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## Three Finales Fizzle, but 'Idol' Sizzles on Wednesday

**Rash Report: 'Lost,' 'Lie to Me,' 'America's Next Top Model' All Down**

By [John Rash](#)

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MINNEAPOLIS (AdAge.com) -- Season finales for three shows -- ABC's "Lost," Fox's "Lie to Me" and the CW's "America's Next Top Model" -- fizzled, while Fox's "American Idol" sizzled, with its highest results-episode rating since late March. That helped Fox easily win Wednesday's ratings race with an overall 5.7/16 rating and share in the ad-centric 18-to-49 demographic, followed by ABC (3.7/10), CBS (2.9/8), NBC (1.5/4) and the CW (1.2/3).



'Lost'

Photo Credit: ABC

"Idol," in its penultimate week, belted out an 8.7/22. But lead-in "Lie to Me," while winning its time slot with a 2.6/8, saw its finale fade 47% compared with its promising premiere in January, when it made its debut with a 4.9/12.

"Lie to Me" just beat "Lost: A Journey in Time" (2.5/8), a recap show before the two-hour "Lost" finale (4.4/11), which was down 10% from last year's last episode. The ambitious but often opaque plotlines of "Lost" create work but also reward for viewers. Not surprisingly, however, the show is prone to

audience attrition. This season, for example, "Lost" lost 19% of its original-episode viewers compared with last year and is off 44% from its season-two peak.

"America's Next Top Model," conversely, is much more episodic, which makes last night's finale rating of 1.9/6 a disappointment, as it slumped 17% from both last spring's and last fall's finales. Still, "Top Model" is the CW's top program and is one to build upon, which the network will need to do starting with its upfront presentation next week. Its first order of business should be to quit running reruns of "90210," a drama that's already struggling even when it runs original episodes. Last night it held only 21% of the audience from "Top Model," posting a .4/1.

CBS's second-place schedule had no season finales, although "CSI: NY" (3.2/9) will have one tonight, albeit with the benefit of a "CSI" lead-in. Last night "Criminal Minds" (3.4/9) ran before it, holding all but two-tenths of a ratings point of its season average. Comedies kicked off the night, as "Rules of Engagement" (1.9/6) performed at the level of the usual time-slot occupant, "The New Adventures of Old Christine." "Christine" shifted a half-hour later and delivered a 2.0/6.

On NBC, the venerable, valuable "Law and Order" franchise, which may have season finales but seems like it will never have a series finale, ran three episodes: "Law and Order: CI" (1.1/3) at 8 p.m., a "Law and Order: SVU" repeat (1.2/3) at 9 p.m. and an original episode of "Law and Order" (2.2/6) at 10 p.m.

#### **WHAT TO WATCH:**

**Thursday:** Unlike the challenging "Lost," casual viewers can more easily drop in on "Grey's Anatomy," ABC's less ambitious but more accessible drama, which has its two-hour season finale.

**Friday:** The fact that "Prison Break" was furloughed to Friday nights probably means most have lost track of the Fox drama, but former fans may want to see how it all ends on the series finale.

#### **WHAT TO WATCH FOR:**

Smoke coming from your TiVo, as 10(!) shows have season finales tonight. How will they all do amid that competition? Check tomorrow's Rash Report for "finals night" grades.

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*NOTE: All ratings based on adults 18-49. A share is a percentage of adults 18-49 who have their TV sets on at a given time. A rating is a percentage of all adults 18-49, whether or not their sets are turned on. For example, a 1.0 rating is 1% of the total U.S. adults 18-49 population with TVs. Ratings quoted in this column are based on live-plus-same-day unless otherwise noted. (Many ad deals have been negotiated on the basis of commercial-minute, live-plus-three-days viewing.)*

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