

Cablefax Daily™

Friday — June 15, 2018

What the Industry Reads First

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Merger Mayhem: Comcast and Disney Set to War on 21CF, Sky

With *Judge Richard Leon* giving the green light to **AT&T** on its merger with **Time Warner**, those watching the deal began preparing for a flurry of similar proposals across media. **Comcast** chimed in with the first late Wednesday, handing **21st Century Fox** a \$65bln all-cash offer for the assets it has already agreed to sell to **Disney**. The offer was 19% above Disney's, with Comcast also offering to pay for any breakup fees. This isn't Comcast's only battle with Disney, as the two are already in one bidding war over the UK-based **Sky**. Both bids are efforts by Comcast to broaden beyond the US and achieve a more global presence, especially as the US media business copes with cord cutting and OTT disruption. Disney, on the other hand, looks at the deal to take on **Netflix**, according to **BTIG's Rich Greenfield**. Speaking on **CNBC**, Greenfield called Disney's approach odd considering its moves are nothing like those Netflix took to build up to its current powerhouse status. "I think Disney could actually accomplish what it needs to just by investing in itself in the way Netflix did," Greenfield said. "I think there are actually better acquisitions Disney could make, but I think they've dug their heels in." And while in his letter to the Murdoch family, Comcast CEO **Brian Roberts** made it clear that his mission to acquire Sky was a separate, but parallel, situation (although the transaction between Comcast and 21CF would need to be "consistent with our respective obligations under the UK takeover regime"), Greenfield believes that between Comcast and Disney, one winner will take both 21CF and Sky. Despite Comcast's determination to outbid Disney, **Newstreet Research** is still predicting that Disney will rise above to earn the victory. "We think the most likely scenario is that Disney wins both Fox and Sky because they probably win a tie and because they don't have the same limits on what they can pay," Newstreet said in a research note. On the other hand, in all four of the scenarios Newstreet found to be likely, Comcast's equity should appreciate, and it continues to recommend Comcast "because we believe the market ascribed probability of adverse scenarios is way too high." Greenfield hasn't counted Comcast out of the game yet though. Comcast has a checkered history with Disney: In 2004 Comcast tried unsuccessfully to buy the mouse house, and in 2015 Disney was one of the

SUPPORT THE ACA ON ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY!



Cablefax will celebrate ACA's 25th anniversary in a special section of the Top Ops magazine. Coverage includes ACA's genesis as an advocate for Tier 2 and 3 operators, its evolution into an influential force in Washington and its ongoing impact on the industry at large.



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Cablefax's Program & Trailer Awards are the perfect opportunity for all your shows, talent and entertainment icons to shine. *New this year: Check out the Short Form & Online/Mobile categories!*

Program Categories

What are the best shows running on screens around the world? Who are the best actors and actresses that make fans tune in on all screens? We want to know!

Platinum Shows and People

- Best Actor
- Best Actress
- Best Program
- Best New Program
- Best Showrunner

Best of the Best

- Best Branded Content
- Best International Content
- Best Mini-Series
- Best Opening Sequence
- Best Video on Demand Program/Special

By Genre: Best Show or Series

- Animals/Nature
- Animated
- Comedy
- Children's
- Documentary
- Drama
- Education / Instructional
- Faith Based / Religious
- Family Friendly
- Food
- Music
- News
- Public Affairs
- Reality
- Reality Competition / Game Show
- Regional Program
- Sci Fi
- Sports
- Talk Shows
- Other: *Enter your best in a genre not mentioned above*

By Genre: Best Actor/ Actress/Host

- Animals/Nature
- Animated
- Comedy
- Children's
- Documentary
- Drama
- Education / Instructional
- Faith Based / Religious
- Family Friendly
- Food
- Music
- News
- Public Affairs
- Reality
- Reality Competition / Game Show
- Regional Program
- Sci Fi
- Sports
- Talk Shows
- Other: *Enter your best in a genre not mentioned above*

NEW! Short Form (5 minutes or less) & Mobile/Online

- Best Overall
- Branded/Marketing Campaign/ Advertising
- Comedy
- Drama
- Horror
- Documentary
- News/Information
- Sports/Recreational
- Podcast/Videocast
- Educational/Instructional
- Children's/Family Friendly
- Animated
- VR/AR
- Preview/Sneak Peek
- Social/Viral
- Gaming/e-Sports
- Online/Mobile Extras for a Linear Show

Trailer Categories

Don't miss your chance to gain recognition for promos and sizzle reels that entice viewers to watch and engage with their favorite shows, movies, video games, web content and consumer brands. This program covers both creative categories as well as nuts-and-bolts marketing metrics related to tune-in, engagement, sales and overall reach, allowing all the departments that contribute to well-packaged trailers to receive worthy recognition for this vital yet often overlooked marketing tool.

Platinum Categories

- Top Trailer
- Top Network Sizzle Reel
- Best Editing
- Best Directing
- Best Sound / Music Mixing
- Best Graphics
- Most Intriguing / Mysterious
- Most Creative / Surprising
- Most Viral / Shareable
- Most Interactive
- Best Virtual Reality Trailer/Promo

Outstanding TV and Web Content Trailers

- New Show / Series
- Returning Show / Series
- Movie / Mini-Series
- Documentary
- Integrated / Cross-Platform Show/Series
- Comedy
- Drama
- Suspense
- Reality / Docu-Series
- Sports
- News / Public Affairs
- Virtual Reality / Augmented Reality Content
- Branded Network

Outstanding Movie Trailers

- Comedy
- Drama
- Horror
- Thriller
- Science Fiction
- Romance
- Youth
- Fantasy
- Historical/Period
- Documentary
- Sports
- Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality Content

Outstanding Branded Trailers

- Consumer – General Trade
- Technology
- Software Apps
- Amusements
- Food / Travel
- Real Estate
- Toys and Games
- Governmental
- Non-Profit
- Corporate Responsibility/Social Good

Outstanding Trailers in Gaming

- Action
- Adventure
- Puzzle
- Kids
- Comedic
- Horror
- Strategy
- Sports
- Social Conscience
- Science Fiction
- Massive Multiplayer
- Fantasy

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most vocal voices against Comcast’s attempt to purchase Time Warner. On the other hand, Disney head *Bob Iger* also has a lot on the line. His contract is set to end in June 2019. Without the closing of the Fox deal and the Sky bid, there’s no guarantee that Iger would see an extension of that contract. Greenfield believes that whatever company Fox decides to go with will receive regulatory approval, so while the bidding war can continue for however long the two are willing to go at it, the final decision will be determined by the desires of the Murdoch family.

To the Big Apple: Discovery found its new home in NYC. Its new global headquarters will be located at 230 Park Avenue South in the city’s Flatiron district. The company’s existing New York offices will migrate to the new building, with the move-in targeted to begin in the fall of 2019, continuing through mid-2020. The facility will be renovated before anyone moves in, with the new headquarters housing a ground floor studio and production space, a full-service wellness center and more. Discovery first announced plans to relocate its global headquarters from Silver Spring, Maryland to New York in January 2018. It will continue to maintain a national operations headquarters in Knoxville, TN, at the former headquarters of **Scripps Networks Interactive**.

Making a Ruckus: Ian Whiting will serve as the new president of **Ruckus Networks**. Coming into the role on July 1, he’ll report directly to **Arris** CEO *Bruce McClelland*. Whiting succeeds *Dan Rabinovitsj*, who led the integration of Ruckus into Arris and will work closely with Whiting to ensure a smooth transition. Of course, Whiting is no stranger to Ruckus. He currently acts as chief commercial officer, expanding Ruckus’ presence in markets including education, hospitality in government and large public venues. His focus now will be to enable constant connectivity across complex and varied networking environments.

Opportunity in Esports: The lines between mainstream media and esports continues to blur, thanks to a new sponsorship deal between **Overwatch League** esports team **LA Valiant** and **Lionsgate**. The deal will have players wearing branded jerseys for “Uncle Drew,” a film from Lionsgate’s **Summit Entertainment** label, though the Overwatch League playoffs. The move builds on a former deal with **Starz** series “Ash vs Evil Dead.” The LA Valiant are jointly-owned by esports organization Immortals and Lionsgate.

On the Farm: **NCTA - The Internet & Television Association** was one of many speaking out in praise of the passing of the Farm Bill by the Senate Agriculture Committee. The bill focuses on connecting more rural Americans to high-speed broadband networks and includes reforms to the USDA Rural Utility Service’s

Cablefax: What’s Happening in July

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»» Top Operators Magazine

Cablefax’s annual Top Operators Magazine, salutes the operators who are at the forefront of innovation and creativity in the cable industry.

Special Feature: ACA’s 25th Anniversary

»» Independent Voices in Media

Cablefax will analyze the state of independent content as the bundle unravels, OTT flourishes and direct-to-consumer content options across multiple devices has never been more robust. Where will the indie nets and smaller Where will the indie nets and niche players fare in this Brave New World? We’ll take a comprehensive look at the state of the marketplace.

»» The Independent Show

As independent operators return to Anaheim, CA for their annual gathering, Cablefax will preview and cover the regulatory, technology and business strategy debates that always make this NCTC-ACA event a must-attend for anyone with skin in the game.

»» Summer TCA

Summer TCA tends to be a hotbed of news about upcoming fall premieres and other programming — not to mention executive sessions that will address everything from the changing TV business, to ratings and measurement, to the marketing challenges in an increasingly competitive environment.

Awards

Most Influential Minorities

Deadline:
July 13

Most Powerful Women

Deadline:
July 20

broadband funding programs. Other changes within the legislation include transparency, notice and challenge processes to provide the agency with up-to-date information regarding broadband availability while protecting against fraud or abuse. "Connecting more Americans to the internet has been a bipartisan priority for years," a statement from the association read. "It is a priority we share, and we urge the full Senate to swiftly take up and approve this legislation with these important reforms."

Coming to Crackle: Sony's Crackle picked Nielsen's Marketing Cloud to build out its addressable advertising capabilities across all devices and platforms. The tool touts unique audience data, AI-powered segmentation and real-time integrations with most video ad serving platforms. Using the Marketing Cloud, advertisers will be able to reach audiences on Crackle and the Crackle Plus Network, which includes **Funimation**.

Home Run: Congressmen were set to take the field for the 2018 Congressional Baseball Game Thursday night, but one in particular might have had even more reason to celebrate. Rep Steve Scalise (R-LA) was set to return for Thursday's game a year after he was shot practicing for the friendly showdown. "I closed that chapter a long time ago and luckily I've been able to focus on all the good," Scalise said on **Fox News Channel's** "Fox & Friends." He once again earned a spot in the starting lineup, holding the line at second base.

Skipping the Party: You'll be getting no clues regarding the upcoming season of "Game of Thrones" at this year's **San Diego Comic-Con**. **HBO** is skipping the fan convention due to conflicts with the production schedules of the fantasy series and another of the network's hits, "Westworld." This marks the first time Game of Thrones won't have a presence at SDCC since its debut. SDCC is July 19-22 at the San Diego Convention Center. -- One channel not skipping the celebration is **BBC America**, who will bring "Doctor Who" star *Jodie Whittaker* for her SDCC debut. The show will hold a panel in Hall H with Whittaker, *Tosin Cole*, *Mandip Gill*, showrunner *Chris Chibnall* and executive producer *Matt Strevens*.

Eat Your Greens: Health-centric network **Z Living** is now available on **Roku** devices and Roku TV models in the US. The network's current programming is finding success, with original series "Finding Fido" seeing +187% viewership since this time last year. More offerings are launching on Z Living's app and linear channel later this year.

Awarding Excellence: **Comcast NBCU** recognized California students as part of its annual Leaders and Achievers Scholarship Program, awarding 192 students approximately \$212K in scholarships. Funded by the Comcast Foundation, the program gives one-time, \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors excelling in the areas of academic performance, leadership skills and community service. Two students, *Monica Rivera* of Sacramento and *Danning Yu* of Sunnyvale, were each selected to receive an additional \$10K Comcast Founders Scholarship.

Ways to Watch: Don't worry, **DISH** customers aren't being left out of the World Cup fun. They will be able to watch most every match live in 4K HDR on channel 520. In addition, the Soccer Zone app will let fans watch and record all 64 World Cup matches. The **Fox Sports** app will offer every game live, whether you're watching at home or on the go.

First Dibs: **NBA TV** is airing live coverage of the NBA Draft on Thursday, June 21 starting at 7pm. Accompanying the coverage will be pick-by-pick player evaluations through both rounds, roster analysis and off-season forecasts from the Barclays Center in Brooklyn. A two-hour preview show will air just before at 5pm.

Programming: **IFC's** original horror comedy "Stan Against Evil" returns for its third season on October 31 at 10pm. Created by *Dana Gould*, the upcoming season is currently in production in Atlanta, Georgia. -- *Anthony Ray*, better known as rapper Sir Mix-A-Lot, is leaving the stage to undertake a new endeavor on **DIY Network**. With "Sir Mix-A-Lot's House Remix," the artist will buy and flip a rundown home in his hometown, Seattle. The one-hour special will air on June 30 at 8pm. -- It's grilling season, and **Food Network** is ready to celebrate with "Chopped Grill Masters." The five-episode special series will bring together specialists from Kansas City, Missouri; North Carolina; Memphis, Tennessee; and Texas to compete for the \$50K grand prize. They'll fire up their grills on August 28 at 9pm.

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

Taking the Country to Town

When brothers *Chris and Shane Houghton* created their new animated comedy “Big City Greens,” they had plenty of fodder from their own childhoods to draw from. The series (debuts Monday on **Disney Channel**) is about Cricket, a mischievous country boy who moves to the big city with his out-of-place family. He brings some country-fueled hi-jinks to city dwellers, with a sweet family message underneath it all. “We grew up in the country around dirt roads, corn fields, farm animals and lived in the same house for our entire school run, and when we got to age of going to college we both left and it was this immense culture shock of ‘where are all the charming, nice farmers?’” explained Shane. “It wasn’t better or worse, but it was just so different.” After college, the two brothers moved to L.A. and have worked together professionally for about 10 years, including on “Harvey Beaks” and their comic book series “Reed Gunther.” While Big City Greens gets more imaginative than anything the Houghton brothers experienced growing up (the first ep’s dubbed “Space Chicken”), they found ways to work in some real people from their childhoods. Gramma Alice is based on their actual grandmother. “She was this real sweet and sour grandma who would yell at you one second and the next second slip you a five dollar bill and tell you to put it in your pocket,” Chris said. “She was kind of unpredictable and that made her a really fun and a little scary.” As for Cricket, he’s based mainly on Chris, who also voices the character. “You get a lot of specifics and personality that just blast through because Chris has been living this character for his entire life,” Shane said, explaining how his brother was the bold kid with wild ideas while he was more like Cricket’s best friend Remy—along for the ride. “Cricket is the kind of kid I wish I was growing up.” Disney thinks kids will agree, already picking Big City Greens up for a second season. -- *Amy Maclean*

Reviews: “Brockmire,” season II finale, 10pm, Wednesday, **IFC**. As *Hank Azaria’s* hard-luck baseball announcer finishes his sophomore season on IFC, we find him as low as he’s ever been while high as an infield fly. We won’t blame viewers if they bail early on this ep, it’s that dark. For those who hang, the payoff is rich as many of Jim Brockmire’s dreams are realized. Azaria again carries the show, though his silky announcer’s voice sounds slightly gravelly due to substances Brockmire’s imbibed and/or inhaled. Yet Brockmire’s stubbornness prevails; he insists his best days are ahead. Had IFC failed to renew Brockmire this ending would have been fitting. Since season III is coming, it’s even better. – “Love is ___” series premiere, 10pm, Tuesday, **OWN**. In many respects, you’ve seen this series before. In its early moments “Love” feels very much like “How I Met Your Mother,” with a bit of “Love Story” and “When Harry Met Sally” thrown in, along with other romance stories. On the other hand, you’ve not seen this story much with black characters as romantic leads. If only the racial element were brought to the table, then Love would be important viewing. Fortunately there also are things black culture brings to a love story, portrayed fairly realistically, which makes this even more useful. And entertaining. -- *Seth Arenstein*

Basic Cable P2+ Prime Rankings* (6/4/18-6/10/18)		
Mon-Sun	MC US AA%	MC US AA (000)
FNC	0.782	2380
MSNBC	0.525	1600
HGTV	0.458	1395
USA	0.451	1372
TBSC	0.386	1175
CNN	0.352	1072
HIST	0.338	1029
ID	0.335	1020
DISC	0.318	969
A&E	0.318	967
NICK	0.308	939
FOOD	0.303	924
DSNY	0.273	832
TLC	0.271	825
ESPN	0.259	788
ADSM	0.256	779
HALL	0.254	773
NAN	0.246	748
TNT	0.225	684
AMC	0.220	668
HMM	0.204	620
TVLAND	0.202	614
FX	0.189	576
VH1	0.183	557
BRAVO	0.183	557
SYFY	0.174	531
DSJR	0.174	529
INSP	0.174	528
APL	0.173	528
LIFE	0.163	496
CRN	0.155	471
MTV	0.153	467
NATGEO	0.151	461
HBO	0.151	460
TRAVEL	0.149	455
FRFM	0.149	454
BET	0.149	454
NKJR	0.134	407
OWN	0.134	407
GSN	0.132	403
CMT	0.130	396

*P2+ L+SD rankers are based on national Nielsen numbers, not coverage.

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