

For broadcasters, flip-flops never go out of season.

Broadcasters heartily support being paid “fair value” for retransmission of their own content...

“Receiving fair value for our content is core to who we are and we will remain resolute in this principle.”

— Les Moonves, CBS CEO
Los Angeles Times, July 31, 2012

Since before retransmission consent became law, broadcasters have claimed it’s not a “network issue”...

“The broadcast networks would have no right to participate in these negotiations, to dictate their terms, or to demand any part of the benefits which a local station might obtain from a cable system.”

— Edwards Fritts, then-NAB President
Memo to the MPAA, October 7, 1991

Broadcasters frequently claim retrans fees are for local programming...

“...Retransmission consent compensation enables broadcasters to deliver free and locally-focused programming and services. Broadcasters continue to reinvest their revenues in local news and coverage.”

— Gordon Smith, NAB President & CEO
Testimony before Senate Commerce Committee, July 24, 2012

And for all their talk about the importance of local affiliates...

“Undermining broadcasters’ statutory retransmission consent negotiation rights ultimately would reduce the quality and diversity of broadcast programming [sic] (including local news, sports, weather and emergency information) available both via Multichannel video programming distributors (MVPDs) and free over-the-air to all Americans, and move more quality programming solely to increasingly expensive pay services.”

— National Association of Broadcasters,
May 29, 2013

...but balk at paying to retransmit content belonging to others, like musicians.

“The idea that we have to pay them to put their music on our radio stations is absurd.”

— Les Moonves, CBS CEO
RadioInfo, September 20, 2012

...really?

“2013 is going to be an even better year, with significant growth in retrans, significant growth in reverse compensation... ...we are looking at significantly higher retrans revenue in 2013. Plus, we remain ahead of our target of hitting \$1 billion in revenue from retrans and reverse comp by 2017, if not sooner.”

— Les Moonves, CBS CEO
Q4 2012 earnings call, February 13, 2013

...but increasingly use retrans fees to pay for expensive national programming.

“...broadcasters have to be compensated fairly by pay-TV distributors ... if [they] are going to be able to afford to bid for rights to NFL football, The Masters, The World Series and the NBA finals.”

— Gordon Smith, NAB President & CEO
Politico, August 28, 2013

...networks throw them under the bus at the first sign of retrans consent revenue loss.

“If we can’t have our rights properly protected through legal and political avenues, we will pursue business solutions. One such business solution would be to take the network and turn it into a subscription service.”

— Chase Carey, NewsCorp COO
Variety, April 8, 2013



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