

Cablefax Daily™

Monday — April 4, 2016

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 27 / No. 063

Family Approved: PTC OK with Charter Combo

As everyone awaits a soon-expected **FCC** decision on **Charter's** planned acquisition of **Time Warner Cable**, the MSO got a thumbs-up from the **Parents Television Council**. It's a nice win for Charter, given that PTC was a vocal opponent of the scuttled **Comcast-TWC** merger, based partly on their interests in networks and Hollywood studios as well as concerns over consumer control in packaging. The group's best known for poring through TV content and dinging networks over questionable taste. But after PTC reps met with independent, family-friendly cable programmers and examined public comments from networks such as **Hallmark**, **INSP**, **Ovation**, **RFD**, **UP** and **ASPiRE**, the group decided "Charter has worked in good faith with those programmers to make sure that their family friendly programming remains available to its customers." PTC's take: A Charter/TWC/**Bright House** combo would serve the public interest better than the status quo. Last Nov, PTC asked the FCC to consider the impact the deal would have on family friendly programming. At the time, it had mentioned a possible condition that Charter be forced to maintain existing carriage of family friendly nets for at least 5 years post-merger, but Fri's letter made no mention of such an ask. While Charter is expected to get the greenlight from the FCC for the \$56bln cash and stock deal, it still can't close the transaction until CA's regulators give it the OK. The **CA PUC** has scheduled a May 12 vote on the merger, which means *Tom Rutledge* and *Rob Marcus* could literally be toasting the marriage on the floor of **INTX**. Or not... Neither is listed as speaking at the show, though the lineup is ever-changing. Charter CFO *Christopher Winfrey* is slated to moderate a May 16 financial analyst panel at the conference.

Frontier/Verizon: More than a year after it was announced, **Frontier** completed its \$10.54bln acquisition of **Verizon's** wireline assets in CA, TX and FL. The transaction includes 3.3mln voice connections, 2.1mln broadband connections and 1.2mln FIOS video subs, as well as related incumbent local exchange carrier businesses. New subs will start receiving monthly bills starting in mid-April. As part of the deal, 9,400 Verizon employees will join Frontier.

Still Talking: **DISH** subs still had access to **Media General** stations Fri after a short-term extension. Their most recent deal expired at 4pm PT on Thurs. DISH has accused the broadcaster of demanding 10% higher fees than competitors.

Suddenlink Goes Unlimited: Suddenlink, now part of **Altice**, jumped on the unlimited broadband bandwagon Fri. It's



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offering unlimited data plans for customers subscribing to the top 2 Internet tiers. Currently, the top speeds are 100 Mbps and 150 Mbps; 200 Mbps and 400 Mbps, or 200 Mbps and 1 Gbps, depending on the market. New and existing customers will automatically be enrolled in an unlimited plan for free the 1st year. After that it will cost them an added \$5 a month and an added \$10 per month after 24 months. Customers now subscribing to Suddenlink's fastest local services can retain their current usage-based plans or upgrade to an unlimited plan. Parent Altice said earlier this year it plans for up to 1 Gbps service by the end of the year in more than 250 Suddenlink markets, reaching more than 60% of the ISP's Internet customers. **AT&T** launched a \$30 per month unlimited plan earlier this month for subs with standalone U-verse and GigaPower service. **Verizon FiOS** has an unlimited plan for its data subs. Comcast has tested unlimited offerings in select markets.

Rovi Patent Suit: Rovi shares fell more than 10% Fri, following its patent lawsuit against **Comcast**. The lawsuit, filed in the US District Court for the Eastern District of TX, alleges that Comcast infringed upon 14 patents, including technology used for remote DVR. Rovi is demanding an injunction barring Comcast's infringement and is seeking monetary damages. Comcast said in a statement: "We disagree with Rovi's accusations and intend to defend the cases vigorously. Beyond that, we can't comment on pending litigation." Rovi extended its licensing deal with **Time Warner Cable** Thurs, covering program guide and patent agreements, according to an **SEC** filing. Also on Fri, Rovi said it has agreed to a "standstill" in legal dispute with **DISH** and **EchoStar** as the companies continue to work on a potential licensing agreement extension.

Hill on Set-top Proposal: House Communications Subcmte head **Greg Walden** (R-OR) and committee member **Yvette Clarke** (D-NY) asked **GAO** to examine the **FCC's** set-top box proposal, which seeks to open up the market for 3rd party vendors, over concerns efforts "do not include a meaningful assessment of the effects on independent and diverse networks, whose business models may be greatly threatened and undermined by the FCC's proposed rules."

Broadcast M&A: US broadcast M&A volume reached \$4.7bln in 1Q, with \$4.61bln attributable to **Nexstar Broadcasting's** acquisition of **Media General** in Jan, according to **SNL Kagan Research**. The remaining \$13.1mln came from several small deals filed before the **FCC** Incentive Auction quiet period. Until the auction is completed, which could take 6-9 months, the FCC won't approve any applications for broadcast transactions.

ACA on C-SPAN: Check out **C-SPAN's** "The Communicators" Sat 6:30pm ET or online at c-span.org to see **ACA** chmn/**MCTV** pres **Bob Gessner** and **ACA** pres/CEO **Matt Polka** weigh in on the challenges for independent cable ops. Naturally, they talk retrans, but they also express concerns over the FCC's set-top box proposal. "The current FCC proposal is a vague and open-ended solution in search of a problem. The anticipated costs—clearly in the hundreds of millions—could be better spent investing in broadband for customers," Polka said.

FCC/NTIA Meeting: FCC chmn **Tom Wheeler** met with **NTIA** administrator **Larry Strickling** to discuss spectrum planning and management priorities Fri. Wheeler reported that the agency started the incentive auction last week. The pair addressed FCC and NTIA's collaboration to identify additional spectrum for commercial use, including 5G. Both affirmed plans to meet **President Obama's** goal of making 500 Mhz of additional spectrum available for wireless broadband by 2020.

Upfront Update: **Comedy Central** announced 5 series pick-ups, 10 specials and 11 pilot orders. The series include 2 stand-up shows starring and produced by **Kevin Hart** and his company **Hartbeat Productions**, "Jeff Ross Presents: Roast Battle," a series of comedy-focused docs, and the digital series "Typical Rick," created by and starring **Nick Swardson** and filmmaker **Nicholaus Goossen**. Other news: development deals with "Daily Show with **Trevor Noah**" correspondents **Jessica Williams** and **Jordan Klepper**; stand-up specials from **Kurt Braunohler**, **Deon Cole**, **Pete Davidson**, **Joe DeRosa**, **Trevor Moore**, **Big Jay Oakerson**, **Dan Soder** and **The Goddamn Comedy Jam**; and production deals with **Amy Schumer**, **Chris Hardwick**, **Channing Tatum**, **Olivia Wilde**, **Jack Black**, **Eva Longoria**, **Ed Helms**, **Melissa McCarthy** and **Ben Falcone**. -- At its upfront Wed night, **Hallmark Channel** said it will partner with the **National Park Foundation** to exclusively broadcast the 94th annual National Christmas Tree Lighting in an hour-long special as part of its "Countdown to Christmas" programming initiative in Dec. In addition to the tree lighting it will include a live concert, A-list hosts, presenters and performers. The network says it's the 1st ad-supported TV network to air the special, an event attended by approx 20,000 people.

Ratings: **CNN's** premiere of "The Eighties" was the #1 cable news show among adults 25-54 Thurs night and the 2nd-most watched CNN original series premiere ever. The ep scored 598K 25-54s and is up triple-digit percentages compared to "The Sixties" (284K, +111%) and "The Seventies" (291K, +105%).

Cablefax Week in Review

Company	Ticker	4/01 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS				
DISH:	DISH	46.29	(3.38%)	(19.05%)
ENTRAVISION:	EVC	7.54	5.45%	(2.2%)
GRAY TELEVISION:	GTN	11.86	3.13%	(27.24%)
MEDIA GENERAL:	MEG	16.65	3.10%	3.10%
NEXSTAR:	NXST	45.83	7.68%	(21.93%)
SINCLAIR:	SBGI	30.99	2.11%	(4.76%)
TEGNA:	TGNA	22.82	(2.35%)	(10.58%)

MSOS

CABLE ONE:	CABO	441.51	1.00%	1.81%
CABLEVISION:	CVC	32.96	(0.02%)	3.31%
CHARTER:	CHTR	203.47	2.59%	11.19%
COMCAST:	CMCSA	61.86	3.07%	9.61%
GCI:	GNCMA	18.58	4.32%	14.06%
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	LBRDA	58.59	2.99%	13.44%
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	LBTYA	38.92	5.70%	(8.12%)
SHAW COMM:	SJR	19.34	2.55%	12.51%
SHENTEL:	SHEN	27.70	8.16%	(35.66%)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	TWC	205.04	1.15%	10.48%

PROGRAMMING

21ST CENTURY FOX:	FOXA	28.59	3.03%	5.27%
AMC NETWORKS:	AMCX	65.84	3.05%	(11.84%)
CBS:	CBS	55.17	2.05%	17.06%
CROWN:	CRWN	5.10	(0.39%)	(9.09%)
DISCOVERY:	DISCA	28.90	3.25%	8.32%
DISNEY:	DIS	99.07	1.90%	(5.72%)
GRUPO TELEVISIA:	TV	27.50	(0.65%)	1.07%
HSN:	HSNI	52.81	(0.25%)	4.22%
LIONSGATE:	LGF	21.14	(0.8%)	(34.73%)
MSG NETWORKS:	MSGN	17.21	2.81%	(17.26%)
SCRIPPS INT:	SNI	67.41	5.31%	22.10%
STARZ:	STRZA	26.58	0.11%	(20.66%)
TIME WARNER:	TWX	72.97	4.23%	12.83%
VIACOM:	VIA	44.87	1.86%	2.00%
WWE:	WWE	17.29	0.99%	(3.08%)

TECHNOLOGY

ADVANTAGE:	AEY	1.87	(3.61%)	3.31%
AMDOCS:	DOX	60.41	2.51%	10.70%
AMPHENOL:	APH	58.49	2.31%	11.99%
APPLE:	AAPL	109.99	4.09%	4.49%
ARRIS GROUP:	ARRS	22.74	(0.7%)	(25.61%)
AVID TECH:	AVID	6.66	3.42%	(8.64%)
BLNDER TONGUE:	BDR	0.38	0.00%	(5%)
CISCO:	CSCO	28.69	2.61%	5.63%
COMMScope:	COMM	27.64	4.22%	6.76%
CONCURRENT:	CCUR	6.17	2.15%	24.65%
CONVERGYS:	CVG	27.74	4.21%	11.45%
CSG SYSTEMS:	CSGS	45.84	8.52%	27.40%
ECHOSTAR:	SATS	43.94	0.00%	12.35%
GOOGLE:	GOOG	749.91	1.99%	(1.18%)
HARMONIC:	HLIT	3.29	1.86%	(19.16%)
INTEL:	INTC	32.45	1.79%	(5.81%)
INTERACTIVE CORP:	IAC	46.63	2.01%	(22.35%)
LEVEL 3:	LVT	53.06	2.85%	(2.39%)
MICROSOFT:	MSFT	55.57	2.51%	0.16%

Company	Ticker	4/01 Close	1-Week % Chg	YTD %Chg
NETFLIX:	NFLX	105.70	7.46%	(7.59%)
NIELSEN:	NLSN	53.45	2.79%	14.70%
SEACHANGE:	SEAC	5.48	2.81%	(18.69%)
SONY:	SNE	24.91	(2.2%)	1.22%
SPRINT NEXTEL:	S	3.63	11.35%	0.28%
SYNACOR:	SYNC	1.38	(3.5%)	(21.14%)
TIVO:	TIVO	9.03	(4.44%)	4.63%
UNIVERSAL ELEC:	UEIC	62.35	0.60%	21.42%
VONAGE:	VG	4.64	3.92%	(19.25%)
YAHOO:	YHOO	36.48	4.65%	9.68%

TELCOS

AT&T:	T	39.05	0.44%	13.48%
CENTURYLINK:	CTL	32.18	3.27%	27.90%
FRONTIER:	FTR	5.47	3.80%	17.13%
TDS:	TDS	30.45	7.11%	17.61%
VERIZON:	VZ	54.02	0.86%	16.88%

MARKET INDICES

DOW:	DJI	17792.75	1.58%	2.11%
NASDAQ:	IXIC	4914.54	2.95%	(1.85%)
S&P 500:	GSPC	2072.78	1.81%	1.41%

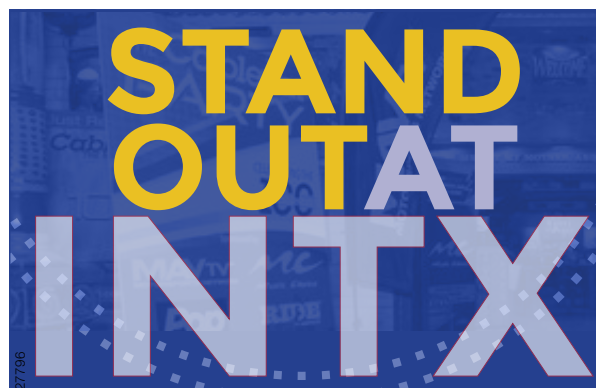
WINNERS & LOSERS

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE WINNERS

COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. SPRINT NEXTEL:	3.63	11.35%
2. CSG SYSTEMS:	45.84	8.52%
3. SHENTEL:	27.70	8.16%
4. NEXSTAR:	45.83	7.68%
5. NETFLIX:	105.70	7.46%

THIS WEEK'S STOCK PRICE LOSERS

COMPANY	CLOSE	1-WK CH
1. TIVO:	9.03	(4.44%)
2. ADVANTAGE:	1.87	(3.61%)
3. SYNACOR:	1.38	(3.5%)
4. DISH:	46.29	(3.38%)
5. TEGNA:	22.82	(2.35%)



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