Bullying Prevention Month this month, **Disney ABC Television Group** and **ESPN** are working together to encourage viewers to “choose kindness” in an effort to help end bullying. The initiative features PSAs airing throughout Oct on **ABC, ESPNU, Longhorn Network** and **SEC Network**. In addition, the pair is sponsoring the “Choose Kindness” campaign with **DoSomething.org**, an organization for young people and social change that will encourage young people to spread positivity. ESPN also will provide \$25K grants to Stomp Out Bullying, **GLAAD** and **GLSEN** to support anti-bullying initiatives.

## Cablefax Daily Stockwatch

Company	10/05 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	10/05 Close	1-Day Ch
<b>BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS</b>			<b>CONVERGYS:</b> .....24.15 ..... 0.79		
DISH:.....	59.38	0.42	CSG SYSTEMS:.....	31.57	0.36
ENTRAVISION:.....	7.05	0.29	ECHOSTAR:.....	43.79	0.92
GRAY TELEVISION:.....	13.50	0.55	GOOGLE:.....	641.47	14.56
MEDIA GENERAL:.....	14.02	0.09	HARMONIC:.....	6.11	0.27
NEXSTAR:.....	48.62	1.55	INTEL:.....	31.21	0.70
SINCLAIR:.....	27.34	1.10	INTERACTIVE CORP:.....	68.84	1.26
TEGNA:.....	23.91	0.82	LEVEL 3:.....	44.77	1.59
<b>MSOS</b>			MICROSOFT:.....	46.63	1.06
CABLE ONE:.....	429.00	(2)	NETFLIX:.....	111.25	5.14
CABLEVISION:.....	33.00	(0.01)	NIELSEN:.....	46.33	0.59
CHARTER:.....	187.52	4.38	RENTRAK:.....	59.45	1.94
COMCAST:.....	59.62	0.90	SEACHANGE:.....	6.53	0.38
COMCAST SPCL:.....	60.12	0.94	SEACHANGE:.....	6.53	0.38
GCI:.....	16.65	0.27	SONY:.....	26.49	0.73
LIBERTY BROADBAND:.....	55.88	1.76	SPRINT NEXTEL:.....	4.42	0.17
LIBERTY GLOBAL:.....	45.09	0.80	TIVO:.....	9.13	0.26
SHAW COMM:.....	19.90	0.27	UNIVERSAL ELEC:.....	43.43	2.64
SHENTEL:.....	42.60	1.32	VONAGE:.....	6.20	0.36
TIME WARNER CABLE:.....	188.74	3.55	YAHOO:.....	30.85	0.14
<b>PROGRAMMING</b>			<b>TELCOS</b>		
21ST CENTURY FOX:.....	28.35	0.31	AT&T:.....	33.43	0.79
AMC NETWORKS:.....	75.83	1.19	CENTURYLINK:.....	25.64	0.99
CBS:.....	41.64	1.34	FRONTIER :.....	5.13	0.25
CROWN:.....	5.49	0.23	TDS:.....	25.99	0.60
DISCOVERY:.....	26.88	0.79	VERIZON:.....	44.00	1.16
DISNEY:.....	103.85	0.85	<b>MARKET INDICES</b>		
GRUPO TELEVISA:.....	26.31	0.26	DOW:.....	16776.43	304.06
HSN:.....	58.57	1.13	NASDAQ:.....	4781.26	73.49
LIONSGATE:.....	39.18	0.53	S&P 500:.....	1987.05	35.69
MSG NETWORKS:.....	19.57	0.23			
SCRIPPS INT:.....	51.30	1.50			
STARZ:.....	39.07	1.52			
TIME WARNER:.....	71.07	0.48			
VIACOM:.....	46.77	1.17			
WWE:.....	17.95	0.65			
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>					
ADVANTAGE:.....	2.26	0.02			
AMDOCS:.....	58.24	1.43			
AMPHENOL:.....	51.78	1.27			
APPLE:.....	110.78	0.40			
ARRIS GROUP:.....	27.40	0.81			
AVID TECH:.....	7.95	0.16			
BLNDER TONGUE:.....	0.64	(0.01)			
BROADCOM:.....	51.05	(0.15)			
CISCO:.....	26.85	1.09			
COMMSCOPE:.....	25.37	0.04			
CONCURRENT:.....	4.91	0.02			



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## CFX TECH by Joyce Wang

### Talking Voice Control

**Universal Electronics (UEI)**—which provides universal wireless remote control products, including voice control to pay-TV ops—is looking to potentially expand its service as cable steps up its smart home offerings. The company announced an agreement with **Comcast** in Jan to provide voice remote service, which features a conversational search that doesn't require specific voice commands. The service has been deployed to the MSO's Xfinity sub base, said *Lou Hughes*, evp-Americas at UEI. Since the agreement, Comcast has created "a huge amount of meta data around content" to enable the overall experience, he said. Voice control is expected to play a part in MSOs' smart home offerings. "They [service providers] recognize that for them to grow, they need to grow ARPU with their existing subscribers," Hughes said. That's especially true as the video market matures and ops are feeling the squeeze from OTT services. Hughes envisions using one remote control to manage everything in the home. Opportunities in the smart home market have prompted UEI's acquisition of **Ecolink Intelligent Technology**, which provides wireless security and home automation technology. Announced in Aug, the \$12.4mln deal is expected to "bring a new level of compatibility to the industry to enable sensors throughout the home to work together seamlessly," the company's chmn/CEO *Paul Arling* said at the time of the announcement. Meanwhile, as MSOs like Comcast expand their streaming offerings, features like voice control make it easy for subs to switch between linear and OTT programming, said Hughes. UEI has developed a feature dubbed "one touch play," which allows input switch with the touch of a button. The feature is expected to come out later this year and the company is looking to roll it out to several OTT players and pay-TV providers. The company also has developed the latest version of its QuickSet solution, QuickSet 3.0, which can detect connected home theater equipment and program the remote automatically for the user, eliminating the need for manual IR code entry. The platform uses UEI device control database to identify the specific model

of the device through the IDs captured over HDMI and/or IP, then determines which specific model code should be used to control that device. QuickSet is embedded in various devices, including set-tops, connected TVs, media devices, game consoles, smartphones and tablets. The company's customers, including **DISH** and **DirecTV**, have the 1st version of QuickSet. UEI counts **Charter** as a customer, but not **Time Warner Cable** or **Bright House**. In addition to major pay-TV ops and OTT providers, UEI has its eyes on small and mid-sized ops. The problem with the smaller guys is they don't have the resources to develop their own next-gen video platform, Hughes said. That's why many of them are partnering with **TiVo** to offer advanced video services. With UEI and TiVo, perhaps voice control will be enabled soon for many **NCTC** members?

**Akamai Scores OTT Contract:** **WhereverTV**, a subscription OTT video service, is partnering with delivery network service provider **Akamai** to improve its content delivery platform and user experience. The partnership is expected to enable WhereverTV to deliver programming to various devices including connected TVs, streaming media players, smartphones, tablets and PCs. The company is using Akamai's Adaptive Media Delivery to help provide streaming service as well as content targeting for compliance with regional licensing agreements. It's also using Akamai's Media Services Live for linear streaming.

**Thuuz Sports' New Feature:** **Thuuz Sports**, which provides sports meta-data for MVPDs, CE companies and rights holders, launched a TV-based feature dubbed Thuuz Highlights. It aims to allow sports fans to customize post-game highlights (through mobile and TV) based on things like favorite players, moments and fantasy teams. When integrated with MVPDs' user interface, the feature is expected to allow fans to watch the precise highlights they want. The company's partners include **Amazon**, **Charter**, **Comcast**, **DISH**, **Sony**, **ThinkAnalytics** and **Hisense**.

Got tech news? Reach out to Cablefax Tech editor *Joyce Wang* at [jwang@accessintel.com](mailto:jwang@accessintel.com)

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