

# Cablefax Daily™

Tuesday — January 12, 2016

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 27 / No. 006

## Free at Last: ABC Family is Now Freeform

**ABC Family** becomes **Freeform** on Tues, and during **TCA** pres *Tom Ascheim* acknowledged some confusion over why the net would mess with its brand as it comes off the best financial year in its history. “Here’s why,” he said. “We like any business need to grow.” He noted that research on those who don’t currently watch the net suggests a warped perception that it offers only family-friendly and wholesome fare. “We’re delighted to be family friendly and wholesome,” he said. “But it’s kind of specific, and it’s not particularly representative of who we are.” On Tues, the net plans a party to ring in the new name. “We’re having sort of a virtual tailgate with our audience,” said Ascheim. That party will include a “*Pretty Little Liars*” marathon followed by its season premiere at 8pm. And just like the network is changing, the hit series is evolving, with the *Pretty Little Liars* flash forwarding from high school to their early 20s. On Mon, the ABC Family **Facebook** page made the transformation to “Freeform.” The brand has been quiet on Facebook since Dec 24, as its “25 Days of Christmas” drew to a close. That’s about to change though as Freeform will have all-day social media activity with musical performances and celebrity drop-ins, and even a stunt in which viewers can ask Freeform to create a unique piece of digital art based on their individual social media profiles. A video featuring “*Shadowhunters*” star *Isaiah Mustafa* addresses the new name, saying Freeform is a place to grow, ask questions and even change your name if you want to. “What’s that? You want me to start calling you Mrs Harry Potter? Done!” he says, an apparent reference to ABC Family’s *Harry Potter* marathons (the net assured fans the movies will continue to air on Freeform). Also on Tues the net will launch a redesigned “Watch” mobile app. And as you may have guessed, the lack of “**ABC**” or “**Disney**” in the new name wasn’t by accident. “For our young audiences, it’s important almost always for them to feel that they discovered something on their own,” he said. “So detaching ourselves from hallowed brands felt like a way to make sure that newness and freshness were part of the qualities that went with Freeform. And research has borne that out. So we feel good about it.”

**Retrans Makeup:** **DISH** and **Cordillera** reached a new deal around noon Sun, which saw the broadcaster’s stations restored to DISH’s lineup. DISH lost 17 Cordillera stations, including **KXLF** in Butte, MT, on Thurs after the 2 were unable to agree to terms for a new retrans pact.

# 100

Cablefax

## Who deserves to appear in Cablefax’s annual power player list?

Every year, Cablefax 100 salutes the most influential cable executives whose leadership continues to take the industry to new heights.

Nominate your colleagues, your boss or even yourself for a coveted spot in the Cablefax 100. It’s free to enter – but you must submit your nominations by January 29.



Released during 2016 INTX!

Enter at [www.cablefax.com/eventsawardswebinars/100-nominations-2016](http://www.cablefax.com/eventsawardswebinars/100-nominations-2016)

Nomination Deadline: January 29 | Free to Enter

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 ● Sr. 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: \$1,699.97/year ● Access Intelligence, LLC, 9211 Corporate Blvd., 4th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850

**AT&T Eyes Unlimited:** AT&T continues to leverage **DirecTV** integration to push for mobile video. It announced an unlimited plan covering video, data, talk and text. However, consumers must have DirecTV or U-verse TV services. **UBS** analyst *John Hodulik* expects this is the first of many integrated video/mobility offerings from AT&T this year. "We believe this is a thoughtful way to seed the DTV customer base with unlimited data ahead of new mobile video offerings (including an OTT linear video product), without running afoul of net neutrality rules (especially given the push back **T-Mobile** is getting with BingeOn)," he wrote in a note to clients. The AT&T plan costs \$100 a month for 1 line, \$40 for each additional line and the 4th line will be at no additional cost. Adding a tablet to the unlimited plan costs \$40 per month extra. Subs have the option to add a tablet for only \$10, but it will only have 1 GB of data per month. For a limited time, the telco is offering up to \$500 in credits for DirecTV or U-verse TV subs who switch to AT&T wireless. And for AT&T wireless subs who aren't DirecTV customers, they can add a TV package starting at \$19.99 per month for 12 months, with a 2-year contract. The company said more integrated video and mobility offerings are coming this year. In addition, it plans to launch a wide-range of new video entertainment options later this year.

**FBN Unbundled:** On Thurs, **Cox**, **Suddenlink** and **Mediacom** will unbundle **Fox Business**, making the channel available to their full sub base ahead of the night's GOP primary debates. The net also will live stream the debates for free without authentication on FoxBusiness.com. FBN's Nov debate set a ratings record for the net of 13.5mln viewers. Its live stream peaked at more than 1.4mln concurrent streams, besting NBC's Super Bowl (1.3mln).

**Golden Globes:** Nice coup for **USA's** "Mr Robot," which snagged the Golden Globe for Best Drama after its 1st season. It defeated **HBO's** "Game of Thrones" and **Netflix's** "Narcos." Another impressive upset was **Amazon Prime's** "Mozart in the Jungle," which won in the Comedy category. While **FX's** "American Horror Story: Hotel" lost the Best Limited Series/Motion Picture Made for TV category to **PBS's** "Wolf Hall," *Lady Gaga* picked up a Globe for her performance in AHS. Awards darling HBO did score a win in Best Performance by Actor in a Limited Series/Made-for-TV Movie (Oscar Isaac, "Show Me a Hero"), while *Maura Tierney* won an acting Globe for her role in **Showtime's** "The Affair." *Jon Hamm* received Best Actor/Drama award for his portrayal of Don Draper in **AMC's** "Mad Men."

**Fox Intl Shakeup:** The **Fox International Channels** banner is going away under a reorg of **Fox Networks Group's** intl TV business that consolidates its global channels under the regional hubs in Europe, Latin America and Asia. As a result, Fox Intl CEO *Hernan Lopez* will step down to launch a new venture, to be announced shortly. *Jan Koepfen* will become pres, Fox Networks Group Europe; *Carlos Martinez* will become pres of Fox Networks Group Latin America; and *Zubin Gandevia* will become pres of Fox Networks Group Asia. All will report to FNG chmn/CEO *Peter Rice* and FNG pres/COO *Randy Freer*.

**Thurs Night Football:** The fate of the **NFL's** Thurs night package is still up in the air, with *Sports Business Daily* reporting that the League is considering splitting the package and selling it to 2 or even 3 broadcast nets. Citing sources, the pub said **ESPN** and **Turner Sports** aren't being aggressive given the short-term nature of the deal (reportedly 1 year, with the option to extend 1 year). Last month, **Time Warner** chief *Jeff Bewkes* said at an investor conference that the programmer would like to get its hands on the Thurs night games, but it would have to make financial sense.

**Effective Competition:** **Time Warner Cable** has asked the **FCC** to reject the **MA Dept of Telecom and Cable's** filing claiming that the town of Adams is not subject to effective competition and thus subject to rate regulation. The state's filing says that MVPD penetration for competing providers is below 15%, but TWC says the analysis is flawed because the DBS subscriber count used from the **Satellite Broadcasting Communications Association** was based on an incomplete sets of zip codes. The MSO said it had identified at least 10 additional zips and submitted them to SBCA, with the new data bringing penetration to 15.02%.

**Soccer Deals:** **Univision Deportes** acquired from the **Union of European Football Associations (UEFA)** the US Spanish-language broadcast rights to all UEFA national team competitions from 2018 to 2022. The rights include the UEFA EURO 2020, UEFA Nations League, UEFA Nations League Final Four and the European Qualifiers to the UEFA EURO 2020 as well as the European Qualifiers to the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Univision Deportes will be airing the matches across its networks including **UDN**, **Univision**, **UniMás**, **Galavisión** and will be streaming the properties via the Univision Deportes app. -- **One World Sports** inked a multi-year, multiplatform agreement for carriage

# BUSINESS & FINANCE

of Juventus TV (JTV), the club channel of Italy's Juventus Football Club. Juventus debuts on the net Tues at 6:30pm. One World will air first-runs of complementary programming including pre- and post-game analysis, player interviews and profiles.

**Comcast's Tomorrow Tour: Comcast NBCU** is teaming with **Technical.ly**, a network of tech news sites (both headquartered in Philly), to launch the Tomorrow Tour, a multi-city event that will bring together entrepreneurs and tech influencers for a day of knowledge-sharing. The tour will visit 6 US cities in 1Q, featuring Comcast NBCU execs and other entrepreneurs. The tour aims to improve collaboration across sectors to drive startup growth, amplify innovation and tech stories, explore and document how technology and innovation are changing cities of the future. Initial cities are Philly, Denver, Miami, Chicago, Detroit and Atlanta.

**MediaBiz Update: MediaBiz Data Solutions**, which provides research and information on the media and entertainment industry, launched MediaMetrics, a business intelligence resource aimed at allowing content owners and distributors across the country to access 100+ OTT and TVE video providers and 400K programs across devices. The company said it recently scored **NBCU** as its client.

## Cablefax Daily Stockwatch

Company	01/11 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	01/11 Close	1-Day Ch
<b>BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS</b>					
DISH:	53.24	(0.57)	CSG SYSTEMS:	33.60	(0.61)
ENTRAVISION:	7.33	0.36	ECHOSTAR:	35.34	0.13
GRAY TELEVISION:	14.07	0.50	GOOGLE:	716.03	1.56
MEDIA GENERAL:	15.85	(0.07)	HARMONIC:	3.50	0.04
NEXSTAR:	50.36	(0.51)	INTEL:	32.06	0.55
SINCLAIR:	29.76	(0.2)	INTERACTIVE CORP:	56.65	0.84
TEGNA:	23.09	(0.41)	LEVEL 3:	49.45	(0.5)
<b>MSOS</b>					
CABLE ONE:	427.40	4.00	MICROSOFT:	52.30	(0.03)
CABLEVISION:	30.78	(0.23)	NETFLIX:	114.97	3.58
CHARTER:	175.63	0.74	NIELSEN:	44.99	0.66
COMCAST:	54.72	0.06	RENTRAK:	41.29	(0.43)
GCI:	19.23	0.63	SEACHANGE:	6.29	0.14
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	49.14	(0.16)	SONY:	23.36	0.36
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	35.51	(2.69)	SPRINT NEXTEL:	3.36	(0.04)
SHAW COMM:	16.59	0.11	TIVO:	7.89	(0.03)
SHENTEL:	20.29	0.02	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	46.99	0.45
TIME WARNER CABLE:	183.30	0.37	VONAGE:	5.07	(0.09)
<b>PROGRAMMING</b>					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	25.88	(0.01)	YAHOO:	30.17	(0.46)
AMC NETWORKS:	75.98	0.08	<b>TELCOS</b>		
CBS:	46.78	0.32	AT&T:	33.95	0.41
CROWN:	4.83	0.06	CENTURYLINK:	24.12	0.15
DISCOVERY:	25.83	(0.18)	FRONTIER:	4.52	(0.16)
DISNEY:	99.92	0.67	TDS:	23.99	0.14
GRUPO TELEVISA:	25.96	0.34	VERIZON:	45.09	0.26
HSN:	48.35	0.32	<b>MARKET INDICES</b>		
LIONSGATE:	28.62	0.05	DOW:	16398.57	52.12
MSG NETWORKS:	19.81	0.16	NASDAQ:	4637.99	(5.64)
SCRIPPS INT:	53.78	0.22	S&P 500:	1923.67	1.64
STARZ:	31.47	UNCH			
TIME WARNER:	69.61	(1.56)			
VIACOM:	43.50	0.13			
WWE:	16.43	0.13			
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>					
ADVANTAGE:	1.72	0.01			
AMDOCS:	51.81	(0.36)			
AMPHENOL:	46.27	(0.36)			
APPLE:	98.53	1.57			
ARRIS GROUP:	26.79	(0.53)			
AVID TECH:	7.12	(0.28)			
BLNDER TONGUE:	0.38	(0.03)			
BROADCOM:	54.18	0.01			
CISCO:	25.27	0.49			
COMMSCOPE:	23.28	(0.08)			
CONCURRENT:	5.40	(0.16)			
CONVERGYS:	23.50	0.07			

## Cablefax Webinar

Jan. 19 • 2:00-3:30pm ET | Register today at [www.cablefax.com/webinars](http://www.cablefax.com/webinars)

### SPEAKERS:



**Melinda Witmer**  
EVP, Chief Video Officer and  
Chief Operating Officer  
Time Warner Cable



**Cory Key**  
Interactive Creative Director  
Discovery  
Communications



**Julian Reyes**  
VR Producer  
Fusion

**Virtual Reality: Are You Ready to Capitalize on TV's Next Big Leap? Register Now!**

# CFX TECH

by Joyce Wang

## CES Wrap

By now, you've read 4,286 stories about the **Consumer Electronics Show** in Vegas last week. And by now, you're sick of hearing about drones, driverless cars, virtual reality and other technology that sounds like it will either oppress or brainwash you before the end of 2016. But fear not. CES is all about presenting tech as your friend. And for media and entertainment execs in attendance, it's a glimpse into hardware, software and consumer obsessions that just may revolutionize how content makes its way into your brain. When it comes to screens and gadgets, the march toward continued personalization continues as what began with the smartphone creeps into content packages across all devices including TVs in the living room. That trend may also explain this year's fixation on VR, which offers perhaps the most immersive personal experience in history. But as often happens with new tech, explaining it to curious consumers faces a big challenge, namely that the VR wares being pushed at CES offer vastly different levels of immersion. From the low-end utility of **Google** Cardboard to the high-end (and therefore expensive) wonder of **Facebook's** Oculus Rift headset, VR can mean different things to different users. And the potential for confusion is a real threat as distributors and programmers wade their toes in the VR waters. Getting a little less press last week was the Internet of Things, which perhaps was lost in some of the other noise of the show, but certainly commanded a big presence on the myriad exhibit floors. For media companies, finding a way onto a refrigerator—or even a robotic and Internet-connected beer making machine—may not be top of the list. But neither was VR last year. And yet here we are. So until the day when a driverless drone flies us through the VR looking glass and into a personalized 4K hologram controlled by a smartphone, we'll just have to settle for the current reality. Virtual or not. - *Michael Grebb*

**CES:** Turns out travel delays weren't much of a hindrance. **CES 2016** drew a solid 170K attendees, on par with last year's record-breaking attendance. This year's attendees included 50K overseas visitors. The event featured 3,800 exhibitors and nearly 2.5mln square feet of exhibition space.

**Virtual Reality Becoming a Reality:** As CES attendees were sucked into virtual reality on the show floor, a new study showed that the tech is on the public's radar. A majority of consumers (56%) who play any type of game (70% in the US), ages 8-64, have heard of virtual reality, according to research by **Frank N Magid Associates**. When it comes to awareness of devices, gamers are most familiar with Oculus Rift (25%), followed by **Samsung** VR Gear at 21%, PlayStation VR at 20%, and **Google** Cardboard at 17%. A quarter (24%) of the gamer respondents in this survey said they were "very interested" in a VR experience in the home, while a similarly sized group at 23% said they were "interested" in VR. And it's not all about gaming. Among those interested in VR, the #1 type of content of interest was movies & TV (66%), followed by console and PC gaming (59%). Want to learn more about VR? Check out **Cablefax's** Jan 19 webinar on VR at **Cablefax.com**.

**Business Service Expansion:** **RCN Business** has expanded its network into telecom provider **Telehouse's** data center in NYC. Under the deal, RCN Business will provide services including dedicated internet access, hosted voice, video and dark fiber services to businesses of all sizes co-located in the facility. -- Comcast's enterprise arm Comcast Business will expand its fiber network to Huntsville, AL, which is expected to provide up to 10 Gbps speeds to local businesses.

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



## SCREENSTER Reach Your Key Audience!

### SCREENSTER IS:

- The Convergence of Online Content and Traditional Media
- Community Building and Audience Aggregation
- Social and Digital Communication
- Monetization Efforts Across Multiple Sectors
- ...And Much More!

[www.cablefax.com/screenster](http://www.cablefax.com/screenster) | Special Advertising Packages Available!

For more information contact: Olivia Murray: [omurray@accessintel.com](mailto:omurray@accessintel.com) or 301-354-2010