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What the Industry Reads First

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Comcast UltraHD: Pushing HDR Forward

While major ops have rushed to join the 4K race, **Comcast** has stayed relatively quiet about its 4K plans in the last few months as demand for 4K remains uncertain. However, the integration of High Dynamic Range technology might change the game for UltraHD adoption. The goal, according to evp/gm of video service for Comcast Cable *Matt Strauss*, is to offer full UltraHD experiences. That's why instead of launching a 4K set-top box, "we are pivoting more towards a HDR [high dynamic range] box" around mid-year 2016, Strauss told us. The boxes are expected to be ready in time for the Rio Olympics. And toward the end of the year and into 2017, the company is looking to offer Xi6, a new set-top that combines HDR and 4K, "providing a true UltraHD experience," the exec said. Comcast has tested 4K boxes in closed trials and was expected to launch such boxes, dubbed Xi4, in late 2015, delivering 4K directly to the X1 video platform. However, "from the closed trials we concluded that deploying 4K boxes without HDR is not the experience we want to make available to our customers. That's why we are pausing on 4K only trials and putting more resources behind 4K with HDR," said Strauss. HDR is designed to increase the peak luminance output so that the brighter part of the video increases in intensity while maintaining detail in the dark portions of the video, thus providing significant picture quality improvement. That's expected to make the value proposition of UltraHD clearer for consumers, according to Strauss. The combination of 4K and HDR will really move the UltraHD experience forward, he said. Comcast first joined the race of 4K with the launch of a 4K app on **Samsung** smart TVs in 2014, offering limited movie and TV programs. "You will continue to see us launch Xfinity 4K apps on other connected TV devices" even though it's still early stage for 4K, Strauss said. The expected launch of HDR-capable boxes would enable the delivery of live 4K channels. Strauss noted some content providers are getting behind HDR. The real catalyst for adoption will be the programming community embracing HDR and delivering more content in HDR, he said. He expects more momentum behind HDR later this year and early next year. And Comcast will be ready to support 4K HDR content, both live and VOD, he said. On the marketing side, Strauss said the company isn't looking to accelerate its marketing efforts behind 4K/HDR until the time is right. TV vendors demonstrated vari-

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ous HDR-ready sets at the CES earlier this year, but content is still limited with the exception of a few video clips and films used for testing and HDR streaming. A reason was there were multiple HDR technologies, including the ones from **Technicolor**, **Philips** and **Dolby**. The good news is earlier this year, Technicolor and Philips agreed to merge their respective HDR technologies to boost adoption.

Public Files Vote: The **FCC** will vote on a proposal to require cable and satellite ops to post their public files on its online database during its Open Meeting on Jan 28. Broadcasters are already required to file political ad records to an FCC database. The agency OKed a proposed rulemaking in late 2014 to extend the requirement to cable and satellite providers (as well as radio stations).

Cable Readies for Storm: **The Weather Channel** was set to provide a total of 75 hours of live, national coverage of Winter Storm Jonas as it approached the East Coast and was threatening to bring up to 30 inches of snow, a spokeswoman said. The live program, "Winter Storm Jonas: A Special Report," started Thurs and will continue through Sun. The net deployed 9 meteorologists and reporters across 5 cities, including DC, Atlantic City, NYC,, Charlotte and Memphis. **Verizon FiOS** dropped the net after their carriage agreement expired in March. Several other ops, including **Cox**, **Time Warner Cable** and **NCTC**, renewed their carriage deals with the net. On the ops side, **Comcast** is opening its Xfinity WiFi hotspots to everyone, including non-subs in the region. Other ops, including **Cox**, are also offering similar WiFi services. Comcast has a webpage, xfinity.com/winterstorm, to help subs prepare for the storm, and it includes information on how to deal with service disruptions. **Verizon** said its operations teams continue to closely monitor the storm's impact on its networks and deploy repair technicians to the hardest hit areas. The company has tested and fueled backup batteries and generators at its key network facilities to keep power flowing in case of prolonged power outages.

Actors Guild Awards: **TNT** and **TBS** will expand digital and social media efforts surrounding the 22nd Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards. As in past years, the nets are teaming with People.com to offer a live webcast of the Awards Red Carpet Pre-Show. Social media influencers will also provide behind-the-scenes play-by-plays before and during the ceremony. Added to the mix this year will be *Amy Poehler's* Smart Girls initiative, a partnership with **Twitter** aimed to elevate award show chatter by including more meaningful questions on the red carpet.

Beacon Awards: **The Association of Cable Communicators** (ACC) announced that the 2016 entry deadline for the Beacon Awards is March 18. The award ceremony will be held during ACC's annual conference, FORUM 2016, June 20-22 in NYC. *Katina Arnold*, communications vp at **ESPN**, and *Tom Larsen*, svp of government and public affairs at **Mediacom** will serve as co-chairs for the conference.

Imagine Teams with HP Enterprise: **Imagine Communications** expanded its relationship with **Hewlett Packard Enterprise** (HPE), which will allow HPE to resell Imagine's entire product portfolio worldwide, including video playout, networking, distribution and ad management services. The partnership is also intended to include Imagine's CloudXtream platform, which offers live, linear, on-demand and cloud DVR delivery services.

People: **Turner Sports** upped *Valerie Immele* to svp of business, adding oversight of the marketing and ad sales strategic planning teams to her responsibilities. She will continue to head strategy, programming acquisitions and biz development at Turner Sports, reporting to *Matt Hong*, evp/gm of Turner Sports. Immele joined Turner Sports in 1997.

Editor's Note: **Cablefax's** Multiscreen Summit continues to attract the industry's best and brightest, who will gather on March 8 at The Yale Club in New York City. This full-day summit will help attendees assess the risks and opportunities as the changing TV ecosystem reaches across screens and shakes up advertising, marketing and content production. Confirmed speakers already include **Needham & Co's** *Laura Martin*, **Comcast's** *Peter Nush*, **Time Warner Cable's** *Alix Cottrell*, **DISH's** *Thea Ellis*, **Crown Media Family Networks'** *Angela Megrey*, **CSG Digital's** *Kent Steffen*, **Discovery Comm's** *Jen Corbett*, **Layer3's** *Eric Kuhn*, **Scripps Networks Interactive's** *Ann Lundberg* and many more. Email Publisher *Michael Grebb* at mgrebb@accessintel.com to inquire about remaining speaker slots, which are going fast. Check out the full agenda and register today at cablefaxmultiscreensummit.com

Cablefax Week in Review

Company	Ticker	1/22 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS				
DISH	DISH	49.10	(1.68%)	(14.13%)
ENTRAVISION	EVC	7.68	7.26%	(0.39%)
GRAY TELEVISION	GTN	13.24	(3.78%)	(18.77%)
MEDIA GENERAL	MEG	15.87	1.86%	(1.73%)
NEXSTAR	NXST	49.65	2.82%	(15.42%)
SINCLAIR	SBGI	30.51	3.07%	(6.24%)
TEGNA	TGNA	23.42	(2.5%)	(8.23%)

Company	Ticker	1/22 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
MSOS				
CABLE ONE	CABO	421.95	0.14%	(2.7%)
CABLEVISION	CVC	31.35	1.29%	(1.72%)
CHARTER	CHTR	174.72	5.84%	(4.52%)
COMCAST	CMCSA	55.33	2.67%	(1.95%)
GCI	GNCMA	18.09	(5.39%)	(11.05%)
LIBERTY BROADBAND	LBRDA	48.27	0.92%	(6.54%)
LIBERTY GLOBAL	LBTYA	33.70	1.63%	(20.44%)
SHAW COMM	SJR	16.97	2.85%	(1.28%)
SHENTEL	SHEN	21.41	3.88%	(50.27%)
TIME WARNER CABLE	TWC	182.04	2.83%	(1.91%)

Company	Ticker	1/22 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
PROGRAMMING				
21ST CENTURY FOX	FOXA	26.38	1.07%	(2.87%)
AMC NETWORKS	AMCX	74.78	2.01%	0.13%
CBS	CBS	46.94	2.31%	(0.4%)
CROWN	CRWN	4.54	(0.44%)	(19.07%)
DISCOVERY	DISCA	26.90	3.90%	0.82%
DISNEY	DIS	96.90	3.19%	(7.78%)
GRUPO TELEVISIVA	TV	26.50	1.81%	(2.61%)
HSN	HSNI	48.29	1.66%	(4.7%)
LIONSGATE	LGF	28.04	0.14%	(13.43%)
MSG NETWORKS	MSGN	18.27	(6.31%)	(12.16%)
SCRIPPS INT	SNI	59.04	5.43%	6.94%
STARZ	STRZA	30.72	(1%)	(8.3%)
TIME WARNER	TWX	70.90	1.79%	9.63%
VIACOM	VIA	45.90	8.31%	4.34%
WWE	WWE	16.74	(0.36%)	(6.17%)

Company	Ticker	1/22 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
TECHNOLOGY				
ADVANTAGE	AEY	1.73	(5.46%)	(4.42%)
AMDOCS	DOX	52.68	(0.87%)	(3.46%)
AMPHENOL	APH	48.70	7.06%	(6.76%)
APPLE	AAPL	101.42	4.42%	(3.65%)
ARRIS GROUP	ARRS	26.84	1.59%	(12.2%)
AVID TECH	AVID	7.20	(0.55%)	(1.23%)
BLNDER TONGUE	BDR	0.35	(14.63%)	(12.5%)
BROADCOM	BRCM	54.04	2.08%	(6.54%)
CISCO	CSCO	23.37	(1.06%)	(13.95%)
COMMSCOPE	COMM	22.52	(0.92%)	(13.02%)
CONCURRENT	CCUR	5.13	(2.29%)	3.64%
CONVERGYS	CVG	23.79	1.75%	(4.42%)
CSG SYSTEMS	CSGS	35.66	8.00%	(0.89%)
ECHOSTAR	SATS	34.27	(0.35%)	(12.38%)
GOOGLE	GOOG	725.25	4.44%	(4.43%)
HARMONIC	HLIT	3.30	(0.9%)	(18.92%)
INTEL	INTC	29.93	0.57%	(13.12%)
LEVEL 3	LVLT	47.82	2.38%	(12.03%)
MICROSOFT	MSFT	52.28	2.53%	(5.77%)

Company	Ticker	1/22 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
NETFLIX	NFLX	100.68	(3.23%)	(11.98%)
NIELSEN	NLSN	45.31	1.39%	(2.77%)
RENTRAK	RENT	46.82	(4.04%)	(1.49%)
SEACHANGE	SEAC	6.08	(2.41%)	(9.79%)
SONY	SNE	21.74	1.40%	(11.66%)
SPRINT NEXTEL	S	2.87	0.00%	(20.72%)
TIVO	TIVO	7.70	(1.53%)	(10.78%)
UNIVERSAL ELEC	UEIC	47.40	1.41%	(7.69%)
VONAGE	VG	5.14	9.13%	(10.45%)
YAHOO	YHOO	29.75	2.09%	(10.55%)

Company	Ticker	1/22 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
TELCOS				
AT&T	T	35.14	3.38%	2.12%
CENTURYLINK	CTL	23.80	2.19%	(5.41%)
FRONTIER	FTR	4.36	2.83%	(6.64%)
TDS	TDS	21.74	(0.78%)	(16.03%)
VERIZON	VZ	47.05	5.90%	1.80%

Index	Ticker	1/22 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
MARKET INDICES				
DOW	DJI	16093.51	0.66%	(7.64%)
NASDAQ	IXIC	4591.18	2.29%	(8.31%)
S&P 500	GSPC	1906.90	1.42%	(6.7%)

WINNERS & LOSERS

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE WINNERS

COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. VONAGE	5.14	9.13%
2. VIACOM	45.90	8.31%
3. CSG SYSTEMS	35.66	8.00%
4. ENTRAVISION	7.68	7.26%
5. AMPHENOL	48.70	7.06%

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE LOSERS

COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. BLNDER TONGUE	0.35	(14.63%)
2. INTERACTIVE CORP	50.68	(6.94%)
3. MSG NETWORKS	18.27	(6.31%)
4. ADVANTAGE	1.73	(5.46%)
5. GCI	18.09	(5.39%)



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

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