

Cablefax Daily™

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What the Industry Reads First

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At TCA: Everything Old is New Again

Blame it on “Downton Abbey” if you want or perhaps it’s the fault of the digital age, but TV’s penchant for history, specifically series and films based in historic times or about historic icons, was clearly in evidence during TCA. And while every network’s goal is to attract a younger audience, programmers apparently think telling stories to a new generation about events and people from the past can be a successful formula. History is the way to go, **American Heroes Channel** chief *Kevin Bennett* told TCA. “We see a clear mandate from our audience. They want high-quality history programming that is currently missing from the television landscape... looking ahead, we are fully committing to the genre. We have 36 hours of premiere history series and specials in just the first quarter of 2016.” One of the most promising looks to be the doc, “Justice for MLK: The Hunt for *James Earl Ray*,” which will debut on the evening before MLK Day. The next case in point is **Ovation’s** “The Artful Detective” (season 9 premiere, Jan 23), set in Toronto at the dawn of the 20th century. A clip shown to critics last week featured none other than late-60s icon *William Shatner*, 84, guesting as *Mark Twain*. Then it was on to the net’s series about writers, “Rough Draft with *Reza Aslan*” (Feb 28 premiere). It didn’t seem to be a coincidence that *Norman Lear*, the 93-years-young creator of “All in The Family,” “Maude” and “Sanford and Son” among many others, was the guest *Ovation* touted to TCA. **ESPN** brought a slate of upcoming docs, all of which examine stories and people, including the 1985 Chicago Bears, the Duke University lacrosse rape scandal of 2006 and a documentary series, the net’s first, that traces the life of *O.J. Simpson*, including the mid-1990s murder case against him. **A&E** touted “The Frankenstein Chronicles” (premiere TBD), which examines the dark world of body snatching and other nefarious activities in London around 1818, the time *Mary Shelley’s* iconic novel was published. *Sean Bean* plays an inspector who finds a corpse that’s actually a collection of disparate body parts stitched together, aping Frankenstein. A&E, **Lifetime** and **History** will simulcast limited series “War and Peace” (begins Jan 18), *Leo Tolstoy’s* 1869 book about early-1800s Russia; the author’s first title for the book was “The Year 1805.” A large portion of **HBO’s** TCA presentation was devoted to history. In addition to the series “Vinyl,” a *Martin Scorsese-Mick Jagger* collaboration about rock music in 1970s NY (Feb 14 premiere), a pair of spring premieres from HBO Films have historic backdrops: “All the Way,” about President *Lyndon B. Johnson*, with *Bryan Cranston* reprising his Broadway role as the complicated successor to *JFK*, and “Confirmation,” which examines the 1991

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Supreme Court nomination hearing of now-Supreme Court Justice *Clarence Thomas*. *Wendell Pierce* plays Thomas; *Kerry Washington* is *Anita Hill*. Returning series “Black Sails” (Season 3 premiere, Jan 23, **Starz**) dramatizes the exploits of pirates like *Edward Teach*, aka Blackbeard, in the early 1700s. And the net also has “Outlander,” with its 18th Century historical backdrop. Another new history-tinged series is **WGN’s** “Underground” (March 9 premiere), a drama taking its name from *Harriet Tubman’s* Underground Railroad that smuggled African-America slaves out of servitude to free states and Canada during the 19th century. Singer *John Legend* is the producer. While we’d be hard-pressed to call the original “Beverly Hills 90210” a piece of history, it is in a sense. And creator *Darren Starr* was at **Hulu’s** TCA presentation to muse over how digital platforms are exposing a whole new generation to his series. “I don’t know if they are watching it for the nostalgia trip or they are actually getting invested. I’m sure they are getting invested in the stories and the characters, but there’s just something... it’s a time capsule, which I think is kind of cool for younger viewers to see.” Of course, at times, TV uses history merely as a backdrop or to facilitate time travel, witness Hulu’s upcoming original, an adaptation of *Stephen King’s* 2011 novel *11.22.63*, about English teacher *Jake Epping* who’s tasked with preventing JFK’s assassination. In addition to King, the project’s cache includes *J.J. Abrams* and *James Franco*, its star.

Charter Merger-Diversity: Charter and leaders of the **National Urban League**, **National Council of La Raza** and 10 other civic organizations serving communities of color announced an agreement that will take effect upon the closing of its merger with **Time Warner Cable** and acquisition of **Bright House**. Under it, Charter committed to appointing 1 African American, 1 Asian American/Pacific Islander and 1 Latino American to its newly formed board within 2 years of transaction close. It will also appoint a chief diversity officer who will lead the company’s diversity and inclusion efforts. The MOU also details steps the new company will take to improve diversity in its workforce and among suppliers, and also covers expanding programming targeting diverse audiences and its involvement in organizations serving communities of color.

Retrans Replies: A Northwestern law professor is telling the **FCC** that he believes the agency has ample authority to adopt additional procedures governing retrans consent renewal negotiations, including requiring interim carriage. Prof. *James Speta’s* comments came along with many others late last week as replies were due in the Commission’s proceeding to examine what constitutes good faith in retrans negotiations. Speta was hired by **Mediacom** to review the issue but said the conclusions reached were solely his own (Mediacom does share his opinion). The professor concluded that the Communications Act and Section 325 supports such intervention. “The Commission is no doubt correct that ‘Congress did not intend the Commission to sit in judgment of the terms of every retransmission consent agreement executed between a broadcaster and an MVPD.’ But the Commission can take actions that fall far short of that level of intrusion, in my view, so long as it respects some right to bargain in good faith to impasse,” he wrote. In a 98-page filing, **ACA** took aim at broadcasters’ insistence on bundling the Big 4 broadcast signals with RSNs or must-have programming and blackouts involving linear programming before marquee events, asking that those and other actions, such as online blocking, be viewed as per se violations of the good faith rules. **DISH**, which has had several retrans blackouts in recent months, filed a statement from its director of local programming, who said broadcasters require DISH to carry at least 1 multicast, cable channel or duplicative station in at least 75% of the retrans deals she negotiates. **NCTA’s** initial comments focused on online blocking of programming in negotiations being a violation. It defended that stance, saying broadcasters who argue it would be tantamount to requiring them to make their content available online for free miss the point. NCTA said it is referring to content broadcasters are already making available online to the general public, and nothing in the Communication Act, Copyright Act or Constitution prohibits such a narrowly focused ruling. **NAB** argued that such comments show that distributors aren’t in this for consumer welfare, but to prevent broadcasters from negotiating fair market value for their signals. “Good faith negotiation complaints are exceedingly rare. In fact, the record and recent FCC experience in this area should drive the Commission to close this proceeding as soon as practicable, so as to remove the greatest impediment to the successful and timely conclusion of retransmission consent agreements: MVPDs’ ongoing wish for government intervention,” the broadcast group said.

Debate #6 Ratings: **Fox Business** netted 11mln total viewers for Thurs’ night’s GOP debate (3mln in the so-called new demo of 25-54s). It was the 2nd highest-rated program in network history, behind Debate #4 that it aired in Nov (13.5mln). The showdown had 1.2mln peak concurrent streams, just behind its record-breaking 1.4mln streams for Nov’s debate. The undercard debate at 6pm drew 2mln viewers.

Cablefax Week in Review

Company	Ticker	1/15 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS				
DISH:	DISH	49.94	(7.19%)	(12.66%)
ENTRAVISION:	EVC	7.16	2.73%	(7.13%)
GRAY TELEVISION:	GTN	13.76	1.40%	(15.58%)
MEDIA GENERAL:	MEG	15.58	(2.14%)	(3.53%)
NEXSTAR:	NXST	48.29	(5.07%)	(17.73%)
SINCLAIR:	SBGI	29.60	(1.2%)	(9.04%)
TEGNA:	TGNA	24.02	2.21%	(5.88%)

Company	Ticker	1/15 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
MSOS				
CABLE ONE:	CABO	421.36	(0.48%)	(2.84%)
CABLEVISION:	CVC	30.95	(0.19%)	(2.98%)
CHARTER:	CHTR	165.08	(5.61%)	(9.79%)
COMCAST:	CMCSA	53.89	(1.43%)	(4.5%)
GCI:	GNCMA	19.12	2.80%	17.37%
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	LBRDA	47.83	(2.98%)	(7.4%)
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	LBTYA	33.16	(13.19%)	(21.72%)
SHAW COMM:	SJR	16.50	0.12%	(4.01%)
SHENTEL:	SHEN	20.61	1.68%	(52.13%)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	TWC	177.03	(3.23%)	(4.61%)

Company	Ticker	1/15 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
PROGRAMMING				
21ST CENTURY FOX:	FOXA	26.10	0.81%	(3.9%)
AMC NETWORKS:	AMCX	73.31	(3.41%)	(1.83%)
CBS:	CBS	45.88	(1.25%)	(2.65%)
CROWN:	CRWN	4.56	(4.4%)	(18.72%)
DISCOVERY:	DISCA	25.89	(0.46%)	(2.96%)
DISNEY:	DIS	93.90	(5.39%)	(10.64%)
GRUPO TELEVISIA:	TV	26.03	1.60%	(4.34%)
HSN:	HSNI	47.50	(1.1%)	(6.26%)
LIONSGATE:	LGF	28.00	(2%)	(13.55%)
MSG NETWORKS:	MSGN	19.50	(0.76%)	(6.25%)
SCRIPPS INT:	SNI	56.00	4.56%	1.43%
STARZ:	STRZA	31.03	(1.4%)	(7.37%)
TIME WARNER:	TWX	69.65	(2.14%)	7.70%
VIACOM:	VIA	42.38	(2.28%)	(3.66%)
WWE:	WWE	16.80	3.07%	(5.83%)

Company	Ticker	1/15 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
TECHNOLOGY				
ADDVANTAGE:	AEY	1.83	7.02%	1.10%
AMDOCS:	DOX	53.14	1.86%	(2.62%)
AMPHENOL:	APH	45.49	(2.44%)	(12.9%)
APPLE:	AAPL	97.13	0.18%	(7.72%)
ARRIS GROUP:	ARRS	26.42	(3.29%)	(13.58%)
AVID TECH:	AVID	7.24	(2.16%)	(0.69%)
BLNDER TONGUE:	BDR	0.41	(0.27%)	2.22%
BROADCOM:	BRCM	52.94	(2.27%)	(8.44%)
CISCO:	CSCO	23.62	(4.68%)	(13.03%)
COMMSCOPE:	COMM	22.73	(2.7%)	(12.21%)
CONCURRENT:	CCUR	5.25	(5.58%)	6.06%
CONVERGYS:	CVG	23.38	(0.21%)	(6.07%)
CSG SYSTEMS:	CSGS	33.02	(3.48%)	(8.23%)
ECHOSTAR:	SATS	34.39	(2.33%)	(12.07%)
GOOGLE:	GOOG	694.45	(2.8%)	(8.49%)
HARMONIC:	HLIT	3.33	(3.76%)	(18.18%)
INTEL:	INTC	29.76	(5.55%)	(13.61%)
INTERACTIVE CORP:	IACI	54.46	(2.42%)	(9.31%)
LEVEL 3:	LVT	46.71	(6.49%)	(14.07%)

Company	Ticker	1/15 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
MICROSOFT:	MSFT	50.99	(2.56%)	(8.09%)
NETFLIX:	NFLX	104.04	(6.6%)	(9.04%)
NIELSEN:	NLSN	44.69	0.81%	(4.1%)
RENTRAK:	RENT	48.79	16.95%	2.65%
SEACHANGE:	SEAC	6.23	1.30%	(7.57%)
SONY:	SNE	21.44	(6.78%)	(12.88%)
SPRINT NEXTEL:	S	2.87	(15.59%)	(20.72%)
TIVO:	TIVO	7.82	(1.26%)	(9.39%)
UNIVERSAL ELEC:	UEIC	46.74	0.43%	(8.98%)
VONAGE:	VG	4.71	(8.72%)	(17.94%)
YAHOO:	YHOO	29.14	(4.86%)	(12.39%)

Company	Ticker	1/15 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
TELCOS				
AT&T:	T	33.99	1.34%	(1.22%)
CENTURYLINK:	CTL	23.29	(2.84%)	(7.43%)
FRONTIER:	FTR	4.24	(9.21%)	(9.21%)
TDS:	TDS	21.91	(8.13%)	(15.37%)
VERIZON:	VZ	44.43	(0.89%)	(3.87%)

Index	Value	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
MARKET INDICES			
DOW:	DJI	15988.08	(2.19%) (8.25%)
NASDAQ:	IXIC	4488.42	(3.34%) (10.36%)
S&P 500:	GSPC	1880.29	(2.17%) (8.01%)

WINNERS & LOSERS

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE WINNERS

COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. RENTRAK:	48.79	16.95%
2. ADDVANTAGE:	1.83	7.02%
3. SCRIPPS INT:	56.00	4.56%
4. WWE:	16.80	3.07%
5. GCI:	19.12	2.80%

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE LOSERS

COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. SPRINT NEXTEL:	2.87	(15.59%)
2. LIBERTY GLOBAL:	33.16	(13.19%)
3. FRONTIER:	4.24	(9.21%)
4. VONAGE:	4.71	(8.72%)
5. TDS:	21.91	(8.13%)

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CFX TECH by Joyce Wang

Arris Exec Talks Gigabit Service

It seems there is a new gigabit broadband launch almost every week, and the pace is likely to pick up in 2016. “In short, multi-gigabit is enabling the future of TV,” which centers on immersive and interactive video experiences, **Arris** CTO of customer premises equipment *Charles Cheevers* said. Whether they include virtual reality, Fast Sync, 360-degree viewing, or 8K, these services are going to need bandwidth anywhere from 10 Mbps to more than 20 Gbps for 4K virtual reality, he said. And any household will likely use these services wirelessly and on multiple devices, simultaneously. The next-generation consumer experience will be all about immediacy and believability: lower latency with higher resolutions and frame rates, the exec said. With more and more content residing in the cloud, the challenge is to get content to the home network and distribute it to the right devices without lag or noticeable drops in performance, he said. More than 80% of home devices are connected to WiFi, with many client devices supporting 2x2 (2 antennas on the access point side and 2 antennas one the client side). And “we are seeing more 3x3 radios, offering almost gigabit capability to a single client,” he said. That creates a challenge for the home network because a single access point can’t deliver a sustained speed across multiple walls in the home. That’s where extenders come into play. According to Cheevers, two 4X4 devices can allow most of the home to experience gigabit WiFi at 5 GHz levels, which enables new services like 4K. There’s also an emerging trend that leverages the extender network to offer new IoT devices for vertical industries like health-care, energy and utility, he noted. Meanwhile, with the emergence of DOCSIS 3.1, the move to more IP video delivery will happen in 2016, the exec said. As part of the convergence of the traditional and online video experiences, future set-tops will feature smaller, converged devices that offer the highest possible WiFi performance, Cheevers said. And with the rise of demand

for UltraHD, “MSOs have begun refreshing their set-tops to support future HDR services.” In terms of the user interface, voice control—increasingly integrated into the remote control—has proven a “good, controlled solution for content navigation.” In addition, set-tops with Bluetooth make a great IoT hub for wearables and medical sensor onboarding, he said: “Through cloud virtualization and processing solutions, the set-top can be more extensible and provide more advanced services sooner.”

ClowdTV Launches DVR Service: Startup **ClowdTV**, which offers micro online pay-TV packages, launched its 1st cloud DVR service starting at \$3 a month. Customers can record multiple shows at once. ClowdTV currently provides access to nearly 58 channels across platforms, including Android, iOS, **Roku** players, **Amazon** Fire TV, Sony and **Hisense** smart TVs, **TiVo** and **Samsung** BluRay players.

Research: **Deloitte** predicts that the number of gigabit Internet connections will surge to 10mln by the end of the year, a ten-fold increase of which about 70% will be residential connections. In a study released Wed, the firm said rising demand of gigabit services will be driven by increasing availability of devices and falling prices. It expects around 600mln subs to be on networks offering gigabit speeds as of 2020, representing the majority of connected homes in the world. Meanwhile, the US pay-TV market might see some erosion in the next few years. Deloitte predicts that the number of US subs who cut the cord is likely to be just over 1% in 2016, around 1.5% in 2017, and around 2% in 2018. By 2020, it predicts that there are likely to be around 90mln US homes still paying for some version of the traditional bundle which, while down from the peak of 100.9mln subscribers in 2011, will be 18mln higher than the 72mln US cable and satellite subs in 1997.

Got tech news? Reach out to Cablefax Tech editor Joyce Wang at jwang@accessintel.com



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