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4 Pages Today

Cablefax Daily™

Friday — January 15, 2016

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 27 / No. 009

Merger Watch: Time Warner Inc Sounds Alarm on Charter-TWC

HBO and Time Warner execs were at the FCC Mon, raising potential OTT concerns about Charter's planned acquisition of Time Warner Cable. The FCC extended the invitation (it's chatting with many companies about the merger), with TWX gen counsel *Paul Cappuccio* and HBO global distribution pres *Tom Woodbury* meeting with FCC gen counsel *Jonathan Sallet* and others. "The discussion focused on certain statements made by representatives of Charter, both in private interactions and in public forums, including analyst calls and television interviews," said an ex parte posted by the FCC Thurs. "Some of these statements raise concerns because they suggest that a combined Charter-Time Warner Cable would be included to take action directed at programmers in response to the development of 'over the top,' or 'OTT,' services with the purpose and/or effect of slowing down the development of OTT options to the detriment of consumers." The filing did not specify what statements caught its attention, and TWX declined comment. In Oct 2014, before Charter entered into the merger, CEO *Tom Rutledge* suggested that HBO and CBS going direct to consumers could be good for cable because it could help break up the "very fat" bundle of programming. In Oct of last year, Rutledge complained about programmers not policing password sharing for their TV Everywhere apps. Charter repeated its stance that there is "no more friendly broadband provider to OVDs" than itself. "Charter's slowest speed is 60 Mbps, we have no data caps, no usage based billing, no contracts and no modem fees," said a MSO statement. Last year, HBO began offering the premium channel on standalone, OTT basis through its HBO Now service. DISH has opposed the merger, claiming the combined company would have an incentive to hinder OTT competition. Most programmers have been positive on the deal, though Herring Networks (AWE and One America News Now) also has raised concerns about OTT. TWX urged the FCC to take its concerns into consideration while reviewing the proposed transaction and in formulating any potential conditions. The FCC paused its informal 180-day merger review clock on Jan 4 to give commentators time to catch up to various submissions and supplemental filings. While the clock is paused, the FCC has continued to work. Last week, it requested more information from Level 3, including details on its most recent interconnection agreement with Bright House.

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Profiles will be featured in Cablefax:
The Magazine's Multiscreen March Issue



Deadline: January 15 | Questions? Contact Alex Virden at avirden@accessintel.com

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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 ● 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

Pai on Communicators: Republican FCC commish *Ajit Pai* will appear on **C-SPAN's** "Communicators" Sat, 6:30pm (online Fri at c-span.org). Among the topics discussed in the half-hour interview was the FCC's probe into **T-Mobile's** Binge On offering, saying it represents one of the reasons he expressed concerns about the FCC's general conduct standard and Open Internet order. "The uncertainty is generated in part by the fact the agency has been of 2 voices," calling Binge On "highly competitive and highly innovative in Nov," Pai said. "A few months later, 2 bureaus are hauling in that company. That's the very definition of regulatory uncertainty." The commish also touched on **CES**, saying he walked away from Vegas impressed, including by an **Oculus** virtual reality demo. "I certainly hope any future innovation, virtual reality, will be tested in my own household. I'm making myself available for any of it because I think it's really exciting to see what the possibilities are," he said.

Midcontinent Rebrands: Midcontinent has changed its name to "Midco" with a new logo. In a release Thurs, the company said the "shortened name, logo and marketing honor our past, and more importantly, point to where we're going in the future." Midco subs in MN, ND, SD and WI will see some changes immediately, including advertising and marketing materials that will use the new name and logo. The company is also planning to deploy gigabit speeds to the company's entire footprint by the end of 2017.

Sling Number: DISH's subscription streaming service Sling TV had an estimated 346K subs at the end of 3Q. DISH is expected to end 2016 with more than 2mIn Sling TV subs, **Goldman Sachs** analyst *Brett Feldman* said in a research report Thurs. Feldman estimates DISH will lose 724K satellite TV subs in 2016, up from an estimated 543K loss last year.

Distribution: On the heels of **TheBlaze's** recent launch on **Verizon FiOS**, the *Glenn Beck* net announced a multi-year deal with **NCTC**.

TWC Fights Robocalls: Time Warner Cable launched Nomorobo, a 3rd-party call-blocking application aimed at stopping unwanted telemarketing and robocalls for its phone subs. The company has already integrated the feature into its home phone management Website, VoiceZone. The service uses TWC's "Answer Anywhere" technology, a feature that allows incoming calls to be routed to up to 5 different telephone lines. The call rings in the home and simultaneously at Nomorobo's servers. If the number is on a so-called "blacklist," the call will end after one ring.

AMCN App Moves: Before there was podcast "Serial" or **Netflix's** "Making of a Murderer," there was **SundanceTV's** award winning "The Staircase." If you've never seen the documentary series on accused murderer/novelist *Michael Peterson*, rest assured that it'll be available on the SundanceTV app and website starting today, with the first 2 eps of the 8-part series requiring no authentication. -- **AMC Networks** seems to be playing around with its mobile apps, announcing that **IFC** is making its hit series "Portlandia" available for free on its mobile app ahead of Thurs' linear premiere. The app features full eps of IFC originals and access to nearly 30 distinct web series that were formerly only available on IFC.com.

Comcast Wholesale: Denver-based **Comcast Wholesale**, a unit of the company that provides IP voice, data, and digital content distribution, recently added international IP voice termination to its portfolio of services for MVPDs, ILECs, CLECs and OTT voice carriers. The service seeks to lower the costs of international calls.

Research: Global telecom, media and tech mergers and acquisitions reached a record 3,021 transactions in 2015 with a \$768.3bln value, according to research firm **Mergermarket**. That's up 46% YOY. With 977 transactions valued at \$412.5bln, the US saw the most and the biggest deals. The largest deal of the year was **Charter's** proposed \$78.7bln purchase of **Time Warner Cable**. The firm expects the trend to continue in 2016, driven in particular by US activity as companies seek to expand their presence in new markets. -- Global set-top shipments maintained elevated levels in 2015 thanks to demand in emerging markets like China and India, according to a report by **SNL Kagan**. Worldwide set-top shipments are estimated to be around 253.1mln in 2015, up from 248.6mln in 2014, as the global multichannel market grew to an estimated 959mln subs. Worldwide cable set-top shipments are expected to be around 75mln units in 2015, largely unchanged from 2014. In the near term, demand for cable set tops is expected to be flat as many of the world's largest cable TV markets approach saturation or experience increasing competition from online video providers. The market for IP STBs

BUSINESS & FINANCE

is also projected to remain relatively flat over the next few years, as growing demand for IP STBs in Europe and Asia is offset by declining demand in North America.

Programming: USA Network picked up pilot “Falling Water.” The thriller tells the story of 3 unrelated people, who realize that they are dreaming separate parts of a single common dream. -- **Discovery** bows new series “Deadliest Job Interview,” where rookies try to land a permanent spot doing some of the world’s most dangerous jobs, on Jan 29, 10pm. -- **AXS TV** brings back “The World’s Greatest Tribute Bands” for a 6th season to debut Feb 17. -- **One World Sports** inked a deal with **Harvard University’s** Athletics program to air 5 home games on the net this year. Programs will feature 3 men’s hockey events and 2 women’s hockey contests, with all 5 productions simulcast on the **Ivy League Digital Network**.

People: TruTV promoted *Marissa Ronca* to evp, head of programming, and *Puja Vohra* to evp, marketing and digital. Both will continue to report to *Chris Linn*, pres of truTV. Ronca most recently served as svp of development & original programming, while Vohra most recently served as svp of marketing and digital. -- **CTHRA** added **Scripps Nets Interactive** svp, intl HR *Cheryl Middleton Jones* to its board.

Cablefax Daily Stockwatch

Company	01/14 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	01/14 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DISH:	51.73	(0.34)	CSG SYSTEMS:	33.78	0.25
ENTRAVISION:	7.34	0.25	ECHOSTAR:	35.04	0.27
GRAY TELEVISION:	14.24	0.83	GOOGLE:	714.72	14.16
MEDIA GENERAL:	15.82	0.35	HARMONIC:	3.40	0.07
NEXSTAR:	49.08	0.62	INTEL:	32.74	0.83
SINCLAIR:	29.79	0.50	INTERACTIVE CORP:	55.38	0.70
TEGNA:	24.29	1.42	LEVEL 3:	48.36	0.99
MSOS					
CABLE ONE:	420.50	0.88	MICROSOFT:	53.11	1.47
CABLEVISION:	31.20	0.39	NETFLIX:	107.06	0.50
CHARTER:	172.31	4.32	NIELSEN:	45.70	1.08
COMCAST:	55.05	1.50	RENTRAK:	47.57	3.53
GCI:	19.03	0.18	SEACHANGE:	6.48	(0.12)
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	49.45	1.34	SONY:	22.30	(0.19)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	34.79	1.05	SPRINT NEXTEL:	3.19	0.09
SHAW COMM:	17.18	(0.04)	TIVO:	8.08	0.22
SHENTEL:	21.03	0.50	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	46.70	(0.03)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	181.96	2.39	VONAGE:	5.05	0.16
PROGRAMMING					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	26.56	0.68	YAHOO:	30.32	0.88
AMC NETWORKS:	75.88	1.67	TELCOS		
CBS:	46.73	1.79	AT&T:	34.30	0.56
CROWN:	4.68	0.11	CENTURYLINK:	23.89	0.87
DISCOVERY:	26.30	0.76	FRONTIER:	4.37	0.20
DISNEY:	99.11	0.63	TDS:	23.01	0.24
GRUPO TELEVISA:	27.28	0.36	VERIZON:	44.87	0.72
HSN:	46.99	(0.55)	MARKET INDICES		
LIONSGATE:	28.97	0.31	DOW:	16379.05	227.64
MSG NETWORKS:	20.10	0.54	NASDAQ:	4615.00	88.94
SCRIPPS INT:	57.10	2.50	S&P 500:	1921.84	31.56
STARZ:	31.43	0.32			
TIME WARNER:	70.55	(0.1)			
VIACOM:	43.65	0.59			
WWE:	16.83	0.73			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADDVANTAGE:	1.83	0.10			
AMDOCS:	53.92	1.12			
AMPHENOL:	46.71	0.16			
APPLE:	99.52	2.13			
ARRIS GROUP:	28.01	1.28			
AVID TECH:	7.67	0.37			
BLNDER TONGUE:	0.38	0.00			
BROADCOM:	54.00	0.78			
CISCO:	24.66	0.06			
COMMSCOPE:	23.31	0.25			
CONCURRENT:	5.29	0.04			
CONVERGYS:	23.54	0.71			

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PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

Potomac, 20854

When **Bravo** announced that its latest “Real Housewives” franchise would be set in Potomac, MD, there was some excitement in our Rockville office. After all, Potomac is about 10 miles down the road from **Cablefax’s** headquarters. But while we’re very familiar with the zip code’s mansions, delish restaurants (hello Founding Farmers) and celebrity residents (Wonder Woman herself), is the rest of America? Bravo recognizes this, with trailers that ask “Where’s Potomac?” “The reason it’s Potomac is this particular cast is really exceptional and amazing, and they all are in Potomac,” *Shari Levine*, evp, current production, Bravo Media, told us. The women of Potomac include *Charrisse Jackson-Jordan*, wife of former Wizards head coach and current Rutgers men’s basketball coach *Eddie Jordan*. There’s also *Gizelle Bryant*, the ex-wife of Baltimore mega-church pastor *Jamal Bryant*, and *Robyn Dixon*, who still lives with ex-husband and former **NBA** star *Juan Dixon*. “If [Potomac is] the best-kept secret now, we’re hoping that once the series starts and people start to see it, it won’t be a best kept secret any longer,” Levine said. The cat almost was out of the bag in the 1990s, as “Beverly Hills, 90210” creator *Darren Star* wanted the show to be “Potomac, 20854,” but execs thought a Beverly Hills zip code would be more familiar to viewers. Real Housewives had a series set in DC that focused on political power, but ratings never really took off and it was canceled after 1 season. RHOP is a completely different vibe, with political prowess traded for suburban flair. It is also one of the franchise’s most diverse casts, following 6 African-American women. Potomac’s not as diverse, with the population 75% white, according to the 2010 US Census. Jackson-Jordan quips in the premiere ep (Sun, 9pm) that folks weren’t too friendly at first because they assumed she was a Section 8 housing voucher resident. The 1st ep has the ladies batting around the word “etiquette” a lot, offering the hint that this latest installment may offer something past casts haven’t with their table-flipping and wig-pulling. Or not. Either way, **Cablefax** is ready for a cameo. – *Amy Maclean*

Reviews: “War & Peace,” Mon, 9pm, **A&E, History, Lifetime**. It will be interesting to see if today’s viewer, whose attention span is reputed to be shorter than a goldfish’s, can last for 8 hours over 4 nights for this good adaptation of *Tolstoy’s* classic. Lean in: Filmed sumptuously in Eastern Europe, the tale of imperial Russia’s last days is loaded with characters from the five aristocratic families the story follows. In the early eps, American actor *Paul Dano* is the standout, more than holding his own as well-intentioned yet naïve *Pierre Bezukhov*. -- “Rachel Hunter’s Tour of Beauty,” premiere, Sun, 8pm ET, **Ovation**. Supermodel Hunter’s premiere show is a paean to Paris, but the 2nd ep, in S Korea, is far more interesting, exploring that country’s obsession with outer beauty, which has women trying things ancient and modern, including plastic surgery. Hunter is a delightful and, yes, beautiful host. -- “Portlandia,” 6th season premiere, Thurs, 10pm, **IFC**. The trio of eps IFC sent feature full-length stories as opposed to short sketches; each is a quirky gem. *Fred Armisen* and *Carrie Brownstein* hit their stride and receive excellent support from *Natasha Lyonne*. -- “Justice for MLK: The Hunt for *James Earl Ray*,” Sun, 9pm, **AHC**. An extensive look at the **FBI’s** 65-day manhunt, its biggest for a killer who remains an enigma. – *Seth Arenstein*

Basic Cable Rankings			
(01/04/16-01/10/16)			
Mon-Sun Prime			
1	FOXN	0.8	1966
1	DISC	0.8	1850
3	TBSC	0.7	1659
3	HGTV	0.7	1641
3	USA	0.7	1619
6	DSNY	0.6	1487
6	ESPN	0.6	1385
6	DSE	0.6	128
9	HIST	0.5	1290
9	ID	0.5	1033
11	FOOD	0.4	1075
11	FX	0.4	1016
11	ADSM	0.4	986
11	TNT	0.4	968
11	FAM	0.4	932
11	TLC	0.4	908
11	SPK	0.4	876
11	A&E	0.4	846
11	NAN	0.4	836
11	HALL	0.4	807
21	LIFE	0.3	836
21	AMC	0.3	812
21	CNN	0.3	774
21	MSNB	0.3	731
21	BRAV	0.3	705
21	SYFY	0.3	656
21	APL	0.3	652
21	NKJR	0.3	598
21	DSJR	0.3	594
21	OWN	0.3	591
21	VH1	0.3	586
21	LMN	0.3	541
21	HMM	0.3	479
34	MTV	0.2	557
34	TVLD	0.2	544
34	WETV	0.2	543
34	EN	0.2	539
34	CMDY	0.2	531
34	BET	0.2	495
34	GSN	0.2	469
34	TRAV	0.2	449
34	CNBC	0.2	428
34	INSP	0.2	423
34	NGC	0.2	414

*Nielsen data, supplied by ABC/Disney, is based on coverage area of individual networks

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