

Cablefax Daily™

Monday — December 14, 2015

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 26 / No. 239

Star Wars: Networks Use the Force to Make the Most of Movie's Release

Conan O'Brien and his crew may have traveled to Cuba, but they've not been to another galaxy. That changes on Thurs—the night before one of the most highly anticipated films of the decade opens—as TBS' "Conan" welcomes the entire main cast of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. The appearance of *Harrison Ford*, *Carrie Fisher*, *Daisy Ridley*, along with director *J.J. Abrams* and other cast members, is just one of the many cable tie-ins—and likely the splashiest—timed to coincide with the release of the blockbuster movie. **Science Channel** is devoting a whole night's worth of programming Wed to "Star Wars," kicking off with two hour-long docs on *George Lucas* and his *Industrial Light & Magic*, followed by 2 hours of Force-related "MythBusters." "We want to show how Science caught up in some areas with the mind of the brilliant filmmaker George Lucas and his work dating back to the 1970s, which has done more than just advance entertainment and film; it has created an army of astrophysicists, archaeologists and engineers who were inspired by his work and moved ideas forward in their areas of expertise," said *Marc Etkind*, gm of Science Channel. **Disney's ESPN**, which premiered the first trailer for "The Force Awakens" during Monday Night Football in October, is getting in the game with a half-hour special Tues, "Star Wars: Evolution of the Lightsaber Duel," hosted by *Mark Hamill*. "We will take viewers on a unique journey that examines the connection of these duels to sports and their evolution, from the original trilogy through the prequels, and now to 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens,'" said ESPN vp *Craig Lazarus* in making the announcement. "Viewers will see the transition from fencing and samurai swordplay in the original films to an increased focus on martial arts and the sport of kendo." Disney XD and Disney Channel have been serving the Star Wars brand to their young audiences with rotating interstitials promoting the movie hosted by popular characters *Jake Short* and *Cameron Boyce*. On Thurs, **Disney XD** will air a "Disney XD 365" interstitial about the red carpet premiere of the movie. And young fans can always tune in to the animated series "Star Wars Rebels," which recently announced a Season 3 pickup, as well as "LEGO Star Wars." **Syfy**, which debuted in 1992 by running *Star Wars: A New Hope*—when it was known as the Sci Fi Channel—is also likely to capture some of the Star Wars fervor by debuting "The Expanse" on Mon. "From its first ever broadcast through

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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 ● 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, 9211 Corporate Blvd., 4th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850

the critically-acclaimed 'Battlestar Galactica' series and now 'The Expanse,' Syfy is committed to bringing fans young and old alike, engaging, provocative and entertaining space-based science fiction," said *Bill McGoldrick*, Syfy's evp, original programming. The enduring popularity of the "Star Wars" film franchise has not gone unnoticed by **TCM** host *Ben Mankiewicz*, who recently re-watched the first three. "They're in the ether, these movies, they've gotten into our skin," he said. "It is almost the most amazing phenomenon in history of American entertainment, and selling it—and the products—to the world." – *Hillary Atkin*

Crestview Takes WOW Stake: NY private equity firm **Crestview** will acquire a significant stake in **WOW!**, purchasing units held by **Avista Capital** and other unitholders and investing \$125mln in the overbuilder. Crestview partner *Jeffrey Marcus* will become **WOW's** board chmn on Jan 1, with *Colleen Abdoulah* retiring as chair but continuing to serve on the board. Marcus is a familiar cable face, having founded **Marcus Cable**, which at the time of its 1998 sale was the largest privately held cable company in the US. **WOW** is Crestview's 4th cable investment since it was founded in 2004. **Credit Suisse** acted as financial advisor, and **Kirkland & Ellis LLP** acted as legal advisor to **WOW** and **Avista** in connection with the transaction. **Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP** acted as legal advisor to Crestview in connection with the deal.

DISH Musical Chairs: **DISH's** *Charlie Ergen* is giving up the president role, but continuing as chmn/CEO. **DISH** vet *Erik Carlson* was tapped as pres/COO, where he'll supervise all **DISH** revenue-generating and administrative units. Current **DISH** COO and evp *Bernie Han* was named evp of strategic planning and will continue reporting to Ergen. Han will be "indispensable" as **DISH** works on a strategic transformation that includes entry into wireless, Ergen said. As for Carlson, Ergen said he has a clear vision for delivering the best customer experience. Corporate Development evp *Tom Cullen*, general counsel/evp *Stanton Dodge* and **Sling TV** CEO *Roger Lynch* will continue to report to Ergen. *John Swieringa* was promoted and will assume Carlson's role as evp, ops. *Rob Dravenstott*, who most recently served as **DISH** vp of IT Application Development, has been promoted to SVP and CIO, and will report to Swieringa. **DISH** also has appointed svp and corporate controller *Paul Orban*, who reports to Swain, to chief accounting officer.

Muni Broadband Backlash: A group of 8 Republican senators wrote to the **FCC** chmn Thurs to complain about the agency's recent efforts to encourage deployment of muni broadband networks, irrespective of privately owned broadband networks. In Feb, the **FCC** voted along party lines to pre-empt TN and NC state laws regulating govt owned broadband networks. "We understand that, in the months following the **FCC's** decision, agency officials have begun engaging in outreach to persuade communities to deploy municipal broadband networks," said the letter, which included Sens *Deb Fischer* (R-NE), *Marco Rubio* (R-FL) and *Ron Johnson* (R-WI). The lawmakers believe the **FCC** is promoting govt-owned networks at the possible expense of private sector broadband providers. They've asked the Commission to respond to a series of questions on the subject by Jan 4. Among other things, they want to know how much money the Commission has committed to muni broadband providers through the **USF's** Rural Broadband Experiments program.

Internet Tax Ban: The country took another step toward a permanent ban on Internet taxes from states and localities on ISP access. The House voted to make the ban permanent Fri. Prospects look good for a similar vote in the Senate as members of a House-Senate conference committee approved the permanent extension of the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

Ratings: **Discovery's** premiere of "Racing Extinction" reached more than 11.5mln total viewers for its US simulcast in L+3. The simulcast averaged 2.55mln viewers and 1.18mln 25-54s, making it the most-watched cable doc film in more than 3 years. The film ranked as a top 3 non-sports program in **Nielsen's** Social Guide for the night. 26.7 million impressions were delivered on **Facebook** on Dec. 2, and a total of 300 million Facebook impressions across **Discovery's** global campaign which began in November.

People: *Tiffany Moore* was named vp, congressional affairs for the **Consumer Technology Assn** (formerly **CEA**). She joins from **TwinLogic Strategies**, where she worked with corporate and trade association clients on a variety of competitiveness, trade, tax and technology issues.

Cablefax Week in Review

Company	Ticker	12/11 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS				
DISH	DISH	59.00	(4.1%)	(19.06%)
ENTRAVISION	EVC	7.87	(8.81%)	21.45%
GRAY TELEVISION	GTN	15.16	(9.82%)	35.36%
MEDIA GENERAL	MEG	15.19	(0.72%)	(9.21%)
NEXSTAR	NXST	55.87	(5.16%)	7.88%
SINCLAIR	SBGI	31.95	(8.14%)	16.78%
TEGNA	TGNA	25.45	(9.69%)	0.00%

Company	Ticker	12/11 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
MSOS				
CABLE ONE	CABO	440.42	(0.26%)	0.00%
CABLEVISION	CVC	30.14	0.57%	46.03%
CHARTER	CHTR	178.06	(3.51%)	6.87%
COMCAST	CMCSA	57.97	(4.58%)	(0.07%)
COMCAST SPCL	CMCSK	58.00	(4.64%)	0.75%
GCI	GNCMA	19.19	(8.97%)	39.56%
LIBERTY BROADBAND	LBRDA	50.44	(3.33%)	0.70%
LIBERTY GLOBAL	LBTYA	41.39	(2.17%)	(17.57%)
SHAW COMM	SJR	19.36	(6.47%)	(28.27%)
SHENTEL	SHEN	43.86	(8.13%)	40.35%
TIME WARNER CABLE	TWC	180.50	(2.53%)	18.70%

Company	Ticker	12/11 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
PROGRAMMING				
21ST CENTURY FOX	FOXA	27.46	(6.39%)	(28.52%)
AMC NETWORKS	AMCX	77.24	(6.73%)	21.12%
CBS	CBS	46.84	(6.34%)	(15.36%)
CROWN	CRWN	5.16	(11.03%)	45.76%
DISCOVERY	DISCA	27.37	(10.93%)	(20.55%)
DISNEY	DIS	108.04	(5.43%)	14.70%
GRUPO TELEVISIA	TV	27.11	(6.06%)	(20.41%)
HSN	HSNI	50.31	(1.39%)	(33.8%)
LIONSGATE	LGF	34.08	1.04%	6.43%
MSG NETWORKS	MSGN	20.27	1.05%	0.00%
SCRIPPS INT	SNI	54.62	(7.46%)	(27.43%)
STARZ	STRZA	33.33	(3.98%)	12.22%
TIME WARNER	TWX	65.47	(7.28%)	(23.36%)
VIACOM	VIA	44.10	(9.05%)	(41.59%)
WWE	WWE	15.87	(7.63%)	28.61%

Company	Ticker	12/11 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
TECHNOLOGY				
ADVANTAGE	AEY	2.17	(4.82%)	(11.07%)
AMDOCS	DOX	54.71	(4.34%)	17.25%
AMPHENOL	APH	52.61	(3.98%)	(2.23%)
APPLE	AAPL	113.18	(4.91%)	2.54%
ARRIS GROUP	ARRS	30.65	(6.18%)	1.52%
AVID TECH	AVID	6.58	(1.5%)	(53.69%)
BLNDER TONGUE	BDR	0.38	0.00%	(85.87%)
BROADCOM	BRCM	57.34	(0.31%)	32.33%
CISCO	CSCO	26.16	(4.8%)	(5.97%)
COMMSCOPE	COMM	25.86	(6%)	13.27%
CONCURRENT	CCUR	4.80	(2.04%)	(32.3%)
CONVERGYS	CVG	24.38	(4.35%)	19.69%
CSG SYSTEMS	CSGS	34.17	(3.77%)	36.30%
ECHOSTAR	SATS	37.20	(3.23%)	(29.14%)
GOOGLE	GOOG	738.87	(3.64%)	40.36%
HARMONIC	HLIT	4.26	(20.22%)	(39.23%)
INTEL	INTC	34.27	(1.92%)	(5.57%)
INTERACTIVE CORP	IACI	59.67	(2.71%)	(1.84%)

Company	Ticker	12/11 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
LEVEL 3	LVL	51.52	(0.52%)	4.33%
MICROSOFT	MSFT	54.06	(3.31%)	16.38%
NETFLIX	NFLX	118.91	(9.18%)	(65.19%)
NIELSEN	NLSN	45.45	(3.07%)	1.61%
RENTRAK	RENT	45.37	(12.18%)	(37.7%)
SEACHANGE	SEAC	6.76	(0.15%)	5.96%
SONY	SNE	24.34	(4.14%)	18.91%
SPRINT NEXTEL	S	3.65	3.40%	(12.05%)
TIVO	TIVO	8.57	(4.78%)	(27.62%)
UNIVERSAL ELEC	UEIC	49.97	(3.53%)	(23.16%)
VONAGE	VG	5.62	(10.94%)	47.51%
YAHOO	YHOO	32.91	(5.72%)	(34.84%)

Company	Ticker	12/11 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
TELCOS				
AT&T	T	33.17	(2.76%)	(1.25%)
CENTURYLINK	CTL	24.91	(6.74%)	(37.06%)
FRONTIER	FTR	4.57	(10.39%)	(28.59%)
TDS	TDS	26.32	(5.93%)	4.24%
VERIZON	VZ	44.82	(1.95%)	(4.19%)

Company	Ticker	12/11 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
MARKET INDICES				
DOW	DJI	17265.21	(3.26%)	(3.13%)
NASDAQ	IXIC	4933.47	(4.06%)	4.17%
S&P 500	GSPC	2012.37	(3.79%)	(2.26%)

WINNERS & LOSERS

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE WINNERS		
COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. SPRINT NEXTEL	3.65	3.40%
2. MSG NETWORKS	20.27	1.05%
3. LIONSGATE	34.08	1.04%
4. CABLEVISION	30.14	0.57%
5. BLNDER TONGUE	0.38	0.00%

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE LOSERS		
COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. HARMONIC	4.26	(20.22%)
2. RENTRAK	45.37	(12.18%)
3. CROWN	5.16	(11.03%)
4. VONAGE	5.62	(10.94%)
5. DISCOVERY	27.37	(10.93%)



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