

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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CableLabs CEO: Preview and Predictions for CES

CableLabs has had a busy year, conducting interoperability tests for DOCSIS 3.1, facilitating better WiFi experiences, and exploring various formats of video streams such as 4K. With **CES** just around the corner (Jan 6-9), CEO *Phil McKinney* spoke with us about what to look out for at the giant trade show. CableLabs will host an event at CES to share trends and changes happening to the industry and their impact. "We will also have a pitch event, where we bring in 10 interesting startup tech companies and give them an opportunity to spend time with CEOs and share what they will be working on," McKinney said. Virtual Reality will be a hot topic at CES, according to the former CTO of HP. At CES, "this is the year it's going to go beyond VR goggles. There is going to be a lot of emphasis on VR content," he said, explaining that storytelling in the VR format requires a whole new structure. "There will be a bunch of companies demonstrating some interesting content in the VR space," which will signal how VR content can become mainstream for consumers. Content is, of course, key, because all the gadgets are meaningless without content to drive adoption. McKinney said gaming content is gaining a lot of traction currently. In addition, "you will see a lot of nature and travel content." Sports VR content, which provides viewers an immersive stadium experience in the home, is another big area, he said. The next step is creating dramatic content. Storytelling in the 360 context still requires a lot of work, he said. The buzz around VR fits into the development of DOCSIS 3.1 because of the needs for high speed. While DOCSIS 3.0 can support existing VR streaming, as VR progresses, it will require much more bandwidth and capacity, said McKinney. Several major ops indicated they will trial and even roll out 3.1 in 2016 (see "DOCSIS 3.1" below). Meanwhile, 4K is expected to continue to have a major presence on the show floor. And the focus will be more on colors and less on resolution, focusing on getting richer and better color on display, he said. Resolution by itself isn't enough to attract consumers to purchase 4K TV sets, he said. McKinney noted High Dynamic Range (HDR) has been at the center of discussions in the 4K space this year. The technology is considered an option that could prove popular with consumers as it could provide a much greater impact on perceived image quality, significantly differentiating 4K from HD. At CableLabs, "we have fully tested 4K and HDR." Cable operators are ready today to handle 4K servic-

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es, meaning no major upgrade is needed to transmit 4K signals, McKinney said. Mass adoption of 4K still comes down to the availability of content and devices. McKinney noted some Blu-rays coming next year will feature 4K capabilities, providing noticeable display improvement. It can be a nice early entry point for 4K, allowing consumers to watch a variety of content in 4K quality, he said.

DOCSIS 3.1: Comcast took what it believes is the world's first DOCSIS 3.1 modem online last month in Philly on a "customer-facing network." It has since expanded the trials to additional locations in PA, Northern CA and Atlanta. "We will continue testing over the coming months, as we get ready to start delivering DOCSIS 3.1-powered service to our customers. Before the end of 2016, we will begin offering a new gigabit speed choice that works over the existing connections in our customers' homes in several parts of the country," CTO *Tony Werner* wrote in a blog post Tues. Comcast intends to activate more test homes with DOCSIS 3.1 in the coming months. Comcast previewed a DOCSIS 3.1 Gigabit Home Gateway at **INTX** in May. It's clear 3.1 will be a major priority for the MSO in 2016. "We still have a lot of work to do, but these tests confirm that DOCSIS 3.1 will work over our existing network as currently configured," Werner said. **CableLabs** has held 7 DOCSIS 3.1 interoperability events over the past year. A total of 27 vendors across cable modem, head-end, and test equipment manufacturers have participated so far. It's not clear which vendors Comcast is working with.

Broadcast M&A: Gray and Schurz Communications said they've reached an agreement with the DOJ that should enable them to complete Gray's acquisition of the broadcast stations owned by Schurz. Gray and Schurz's proposed consent decree with the DOJ requires the divestiture of stations in Wichita, KS (**KAKE**), and South Bend, IN (**WSBT**). The FCC still must weigh in on the deal, with Gray anticipating closing the transactions in 1Q16.

Pew Broadband Study: A few notable takeaways from **Pew Research Center's** new home broadband survey... Home broadband adoption is down slightly to 67% from 70% in 2013. It's worth noting that this comes as there has been an increase in the number of "smartphone-only" adults who use their phones as their means to access the internet at home. Of the 68% of Americans with a smartphone, 13% are smartphone only (up from 8% in 2013), Pew said. The study also pegged 15% of American adults as cord-cutters who have abandoned cable or satellite service. Another 9% never had either cable or satellite service.

Apple TV Apps: There are currently 2,624 apps available in the **Apple TV App Store**, according to a blog post from **appFigures**, an online community that tracks apps. That's quite a number considering the store is just about a month old," appFigures' blog post said. It noted an average of 447 new apps are being added to the store each week. "With a pretty steady rate of growth so far, we estimate the store will be hitting 5,000 apps in about a month and 10,000 apps in early 2016." Apple launched the latest version of Apple TV less than 2 month ago.

Interconnection Measurement: NCTA asked the FCC to reject **Level 3's** proposal that the Commission require broadband providers to report new metrics that it purports would represent actual performance of their retail service across interconnection points. In a letter Mon, the trade assn argued that Level 3's proposal places sole responsibility on 1 party to the interconnection arrangement, despite the fact both parties affect the performance experienced by the customer. Among Level 3's suggestions is that broadband providers should measure performance across their top 20 interconnection points and report the slowest, media and best avg performance. It suggested a color-coded connectivity rating system based on the number of days in a month with interconnection capacity above 80% utilization with a top 20 interconnection partner for 3 or more hours. NCTA said the proposals go beyond what's contemplated in the FCC's Open Internet order and have major substantive flaws, including determining which interconnection points qualify for the top 20 and which providers have the capability to perform such measurement.

Christmas for the Win: **Hallmark Channel's** "Countdown to Christmas" helped it to become the most-watched net in prime and total day among women 25-54, as well as #1 in prime among total viewers (excluding sports and news), since the Oct 30 launch of the programming stunt. Collectively, the 17 new Countdown to Christmas holiday premieres this year averaged a 3.0 HH rating and reached more than 26.3mln unduplicated viewers and

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5.5mln W25-54. Sat's premiere of "A Christmas Melody" starring *Mariah Carey* delivered 3.9mln total viewers/3.3 HH rating. The film made Hallmark the highest HH-rated cable network on Saturday in both primetime and total day. Sun's "Christmas Land" scored a 3.5 HH rating and 4.2mln viewers.

Programming: TNT added 2 new original dramas to its 2016 slate: "Good Behavior," an adaptation of the Letty Dobesh novels by author "Blake Crouch," and "Animal Kingdom," featuring a south CA family whose excessive lifestyle is fueled by their criminal activities. -- **Fox Productions** and **FX Networks** inked a 3-year overall production deal with exec producer/writer *Noah Hawley*. Under the deal, Hawley will develop numerous new projects while remaining the creator and showrunner of limited series " Fargo."

SCTE Program: The 2016 **SCTE-Georgia Tech** Management Development Program will feature **Bright House's** vp for the engineering and design department *Sabrina Calhoun*, and **Comcast** svp of engineering and technical operations for central division *Dan Murphy*. The pair will speak on Fiber to the Home and DOCSIS 3.1, respectively, during the 4-day event April 17-22 on the Dartmouth College campus in Hanover, NH.

Editor's Note: Your next issue of **Cablefax Daily** will arrive Monday evening. Enjoy the holidays!

Cablefax Daily Stockwatch

Company	12/22 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	12/22 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DISH:	57.60	0.02	CSG SYSTEMS:	34.79	0.15
ENTRAVISION:	7.59	(0.02)	ECHOSTAR:	37.31	0.33
GRAY TELEVISION:	15.22	(0.14)	GOOGLE:	748.22	0.45
MEDIA GENERAL:	15.57	0.28	HARMONIC:	4.23	(0.02)
NEXSTAR:	55.68	(0.93)	INTEL:	34.68	0.44
SINCLAIR:	31.53	(0.68)	INTERACTIVE CORP:	61.00	0.49
TEGNA:	25.90	0.05	LEVEL 3:	52.62	0.72
MSOS					
CABLE ONE:	432.94	(3.99)	MICROSOFT:	55.34	0.51
CABLEVISION:	31.59	0.75	NETFLIX:	116.00	(0.63)
CHARTER:	180.18	0.13	NIELSEN:	46.18	(0.01)
COMCAST:	56.90	0.44	RENTRAK:	44.58	1.25
GCI:	19.51	0.10	SEACHANGE:	6.84	(0.05)
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	50.58	0.55	SONY:	24.27	(0.09)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	38.84	(0.06)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	3.74	0.21
SHAW COMM:	17.04	0.04	TIVO:	8.65	0.11
SHENTEL:	43.37	(0.16)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	51.11	1.25
TIME WARNER CABLE:	182.76	0.79	VONAGE:	5.74	0.02
PROGRAMMING					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	27.36	0.29	YAHOO:	34.10	1.13
AMC NETWORKS:	76.42	0.22	TELCOS		
CBS:	46.50	0.71	AT&T:	34.35	0.26
CROWN:	5.20	(0.05)	CENTURYLINK:	25.13	(0.03)
DISCOVERY:	26.78	0.50	FRONTIER :	4.64	(0.01)
DISNEY:	106.57	(0.02)	TDS:	26.13	UNCH
GRUPO TELEVISA:	27.99	0.32	VERIZON:	46.28	0.38
HSN:	51.06	0.54	MARKET INDICES		
LIONSGATE:	32.79	0.40	DOW:	17417.27	165.65
MSG NETWORKS:	20.85	(0.06)	NASDAQ:	5001.11	32.19
SCRIPPS INT:	54.79	0.99	S&P 500:	2038.97	17.82
STARZ:	33.61	(0.07)			
TIME WARNER:	64.05	0.64			
VIACOM:	43.18	1.70			
WWE:	17.81	0.55			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADVANTAGE:	1.83	0.02			
AMDOCS:	55.95	1.01			
AMPHENOL:	52.92	0.82			
APPLE:	107.12	(0.21)			
ARRIS GROUP:	29.62	(0.01)			
AVID TECH:	6.21	0.11			
BLNDER TONGUE:	0.37	0.00			
BROADCOM:	57.31	(0.16)			
CISCO:	26.83	0.19			
COMMSCOPE:	25.38	0.20			
CONCURRENT:	5.32	0.23			
CONVERGYS:	25.22	0.72			



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