

Cablefax Daily™

Thursday — March 17, 2016

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 27 / No. 051

AT&T UltraHD: 4K Channels, HDR Development Planned

2016 is looking to be a big year for AT&T on UltraHD. Through its acquired DirecTV assets, the telco aims to launch 4K channels and collaborate with industry standards groups and companies to develop High Dynamic Range (HDR) technology, *Phil Goswitz*, svp of space communications and video engineering at AT&T told us. Like Comcast, DirecTV was one of the 1st video providers diving into UltraHD, even before AT&T announced its acquisition. Now the DirecTV UltraHD team is part of AT&T's Entertainment Group. "We're seeing some great collaborations after integrating, particularly with the Mobility team," Goswitz said. That was part of AT&T's broader strategy to blend DirecTV assets with its wireless offerings. The telco has also shifted its video sub base onto DirecTV platforms. Over the past decade, DirecTV has invested in the infrastructure to deliver 4K Ultra HD. "This includes new satellites and spectrum as well as the equipment and architecture required to bring it to customers efficiently. We allocated an entirely new band of spectrum for 4K UHD and launched two new satellites to increase the size of our distribution. We also have been working on ensuring that the latest in-home equipment is 4K UHD ready," Goswitz said, with AT&T's DirecTV team "actively collaborating with content providers" to make more UltraHD content available. "Beyond the content providers, we're also working across the ecosystem—from cameras, to production trucks, to consumer displays—to get a truly transformational live content UHD." The company will launch a live 4K channel DirecTV 4K on April 4 with initial programming that includes the Masters Tournament in Augusta. The company is also testing live feeds at other events. "We are also launching a 4K channel that features PPV movies and other 4K content," said Goswitz. Offering live 4K content, especially sports content, is a priority, according to the exec. Meanwhile, instead of launching a 4K set-top box, ops like Comcast are pivoting toward a HDR box, as HDR offers more significant picture quality improvement. "We're big proponents," Goswitz said. "Through our founding membership in the **UltraHD Alliance**, and in collaboration with other industry groups such as the **UltraHD Forum**, the **Consumer Electronics Association** and the **Digital Entertainment Group**, we are helping to develop standards to ensure that HDR is implemented properly in consumer products and services. We're also involved in education initiatives to ensure that customers understand the value of the technology." With live 4K content is a big focus, particularly for sports where better con-

Cablefax

TOP OPS

NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS!

Nomination Deadline: **APRIL 15**

Who are cable's top operators?

Help Cablefax compile this influential list of MSOs and Independent Operators by nominating the companies and executives you think should be included in our annual list of leading cable operators. The Top Ops list will be honored in the July issue of Cablefax: The Magazine.

Enter at www.cablefax.com/topops

Questions: Contact Alex Virden at avirden@accessintel.com

FREE TO ENTER



HOME SWEET HOME?

Schitt's Creek



NEW SEASON

WEDNESDAYS | 8P7C *only on*



**9 QUARTERS
OF RATINGS
GROWTH¹**

**▲ 30% TOTAL DAY
▲ 27% PRIMETIME²**

**400 HOURS
OF ORIGINAL
PROGRAMMING**

1. Nielsen, NHI, Npower, C3, P2+ (000), Measurement Period 3Q13-4Q15 vs. Prior Year, Dayparts: M-F 9a-2a + Sa/Su 11a-2a, M-Su 7p-12a.

2. Nielsen, NHI, Explorer, L+SD, W25-54 (000), 4Q15 vs. 4Q14, Total Day = M-F 9a-2a+Sa/Su 11a-2a, Primetime = M-Su 7p-12a, Strict Daypart.

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

trust and brightness can result in an advanced viewing experience, getting the industry to agree to an HDR standard is critical, he said: "We're ready to deliver on the promise of HDR and want to do it as quickly as possible." While it's hard to predict when 4K will become mainstream, "there are many signs that point to it being just as popular as HDTV," Goswitz said, noting a near-term challenge of educating customers about what's required to experience all that 4K has to offer. "Our teams are working hard on that right now," he said.

CNN's Digital Team Revamp: As part of a restructuring of **CNN Digital**, the company plans to hire more than 200 new staffers, including a mix of journalists, video producers, analysts and audience development experts and mobile product developers, according to an internal note from evp of editorial of CNN US and gm of CNN Digital Worldwide *Andrew Morse* (a spokesman confirmed it). Roughly 150 jobs have already been posted, the spokesman said. Some jobs will be impacted as part of the realignment, but those staffers will have the option to apply for the newly created positions, he said. "The restructuring is a fundamental shift from a team organized around a traditional website to one poised for success across all platforms, specifically mobile. And it's an expansion of our 'follow the sun strategy' for global news coverage," said the note from Morse. The company will fully transition to the new structure by mid-April and plans to fill all the jobs by 2017.

Arris Investor Day: The **FCC's** set-top proposal doesn't seem to worry Arris. "We're not terribly concerned about this FCC drama," CEO *Bob Stanzione* said during the company's investor day Wed. He noted it will be a while before the proposed new rules would go into effect. In addition, it takes time for the standards to be developed. The 2016 operating environment for Arris is expected to feature increased investment in broadband infrastructure driven by the expansion of gigabit speeds, network upgrades, IoT expansion and the acceleration of OTT services, said *Bruce McClelland*, pres of network & cloud. Key trends driving service provider investment include the push for more wireless broadband and WiFi offload is a critical part of the trend, he said. A priority for Arris is international markets. Citing the company's **Pace** acquisition, Stanzione said "we're structured to gain international share."

On the Hill: The House approved the Small Business Broadband Deployment Act, which extends the **FCC's** exemption of smaller ISPs from the enhanced transparency rules under the agency's enhanced net neutrality order. The bill is pending Senate approval. "ACA thanks House Communications and Technology Subcommittee Chairman Rep. *Greg Walden* (R-Ore.) and Rep. *Dave Loebsack* (D-Ia.) for designing a bill that will provide targeted relief to a category of ISPs that clearly needed it. It is important to note that these ISPs will continue to comply with transparency rules that were in effect prior to adoption of the FCC's enhanced transparency rules in February 2015," said pres *Matt Polka* in a statement.

ACA Asks for Extension on Set-top NPRM: ACA is asking the **FCC** for one more month to file comments on the Commission's set-top NPRM. Initial comments are due April 15, but ACA argued in a filing that "additional time to analyze and prepare comments for the Commission's consideration in this proceeding is particularly important when considering such sweeping changes to the MVPD operating environment because, if adopted as written, these regulations could threaten the continued operations of many smaller MVPDs."

Viacom's New Appointment: The **Viacom** board tapped *Frederic Salerno* to the newly created position of lead independent director. He will coordinate the activities of the independent directors and serve as a liaison between the exec chmn, pres and CEO and other independent directors. "The addition of a Lead Independent Director will enhance Viacom's corporate governance practices, which already include a majority of independent directors and board committees that are comprised solely of independent directors," Viacom said in a release. Salerno is a retired vice chmn and CFO of **Verizon**.

Rumor Mill: *The Wall Street Journal* reported that **FCC** chmn *Tom Wheeler* is likely to circulate an order approving the **Charter-Time Warner Cable** merger with conditions as early as this week. The Commission is at day 172 of the 180-day merger review shot clock. A spokesman for the agency declined to comment.

CableLabs 5G: **CableLabs** has been actively involved with wireless standard group **3GPP** on the development of 5G because 5G networks will require tighter integration between fixed and mobile networks, *Dorin Viorel*, principal wireless architect at CableLabs wrote in a blog post Tues. "The cable industry will play a role in the success of 5G network deployments" with its fiber and HFC networks capable of supporting large data capacities, he said.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Training Vets: SCTE and the SCTE Foundation are teaming with Comcast and Georgia Tech Professional Education to train transitioning members of the armed forces, preparing them for careers in cable. The program uses the training resources of SCTE and will be funded by a grant from the SCTE Foundation. Check out the full story at Cablefax.com

Programming: Poker Central greenlit the 1st of several new live shows that will debut in 2016. "Poker Central Live at The Bike!" will premiere on April 18th. -- **Showtime** picked up the revelatory docu-series "Dark Net" for a 2nd season. The series explores the dangers of the Internet's unregulated underbelly known as the deep web. -- **TLC** premieres 1-hour special "Say Yes to the Prom" on May 20. The initiative returns this year alongside **AT&T** to offer high school students the opportunity to have the prom of their dreams. The program is designed to remove the financial burden while building self-confidence and a sense of empowerment among its academically strong participants.

Editor's Note: Don't miss out on your chance to put forward the people and campaigns that make your PR and marketing programs shine. Enter the Faxies by the March 23 deadline to ensure consideration. More info at www.cablefax.com

Cablefax Daily Stockwatch

Company	03/16 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	03/16 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DISH:	48.97	0.39	ECHOSTAR:	44.37	(0.11)
ENTRAVISION:	7.63	0.03	GOOGLE:	736.09	7.76
GRAY TELEVISION:	12.17	0.14	HARMONIC:	3.03	0.07
MEDIA GENERAL:	16.81	0.10	INTEL:	31.69	0.04
NEXSTAR:	47.06	0.74	INTERACTIVE CORP:	47.07	1.22
SINCLAIR:	32.42	(0.06)	LEVEL 3:	52.14	1.19
TEGNA:	23.83	0.54	MICROSOFT:	54.35	0.76
MSOS					
CABLE ONE:	438.93	0.21	NETFLIX:	99.35	1.49
CABLEVISION:	33.05	0.10	NIELSEN:	51.79	0.73
CHARTER:	198.16	11.23	SEACHANGE:	5.38	UNCH
COMCAST:	59.91	0.51	SONY:	25.50	0.98
GCI:	17.74	0.19	SPRINT NEXTEL:	3.57	0.02
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	56.55	3.40	SYNACOR:	1.86	0.02
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	37.59	1.28	TIVO:	7.83	0.10
SHAW COMM:	18.74	0.22	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	62.83	0.65
SHENTEL:	25.49	0.73	VONAGE:	4.59	(0.02)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	202.19	6.51	YAHOO:	34.01	0.75
PROGRAMMING					
21ST CENTURY FOX:	28.12	0.29	TELCOS		
AMC NETWORKS:	65.74	0.99	AT&T:	38.77	0.25
CBS:	54.44	1.85	CENTURYLINK:	32.17	0.85
CROWN:	5.09	0.03	FRONTIER:	5.34	0.18
DISCOVERY:	28.55	0.89	TDS:	27.89	0.26
DISNEY:	98.44	0.20	VERIZON:	53.21	0.54
GRUPO TELEVISA:	26.75	0.29	MARKET INDICES		
HSN:	53.48	(0.17)	DOW:	17325.76	74.23
LIONSGATE:	22.33	(0.66)	NASDAQ:	4763.97	35.30
MSG NETWORKS:	17.27	0.16	S&P 500:	2027.22	11.29
SCRIPPS INT:	65.54	0.45			
STARZ:	28.18	(0.04)			
TIME WARNER:	71.50	0.54			
VIACOM:	44.58	1.35			
WWE:	17.87	0.10			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADDVANTAGE:	1.95	0.09			
AMDOCS:	58.89	0.40			
AMPHENOL:	56.41	0.89			
APPLE:	105.97	1.39			
ARRIS GROUP:	22.30	0.68			
AVID TECH:	6.99	0.30			
BLNDER TONGUE:	0.40	(0.04)			
CISCO:	27.88	0.22			
COMMSCOPE:	27.11	0.50			
CONCURRENT:	6.38	UNCH			
CONVERGYS:	26.23	0.20			
CSG SYSTEMS:	40.42	0.98			

2016

Cable Hall of Fame

CELEBRATION

REGISTER NOW | MAY 16, 2016 | BOSTON

2016 Honorees

MIKA BRZEZINSKI &
JOE SCARBOROUGH
PAT ESSER
JOHN D. EVANS
TOM ROGERS
ROBERT J. STANZIONE
JOHN O.
"DUBBY" WYNNE


COMMSCOPE
PROGRAM SPONSORS


COMCAST
WELCOME SPONSOR


food
network


bright house
NETWORKS
CENTERPIECE SPONSOR


Discovery
COMMUNICATIONS
GLOBAL INNOVATION SPONSOR


scrippsnetworks
INTERACTIVE
WINE SPONSOR


TIVO


CNN


Time Warner Cable


Cablefax


BROADBAND
library


JOHN D. EVANS
FOUNDATION


Shaw


FierceCable


Light Reading


CTAM SmartBrief

as of 3/9

Think about that for a minute...

The Experts

Commentary by Steve Effros

When are we going to give up the idea that “the experts” know everything about a given topic, that we should simply respond to what they say by either reacting or accepting without question their “expert” advice?



I’ve raised this issue numerous times before in the context of courts giving deference to the “expert agency”—in our case, the FCC—but it goes a lot further than that. For instance, we are experiencing, repeatedly these days, the spectacle of election polls being totally wrong on their “expert” prognostications. The interesting thing is that when the poll is just dead wrong, and the winner “upsets” the loser, there doesn’t seem to be anyone around saying “..hey, wait a minute... that wasn’t an ‘upset,’ that was a screwed up set of polls!” They were likely wrong all along, but somehow the “expert” is still considered the “expert” and the result, when different, is somehow described as a change, a loss, an upset, a failure or whatever. Why? It may not have been a “failure” at all, other than that the prognosticator, the alleged “expert” was wrong.

Another example: we repeatedly hear about various publicly traded companies “missing” the “guidance” and expectations of the “experts.” You know, XYZ Company reported their profits today and they “only” made \$23 Gazillion dollars instead of the “analysts” projections of \$24.2! And then XYZ’s stock tanks! Hello? 23 Gazillion ain’t bad, and why are we focused on the “expert” estimation instead of the real accomplishment? Things have gotten totally out of whack.

I, for one, am really tired of it. I don’t understand why we don’t say what appears to be the case (a la “the emperor has no clothes!”) and simply note that the “experts” were wrong, not the company or the candidate. As to propos-

ing new policies, it has gotten totally tiresome hearing about “expert agencies” like the FCC, which have pretty much totally abandoned actual economic analysis or adherence to verifiable statistics and instead work almost completely from manufactured numbers and the “gut.”

Look, I understand the politics of all this. I understand that in the case of agencies, for instance, the powers that be are going to do what they believe, from their perception of reality, within the limitations on power that they have. They’re going to do what they can, where they can, when they can to advance their own agendas... regardless of whether those agendas have anything other than ideology, belief, gut feeling or fear behind them. I’m being nice and not suggesting that they also tend to tilt things for their “friends.” Don’t need to. The biases they have when they walk in the door do that for them.

OK, that’s reality, and there is very little we can do about it. Thus when there is no real economic support for a “gut” feeling, or a “fear” that someone has the theoretical power to do something bad, and therefore regulations are needed on a “prophylactic” basis, other things are used to support the decision—like pointing out that 4 million viral emails must prove some expert point. That’s nonsense.

Let’s just stop the “expert” stuff. Let’s just acknowledge that in a lot of cases things are done or said because they are the best guess, or the worst fear of the moment and hopefully folks will start refraining from instantly reacting to those “expert” opinions. This goes back to one of my core concerns; our enabling of “instant” telecommunications has created way too many “instant experts.” Let’s start ignoring them.

T:202-630-2099
steve@effros.com

(Steve Effros was President of CATA for 23 years and is now an advisor and consultant to the cable industry. His views do not necessarily reflect the views of Cablefax.)

< A LITTLE

DISRUPTION

the internet & television expo

MAY 16-18, 2016 » BOSTON, MA

NEVER HURT >

▶▶▶ Register today » intxshow.com/redefine