

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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Ratings Review: ESPN Poised to Win 2015, AMC Has Top Series

For the 2nd consecutive year, **ESPN** has taken the ratings crown from the general entertainment cable networks. Through 51 weeks of 2015, ESPN averaged 2.1mln total viewers in prime. That's down 7% from last year's 2.3mln average, according to an analysis of **Nielsen** data by **ABC/Disney** research. The slide for the sports net isn't as bad as what some general entertainment nets have seen, however. **USA**, which finished 2nd in the yearly prime race in 2014 and 1st for 2013, is down 16% to 1.8mln viewers in prime. That puts it in 3rd place for 2015, behind **Fox News** (1.8mln, up 3% over last year's average). **TNT**, which finished 3rd last year, is tied for 5th with **Disney**. Both nets have averaged about 1.7mln viewers in prime—down 14% YOY for TNT and 10% for Disney. **FX** joined the general entertainment nets in taking a tumble, dropping 14% YOY to 1.22mln. **TBS** was the 4th most-watched cable net in prime, with 1.79mln viewers, down just 1% YOY. Fox News, which was helped by the presidential race and debates, wasn't the only net to see viewership increase. **Discovery Channel's** prime total viewers are up 11% from 2014 to 1.55mln viewers. **HGTV** also is up 11% to 1.5mln, while **AMC** is up 4% to 1.4mln. AMC is home to the 2 most-watched cable series for the year—"The Walking Dead" (19.5mln viewers) and "Fear the Walking Dead" (11.8mln). Its ratings success adds to the drama behind negotiations with NCTC for a new carriage deal for the suite of AMC Networks channels. AMC was the top destination for original programming in all of TV (broadcast and cable) in 2015, with the net having the highest live+3 audience for all new eps of originals over the course of the year in both 18-49s and 25-54s. AMC averaged 3.9mln in 18-49s, well ahead of runner-up **CBS's** 2.8mln. AMC averaged 3.9mln in 25-54s, ahead of CBS's 3.6mln average. Rounding out the top 5 cable series of 2015 are **HBO's** "Game of Thrones" (9.5mln), FX's "American Horror Story" (6.7mln) and TNT's "Rizzoli & Isles" (6.6mln).

GCI Plans to Drop Univision, AMCN: GCI said it will drop **Univision** and **AMC Networks** in 2016 "because of substantial price increases." GCI currently carries AMCN through an **NCTC** deal that is set to expire Dec 31. Both NCTC and AMCN have said they are working on negotiating a new agreement, but there is no deal yet. Univision said it's committed to reaching a fair agreement with all of its distributors. "Despite us making every effort over the last several months to reach a deal with General Communication, Inc. (GCI), we were surprised and disappointed to

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learn of their plans to no longer offer the Univision Network to their customers in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau, Alaska,” the Spanish-language programmer said, pledging to work “diligently” to reach a mutually beneficial deal with GCI. The Alaskan operator said it would add several new channels to its lineup in 2016, including **One World Sports, Discovery Family** and **Outside Television**. It’s also offering its **TiVo** customers a \$50 Visa gift card to “explore the thousands of hours of new content available through apps such as Vudu and Netflix.” Vudu’s offering of TV eps for purchase include the most recent eps of AMC’s “The Walking Dead,” which returns to the net Feb 14.

Retrans Watch: Griffin Comm-owned **KWTV** and **KOTV** in Oklahoma City have warned **AT&T U-verse** customers that they could lose the stations by Jan 1 if a new retrans agreement is not reached. -- **KJZZ** quietly went dark on **DISH** earlier this month. The full-service independent station serves all of UT and parts of 5 surrounding states with a variety of classic and syndicated shows, movies and sports. The net, owned by **Larry Miller Communications** and operated by **Bonneville**, was dropped from DISH’s lineup Dec 17.

Charter Says It’s Down with OTT: Charter is rejecting **AWE** and **One American News Net** owner **Herring Broadcasting’s** claim that it wasn’t helpful in allowing a linear feed of AWE to OTT devices. “Herring Broadcasting has been a valued member of our programming line-up but is attempting to make an issue of a provision in a 10-year-old contract. OANN has been available to anyone on **Amazon Prime** and **Roku**,” a spokesman said in a statement. “Charter has embraced the development of online video, as evidenced by our OTT-friendly broadband policies, support from Netflix and a host of independent programmers including **AXStv, TV One, BabyFirst, One World Sports, Crown Media, RFD-TV** and **TheBlaze**.” Herring told the FCC this month that its contract with Charter initially prevented AWE to offer itself OTT, saying it was only modified after it pointed out its concerns and sent formal notice of the upcoming expiration of its carriage agreement with Charter. The **Charter-Time Warner Cable** docket has been flooded in recent weeks with comments supporting One America News Network that ask the FCC to ensure that independent nets are treated fairly. Herring said that a “vast majority of the 17,100 emails” in the docket are from passionate AWE and OANN viewers. “We don’t oppose the merger, but recognize that there are a number of potential concerns that need to be closely scrutinized,” Herring pres *Charles Herring* told us. The programmer’s 10-year contract with Charter nears expiration in the early half of 2016.

ACA’s Request: ACA’s regulatory team recently had a phone call with **FCC** chmn *Tom Wheeler’s* sr legal advisor on wireline *Stephanie Weiner* to discuss the Connect America Fund Phase II bidding process, the group said in an ex parte filing posted Mon. The FCC is proposing that an experienced service provider will be considered financially qualified if it submits in advance of bidding 1 year of audited financials, and that if it is a winning bidder, it submits a Letter of Credit from a “top 100 bank” that has an investment grade or better credit rating and that is insured by the FDIC or FCSIC. “These requirements may work for larger providers, especially those that are public and have relationships with major banks, but for hundreds of ACA’s smaller providers, they will effectively preclude them from participating in the auction,” ACA said. In addition, to maximize the number of bidders in the auction, the FCC should award preferences to bidders that offer to provide higher performance broadband service over “future proof” networks in exchange for support. Finally, the FCC, as it works to create the framework for the competitive bidding process, should be less concerned about using limited CAF funding for deployment of “future-proof” broadband service in some areas when other areas without any broadband service may remain unserved after the auction. The FCC should avoid a competitive bidding process where support is awarded at the reserved price to provide lower performance broadband service, ACA said.

ESPN Digital’s Nov: Thanks to coverage of the **NFL**, college football, Fantasy Football, the **NBA** and other sports, **ESPN** reached 89.9mln unique visitors in the US in November, the 6th largest total all-time in the sports category. Fans spent 9bln minutes using ESPN digital properties in Nov. The ESPN.com site reached 71.4mln unique visitors across platforms over the course of the month. On mobile, users spent 6bln minutes with ESPN content across all devices in Nov. The net reached 18.6mln average daily unique users on smartphones, up 13% YOY and 90% more than #2 **Yahoo! Sports-NBC Sports Network** (9.8mln). Some 68% of ESPN’s unique users—60.8mln people—exclusively accessed content on smartphones and tablets. And 67% of all time spent with ESPN digital content was consumed by mobile device users. Meanwhile, 3 ESPN apps, the ESPN app, the WatchESPN app and the ESPN Fantasy Football app, were among the top sports apps on smartphones and tablets in terms of unique us-

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ers during the period. Also in Nov, 10mln unique devices streamed WatchESPN content in Nov, up 38% YOY. Viewers spent 2.1bln minutes with programming across all platforms, up 66% YOY. Fans watched 458.7mln ESPN digital video clips in Nov, up 9% from a year ago.

CES Guide: The 2016 CES, to be held Jan 6-9 in Las Vegas, will feature plenty of discussions around OTT video, multiplatform experience, UltraHD and Internet of Things. Check out the full story on Cablefax.com

Programming: CBS and NFL reached a deal with **ESPN Deportes** to televise Super Bowl 50 in Spanish on Feb 7. It's the 1st Super Bowl telecast for ESPN Deportes. To complement the live telecast, the net will provide week-long multimedia coverage starting Feb 1. The lineup on Super Bowl Sunday will feature coverage leading up to the game, including a 90-min pregame special and a postgame show. – Showtime Sports will expand its coverage of the Notre Dame Fighting Irish with a bonus bowl game ep of the series "A Season with Notre Dame Football," premiering Jan 5 at 10pm EST. -- **Discovery Channel's** series "Fast N' Loud" returns with new eps starting Mon at 9pm EST.

Editor's Note: Your next issue of **Cablefax Daily** will arrive Mon, Jan 4. Keep an eye on Cablefax.com and your inbox for breaking news, including the latest on **NCTC-AMC Networks** negotiations. Happy New Year!

Cablefax Daily Stockwatch

Company	12/29 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	12/29 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DISH:	58.05	0.15	CSG SYSTEMS:	36.38	0.56
ENTRAVISION:	7.55	0.03	ECHOSTAR:	38.57	0.44
GRAY TELEVISION:	16.15	0.34	GOOGLE:	776.60	14.09
MEDIA GENERAL:	15.63	(0.07)	HARMONIC:	4.20	0.02
NEXSTAR:	59.32	0.83	INTEL:	35.44	0.51
SINCLAIR:	32.29	0.19	INTERACTIVE CORP:	61.00	0.47
TEGNA:	26.23	0.20	LEVEL 3:	54.45	0.52
MSOS					
CABLE ONE:	440.25	(9.37)	MICROSOFT:	56.55	0.60
CABLEVISION:	31.92	0.07	NETFLIX:	119.12	2.01
CHARTER:	185.17	3.09	NIELSEN:	47.34	0.38
COMCAST:	57.56	0.37	RENTRAK:	48.41	0.91
GCI:	20.18	0.51	SEACHANGE:	7.04	0.04
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	51.53	0.60	SONY:	24.83	0.16
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	40.24	0.78	SPRINT NEXTEL:	3.85	0.04
SHAW COMM:	17.37	0.19	TIVO:	8.81	0.14
SHENTEL:	44.06	0.34	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	51.92	0.60
TIME WARNER CABLE:	187.23	2.18	VONAGE:	5.92	0.05
PROGRAMMING					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	27.57	0.15	YAHOO:	34.04	0.44
AMC NETWORKS:	77.00	0.05	TELCOS		
CBS:	47.29	0.46	AT&T:	34.93	0.17
CROWN:	5.57	0.30	CENTURYLINK:	25.88	0.04
DISCOVERY:	26.90	0.06	FRONTIER :	4.82	(0.03)
DISNEY:	107.08	(0.17)	TDS:	26.66	(0.08)
GRUPO TELEVISA:	28.07	0.15	VERIZON:	47.21	0.46
HSN:	51.51	0.38	MARKET INDICES		
LIONSGATE:	32.45	(0.36)	DOW:	17720.98	192.71
MSG NETWORKS:	21.11	0.25	NASDAQ:	5107.94	66.95
SCRIPPS INT:	55.49	0.35	S&P 500:	2078.36	21.86
STARZ:	34.08	0.51			
TIME WARNER:	64.84	0.36			
VIACOM:	43.41	0.07			
WWE:	18.71	0.06			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADVANTAGE:	1.83	0.03			
AMDOCS:	55.50	UNCH			
AMPHENOL:	53.45	0.28			
APPLE:	108.74	1.92			
ARRIS GROUP:	30.71	0.77			
AVID TECH:	7.26	(0.06)			
BLNDER TONGUE:	0.40	0.03			
BROADCOM:	58.32	0.31			
CISCO:	27.77	0.46			
COMMSCOPE:	26.31	0.18			
CONCURRENT:	5.04	(0.32)			
CONVERGYS:	25.48	0.34			

Cablefax Industry Jobs

3 Tips to Finding and Hiring the Perfect Candidate

TIP 1 : Target Candidates!

Post your openings on Cablefax's job board to reach top talent and filter applicants that lack industry experience. Ask about bundles to fit your needs and budget.

TIP 2 : Be Selective!

Don't waste time reading pointless resumes. You can search Cablefax's resume database for free, while utilizing the demographic filters.

TIP 3 : Stand Out!

Take advantage of upgrades to add exposure by taking advantage of upgrades, including weekly job eletters sent to over 40k industry executives.

