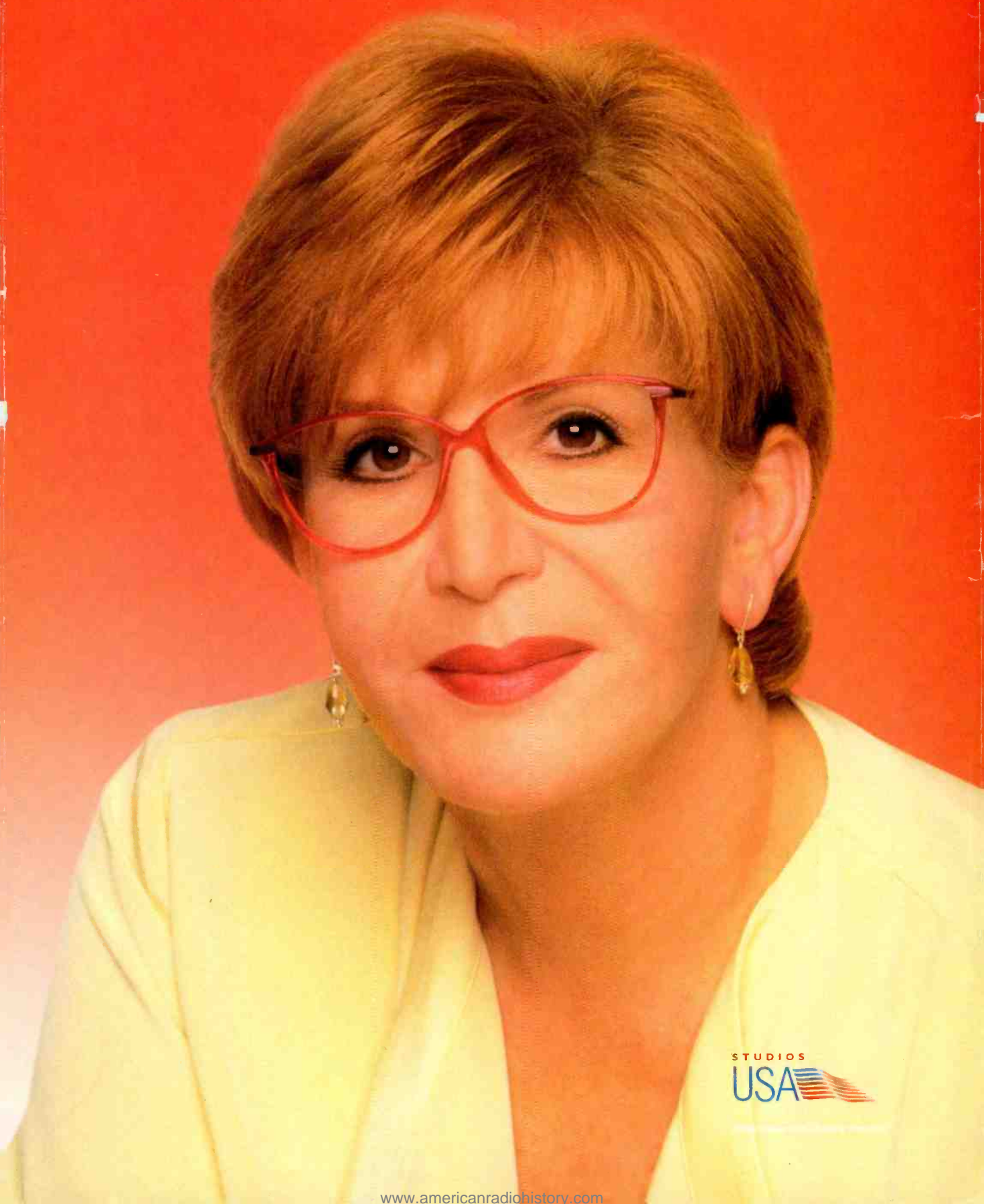


N SALLY!



STUDIOS
USA 

FOCUS O

Early Fringe

November '98 Sweep
Ranked by Weighted W18-49 Rating

	<u>W18-34</u>	<u>W18-49</u>	<u>W25-54</u>
Jerry Springer	6.2	5.0	4.1
Oprah Winfrey	4.6	5.0	5.4
Sally Jessy Raphael	3.1	3.1	3.0
Rosie O'Donnell	3.0	3.0	3.1
Ricki Lake	3.7	2.8	2.2
Montel Williams	2.7	2.7	2.7
Maury Povich	2.7	2.6	2.6
Jenny Jones	3.0	2.5	1.9
Judge Judy	2.0	2.4	2.7
Forgive or Forget	2.2	2.0	1.8
Judge Joe Brown	1.8	1.8	2.0
People's Court	1.5	1.7	1.9
Leeza	1.9	1.4	1.2
Roseanne	1.2	1.2	1.2
Judge Mills Lane	1.2	1.2	1.4
Donny & Marie	1.1	1.1	1.1
Howie Mandel	0.8	0.8	0.9

Source: NSI, SNAP November '98, cross market average, 10+ early-fringe occurrences.

It's perfectly clear. *Sally* is your best choice when it comes to early-fringe. The longest-running, continuously growing talk show in syndication.

**FUZZY ABOUT
YOUR BEST
CHOICE FOR
EARLY FRINGE ?**

TOP OF THE WEEK / 6

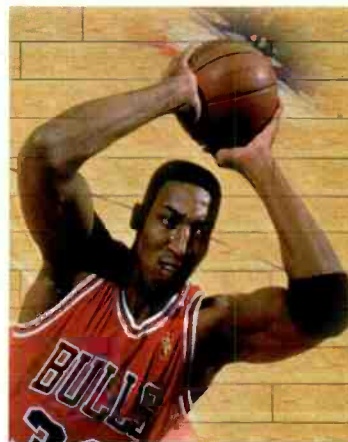
CTTD pitches classic TV Columbia TriStar packages screen gems for daily broadcast service. / 10

AT&T/TCI merger gets a makeover AT&T decides to keep cable and all of long-distance together; five MSOs sign on as local telco partners. / 14

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Round ball rebounds

NBA owners and players finally ink a deal and networks breathe a collective sigh of relief. Hopes are high for a successful, albeit abbreviated, season. / 15

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COVER STORY

Shopping guide to NATPE '99

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Your new digital home

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DAILY VARIETY

MONDAY
DECEMBER 21, 1998

THE 18-34 QUESTION

Key demo is tuning out TV, Nielsen reports

BY RICHARD KATZ

NEW YORK — In response to NBC's charges that flaws in Nielsen methodology have caused a decline in 18-34 viewership, a new Nielsen Media Research report maintained that NBC and TV in general have for years suffered losses in this important demographic.

Nielsen said Friday that primetime among adults 18-34 declined 6% on a seasonal basis compared with last year.

To ensure that the 18-34 viewers was not an anomaly in People's diaries, Nielsen conducted an analysis, meaning that the same young audience

Nielsen also conducted the same analysis for adults 18-24. Overall primetime TV usage for this demographic was down 6%. In the unified analysis in October, these people watched 12% less television.

"Our conclusion is that the measurement service is accurately reflecting a real change in the TV usage within this young audience," Barry Cook, senior VP and research officer

WB on

Nielsen also... in each of... and basic... as down 39... year in the non... off 43% in the... WB was the o... show a gain... racket...

Basic cable showed a 15% boost in 18-34 viewers in the non-unified sample and was flat with last year in the unified sample.

Declining viewership

Nielsen added that both PeopleMeters and diaries indicated that overall 18-34 television viewing has been dropping since at least 1991.

Going by Nielsen's diaries, women 18-34 have dropped from just under a 42.0 rating in November 1991 down to below a 37 rating in November 1997.

Men 18-34, using diaries, have decreased from a 36.0 rating in November 1991 to a 32.0 rating in November 1997.

Where are all the young adults going?

"These are people that eat, sleep and drink computers and the Internet," said Bill Croasdaie, president of broadcast for ad agency Western Intl. Media.

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Change of Heart

Love Connection
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THE 18-34 ANSWER.

LOVE CONNECTION

Market	N'98 Vs. N'97
New York/1:30am	Up 163%
Philadelphia/12m	Up 25%
Boston/12:30am	Up 175%
Dallas/12:30am	Up 800%
Wash., DC/7:30pm	Up 120%
Detroit/12m	Up 367%
Seattle/10:30pm	Up 222%
Minneapolis/12m	Up 800%
Denver/1am	Up 200%
St. Louis/1am	Up 467%
Orlando/10am	Up 80%
Portland/12m	Up 250%
Indianapolis/12m	Up 157%
Raleigh/11:30pm	Up 67%
Milwaukee/1am	Up 200%
Kansas City/11pm	Up 1700%
Salt Lake/11:30pm	Up inf
Norfolk/6pm	Up 150%
Buffalo/12:30am	Up inf
Oklahoma City/12:30am	Up 200%
Albuquerque/11pm	Up 175%
Providence/12m	Up inf
Jacksonville/12:30am	Up 800%
Las Vegas/10pm	Up inf
Charleston/1am	Up 700%
Tulsa/11pm	Up 50%
Wichita/12m	Up 100%
Spokane/11:30pm	Up inf
Omaha/3pm	Up inf
Paducah/12m	Up 200%
Tucson/11pm	Up 80%
Cedar Rapids/12n	Up inf
Johnstown/12n	Up 200%
Colorado Springs/11pm	Up 29%
El Paso/2pm	Up 500%

CHANGE OF HEART

Market	N'98 Vs. N'97
New York/1am	Up 67%
Los Angeles/12:15am	Up 81%
Chicago/12m	Up 56%
Philadelphia/11:30pm	Up 58%
Boston/12m	Up 400%
Dallas/12m	Up 575%
Wash., DC/7pm	Up 300%
Detroit/11:30pm	Up 125%
Houston/12m	Up 89%
Seattle/10pm	Up 160%
Minneapolis/11:30pm	Up 425%
Phoenix/10pm	Up 800%
Sacramento/11:30pm	Up 50%
St. Louis/1:30am	Up 190%
Orlando/10:30am	Up 283%
Portland/11:30pm	Up 350%
Indianapolis/11am	Up 29%
Hartford/11am	Up 20%
Nashville/12m	Up inf
Kansas City/10:30pm	Up inf
Columbus/12:30am	Up 20%
Salt Lake/11pm	Up inf
Birmingham/1:30am	Up inf
Norfolk/6:30pm	Up 500%
W. Palm Beach/12:30am	Up inf
Albuquerque/11:30pm	Up 129%
Providence/12:30am	Up inf
Jacksonville/1am	Up inf
Dayton/1am	Up 40%
Las Vegas/10:30pm	Up inf
Charleston/1:30am	Up 800%
Tulsa/11:30pm	Up 100%
Tucson/11:30pm	Up 1200%
Baton Rouge/11pm	Up 25%
El Paso/2:30pm	Up 250%

Source: NSI SNAP, Adult 18-34 rating Nov.'98 vs. Nov.'97 time period

Subject to qualifications available upon request.

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Nets Go To The Hoop

With settlement of NBA lockout, NBC and Turner look forward to resuming broadcasts

By Steve McClellan

There is a god.

That's what NBA TV rights holders were telling themselves last week after the league and the players came to an agreement just 24 hours before the owners were set to vote to cancel the 1998-99 season.

"We're definitely a happy group," said NBC Sports chairman Dick Ebersol. "And the alternative was just too black an opportunity to think about."

Black as in black hole—one that would suck up considerably more of NBC's already dwindling audience of male viewers this season. Season to date through Jan. 3, NBC is down 26% among men 18-49 in prime time. Contributing significantly to that decline, executives say, is the loss of the NFL. Losing the NBA this season as well certainly would have accelerated those losses.

Without the NBA in the fourth quarter, TNT's and TBS's male audiences were

down dramatically. "We pursue the NBA rights for the young male demographic that it attracts," says TNT Research Vice President Barry Koch. "That's where we've really taken a hit." Replacement programming on TNT is drawing about half the young male audience that the NBA delivered last season, he said.

Though NBC was thrilled to see the NBA and players settle, Ebersol said, "It would be crazy to say there's been no damage" in terms of fan resentment and possible viewer defections this season. That has made advertisers quite nervous about how this season will play out in the ratings.

As a result, NBC will offer its NBA advertisers a guarantee for the first time ever for scatter market ad sales, which represent 25%-30% of the total NBA sales pie, agency executives say.

That guarantee will be based on last year's ratings, upon which this year's ad pricing is based, agency executives say.

It will also vary from client to client, and depend on the breadth and scope of individual ad packages. Last year, NBC averaged a 4.8/12 for 26 telecasts in the regular season and a 7.7/20 for 22 non-final post-season games. The finals averaged an 18.7/33, and were the highest rated championship finals ever.

NBC offers a guarantee to up-front advertisers, but only began doing so this season, the first of a new four-year, \$1.75 billion rights deal with the league. Turner-owned TNT and TBS

onship series, and that part of the schedule will be played out in full in the second quarter, and end just six days later than the planned pre-lockout NBA season.

NBC says that just under 50% of its NBA inventory was sold before the start of the lockout. All but a fraction of that money remains committed, the network said. The canceled All Star game in February may be made up with a regular-season double-header.

"They're catching a marketplace that's really in their favor," said TN Media's John Lazarus. "ABC and NBC are almost sold out in prime time in the first quarter. CBS still has some inventory. Obviously Nike and Anheuser-Busch didn't pull their money. I think they're going to be fine." The same is true for Turner, he said.

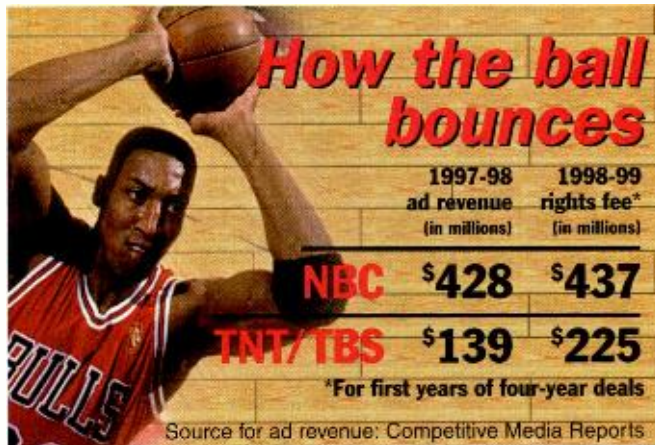
Last season, TNT and TBS took in \$138.9 million in NBA advertising, CMR reports. Turner sales execs say three-quarters of its upfront NBA advertisers, including the biggest spenders (Anheuser-Busch, AT&T, Burger King, among others)

kept the money with the networks. The bottom line is they don't expect to lose much revenue from the lockout.

One wild card is the ever popular Chicago Bulls star Michael Jordan, who has yet to decide if he will play this season. Many believe that Jordan's popularity alone will have an impact on TV ratings. NBC will hedge its bets as best it can. Clearly it wants as many Bulls games as it can get on the schedule, but it also plans to schedule extra games when it airs the Bulls, so it can go to regional coverage if the Bulls dynasty collapses this season.

The season is saved, but it will be 30 regular-season games shorter—52 games instead of the usual 82. The good news, for rights holders, is that there will be a full complement of playoff games, where the bulk of ad dollars are placed.

At deadline, the league had settled on a Feb. 5 start date for the regular season, when TNT will kick off its coverage with a double-header. NBC said



already had been and will continue to offer ratings guarantees to both up-front and scatter advertisers.

In a teleconference with reporters last week, Ebersol stopped short of saying that the network won't take a financial hit with basketball this season. But he strongly suggested there's a good chance that NBC will do as well—or better—than last season, when the network generated \$427.7 million in NBA ad revenue, according to Competitive Media Reporting.

With the tight prime time scatter market for first quarter, Ebersol said there was a lot of money available from advertisers looking to reach the prized male audience. Agency executives agreed, although one ad executive said the network might come up a little short in the first quarter because of the jump CBS has had selling the NCAA Championship Tournament. But the bulk of NBA ad dollars go against the playoffs and champi-

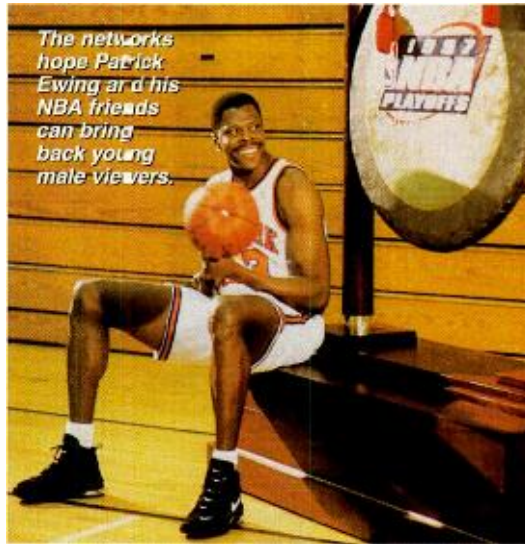
it would air its first game, also a double-header, on Sunday, Feb. 7. The network had planned on airing 31 regular season games and will be able to squeeze in 27 or 28 of those games.

The regular season will end in early May, two weeks later than usual. Playoffs are set to begin the second weekend in May, with the championship series ending no later than June 29 (assuming it goes seven games) so that the player draft for next season can begin on time on June 30. The pre-lockout schedule had the final series ending no later than June 20.

Clearly, TNT has more lost ground to make up than NBC. TNT's pre-lockout coverage was to have started in November, so it's losing out on three months of games. But sources there say they're talking to the league about adding games on Wednesdays and weekends. NBC's regular season wasn't scheduled to start until Christmas Day.

TNT and TBS missed a combined 47 games during the lockout, and the two Turner-owned cable networks will likely wind up televising 50 games during the revamped regular season and another 40 games during the playoffs.

"We don't know how many games we are going to miss exactly and how many are going to be made up in restitution," one Turner executive said. "We could add some games possibly on Wednesday nights and maybe on weekends, as well."



Sources say the two Turner nets will likely get an additional eight to 10 games this season in make-goods from the league, with close to 40 more games to be made up over the next few years of its current NBA contract.

TNT broadcasts NBA games on each Tuesday and Friday night of the regular season, while sister-station TBS carries a regular Monday night national broadcast.

Last Friday, the league and the networks were focused on setting the schedule. The next priority is to win back fans angered by what some saw as

a fight between rich and spoiled players and rich and spoiled owners.

NBC's Ebersol said the league bore the lion's share of that responsibility, and he called on NBA players to follow the example of the more fan-friendly WNBA players, who frequently spend a half-hour mingling with fans after games, talking and signing autographs.

Ebersol also said NBC was already at work cutting new promotion spots with some of NBC's biggest stars, including the casts of *Friends*, *ER* and *Frasier*. He said an on-air campaign would begin 10 to 12 days before the start of the season to "address with humor the tough times we've been through."

Despite the shortened season, both Turner and NBC are contractually obligated to pay the full rights fee this year. But the league and the networks will sit down shortly to figure out how to make up for any lost games and revenue, sources say. Adding more games, or rebates, or some combination could do that. "Everything's on the table," NBA Commissioner David Stern told reporters last week.—*With reporting by Joe Schlosser and Donna Petrozzello*

Shows, not games, must go on

In shortened season, some stations unlikely to preempt regular programming for NBA

By Dan Trigoboff

Despite the value of televising NBA franchises, some local stations say they will not disrupt their prime time entertainment schedules to cover losses from the just-ended lockout.

Many of these stations are affiliated with the WB and UPN. In Washington, for example, the return of the NBA is definitely an upside, said Mike Nurse, vice president and general manager of the Tribune Broadcasting-managed station.

Wizards games typically draw a 3 or 4 household share on WBDC-TV, which sells time to rights holder Home Team Sports for games. But Nurse said he's unlikely to preempt WB programming to carry additional games.

And when the season extends

beyond its normal end into the spring, he has no plans to preempt the Baltimore Orioles to carry the Wizards.

Officials at WB stations in particular said that the success of some of the network's schedule has offset some of their revenue losses. But that success has also made rescheduling more difficult. A Tribune official estimated that the strength of the WB lineup helped offset about 40% of the station's NBA-related losses. Stations are especially reluctant to disrupt viewing patterns for hour-long dramas, which make up the WB's strongest programming.

Moreover, other WB station managers said that even if they try to take on more games in the renewed season, they would try to avoid conflicting with the Sunday-Thursday WB schedule.

Among station heads, the consensus was that individual losses from the

absence of NBA games so far was significant—but not catastrophic. On the plus side, unlike the networks, stations typically didn't pay rights fees up-front for games they didn't air due to the lockout, they said.

Sources familiar with TV sales estimated that station losses from the lockout—for both stations owning rights and those selling time to the teams—ranged from the mid-six figures for stations carrying marginal teams to millions for stations with more successful franchises.

Namely, the Chicago Bulls. "The end of the lockout means good things" for Tribune Broadcasting-owned WGN-TV, said Vice President and General Manager Peter Walker, whose station airs the league's dominant franchise. "The Bulls are a significant source of revenue and a significant source of programming." In

Chicago, the 35 games carried on WGN-TV for the Bulls 1997-98 averaged a 16.3 household rating and always finished in the top 10 for the week.

"There's not that much that's 16-rated in prime any more," Walker said.

Of the 35 games the station had scheduled for this season, more than half, 18, would have been played in December and January. WGN-TV and the Bulls have a profit-sharing arrangement, so the station was not out rights money, Walker added.

"We've had a nice run with the Bulls," Dennis FitzSimons, president of Tribune Broadcasting, agreed. "We had a lot of sponsors lined up and they're still lined up. We're anxious for the schedule and we're glad that this is over. Hopefully, by February, when the season starts, some of the [fans'] antagonism will be gone."

"We were missing a big cog," added Phil Paligraf, who moved recently from sales manager to general manager at WITV, Bloomington, Ind., which airs Indiana Pacers games. "We lost significant dollars, but we also lost in image. Image-wise, we're the Indiana sports station." Of the 30 games scheduled, the station may have lost 16, depending on how make-up scheduling goes.

The lost games were especially painful, said Tom Ehlmann, vice president and general manager at Tribune-owned Houston Rockets carrier KHTV(TV), because December and January are lower-demand months, primarily dropping just before the holidays.

"The revenue from the NBA would have helped more than it would in March and April. Another problem is that we're already well into selling our advertising for this quarter. We went ahead and sold our regular [programming] schedule. Now we will have to preempt some advertisers" in order to

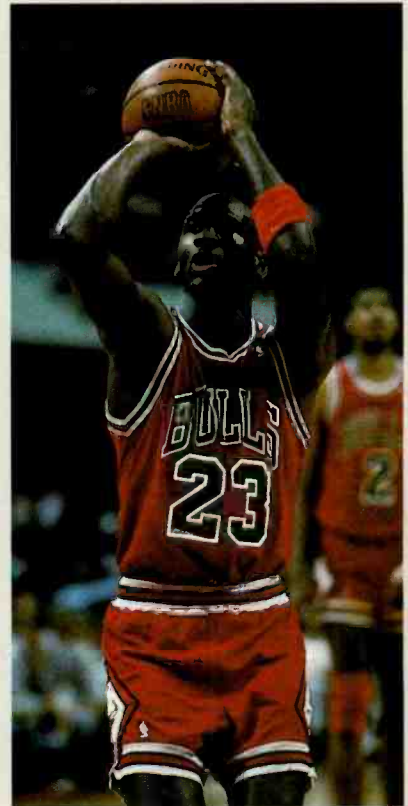
NBA's back not a minute too soon for Fox

Fox Sports Net, with 22 regional cable networks and local broadcast contracts with 26 of the 29 NBA teams, has incurred the most damage within the industry in terms of actual missed games.

Fox Sports Net will lose 545 games through the end of January, and a handful more during the first few days of February. Ratings on Fox Sports Nets' nightly *Fox Sports News* broadcasts have also plunged during the lockout, and executives at the one-year-old cable channel are ready for the NBA's return.

"We are so excited about getting ourselves back on track," says Arthur Smith, executive vice president of programming and production at Fox Sports Net. "Certainly we were hurt by the NBA lockout, not because we didn't have quality programming to fill in, but it's hard to replace the Bulls in Chicago and the Lakers in Los Angeles and the ratings that come with it. We were hurt by it, but nobody benefits more because we do more NBA games than anybody else."

—Joe Schlosser



sell time to the Rockets.

Similarly, UPN stations, like Sinclair-owned Milwaukee Bucks carrier WCGV-TV, said they did not want to endanger the anticipated launch of *Dilbert*, set to debut on Monday nights starting Jan. 25.

Still, says General Manager Michael Pumo, "People in Milwaukee were upbeat about the Bucks because of [new coach] George Karl. We would take more games if we can get them." And late last week, Pumo said, the indication from the Bucks was that the

station would get more games."

Final scheduling of games on the local level could prove to be contentious, with broadcasters and cablecasters vying not only for the best possible lineups but also looking to make up as much lost ground as they can. "We understand that this labor problem was not the team's fault," said one station manager. "And we've always had good relations with the team here. But our thinking is that we lost a lot of money. They should give us more games." ■

'60 Minutes II' debut due

For years, CBS considered expanding its lucrative *60 Minutes* franchise. And now, seven months after finally deciding to do it, the moment of truth is at hand with this Wednesday's (Jan. 13) debut of *60 Minutes II* at 9 p.m. The last piece of talent for the show fell into place with last week's hiring of satirist Jimmy Tingle to provide commentary at the end of the program.

Tingle has appeared on MSNBC as a commentator, on a number of late-night shows, and in cable comedy specials. Commenting on the hire last week, *60 Minutes II*



Jimmy Tingle

executive producer Jeff Fager said Tingle's tape submission "really stood out. He's smart, funny and thoughtful. It's nothing more complicated than that." But Fager wasn't sure last week whether Tingle would appear on the initial show, or whether he'd even be a weekly contributor. That's to be determined. For the debut, a special edition of *JAG* will lead into the magazine.

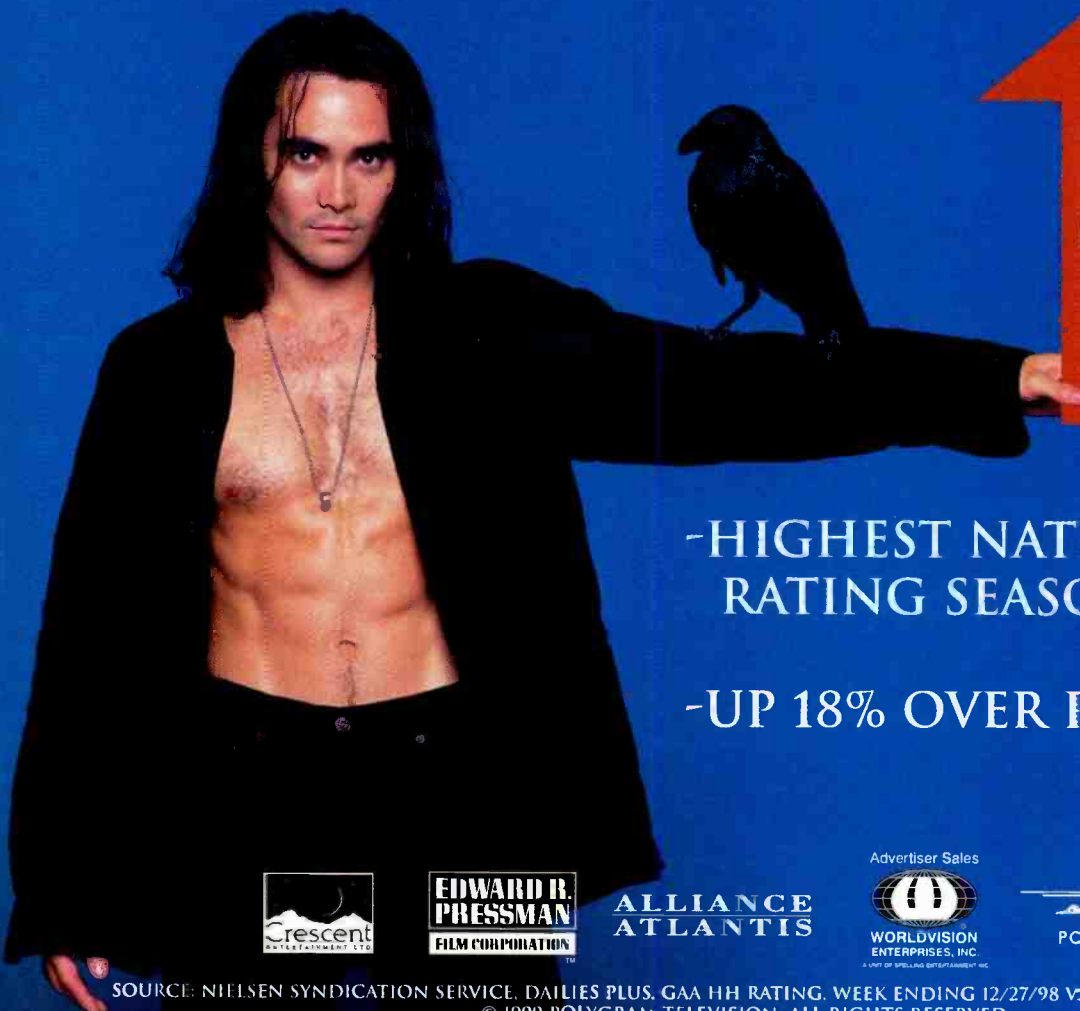
Network sources say they'd be happy with an 8 rating—although even a 6 would be an improvement for the struggling time period.

—Steve McClellan

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CTTD pitches classic TV

Studio packages gems for daily service; would you believe Larry, Curly and Moe in late-fringe—nyuk, nyuk?

By Joe Schlosser

It's got big-ticket movies, classic TV shows with hip intros and retro commercials, and a variant on professional wrestling. A new cable channel? No. It's Columbia TriStar Television Distribution, which is coming to NATPE with some shows it hopes will help TV stations beat cable at its own game.

The Sony-owned studio is going to tap into its rich television library next fall and offer stations The Screen Gems Network, a daily hour satellite-fed broadcast consisting of two classic Columbia shows, trivia, old advertisements (Swanson TV dinners, for one) and a number of different themes. The first few months of The Screen Gems Network (Screen Gems was the original name of Columbia Pictures' television division) will feature classic episodes of *I Dream of Jeannie* and *Bewitched*.

Columbia TriStar executives have also repackaged The Three Stooges and are offering 130 half-hour episodes for next fall. In addition, the studio is selling a new movie package to stations entitled *Showcase Six*, with such titles as *Men in Black*, *Air Force One* and *Starship Troopers*.

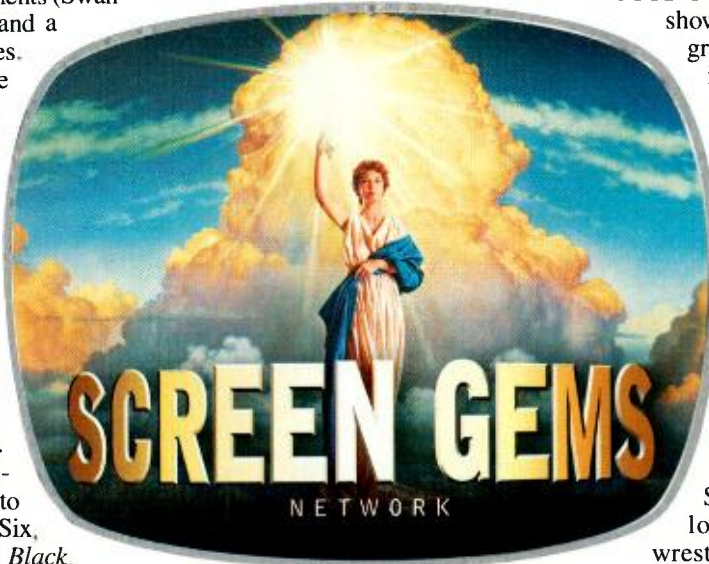
CTTD executives also announced last week they will be bringing back *Ricki Lake* for a seventh season, freshman talk show *Donny & Marie* (which already had an initial two-year commitment) and action-hour *V.I.P.* with Pamela Anderson for a second season.

Its new, first-run entry for fall 1999 will also take a page from cable. It's an hour weekly sports entertainment series, *Battledome*, that is billed as a mixture of professional wrestling and the former weekend show *American Gladiators*.

The Screen Gems Network is what really has the Columbia executives excited about going to the NATPE convention in New Orleans in two weeks. The hour feed will get national advertising support and will likely be

expanded to a two-hour feed in its second year. CTTD executives say they are taking Screen Gems to stations in search of two-year commitments.

"This is something that has never been done before in syndication and that we have been wanting to do for some time now," says CTTD President Barry Thurston. "We were watching what the cable networks have done over the years and how they have created their network by buying products from us and other studios and putting it all together—and suddenly they have a network. We said, 'Why can't we do the same thing for tel-



levision stations and give them the ability to compete in their marketplace with something that is different?"

To capitalize on what might be called the *Nick at Nite* model, Columbia will be able to tap into its 50-year-old library, which consists of 58,000 episodes of sitcoms and dramas. *Barney Miller*, *All in the Family*, *The Jeffersons* and *Charlie's Angels* are just a few of the shows that will likely be included in Screen Gems' rotation.

A station advisory board is being set up by CTTD executives (who helped pioneer the practice) to gain input on promotion and possible marketing plans for the fledgling network. Thurston says the hour feed will likely be sold in daytime, early fringe and late fringe time

periods. The hour Screen Gems Network will generally consist of two half-hour sitcoms and, when it expands to two hours the following year, will tap into Columbia's library of one-hour dramas.

As for The Three Stooges, CTTD executives say demand from station owners for the show has been overwhelming. In all, The Three Stooges produced 190 original short films of varying lengths. CTTD has put them into themed half-hours. Newly produced interstitials have also been added to the packages.

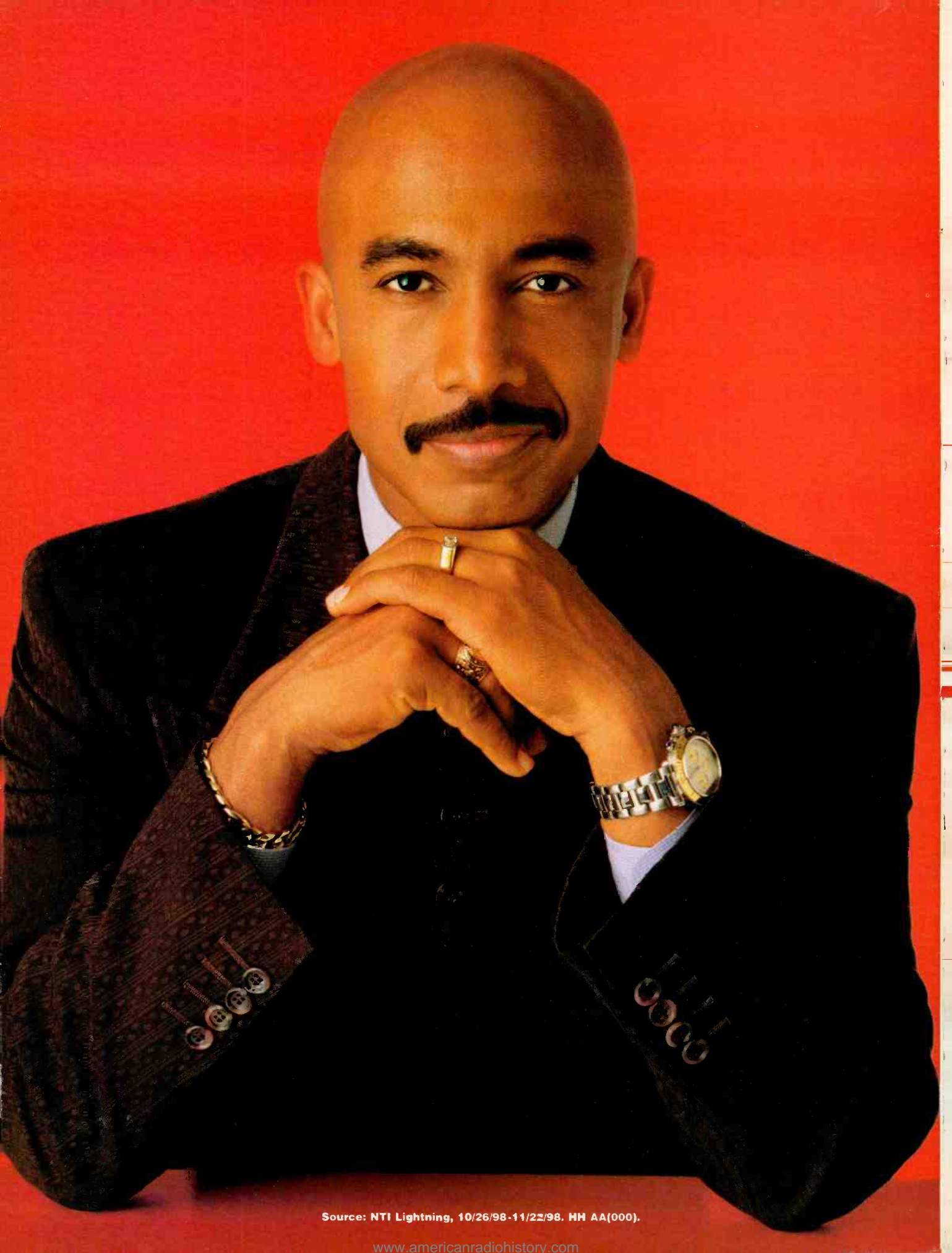
In addition to the usual complement of nyuk-nyuks, "each half-hour will feature things like the eye-poke or the best pie fights," says Russ Krasnoff, CTTD's head of programming. "The show is so rich in history, people grew up with The Stooges, and it's just part of the culture."

Following up on the studio's successful first entry into the weekly hour business last fall with *V.I.P.*, CTTD executives believe they can continue to attract male demos with *Battledome*.

"It's a sports entertainment show that has physical competition in a larger-than-life setting with larger-than-life characters," CTTD Executive Vice President Steve Mosko says. "We have looked at the success of wrestling and how it has become almost mainstream these days, and we believe that there are opportunities with *Battledome* not only in the TV marketplace, but in merchandising and other business opportunities."

Battledome will feature two teams, both composed of a male and female contestant, battling it out in four or five different athletic events. Both teams will be hand-picked from local market tryouts that CTTD executives will be setting up as the season goes forward. A group of *Battledome* warriors will be featured in each event and their job is to slow down the contestants. At the end of each show, one team will be awarded a cash prize and will move on to the next round. The end of the broadcast season will feature a Super Bowl-like finale. ■

**WHILE OPRAH
AND JERRY
GO BACK AND
FORTH FOR THE
NUMBER ONE
SPOT IN TALK,
ONE THING IS
CERTAIN.**

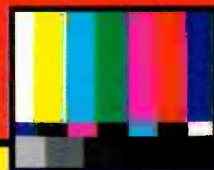


Source: NTI Lightning, 10/26/98-11/22/98. MH AA(000).

www.americanradiohistory.com

MONTEL IS RIGHT BEHIND THEM.

And ahead of
Sally, Rosie,
Regis & Kathie Lee,
Ricki, Maury, Jenny,
Roseanne, etc.



PLEASE ADJUST YOUR PERSPECTIVE NOW.



A VIACOM COMPANY

AT&T/TCI merger gets a makeover

AT&T decides to keep cable and all long-distance together; five MSOs sign on as local telco partners

By John M. Higgins

AT&T has backtracked on its plans for Tele-Communications Inc., scrapping a proposal to create a "tracking stock" that would have included the TCI's cable systems and all of AT&T's consumer phone services.

The revamped plan for the AT&T/TCI merger unveiled last week calls for AT&T's commercial long-distance, consumer long-distance, cellular and cable operations to fall under a single umbrella.

But not all has changed. As announced last June, Liberty Media Corp will have its own tracking stock and an entirely different set of shareholders and remain controlled by TCI Chairman John Malone.

AT&T also disclosed that it had formed joint ventures with five other cable operators serving about three million subscribers to help them roll out local phone service on their cable systems. AT&T's pursuit of TCI is driven almost solely by the promise of deliver-

ing telephone traffic over cable systems.

Four of the MSOs that signed up are owned in part by TCI: Intermedia Partners, Falcon Cable TV, Bresnan Communications, and Peak Communications. The fifth is Insight Communications.

The changes were disclosed Friday morning when AT&T finally released a proxy statement detailing its post-TCI operations at a meeting with securities analysts in New York. The new structure contrasts sharply with the one AT&T Chairman Michael Armstrong enthusiastically spoke about creating, based on a new tracking stock, when the TCI takeover was announced in June.

At that time, Armstrong contended that the structure would generate greater value by keeping the cable business from getting overshadowed by AT&T's core long-distance business. Two stocks would give AT&T investors a choice of investing in the relatively stable long-distance business, generating reliable net income and dividends, or the higher-growth, but volatile and capital inten-

sive, cable and cellular operations.

But at Friday's meeting, analysts in attendance said Armstrong explained that separating the units erected too many internal operating barriers. "He said it was more important to spend time integrating the larger entity," said one analyst.

Under the revised structure, TCI President Leo Hindery will run AT&T's cable and cable telephone operations and report to John Zeglis, currently vice chairman but soon to be head of all of AT&T's consumer services.

The deals behind the joint ventures depend on how much cash each operator wants up front to rebuild its systems to handle telephone traffic. AT&T expects to own between 51%-65% of each venture and have 20-year exclusive rights to offer communications services over the systems. AT&T will pay \$15-\$20 per home passed by a phone-ready system. For each phone subscriber actually signed up, the operator will receive additional fees starting at \$1.50 per month.

As incentive to actually perform, operators will get even more bonuses if average monthly revenues surpass certain goals. Hindery characterized those payments as "schmuck insurance" aimed at keeping AT&T from laying out cash to operators that don't aggressively or effectively sell phone service.

Some investors had been expecting an affiliation deal with Time Warner Cable. Executives familiar with those talks said they are still on track. ■

FCC to AT&T: Unveil phone plans

Kennard also plans to make resolving digital must-carry issue a priority

By Bill McConnell

FCC Chairman William Kennard urged AT&T last week to reveal its plans for rolling out local telephone service over Tele-Communications Inc.'s cable network. "Congress envisioned that companies, particularly the cable industry, would be moving into local telephone markets," he said. "When are Americans going to receive these benefits?"

Kennard predicted that the FCC would rule on the merger "in the first half of 1999." He indicated in a hearing last month that a strict buildout schedule may be one of the agency's conditions for approving the merger.

Kennard made his latest comments in a press briefing on his 1999 agenda.

He said again that he does not feel that cable companies should face digital must-carry requirements. "We don't know how exactly this market is going to develop and I don't think it's appropriate for the FCC to preemptively dictate how it will develop," he said.

Kennard would not commit to a deadline for the commission's decision on whether cable companies must carry both the digital and analog signals of local broadcasters, but called the issue a top priority.

The agency's review of broadcast ownership rules also should be completed early in 1999, he said. FCC staffers said Kennard plans to hold a hearing on broadcast ownership rules, but the date is still uncertain. Kennard

has come under fire from Capitol Hill for plans to restrict local marketing agreements and make fewer exceptions to the radio/TV cross-ownership prohibition. "I personally feel we need to do some more outreach," he said.

Kennard complained that cable rates are too high and lamented that the FCC has little power to reduce subscribers' bills because upper-tier regulation expires March 31. "Congress indicated that it wants competition to be the driving force in the marketplace, not rate regulation," he said.

Instead, he called on Congress to promote competition from direct-broadcast satellite providers by passing legislation allowing them to offer signals from local network affiliates. ■

Sat TV goes interactive

EchoStar, DirecTV ink software partners, compete with enhanced applications

By Glen Dickson

While the hype going into the 1999 Consumer Electronics Show centered on HDTV, the real buzz last week in Las Vegas was created by new interactive services announced by EchoStar and DirecTV.

The competing DBS services have partnered with different interactive software companies, but both are looking to deliver similar services—advanced electronic program guides (EPGs), VCR-like time-shifting and Web (or Web-like) content. And both say the robust bandwidth of digital satellite television gives them an edge in the interactive game over cable TV.

"No one can get zeroes and ones to everyone in America as fast and as cheaply as EchoStar," says EchoStar Chairman and CEO Charlie Ergen.

EchoStar has partnered with Microsoft's WebTV to include the WebTV Network Plus Internet TV service in a new generation of EchoStar integrated receiver/decoders available this spring. The service will not only deliver actual Web-page content to EchoStar viewers but will also allow them to pause a program for up to 30 minutes and then resume watching it. The latter feature relies on an 8.6 megabyte disk drive within the \$499 Web TV box to record video. A set-top upgrade later in 1999 will allow EchoStar viewers to record about 8 hours of high-quality digital video.

The WebTV service will cost \$24.95 a month (in addition to EchoStar's \$19 basic programming package) and will still rely on a phone line to handle functions such as e-mail and surfing less popular Web sites that aren't broadcast by EchoStar.

"It marries the best of what we both have to offer," says Ergen. The extra satellite capacity EchoStar is acquiring through its merger with News Corp.'s and MCI's satellite operation will "be used for lots of data services," he adds.

Ergen hasn't disclosed EchoStar's financial arrangement with WebTV, but says that he would "like to get it as 50/50 as possible."

EchoStar already has a deal in place with OpenTV to use that company's digital operating system to support interactive content and e-commerce in its basic set-tops. "OpenTV is economical enough to put in every box we sell," says Ergen.

DirecTV also is pursuing a two-tiered interactive strategy, announcing a deal with Wink Communications to deliver "virtual channels" of full-screen graphics and text and another one with TiVo and Philips to launch Philips' "Personal TV" service, which will support time-shifting, e-commerce and data services. Both services will require new set-tops, with the TiVo/Philips box likely to be a high-end unit with multiple hours of disk storage.

DirecTV says both services will be available later this year, but the Wink deal seems more concrete. At DirecTV's press conference, Wink executives demonstrated the types of services they will offer on DirecTV such as local weather information from The Weather Channel and a "bonus channel" of news from CNN Interactive.

Details on the TiVo/Philips partnership were harder to come by. DirecTV

didn't elaborate on storage specifications or pricing for the new Philips set-tops. Philips said it would build two TiVo-enabled receivers for DirecTV—one in 1999 that will combine DirecTV programming with TiVo's "personalized" viewing technology, and a second in 2000 that will be capable of receiving terrestrial DTV broadcasts.

That EchoStar cut a deal with WebTV and not DirecTV raised some eyebrows. DirecTV and WebTV parent Microsoft are already equity partners in Thomson Consumer Electronics, the biggest seller of DirecTV receivers. DirecTV's alliance with Philips is also surprising, since Philips is the primary supplier of set-tops to arch-rival EchoStar. However, DirecTV and WebTV executives say a deal between them is still possible.

"In no way are we conceding that product category of the full Internet browser," says DirecTV Executive Vice President Larry Chapman. "Am I disappointed that EchoStar beat us to the punch on the announcement? Yes. But I wouldn't be surprised to see a DirecTV set-top in 1999 that will work with WebTV." ■

'98 Political Spending Tops \$530 million

Money was no object during the 1998 political campaigns. Politicians spent a record \$531.9 million on local TV stations trying to get their messages to the viewing public, according to Competitive Media Reporting, the New York-based ad tracking service. That shatters the previous record set in 1996, when total political TV spending totaled \$405 million. The bulk of that money—almost \$380 million—went to local stations, with the remaining \$25 million going to the broadcast networks and cable. In 1994, the previous mid-term election, spending totaled a then-record \$356 million.

The bulk of the political spending came in October and November 1998 and will help many broadcasters salvage what otherwise would have been a less-than-robust fourth quarter. Most estimates have the fourth quarter coming in at mid-single percent increases. The biggest spending occurred on the coasts, in New York and California, where hotly contested Senate races captured \$33 million in ad dollars. Spending on the California Senate race totaled just under \$15 million, CMR reports, while the New York Senate race commanded a little more than \$18 million in TV ads.

—Steve McClellan



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CAUGHT ON TAPE continues to be one of the most popular real video showcases.



Source: NTI Dailies Plus, week of 11/23/98 (through the end of November sweep) vs. week of 9/14/98 (season premiere week). AA%.

RENEWED INTEREST.

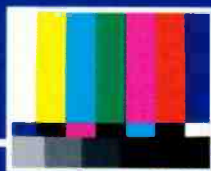
**ADULTS
18-49**

+ 22%

**ADULTS
25-54**

+ 30%

**RENEWED IN
60% OF THE U.S.**



PLEASE ADJUST YOUR THINKING NOW.



Netlets aim: New demos

By Michael Stroud

It was the best of times (WB). It was the worst of times (UPN). Last week, the two networks were telling the television press just how they plan to retain—or change—those story lines.

For WB, coming off its best season start ever, the challenge is to secure those gains and broaden beyond dramas. At its press-tour presentation, WB previewed two midseason comedies, *Zoe, Duncan, Jack & Jane*, and *Movie Stars*. In addition, says Entertainment President Susanne Daniels, “we’re looking for the first time to develop variety and reality shows” that appeal to younger audiences.

For UPN, whose ratings have plummeted this season, it’s about pushing the envelope with alternative programming and attracting more of the young men who form a big chunk of its core audience. The network is counting on two animated half-hours—*Dilbert* and *Home Movie*—to jump-start the effort.

Also on tap from UPN and outlined at the annual critics tour last week is a comedy called *Family Rules*, from Jim Henson Television, about a widowed college basketball coach. Another possible mid-season entry, *RedHanded*, has people entrap their friends and show them in embarrassing situations on camera. The network has a new animated comedy in development, *Quints*, which UPN executives describe as an “irreverent *South Park* with females.” from Meg Ryan and Heather Thomas. Also in the works is a comedy, *Swingers*, described as “*Sex in the City* from a male perspective.”

UPN executives acknowledge that going after the same viewers that NBC, ABC and CBS court was too ambitious. “We may have cast our lot too wide,” says UPN Entertainment President Tom Nunan.

The WB plans to remain focused on its core 18-to-34 audience with a goal of becoming the No. 1 network in that category, although WB chief Jamie Kellner says he expects the network’s demographics “to bleed upwards and downwards.” Kellner also says the network is “a little bit more female [skewed] than I’d like to see,” a situation which he says merely requires some modest programming adjustments. ■

CLOSED CIRCUIT

BEHIND THE SCENES, BEFORE THE FACT

NEW YORK

CMR changes its spots

Competitive Media Reports is changing the way it measures TV advertising, shifting several major categories from local to national spots. As a result, roughly 70% of ad dollars spent on local stations will be categorized as national spot dollars by CMR and about 30% will be classified as local television advertising. Recently, the split has been closer to 50-50. Major categories being shifted include restaurants (primarily fast-food chains), movies, hotels, banks and political. The first four had been considered local because they’re retail products and services, says TVB Vice President Harold Simpson, who analyzes the CMR data for TVB member stations. But the source of the spending is really from national advertisers, he notes. Political had been split, with presidential campaign money classified as national spot and the rest considered local. Now, all the political money will be classified as national.

WASHINGTON

Broadcasters and bucks

The NAB is generally recognized these days as a first-rate lobby, able to have its way in Washington on most matters. What may come as a surprise to some is what a good business it is. The association’s proposed budget for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000, which is expected to be adopted at the NAB board meeting in Naples, Fla., this week, calls for net income of \$11.6 million on revenues of \$51.7 million.

And what does a nonprofit organization do with the extra cash? Invests it, apparently. The association’s balance sheet projects “cash/investments” at \$61.8 million on March 31, 2000, up from a projected \$50.9 million on March 31, 1999, and an actual \$40.1 million on March 31, 1998. The proposed 1999-2000 budget shows \$2.5 million in interest income.

The NAB’s annual spring convention, the world’s largest and most important exhibition of professional audio and video gear, continues to be the chief moneymaker. This year’s show, April 19-22 in Las Vegas, is expected to net \$22.9 million on revenues of \$33 million—a 69% “profit” margin.

Can’t get enough

TCI’s District Cablevision in Washington plans to add C-SPAN’s C-SPAN Extra—a weekday daytime channel covering live events around the capital region—to its system starting later this month, according to sources close to the operator. C-SPAN Extra would replace The Box music video channel, which would be shifted to air on Saturdays and Sundays, 6 p.m. through 12 a.m. Odyssey Channel and Capitol Link, a public access channel, would retain their weekday morning slots on Ch. 23, says District Cablevision. In addition, District Cablevision officials say they are “interested in talking to WETA” about striking a carriage agreement for its proposed public affairs channel, Forum Network (see page 68.)

LAS VEGAS

Paring at Primestar

Primestar Inc., as part of its financial austerity program, has dropped New York PR firm Powell & Tate as its official agency. Primestar had previously cut back plans for a big display at the International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. Primestar President-CEO Carl Vogel was among DBS panelists at last week’s CES. But the big floor presence Primestar had planned, sources say, was trimmed as the struggling satellite firm took a machete to overhead. While the cost-cutting helps Primestar cope with diminished business expectations in the wake of the failed ASkyB acquisition, it also improves cash flow and makes the company more attractive to a potential acquirer, such as DirecTV.

Satellite TV subs face cut-off

April 30 is new date for subscribers to lose CBS and Fox feeds, court rules

By Paige Albiniak

A federal court in Miami last week set a deadline of April 30 for satellite TV broadcasters to cut off subscribers who illegally receive CBS and Fox signals via satellite.

Judge Lenore Nesbitt of the U.S. Southern District Court of Florida issued a permanent injunction against satellite TV distributor PrimeTime 24, which provides network feeds for direct broadcast satellite (DBS) companies. The court ruled that satellite TV companies must turn off by April 30 the PrimeTime 24-delivered CBS and Fox signals of all subscribers signed up before March 11, 1997, if those subscribers can get a clear over-the-air signal.

"This is another victory for localism and America's unique system of universal, free over-the-air television," said NAB President Edward Fritts.

Satellite broadcasters also must cut off by Feb. 28 the illegal CBS and Fox signals of subscribers signed up between

March 11, 1997, and July 10, 1998. (The CBS and Fox networks and their affiliates filed their lawsuit against PrimeTime 24 on March 11, 1997, and the Miami court issued the preliminary injunction on July 10, 1998. ABC and NBC filed lawsuits against PrimeTime 24 in different cities to avoid antitrust considerations.) Some three million people will lose their satellite-delivered CBS and Fox feeds.

Charles Hewitt, president of the Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association, saw it differently. "We are extremely concerned by this permanent injunction that will affect more than three million American television consumers,"

The injunction puts even more pressure on Congress to pass a bill early this year to rewrite the Satellite Home Viewer Act, which governs the satellite industry. Such a bill is expected to sort out which consumers may receive imported network signals legally. Satellite TV providers want Congress or the FCC to establish

clearly which subscribers residing within the outer portion of the broadcast signal can legally receive distant network feeds via satellite. Although some outlying households cannot receive over-the-air TV even with an antenna, most local broadcasters oppose allowing satellite TV providers to import distant signals.

House commerce committee Chairman Tom Bliley (R-Va.) late last month said passing satellite legislation is a top priority. House Telecommunications Subcommittee Chairman Billy Tauzin (R-La.) will lead that effort. Tauzin introduced his own satellite bill late last session, but put it aside once the Senate's attempt to pass legislation ended.

Satellite TV providers argue that they should be able to import network feeds to subscribers who cannot receive local TV signals clearly over the air, regardless of where they live. The NAB argues that the FCC has no authority to decide the matter and says that shrinking their signal threatens local TV. ■

Radio stations make digital push

FCC asked to set standards so terrestrial radio can remain competitive

By Bill McConnell

As satellite rivals gear up to offer digital radio services, broadcasters are calling on the FCC to get moving on rules that will let them transmit digital signals as well.

Radio industry groups in late December called on the FCC to set technical standards that will allow them to use their current AM and FM spectrum to broadcast analog and digital signals simultaneously. "If terrestrial radio is unable to compete effectively with satellite and with other media such as Internet broadcasting, there is a possibility that radio stations will fail, thus depriving the public of free, locally originated programming," wrote Cumulus Media.

Broadcasters say their favored technology, called in-band-on-channel (IBOC), will allow a smooth transition from analog signals because the government will not need to allocate additional spectrum, as was done for the

introduction of digital television. Compression technology allows an IBOC system to place digital and analog signals at the same frequency.

The industry has split, however, over how fast the FCC should act. USA Digital Radio has asked the FCC to move quickly enough to get signals on the air by 2000. Furthermore, the company said the IBOC system it has developed should be the FCC's standard. USA Digital Radio's request is backed by CBS, its founder, and Gannett Broadcasting, a longtime investor. Also taking USA Digital's side are group owners including Jacor Communications, Cumulus, Cox Communications, Clear Channel, Radio One and Chancellor Media, all of which announced last week that they would become investors in the eight-year-old company.

"Because a number of different digital radio systems have been developed, it is highly unlikely that private industry would itself agree on which one should be selected as the standard,"

wrote CBS. "USA Digital's system is ideally matched to the requirements of IBOC, and allows for the smooth transition from all-analog radio to a hybrid period during which both analog and digital radio could co-exist."

Under USA Digital's plan, simultaneous analog and digital broadcasts would be offered for 12 years, after which analog transmission would cease.

A delay in establishing technical standards will discourage further investment in IBOC, argued CBS. "If the commission mandates USA Digital's system, neither the public nor broadcasters will be required to assume the risk and expense of purchasing equipment which later proves to be nonviable," the company said.

Urging the FCC to take it slower are Digital Radio Express, which is developing a rival IBOC system, and equipment manufacturers. "USA Digital has not presented sufficient evidence that [its] performance will accomplish the coverage goals of IBOC in realistic sig-

nals reception circumstances," wrote Digital Express.

"Premature introduction of IBOC could threaten existing broadcast services and dampen the prospects for a successful transition from analog to digital," added Lucent Technologies Inc., which is developing its own system. The Consumer Equipment Manufacturers Association also urged the FCC to delay technical standards until more field tests have been conducted.

"I think there is still a lot of skepticism," said Digital Radio Express president Norman Miller in an interview. "The first group that steps up with a

successful demonstration across the country in all market areas will get industry support," he said.

Though the National Association of Broadcasters avoided taking sides in comments filed in December with the FCC, sources said the industry trade group wants the FCC to hold off until extensive field tests can be conducted on various IBOC technologies.

FCC Chairman William Kennard has not indicated a preference for either system, but sources said the decision has been put on a fast track. Also, Kennard indicated at the NAB's Radio Show in October that the digital radio proceeding

would be on the same timetable as a separate proceeding that would create a low-power or "micro" radio service.

The FCC's decision is critical because the free over-the-air system requires a ubiquitous technology. "A single standard is necessary to promote rapid consumer and industry [acceptance] of the system and to ensure interoperability of radio receivers," said Digital Radio Express.

In the meantime, CD Radio and American Mobile Radio, two satellite radio broadcasters, are gearing up to bring their subscription-only systems online by 2000. The FCC issued licenses to those companies in 1997. ■



WASHINGTON WATCH

By Bill McConnell and Paige Albiniak

Hastert takes House reins

Maybe the third time will be the charm. The House of Representatives last week elected Rep. Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) to be its Speaker by a vote of 220-205, with Hastert and House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt (D-Mo.) voting present.

The House in the past two months has lost two other Speakers. House Republicans refused to reelect Newt Gingrich (Ga.) when the GOP lost five seats in the November midterm elections. Then Gingrich's original successor, Bob Livingston (La.), stepped down last month after disclosing extramarital affairs. Hastert was officially nominated by House Committee on Commerce Chairman Tom Bliley (R-Va.), who said: "There is no one we should trust more as our next Speaker than Denny Hastert."

Hastert, a protégé of former House minority leader Bob Michel of Illinois, is the first member of the House's commerce com-

mittee to become Speaker since Sam Rayburn of Texas. Hastert had been slated to chair the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee. Last week Bliley also announced the addition of two Republicans to the commerce committee: Ed Bryant of Tennessee and Robert Ehrlich of Maryland. One fills Hastert's seat and the other takes one of two new commerce committee slots.

Nets: Dump Intelsat middleman

Broadcast networks are calling on the FCC to allow satellite users to contract directly with Intelsat rather than going through Comsat, the U.S. signatory to the international consortium. "Direct access will bring positive benefits to U.S. users of international satellite services in the form of lower prices, better service and greater operational flexibility," wrote ABC, CBS, NBC and Turner Broadcasting in comments to the agency. The networks rely on Intelsat to transmit

overseas breaking news and sporting events to the U.S. and to export American programs. The networks noted that 76 countries already allow satellite users within their borders to have direct access. "It seems incongruous for the United States, which to its great credit has been the leading exponent... of a competitive telecommunications paradigm, to be a laggard with regard to direct access." Comsat, however, said Intelsat's tax-exempt status would give it an unfair advantage in the U.S. market. Furthermore, Comsat predicted that direct access would doom U.S. efforts to privatize the entire Intelsat system. "Direct access would balkanize the U.S. presence in Intelsat and undermine Comsat's continued ability to provide strong leadership to Intelsat in the privatization process."

Seeking another way on two-way wireless

It's hard to please everyone. And sometimes it's hard to please anyone, as

demonstrated by the FCC's Sept. 17 decision allowing wireless cable operators to offer two-way services. The Wireless Communications Association has asked the FCC to reconsider new rules intended to protect instructional television licensees, who share spectrum with wireless operators. For starters, the WCA last week asked the FCC to lift a rule requiring wireless cable operators to give 20 days notice before activating two-way transmission sites within 1,960 feet of an educational licensee's site. The group also is fighting a provision requiring two-way sites to be professionally installed, which WCA says would prevent retail sales. "Wireless cable operators are being denied the right to respond rapidly to consumer requests for services," wrote WCA in its petition. But the Catholic Television Network, which provides instructional programming to parish schools, says the FCC should better protect educational programmers from signal interference by streamlining complaint procedures.

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SMOKING CIGARS
& SWING DANCING.**



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I LOVE LUCY
LAVERNE & SHIRLEY
MATLOCK
ODD COUPLE
PERRY MASON
RAWHIDE
STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
TAXI
THE UNTOUCHABLES
WILD WILD WEST

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PLEASE ADJUST YOUR WISH LIST NOW.

A fiscally conservative NATPE convention? Right now, that seems to be what this year's annual TV swap meet in New Orleans will be, at least from Hollywood's perspective. No stadium parties. No overhead blimps. No free-flowing champagne. In short, no excess.

With fewer and fewer time periods available and the fallout from some recent multimillion-dollar failures in syndication, the studios are coming to the Big Easy strictly for business this year.

"The fact is there are a lot of shows that are working and there are fewer time periods available in big blocks. I don't think there is a crying need for a bunch of new product," says Paramount Domestic Television co-president Frank Kelly. "There is a finite number of time periods, so why bring three or four different shows when you know physically that there is just no way to bring them in?"

In past years, many of the big studios came to NATPE with just that—three or four potential first-run

which shows currently on the air will be renewed for another season or given the ax before season's end. A number of projects that already have been announced and are heading to NATPE are still looking for viable time periods on major station groups for the 1999-2000 season.

"It's tough out there right now, but it only takes a couple of shows being canceled, and all of sudden there is a flurry of activity going on," says John Ryan, Worldvision Entertainment president. "It's going to happen, so it's just a matter of time."

In the talk-show genre, this year's conference will feature new projects fronted by Martin Short, Queen Latifah, Richard Simmons and radio personality Dr. Joy Browne. A couple of original talk show vehicles are being offered without major stars attached, and Paramount's *Leeza* is coming to syndication after six seasons on NBC.

Getting on the court-show bandwagon, Twentieth Television is remaking *Divorce Court*—with real liti-

Shopping Guide to

Multimillion-dollar failures and fewer time periods contribute to no-frills atmosphere at this year's programming marketplace

By Joe Schlosser

projects that more often than not would find their way onto the air somewhere.

But with increased programming at The WB and UPN, a spate of off-network and returning shows occupying key time periods and ratings hitting all-time lows, not many studios want to roll the dice with an expensive first-run project that could come and go in a flash.

"Everyone is going in knowing this is a sales convention. Everyone is looking at their bottom line and trying to control costs to the best of their ability," says Ed Wilson, president of CBS's syndication unit, Eyemark Entertainment. "I don't think you are going to see a whole lot of big-ticket items because they didn't work."

What the syndicators are bringing to NATPE this winter are shows with proven track records, those that follow in the footsteps of successful shows and projects with a name brand. Two more court shows are joining the fray this year; a handful of proven game shows are lined up for next fall, and action hours have ties to established authors or titles.

"The studios are watching what their brethren are doing, looking at the trends and trying to take advantage of them," says Bill Carroll, vice president and director of programming at Katz Television. "I think it's the business model they have always followed and for those that are successful, it's a sound business model. For those that don't understand which trends are still hot and which ones have passed, it becomes a little stickier."

The syndication vultures are circling, waiting to see

gants this time around—and Warner will feature Greg Mathis as a judge skewed to a younger demographic.

In the game show arena, *Family Feud* and *Let's Make a Deal* are going to give it another go, and an international game success is entering the domestic market (Pearson's *100 Percent*) along with Paramount's *Who Knew?* In late night, PolyGram is taking a swing with a reality series entitled *Blind Date* that has many of the station executives on the edge of their seats.

Only two new news magazines are being offered for syndication—they are MGM's *National Enquirer* daily half-hour show and USA Studio's *Free Speech*.

The action-hour business is chock-full of large, multimillion dollar projects, including the *Beastmaster* series; *The Lost World*, a weekly series based on a story by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle; another based on Peter Benchley's novel *Amazon* and several shows based on major motion pictures, including *Total Recall*.

The off-network market doesn't have a *Seinfeld* or a *Friends* this year, but a number of top shows like *King of the Hill*, *Everybody Loves Raymond* and *Dharma and Greg* will be available.

Movie packages, animated and live-action children's series and lots of international fare will be showcased on the conference floor. But don't expect promotional fanfare of years past. ■

KIDS
TV

MOVIES

TALK

NATPE '99

Courts

ACTION

GAME
SHOWS

TV

OFFNET

NEWS

More talking heads

This year it's *Queen Latifah*, *Martin Short* and *Richard Simmons*

By Joe Schlosser

Last year at this time, *The Rosie O'Donnell Show* seemed like a can't-miss format for daytime television. The Warner Bros.-distributed show with O'Donnell at the helm was crushing opponents with its *Tonight Show* format and daytime clearances. Everyone in Hollywood was racing to come up with the next *Rosie*. Howie Mandel, Donny and Marie Osmond, even sitcom star Roseanne were all given their marching orders to follow O'Donnell's lead.

How quickly things change—fast forward to today and that's no longer the case.

O'Donnell's show is still among the elite of the talk-show genre, but her ratings have been slipping and TV executives are suddenly second guessing the celebrity-guest format, even writing it off in some cases. Mandel, the Osmond siblings and Roseanne are all struggling to find audiences. And not one of the three shows is averaging over a 2.0 rating nationally.

"I'm not sure that simply because you've got a personality and that you can call on some friends that come around and populate the sofa that you've got a talk show," says Aaron Cohen, executive vice president of national broadcast for Horizon Media. "It seems to me that if you get up and walk into the audience and mix with the people, you get a lot more done and a lot more people excited about your show."

"Just because a person is a celebrity or a comedian in one area of show business doesn't mean they can necessarily host a talk show," adds Dick Kurlander, vice president and director of programming for Petry Television.

The copycats are learning a lesson, says Scott Carlin, executive vice president of Warner Bros. Domestic Television, national distributor of O'Donnell's show.

"Everyone thought it was the talk/variety/celebrity format that propelled Rosie to where she was and that if you could just knock off that format and plug in a new host, you could replicate her success," Carlin says. "Obviously



Each episode of Warner Bros.' *'Latifah'* will focus on a single issue.

that's not the case. It had very little to do with celebrities and more to do with Rosie and how she dealt with the guests."

After what happened to last year's new talk shows, it seems like some Hollywood syndicators are listening.

Only one of the seven proposed talk shows for next fall is going the *Rosie* route, and the lone talker that is going to be chatting with celebrities—Martin Short—is expected to be a good fit for that format, according to many industry experts. King World's talk show format with Short will feature celebrity interviews—but executives say that will not "be the only thing happening" during the daily one-hour show.

Actress and rap star Queen Latifah (Dana Owens) also is entering the daytime talk show fray—but Warner executives say the show will feature single-issue discussions with no emphasis on celebrity guests.

Richard Simmons is getting another shot at national daytime television, but the diet and exercise guru-cum-inspirational speaker is going to make dreams come true for regular people on his Tribune-distributed show. And radio talk show veteran Dr. Joy Browne is heading to television, while Paramount's *Leeza*, which spent the last

five years on NBC, is making the switch to syndication in 1999.

Other talk shows include MG Perin's *Solutions* with former *American Journal* host Charles Perez, and Pearson Television's somewhat offbeat *Christopher and Camilla at the Mall*.

When Warner Bros. executives decided they wanted to try their hand at another daytime talk show—one that wouldn't likely have a celebrity format—they, of course, turned to Rosie O'Donnell for advice.

"We were looking at a couple of personalities at the time," says Carlin. "We asked Rosie—who has one of the most talented and savvy producer minds in the entertainment business—if she were us and had this kind of [distribution] machine, who would be some personalities she would picture hosting a daytime talk show," he continues. "And it was like hands down, Dana Owens."

Shortly thereafter, Carlin and his fellow Warner executives sat down with Owens for a meeting and came out knowing they had found their woman. Throughout the country starting next fall, Owens will host an hour-long show called *Latifah* that will focus on a single issue each episode. The former *Living*

Richard Simmons'
Dream Maker

Single star who is also co-starring in another motion picture later this year will get opinions and ideas from everyday people in her studio audience. *Latifah* will be produced in New York.

"The show is not going to be something that is radically different than what is on many of the talk shows today, but it's going to be something that's custom-crafted to her personality and her strengths," Carlin explains.

King World executives are bringing their second big-name celebrity to daytime talk next fall with funnyman Martin Short. Last year King World introduced *The Roseanne Show* to the mar-

youngest

skewing show on CBS

ket, a show that has two-year deals with most stations that originally cleared it. Michael King, King World's CEO, makes no bones about Short's potential talent in the talk-show format.

"He's a pretty amazing star and one of the truly funniest guys in the business," King says. "If we were to put Marty Short on say, Howie Mandel's show, or any of the other shows like that—he would make it better."

King World executives have been keeping the format of the show a secret as they continue to sell it to stations. Andy Friendly, head of King World's programming and development division, says they are interviewing for executive producers to work with Bernie Brillstein, Short's agent, who

\$5,000 a check for that amount."

All 18 Tribune-owned stations have cleared the show for fall, and it already is cleared in 55% of the country. Vin Di Bona, producer of *America's Funniest Home Videos*, will produce the Simmons project.

Eyemark Entertainment is trying its hand with radio personality Dr. Joy Browne, a longtime New York-based talk-show host. Browne is a licensed clinical psychologist who will host the single-issue talker from a New York studio.

"It is going to be a talk show looking for solutions instead of creating problems," says Eyemark President Ed Wilson. "It is going to be a classic talk show, but the only difference is we've got a woman who has already been

while Scott is a veteran Canadian talk-show host and actress.

"We are producing this for the daytime audience, which we have researched pretty intensely," Turner says. "They want a faster pace with different segments and that's what we are going to give them."

Buena Vista Television executives have stolen away London chef Ainsley Harriott to host a one-hour daytime talk and cooking show in the U.S.

"There has never been anything like this," says Buena Vista Television president Mort Marcus, referring to *The Ainsley Harriott Show*, which is slated for the fall.

"He is one of the most unique characters we have ever met. We are calling it a talk show in the kitchen."

Harriott, a celebrated chef in England, will not only be working-out in the kitchen for the daily one-hour show, but he will work from a couch and enjoying his own house band as well, says Marcus.

"Food and cooking is not going to be the focus of this show. Ainsley himself will probably steal the show," Marcus says.

Live with Regis and Kathie Lee Executive Producer

Michael Gelman produced the pilot for Buena Vista and will also take part in the show going forward, Marcus says, but not as Harriott's executive producer.

MG Perin executives are also producing a daily series called *Solutions* with former *American Journal* host Charles Perez. The daytime series will combine prepackaged reports with talk-show elements, all in front of a live studio audience, says MG Perin President Dick Perin.

"It's about people and organizations that are making a difference," Perin says.

Paramount Domestic Television executives say *Leeza*, which has been on NBC's daytime lineup since 1993, will make the transition from network television to syndication. Earlier this year, NBC opted not to pick up the program for another season and Paramount executives quickly repositioned the show—hosted by Leeza Gibbons—for station sales. *Leeza* will remain on the network until the end of the year and migrate to syndication in the fall. ■

THE NEW CLASS OF TALK SHOWS

Show	Distributor	Terms-barter split	Clearance	Debut
Lalifah	Telepictures	cash-plus-3.5/10.5	35%	Fall '99
Christopher and Camilla	Pearson	barter-7/7	35%	Fall '99
The Ainsley Harriott Show	Buena Vista	cash-plus-3.5/10.5	NA	Fall '99
Dr. Joy Browne	Eyemark	cash-plus-3.5/10.5	60%	Fall '99
Leeza	Paramount	cash-plus-3.5/10.5	NA	Fall '99
The Martin Short Show	King World	cash-plus-3.5/10.5	NA	Fall '99
Richard Simmons'	Tribune	cash-plus	55%	Fall '99

will serve as one of the executive producers. *The Martin Short Show* will be taped in Los Angeles.

"The focus is going to be on Marty Short," Friendly says. "To go into detail at this point is premature. It is going to be pure entertainment with no heavy or serious topics. We are not going to do a single-issue show. It is going to be a combination of Johnny Carson and Merv Griffin and Mike Douglas."

Richard Simmons will make dreams come true in Tribune Entertainment's daytime series *Richard Simmons' Dream Maker*. The one-hour daily show will be taped in Las Vegas at a hotel to be named later, and "Simmons is going to be Simmons," say Tribune executives in describing the show.

"The idea is that if you write Richard or see Richard and have a dream that is interesting and poignant or one that might just capture his fancy, he'll make your dream come true," says Dick Askin, president of Tribune Entertainment. "He might come by your office and give you a day off. Or maybe he'll give someone in need of

doing it for over 20 years on radio and who is now bringing it to television."

Dr. Joy Browne has been cleared on the majority of the CBS owned and operated stations for the fall.

Pearson Television executives say they have put together something fresh and different for the daytime talk-show viewers in *Christopher and Camilla at the Mall*. And Pearson's Bob Turner says it's not going to be about shopping, as some people think.

"We have found there is a lot of misperception about what the show is. It's going to be a talk show located in a mall, not a shopping hour," Turner explains.

Pearson executives have not disclosed the shopping mall, but say they have a deal worked out with a "large" shopping complex in the New York City area. Pearson executives say they will spend more than \$1 million on a set that will be built inside the shopping mall. As for the hosts, Christopher Lowell and Camilla Scott will handle day-to-day chores. Lowell is the host of Discovery Channel's most popular daytime program, *Interior Motives*,

#1

in men

in its time period

Source: NTD Dailies Plus, Rating/Share of M18-34,
M18-49 and M25-54 (Sept. 21 - Nov. 22, 1998)

Rough times for action shows

At \$1 million per, hours are hard to come by without back-end deals

By Joe Schlosser

A few years ago, TV station executives would have killed to have a first-run fantasy or sci-fi series to pair with *Star Trek* or *Planet of the Apes* reruns on weekends.

The idea of a high-tech, big-budget project produced just for weekend time periods still was a novelty and a welcome addition to nearly every station in the country. Shows like *Baywatch*, *Xena* and *Hercules* thrived in that culture, both domestically and internationally.



Polygram's 'Total Recall,' which debuts this fall, is based on the hit theatrical.

But today's weekend marketplace is considerably different—for one, it's more crowded, and buyers are less likely to be interested in fresh ideas. And with increased off-network production, greater reliance on sports programming and tepid markets overseas, Hollywood studios will undoubtedly think twice before committing to a one-hour program. Even when studios do agree to a weekend action series—they must do so in a big way.

The minimum entry fee these days is close to \$1 million an episode and many of the top programs go well beyond that amount for a one-hour show. Studio executives say the average weekend viewers are so used to sophisticated, feature-filmlike production values that they demand them from every action series.

"I don't know if a project like *Xena* could get launched in the current environment," says Bill Carroll, vice president and director of programming at Katz

Television. "These shows were able to get launched in the past when there were fewer choices and more time periods."

Bob Sanitzky, the president of PolyGram Television, whose studio launched *The Crow: Stairway to Heaven* last season and this year is presenting an action-hour based on the hit film *Total Recall*, says the action-hour genre is facing some hurdles in today's market.

"Number one: to do a quality action show, you have to spend over a million dollars per episode. I think anyone can see who is doing a show that's in the \$700,000 range," he remarks. "I think to compete in a six network universe and against all the cable networks, you must spend money.

"Problem number two is that international revenue is going down for the hours, which leaves a bigger number domestically that you need to recoup," he continues. "And finally, ratings are down across the board for broadcast, cable or whatever, which translates into lower spot values."

The action-hour business has increasingly become a joint effort on the part of producers and distributors. To get the \$25 million to \$30 million it takes to produce one season, many of the domestic production companies partner with an international group or get the green light from a foreign market before any cameras start rolling.

"You have to work with them [international TV executives] from the get go," says Ira Bernstein, president of Rysher Entertainment, which currently has two action series on the air and another planned for fall 1999. "Unless you are a major studio with an output deal, you have to say that at least, three, four or five of the key international territories are signed on."

Not only are production companies scurrying for countries such as Canada and New Zealand to produce their shows because the U.S. dollar goes further, but

they are also looking for new ways to make money on the distribution side.

A few years ago MGM Domestic Television engineered a financial coup for action hours by selling a number of series—including *The Outer Limits* and *StarGate-SG-1*—to cable's Showtime Television and then reselling the same programs to broadcast stations for weekend play on a barter basis. Today that is becoming the norm for top action series, such as PolyGram's *Total Recall*, which is following the same path as *StarGate SG-1*, to Showtime.

This past season, Warner Bros. licensed its action-hour *Mortal Kombat: Conquest* to TNT, which is co-owned by their parent company, for virtually simultaneous play. And more deals like this—with cable networks—are planned for next season.

"It was a new model at the time and it has proven to be a very good model and a way of creating new areas of revenue for the shows," says MGM Domestic Television president Sid Cohen.

Last May, Cohen added yet another venue for his first-run shows, selling the "back end" of the action series, *Poltergeist: The Series*—based on the movie franchise, *The Outer Limits* and *StarGate*—to cable's Sci-Fi Channel for future use.

Among the new action series slated for fall 1999 are two from the recently merged, Canadian-based production company, Alliance Atlantis. Along with Eyemark Entertainment, Alliance Atlantis is producing author Peter Benchley's *Amazon*, an action-hour that follows the journeys of the survivors of a plane crash through the huge South American jungle. Alliance Atlantis is also working with Tribune Entertainment on *Beastmaster: The Legend Continues*, which will advance the two feature films and chronicle the journeys of *Dar*, the *Beastmaster*.

"Peter Benchley is an incredible writer who understands suspense and drama probably better than anyone," says Eyemark President Ed Wilson. "This series is going to set the standard for action-hours going forward."

Dick Askin, Tribune Entertainment's president, says his company decided to go forward on the *Beastmaster* series



growth

for 3 years straight

Source: NTD Dallas Plus, W19-49, W25-54, M18-34 share for network seasons of 1995-97, 1997-98, and 1998-99 thru Nov. 22, 1998.



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RELIC HUNTER

THE HUNT BEGINS FALL 1999



ADVENTURE!



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25
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HOURS READY FOR ACTION

Show	Distributor	Terms-barter split	Clearance	Debut
Relic Hunter	Rysher Entertainment	barter-8/6	NA	Fall '99
Avalon	Paramount Domestic TV	barter	NA	Fall '99
Doyle's The Lost World	New Line Television	barter-7/7	NA	Fall '99
Total Recall 2070	PolyGram Television	barter-8/6	NA	Fall '99
Beastmaster: The Legend	Tribune Entertainment	barter-8/6	60%	Fall '99
Peter Benchley's Amazon	Eyemark/Alliance Atlantis	barter-8/6	NA	Fall '99
Your Big Break	Buena Vista Television	barter-8/6	NA	Fall '99
Dream Team	BKS Bates	barter-8/6	NA	Fall '99

because stations that have been running the two feature films have been asking for a show based on the character.

"The *Beastmaster* movies have a long track record and this is just a very logical step," Askin notes. "Our goal is to deliver the production values and storylines that are consistent with the movies. We are very confident that we can deliver that."

New Line Television is also following up on the success of a feature film, developing *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's The Lost World* for television. The series is currently being shot on location in Australia with producer-director John Landis behind the camera for this project. Doyle's dinosaur tale will be extended further in this action-hour, which will kick off the year with a two-hour TV film.

"I think this is the type of brand name that is necessary to work in the cluttered action-hour genre," says Robert Friedman, New Line Television's president. "We are going to really concentrate on the storylines and use a lot of those CGI effects that everyone loves these days."

Rysher Entertainment president Ira Bernstein says he has something to follow up on Columbia TriStar's success this past season with Pamela Anderson's action series *V.I.P.* Bernstein has cast film and TV star Tia Carrere in an action series called *Relic Hunter*. Carrere plays a college professor who tracks down missing artifacts for governments, philanthropists and various organizations—all the while throwing a few karate chops at the bad guys.

"There are a zillion shows out there and it is tough to get anyone to give a crap about your show," Bernstein comments. "We think we've got the answer to that with Tia, who is a big name and a great screen presence."

Western International is bringing back the Conan action series, but this time around it will be called *Conan, The Barbarian*, rather than what it was named in its last syndication run: *Conan, The Adventurer*. The original

series had its first-run debut in the fall of 1997 and lasted the entire season. But after the first season, Western faced production problems and decided to sit the show out for a year, letting stations sign on for a second season, airing the first season's episodes free of charge for the entire 1998-99 season.

Other action-hour series that have been announced for 1999 include BKS Bates' *DREAM Team*, PolyGram's *Total Recall* series and possibly a *Baywatch* spin-off from Paramount called *Avalon*. And in the one-hour weekend business, Buena Vista Television is offering a comedy talent-type show called *Your Big Break* and Raycom is expected to bring *Missing: Without a Trace* (a positive-spin on *America's Most Wanted*) to the market this fall. ■

Everything old is new again

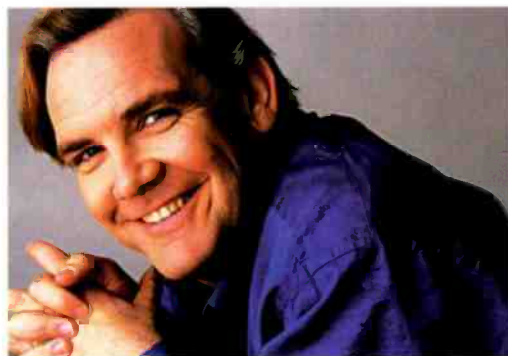
This year's crop of game shows have a familiar ring

By Joe Schlosser

Last fall, King World promised to bring back the classic game show *Hollywood Squares* in a bigger and brighter way than ever before.

The show, which airs mainly in access time periods across the country, so far this season has been one of the few bright spots among the latest crop of syndicated shows.

Whoopi Goldberg signed on as the famed center square, and the eight surrounding squares are constantly filled with top name talent. Promotional ads for *Hollywood Squares* have been virtually everywhere. Not surprisingly, with all the attention and signs of success for *Squares*, a number of top Hol-



Former talk show host Gordon Elliott will host a remake of 'Let Make a Deal.'

lywood studios have given the green light to bringing back game shows.

Buena Vista Television has former talk show host Gordon Elliott primed to

host a one-hour daily remake of *Let's Make A Deal*. Pearson Television is updating *Family Feud* with comedian Louie Anderson as host and has also lined up Casey Kasem as the unseen voice of a popular British game show called *100 Percent*.

Paramount Domestic Television executives have developed *Who Knew?*—a game show with former *Seinfeld* co-star John O'Hurley (J. Peterman)—as the ringmaster.

The two top-rated shows in all of syndication are King World's long-running tandem of *Wheel of Fortune* and *Jeopardy!* But in the '90s, attempts at reviving game shows have

been, for the most part, fruitless.

"Before *Hollywood Squares* proved to be credible, there was the perception in the marketplace that there wasn't the potential for success in the game show business," says Bill Carroll, vice president and director of programming at Katz Media. "We went through a cycle, six or seven years ago, when there were as many, if not more game shows that were brought to NATPE—shows like *Joker's Wild*, *Trump Card* and *Challengers*. Unfortunately none of them were successful and that sort of put the game show category on the back burner. Now it appears to be coming back, thanks to *Squares*."

Andy Friendly, head of programming and development at King World, gives *Hollywood Squares* a lot of the credit for the resurgence in the game shows that have already been announced for next fall, but adds that one show cannot carry a genre.

"Game shows were out and now they are back in. But it really doesn't matter what genre is in vogue or what trend is taking place in the marketplace," says Friendly. "The only thing that matters is how successful the show is," he says. "If we didn't work hard, put a lot of money into it and execute well, *Hollywood Squares* would have been a failure. Right now, the game show field is wide open for someone to come in and make some noise. They'll just have to execute like we have."

Mort Marcus, president of Buena Vista Television, says his company saw the success of *Hollywood Squares* and the current ABC prime time series *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*—which stars Drew Carey—as a sign that audiences might be warming up to game shows again.

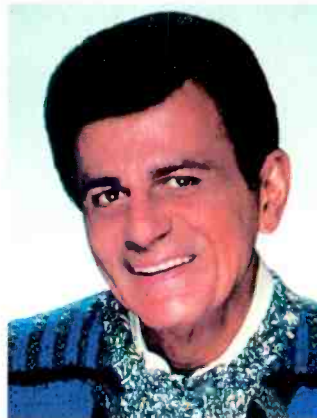
"A show like *Whose Line Is It Anyway?* might not have worked a few years ago," Marcus says. "The marketplace is changing a lot and it feels like there's room for more things. In a year when there are going to be six court shows on the air, we think a little diversity is good."

Marcus has taped a pilot for the upcoming remake of *Let's Make a Deal*, the classic game show hosted by Monty Hall that was a daytime success in the 1970s. The 1999 version will be very similar to the old game show, Marcus says, except Gordon Elliott will be host-

ing and the prizes will be bigger—along with the show's production budget.

Buena Vista executives say they studied the track record of CBS's long-running daytime game show *The Price is Right*, and decided to bring out *Let's Make a Deal* as an hour-long show next fall.

"If you look at the success of *The Price is Right*, the second-half hour always does better than the first half-hour," says Marcus. "And *The Price is Right* was actually based on *Let's Make a Deal*. It was first, and we think it's a better show creatively as an hour," he adds. "It won't have to stand on an island so much when we sell it to stations."



Casey Kasem will be heard but not seen as host of Pearson's '100 Percent,' a trivia game show.

U.S. market in 1999: *Family Feud* and *100 Percent*. Pearson syndicated *Match Game* last season and is currently clearing the show for the 1999-2000 season. Other game shows are likely to be introduced by the international syndicator over the next year or two.

After attempts to sign on Dolly Parton as host for a remake of *Family Feud* failed, Pearson executives finally settled on well-known comedian Louie Anderson as the next Richard Dawson. The show will remain primarily intact, with its original format, pitting two families against one another in a battle of survey questions. It will remain a

GAME SHOWS IN PLAY

Show	Distributor	Terms-barter split	Clearance	Debut
Who Knew?	Paramount Domestic TV	cash plus-5.5/1.5	NA	Fall '99
Family Feud	Pearson Television	cash plus-1.5/5.5	40%	Fall '99
Let's Make a Deal	Buena Vista	cash plus-3.5/10.5	NA	Fall '99
100 Percent	Pearson Television	barter-3/4	30%	Jan. '99
Blind Date	PolyGram Television	cash plus-3.5/3.5	NA	Fall '99

Frank Kelly and Joel Berman, the co-presidents of Paramount Domestic Television, say they didn't feel an obligation to get back into the game show genre just because it was showing signs of a revival. Paramount brought a half-hour version of *The Price is Right* into syndication five years ago—the studio's last attempt to develop a game show. For next fall, Berman and Kelly have developed *Who Knew?*—which is being billed as an "entertaining game show."

"Essentially it is in the light-game category, like a *Hollywood Squares*," Kelly says of *Who Knew?* "There is a very significant comedy element to it, but it's a regular game."

The half-hour show will feature three comedians attempting to fool two contestants on the derivation of words and phrases.

Pearson Television, which owns the rights to the Mark Goodson Productions library and other game-show rich catalogs, is bringing a pair of shows to the

half-hour show, Pearson executives say.

"The only different element is going to be Louie," says Pearson programming head Bob Turner. "He has great promise. He's a gentle, family-oriented comedian. The material will be updated and modern, and there will be a new set. The show has rested a while and it has always been popular."

Pearson executives are also selling *100 Percent*—a show that is available to stations starting this month on a barter basis. Radio personality Casey Kasem is the game's host, but he is not seen—only heard, according to Turner.

If one of the three contestants gets all the answers correct, he or she can win \$100,000.

"It is the derivative of a program that has worked very well in the U.K., France, and a number of other places," says Turner. "It's a no-nonsense game of general trivia on a rapid-fire basis. It's very easy to get sucked in and to start playing along."

Access denied

Limited time slots mark the decline of newsmagazines

By Joe Schlosser

The news magazine business ain't what it used to be.

The programming category that brought you *Hard Copy*, *American Journal* and a host of other copycat shows over the past few years is no longer the vehicle of choice among many syndicators.

Only two new magazine-style shows will be on display at this year's annual NATPE conference in New Orleans, and neither of them are considered traditional news magazines.

The absence of syndicated news magazine shows this year can be traced to two things, according to studio executives—the lack of quality or access time periods and increased competition from cable and broadcast networks' news magazines.

"Why would you want to enter the fray in a genre that is heading south?" asks Dick Kurlander, vice president and director of programming at Petry Television. "It's saturated and it's hard to distinguish between an entertainment and a non-entertainment magazine these days."

There is little or no room in the key access time periods on virtually every station from Fresno to Duluth, so the Hollywood syndication studios have generally stayed away from the genre over the last three years. Moreover, to produce a quality news magazine, syndicators say, it takes a big-budget news organization that can get high-profile time periods, mainly access time slots.

Entertainment Tonight, *Access Hollywood*, *Extra* and even *Hard Copy* still clog access time periods on network affiliates, along with game shows like *Hollywood Squares*, *Wheel of Fortune* and *Jeopardy*.

Frank Kelly, co-president of Paramount Domestic Television, which distributes *Hard Copy*, *Entertainment Tonight* and *Real TV*, says it would be a

"big roll of the dice" for a studio to launch a traditional newsmagazine in today's climate.

"It's a very expensive kind of proposition," Kelly says. "Any program where you are doing a lot of original programming with that kind of commitment needs a clean lineup, where it is going to get somewhere around 70% of its clearances in access. That can't happen right now."

Michael King, vice chairman and CEO of King World Productions, opted last season to drop *American Journal*



Studios USA's 'Free Speech' will feature everyday people shooting news magazine-type stories.

THE NEW NEWSMAKERS					
Show	Distributor	Terms-barter split	Clearance	Debut	
National Enquirer	MGM Domestic Television	barter-3.5/3.5	76%	Fall '99	
Free Speech	Studios USA	cash-plus-1.5/5.5	NA	Fall '99	

and put all of the company's news-magazine resources behind *Inside Edi-*

tion. King says the company was lucky to have launched *Inside Edition* when it did back in 1989.

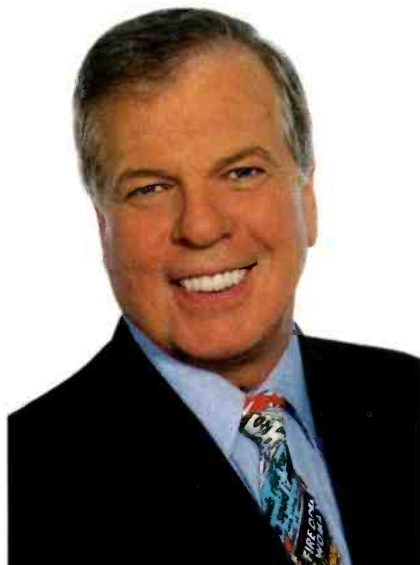
"I don't think you could get another *Inside Edition* on the air right now," says King. "Most of the news magazines are renewed and there is more competition from cable and broadcasters with shows like *60 Minutes II* and *20/20*."

Bill Carroll, vice president and director of programming at Katz Media, says that for a new show to enter the magazine field, it has to be something different than what the *Fox Files* and *Datelines* are showing on a nightly basis.

"What has happened is that the audience, the topics and the guests have been ceded to the networks," says Carroll. "So it's a much more difficult arena for the news magazines unless you are going with a branded program or something original and out of the ordinary."

And the new shows for the fall are just that.

MGM Domestic Television is count-



'National Enquirer' editor Mike Walker will host the strip for MGM.

the more things
change,

the more
**they stay the
same...**

HERCULES AND the #1 and #2 choice

1998-99 Premier-To-Date

XENA

HERCULES

BAYWATCH

EARTH: FINAL CONFLICT

STARGATE SG-1

VIP

CROW: STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

MORTAL KOMBAT

PENSACOLA: WINGS OF GOLD

NIGHT MAN

OUTER LIMITS

HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS

VIPER

WILD THINGS

HIGHLANDER: RAVEN

S.O.F.: SPECIAL OPS FORCE

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POLTERGEIST

Source: NSS Premiere-to-date through 12/20/98. HH GAA%.

It's the same great story. Hercules and Xena on top again. Among all the 1999-2000 season returning hours, **Hercules: The Legendary Journeys** and **Xena: Warrior Princess** continue to reign as the #1 and #2 ratings champions. Even with 36 new hours launched since their debut, Hercules and Xena remain undefeated. It's no surprise that these legends are enduring. After all, they are heroes.

XENA: for '99 and beyond.

(HH GAA%)

4.6

4.3

3.6

3.2

3.0

3.0

2.7

2.7

2.6

2.3

2.2

2.1

1.9

1.9

1.8

1.7

1.6

1.6

1.4



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ing on the strength of the *National Enquirer* brand name and news sources for its daily half-hour program, while Studios USA is looking for audience participation in its magazine strip entitled *Free Speech*.

Studios USA, which has made a name for itself with talk (*Jerry Springer*, *Sally Jessy Raphael*) and action-hours (*Xena and Hercules*), is looking to get a foothold in the prized access and early-fringe time periods. And with *Free Speech*, the Barry Diller-run syndication unit is sending out video cameras to everyday Americans to let them produce and shoot news magazine-type stories themselves.

Studios USA is teaming up with New York-based Broadcast News Network (BNN) to produce the daily half-hour shows. BNN is a well-established independent news organization that contributes to many shows, including CBS's *48 Hours*, A&E's *Investigative*

Reports and MTV's *MTV News: Unfiltered*.

"It's a magazine show that tells the story from a first-person perspective," says Steve Rosenberg, president of Studios USA Domestic Television. "As opposed to having *20/20* or *Primetime Live* go out and do a story by a staff reporter, *Free Speech* will be told by a person who is living it. You are going to get a much more emotional pull and first-person attitude than you would from a reporter."

Viewers who write in with a compelling story to tell will be sent a video camera and sound equipment that allows them to do all the work alone. A BNN segment producer will be assigned to each story and sent to a location if a story requires further assistance.

As for MGM's *National Enquirer* strip, the show will combine the strengths of tabloid newspapers and seek out stories reported by the publi-

cation. *National Enquirer* editor Mike Walker, who is a regular contributor to Howard Stern's syndicated radio program, will be the show host.

National Enquirer will not be "day-and-date," says MGM Domestic Television president Sid Cohen. Rather, it will focus on more evergreen investigative pieces and gossip items.

"These kinds of television programs, once they catch hold of the audience, can really go for five, six, seven years and seemingly get perpetual renewals like an *Entertainment Tonight* has," Cohen says. "We think we have a show that will do just that."

MGM has scrapped plans for a half-hour, companion strip for *National Enquirer*, which was titled *Daily Edition*. The show was to have worked with more than 50 daily and weekly news publications from around the country, digging out local stories and giving them national television exposure. ■

Here comes the judge, redux

For reality-based court shows, the verdict is decidedly thumbs-up

By Joe Schlosser

The buzz at NATPE this year is simple: court shows.

Judge Judy and three other successful reality-based court series are the stars of the syndication business, having spawned two more would-be successors for the 1999-2000 season.

Last year, Rysher's *Judge Mills Lane* and Worldvision's *Judge Joe Brown* took off quickly, producing Nielsen numbers early and often. Even Warner Brothers' second-year remake of *The People's Court* is shaping up, showing increases over its 1997-98 ratings at a time when television viewership is slipping across the board.

Joining the fray next season will be Twentieth Television's remake of *Divorce Court* (no more actors in this version—reality is the name of the game) and Warner Bros.' promising series *Judge Mathis*.

Scott Carlin, the executive vice president of Warner Bros. Domestic Television, says there is no secret to the success of court shows. "In general, the genre is working. They are all working



Warner hopes 'Judge Mathis,' a former Detroit judge who is only 36, will attract younger viewers.

and they are delivering great demos," says Carlin, who originally helped bring *The People's Court* to syndication back in 1981. "They are working on independents. They are working on affiliates. They work in the morning. They work in the afternoon. They work in late night and they work in prime

access," he continues. "Court shows are really the ultimate utility players right now."

Judge Judy (Judy Sheindlin), the former New York City family court judge who is now in her third season on Worldvision's syndicated show, is enjoying unmatched success. The half-hour series runs back-to-back in nearly every top market these days and is up nearly 100% in ratings over last season. It averaged a 6.7 national rating for the first 15 weeks of this season, according to Nielsen Media Research.

Judge Judy started out with weak to modest ratings in its first season when it was scheduled in especially tough time periods. But it began to show growth near the end of the 1996-'97 season.

"*Judy* has become a national phenomenon," says John Ryan, president of Worldvision. "She has been great. She

has been a real professional through all that has happened. We have taken the show from a total unknown to a household name. We were really high on her from the beginning and we're really glad we stuck by her."

Bill Carroll, vice president and director of programming at Katz Media, says strong personalities like Sheindlin's are the difference between success and failure.

"There is an understanding on the part of the producers of these shows that they need a strong personality to lead the way," says Carroll. "For the most part, all of them are. And the two new court shows, with Greg Mathis and [*Divorce Court*'s] Mablean Emphriam, appear to be following that lead."

Rysher Entertainment President Ira Bernstein, who launched *Judge Mills Lane* this past fall, says there are two other reasons why the court shows are suddenly attracting so many viewers.

"You get both conflict and resolution and that's what people want," Bernstein says. "If you mix that in with a really compelling, fun and explosive personality, I think you're going to have a winning combination. That's what we believe we have with *Mills*."

Warner's Carlin says his new court series with former Detroit district court judge Greg Mathis has those important elements and an added bonus—it's skewed toward a younger audience. Carlin says Mathis's age—he's only 36—will attract even younger viewers than *Judge Judy* or *Judge Lane* currently draws.

"Mathis is young. He speaks to a younger audience and we think we'll have our cake and eat it too with this guy," Carlin says. "We're selling him as a unique, dynamic personality who just happens to be in the judiciary. There is nothing about him that's the same as any of the other judges."

Mathis is a former Detroit gang member who dropped out of high school only to turn his life around, go to law school and become the youngest person ever elected to the district court in the state of Michigan.

Judge Mathis is being sold as a one-hour stand-alone series that will feature four different cases in each episode. Warner executives say the show will be taped in Chicago, a city where there

NEW ON THE COURT DOCKET

Show	Distributor	Terms-barter split	Clearance	Debut
Judge Mathis	Warner Bros.	cash plus-3.5/10.5	60%	Fall '99
Divorce Court	Twentieth Television	cash plus-5.5/1.5	70%	Fall '99



Lawyer Mablean Emphriam will preside over *'Divorce Court,'* a real-life remake of the '80s fictional court series.

currently is no other court series, and will likely draw litigants from the Midwest. The other court shows are all taped in New York or Los Angeles.

Last month, Warner announced that *Mathis* had been cleared in 60% of the country, including WPIX-TV in New York, KCAL-TV in Los Angeles and WCIU-TV in Chicago.

Probably the least-known aspect of Fox Broadcasting's acquisition of New World Entertainment was the transfer of ownership rights for the '80s fictional court series, *Divorce Court*.

Twentieth Television, Fox's syndication division, is now developing the half-hour series for a second round in syndication, but with real-life litigants this time.

"We know that in today's environment, realism is in demand. A scripted access-

type show wouldn't cut it," says Rick Jacobson, president of Twentieth TV.

Jacobson set out to find a judge with the qualities necessary to carry off the real-life version of *Divorce Court* five days a week. He found it in the person of Mablean Emphriam, who has worked in a number of different jobs as a lawyer, including a stint as a deputy city attorney in Los Angeles and as a juvenile trial mediator in L.A. County.

"We had to have someone with family court experience because we're not talking about, 'Did you dent my car?' on this show," says Jacobson. "These are more emotional issues. This is like the best of relationship-talk, with resolution."

Divorce Court has been cleared on all 22 Fox owned-and-operated stations for fall 1999, and Twentieth executives are currently clearing the show in the remainder of the country.

With the addition of two more court shows next season, several TV executives are now wondering how many court shows will actually make it.

"*Judge Judy* is truly a breakout hit, and now you are finding people coming out with show after show in that genre," says Frank Kelly, co-president of Paramount Domestic Television. "And they probably will continue bringing out more court shows until they finally realize that there is something fairly unique about her," he says. "Not that there won't be other successful court shows, but there is a rush to genres as opposed to programs, and I think sometimes that's a little foolish."

Dick Kurlander, vice president and director of programming at Petry Television, says he plans to take a wait-and-see approach before saying enough is enough.

"This is certainly the healthiest genre of all and at some point it will be saturated, but it doesn't appear to be right now." ■

A December T



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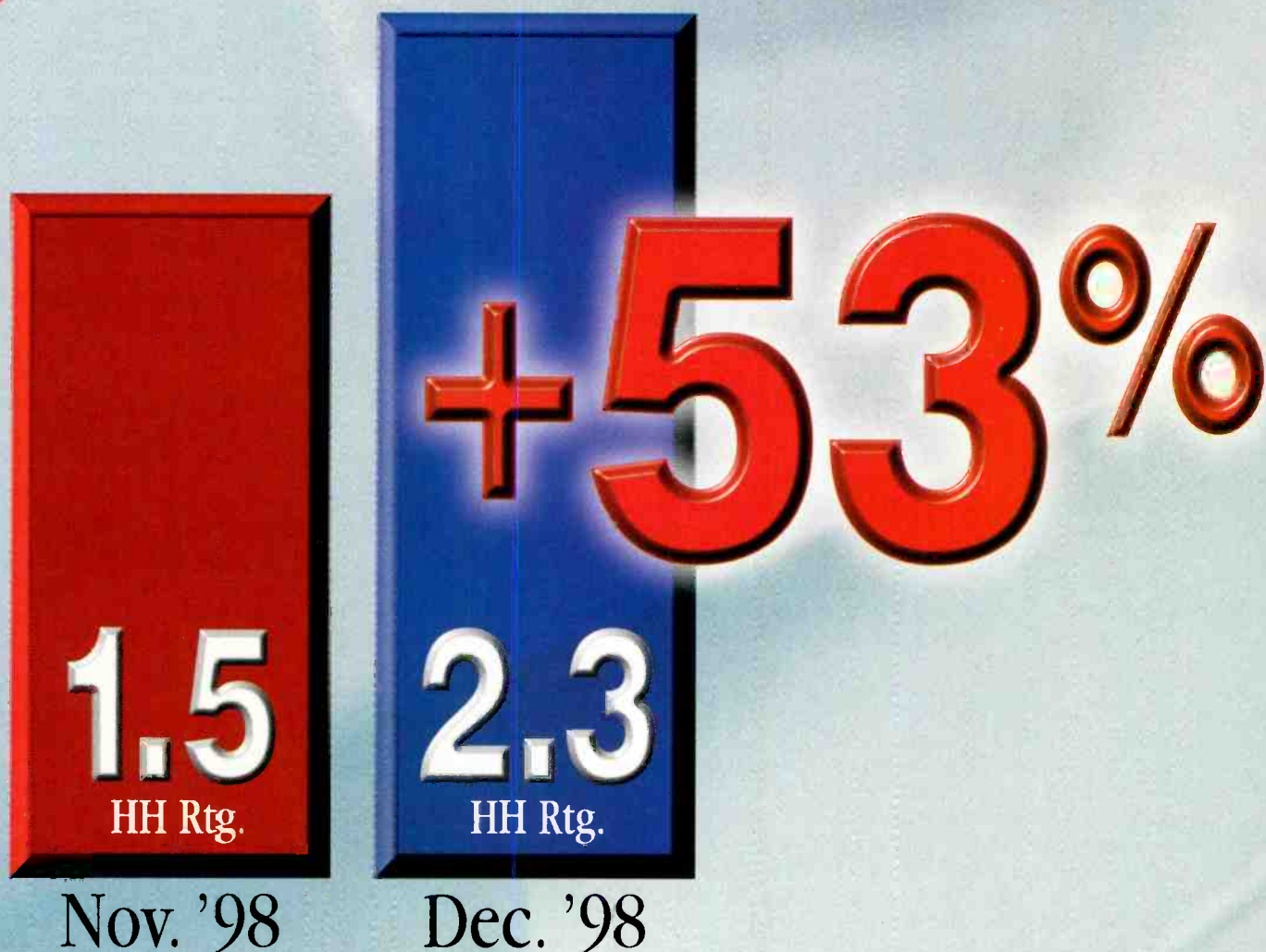


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Animation's next generation

Computer generated shows vie with old-fashioned cartoons

By Michelle Y. Green

Eye-popping graphics! Motion-capture action! Interactivity! Welcome to the world of next-level animation that is kids' television for the new millennium.

But while entertainment companies fill the bill with cutting-edge technologies, animated spin-offs, and toy tie-ins, FCC-friendly fare and good, old-fashioned books aren't totally ignored. Here's a sampling of some of the new shows at NAPTE for children.

Annex Entertainment has teamed up with Abrams/Gentile Entertainment (AGE) and Kaleidoscope Media Group (KMG) to launch *Micronauts* for fall 1999 syndication. The first five episodes will preview in late 1999 as a weekly strip or 90-minute special, according to AGE President John Gentile. The concept is based on the *Micronauts*, action figures that were popular in the 1970s and '80s and generated over \$300 million in toy revenues.

The characters launched Marvel Comic's most serialized toy-based comic book line. French co-production partner Gribouillee is providing 3-D animation for the series, and Italian toy manufacturer Giochi Preziosi has signed on to create the next generation of *Micronauts* action figures.

Marvel is also set to reintroduce the *Micronauts* comic book series. Merchandising will roll out concurrently with the release of 26 half-hour animated episodes in year 2000.

Employing 3-D computer-generated images (CGI), motion capture character animation, and Dolby sound, *World Event's Voltron: The Third Dimension* builds on the success of its top-ranked predecessor *Voltron: Defender of the Universe* created in the 1980s. The first 13 episodes of the half-hour weekly show cleared in 90% of the country in its first few months of syndication, and a total of 26 episodes is slated for produc-

tion through the year 2000.

The show, the first 3D CGI series produced entirely in the U.S., appeals to kids and sci-fi fans of all ages, according to executive producer Kevin Harlan. "There are a few out there using 3-D animation," he says, "but ours is the next generation CGI. We use all-motion-capture technology that nobody I know of uses."

The new show involves all the original characters from the *Voltron Force*, a federation of cosmic heroes with lion-shaped spaceships, along with antago-



'Our Friend Martin,' a two-hour special from DIC, introduces kids to the legacy of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

nists—the evil King Zarkon and Prince Lotor. Production is being handled jointly by Mike Young Productions (*Superted, The Secret Garden*) and Netter Digital Entertainment (*Babylon 5*).

Other 3-D offerings for fall 1999 include DIC Entertainment's *Sherlock Holmes in the 22nd Century*—a new 26-episode, half-hour strip that combines traditional 2-D cel animation with 3-D technology in a modern take on the mystery classics—and Claster Television's weekly strip *Beast Wars*, with 52 half-hour episodes currently in syndication.

Animated versions of successful kids TV shows and feature films include four returning series from Columbia TriStar Television: *Jumanji* on UPN; *Extreme Ghostbusters* on BKN; *Men in Black: The Series* on

Kids' WB!; and, *Godzilla* on the Fox Kids Network. *Bug Wars: A Starship Troopers Adventure* is set to air on BKN, and an animated version of the classic sitcom *I Dream of Jeannie* is in development for 1999.

"Our business is about building brands and audiences, extending franchises with quality programming, and maintaining relationships with international buyers who know they can count on us for quality programming," says Sander Schwartz, executive vice president and general manager of Columbia TriStar Television's Children's Programming.

DIC and Buena Vista hope to make magic with the debut of *Sabrina: The Animated Series*, which will air on UPN stations in the two-hour Disney afternoon block. A "prequel" to the live-action *Sabrina the Teenage Witch*, the No. 1 kids and teen show that airs on ABC's TGIF lineup, is a half-hour strip featuring the voice of 12-year-old Emily Hart, sister of *Sabrina* star Melissa Joan Hart.

Beginning in the fall of 1999, Disney's afternoon kids block will air Sunday

through Friday on UPN and in syndication. It will include returning shows such as Disney's *Hercules*, an offshoot of the 1997 feature film; *Recess*, a school-based *Rugrats*-like animation for kids aged 2-11, in its third season. And the syndicator's top-rated *Disney's Doug*, a show about an average kid dealing with "real" kids' issues that is returning to Disney's One Saturday Morning on ABC.

Book-based classics form the core of Nelvana's new children's offerings. In production for fall 1999 are four animated series that sprang to life from books with the same names.

HBO Family Channel is licensing two half-hour, 13-episode series: *George and Martha*, based on the 1.3 million-selling book by James Marshall, and *Really Rosie* from venerable children's author Maurice Sendak. *Redwall*, a co-production of Nelvana and France's Alphanim, will air on Cana-



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Bohbot to launch kids network

Bohbot Entertainment and Media has set Aug. 29, 1999, as the launch date of BKN, the fourth and newest broadcast kids network. The network will air animated series entertainment a total of 24 hours per week—outpacing the Fox Kids Network, the Kids' WB, and Disney in broadcast hours—using two distinctly branded services. BKN Action Adventure will offer action-based animated series targeted to boys aged 6-11, while BKN Cartoon Classics will target a broader audience of boys and girls aged 2-11.

"What will distinguish us from the other networks will be the environment we're creating, particularly for the boys network," says Rick Ungar, BKN's newly appointed chairman and CEO. "It's completely action-oriented. Boys will feel very comfortable, very hip."

BKN will air two hours of programming a day of each service, Sunday through Friday, and use animated char-

acter mascots, in-pattern promos and bumpers to establish its brand identities. The network is bankrolled by a programming and marketing budget of \$100 million, and it has cleared 193 of 211 markets domestically, covering 92% of the country.

Along with the network's fall 1999 launch will be the rollout of BKN's first original animated series, *Roswell Conspiracies: Aliens, Myths & Legends*, an animated sci-fi action/adventure strip for kids aged 7-13 years-old. DIC Entertainment's *Sonic Underground*, the Sega-based, half-hour animated strip now in its third season, will also appear on BKN, and additional animated projects are set for production over the next 12 months.

"The idea of this network," says Ungar, "is to have fun on both sides of the screen. We want to have fun with what we're putting up, and we want kids to have fun with what they're watching!"
—Michelle Y. Green

da's Teletoon as a 13-episode, half-hour series based on a 12-book series by British author Brian Jacques. *TVC*, created for Ontario's public broadcast network, is a 26-episode, half-hour series based on Andrea Beck's book "Elliot Moose." It combines live-action puppetry and animation and is designed to attract preschool viewers.

Nelvana covers the dial with a variety of kids shows. Besides producing the entire CBS Saturday morning block, Nelvana also produced *Rolie Polie Olie* for the Disney Channel and CBC; *Bob and Margaret* for Comedy Central, Global Television, and Channel 4; *Ned's Newt* for the Fox Kids Network and Teletoon; and *Little Bear* for Nickelodeon and CBC, among others.

Hearst Entertainment is returning *Popular Mechanics for Kids*, a show that explores the limits of science and technology with a reality-based, live-action format. Now in its third season, with 22 new half-hour episodes, the award-winning series is praised by educators and parents for its FCC-friendly content and educational value. "The show has gotten a win, place, or show in every category its been nominated for, not only because its the right thing to do, but because kids enjoy watching it. There are no toys associated with the show, but its as high tech a show as there is out there, because it deals with what kids find interesting," says Rob Corona, Hearst's senior vice president for domestic sales.

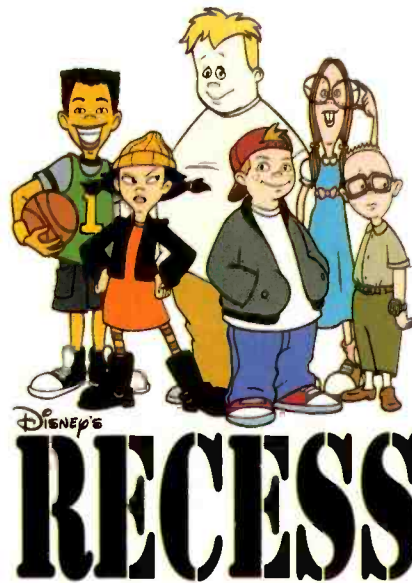
Popular Mechanics for Kids targets children 8-12 and is shot on location in cities and towns throughout North America. The series is broadcast domestically in

about 162 markets covering 93% of the country and is sold on a two-and-a-half minute national/local barter basis by Eyemark Media Sales.

Columbia TriStar Television's science-based, live-action show, *Beakman's World*, enters its fourth season with 91 half-hour episodes. Also returning is TriStar's *Dragon Tales*, a school-readiness program for kids aged 2-5, produced in association with the Children's Television Network for PBS.

Exposing a new generation of kids to the life and legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. is the goal of DIC Entertainment's animated movie, *Our Friend Martin*. The brainchild of DIC President Andy Heyward, the two-hour special will debut on Encore this month with plans for direct-to-video distribution and future syndication as a network perennial.

"It was really a labor of love," says Heyward who, when his own son was home from school in observance of King's birthday, bemoaned the lack of educational television that teaches kids about character. "It was a daunting task that had to be treated so successfully and respectfully, but



'Recess,' in its third season, is featured on Disney's afternoon kids block.

we've come up with a story we've all been able to embrace," he says. After two years in script development, and with the blessing of the King family, the special showcases the voices of King's son Dexter, Oprah Winfrey, James Earl Jones, John Travolta and Whoopi Goldberg, among others.

DIC is also busy developing *Archie's Weird Mysteries*, 26 hour-long, curriculum-based episodes of the

popular comic book character that meet FCC educational guidelines. Summer feature films include a live-action version of *Inspector Gadget* starring Matthew Broderick and a movie version of *Madeline* marking the 60th anniversary of the classic children's books. Both properties have been renewed as animated series for 1999.

Gravity Angels—a first of its kind, made-for-the-Internet movie—utilizes revolutionary, proprietary SCUD animation tools that offer users and broadcasters interactive capability. Developed by Brilliant Digital Entertainment, the two-hour, 3-D, computer animated sci-fi thriller is slated for worldwide distribution by KMG in 1999. ■

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The 'B'—as in broadcast—list?

Broadcasters are low on the food chain for new movies

By Joe Schlosser

It was only a few years ago that syndicated movie packages were a hot commodity for local broadcasters, a sure bet to get good ratings in most day parts, especially on independent stations. But the combination of cable networks, both pay and basic, along with a thriving home video and pay-per-view business has all but stripped the so-called exclusive broadcast window away.

Nowadays, after a major motion picture is released in theaters, either a USA Network, TNT or TBS Superstation steps in and pays top dollar to grab it away from broadcast stations, and claim it for cable. And 99% of the time, there is nothing a station or station group can do about it.

Not until after a movie has been in theaters, Blockbuster, on HBO and more than likely on USA or TBS, do studios start knocking on stations' door to offer up their films.

"It used to be that the broadcasters were at the beginning of the food chain and now they are lucky to be in the middle, if not the end of it," says Bill Carroll, vice president and director of programming at Katz Media.

Veteran syndicator Sid Cohen, president of MGM Domestic Television, says it is still a viable business selling to the local station community, but it "isn't what it used to be."

"The stations do need movies and we haven't had any problem clearing them, but the business has changed dramatically," Cohen says. "The bulk of our business is now with the cable networks. And when we do go and sell to the station community, the stations are not buying five-year license windows any more. They want shorter windows, and that's what we are giving them."

Robert Friedman, president of New Line Television, says his company is taking on the role as the "station-friendly movie supplier." He says New Line is going the extra mile to sell quality movie packages in short, inexpensive ways because of the changing times in the station community.

"Almost every station is now a network affiliate, with the addition of The WB and UPN, so they all have programming coming from the networks that takes up a



'Waiting to Exhale' is one of 18 movies available in Twentieth Television's Century 18 package.

majority of their prime time slots," Friedman says. "So we have taken on this role as the friendly programmer, if you will, and we are coming out with somewhat smaller packages. We have reduced the license period time to nine months rather than the usual four or five years."

Twentieth Television President Rick Jacobson says syndicators are still coming out with the same results financially as they did when the stations were the only stop for box office movie sales. He says the average revenue from a "good movie" these days is in the \$2.5 million range when cable and broadcast sales are tallied.

"You get cash packages now from the basic cable networks, you get the barter with the broadcasters and the number ends up being pretty much where it was before," he says. "The only difference now is you have to go a lot more places to get it all."

Here are some of the many movie packages available for syndication from the major Hollywood studios.

New Line Television: The movie-heavy studio has a number of packages out, including New Line 7 and The New Boss. New Line 7 includes *Rush Hour*, *Wag the Dog*, *Lost in Space* and *The Wedding Singer*. The New Boss, an action-packed 14-title assortment, includes the *Jackie Chan: Police Story* films and all four *Sony Chiba Street Fighter* films.

PolyGram Television: The studio currently has four film packages available, including Showcase 12 and Showcase

14. Showcase 12 includes *Backbeat*, *Bound* and *Crossing The Line*, while Showcase 14 includes *Barb Wire*, *Rage in Harlem* and *Cold Blooded*.

MGM Domestic Television: MGM is selling *Lion's Pride II*, a 13-title package that includes *Benny and Joon*, *Fled*, *Leaving Las Vegas*, *Birdcage* and *Kingpin*.

Twentieth Television: The Fox unit is offering six assortments, including the new package entitled Century 18, which features 18 titles on a barter basis. Included in Century 18 are *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *William Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet*, *Broken Arrow* and *Waiting to Exhale*.

Buena Vista Television: The Disney division has four offerings for sale, including Buena Vista IV and Buena Vista V. Buena Vista IV encompasses 63 titles, including *The English Patient*, *Evita* and *The Rock*. Buena Vista V has 32 titles in it and counts *Good Will Hunting*, *Wings of the Dove* and *Kundun* among them.

Warner Bros./Telepictures Distribution: The studio has two packages available, Volume 34 and Volume 35, both available on a barter basis. Volume 34 has 27 titles including *Batman Forever*, *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls*, *Outbreak* and *The Bridges of Madison County*. The Volume 35 grouping has 24 films in it, including *Twister*, *Eraser*, *A Time to Kill* and *Tin Cup*. ■

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What's the next 'Seinfeld'?

The off-net syndication game is played like high-stakes poker

By Joe Schlosser

A year after Columbia TriStar executives opened up what turned out to be a syndication record for second-cycle sales on *Seinfeld*, and just months after Warner Bros. offered fellow NBC sitcom *Friends* to the off-network world, station general managers and programming heads are coming to NATPE in search of the next network program to make it in reruns.

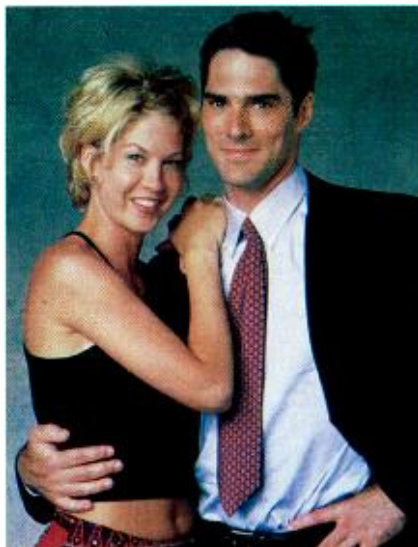
Not surprisingly, there are a lot of studio executives heading to New Orleans who say they have the next *Seinfeld* in hand.

For example, Eyemark Entertainment executives have already made the first sales on CBS sitcom *Everybody Loves Raymond*. Columbia TriStar is prepping NBC's comedy *Just Shoot Me* and Twentieth Television is getting ready to bring ABC's sophomore series *Dharma & Greg* into the land of off-network riches. A number of other half-hour sitcoms are coming to local stations over the next few years and a handful of one-hour dramas will be unveiled for weekend time periods in the coming months—including *Ally McBeal*, *The Practice* and *Buff*, *The Vampire Slayer*.

"There is definitely a great off-net business in syndication right now," says Buena Vista Television President Mort Marcus, who is currently wrapping up second-cycle sales of *Home Improvement*. "There's a need for shows and there are buyers for shows. If you have a hit show, you can really make money."

Shows like *Seinfeld*, *Home Improvement* and *Friends* can make upwards of \$4 million per episode in cash and barter in a four-year syndication cycle.

However, such lofty prizes have turned the off-network syndication business into a slow, strategy-filled game of poker among the top sitcom and drama producers in Hollywood. A lot of bluffing and waiting takes place before any one show comes to market—mainly because the release of an off-network show now depends on the needs of a finite group of mega-station owners. The 22 Fox owned and operated stations, Sinclair, Tribune and Chris Craft-United Television station groups are often the reason a show comes to

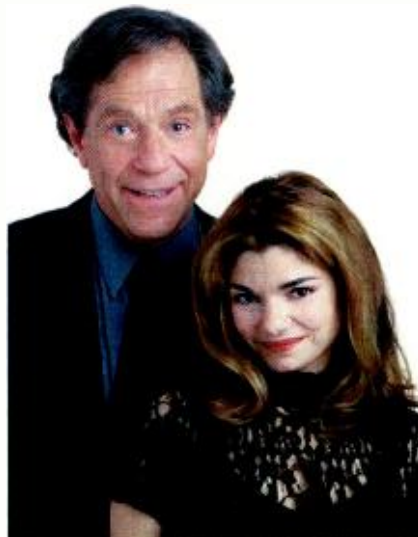


ABC is hoping that it has an off-network hit in 'Dharma & Greg.'

the market or waits on the sidelines.

"There are currently a number of shows that are anticipated at the station level," says Bill Carroll, vice president and director of programming at Katz Media. "The dates of when these shows come out appears to depend on the major-market groups and their needs. That will ultimately determine if a show comes out or is held back. There is sufficient supply right now, but demand could change very quickly on a few moves."

Carsey-Werner's *3rd Rock From the Sun* and Warner's *Drew Carey*—both



NBC's 'Just Shoot Me' is expected to be available in fall 2001.

of which will have their off-network debuts in over 90% of the country—have already been sold to several major station groups for next year.

Here's a look at what the top Hollywood studios will showcase in New Orleans this month.

TWENTIETH TELEVISION

Executives at Twentieth Television—which has been the recipient of all of Twentieth Century Fox's network programming over the past few years—are busy selling and preparing a war chest of sitcoms and one-hour dramas for syndication. On the one-hour side, Twentieth is close to bringing out *Ally McBeal*, *The Practice*, *Millennium* and *The Pretender*. Second-cycle renewals for weekend runs of *The X-Files* and *NYPD Blue* are also said to be close at hand for Fox. And *Buff*, *The Vampire Slayer* was recently sold to co-owned cable channel FX for Monday-through-Friday airings and to local stations for the weekends. *Buff* joins the off-network world in the fall of 2001.

Twentieth executives are also wrapping up sales on the animated series *King of the Hill*, which should reap close to \$3 million an episode when barter and cash sales are tallied. *King of the Hill* debuts in syndication in the fall of 2001. *Dharma and Greg* will likely be open for syndication sales after NATPE. Though the arrival date for its off-network launch is still undecided, it will likely be between 2001 and 2002, sources say.

EYEMARK ENTERTAINMENT

Last month, the CBS syndication unit rolled out *Everybody Loves Raymond* and opened sales in a few top markets. Eyemark executives quickly sold the show on the Tribune-owned stations in Los Angeles and New York for what sources say was close to \$100,000 a week. Eyemark executives were not commenting on the price, but said they were pleased with the deals. The sitcom is likely to garner between \$2 million and \$3 million in off-network play. *Everybody Loves Raymond* will debut in syndication in the fall of 2001.

Eyemark is also finishing up sales on *Caroline in the City* for the sitcom's fall 1999 debut. The first three years of *Caroline* will be seen on broadcast stations only, then the sitcom heads to cable's

Lifetime Television for four years of exclusive play. Third-year drama series *Early Edition* will likely wind up on a cable network when it is released in syndication over the next few years.

WARNER BROS.

The studio that just brought *Friends* and *ER* to syndication is not relaxing this winter. Four more sitcoms are set to go into syndication next fall and two more in the fall of 2000. *The Drew Carey Show* is expected to garner between \$3 million and \$4 million per episode, sources say. In its first off-network attempt, the show is cleared on 95 stations representing 84% of the country for its fall 1999 debut. *Drew* will head to co-owned TBS Superstation in the fall of 2002 for a dual window run. Fellow sitcoms *In the House*, *The Wayans Brothers* and *Parent 'Hood* are all cleared in more than 80% of the country for next fall as well. *Parent 'Hood* will have a simultaneous TBS Superstation run that starts in 2002 as well.

The Jamie Foxx Show, which is distributed by Warner Bros.' other syndication division, Telepictures Distribution, will debut in syndication in the fall of 2000 along with *Suddenly Susan*. Foxx is currently cleared in 80% of the country, while *Suddenly Susan* is sold in 84% of the U.S. on 107 stations. *Susan* heads to cable's Lifetime Television for a shared window that starts in the fall of 2003.

Veronica's Closet, the current NBC sitcom, will likely be taken into syndication by Warner executives in the coming year for a fall start in either 2001 or 2002.

CARSEY-WERNER

The studio is wrapping up sales of *3rd Rock from the Sun* and is preparing to bring the latest Bill Cosby sitcom out for its turn to cash in on off-network sales. *3rd Rock* debuts this fall and Carsey-Werner executives are still unsure when they will bring *Cosby* to the marketplace. The current CBS *Cosby* sitcom will likely be available to stations for the fall of 2000, sources say. The third syndication cycle of the original *Cosby Show* is being cleared by Carsey-Werner as well—that one starts up again this fall.

BUENA VISTA TELEVISION

The Disney syndication division is mopping up sales on WB sitcom *Unhappily Ever After* and a second cycle of *Home Improvement*.

Unhappily, which comes to syndication this fall, already has been sold to 130 stations covering more than 80% of the country. Tim Allen's long-running ABC sitcom has been sold in more than 70% of the country for a fall 2002 restart. Buena Vista executives also are preparing to bring out *Boy Meets World*.

first sales of *Married...with Children*'s second tour-of-duty in syndication last October. The renewals on *Married* begin this fall and will last throughout the 2002-2003 broadcast season. Several top station executives who eagerly await sitcom *Just Shoot Me* say they expect the NBC show to be available in fall 2001. The WB drama *Dawson's Creek* also is expected to go on the block soon, but CTTD executives are not talking. The teen drama likely will begin off-network play in fall 2002.

OFF-NET CONTENDERS

Show	Distributor	Terms-barter split	Clearance	Debut
Caroline in the City	Eyemark Entertainment	cash-plus-1.5/5.5	85%	Fall '99
The Drew Carey Show	Warner Bros.	cash-plus-1.5/5.5	84%	Fall '99
In the House	Warner Bros.	cash-plus-barter	82%	Fall '99
The Parent 'Hood	Warner Bros.	cash-plus-barter	80%	Fall '99
3rd Rock From the Sun	Carsey-Werner	cash-plus-barter	92%	Fall '99
Unhappily Ever After	Buena Vista Television	cash-plus	NA	Fall '99
The Wayans Brothers	Warner Bros.	cash-plus-1/6	79%	Fall '99
Clueless	Paramount	cash-plus-3.5/3.5	70%	Fall '00
The Jamie Foxx Show	Telepictures Distribution	cash plus-1/6	78%	Fall '00
Moesha	Worldvision	cash-plus-6/8	65%	Fall '00
Sabrina	Paramount	cash-plus-1.5/5.5	70%	Fall '00
Spin City	DreamWorks/Paramount	cash-plus-1.5/5.5	90%	Fall '00
Suddenly Susan	Warner Bros.	cash plus-1.5/5.5	84%	Fall '00
Raymond	Eyemark Entertainment	cash-plus-1.5/5.5	NA	Fall '00
King of the Hill	Twentieth Television	cash-plus-5.5/1.5	94%	Fall '00
7th Heaven*	Worldvision	barter 6/8	72%	Fall '00

* 7th Heaven is hour drama. Other shows on list are half hour sitcoms.

PARAMOUNT

In October, Paramount executives made the first sales on *Sabrina*, *The Teenage Witch* and *Clueless*, selling both series in the top three markets to the Tribune-owned stations. Sales currently are under way for both series, which debut in fall 2000. Dramas *Jag*, *Viper* and *The Sentinel* all have been sold exclusively to USA Network for debut in fall 2001 and will not be sold for weekend syndication. Paramount also is handling sales of DreamWorks-produced sitcom *Spin City*, which is cleared in more than 90% of the country for a fall 2000 launch.

COLUMBIA TRISTAR

Columbia TriStar executives made the

HBO recently took *The Larry Sanders Show* out of stations' hands by signing on for reruns of its own series for three years starting this fall. However, a broadcast station window is expected, probably in 2002. *The Steve Harvey Show* and *Malcolm and Eddie* likely will be available at the NATPE market—but CTTD executives won't discuss either show. The two sitcoms will hit local stations in 2000 or 2001.

WORLDVISION

The Spelling Entertainment-owned distributor is finishing sales on *Moesha* and *7th Heaven*, which will debut off-net in fall 2000. The new WB drama *Charmed* is the next possible syndication story for Worldvision. ■

Syndication feels November chill

Ratings drop for most first-run and off-net fare

By Steve McClellan

For the most part, sweeps ratings were down for first-run talk shows, magazines and off-network sitcoms. Among the new crop of first-run syndicated shows, the *New Hollywood Squares* was a standout, particularly in prime time access, where it boosted time-period viewing levels across key demographics as well as in total households, according to a Petry Television analysis of Nielsen local market-ratings data for November 1998 compared to average time-period performance for November 1997.

Among new off-network shows, *Friends* had the best overall performance. In access, it placed fourth among sitcoms and boosted viewing levels among women 18-34 by 4 share points, to an average 19 share. It also boosted viewing among men 18-34 by an average 3 share points, to a 20 share in the daypart.

Rosie O'Donnell was the top-rated daytime talker, but her numbers were down considerably, as were those for second place *Regis & Kathie Lee*. *Rosie* averaged a 4.7 household rating and 17 share, down from a 6.5/22 in November 1997. Her demos slipped from 4s and 5s to 3s.

Regis & Kathie did a 4.1/19, down from a 4.9/23, slipping from 2s and 3s to 1s and 2s in the demos.

Third place daytime talker *Jerry Springer* showed growth—climbing to a 4.0/14 from a 3.4/10 with comparable growth in the demos.

Donny & Marie and *Howie Mandel*, both new and cleared mostly in daytime, had disappointing ratings in November, according to the Petry rundown. *D&M* averaged a 1.3/6, down an average half a rating point and 2 share points

from year-ago time period averages. *Howie* posted the same average rating, down from an average 2/9 for year-ago time periods. Key women demos for both rounded to a 1.

Forgive or Forget, also mostly slotted in daytime, averaged a 1.3/4, up slightly in households and across the key demos.

The new *Roseanne Show* also fared poorly. In daytime, where it had 62 clearances, the show averaged a 1.9/8, down from a time period average of 3.1/13. Key demos were off about 1 point. In early fringe, where the show had 87 clearances, *Roseanne* averaged a 1.9/6, down from a time period average of 3.5/10.

Oprah Winfrey was the top-ranked early fringe talk show, with a 7.1/22, but down from an average 8.0/24. The show's 25-54 female audience dropped from a average 5.7 to a 5.4. *Jerry Springer* was second among early fringe talkers. It averaged a 6.1/14, up from a 4.9/10, with gains of a rating point or more across the key demos. *Sally Jessy* was third, but down a half rating point to a 4.9/13, and it slipped a point or more across the key demos. *Montel* was fourth and down slightly, to a 4.2/14. *Maury Povich* was fifth, with a 4.0/15, up from a 3.6/13; *Rosie O'Donnell*, with 176 early fringe clearances, was sixth, with a 3.7/13, down from a 4.8/16.

Jenny Jones was seventh, with a 3.1/6, down from a 4.0/12. *Ricki Lake* was eighth and up slightly in house-

'Friends' and 'New Hollywood Squares' were among the few syndies to raise ratings during the sweeps period.

holds, to a 3.0/9, but up sharply with women 18-34, where she averaged a 3.7/18, versus a 2.8/13.

Early fringe magazines were all down with the exception of *Entertainment Tonight*, which was flat with a 4.1/10. In access, *Inside Edition* was tops in households with a 6.7/12, up from a 6.5/12. But *ET* was first in the key demos and second in households with a 6.3/11, down almost half a rating point. *Extra* posted a 5.6/10 household rating, down from a 6/11, and *Access Hollywood* averaged a 4.7/5, down from a 4.8/6. *Real TV* was down more than half a rating point to a 4.1/7 and *Hard Copy* was down a full rating point, to a 3.4/6.

In the cluttered daytime sitcom environment, freshman *The Nanny* (with 41 clearances) was tops, but didn't break a 2 rating. It averaged a 1.6/5, up slightly from year-ago time periods. In early fringe, where the show had 77 clearances, it ranked 11th with a 2.8/4, down from its 3.1/5 year-ago time period average.

Seinfeld was still the top-rated early-fringe sitcom, averaging a 5.8/15. But it only had 13 clearances in the daypart and its average there was down from a 6.7/17. *The Simpsons*, with 110 clearances in early fringe, was second with a 4.7/8, up from a 4.4/7. The show was up more than a rating point among men 18-34, with a 5.2/23. *Frasier* was number three in early fringe with a 4.5/10, down two-tenths of a rating point from a year ago.

In access, *Seinfeld*, with 124 clearances, was again first with a 6.8/11, but down from an 8.0/14. *Home Improvement* was second, but like *Seinfeld*, continues to erode: It averaged a 5.9/12, down from a 7.2/15. *The Simpsons* was third with a 5.7/7, down from a 6.2/8, but its 18-34 male audience grew a full rating point to a 6.7/20.

In late night, *Seinfeld*, *Frasier*



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er, *Friends*, *Simpsons* and *Married...with Children* were the top five sitcoms.

Wheel and *Jeopardy* continue to dominate access, with a 13.1/27 and a 12.1/22, respectively. But the audiences for both continue to erode. *Wheel* was down a full rating point and *Jeopardy* was down eight-tenths of a point.

Both shows also slipped some in the key demos. For example, among women 25-54, *Wheel* dropped from a 6.6/21 to a 5.9/19, while *Jeopardy* fell from a 6.5/29 to a 5.8/16.

The *New Hollywood Squares*, with 69 access clearances, averaged a 6.0/11, boosting household time period averages by an average three-tenths of a rating point. Among women 25-54, *Squares* averaged a 4.4/12, up from an average 3.5/10 in access time periods a year earlier. In early fringe, where it had 58 clearances, *Squares* averaged a 3.4/14, up one-tenth of a rating point, with slight demo gains across the board.

Judge Judy was tops in the court show category with a 5.0/14 in early fringe, up

almost 1.5 rating points. The show spurred 3 share points among women 25-54 to an average 14 share. In the same daypart, *People's Court* did 3.8/10, down from a time period average of 4.2/8. *Judge Joe Brown* did a 3.7/10, up from a 2.0/5 time period average. *Judge Mills Lane* did a 2.5/7, up from a 1.7/5 year ago time period average.

In daytime, *Martha Stewart* the strip, with 126 clearances, averaged a 2.4/11, down slightly in households and across key demos. ■

Ailing 'GMA' gets star transfusion

Sawyer and Gibson in for McRee and Newman; Ross steps in as executive producer

By Steve McClellan

The major overhaul at *Good Morning America*, which began when Joan Lunden stepped down in September of 1997, continues. What happens to the struggling morning news show in the long run is still unclear, but ABC affiliates applauded the network's latest short-term fix, which includes bringing Diane Sawyer and Charles Gibson in temporarily as co-anchors. They take over for Kevin Newman, who replaced Gibson just eight months ago, and Lisa McRee, who replaced Joan Lunden 16 months ago. Sawyer and Gibson start Jan. 18.

What the affiliates have been clamoring for, and what they got last week, was some real star power to help give the show a boost. Sawyer, one of the network's biggest stars, is no stranger to morning television. In the early '80s, she co-hosted the *CBS Morning News*, where she became a household name to U.S. view-

ers. Her career took off from there—Sawyer was promoted to correspondent at *60 Minutes* and then leaped to ABC to front the then-new *Prime Time Live* in 1989.

GMA has been in decline for several years. So far this season, the show is down 15% on a household basis, to an average 2.9 rating and 12 share of the available audience. Among women 25-54, *GMA* is down 25% to a 1.8/13. Third place CBS's *This Morning* is narrowing the gap by declining at a slower rate. Season to date, *This Morning* is down one-tenth of a rating point in households, to a 2.5/11. Among women 25-54, it's down 7% to a 1.3/10. *Today* on NBC continues to sail along in first place, up 4% in households to a 5.3/22 and flat among women 25-54, with a 3.4/26.

The changes last week signaled



Gibson surprised to be back at 'GMA.'

ABC's determination to put its show back on course, and recapture a greater share of the roughly \$400 million morning news marketplace. The show is of particular importance to affiliates, for both the revenue opportunity (they get several spots in the show itself) and because they want the largest audience possible leading into the daytime schedule.

What Sawyer and Gibson don't bring to the table is a long-term solution to the ailing *GMA*. ABC News president David Westin acknowledged in so many words that he's bought some time by bringing the two ABC News veterans to the program. Both Sawyer and Gibson are basically doing the network a favor (at no additional compensation) and pitching in to get what they also view as an extremely important program back on track.

As Westin pointed out during a press teleconference last week, neither one needed to do this as a career move. Gibson said he was doing it out of sheer "love" for the show he called home for 11 years, despite the fact that he was "flabbergasted" when Westin first raised the subject about a month ago.

As for Sawyer's motives, Westin described her as a "loyal colleague stepping up" when needed. "When I had the long discussion about this with her, she said, 'If the news division needs me to do this, I'll do it.'"

Gibson's and Sawyer's stints on the broadcast are designed as stopgaps until permanent replacements can be found. But last week the two veterans

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offered differing views on how long their half-lives at *GMA* would last. "We'll do this as long as it takes," Gibson told reporters. But Sawyer said, "We're thinking in terms of a few months, but we're not putting a number on it."

Paul La Camera, vice president and general manager, WCVB-TV Boston, echoed the opinions of many affiliates last week with his reaction to the *GMA* moves: "It really was a blockbuster; an old-fashioned, big-time show business move." La Camera said the show is critical to stations for several reasons, including the fact that morning news for many stations is "the singular area of growth."

He also noted the show serves as a flow point to stations' daytime syndi-



Sawyer says her stay at 'GMA' is not set in stone.

cated fare. "It's a great promotion vehicle, and beyond that it is one of those defining programs that bring an image and standing to a television station," not unlike ABC News itself.

ABC News management shouldered much of the blame for the decline of the program, Westin said. Indeed, he agreed with Gibson, who said Newman and McRee

weren't given enough time as anchors to "find their voices," as they say in the business. Nor were they given enough face time on the program before assuming full-time anchor duties. Westin said he and other top news managers also failed to identify a "clear vision" for the program before putting McRee and Newman in their

anchor seats.

Despite the show's many problems, ABC executives strongly denied that the show's editorial content was lacking. Nevertheless, *GMA* is also getting a new executive producer, suggesting at the very least that a fresh perspective on content is also warranted.

The new executive producer is Shelley Ross, who has been executive producer, West Coast and a senior producer for *20/20*. Ross is said to be a favorite of Sawyer.

In addition, ABC News Vice President Phyllis McGrady, who was *GMA* executive producer from 1984-86, was named executive-in-charge of the program.

Outgoing *GMA* anchor Newman is joining *Nightline* as correspondent. McRee, who is expecting her first child in August, is returning to the West Coast, where she will do what the network termed "special assignments and projects" for the news division. ■

Need for mayhem an 'urban legend'

Study says local news doesn't have to be sensational to succeed

By Dan Trigoboff

One news story in a major market, says veteran newsman Carl Gottlieb, told of a man who had horns implanted in his head. Gottlieb, after working for months on a study that surveyed thousands of stories from local TV newscasts, concludes that: "Some are quite astounding. You have to ask 'Is this news? Isn't there, maybe, another place on television for a story on bizarre implants?'"

That reaction was one of several constituting a mixed report card for local news broadcasts throughout the U.S. Yet there was some good news in the report from the Washington-based Project for Excellence in Journalism, which found that local news need not be sensational to be successful.

"It turns out that viewer preference for murder and mayhem in local news is just another urban legend," says Tom Rosenstiel, the project's director and

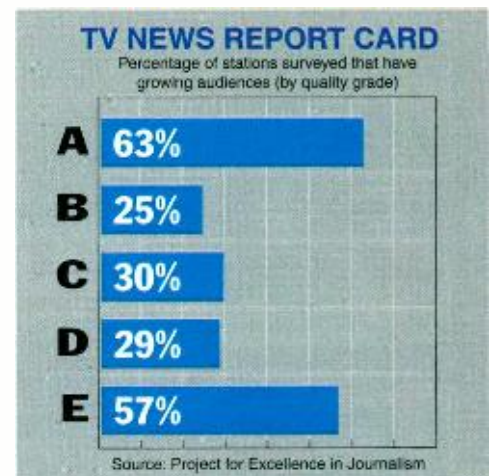
co-author of the report.

The study found that "most local newscasts are far from excellent. The general picture of local TV news is superficial and reactive—journalism on the run." In fact, the study found, even the lowest scoring stations were just as likely to succeed in ratings as those with the best scores.

The report refuted the notion that crime and violence dominate newscasts. It found that only about 28% of local stories dealt with crime. Stations were assigned grades on the basis of both quantity and quality of topics, sources, balance, and community relevance. The grades were then correlated with Nielsen numbers over a three-year period.

Stations receiving "A" grades included KOAT-TV Albuquerque, N.M.; WEHT-TV and WEVV-TV, both in Evansville, Ind.; KARE-TV Minneapolis-St. Paul; KAKE-TV Wichita, Kan.; WLKY-TV and WHAS-TV, both in Louisville, Ky., and WCTV-TV Tallahassee, Fla.

Getting failing grades were WABC-TV, New York; KIRO-TV, Seattle; WGNX-TV Atlanta; WCCO-TV Min-



neapolis-St. Paul; and WPXI-TV and WTAE-TV, both in Pittsburgh.

Grades were surprisingly low in the largest markets surveyed. Among top-market stations listed, Washington's WRC-TV was the standout, with a B-.

Barbara Cochran, president of the Radio-Television News Directors Association, said, "There are some very useful things to be learned from this study, such as that quality—as defined by this study—can get you ratings." The assignment of grades and rankings—particularly at the lower ends—were more troublesome, she said.

The effort studied 8,500 local stories from 600 broadcasts at 61 stations in 20 cities. The project is affiliated with the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and was funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts. ■

Court clears Houston station

KTRK-TV investigative report was neither false nor malicious, appeals panel rules

By Dan Trigoboff

KTRK-TV Houston's Wayne Dolcefino's time as the subject of in-depth TV reporting may finally be over. In late December a Texas appeals court reversed the \$3.25 million libel judgment against the investigative reporter and his station, and he even gained some vindication in the media.

The defamation suit brought by former mayoral candidate, now state Rep. Sylvester Turner, had put Dolcefino in the focus of NBC *Dateline* and Court TV cameras.

Turner claimed Dolcefino and KTRK ruined his reputation with a 1991 investigative report that connected him to an insurance scam in which his client faked his own death to collect on a policy.

Dateline had just rerun the story on the 1996 trial the night before the appeals court determined that Turner

had not demonstrated that Dolcefino's reports were false or malicious. "I never had any problem with the representation of the trial" by *Dateline* or Court TV, said Dolcefino. "But I was a little concerned that the story was couched in terms of a news organization going too far."

Dolcefino was elated by the appeals court decision, calling it a victory for the First Amendment and lauding his station for standing by him and his reporting.

The televised reports showed Dolcefino as an aggressive and combative—and, perhaps, not particularly likable—witness in his own defense. However, viewers were told what jurors were not: that Dolcefino's mother had been gravely ill and died only two days before his testimony.

"I would not be surprised if anyone came away [after watching *Dateline*] with a negative impression of me and the [Turner insurance] story. But that's

what the jury did, so I don't think it was unfair of *Dateline* to report that. I'm from Brooklyn; I'm probably not the greatest public relations guy. But I was forced to spend six weeks in a courtroom when my mother was dying, defending a story I always believed in and still do. Why shouldn't a reporter be outraged? I'm looking forward to my hour. *Dateline* owes me."

It didn't take long to collect. *Dateline* reviewed and updated the story last week, a few days after the appeals court's reversal of the trial court. Included were statements from the reporter and the station.

Regarding Court TV's numerous broadcasts of his trial, Dolcefino commented, "They run it all the time. If I had syndication rights, I'd be a rich guy."

"They're going to have a big programming hole."

Maybe not. Turner promises to appeal the case. ■



GET WITH THE PROGRAM

By Michael Stroud and Joe Schlosser

ABC news claims more prime time

ABC News is getting two more hours of weekly prime time to fill over the next three weeks. On Thursday, Jan. 14, *ABC News Thursday Night* will debut at 10 p.m., leading out of *Cupid*, which moves from Saturday. *Vengeance Unlimited* remains at 8 p.m. The news hour will be a mix of original and repeat programs from various correspondents. The Jan. 14 edition is tentatively scheduled to be a new terrorism special from the news division's law and justice unit. Outgoing *Good Morning America* executive producer Shelley Lewis will be executive producer of the

Thursday news hour, which ABC also used last season when it needed to fill the void left by a canceled entertainment show. This time around, it's the ABC Thursday movie that's getting the hook. On Monday, Feb. 1, the fourth night of *20/20* debuts with co-anchors Charles Gibson and Connie Chung. That will give the news division five hours of weekly prime time programming per week.

PolyGram's Crow flies high

PolyGram Television's action-hour *The Crow: Stairway to Heaven* earned its highest national rating of the season for the week

ending Dec. 27. *The Crow* scored a 3.3 GAA rating for the week, according to Nielsen Media Research. The 3.3 rating was up 18% from the show's season-to-date average of 2.7.

Really rosy return for Rosie

The Rosie O'Donnell Show returned to a live format last week and the talker earned its highest ratings of the season in the overnight markets. O'Donnell posted a 5.6 rating/15 share in the 44 Nielsen Media Research markets for Monday, Jan. 4, and a 5.6/15 on Tuesday. The show's performance on Monday was up

30% from its November book numbers. *Rosie* scored a 6.6/26 on WABC-TV New York and 4.7/16 on KNBC-TV Los Angeles.

Donny & Marie-vival

Donny & Marie had a good couple of holiday weeks. Columbia TriStar Television Distribution's new syndicated talk show with the Osmond siblings averaged a 2.1 rating for the final two weeks of December, according to Nielsen Media Research metered market statistics. *Donny & Marie* was up 40% over its November book average during the two-week span.

Dinner and a Doobie

King World executives are throwing a dinner party at NATPE featuring former Doobie Brother Michael McDonald. It will be held at The Big Easy's Generations Hall on Tuesday, Jan. 26.



By Dan Trigoboff

First and a couple for Syracuse

New York's Yates County might give up a couple of acres to gain 100 yards. But that hundred yards includes some prime television space, highly valued by fans of the Buffalo Bills football team.

Because a small part of Yates County may be within 75 miles of Ralph Wilson Stadium in nearby-Orchard Park, N.Y., the entire Syracuse area—which would presumably be served by NFL carrier and CBS affiliate WTVH(TV)—is blacked out from Bills home games unless the game is sold out. Five of eight home games were blacked out this year, and the number would have grown to six had not Bills management agreed to purchase a couple of thousand tickets.

The blackout rule for the Syracuse area came up this year, the National Football League said, because the league reviewed the rule's enforcement when CBS took over the broadcast rights from NBC. Also, locals suggest, there were fewer empty seats in the stadium back during the Bills' Super Bowl years earlier this decade.

New York Republican Assemblyman Craig Doran is looking into the county possibly giving up some territory to neighboring Ontario County. "I believe we're talking about a very small parcel," he said, "with fewer than five residences; primarily a state-owned preserve. As

far as the county losing any tax revenue to get the Bills, well, it was Yates County that initiated this." At the request of the county, Doran, an attorney, first plans to acquaint himself with NFL rules. He then may hire a surveyor to measure the distance between the stadium and the part of Yates County said to be within 75 miles.

More honors for former Tampa reporters

Jane Akre and Steve Wilson, the WTVT(TV) Tampa, husband-wife reporting team that left Fox TV last year amid controversy over a report on possible dangers of a synthetic growth hormone given to cows, were honored for "civic courage" by an organization connected to consumer advocate Ralph Nader. Wilson and Akre were given the Joe A. Callaway Award for Civic Courage by the Shafeek Nader Trust for the Community Interest, named for the brother of Ralph Nader and administered by the Nader family. Wilson and Akre said they left the station rather than slant a 1997 investigative piece under pressure from the station, Fox and its lawyers.

Wilson and Akre believe Fox and the station were bowing to pressure from Monsanto, the hormone manufacturer, and have sued their former employer. Wilson said last week that the original trial date of Feb. 22 was set back to May after a

request for a continuance from WTVT.

WTVT denies its former reporters' charges of ethical breach, and has objected to Wilson and Akre being characterized as heroes. Last year, the station objected to an ethics award from the Society of Professional Journalists, and caused at least one member of the SPJ ethics committee to rethink the fact-gathering process for the nomination. Still, SPJ said there has been considerable support within the organization for Akre and Wilson.

Exits in Omaha, Buffalo

WOWT(TV) newsman Gary Kerr, who was called "Omaha's version of Walter Cronkite" by the *World Herald*, stepped down after 34 years in Nebraska



TV blackout issue has Syracuse scrambling for the Bills.

news. Kerr said last month he'd be leaving after being moved in September to reporting from anchoring the early evening news. At 59, Kerr said he saw little future at the station and although station management said publicly that they wanted Kerr to stay,

he decided to leave.

■ Another 34-year veteran of local news made a resolution to begin the new year off the air, as Buffalo anchor Irv Weinstein gave Buffalo an emotional goodbye. Weinstein's popularity was noted by a local paper in an editorial tribute that included the observation that fans at local ball games would chant his name if the scoreboard showed him during the seventh-inning stretch. "Irv Weinstein," *The Buffalo News* said, "has owned television" in Buffalo.

Among many thanks during his sign-off, Weinstein expressed gratitude for station managers who fired him early in his career. If not for them, he said, he might be directing a cooking show in Iowa or wrestling in West Virginia.

Orlando station sued by FNC

Florida's News Channel has sued WNTO(TV), charging the broadcast station with breaching its agreement to carry the network. The lawsuit contends the Daytona Beach-based station was to begin airing news programming from the statewide network in October, but has unfairly tried to renegotiate for a better deal.

The breach, the news network says, has left it unable to serve the important Orlando-Daytona Beach-Melbourne market. The news network asks the state court to enforce the contract or grant it unspecified monetary damages. WNTO management could not be reached for comment.

All news is local. Contact Dan Trigoboff at (301) 260-0923, fax, (202) 429-0651, or e-mail to dtrig@erols.com

DECEMBER 21-27

Broadcast network prime-time ratings according to Nielsen Media Research



PEOPLE'S CHOICE

'Walker, Texas Ranger' finished 10th and helped win Saturday night and week 14 for CBS.

Week 14	abc	CBS	NBC	FOX	UPN	WB
	15.4/25	7.4/12	7.0/11	7.0/11	1.7/3	2.9/5
MONDAY	8:00 5. NFL Blast/Pre 10.1/18	19. Cosby 7.9/13	50. Suddenly Susan 5.9/10	44. Melrose Place 6.2/10	106. Malcolm & Eddie 1.8/3	85. 7th Heaven 3.6/6
	8:30 1. NFL Monday Night Football—Denver Broncos vs. Miami Dolphins 15.4/25	31. King of Queens 7.3/12	50. Caroline in/City 5.9/9		112. Guys Like Us 1.5/2	
	9:00	11. Ev Lvs Raymd 9.2/14	53. Mad About You 5.7/9	22. Ally McBeal 7.8/12	106. Malcolm & Eddie 1.8/3	98. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 2.2/3
	9:30	13. Becker 8.9/14	69. Conrad Bloom 5.0/8		110. DiResta 1.6/3	
	10:00	53. L.A. Doctors 5.7/9	6. Dateline NBC 9.8/16			
TUESDAY	8:00 8.8/15	8.6/14	7.5/12	5.6/9	2.0/3	2.3/4
	8:30 7. Home Imprvmt 9.7/17	33. JAG 7.2/12	46. 3rd Rock fr/Sun 6.1/10	58. King of the Hill 5.4/9	94. Moesha 2.5/4	89. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 2.9/5
	9:00 16. The Hughleys 8.2/14		41. Working 6.5/11	71. World's Funniest! 4.8/8	98. Clueless 2.2/4	
	9:30 25. Spin City 7.6/12	11. CBS Tuesday Movie—I'll Be Home for Christmas 9.2/15	14. Just Shoot Me 8.3/14	44. Guinness World Records 6.2/10	109. America's Greatest Pets 1.7/3	110. Felicity 1.6/3
	9:30 36. Sports Night 7.1/12		28. Will & Grace 7.4/12			
WEDNESDAY	8:00 7.5/13	6.4/11	6.9/12	5.7/10	2.4/4	2.8/5
	8:30 19. Dharma & Greg 7.9/14	78. The Nanny 4.3/8	22. Dateline NBC 7.8/14		102. 7 Days 2.1/4	94. Dawson's Creek 2.5/4
	8:30 31. Two Guys, a Girl 7.3/13	82. Maggie Winters 3.8/7		53. Behind the Laughs 5.7/10		
	9:00 18. Drew Carey 8.1/14	25. CBS Movie Special—The Christmas Box 7.6/13	64. 3rd Rock fr/Sun 5.1/9		90. Star Trek: Voyager 2.7/5	88. Charmed 3.1/5
	9:30 33. Whose Line Is It 7.2/12		71. Encore! Encore! 4.8/8			
THURSDAY	8:00 4.2/10	4.4/11	5.5/14	3.0/8	1.4/3	2.4/6
	8:30 81. Vengeance Unlimited 3.9/10	85. American Red Cross Celebrates 3.6/9	59. Friends 5.3/14	87. World's Incredible Animal Rescues 3.4/9	113. UPN Thursday Night Movie—Warlord: Battle for the Galaxy 1.4/3	98. Wayans Bros. 2.2/6
	9:00 78. ABC Thursday Night Movie—Holiday in Your Heart 4.3/10	64. Diagnosis Murder 5.1/13	56. Frasier 5.5/14	90. Fox Files 2.7/6		94. Jamie Foxx 2.5/7
	9:30	76. 48 Hours 4.4/11	64. Veronica's Cist 5.1/14			93. Steve Harvey 2.6/7
	10:00		41. ER 6.5/16			97. For Your Love 2.4/6
FRIDAY	8:00 6.0/13	7.0/15	4.5/10	2.7/6	1.2/3	
	8:30 73. Two of a Kind 4.7/11	46. Kids/Darndest 6.1/14		90. Fox Movie Special—The Munsters' Scary Little Christmas 2.7/6	115. Legacy 1.1/2	
	8:30 61. Boy Meets Wrld 5.2/12	38. Kids/Darndest 7.0/16	75. NBC Movie of the Week—It's a Wonderful Life 4.5/10		113. Love Boat: The Next Wave 1.4/3	
	9:00 56. Sabrina/Witch 5.5/12	28. Candid Camera 7.4/16				
	9:30 61. Brother's Keeper 5.2/11	24. Candid Camera 7.7/16				
SATURDAY	8:00 4.1/8	7.4/15	5.1/10	4.2/8		
	8:30 70. America's Funniest Home Videos 4.9/10	48. Early Edition 6.0/12	64. NBC Movie of the Week—Richie Rich 5.1/10	80. Fox Movie Special—Rudy 4.2/8		
	9:00 82. Fantasy Island 3.8/7	40. Martial Law 6.8/13				
	9:30 82. Cupid 3.8/7	10. Walker, Texas Ranger 9.3/18	64. International Dancesport 5.1/10			
	10:00					
SUNDAY	7:00 6.2/11	12.0/20	6.5/11	5.8/10		2.0/3
	7:30 59. ABC Family Movie—The Indian in the Cupboard 5.3/9	(nr) NFL Game 2 16.4/31	73. NBC Movie of the Week—Free Willy 2 4.7/8	61. World's Funniest! 5.2/9		104. 7th Heaven Beginnings 2.0/4
	8:00	2. 60 Minutes 14.4/25		43. The Simpsons 6.3/11		102. Sister, Sister 2.1/4
	8:30	3. Touched by an Angel 11.4/19		52. That '70s Show 5.9/10		98. The Smart Guy 2.2/4
	9:00 33. 20/20 7.2/12		14. NBC Sunday Night Movie—I.Q. 8.3/14	48. The X-Files 6.0/10		104. Unhap Ever After 2.0/3
10:00 36. The Practice 7.1/12	9. CBS Sunday Movie—Final Descent 9.5/17				106. Unhap Ever After 1.8/3	
10:30						
WEEK AVG	7.4/14	7.8/15	6.2/11	4.9/9	1.7/3	2.4/4
STD AVG	8.5/14	9.1/15	8.8/15	7.1/12	2.0/3	3.2/5

KEY: RANKING/SHOW TITLE/PROGRAM RATING/SHARE
 • TOP TEN SHOWS OF THE WEEK ARE NUMBERED IN RED
 • TELEVISION UNIVERSE ESTIMATED AT 99.4 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS; ONE RATINGS POINT IS EQUAL TO 994,000 TV HOMES • YELLOW TINT IS WINNER OF TIME SLOT • (NR)=NOT RANKED; RATING/SHARE ESTIMATED FOR PERIOD SHOWN • *PREMIERE • SOURCES: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH, CBS RESEARCH • GRAPHIC BY KENNETH RAY

DEC. 28—JAN. 3

Broadcast network prime-time ratings according to Nielsen Media Research



PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Football scored big for ABC, winning three nights for the network and helping it to a second-place finish for the last week of 1998.

Week 15	abc	CBS	NBC	FOX	U/PIN	WB
	11.2/19	8.5/14	6.8/11	6.8/11	1.4/2	4.0/7
MONDAY	8:00 22. NFL Blast/Pre 8.3/14 8:30 6. NFL Monday Night Football—Pittsburgh Steelers vs. Jacksonville Jaguars 11.5/19 9:00 9:30 10:00 10:30	27. Cosby 8.0/13 22. King of Queens 8.3/14 11. Ev Lvs Raymd 9.7/15 18. Becker 8.9/14 27. LHJ's Most Fascinating 8.0/14	61. Suddenly Susan 6.3/10 68. Caroline In/City 5.8/10 76. Mad About You 5.5/9 73. Mad About You 5.7/9 20. Dateline NBC 8.7/15	41. World's Greatest Hoaxes 7.1/12 57. Ally McBeal 6.5/10	106. Legacy 1.5/2 109. Malcolm & Eddie 1.3/2 112. DiResta 1.1/2	89. 7th Heaven 3.8/6 83. 7th Heaven 4.3/7
TUESDAY	7.5/12 8:00 14. Home Imprvmt 9.4/16 8:30 27. The Hughleys 8.0/13 9:00 39. Spin City 7.2/12 9:30 62. Sports Night 6.0/10 10:00 10:30 41. NYPD Blue 7.1/12	11.1/18 8. CBS Tuesday Movie—The Bodyguard 11.1/18	6.8/11 65. 3rd Rock fr/Sun 5.9/10 76. NewsRadio 5.5/9 45. Just Shoot Me 6.9/11 59. Will & Grace 6.4/10 25. Dateline NBC 8.1/14	4.7/8 84. King of the H II 4.2/7 87. World's Funniest! 4.0/7 79. Guinness World Records 5.3/8	1.2/2 107. Legacy 1.4/2 111. Moesha 1.2/2 115. Reunited 0.9/1	3.0/5 93. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 2.9/5 91. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 3.1/5
WEDNESDAY	7.2/12 8:00 32. Dharma & Greg 7.9/14 8:30 52. Two Guys, a Girl 6.6/11 9:00 27. Drew Carey 8.0/13 9:30 50. Whose Line Is It 6.7/11 10:00 10:30 45. 20/20 6.9/12	8.2/14 52. Life Remembers 6.6/11 17. The Kennedy Center Honors 9.0/15	7.4/12 22. Dateline NBC 8.3/14 68. 3rd Rock fr/Sun 5.8/9 74. Encore! Encore! 5.6/9 24. Law & Order 8.2/14	7.4/12 45. Magic's Biggest Secr Revealed 6.9/12 27. Magic's Biggest Secr Revealed 8.0/13	1.8/3 107. Legacy 1.4/2 99. Star Trek: Voyager 2.2/4	2.8/5 97. Dawson's Creek 2.7/5 93. Dawson's Creek 2.9/5
THURSDAY	4.2/9 8:00 84. Vengeance Unlimited 4.2/9 8:30 9:00 84. ABC Thursday Night Movie—Naked Gun 33 1/3 4.2/9 9:30 10:00 10:30	6.1/13 74. Promised Land 5.6/11 41. Diagnosis Murder 7.1/15 68. Diagnosis Murder 5.8/13	6.0/13 38. Friends 7.3/15 76. Jesse 5.5/11 62. Frasier 6.0/12 81. Veronica's Clst 5.0/11 65. ER 5.6/12	4.6/9 80. World's Wildest Police Videos 5.2/11 88. Fox Files 3.9/8	1.2/3 109. Legacy 1.3/3 112. Am Greatest Pets 1.1/2 112. Am Greatest Pets 1.1/2	2.0/4 103. Wayans Bros. 1.9/4 101. Wayans Bros. 2.0/4 99. Steve Harvey 2.2/5 103. For Your Love 1.9/4
FRIDAY	12.8/22 8:00 (nr) Rose Bowl 14.7/25 8:30 9:00 6. Sugar Bowl—Ohio State vs. Texas A&M 11.5/20 9:30 10:00 10:30	7.5/13 32. Kids/Darndest 7.9/13 39. Candid Camera 7.2/12 41. JAG 7.1/12 34. Nash Bridges 7.8/13	6.8/11 37. Dateline NBC 7.4/12 57. Law & Order 6.5/11 52. ER 6.6/11	4.5/7 82. Fox Movie Special—The Three Musketeers 4.5/7	2.0/3 103. Legacy 1.9/3 101. Love Boat: The Next Wave 2.0/3	
SATURDAY	9.0/15 8:00 8:30 9:00 21. Orange Bowl—Florida vs. Syracuse 8.4/14 9:30 10:00 10:30	7.0/12 48. Early Edition 6.8/11 52. Martial Law 6.6/11 36. Walker, Texas Ranger 7.5/13	6.4/11 68. Payback 5.8/9 50. The Pretender 6.7/11 48. Profiler 6.8/12	6.1/10 65. Cops 5.9/10 52. Cops 6.6/11 62. AMW: America Fights Back 6.0/10	KEY: RANKING/SHOW TITLE/PROGRAM RATING/SHARE • TOP TEN SHOWS OF THE WEEK ARE NUMBERED IN RED • TELEVISION UNIVERSE ESTIMATED AT 99.4 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS; ONE RATINGS POINT IS EQUAL TO 994,000 TV HOMES • YELLOW TINT IS WINNER OF TIME SLOT • (NR)=NOT RANKED; RATING/SHARE ESTIMATED FOR PERIOD SHOWN • *PREMIERE • SOURCES: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH, CBS RESEARCH • GRAPHIC BY KENNETH RAY	
SUNDAY	7.8/11 7:00 68. Wonderful World of Disney—D3: The Mighty Ducks 5.8/8 7:30 8:00 8:30 9:00 10. 20/20 9.8/14 9:30 10:00 12. The Practice 9.6/15 10:30	14.6/21 2. 60 Minutes 14.3/21 1. Touched by an Angel 16.4/23 3. CBS Sunday Movie—Sabrina 14.0/22	8.7/13 59. Dateline NBC 6.4/9 13. NBC Sunday Night Movie—Heat 9.5/14	12.8/18 (nr) NFC Wildcard 27.5/41 2. NFC Postgame 12.1/18 16. The Simpsons 9.1/13 34. That '70s Show 7.8/11 9. The X-Files 10.5/15	2.8/4 96. 7th Heaven Beginnings 2.8/4 92. Sister, Sister 3.0/4 90. The Smart Guy 3.2/4 93. Unhap Ever After 2.9/4 97. Unhap Ever After 2.7/4	
WEEK AVG	8.5/14	9.2/15	7.1/12	7.1/12	1.5/3	2.9/5
STD AVG	8.5/14	9.1/15	8.7/15	7.1/12	2.0/3	3.2/5

High velocity at Fox Sports News

In one night, cable net begins anew to cut into ESPN's lead

By Joe Schlosser

Call Keith Olbermann "The Accelerator" in his new job at Fox Sports News.

Last week, the upstart sports cabler took another step in its quick ascent up the ladder, adding a new look to its marquee nightly *Fox Sports News* program and bringing the acerbic-but-insightful Olbermann in to anchor it.

"It was fairly brave of us, some would say fairly stupid of us, to do it all on one night," says Tracy Dolgin, the chief operating officer at Fox/Liberty Networks. "We unveiled the new look, the new set and obviously the new talent in Keith all at once because we don't have 17 years to get it perfect. We have to get it right as soon as we can."

Dolgin was speaking of the 17-year lead rival all-sports cable network ESPN (which went on the air in September 1979) has on Fox Sports Net. The Fox-owned and branded cable network first launched in November 1996 with only seven of the 22 regional cable channels that now comprise the fast-growing sports outlet. Fox added a few more regional networks to its portfolio shortly after launching, but it was in June 1997 that Fox Sports Net became a national player.

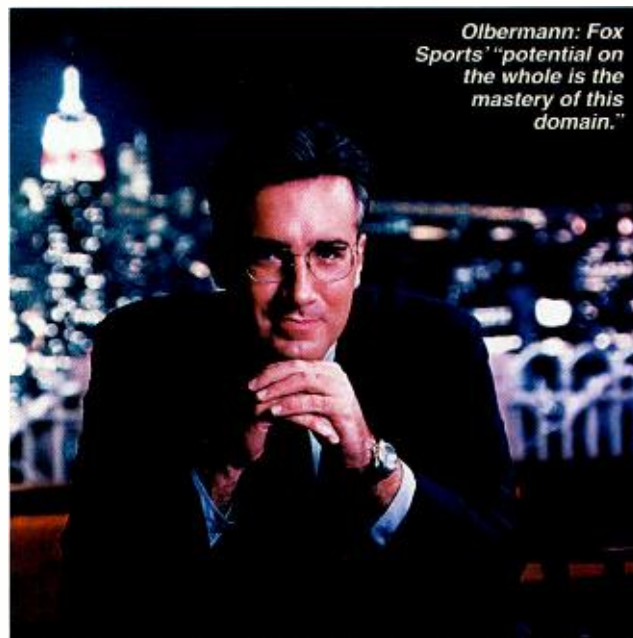
Fox teamed up with New York-based Cablevision and its Rainbow Sports division to add another eight regional channels, many of those on the East Coast, where Fox Sports Net needed coverage.

"We have gone through several evolutions in a short period of time," says Arthur Smith, executive vice president of programming and production at Fox Sports Net. "But the one thing we don't want to ever change is the core of who we are; that is, a home-team network."

While ESPN has become the most profitable cable network in the country with a national sports programming focus, Fox Sports Net's 22 regional channels are playing catch by acquir-

ing broadcast rights to local teams in bunches.

Fox Sports Net now holds local broadcast rights to 24 Major League Baseball teams, 19 National Hockey League organizations and 26 National Basketball League franchises—not to mention professional tennis, golf, auto



Olbermann: Fox Sports' "potential on the whole is the mastery of this domain."

racing and top collegiate events.

On that premise, Fox Sports Net was on a roll in the ratings up until this past winter. *Fox Sports News* in prime-time—which is produced live for every U.S. time zone each night—had seen higher ratings from the fourth quarter of 1997 to the third quarter 1998.

But without its NBA audience lead-in over the past few months, *Fox Sports News*' ratings have slowed. In December, ESPN's *SportsCenter* clearly led the competition. At 11 p.m., *SportsCenter* averaged 1.074 million households per night, according to Nielsen Media Research figures. CNN's *Sports Tonight* averaged 245,774 households, while Fox Sports News at 11 p.m. only attracted a little over 100,000 HH's per evening.

Enter Olbermann, who eagerly accepts the role of helping Fox Sports Net make up for lost time. "Its potential on the whole is the mastery of this domain," says Olbermann of Fox Sports Net.

Olbermann left ESPN in 1997 to take on what became a short-lived nightly political talk show on MSNBC.

Now, Fox Sports execs are hopeful they have added an anchor that will ensure an audience—with or without a game lead-in.

"He's terrific, he's eloquent, witty and the premier sports anchor of our time," Smith says. "He certainly had a following at ESPN, and we expect that audience to follow him here. He's an impact guy who I said when we hired him that it was a milestone for us."

Olbermann, who signed a three-year deal with Fox Sports Net worth more than \$1 million a year, joins former ESPN anchor Chris Myers. Myers, the former host of ESPN's *Up Close*, is also an anchor on *Fox Sports News* as well as host of Fox Sports Net's magazine series *Goin' Deep*.

For his part, Olbermann sees few speed bumps ahead. "We're certainly in a groove to achieve [suc-

cess] in the not too distant future," Olbermann said. "One of the accelerants, evidently in the minds of my employers, was my coming here."

With Olbermann's arrival last Tuesday came a whole new aesthetic look for *Fox Sports News*. Gone are the numerous monitors that dotted the set's background, replaced by a plain black-and-white Fox-labeled look. The show's graphics are also black-and-white, allowing more statistical information to be seen on each scoreboard.

"It's a fresh coat of paint," says Smith. "We're always looking for modifications. We started with [Fox Sports] *News*, but there will be other graphic and aesthetic changes throughout the whole network in the near future." ■

Unbundling duel in Denver

Subs numbers may be small, but 'home-field vote' has national implications

By Price Colman

Denver has become ground zero in the regulatory free-for-all over Internet unbundling and its impact on the pending AT&T-TCI merger.

Last week, a Denver City Council member introduced an amendment—largely drafted by Baby Bell US West—that would require TCI and AT&T to open their networks to competing Internet service providers.

How Denver resolves the issue will have broad implications, not only for other cities considering the unbundling issue—including Los Angeles, Dallas and Seattle—but at the national level as well.

TCI and US West both are headquartered in suburban Denver, magnifying the significance of the “home field vote.” A vote favoring TCI-AT&T would essentially offset the unbundling condition the city of Portland and surrounding Multnomah County, Ore., imposed late last year. Conversely, a vote in Denver that would force TCI to open its network would give a signal to federal regulators that momentum is building in favor of unbundling.

Under the Denver proposal, which was tabled for further study, TCI would be allowed to transfer its 115,000-subscriber Denver cable franchise to AT&T only if the cable operator accepts the unbundling condition. It's a condition TCI is unlikely to accept.

“We have made the investment in our plant and our networks to bring new services to our customers,” says TCI spokeswoman LaRae Marsik. “If as a new entrant in many of these new service arenas we're forced to wholesale our network to our competitors, why even get into it?”

Denver officials have scheduled a Jan. 19 work group meeting to further explore Internet unbundling and draft a bill that will be subject to a vote by the full council.

Meanwhile, top executives at TCI and AT&T have told the Federal Communications Commission that federally mandated unbundling would almost certainly kill the merger many view as the first real fruit born out of the 1996 Telecom Act.

But Tim Sandos, the former TCI employee and ex-Denver City Council member who's now a US West lobbyist,

told Denver officials that TCI-AT&T should bear the same regulatory burden of unbundling its network as was imposed on US West and other Baby Bells under the 1996 Telecom Act.

Oregon officials, like their Denver counterparts, were aggressively lobbied by US West, AOL and local Internet service providers. But the Oregon lawmakers imposed Internet unbundling not in an effort to achieve what Sandos calls regulatory parity, but to smooth the way for those local ISPs to offer Internet access that addresses

specific community needs.

Portland and Multnomah County officials last week turned the franchise-transfer request based on TCI-AT&T's rejection of the unbundling condition. The dispute now appears headed for court.

Says Dean Smits, Denver Telecommunications officer: “Any condition requiring unbundling of services would result in a delay of the rollout of such services, would court litigation and would be a disincentive for TCI and AT&T to make additional investments.” ■

Net firm seeks lease on life

While America Online and its allies looked to gain access to cable by changing the rules, small high-speed Web provider Internet Ventures Inc. continued its push its way onto systems by twisting existing regulations covering leased access.

Internet Ventures last week served a request for access to Tele-Communications Inc.'s Spokane, Wash. system for a channel on which the company would offer its Perkinet service to the TCI's subscribers. Perkinet offers surfers an Internet stream at up to 256,000 bits per second, about five times the speed they can get from conventional modems over telephone lines. That's far less than the 10 megabit pace offered by @Home, of which TCI is a controlling shareholder, but that high-speed service is not currently available in the Spokane market.

Redondo Beach, Calif.-based Internet Ventures plans to make similar demands of nine other systems owned by TCI, Century Communications Corp., CableOne and American Cable Entertainment, all in Western markets where the company has acquired conventional dial-up Internet service providers over the past three years. Internet Ventures sees the move as a way to boost distribution of Perkinet, which is designed for smaller systems that have not been upgraded for full high-speed service. Perkinet is a one-way service, letting subscribers pull down data at faster speeds by sending commands and data back to the Net via a telephone line connected to their cable modem.

The company has met with limited success, signing up four small systems as affiliates but halting installation at one of them, Sun Country Cable in Groveland, Calif.

Under leased access, Internet Ventures would market the service and handle installation in customers' homes. Data routers, servers and other cable-specific equipment that would ordinarily be located at the system's headend would be located in a separate facility. Instead of sending a conventional NTSC video signal via satellite as a TV network does, Internet Ventures would have an intermediate frequency, or IF, signal carrying Internet traffic.

However, while federal rules governing leased access for video programming are clear, the move is unique. Internet Ventures insists that a channel is a channel and it should be able to send whatever signals over a leased slot it wants.

“We feel it's very clear, it's exactly what these leased access regulations were written for,” said Internet Ventures chairman Don Janke. He added that surfers often use the Net to download video as well. —John M. Higgins

Forum Network to launch

Washington public broadcaster aims to provide public affairs programming

By Donna Petrozzello

Public broadcaster WETA-TV Washington, D.C. announced its stake in a second cable network last week, the planned Forum Network, a not-for-profit public affairs channel that WETA intends to launch in a joint venture with The Freedom Forum.

Last month, WETA came forward as an equity partner in Fanfare: The Classical Music Network, an ad-supported service that several investors—including Food Network co-founder Jack Clifford—want to launch by Thanksgiving.

Unlike Fanfare, Forum Network would be a non-commercial channel,

says WETA executive vice president and chief operating officer Linwood Lloyd. It would be funded mainly by The Freedom Forum's \$1 billion endowment base. Lloyd anticipates a late-spring launch for Forum Network. Lloyd says WETA has made a three-year commitment to launching and building a subscriber base for Forum Network.

WETA has tapped CNN co-founder and veteran journalist Ed Turner as the channel's president. The channel will cull programming from WETA, including time-shifted offerings of *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, *Washington Week in Review*, *Frontline* and *Firing Line*. Additional programming will come from libraries



Turner: Not for the 'Roseanne' crowd

managed by The Freedom Forum, a nonpartisan media rights organization.

"This channel gives us another video service for our member viewers in Washington who are avid consumers of public affairs

programming," says Lloyd.

WETA says other programming will be originally produced at Forum Network's Washington headquarters. Turner says the program mix will include talk shows and topical news analysis programs "for grown-ups," emphasizing that the network will tackle serious societal issues rather than rehash talk about sensationalized news stories.

"This channel will not have a *Roseanne* audience," says Turner, referring to the sitcom. "Much of TV talk is fixated on one or two stories. There's a gulf to be filled with public affairs programming for grown-ups. The channel will have room for discussion, debate and commentary on hard news issues such as Social Security, abortion and the complexities of medical care," Turner says.

To date, no major cable operators have stepped forward with carriage agreements for Forum Network, although Turner says "we have received positive acceptance of the idea by the major MSOs in the area."

Lloyd dismissed criticism that the channel will be a knock-off of Washington, D.C.-based C-SPAN. "We will do breaking news analysis, and C-SPAN has become the service of record for the House and the Senate."

C-SPAN spokesman Rich Fahle agreed that the planned Forum Network "will not directly compete."

"As it's described, Forum will be different from C-SPAN's style of complete, event-driven coverage," he said. "Forum's programming sounds like it will be more packaged news analysis. And, C-SPAN has co-existed quite nicely in this town with news-oriented networks. I don't think we'll compete at all with this new one." ■



CABLE'S TOP 25

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

ESPN scored big with its coverage of Arizona's victory over Nebraska in the Holiday Bowl. The sports network's bowl coverage took four top-ten slots last week.

Following are the top 25 basic cable programs for the week of Dec. 28-Jan. 3, ranked by rating. Cable rating is coverage area rating within each basic cable network's universe; U.S. rating is of 98 million TV households. Sources: Nielsen Media Research, Turner Entertainment.

Rank	Program	Network	Day	Time	Duration	Rating Cable	U.S.	Hhs (000)	Cable Share
1	Holiday Bowl: Nebraska/Arizona	ESPN	Wed	8:00P	212	6.0	4.6	4557	9.8
2	WWF Wrestling	USA	Mon	10:00P	67	5.4	4.1	4026	8.7
3	Alamo Bowl: Kansas State/Purdue	ESPN	Tue	8:30P	245	4.9	3.7	3727	8.5
4	Outback Bowl: Kentucky/Penn State	ESPN	Fri	11:00A	223	4.8	3.7	3650	9.6
4	WCW Monday Nitro	TNT	Mon	8:00P	60	4.8	3.7	3635	7.5
6	WCW Monday Nitro	TNT	Mon	10:00P	65	4.6	3.5	3433	7.4
7	Peach Bowl: Georgia/Virginia	ESPN	Thu	5:11P	233	4.4	3.3	3296	8.5
7	WCW Monday Nitro	TNT	Mon	9:00P	60	4.4	3.3	3290	6.6
9	WWF Wrestling	USA	Mon	9:00P	60	4.3	3.3	3257	6.5
9	Movie: "Lethal Weapon"	TNT	Sat	8:00P	150	4.3	3.3	3240	6.6
9	WWF Wrestling	USA	Sun	7:00P	60	4.3	3.2	3217	5.9
12	Best of WCW '98	TNT	Tue	10:00P	60	3.8	2.9	2875	6.2
12	Movie: "Sin and Redemption"	LIF	Sun	4:45P	105	3.8	2.8	2766	6.0
14	Movie: "Betrayed"	LIF	Sun	6:30P	105	3.6	2.7	2657	5.1
15	Independence Bowl: Miss./Texas Tech	ESPN	Thu	9:04P	173	3.5	2.7	2647	7.2
15	Best of WCW '98	TNT	Tue	9:00P	60	3.5	2.6	2601	5.3
15	Pacific Blue	USA	Sun	8:00P	60	3.5	2.6	2598	4.7
18	Rugrats	NICK	Sat	8:00P	30	3.3	2.5	2486	5.2
18	Movie: "Change of Heart"	LIF	Sun	3:00P	105	3.3	2.4	2389	5.8
20	Best of WCW '98	TNT	Tue	8:00P	60	3.2	2.4	2431	5.1
20	Movie: "Lethal Weapon"	TNT	Sun	5:30P	150	3.2	2.4	2370	4.6
20	Movie: "My Neighbor's Daughter"	LIF	Sun	1:15P	105	3.2	2.3	2313	5.8
23	NFL Countdown Sun.	ESPN	Sun	11:59A	31	3.1	2.3	2331	6.9
23	Rugrats	NICK	Mon	7:30P	30	3.1	2.3	2283	5.1
25	All That	NICK	Sat	8:30P	30	3.0	2.2	2219	4.6
25	Movie: "The Shannon Mohr Story"	LIF	Sat	6:00P	120	3.0	2.2	2200	4.8
25	Movie: "Her Last Chance"	LIF	Mon	9:00P	120	3.0	2.2	2199	4.7
25	Rugrats	NICK	Wed	7:30P	30	3.0	2.2	2193	4.9



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DBS providers set brisk pace

Only Primestar lags badly, fueling rumors it will sell its subscribers to DirecTV

By Price Colman

DBS providers DirecTV and EchoStar racked up record customer growth in December, while Primestar saw sales slip at year-end.

In raw numbers, DirecTV was the long-distance leader, gaining 183,000 new customers in December and bringing its 1998 subscriber total to 4.46 million. For all of 1998, DirecTV added 1.157 million new customers.

EchoStar's Dish Network, propelled by a "free dish" promotion, added 130,000 customers in December, bringing its year-end total to 1.94 million subscribers. Dish Network tallied 900,000 new customers for the past year.

Primestar added nearly 37,000 customers in December, bringing its 1998

final count to about 2.3 million subscribers. Primestar was well behind the others in total new customers for the year, adding 349,000.

On a percentage basis, Dish Network started with a lower sub count and was the easy winner. It grew 86.5% in 1998; its December 1998 numbers jumped 73% vs. December 1997.

DirecTV grew 35% in 1998 but was up only about 2.2% in December vs. the same month in 1997. Primestar managed about 17.9% subscriber growth for the year as it coped with internal restructuring and regulatory roadblocks, but its December growth declined 13.4% from the previous year.

For DirecTV and EchoStar, 1998 was pivotal not only in terms of growth but also deals. EchoStar in early

December cemented plans to buy AskyB's assets for \$1.25 billion. DirecTV shortly before year-end announced plans to buy USSB for \$1.3 billion.

Meanwhile, Primestar was the odd man out as the U.S. Justice Department blocked its plans to acquire AskyB's assets. Primestar stock, which fell as low as 59 cents per share in mid-December, rebounded to about \$1.70 last week on speculation that it's working on a deal to sell its subscribers to DirecTV. Officials at Primestar and DirecTV declined to comment. But rumors are swirling on Wall Street.

"I think they're looking at it, and it makes sense," says an analyst familiar with both companies. "But at what price?" ■



TNT adds Law and Order

Turner Network Television will add its second one-hour drama from NBC, *Law and Order*, starting in September, 2001 in a six-year exclusive deal with Studios USA in which TNT will pay an estimated \$600,000 to \$700,000 per episode that it airs in first-run syndication. TNT acquired *ER* from NBC in a syndication deal that kicked in earlier this year.

Law and Order has run in syndication on A&E for eight years. A&E's contract for the series extends through September, 2002, which means that both TNT and A&E will air off-net episodes of the series from fall, 2001 through fall, 2002, although not the same episodes.

TNT's deal for *Law and Order* has two parts. Starting in September, 2001, TNT has rights to air episodes produced in the 1998-99 season and continuing for at least two additional new seasons, say TNT officials. Cable industry sources estimate that TNT will pay between \$600,000 to \$700,000 per episodes for the newest episodes, which are not part of A&E's syndication deal, which included episodes produced only through the 1997-98 season.

Encore Media Group spends \$20 million on Starz!

Encore Media Group launched into the second half of a two-year branding campaign for its pay-movie channels Starz! and Encore



last week, announcing \$20 million in media buys across national cable TV and radio for Starz! during the first half of 1999. The campaign bills Starz! as a premium movie channel around the tag line "movies, movies, hit new movies." Last year EMG invested \$40 million to brand Starz! and to promote Encore around the tag line, "the movies of your life." Later this spring, EMG is expected to invest an additional \$20 million in media buys for Encore.

Cable Ratings Rise

Basic cable had record primetime audiences in the past year, says the Cabletelevision Advertis-

ing Bureau's (CAB) analysis of Nielsen data. Ad-supported cable's average U.S. primetime household delivery rose 14.3% to 22.7 million in 1998 compared with 1997, and

cable's ratings increased 12.7% to 23, reported the CAB based on Nielsen data. The four major broadcast networks—ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox—saw aggregate U.S. primetime delivery fall 4.7% to 30.8 million, as ratings dropped 6% to 54. Basic cable's fourth-quarter numbers also hit record highs, the CAB reported. Average U.S. primetime household delivery increased 14.7% to 23.6 million while ratings increased 13.3% to 23.8 million on average for the quarter, reported the CAB. Basic cable's audience share for the quarter increased 13.4% to 39.7, says the CAB.

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Your new digital home

New TV facilities are loaded with computer-based gear that promises to save money and space; but designers still must balance cost against capability

By Karen Anderson

Building a new digital TV plant is not an easy undertaking. It can take years, costs millions of dollars and requires high-level technical expertise to integrate intricate equipment into an efficient, working system.

The good news, according to the specialized systems integrators and architects that help with such facilities, is that the new computer-based gear can save money—and space. But, the experts say, broadcasters and networks still have hard decisions. They must minimize costs and at the same time make sure the plant can accommodate bandwidth-greedy high-definition television and other potential digital video services. And these goals are often at odds.

The common denominator in most of the new plants described in the following pages is video servers, computers with massive storage that do more than just replace videotape machines. Networked with automation systems that manage scripting, editing, master control and trafficking commercials are almost mandatory these days, the servers allow broadcasters to streamline workflow, reduce manpower and consolidate operations.

“We don’t have the need for large scale post-production suites. Editing and post-production can be done in a much smaller space,” says Frank Rees, president of Rees Associates, an architectural firm based in Oklahoma City, Okla.

Scott Griffin, The Systems Group’s president of engineering and technology agrees. “In the past you had to build a graphics suite and an edit suite, an audio suite. Now there is more of a generic bullpen environment that can take the form of any number of applications to reduce your floor space and retain the flexibility.

“With this new digital technology, we can focus on the human interaction requirements,” he says.

Hans Knutzen, president of his own

architectural firm, Hans Knutzen Associates in Nyack, N.Y., also sees more broadcasters trying to squeeze more functionality into smaller spaces. More open spaces and higher ceilings, fewer walls and more glass help to create the appearance of larger workspaces, even

It can be done

Here’s a look at five broadcasters and four networks that injected heavy doses of digital into their new or upgraded facilities.

National Digital TV Center	74
WAMI-TV Miami	78
Ethnic American Broadcasting Company	80
WSB-TV Atlanta	82
Fox Network Center	86
WXTV(TV) Teaneck, N.J.	88
WJXX-TV Jacksonville, Fla. ...	90
ESPNEWS	92
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though stations can operate with less space. “We keep it so that people are happy to come to work,” he says.

But Bice Wilson, managing partner of Meridian Design Associates, New York-based architects, warns that a station may soon outgrow a small studio space, especially since 16:9 production calls for wider set designs. “You can always take a big studio and do small things in it,” he says. “But you can’t take a small studio and do big things in it.”

Rees, however, says that isn’t always the case. He believes virtual sets offer broadcasters an almost infinite number of set designs and the appearance of limitless space on a computer platform. “Prices are dropping to reasonable levels, allowing us not to have to build the very large studio spaces that we once did,” he says.

But building a better plant is not just about building a better space and hav-

ing the best equipment. It means getting into the guts of the plant—the infrastructure. And the fundamental decision is how big to make the pathways through which all the electronic pictures and sounds flow.

Some system architects still argue the merits of the mezzanine level 360 Mb/s plant, which can handle uncompressed standard definition and 4:1 compressed HDTV. Others are looking ahead to the 1.5 Gb/s plant, which can handle full-bandwidth 1080i HDTV. The 270 Mb/s (or 601 component) infrastructure seems to be the most widely utilized infrastructure in today’s digital plants. It is capable of handling up to 480p/30 and 480i/60, and compatible equipment is currently available. Once you get into the 360 Mb/s or 1.5 Gb/s arena, compatible equipment is limited, most integration experts say.

Jay Adrick, vice president and product-line manager of broadcast systems for Quincy, Ill.-based Harris Broadcast, advocates a mixed-plant approach that integrates both 601 components and 1.5 Gb/s. “It is the most cost-effective way to approach plant design today,” he says. “It allows you to use all the digital devices out there for standard definition, and it allows you to use all the new technology coming out for high definition and allows them to co-exist.”

The mixed plant will include mostly 270 Mb/s switching and signal infrastructure with some 1.5 Gb/s infrastructure to support high definition. “The benefit really is one driven by necessity right now because being able to do standard definition at 1.5 Gb/s is not a reality. It is a proposal, so the equipment doesn’t exist,” Adrick says. He predicts that within five years, once standards are resolved, most plants will migrate toward the 1.5 Gb/s infrastructure.

Adrick is not a proponent of the standard-definition 360 Mb/s plant. He says, “There are no encoding and decoding devices that are designed for mezzanine compression for high definition, so you technically could not build



Adjacent to the new digital Fox Network Center is a multi-dish satellite uplink, which has been beaming Fox's prime time schedule to affiliates for more than a year.

a plant today for 360 Mb/s and carry high definition on it. There would be some missing pieces."

Northvale, N.J.-based AF Associates' Senior Vice President of Engineering Jim McGrath is another proponent of 601 because a plant can operate most efficiently today at 270 Mb/s. However, McGrath believes in also integrating some 360 Mb/s capability for compressed HDTV. Building 1.5 Gb/s into the plant is just too expensive, asserts.

Since the costs of building facilities vary dramatically, it is almost impossible to determine exactly how much more it costs to build a 1.5 Gb/s plant. But Warren Allgyer, vice president of Panasonic Systems Solution Company in Los Angeles, estimates that a 1.5 Gb/s plant costs about 20% more than a 360 Mb/s plant. He says, "It just doesn't make sense to complicate your life by adding compression-level systems for 20% less." He adds, "You lose the cost advantage when you add compressors, decompressors and processing equipment needed to implement the mezzanine strategy."

Since most broadcasters' budgets are too tight to build a full 1.5 Gb/s HDTV plant, The Systems Group's Griffin says that broadcasters should look at the 360 Mb/s infrastructure as a cost-effective bridge to HDTV, because it handles both uncompressed SDTV and mezzanine compression-level HDTV.

Griffin also suggests that broadcasters with immediate plans to produce high definition should take the "island" approach. The signal is moved throughout the plant at 360 Mb/s, but a portion of the master control, an HDTV island, is wired for 1.5 Gb/s transport. The island is equipped with

HDTV gear including an upconverter, HD tape machines and routers.

"Until stations determine their business models as to how much high definition programming is going to be transmitted in a given day, the proportion of 1.5 to 360 Mb/s is difficult to determine," Griffin warns. "But to go any less than 360 is a bad choice altogether."

Like Griffin, Tom Mann, chief technology officer of Digital Systems Technology in Irwindale, Calif., agrees that the 360 Mb/s infrastructure is the most practical way to go, but says the clear path to a "true" high-definition plant does not exist today. Besides, Mann says, most broadcasters are not concerned with high definition right now, but are more interested in complying with FCC DTV mandates.

"Lots of stations are undergoing their digital rebuild right now, but very few

people have much interest in high definition," says Mann. "You couldn't do it [HDTV] if you wanted to because the equipment does not exist." He predicts that most stations, especially those in smaller markets, won't produce local HDTV programming for about 10 years.

Not so, says Newington, Va.-based Communications Engineering Inc. Vice President of Engineering John Wesley Nash. He says HDTV is on the horizon for a good number of broadcasters and urges them to consider using as much 1.5 Gb/s equipment as possible. He believes that everything in the plant, from patch bays and jack fields to routing switchers, should be capable of handling HDTV.

Nash admits that 1.5 Gb/s equipment is more expensive than 360 Mb/s equipment. But he says broadcasters need to ask themselves, "What will it cost to do it today versus what does it cost to have insurance for the future?"

"Although [the jack fields] may only be running 270 Mb/s through them today—in the next five years you know you're going to want to run 1.5 Gig through it," Nash says. "You're paying us to install these now, you don't want to pay someone to deinstall and reinstall another product down the road."

Robert Slutsky, vice president of National TeleConsultants, a Glendale, Calif.-based firm does not support one infrastructure methodology over another. He believes that since a great deal of equipment still is analog, integrators need to work both analog equipment and digital equipment into a plant.

"You are always going to be building, you are always going to be changing, you are always going to be living in a hybrid plant," he says. ■



WJXX-TV Jacksonville, Fla., is digital ready, but the Allbritton station has no immediate plans to offer a DTV signal.

TCI's mega-digital center

SPECIAL REPORT

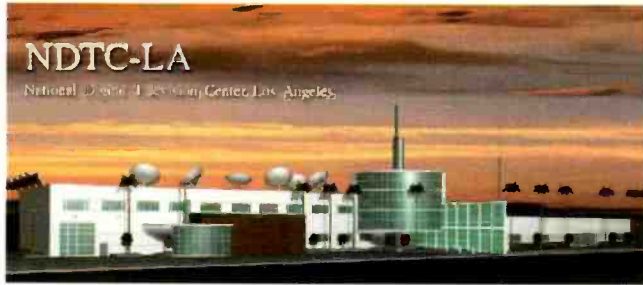
By Margot Suydam

TCI's National Digital Television Center Inc. (NDTC) set its sights on Hollywood with the Dec. 1 opening of a new digital facility in Los Angeles.

Located on the city's West side, the 125,000 square foot complex is designed to serve Los Angeles' production community as a "one-stop shopping" site for production, post-production, origination and transmission. "The goal is to enable programmers to come here with an idea and leave with a channel," says Rosemary Danon, NDTC-LA's general manager.

Although still a work-in-progress, the NDTC-LA facility currently has its production studios and post-production suites up and running

NDTC offers one-stop-shopping for production, post-production, origination and transmission.



at full tilt. Already the facility has done productions in-house for such networks as MTV and Black Entertainment Television (BET).

Four full-service studios, one insert stage, green rooms, makeup and dressing areas are all part of the 40,000-plus square feet of dedicated production space. Studio equipment includes Chyron Infit!, Pinnacle Flashfile, Grass Valley switchers and Sony audio consoles, as well as Sony BVP-90 cameras, Fujinon lenses and Desisti lighting for acquisition. "In Studio 2 and

3, we have Ikegami 388 cameras and Grass Valley 4000 switchers with Krystal digital video effects," Danon adds.

Ultimately eight post-production suites will support online and non-linear editing, and such video formats as Digital Betacam and Betacam SP. "We now have four Avid Media Composer edit bays, and one digital and one analog edit suite," Danon says. "We are adding a Digidesign ProTools audio suite and a second digital edit bay some-

time this year." The digital edit suite is equipped with Sony Digital Betacam VTRs, DVS-8000 switcher and the DME-5000 for effects, as well as a Chyron Infit! and a Graham-Patten D-ESAM audio-for-video mixer.

Twenty master-control suites built to clients' specifications are part of the network-origination capability of the center. According to Danon, NDTC-LA is in the process of designing those facilities to accommodate the requirements of existing and new clients. Origina-

National Digital Television Center

LOS ANGELES

OWNER: Telecommunications Inc.

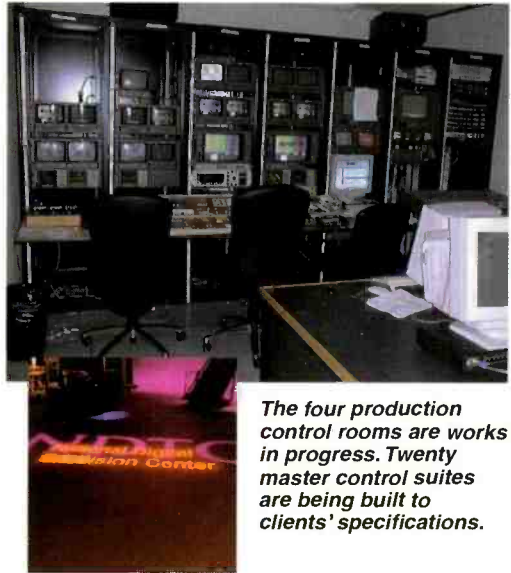
ARCHITECT: Cybercom

SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR: Sony Systems Integration Center

SIZE: 125,000 sq. ft.

BUDGET: \$200 million

COMPLETION DATE: November 1998



The four production control rooms are works in progress. Twenty master control suites are being built to clients' specifications.

tion is scheduled to be fully operational by April 1999.

"What's most exciting is that we are working on digital interactive playback," she says. "We are going to be launching several interactive channels. I consider this place as a lab for the next millennium for programming. We are digital from the ground up so [we] were fully responsive to the new technology of interactivity. We are working right now with interactive network provider ACTV. We are doing testing with them to make sure we have the most innovative technology possible. This includes data transmission and digital video equipment, so that consumers, for example, can get playback on sport moves and other ancillary information."

The facility is supported by a teleport facility offering uplink and downlink services utilizing, both C and Ku band antennas, as well as full-time fiber

circuit connectivity. To assure that service is not interrupted, NDTC-LA is backed by two standby diesel generators and an uninterrupted power supply.

Danon attributes NDTC-LA's decision to build the new facility, in part, to the fact that production operations were not new to them. "We have been producing before this," she says. "We were part of the International Channel, a network owned by TCI. Production was a side business, and now we've moved across the street to a higher-end facility that is 100 percent focused on production. We have many more studios and more support. We've taken a side business and made it a premiere operation." ■

Cybercom gave the facility a futuristic look to take it into the 21st century.



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SONY

Miami's storefront studio

SPECIAL REPORT

By Peter Brown

When WAMI-TV opened its doors this summer, the 4,000-square-foot "storefront" studio—a showcase concept—instantly became a big hit on Miami's South Beach.

According to Howard Bolter, senior vice president of production operations and engineering for USA Broadcasting in Los Angeles, there was a heavy emphasis on attracting fresh, young talent to this station. "We have separate production teams for our kids, news and sports programming," Bolter says. "We're trying new things and working with 14 hours of original programming. We're a content-driven station. Engineering is there to support it, not drive it," he says. "We've made some changes already. For example, we have moved a couple of programs that were live to tape."

When the new station went on the air for the first



The station uses six Philips in-studio cameras for its daily newscast, 'The Times.'

time, 165 new employees made it happen. This agile young team is showing that it can handle 6 to 7 hours of live programming per day in a proficient fashion, according to Bolter.

"We had no tape legacy at all," he says. "Everything is transportable across the entire network, and there's no linear in the mix. We're using a Philips Venus router with a Philips Saturn master control switcher and two 4-channel Hewlett-Packard video servers so we're always running redundant," Bolter says. "Our programming is Panasonic DVCPRO from beginning to end. We think it's the future of tape format."

Avid nonlinear editing gear is everywhere at WAMI. There are four Avid Media Composer 1000s and four Newscutters as well as an Avid MCXpress. Panasonic DVCPRO laptop editors are also used, and graphics are generated using four Mac workstations and an SGI Octane.

Creating the right look for the daily newscast known as *The Times* is essential to WAMI's strategy, according to Bolter.

"Our news is so unusual. We bring it all in prepackaged. We use a Philips Diamond Digital 30 [production switcher] with an Abekas two-channel DVEOUS and a Pinnacle Shotbox because we wanted to go with something in-market," Bolter says. "We have six cameras, all manned, including three pedestals, one hand-held, a jib and a Steadicam."

WAMI-TV

MIAMI

OWNER: USA Broadcasting

ARCHITECT: Spillis, Candella & Partners

SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR: Harris Broadcast Systems

SIZE: 25,000 sq. ft.

BUDGET: \$6 million

COMPLETION DATE: June 1998



The independent station blends in well with its South Beach neighbors.

Live audio is important, so WAMI incorporated a Gentner interface into its Wheatstone audio production console for call screening. An Enco Systems digital audio server allows for multiple access to the same audio file by the audio suite, the production control room and master control.

Bolter says that getting the technical staff familiarized with the Philips DVCPRO field cameras took some time, as they set up differently than the analog Betacam camcorders

previously used.

"The LDK 700s have a special set-up. The audio monitoring in particular can be a bit tricky," Bolter says.

WAMI could transition to DTV in two or three years, says Bolter, who explains that the station's new Harris transmitter could be easily converted to digital. WAMI's transmitter site is 18 miles away in Miramar—at the Dade-Broward county line—and is connected to the station by a redundant, two-path fiber link.

The station's staff produces up to seven hours of live programming each day.



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SPECIAL REPORT

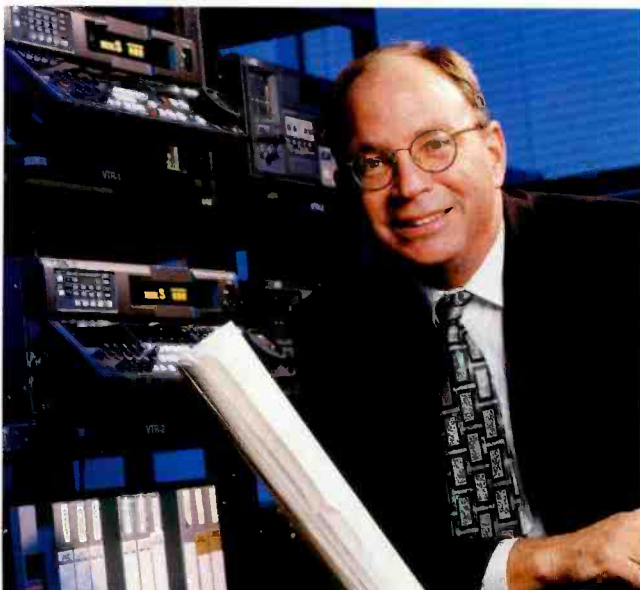
By Karen Anderson

From its new \$20 million, 25,000-square-foot facility in Fort Lee, N.J., Ethnic American Broadcasting Company (EABC), a satellite distributor of foreign-language programming, will operate 20 television and 15 radio networks. Each will have its own master control suite.

"It is future-scalable and completely digital," says Murray Klippenstein, executive vice president of EABC's SkyView division. "It allows us to produce a very high-quality product very efficiently considering the number of channels that are passing through the center."

The EABC plant is currently under construction and is scheduled for completion in summer 1999. Once finished, the all-digital facility will enable EABC to offer its international programmers "end-to-end turnkey broadcast services," Klippenstein says. Those capabilities include editing, format conver-

EABC VP of Engineering Dennis Roche says the new facility will provide international programmers turnkey services.



sion and replacement of foreign commercials with local ones.

The integration was done by The Systems Group, a firm located in Hoboken, N.J. The new facility will be based on JVC's Digital-S format with JVC cameras, VTRs and monitors. EABC Vice President of Engineering Dennis Roche

says he also considered Panasonic's DVCPRO format and Sony's BetaCam SX, but got the best deal with JVC. "It was a very good call," he says. "The company is great; the machines are great."

EABC had been using Sony analog BetaCam tape before the switch to digital. "The maintenance bills have gone down in this place like you would not believe," he adds.

Ethnic American Broadcasting Company

FORT LEE, N.J.

ARCHITECT: Hans Knutzen Associates

SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR: The Systems Group

SIZE: 25,000 sq. ft.

BUDGET: \$20 million

COMPLETION DATE: Summer 1999 (but some facilities already in use)



EABC's new all-digital facility is based on JVC's Digital-S format, with JVC tape machines, monitors and camcorders.

Because EABC receives video in a wide variety of international formats, an acquisition room was needed to process all incoming program materials into the Digital-S format.

In addition to the JVC gear, EABC will equip its facility with Leitch video servers, conversion gear and switching equipment. Post-production will consist of four on-line editing rooms and one Avid nonlinear editing suite. Each on-line room will house one Editing Technologies Corporation editor, a Snell & Wilcox Magic DaVE digital video effects editor and switcher, a Chyron Maxine single-channel character generator and a Graham-Patten-audio editor. The Avid nonlinear editing room will be used for short productions including promotional spots and interstitials.

On the transmission side, EABC will utilize a number of transport providers including Teleglobe, Orion/Intelsat and ATS-Micronet. In addition, Bell Atlantic will provide a 2.4 Gb/s digital fiber connection between the Fort Lee plant and a Brooklyn PanAmSat uplink for distribution.

Facility design was a major consideration for EABC, and with a total of 35 master control rooms, efficiency was key. The first floor will house 20 television master control suites, three production studios, and the five post-production rooms, as well as an extensive tape library. The second floor will house 15 EABC radio networks as well as employee offices.

"It was an exercise in miniaturization, says Hans Knutzen, president of the architectural firm that designed the facility. "It's tightly designed to be efficient in equipment and manpower. There are probably more channels in less space than we've ever designed before." EABC's "densely designed" facility has high ceilings and lots of glass that give it the feel of an open space, Knutzen explains.

"We are very cost-conscious," Klippenstein says. "On the other hand we want flexible functionality out of our facility." He adds that EABC plans to expand its studio space for more original production, including live events, in the "not so distant future." ■

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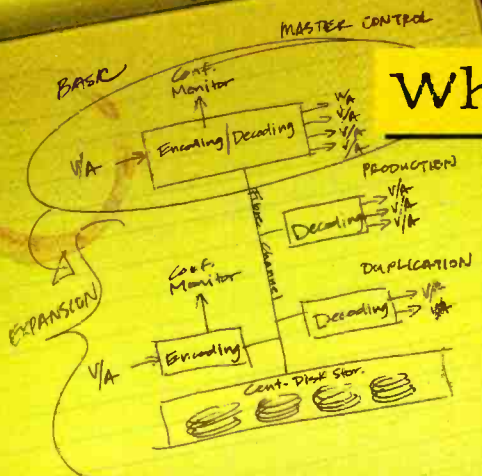
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Two-in-one digital station

SPECIAL REPORT

By Peter Brown

With 220 employees including an engineering staff of 20, WSB-TV simply outgrew its original facility, which had been used for five decades, says Gary R. Alexander, WSB's assistant director of engineering. That's why the station committed \$13 million in 1996 for Sony to build it a new digital facility to support both its ongoing NTSC service and its launch of DTV.

WSB-DT began experimental DTV broadcasts back in October 1997 and did its first HDTV broadcast in April 1998. It is now on-air full time with upconverted



WSB-TV uses a touch-screen computer designed by Vinten to switch among three robotic cameras.

NTSC content and 720p programming from ABC.

"We've stayed flexible as far as HD is concerned," says Alexander. "At this time, I think everyone is rethinking the issue of formats, and whether a multi-channel approach might be more suitable. Besides, with our NDS encoder, with a click of the mouse we can do any format we want."

While WSB-TV can be properly described as a "Sony house," which includes Sony cameras, tape decks, servers and DME 7000 production

switchers, the station's HDTV-related infrastructure currently has no Sony hardware. Panasonic monitors, D-5 VTRs and two Grass Valley Performer 10x1 switchers are used for program and quality control preview, according to Alexander. No HD routers are being used.

"We're using the Leitch Juno upconverter for our [NTSC] product for now. ABC provides two hours of HD on Sunday and Thursday night. We can time-shift our HD, and do tape-to-tape while editing with pre-shot material," Alexander says. "We have kept our monitoring costs down by adding our own 60-channel CATV system, which was provided by Cox Cable. We use it to monitor our SDTV channels."

"Our Sony DVS series routers are large and diverse," says Alexander. "The house SDI router is 192x192 [cross-points]. The AES/EBU is 192x192, and our server SDI router is 128x128. For key signals we have 32x32, and for machine control 48x48."

The routers are all based on Sony S-Bus interfaces, according to the engineer. WSB-TV continues to use its old analog Utah routers for monitoring and feeding analog tape machines, he adds.

In May, WSB-TV made its first newscast out of the facility with an all-new AvidNews newsroom computer system.

WSB-TV's production and playback scheme is built around four Sony servers. A clip server holds a low-reso-

WSB-TV/ WSB-DT

ATLANTA

OWNER: Cox Enterprises

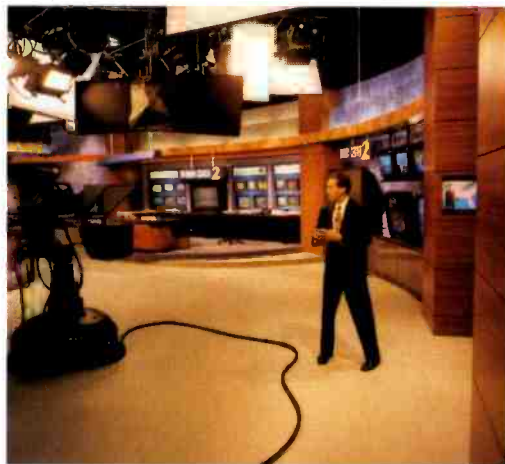
ARCHITECT: Austin Company

SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR: Sony Systems

SIZE: 200,000 sq. ft. plus 100,000 sq. ft. covered garage

BUDGET: \$13 million

COMPLETION DATE: Occupied May 1998, although work continues.



Sony camera is mounted on a robotic pedestal.

lution copy of what is on the daily server and functions as the reporter's editing workstation via Sony's ClipEdit.

"The daily server holds 70 hours of recorded material that can be manipulated by the Sony DNE-1000's [editing systems]," he says. "The on-air server holds 11 hours of material to be played out on-air, and is controlled by AvidNews. Finally, the commercial server holds 24 hours of library content and 6 hours of cache [storage] for commercial playback.

"We want to be totally nonlinear," he adds. "We're already there in production, and news is the next big project."


WSB-TV's acquisition cur-

rently takes place on Sony Betacam, but the station plans to eventually migrate to Betacam SX in both the studio and in the field. WSB-TV is already prepared to produce widescreen content for digital broadcast. Sony 550 digital studio cams with switchable 16:9 optics blocks sit atop Vinten-TSM robotic units. All of its monitors and new VTRs can handle 16:9 pictures.

"In the Cox group of stations, this is a high-profile station from the standpoint of digital," says Alexander. "We had all the Cox broadcast engineers here for a walk-through and two days of meetings [in late December]. I think that they are all kind of glad to see us on the bleeding edge."

The stations and their transmission tower are co-located.





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The all-digital TV network

SPECIAL REPORT

By Margot Suydam

After 12 fully operational months, Fox Network Center is reaping the benefits of running a totally digital network facility—for both its traditional base of affiliates broadcasting analog signals and the handful of other stations that launched digital television (DTV) broadcasts on Nov. 1.

“It’s a foregone conclusion that the world is going digital, and so that’s why we built a digital facility,” says Andrew G. Setos, Fox Television’s senior VP, broadcast operations and engineering, and executive VP of News Corp.’s Technology Group.

“What the world does, and what we do tend not to be the same, says Setos. “What’s important is that we’re like a factory, and what we manufacture is a network feed and manufacturing needs to be efficient and up to the task. Network topology and digital architecture has allowed us to get away from the inefficiencies of videotape.”

According to Setos, Fox Television’s goals for construction of the new Fox Network Center were twofold. The first was to unite Fox Broadcasting Company and 20th Century Fox, which were about 10 miles apart. Going

digital was Fox’s second aim. However, that came about only when the company felt the technology offered significant advantages.

“We had been watching various digital technologies mature,” Setos says. “But it was either unaffordable or hard to implement. Then about a year and a half ago, when we were designing the building, we pulled the trigger to make it all digital. The technology had come to a point where it was appropriate because of all the benefits.”

The benefits, according to Setos, include virtually total elimination of videotape from Fox’s network operation. “One of the weak links, for us at least, was videotape,” he says. While videotape is okay, and we use it, the price you have to pay is high. Videotape recording must be checked. Ever check a floppy disk? You don’t make checks of digital files; that is just part and parcel

Fox Network Center

LOS ANGELES

OWNER: Fox Broadcasting Co.

ARCHITECT: Fox Broadcasting Co.

SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR: National TeleConsultants

SIZE: 150,000 sq. ft.

BUDGET: \$150 million

COMPLETION DATE: January 1998



The facility houses the football studio.

of the process. Because of the technology, we’re able to make a copy of a one-hour show in 15 minutes.”

In collaboration with Tektronix and Louth, Fox developed the new digital operation with the Tektronix Profile digital file server at its core. A completely serial-digital facility, Fox Network Center’s traditional video routing and on-air switching is provided by Grass Valley equipment, including the M2100 switcher. “We worked very closely with Tektronix to define the file-server-based networked digital topology,” Setos says. “Tektronix employed Fiber Channel, which was just com-

ing into maturity, and wrote a significant amount of software that makes the file servers and Fiber Channel all look like VTRs to the Louth automation software.”

The critical link in the chain, Setos adds, is Ampex DST digital data tape, which provides near line storage and archives of what previously would have been libraries of videotape. “Our prime time shows are now files that get moved around on networks, and copied on digital data tape, which provides for speed and compactness. In two or three units the size of large laptop computers, we can store 20 hours of programming. We record that programming at four times real time.”

Setos claims the Fox Network Center is the first all digital network facility in the country. Although officially completed on Jan. 1, 1998, the facility has been outputting an analog feed of Fox’s prime time schedule to affiliates since December 1997. With the Nov. 1, 1998 launch of DTV, three Fox affiliates—Dallas, Detroit, and Philadelphia—went on-air in prime time with a digital feed.

“This is the only plant that is DTV-ready without much energy at all,” Setos asserts. “Every night there is digital television coming out of here in prime time.” ■



The project unites Fox Broadcasting Co. and 20th Century Fox in a single facility. The master control room is shown above.

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Univision's East Coast hub

SPECIAL REPORT

By Peter Brown

With low-power links to Philadelphia and Hartford as well as an antenna mounted atop the Empire State Building, WXTV is helping establish Univision's reputation as a major digital facility in the East Coast. Last year, the station created a state-of-the-art production facility in what was once a quiet office complex in Teaneck, N.J., just minutes from midtown Manhattan.

To handle the job, Univision hired systems integrator IMMAD ECVS, a subsidiary of Ontario-based AZCAR Technologies. IMMAD ECVS served as the systems integrator for EchoStar Communications' satellite uplink facility in Cheyenne, Wyo., and is currently rebuilding CNBC's Asia facility in Singapore.

Despite the company's vast experience, constructing a new TV studio complex at the Teaneck site was not without its challenges, says Louis Coppola,

senior project engineer for IMMAD ECVS. Two major problems on the project were the 12-foot-ceiling height requirement, and the number of 45-degree turns within the building, which made running the cable more difficult. By raising the floors and using exposed oval HVAC ductwork, the new home for WXTV (formerly based in Secaucus, N.J.) took shape gracefully.

WXTV has a 360 Mb/s digital infrastructure. Its signal distribution is controlled by a Grass Valley 4000 production switcher, a Philips Venus routing switcher (the 128x128 digital switcher is bridged to a 96x96 analog switcher) and a Saturn master control switcher.

An HP MediaStream digital video server is linked to a Sony LMS 500 cart machine to handle program payout for three separate market

streams. A Louth ADC-100 automation system interfaces to the HP video server and master control to handle commercial inserts for the Philadelphia LPTV site on a second playlist, says Coppola.

For production, WXTV uses Hitachi SK-2800 studio cameras atop Vinten-TSM robotic pedestals, Sony Betacam VTRs and Sony Betacam ENG camcorders.

IMMAD ECVS has also designed and rigged a new microwave Frontline ENG truck for WXTV that includes dual hop or simultaneous 2 GHz/7 GHz microwave capability. The truck is equipped for machine-to-machine editing, live switching, and fax communications.

In the newsroom, WXTV relies on an AvidNews (Basy) newsroom computer system. The station's editing staff recently began using an Avid Media Composer 1000

nonlinear editor. Graphics and DVEs consist of Scitex DVEOUS and Pinnacle Flashfile. An AccuWeather Ultra Graphics weather system handles the meteorological output.

To broadcast its signals, WXTV uses a Harris TV-120UM MSDC Klystron transmitter at the Empire State Building in New York City, while its LPTV locations in Philadelphia and Hartford use Acrodyne 1KW transmitters. ■

WXTV

TEANECK, N.J.

OWNER: Univision

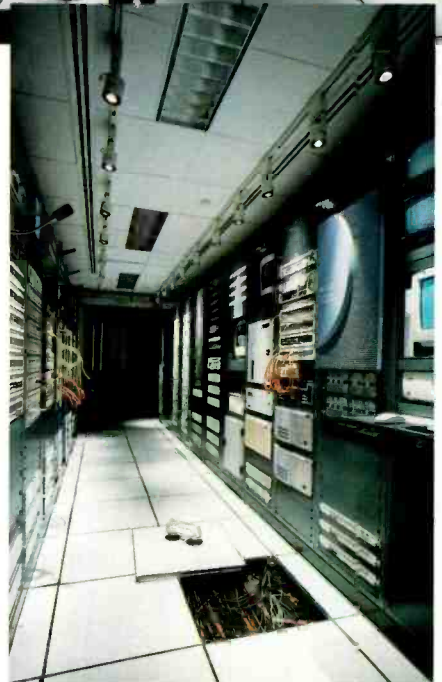
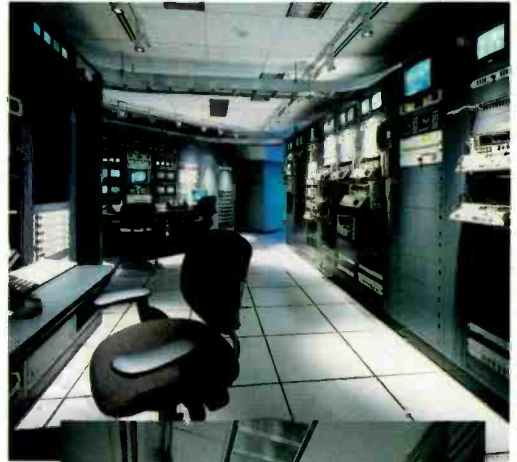
ARCHITECT: HLW International LLP

SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR: IMMAD ECVS, Boonton, N.J.

SIZE: 40,000 sq. ft.

BUDGET: N/A

COMPLETION DATE: March 1998



Raised floors in the control room allow wires and cables to be easily moved or replaced.



The facility has a 4,900-square-foot news studio and an 8,729-square-foot newsroom.



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Digital ready, but waiting

SPECIAL REPORT

By Peter Brown

Michael S. Geis became director of operations and engineering at WJXX-TV in Jacksonville, Fla., after supervising the technical planning and systems implementation at the station as a member of the Harris Broadcast Systems team. This dual-station serial digital operation, which includes a transmitter site in Brunswick, Ga., is the virtual twin of Allbritton's dual ABC stations, WJSU and WCFR, in Birmingham, Ala. Geis was also involved on the Birmingham job while

dio-to-transmitter links (STLs) to feed both its transmitter in Orange Park, Fla., which is 18 miles from the studio, and WBSG's transmitter in Brunswick, Ga., which is approximately 65 miles away. Both transmitter sites include ENG receive sites utilizing MRC microwave receivers and Pro Scan antennas with Troll Technologies controllers. Two additional ENG receive sites

WJXX-TV

JACKSONVILLE, FLA.

OWNER: Allbritton Communications

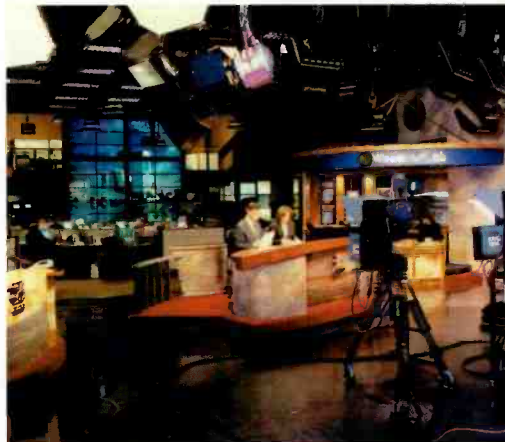
ARCHITECT: Rees Associates, Dallas

SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR: Harris Broadcast Systems

SIZE: 30,000 sq. ft.

BUDGET: N/A

COMPLETION DATE: December 1997



Allbritton's new Jacksonville station is virtually identical to its sister station in Birmingham, Ala.



WJXX-TV is capable of handling end-to-end digital, but is in no hurry to launch DTV.

working for Harris.

Geis explains that although WJXX-TV's 601 plant is ready to handle digital end-to-end, the station is in no rush to launch DTV transmission.

"We're digital-ready, but that's on the back burner," he says. "The only thing we have to do is change our cards to digital in our microwave radios."

WJXX-TV uses Dielectric transmission line and antenna and a Comark IOX Series transmitter while WBSG in Brunswick uses a Harris TV 60 UM transmitter. WJXX-TV uses two digital-ready Microwave Radio 7 GHz stu-

are in Jacksonville and one is in Brunswick.

WJXX has two Harris M1 ENG trucks and one Harris SNG truck with dual-path capability. For production, WJXX uses Philips DVCPRO tape decks, LDK-100 studio cams, LDK-700 DVCPRO camcorders and a Philips Diamond Digital DD30 32-input production switcher. A Scitex DVEOUS is used for digital video effects, while graphics are generated on Power Macs and the Chyron Max! and Maxine! systems.

In WJXX-TV's master control, Philips has supplied a Saturn master-control

switcher and Venus routing switcher. A four-channel Philips Media Pool video server handles the playback of commercials and promo spots. WJXX uses Leitch DigiBus infrastructure gear to lock incoming analog signals to digital house signals, and Leitch also supplies the house sync, video and audio distribution and master clock system.

"The digital equipment has been very solid," says Geis. "Everybody kind of worries about it, but really, it is remarkably simple and straightforward. You either have a picture or you don't. The picture quality is great.

It has been a pretty painless operation for me."

"When you enter the digital world, the analog problems go away," he adds. "For example, I can run 250 or 300 feet of wire between my feed room and my technical room with no problem. In the analog world, we would be adding equalization."

WJXX-TV'S Alamar automation system controls the Saturn switcher and the Philips Media Pool server as well as several DVCPRO machines that play to air. It also talks to the traffic system, says Geis, who adds that a software upgrade will be in place soon. ■

The master control room is equipped with a Philips Saturn switcher and a Venus routing switcher.



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Size doesn't always matter

SPECIAL REPORT

By Peter Brown

ESPNEWS, the 24-hour sports news network, has been operating out of its new digital production facility since early November. The size of the distribution infrastructure is readily apparent, though not necessarily in square footage. According to Ted Szypulski, senior systems engineer and project manager for ESPN Inc., this new digital networking system will handle 400 video sources, plus 200 dual AES streams to support not only ESPNEWS, but all future digital control rooms at ESPN.

Vistek Ltd.'s V-1663 A/D converters were selected to help overcome a major technical hurdle, says Szypulski—the timing problem that is inevitable in such a conversion-intensive environment.

“Most A/D converters introduce a 1 or 2-line insertion delay. With Vistek, we achieved a very high decoding quality, while inserting much less delay into our distribution grid. Our fall-back plan was to install lots of line synchs on all the digital sources,” Szypulski says. Another technical hurdle

was locating a 16-output distribution amplifier DA.

“We required 16 outputs for each source. And when we went looking, we found that no one made a digital model that met our specifications. So we turned to NVision,” he says. NVision developed two types of 16-output versions of the 4000 Series DAs for ESPN's application, according to Szypulski. ESPN uses re-clocking DAs for SDI video, and regenerative DAs for AES audio. Re-clocking is not needed for AES because of the relatively short distances involved and the relatively lower data rate of AES, which means it can travel longer distances without re-clocking, says Szypulski.

This ESPNEWS facility is using the Grass Valley Model 4000 production switcher, along with the Model 2100 master control switcher and Krystal digital effects. Other hardware includes a Calrec T Series

ESPNEWS

BRISTOL,
CONN.

OWNER: ESPN Inc.

SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR: National Tele-Consultants

BUDGET: N/A

SIZE: 1,000 sq. ft.

COMPLETION DATE:
November 1998



Production Control Room #9 is the nerve center for ESPNEWS.

audio-mixing console and a Datatek D2800 digital router.

“We wanted the capability to handle 360 Mb/s signals should we decide to utilize 4:1 compressed mezzanine-level HDTV signals,” Szypulski says. “ESPN will utilize a separate infrastructure for uncompressed 1.5 Gb/s HDTV.”

Production Control Room #9 serves as the nerve center for ESPNEWS operations and has a huge wall of digital video monitors.

“The standard practice is to go with analog monitors in order to avoid the added expense. But we were able to find a manufacturer [Ikegami] that could provide us with what we needed in terms of a digital option. Even the monochrome monitors have digital inputs,” says Szypulski.

For playback, ESPNEWS relies on Sony Digital Betacam tape along with some disk-based systems. The digital I/O on the Tektronix Profile, for example, is used to provide the softly focused ESPNEWS logo that is often used behind sports stat graphics.

“It is quite handy,” Szypulski says. “In order to set up for a graphics element, we key CGs, flown via Krystal over one of the two channels of the Profile that are running

in a loop, providing continuous motion stills. We also use the Profile to re-purpose segments. We just lay them off to the Profile, and go about implementing what is best described as a “wheel.” We may choose to edit previous segments of the broadcast and reuse them during slow news times. Several differently edited segments, sometimes interspersed with live segments, give these shows a fresh look.”

ESPN does not use any fully automated control system. However, Szypulski credits Ed Potter, systems engineer at ESPN, for devising an innovative solution.

“We have designed an elaborate ‘digital assistant’ for our master control operators, using a Crestron touch screen controller,” says Szypulski. “This device will send out affiliate break cues to our service providers, which allows them to sell local advertisements and return to our feed accurately. The controller also initiates the break here, beginning with the removal of the DVE effect that shows the current scores and stats on what we call the ‘Bottom Line.’ The controller sends the end-of-break cues to the affiliates and finally returns our program to the live show while reinserting the ‘Bottom Line.’”



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New HDTV 'island' in NYC

SPECIAL REPORT

By Karen Anderson

After 24 years working in facilities spread over 10 floors of an old New York hotel, employees at WNET had had it with stairs and elevators.

So when the PBS station had the chance to sell its old building and build an entirely new plant, it jumped at the opportunity. After more than a year of planning and construction, the station last month moved into an all-digital facility that occupies the same 50,000 square feet, but everything is on just two floors.

"The communications and the ability for various depart-



The Louth media workstation is used for playback-to-air and studio operations.

ments to collaborate is going to be greatly enhanced," says Ken Devine, WNET's managing director of broadcast operations and engineering.

WNET called upon New York City-based technical consulting firm VDO Limited and Northvale, N.J.-based integration firm A.F. Associates (AFA) to help with the technical design.

"The old hotel wasn't conducive to a television station,"

says AFA president Tom Kavanan. "WNET had a unique opportunity to relocate to a space that would provide them with the capability to enter the digital age and provide a work environment that would allow them growth opportunities for their station."

In creating a state-of-the-art facility, WNET spent about \$12 million on new digital equipment. "It was very advantageous for us to be able to build all in one piece," Devine says. "There is no legacy [old equipment]. Virtually everything is new."

Built on a 601 serial digital infrastructure, the technical-operations center for the new facility includes Sony's DVS-7000 digital switchers, two channels of DME-7000 multi-effects, BVE-9100 editors and Digital Betacam recording gear. Tektronix will provide routing gear throughout the plant.

While the whole broadcast world seems to be migrating toward video servers for long-form playout, WNET decided not to go that route. "I feel a lot of the archive issues and the database management is not mature enough," says Devine. Instead, a Louth automation system controls an Odetics tape-based TC-45 robotic playout system.

WNET does use Tektronix Profiles as caching servers for short-term playout, such as break material. Devine says WNET will make greater use of server technology as it

WNET

NEW YORK

OWNER: Educational Broadcasting Corp.

ARCHITECT: HLW International, New York

SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR: A.F. Associates with VDO Ltd. as technical consultants

BUDGET: \$12 million for equipment; complete digital conversion around \$30 million

COMPLETION DATE: Already broadcasting; HD portion will be completed in May 1999



WNET now occupies two floors instead of 10. Master control is shown above.

becomes mature.

The station's new facility also has plenty of post-production capability with 26 Avid Media Composer nonlinear editing rooms. Quantel Hal and Paintbox systems will handle compositing and finishing.

In addition, a 1.5 Gb/s high definition "island," which is still under construction, will give the public broadcasting station the ability to produce and edit uncompressed 1080i HDTV. The HD island is based on Sony's HDCAM format and includes a Sony HDVS-7300 switcher, HDME-7000 multi-effects, HDW-500

VTRs, and HDM-series monitors with Tally under-monitor display units. Sony's DMX-E3000 system will handle audio mixing. "It's all their latest and greatest stuff for high definition," Devine says. In addition, the WNET facility will have two Sony-equipped standard definition production and editing suites.

"We were trying to design and build a facility that would take us substantially into digital television, and we think we've done that—build a system that will survive for the next five years at least," Devine says.

In March WNET plans to use its new studio for a pledge drive to pay for the facility. ■



Avid gear is used in the audio remix room.

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AOL gets new news partner

Enter CBS News, but ABC's feelings aren't hurt

By Richard Tedesco

CBS News clearly gained some online ground with its America Online link last week, but industry observers question whether the multiyear deal will prove its ticket to the top.

Andrew Heyward, CBS News president, predicts that the AOL alliance will "very dramatically" alter CBS News' online status and vault it to No. 1 among TV news outlets online.

Nonetheless, ABC News was hardly miffed about losing AOL after a three-year partnership. A source familiar with the relationship said AOL underperformed on ABC's projections for generating traffic four-fold. Also, AOL had been a difficult partner, always demanding more promotional time.

Another headache, the source said,

was that AOL wanted ABC News to pay to be on its news "channel," a reversal of the previous pact's terms. "It is nothing ABC News is lamenting over," an ABC source said.

Bill Bass, a senior analyst at Forrester Research of Cambridge, Mass., also questioned what the deal really means.

"CBS is claiming [AOL] is paying for content, when it's an advertising deal," he said. (Meanwhile, ABC News now has a powerful portal connection through the Go Network, launched by parent company Disney, in addition to connections established with Alta Vista, GeoCities and, most recently, The Weather Channel.)

The AOL play is the latest in a series of catch-up moves by CBS, commencing with its equity stake in SportsLine as a quick route to competing with ESPN's SportsZone.

As for CBS News, it sees a prime benefit in bringing its content to a younger demographic online than what it now reaches via the television tube.

"It exposes our editors and reporters to a new audience, new potential viewers who can see what CBS can do," said Heyward, adding that the online integration will include chats with CBS News personalities.

Heyward declined to disclose specific details about the deal, saying only that it was a multiyear deal. A source familiar with the pact said its cash value was "in the millions."

Online, CBS News hasn't shown much to date, with CNN.com, ABC-News.com and MSNBC.com dominating as the Internet's biggest draws for network news.

Industry observers said CBS News also remains behind the curve technologically, producing AOL slide shows while other TV news sites stream video.

Still, CBS News becomes a more convenient destination for AOL's 15 million subscribers as its exclusive broadcast news partner, providing still-frame slide-show webcasts several times daily—essentially what ABC News did during its three years on AOL.

AOL, for its part, gets promotional plugs during CBS News shows, plus references to CBS content on AOL integrated with news stories. This segue occurs as ABC's deal with AOL concludes this month.

AOL also expects big things from its new broadcast link, according to Bob Pittman, AOL's president and COO, who said the alliance "has less to do with ABC and more to do with the possibilities we see with CBS."

Mark Mooradian, senior analyst for Jupiter Communications, sees it as a marriage of convenience.

"Each one has something that the other one wants, and television airtime is hard to get."

But "plenty of unknowns" remain, he said. The pact gives CBS yet another shortcut Web deal and AOL just the sort of pact it covets, "one that's theoretically worth millions and millions," Mooradian said. ■

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ACHIEVEMENT

Friday, January 15, 1999 is the deadline for the receipt of entries for the 58th Annual George Foster Peabody Awards. Radio and television programs broadcast in the calendar year of 1998 (January 1 to December 31) in the following categories are eligible: News, Documentary, Entertainment, Education, Programs for Children, Public Service and Individuals/Institutions/Organizations. For entry information, contact: Barry Sherman, Director, Peabody Awards, 706-542-3787 (tel.); 706-542-9273 (fax); e-mail: www.peabody.uga.edu.

The singularly prestigious Peabody Awards — administered by the University of Georgia's College of Journalism and Mass Communication — recognize distinguished achievement and meritorious public service. A universal symbol of extraordinary accomplishment, a Peabody Award is a highly coveted prize in television, radio and cable.

As part of our May 17 issue, *Broadcasting & Cable* is proud to officially present the Peabody Awards Souvenir Journal. This exclusive special section will serve as the event program at the May 17 awards gala and will also run in the May 17 issue of *Broadcasting & Cable*. A portion of your ad dollars will be donated to the Peabody Awards Fund dedicated to continued excellence in broadcasting and cable.

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CHANGING HANDS

The week's tabulation of station sales

TVS

WFXL(TV) Albany, Ga.

Price: \$15.5 million

Buyer: Waitt Broadcasting Inc., Omaha, Neb. (Norman Waitt Jr., chairman); also owns/is buying four TVs and two FMs

Seller: Wicks Broadcast Group LP, New York (WBG Management Inc., general partner; Edgar R. Berner, 41.7% owner); owns four TVs

Facilities: Ch. 31, 1,580 kw, ant. 990 ft.

Affiliation: Fox

Broker: Kalil & Co.

KYOU-TV Ottumwa, Iowa

Price: \$3 million

Buyer: Waitt Broadcasting Inc., Omaha, Neb. (see WFXL item, above)

Seller: Public Interests Broadcast Group Inc., Ottumwa (Dick Engstrom, principal); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: Ch. 15, 2.2 kw, ant. 1,200 ft.

Affiliation: Fox

Broker: Michael McHugh

COMBOS

KBMR(AM), KSSS(FM) and KXMR(AM) Bismarck, N.D.

Price: \$4.5 million

Buyer: Cumulus Media Inc., Milwaukee (Richard W. Weening, executive chairman; Lewis W. Dickey, executive vice chairman); owns/is buying 63 AMs and 144 FMs

Seller: Anderson Broadcasting Corp., Bismarck (Alvin Anderson, president); owns KQDY(FM) Bismarck

Facilities: KBMR: 1130 khz, 50 kw day; KSSS: 101.5 mhz, 100 kw, ant. 987 ft.; KXMR: 710 khz, 50 kw day

Formats: KBMR: C&W; KSSS: classic rock; KXMR: dark

Broker: Jody McCoy

WMXY(AM)-WZLG(FM) Hogansville, WCOH(AM) Newnan and WMKJ(FM) Peachtree City, all Ga.

Price: \$4.4 million

Buyer: Jacor Communications Inc., Cincinnati (Samuel Zell, chairman; Randy Michaels, CEO; Zell/Chilmark Fund LP, 30% owner; David H.

Crowl, president, Radio Division); also owns/is buying one TV, 87 AMs and 156 FMs

Seller: MetroSouth Communications LLC, City of Homes LLC and Radio LaGrange LLC, Atlanta (Michael Easterly, managing member of all); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: WMXY: 720 khz, 10 kw day; WZLG: 98.1 mhz, 14.5 kw, ant. 482 ft.; WCOH: 1400 khz, 1 kw; WMKJ: 96.7 mhz, 1 kw, ant. 545 ft.

Format: WMXY: urban contemporary; WZLG: AC; WCOH: country; WMKJ: AC;

Broker: Media Services Group Inc.

FMS

KORL(FM) Honolulu

Price: \$1.65 million

Buyer: New Wave Broadcasting LP, El Paso, Texas (William Douglas, Jon Ferrari, Charles Cohn, Kirk Warshaw and Brad Dubow, all limited partners); also owns one AM and seven FMs

Seller: Caribou Broadcasting LP, Denver (J. Kent Nichols, principal); owns one AM and three FMs

Facilities: 99.5 mhz, 100 kw, ant. -386 ft.

Format: AC

WAHY(FM) Midway, Ky.

Price: \$1.375 million for stock

Buyer: Jacor Communications Inc.,

Continues on page 108

CURTIS SQUIRE, INC.

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KDDS-AM/KQDS-FM KNLD-TV

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Kalil & Co., Inc.

3444 North Country Club Tucson, Arizona 85716 (520) 795-1050

PROPOSED STATION TRADES

By dollar volume and number of sales; does not include mergers or acquisitions involving substantial non-station assets

THIS WEEK

TVs ■ \$18,500,000 ■ 2
Combos ■ \$8,900,000 ■ 2
FMs ■ \$3,805,000 ■ 5
AMs ■ \$1,625,000 ■ 2
Total ■ \$32,830,000 ■ 11

TOTAL FOR 1998

TVs ■ \$9,003,752,610 ■ 82
Combos ■ \$2,326,186,992 ■ 272
FMs ■ \$1,024,774,894 ■ 344
AMs ■ \$582,188,700 ■ 245
Total ■ \$12,937,925,196 ■ 943

TOTAL FOR 1997

TVs ■ \$7,246,180,330 ■ 110
Combos ■ \$8,083,059,551 ■ 325
FMs ■ \$1,965,811,233 ■ 399
AMs ■ \$361,716,358 ■ 236
Total ■ \$17,631,757,472 ■ 1,070

Source: Broadcasting & Cable

RADIO

HELP WANTED MANAGEMENT

GSM. Duopoly. Top 100 southern market. Turnaround. Must be self starter and know all aspects of radio management, know billing and computers and have top sales record. Fax resume to 561-689-7415.

HELP WANTED SALES

New Business Account Executive: Terrific company (ABC), hot location, (Raleigh)/Durham) and exciting growth market (#29 and growing) = an opportunity of a lifetime for a creative New Business Specialist! Successful candidate will be responsible for generating new business at client/direct and agency levels. Computer proficiency, good negotiation skills, and strong written and verbal skills a must. Radio or television experience is required. This position will work closely with our research director so knowledge of pure and applied research is helpful. Send resume to: William Webb, General Sales Manager, P.O. Box 2009, Durham, NC 27702. No Phone Calls. EOE.

HELP WANTED NEWS

Managing Editor. WNYC. New York, NY. WNYC-FM and AM, New York's NPR stations, seeks a Managing Editor for News. WNYC operates a News-Talk AM service and a NPR News/Classical music FM station. WNYC is dramatically expanding its local news effort. The position is similar to News Director. Line news staff (10 people) all report to the ME, including reporters, newscasters, and talk show hosts. You must have proven editorial and journalism strengths to help us improve cohesiveness across all our news programming. We want someone who knows the difference between the public radio and commercial radio news, who also has strong supervisory skills. To apply, send a cover letter, resume and four professional references to: Livingston Associates, 4005 Iva Lane, Fairfax, VA 22032, or fax (703) 978-6970.

Evangelical Christian organization looking for producer/reporter to work with award winning staff on nationally syndicated financial programs. Must have demonstrated broadcast skills presenting financial, consumer and economic issues in a clear and entertaining way. Excellent writing and digging skills a must. T&R to Steve Moore, Christian Financial Concepts, 601 Broad Street, SE, Gainesville, GA 30501-3790.

HELP WANTED ATTORNEY

FCC Attorney. Miami, Florida. Telecommunications company seeks in-house FCC attorney for radio acquisitions, minimum 5 years experience. Profit sharing, stock options. Excellent opportunity. Fax (305) 371-3213.

SITUATIONS WANTED MANAGEMENT

Seeking General Manager/Sales Manager position with possible buyout interest. Experienced top biller. Turn arounds. Excellent references. Willing to relocate. Teddy 212-421-7699 or 212-888-7347.

LEASED PROGRAMMING

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TELEVISION

HELP WANTED MANAGEMENT

Operations Manager - Candidate must possess strong organizational and communication skills, successful decision making abilities and at least five years of progressively responsible broadcast creative/management experience in the areas of programming, promotion, production and/or creative services. Must possess a formal education equivalent to a college degree in Broadcast Communications, Journalism, Marketing or related field. Must be able to work effectively with many departments and provide leadership. Must pass drug screen and possess clean driving record. Equal Opportunity Employer. Resume to Human Resources; KFVS-TV, P.O. Box 100, Cape Girardeau, MO, 63702.

DC Production facility seeks an experienced Director of Production Services. Position requires someone who can aggressively grow our existing client base, and build a strong technical unit handling remote, studio production, and content origination. This person will be responsible for marketing, budgeting and operational management of the department. Successful applicant will have hands on operational, marketing and management experience. Interested applicants should send resumes to PO Box 51142, Washington, DC 20091.

HELP WANTED SALES

Traffic Coordinator. KRON-TV Channel 4, the NBC affiliate serving the San Francisco Bay Area, has an immediate opening on our Traffic team as a Traffic Coordinator. Responsibilities will include heavy client and inter-departmental contact via telephone and in person. Qualifications include a minimum of one year of experience in Traffic/Operations in a television station, radio station, or advertising agency, an ability to type 40 - 45 words per minute with a high degree of accuracy and attention to detail, excellent organizational and interpersonal skills, and an ability to handle pressure related to deadlines. CRT experience is also helpful. We are a drug-free employer that requires pre-employment drug testing and a background investigation. Send your resume no later than January 31, 1999 to KRON-TV Human Resources, P.O. Box 3412, San Francisco, CA 94119. EOE.

TV Sales. WISH-TV, a CBS affiliate in the 25th market, has an immediate opening for a *Sales Account Executive.* Applicants need 2-3 years of media sales experience with the proven ability to develop new business. Candidates must also demonstrate the ability to sell promotions, vendor programs and use qualitative research effectively. If you are interested in advancing your career, send a letter and resume to Local Sales Manager, P.O. Box 7088, Indianapolis, IN, 46207. No phone calls. M/F - Equal Opportunity Employer.



LOCAL SALES MANAGER

Experienced television sales staff looking for local sales manager to coach and mentor. Looking for organized, personable manager with a winning track record. Must have excellent follow-through skills and be willing to travel between our Flint and Saginaw sales offices. Must have four plus years broadcast sales experience with at least two years in television. Great opportunity for this talented individual. Send resume to:

**Robin Gover, Personnel
WNEM5
P.O. Box 531
Saginaw, MI 48606
EOE**



**TRIBUNE
ENTERTAINMENT**

**ACCOUNT
EXECUTIVE**

Tribune Entertainment Company has an exciting opportunity for an Account Executive in Syndication Sales. Candidate must have a minimum 5-7 years experience in Station Sales or extensive Broadcasting Sales experience and be a college graduate. Must be willing to travel regularly and work out of our New York office. Ideal candidate must have aggressive, outgoing attitude and be a self-starter. Polished presentation skills and computer literacy required. We are an EOE. Send resume to:

**Tribune Entertainment
Company
220 East 42 Street
New York, New York 10017
Attention: S Mulderrig**

You can simply fax your classified ad to
Broadcasting & Cable at (212) 206-8327.

ADVERTISING SALES

Leading international television magazine group needs top sales person to sell advertising space across multiple titles. Successful candidate will have proven track record in sales and be an aggressive self-starter and closer. Experience in ad sales or the entertainment industry required. Knowledge of international TV industry a plus. We offer a competitive salary and benefits package.

Please send resume w/salary requirements to:

Cahners Business Information
HR Dept. - BCCLS
245 West 17th Street
New York, NY 10011
Fax: 212-463-6455

New Business Account Executive: Terrific company (ABC), hot location, (Raleigh)/Durham) and exciting growth market (#29 and growing) = an opportunity of a lifetime for a creative New Business Specialist! Successful candidate will be responsible for generating new business at client/direct and agency levels. Computer proficiency, good negotiation skills, and strong written and verbal skills a must. Radio or television experience is required. This position will work closely with our research director so knowledge of pure and applied research is helpful. Send resume to: William Webb, General Sales Manager, P.O. Box 2009, Durham, NC 27702. No Phone Calls. EOE.

National Sales Manager - Brand new facility, brand new ABC affiliate in Jacksonville, Florida, is looking for a tenacious national sales animal. Responsibilities include: developing revenue and expense budgets, managing and pricing the inventory, interfacing with Petry, and calling on clients both nationally and locally. Must be promotionally oriented, ready to travel and proficient with TVScan, Scarborough, and the Enterprise System. If you have a college degree and at least 2 years NSM experience and thrive on exceeding budgets, speed your resume and cover letter to: Human Resources Director, ABC25 WJXX, 7025 A.C. Skinner Pkwy., Jacksonville, FL 32256. Fax (904) 332-2527.

Local Sales Manager - WMC-TV. Successfully motivate local sales to incremental revenue growth through tradition and non-traditional selling. Must be able to plan and execute sales strategies, projects, pricing, package and incentive programs. Must direct departmental functions: hiring, training, evaluations and prepare and submit revenue budgets for Local Sales. Please send resume to: LSM; WMC Stations; 1960 Union; Mphs, TN 38104. *Must Be Able To Pass Drug Test.*

Account Executive. KFSN-TV has an opening for a local account executive. Must have demonstrated media sales ability and proven track record with high personal and professional standards. College graduate preferred. Please send resume to: KFSN-TV, Personnel Department, 1777 G Street, Dept. BC, Fresno, CA 93706. KFSN-TV is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Business Development Specialist. Must be able to develop and sell marketing concepts to businesses in order to create new revenue for the station. Minimum three years sales experience required. Responsibilities include: achieving/overachieving budgets, ability to conceptually sell, proficiency in proposal writing, strong organizational skills, adequate computer skills and capacity to prospect creatively. Send resume or call: Anna Rice, Business Development Manager, WSOC-TV, Dept. 95, 1901 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. (704) 335-4903. EOE M/F

Broadcasting Account Executive: WITI (FOX O&O) in Milwaukee seeks a motivated, experienced sales professional with strong sales development skills to handle local agency and direct client contacts. Ability to create new revenue with station products that includes FOX and local sports (including NFL/Packers). The station has an extensive News Dept. and numerous marketing programs. 1-2 years broadcasting experience with college degree preferred. Send resume to: Human Resources, FOX 6, 9001 N. Green Bay Road, Milwaukee, WI 53209, Fax: 414-354-7491.

Promotion Writer/Producer. KPXX-TV, the CBS O&O in San Francisco has a terrific opportunity for a do it all writer/producer. If you can write copy that grabs viewers, people are jealous of your creativity, and you can make an AVID sing, we're looking for you! We've got the latest AVID toys, a talented team of producers and designers, and a view you've gotta see to believe! Must have solid experience in all phases of production, a keen understanding of Marketing and branding, and a killer tape! Send your resume and reel to Brian Blum, Marketing Director, KPXX-TV, 855 Battery Street, San Francisco, CA 94111.

HELP WANTED MARKETING



A LEITCH COMPANY
VIDEO SERVER

PRODUCT MANAGER

Burbank-based high-tech mfg. co. seeks full-time Video Server Product Manager.

Must have 4+ yrs. product mgmt. or related exp. Background in broadcast television or broadcast equipment vendor preferred. Technical and operational knowledge of both analog and digital video and digital audio signals required. Understanding of SMPTE and EBU standards, digital server technology in broadcast and product life cycle highly desired.

B.A. in communications, marketing, engineering or bus. mgmt. a +

Mail resume/salary requirements to
HR-PM, 4400 Vanowen Street,
Burbank, CA 91505.
Fax 818-842-8945 or
E-Mail to hr@ascvideo.com

HELP WANTED PROMOTION

TV Promotion Writer/Producer. Local TV station wants a highly creative, motivated team player with strong video and film production. Must have strong writing skills and at least two years experience writing and producing TV promos for news, delivering solid ads within budget. Send a reel and a resume to: Audience Promotion Manager, WCCO-TV, 90 South 11 St., Minneapolis, MN 55403. EOE M/F/H/V. No phone calls please!

WDBJ Television, the #1 station in Roanoke, Virginia and consistently one of the top CBS affiliates in the Nation, has the following position available:

PROMOTION DIRECTOR: We are looking for a strong and experienced promotion executive who likes to win and is motivated to keep the station number one. Must have significant background in promoting local news. You will have the technical tools to get the job done. This position works with and is responsible for an experienced promotion production team, talented graphic artist and part-time promotion coordinator. There is also ongoing support from the station's operations department. What we need are your supervisory skills and extensive experience in media buying, copywriting, videotape editing, office administration and ratings research. Marketing degree desired. This is an opportunity to utilize your experience and skills while growing in a stable, professional, local broadcast environment. No beginners. Send cover letter and resume to **Personnel Manager, WDBJ Television, Inc., P.O. Box 7, Roanoke, VA 24022-0007.** We do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or disability. **NO PHONE CALLS.**



A LEITCH COMPANY

NEWS EDITING
PRODUCT MANAGER

Burbank-based high-tech mfg. co. seeks full-time News Editing Product Manager

Must have 4+ yrs. exp. in broadcast news, or post production industry with an emphasis on both linear and non-linear editing. Good understanding of news org. operations needed. Strong interpersonal skills, leadership, and the ability to manage multiple projects is a must. Understanding of SMPTE and EBU standards, digital server technology in broadcast and product life cycle highly desired.

B.A. in communications, marketing, engineering or bus. mgmt. a +.

Mail resume/salary requirements to HR-NE, 4400 Vanowen Street, Burbank, CA 91505.
Fax 818-842-8945 or E-Mail to hr@ascvideo.com

Television Marketing Consultant. Do you have experience in local station, network, or syndication promotion? Can you convert research into a strategic marketing plan and develop positioning strategies that get results? Minimum qualifications include 5 -10 years' of television promotion experience, as well as experience in metered markets, strong communication and presentation skills, direct mail marketing, and a demonstrated knowledge of interactive technologies and industry trends. Work will involve travel to client locations, follow-up correspondence and phone calls, working with researchers on needs assessments, and responsibility for selling services to both clients and nonclients. Reply to Box 01482.

Television Marketing Recruitment Specialist. If you have experience inside a television station, the ability to build relationships with television stations in order to help them ascertain personnel needs, and an innate sense of matching employee skill sets to specific station environments, we are looking for you. We are a media research and consulting firm with an immediate opening for a marketing recruitment specialist. This individual will maintain and grow the country's job bank in the areas of promotion, graphics, marketing, and brand management personnel and conduct active personnel searches. Minimum qualifications include 2-3 years television experience in promotion, graphics, programming, or production; strong communication and interviewing skills; plus the ability to evaluate and critique applicant skill level from sample reels of promotional spots and advertisements. Knowledge of computer databases and Excel a plus. Prefer an undergraduate degree in marketing or related field. For confidential consideration, please send a cover letter and resume to: Box 01477.

HELP WANTED LEGAL

ATTORNEY

Leading New York City based cable company seeks corporate attorney with 3-5 years experience in television industry. Must have experience in negotiating and drafting agreements with cable operators.

We offer competitive salary and excellent benefits package. Please send your resume and cover letter, indicating salary history to: **Sky Box 1181 BC, 235 Park Avenue South, 4th Flr, New York, NY 10003.** EOE M/F/D/V.

HELP WANTED NEWS

Leading trade publication in advanced television technical market is seeking a senior writer. Previous experience writing about TV technology for a business magazine preferred. Great opportunity with expanding publication. Please send resume with salary requirements and two writing samples to:

Cahners Business Information
HR Dept. - DTW
245 West 17th Street
New York, NY 10011
Fax: 212-463-6455

SENIOR WRITER

MANAGER, ON-AIR PRODUCTION

NBC (National Broadcasting Company, Inc.), the premier broadcasting and media company, brings a rich variety of news, entertainment and sports programming to millions of homes every day. The following is a new and exciting job opportunity that is available in our Broadcast & Network Operations Division.

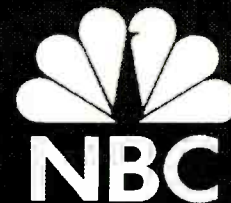
Ensure NBC Network program continuity and technical quality. Oversee the major aspects of NBC Network's day-of-air distribution of programming to its affiliates. This involves managing Skypath (satellite transmission center) and Genesis (digital broadcast command center) operations and staff, and working with related on-air scheduling and production areas. This position works with News and Sports production personnel to coordinate the distribution of News Specials and regional sporting events. The planning, modification and execution of the broadcast routine in an operationally sound manner to accommodate particular programming events or issues are required.

This position requires significant knowledge and experience in a broadcast operations and/or engineering environment. Knowledge of satellite distribution systems, digital video, broadcast routines and scheduling, network and affiliate television station operations is important. Experience in working with computer-based (NT) scheduling and broadcast control systems is helpful. The ability to effectively coordinate and communicate with others in a timely and professional manner is required. An ability to keep the overall broadcast picture in focus, while prioritizing multiple tasks is essential. This position requires the ability to work any scheduled time, including nights, weekends and holidays to support the 24x7 on-air broadcast environment.

Interested applicants should send their resume to:
National Broadcasting Co. Inc.
Employee Relations Department Attn: SZM
30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10112
or fax resume to: (212) 664-5761

No phone calls please

We regret that we will only be able to respond to those applicants in whom we have an interest.
An Equal Opportunity Employer M/F



WTVR-TV in Richmond, Virginia, a Raycom Media station, has an immediate opening for an Associate Producer. We are an EOE and qualified minorities and females are encouraged to apply. Pre-employment drug screening required. Please send resume to (no phone calls): Rob Cizek, News Director, WTVR-TV, 3301 West Broad St., Richmond, VA 23230.

WPBF Eyewitness News 25, the Hearst station in West Palm Beach is seeking a creative, energetic news professional to help manage a news team on the move. The Assistant News Director will supervise daily and long-term news coverage, oversee schedules and sweeps planning, and assist the News Director and Executive Producer in bringing out the best in all employees. The right candidate possesses excellent people skills and the drive to lead a station to the top. Applicants must have at least 5 years television news experience; management experience a plus. WPBF, a Hearst-Argyle managed station, is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Interested? Please send your resume to WPBF, Job Code 9838, 3970 RCA Blvd., Suite 7007, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410, Attn: Margaret Cronan.

WJTV Videographer. Must have minimum 2 years college/trade school w/emphasis in radio/TV or journalism. Related experience evaluated. Requires tape, minimum 2 years news videography experience and knowledge of journalistic standards as related to video presentation of story. Valid Drivers License and safe driving record. Send resume, salary history, and cover letter to HR Dept., Videographer, WJTV, 1820 TV Road, Jackson, MS 39204. EOE M/F. Pre-employment drug test required.

WPBF Eyewitness News 25 is looking for an experienced, aggressive Videographer to work in a fast-paced news environment. Applicant must have several years experience shooting, editing and operating live microwave trucks. DVC Pro and Betacam experience preferred. Person must be capable of working alone and with a reporter. 1-2 years experience necessary. WPBF, a Hearst-Argyle managed station, is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Interested? Please send a tape and resume to: WPBF, Job Code 9845, 3970 RCA Blvd, Suite 7007, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410, Attn: Margaret Cronan, News Director.

WFLA-TV in Tampa is looking for a creative, self-motivated, team playing photojournalist. We are the NBC affiliate in the 14th market, M-II shop. Photojournalist responsibilities include editing in house, operating live trucks, editing in live trucks and satellite truck, shooting and live shots from our helicopter, newsgathering, shooting on-e-man-band packages, and collaborating with reporter on stories. May require working flexible hours. Minimum 3 years experience as a news photographer. Clean driving record. Send resume and non-returnable tape (tape should include one example of each type of story: spot news, general news, feature story, in-depth sports story and photo essay), to WFLA-TV, Human Resources Dept., 905 E. Jackson St., Tampa, FL 33602. No phone calls please. WFLA-TV is an equal opportunity employer. m/f, drug free workplace with pre-employment drug screening required.

WJTV Reporter to write and perform on-air presentation of news stories. Provide direction to technical crew. Write news copy and travel to news scene to cover stories as needed. BS degree in Journalism, Communications or related field. Two years of progressively responsible experience in a television newsroom preferred. Tape required. Send resume, salary history, cover letter to HR Dept., WJTV, 1820 TV Road, Jackson, MS 39204. WJTV is an EOE. Pre-employment drug test required.

WFTX-TV, FOX News is accepting applications for the following positions: *Weekend Weather Anchor/Reporter* full-time, two years experience, college degree preferred. *Co-Anchor* for its established and award-winning newscast. Minimum five years anchor experience preferred. Accomplished reporter a plus. Send non-returnable tape and resume to: FOX WFTX-TV, Mark Pierce, 621 SW Pine Island Road, Cape Coral, FL 33991. Emmis Communications is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Assistant News Director. Second-in-Command of a large, diverse newsroom. Works with the Vice President, News to develop vision and strategies aimed at increasing ratings and upholding high journalistic standards. Involved in staff management, program formatting, show production, editorial content, cost control, station research, scheduling, community relations and general department administration. Must have a demonstrated ability to develop an effective team in a television news environment. Ability to make quick, appropriate decisions, and effectively implement them. Bachelor's degree in Journalism or related field, or equivalent experience. A minimum of five years of management experience in a large-market television newsroom. Please send resume, with salary history to: NBC5, PO Box 1780, Ft. Worth, TX 76101, Attn: Employee Relations.

Two Television Journalists needed immediately at ABC affiliate in the Marquette, Michigan DMA. We're located in Calumet, in the heart of Michigan's beautiful and historic Keweenaw Peninsula. If you love four seasons with cool summers, gorgeous falls, winters with more snow than you've ever seen before, then read on! We are a state-of-the-art station in Market #175, and do local Action 5 News mornings, noon, 6 and 11PM, and weekends at 11PM. *Reporter/Videographer:* If you are adept at digging for great stories, shooting, editing and reporting, thrive under pressure, have a great attitude and love dealing with people, we'd like to hear from you. *Anchor/Producer:* You'll prepare and deliver early morning news briefs as part of Good Morning America, handle the morning assignment desk, and produce and co-host Action 5 News at Noon. Join a team of highly dedicated people who do it all! We shoot and edit on Beta, have plenty of special effects, and look very good on the air. Entry level OK. For both positions a college degree is preferred, some experience or internship helpful but not necessary. Rush tape and detailed resume and references to WBKP Action 5 News, 1122 Calumet Avenue #5, Calumet, MI 49913. EOE M/F.

NBC 10 is looking for a frontline reporter/anchor. We just lost one of our key people. Must have strong anchoring skills, experience. If you like breaking news, field reporting and want to be part of the NBC family send Tape and Resume, ASAP to Steve Schwaid, VP of News, 10 Monument Road, Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004. Indicate position on label. No Phone Calls Please. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Television Reporter/Producer. Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation has a full-time position for a broadcast journalist, based in Lewiston, Maine. This in-depth television reporting and producing position requires considerable judgement, experience and the ability to work independently. You will produce both short and long-form programs. You must be skilled at working both in front of the camera and behind the scenes. A thorough knowledge of Maine issues and basic nonlinear editing skills are preferred. We offer a competitive salary and excellent benefits. Please send resume and VHS tape to: Human Resources Department, Box 9920-MST, Maine Public Broadcasting, 65 Texas Avenue, Bangor, Maine 04401. An Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/H/V.

Position Available. Anchor for Central Texas top 100, NBC affiliate 6 and 10pm newscasts with its female co-anchor. Related degree and 2-3 years anchor experience required. Send resume and non-returnable 1/2" VHS tape to: Box 01478 EOE.

Photographer/Editor. WHAS11, market leader, is looking for a Photographer/Editor for "Louisville Tonight Live" a weeknight Emmy award winning infotainment show. Candidate must have a minimum of three years experience at lighting, shooting and editing daily packages. Must be proficient in the use of "live" trucks. This is more than "point the camera" shooting. The person we're looking for needs to be able to visually tell a story in an interesting, informative and timely manner. Must be capable of working as a team. College degree preferred. Send cover letter, tape, and resume to: Cynthia Vaughan, Human Resources Director, Human Resources #848, WHAS11, 520 West Chestnut Street, Louisville, KY 40202. Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/D/V.

News Graphics Coordinator. The Graphics Coordinator will act as liaison between the news and graphics departments. This position is responsible for making sure all graphic needs and production are completed for all newscasts and local programming. The Graphics Coordinator will also assist in the Marketing Department in organizing and maintaining a stationwide consistent look. Prior TV production and graphics experience necessary. Must be detail oriented and be able to juggle numerous projects simultaneously. If this job sounds right for you, please send resume to: NBC5, PO Box 1780, Ft. Worth, TX 76101, Attn: Employee Relations.

Executive Producer- Good Day Philadelphia. WTXF-TV a FOX Broadcasting Station is looking for an Executive Producer for Good Day Philadelphia. The ideal candidate will be responsible for a three-hour morning news, information, and entertainment program mix from 6-9 am, Monday through Friday. This person will work with eight anchors/reporters, two producers, six writers, and large support staff. The ideal candidate should have 5 years line producer experience or small to medium market executive producer experience and a college degree. Become part of a four-person management team. For immediate consideration, qualified applicants should send resume and tape to: Human Resources Department-BC, WXTF-Fox Philadelphia, 330 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

Executive Producer - News. Qualified candidate would be responsible for the overall look and feel of all news broadcasts, including production values, pacing, teasing and writing. Editorial, creative and some operational responsibility for NBC5 newscasts. Define and maintain the editorial, format and stylistic goals of news broadcasts. General responsibility for the audio and video quality including editorial continuity and technical integrity. Collaborate with news managers in the formation and execution of program strategy, to acquire and maintain the largest possible audience. Must have a four year degree in Journalism, Communications or equivalent preferred. Significant experience as a news producer in a top 20 market. Previous television news management experience preferred. Strong journalistic, leadership, personnel management and communication skills. Must be effective with managing feedback, motivating and critiquing employees. If you feel you have the qualifications, please send resume to: NBC5, PO Box 1780, Ft. Worth, TX 76101, Attn: Employee Relations.

TV News Director: We're looking for a hands-on leader with successful background in news management. Candidate must have excellent news judgement, be able to motivate staff, and manage news budget. Send resumes to: Fred Jordan, General Manager, KBMT-TV, P.O. Box 1550, Beaumont, Texas 77704.

Do you like LIVE TV? If yes, read on. NBC 10 is looking for aggressive, creative journalists for a variety of freelance positions. Reporters, photographers, editors, producers, writers. If you enjoy fast paced, live, local TV, send tape, resume ASAP. NBC 10, the fastest growing station in Philadelphia is looking for people who want to be part of the NBC family. Send to Steve Schwaid, VP of News, 10 Monument Road, Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004. Indicate position on label. No Phone Calls Please. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Co-Anchor/Reporter. Small market, CBS affiliate, seeks a Co-Anchor/Reporter for its 6:00 pm and 10:00 pm weekly newscast. Must be able to edit video tape for broadcast. Degree and on-air experience required. Send tape and resume to Personnel Director, KLST-TV, 2800 Armstrong, San Angelo, TX 76903. EOE.

News Anchor. Looking for great communication skills and commanding presence. Primary news co-anchor to complement our established female anchor. Mid-Atlantic network affiliate on the rise, in search of this missing piece of the puzzle. Minorities encouraged to apply. Send a non-returnable tape and resume to Box 01475 EOE.

**HELP WANTED
FINANCIAL & ACCOUNTING**

Controller. Independently owned New York City Post Production facility, specializing in TV commercial editing is seeking a controller. Five to ten years experience is preferred. Responsibilities include monthly and annual general ledger accounting, budgets and forecasts, financial analysis, management of: accounts payable, receivable, payroll, general bookkeeping, disbursements, petty cash, monthly tax returns. Mac is a must, 4 year degree required, MBA preferred. Full Time. Full Benefits. 70K. Fax Resume/cover letter to: 212-886-4400.

WANT TO RESPOND TO A BROADCASTING & CABLE BLIND BOX ?
Send resume/tape to: **Box _____**
245 West 17th St., New York, New York 10011

HELP WANTED CREATIVE SERVICES

Design Director. KPIX-TV CBS O&O San Francisco. Are you an experienced pro and veteran of the news wars? Are you known for your outstanding creativity and leadership? Are you ready for the 5th market and the country's best city? Then this is your opportunity to join the best team in the business. Rush your tape and resume to: Brian Blum, Marketing Director, KPIX-TV, 855 Battery Street, San Francisco, CA 94111.

Graphic Designer. Design graphics for News and other on-air applications. Print graphics, props, set design, and animation. Must have excellent design skills. Significant desktop video graphics experience required. College degree in Graphics Design preferred. TV station experience a significant asset. Willing to work evening and/or weekends. If you feel that you have the required qualifications, please send your resume to: NBC5, PO Box 1780, Ft. Worth, TX 76101, Attn: Employee Relations.

Broadcast Designer. Major market CBS owned television station is in search of an experienced graphic designer. The Designer must be able to work in a fast pace quick turnaround environment, and be available for varying work schedules. He or she must possess a working knowledge of the following: Hal, Harriet or Express, Adobe After Effects, Photoshop and Illustrator, Chyron Infront! And Newsmaker a plus! Send letter, resume and tape of work to: Karen Dahlquist, Art Director, WCCO-TV, 90 S. 11th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55403. No phone calls please.

HELP WANTED PROGRAMMING

PROGRAMMING
OPERATIONS
SUPERVISOR

ABC7 in Los Angeles is seeking a Supervisor to oversee, coordinate and assist in planning and implementing daily programming schedules and operations. The successful candidate will interface closely with production, outside distributors, sales and technical operations. Must be well organized, computer proficient, have excellent communication skills along with an eye for detail and the ability to handle multiple tasks. Previous work experience in production and broadcasting preferred.

Please send resume to:

ABC7
Attn: Kimberly Castillo
Dept. POS-BC
4151 Prospect Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90027.
No phone calls please.



KABC LOS ANGELES
Equal opportunity employer.

You can simply fax your classified ad to

Broadcasting & Cable at (212) 206-8327.

HELP WANTED MISCELLANEOUS



As one of the fastest growing, most progressive broadcast groups in the nation, SINCLAIR COMMUNICATIONS, INC. owns and/or provides programming services or has agreements to acquire 64 stations in 42 separate markets, and owns, provides sales and programming services to, or has agreements or options to acquire 51 radio stations in 10 separate markets. Sinclair's television group will include ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, WB and UPN affiliates. As our phenomenal growth continues, we seek the one element which gives us the edge on the competition and the power to stay on top-the best people in the business. If you are a motivated team player with a successful track record, an opportunity may await you at Sinclair.

• **Baltimore-WBFF/WNUV-TV/FOX/WB Assistant Promotion Producer**

1 year on-air producing/editing experience preferred. Strong writing and conceptual skills a must. Promo logging, some public relations and event marketing coordination also involved. Degree preferred. Send resume and VHS reel. BC#239

• **Baltimore-WBFF/WNUV-TV/FOX/WB Local Sales Manager**

The top-rated WB affiliate in Baltimore seeks creative, experienced, revenue-driven sales leader. Must possess a strong background in developing new business and promotional concepts, 3-5 years at station sales manager level. Send resume. BC#240

• **Charleston, WV-WCHS/WVAH-TV/ABC/FOX News Assignment Editor**

Responsible for directing news coverage on a daily basis. Ability to work effectively with people is essential. Computer skills a must; ability to work with Newstar system a plus. If you're a first rate journalist, electronic or print, who would like to come inside from the cold, we want to hear from you. Send resume. BC#241

• **Charleston, WV-WCHS/WVAH-TV/ABC/FOX News Photographer**

Duties include shooting and editing with Beta and non-linear. Ability to operate news ENG live truck essential. One-year experience required as is a clean driving record. Ability to work all shifts essential. Ability to fly in fixed wing and chopper very helpful. College degree. Send resume and audition tape. BC#242

• **Charleston, WV-WCHS/WVAH-TV/ABC/FOX Weather Forecaster**

Immediate opening for an AM weather person. A meteorologist is strongly preferred but the winning candidate will be personable and will be able to explain, not just describe the weather. At least one year experience preferred. Send non-returnable VHS tape. BC#243

• **Kansas City-KSMO-TV/WB Account Executive**

WB62 in Kansas City is looking for a proven winner! Experience in television sales and knowledge of Nielsen ratings required. Must be a creative thinker with strong follow-through who can meet the needs of advertising prospects and sell "outside of the box" marketing concepts. Computer skills required. Send resume. BC#244

• **Kansas City-KSMO-TV/WB Research Director**

WB62 in Kansas City has an immediate opening for a Research Director with a minimum of two years broadcast research experience. Qualified candidates must possess strong computer skills and must have experience with Nielsen, Scarborough, TVScan and CMR. Send resume. BC#245

• **Tri-Cities-WEMT-TV/FOX Station Promotions Assistant**

Position requires promotion of the station and its programming utilizing contests, events, radio, cable, print and on-air advertising. Ability to design print ads a plus. Send resume. BC#246

• **Various Locations Account Executives**

Must be able to handle agency business and develop new business. Strong negotiation and communication skills, thorough knowledge of ratings/research tools and working knowledge of computers a must. Send resume. BC#247

Mail your resume in confidence immediately to:
Broadcasting & Cable, 245 W. 17th Street, NY, NY 10011, Attn: Job # _____



Sinclair is proud to be an
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER
and a DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE
WOMEN AND MINORITIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY

HELP WANTED OPERATIONS

TURNER STUDIOS
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Work with our award-winning visual effects team! Establish new concepts and procedures to improve product and client services. Heavy emphasis on facility operation. Qualified applicants have 5+ years operations management experience in a design/visual effects production company.

Tell me why you are the best.

William Chapman
Vice-President of Effects
Turner Studios
1050 Techwood Drive
Atlanta, GA 30318

HELP WANTED PRODUCTION

Successful national talk show looking for experienced east coast based producers. Please fax resume to 212-262-3731.

Sports News television (SNTV) the world's biggest television sports agency is looking to expand its NY operation and is looking for an experienced sports producer. *Responsibilities:* Produces video sports stories for SNTV's daily international satellite feeds. The position involves editing sports highlights and feature stories and writing broadcast style scripts to accompany the pictures. The work also involves a limited amount of story set up, face to face interviews and field producing. *Qualifications:* The successful candidate should have a thorough knowledge of American sports, at least three years of television news experience, preferably in sports. A demonstrated skill as a sports producer and/or camera operator is beneficial. Should be able to operate straight cuts Beta editing equipment, and exercise keen sports news judgement. The post is for a self starter who is able to work effectively without direct supervision. Must be able to work a variety of shifts including night, weekend and out of town assignments. SNTV is an equal opportunity employer/affirmative action employer. M/DF/V/D. Applications to Bill Raffo, SNTV, Suite 710, 1825 K St. NW, Washington DC 20006. Deadline: Friday, January 15th.

C-NET, a government/education cable access channel located in State College, PA, is seeking a Production Supervisor. Duties include: coordinating production schedules, training and supervising volunteer production crews, and producing event coverage programs. Candidates must have a bachelor's degree in Broadcast Production or related field and at least one year of practical production experience. Experience with access television is desirable, but not required. Salary range is low 20's, depending on qualifications, with an excellent benefits package. Send cover letter, resume, and sample VHS tape by January 22, 1999 to: James C. Rossi, Jr, C-NET Executive Director, 304 James Building, University Park, PA 16802. EOE.

Irving, TX: Christian TV production company seeks FT employee. Position requires minimum three years AVID experience. Camera and wiring skills a plus. Fax resume to 972-444-9939.

Audio Operator. WRCB-TV has an opening for an Audio Operator. This full-time position requires at least one year of audio experience. At least one year providing audio for live newscasts is preferred. Please send resume and air check of newscasts to: Doug Loveridge, WRCB-TV, 900 Whitehall Road, Chattanooga, TN 37405. WRCB is an equal opportunity employer.

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

ENG and Broadcast Personnel. ENG Field Operations with Camera and Microwave Experience. Videotape Editors. Studio Operations and Maintenance Including: 1) Technical Directors (GVG-300 switcher with Kaleidoscope) 2) Audio (mixing for live studio and news broadcasts) 3) Studio Camerapersons (studio productions and news broadcasts) 4) Chyron Operators (iNFiNiTi!) 5) Still Store Operations 6) Tape Operators (Beta) 7) Maintenance (plant systems with experience in distribution and patching) 8) Lighting Director Engineer 9) Robotic Camera Operations 10) Master Control. *For the East Coast and West Coast.* Would commence fall/winter 1998. Out-of-town applicants accepted for the positions will be reimbursed for airfare, hotel, and per diem expenses. Send resumes to: MMS, Suite 345, 847A Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017. Or Fax 212-338-0360. This employment would occur in the event of a work stoppage and would be of a temporary nature to replace striking personnel. This is not an ad for permanent employment. An Equal Opportunity Employer.

Large Television Station Group is seeking talented and highly motivated Chief Engineers, Assistant Chief Engineers, Maintenance Supervisors and Video Engineers for positions in major market stations. Qualified applicants will have experience in UHF or VHF transmitter maintenance and repair, microwave and studio equipment repair including Betacam SX and videodisk recorders. Applicants must have a good working knowledge of computers and networking solutions. Must have the ability to work in a fast pace environment and handle multiple tasks. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer and offer a competitive compensation and benefits package in an exciting entertainment environment. For consideration, please forward your resume and salary requirements to: Telemundo Network Group, LLC, Human Resources, 2290 W. 8th Ave., Hialeah, FL 33010. Fax: (305) 889-7079.

Senior Videotape Editor. The Christian Broadcasting Network, headquartered in Virginia Beach, Virginia, one of the world's largest television ministries, is seeking a seasoned client-oriented Videotape Editor. The successful candidate will possess the following qualifications: Experience with CMX, iNFiNiTi!, Grass Valley 200 and D-2 equipment and experience as a videotape editor at a major production or broadcast facility. Experience designing DVE generated effects and good computer skills a plus. Avid experience preferred. If you meet the listed criteria and share our vision and purpose, call our 24-hour line (800) 888-7894 to request an application. Resumes can be faxed to (757) 226-3899. Forward a resume tape with your completed application.

You can simply fax your classified ad to
Broadcasting & Cable at (212) 206-8327.

**Cosmos
Technology Opportunities**

Cosmos Broadcasting is updating files for persons to contact when openings occur for technology positions such as: *Chief Engineers; Assistant Chief Engineers; Maintenance Technicians; LAN Network Administrators.* If you have a short or long term interest in working for a leading broadcast group who is rapidly implementing digital technology, please send your resume via fax to: **Steve Smith, VP Engineering-Cosmos Broadcasting Corporation PO Box 19023 Greenville, SC 29602-9023 Fax: (864) 609-4420** We will consider all **qualified respondents.** Please indicate your preference of station(s) and position(s):

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| WALB-TV Albany, GA | WSFA Montgomery, AL, | WAVE-TV Louisville, KY |
| WTOL-TV Toledo, OH, | WFIE-TV Evansville, IN, | WWAY Wilmington, NC |
| WIS Columbia, SC | KAIT-TV Jonesboro, AR, | WLOX-TV Biloxi, MS |
| KGBT-TV Harlingen, TX | KPLC-TV Lake Charles, LA | |

Cosmos Broadcasting Corporation is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

ENG Maintenance Engineer: Immediate opening. Preference given to candidates with experience in Beta SP, U-Matic, and ENG/SNG equipment repair. Must have strong organizational skills and ability to maintain rigid PM program. No phone calls. Send resume to Personnel, WTVC, P.O. Box 1150, Chattanooga, TN 37401. *Equal Opportunity Employer.*

Engineer: KVDA TV 60, a Telemundo Network owned and operated station in fun and sunny south Texas, has an opening for an Engineer. Technical knowledge must include computers, ENG and studio equipment. UHF transmitter experience or SBE Certification a plus. Send resume and references to Roger Topping, Chief Engineer, KVDA TV 60, 6234 San Pedro, San Antonio, TX 78216-7208. EOE. No phone calls, please.

Technical Director for downtown Washington, DC news bureau. Must have network or major market experience. Fax resume to Mike Berry at 202-824-6469.

Assistant Chief Engineer: KVDA TV 60, a Telemundo Network owned and operated station in fun and sunny south Texas, has an opening for an Assistant Chief Engineer. Excellent opportunity for a present Assistant Chief, Maintenance Supervisor or a smaller market Chief to advance. Candidate must be proficient in project and people supervision. Technical knowledge must include UHF klystron transmitters, computers and studio equipment. Send resume and references to Roger Topping, Chief Engineer, KVDA TV 60, 6234 San Pedro, San Antonio, TX 78216-7208. EOE. No phone calls, please.

Chief Engineer: KERO-TV, the ABC affiliate in Bakersfield, CA seeking hands-on engineering manager to oversee studio, on-air and maintenance operations. UHF transmitter and studio maintenance experience necessary. Experience on DVC-Pro, AVID non-linear and video servers helpful. Resumes to Don Lundy, KERO-TV, 321 21st Street, Bakersfield, CA 93301. EOE.

CABLE

HELP WANTED SALES

**SALES ADMINISTRATION
INVENTORY MANAGER**

Fox/Liberty Networks is seeking an experienced professional who will be responsible for managing the process to provide timely and accurate inventory information to our Ad Sales Group. Responsibilities include implementing inventory monitoring procedures; ensuring that the Traffic System is updated; working with the Manager of Sales Administration to identify, collect, and input any program formats. Position is deadline intensive.

The successful candidate will have television traffic/sales administration experience; have the ability to follow through; be anticipatory by nature; have extreme attention to detail; and great flexibility.

We offer challenging career opportunities, competitive salaries and excellent benefits. For immediate consideration, please submit your resume and salary history to: **FOX/Liberty Networks, LLC, Code: (DH-SAIM), 1440 Sepulveda Blvd., Ste. 118, Los Angeles, CA 90025; fax (310) 444-8490.** Equal Opportunity Employer. No phone calls please.



FOX/LIBERTY NETWORKS, LLC

HELP WANTED PRODUCTION

Scheduling Coordinator. Home & Garden Television is seeking a Scheduling Coordinator. Candidate must have 3 years experience and thorough knowledge of the post-production process. ScheduALL software and Crystal reporting expertise is desirable. The successful candidate is a team player and strong motivator who will enjoy a fast paced environment. Ability to prioritize multi-level tasks in often-stressful situations. College degree required. We offer a comprehensive salary and benefits package. Qualified candidate: please send cover letter with salary requirements to: HGTV, Human Resources, PO Box 50970, Knoxville, TN 37950. Equal Opportunity Employer

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

Field Support Coordinator. National Cable Communications (NCC), the leading national spot cable rep, has openings in New York and Los Angeles for a field support coordinator. Position will focus on custom software and office 97 training and support. Other duties include liaison to corporate IT help desk and sales support back-up. Some travel required. Knowledge of the cable industry and training experience a must. Send/Fax/E-mail resume to: Jeanmarie (Georgiano) Makowski, NCC, 114 West 47th St., New York, NY 10036. Fax 212-730-7479; Email: jeanmarie_georgiano@spotcable.com.

HELP WANTED MANAGEMENT

The Business Affairs Office of
BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION,
a leader in music entertainment and a cable
industry pioneer is looking for a

**DIRECTOR,
CONTENT MANAGEMENT**

- Washington, DC based -

To track, log, and archive media resources. Candidates should have MLS degree plus experience archiving in the broadcast industry. Computer proficiency and knowledge of Lotus SmartSuite preferred. Competitive salary offered plus benefits package.

Interested candidates should send resume (indicate desired position) and salary history to:

Att: Human Resources-Dept. MPR
BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION
One BET Plaza/
1900 W Place, NE
Washington, DC
20018-1211



No phone calls, please
Equal Opportunity Employer - M/F

HELP WANTED NEWS

Photojournalist/Editor. 24-hour cable news station looking for a news photographer/editor. We call them "photojournalists" because we expect them to think about the story. We also want them to be able to edit. If you love telling stories with pictures, please send a non-returnable tape and resume to Director, HR, NEWSCHANNEL 8, 7600 D Boston Blvd., Springfield, VA 22153. No telephone calls. EOE.

ALLIED FIELDS**HELP WANTED INSTRUCTION**

Graduate Assistantships (3), Miami University in Mass Communication Master's degree program. The following assistantships are available: (1) work for WMUB FM, full time 24.5 kw NPR affiliate, news/talk format- position in news. (2) positions as teaching and research assistants. Stipends for 1999-2000 academic year approximately \$8,147, plus fee waiver. 3.0 GPA required. Send letter of inquiry immediately to Dr. David Sholle, Mass Communication, Williams Hall, Miami University, Oxford, OH 45056. AA/EOE. Deadline for application February 14, 1999.

Graduate Assistantships. Central Michigan University. Provide stipend and tuition remission. Deadline: February 12. See www.bca.cmich.edu for details.

Broadcast News Lecturer. University of Georgia's Department of Telecommunications, College of Journalism and Mass Communication is seeking applicants for a non-tenure-track, renewable lecturer position. The primary area will be broadcast news. Additionally, will teach in and serve as lab supervisor for a facility which includes digital newsroom. Must be familiar with non-linear editing. Qualifications: Strong background in television news. MA required. Application deadline is February 10, 1999, for August 1999 position. Send letter, vita, and a list of three references to: David Hazinski, Chair, Search Committee, Department of Telecommunications, College of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-3018, EEO/AA institution. Visit our home page at <http://www.grady.uga.edu>.

HELP WANTED SALES**Advertising Sales Opportunities**

Join the fastest growing television advertising company in the Mid-Atlantic states. The Central Region of Media Partners, the advertising arm of Adelphia Communications, is looking for a few motivated and enthusiastic people to add to its sales team. Candidates will be considered based on experience, performance and work history.

Senior Account Executive- Erie, PA: This position calls on major agency accounts in Western Pennsylvania and New York and Northeast Ohio. A high school diploma or equivalent, plus at least four years of media sales experience is required. A college degree plus major account experience is preferred. This position reports to the Erie, Pennsylvania Sales Manager and requires a goal-oriented individual who can work independently. This position carries a salary, monthly commissions, quarterly incentives and monthly automobile allowance.

Account Executive- Erie, PA; Lake County, OH; Fairview Park, OH; Lynchburg, VA; Tazwell, VA: A high school diploma or equivalent and two or more years of media sales experience is required. A college degree with sales experience preferred. Marketing or advertising knowledge of print layout, design, radio and television production. These positions carry a salary, monthly commissions, quarterly incentives and monthly automobile allowance.

Advertising Sales Coordinator- Erie, PA: This position provides administrative, clerical, traffic and billing support to the advertising sales department. A high school diploma or equivalent is required. A minimum of 2-3 years experience in a detail-oriented office environment is preferred. Computer skills in various programs such as Word Perfect, Microsoft Word, Lotus 123 are required. General clerical/secretarial skills are also required. Hourly rate based on experience.

All successful applicants must pass a drug/alcohol test, physical examination, criminal records and drivers license check. All positions include the standard Adelphia benefits package such as vacation, sick/personal time, health insurance, dental insurance, 401K, and others with most available after standard 90 day probation. Please forward resume to:

Media Partners
17 Middlebrook Avenue
Staunton, VA 24401
Fax #: (540) 886-4304
or e-mail
alunsford@adelphia.net

Applicants will be accepted through January 22, 1999 or until positions are filled. Media Partners is an equal opportunity employer.

WANT TO RESPOND TO A BROADCASTING & CABLE BLIND BOX ?

Send resume/tape to:
Box _____

245 West 17th St., New York, New York 10011

HELP WANTED PRODUCTION

Winner Communications is searching for an enthusiastic, motivated individual for a Unit Management position to be filled immediately. Responsibilities include the facilitation of network level, remote sports telecasts. Applicants must have knowledge of technical and operational procedures related to the planning of remote productions as well as on-site management of facilities and personnel. Must have excellent organizational and communications skills and have the ability to work effectively both independently and in a team setting. This position requires a self-confident individual who travels well. Candidates must be computer literate. For Consideration, fax your resume and cover letter to: Winner Communications, Attention: Director of Broadcast Operation at 918-488-6988 or send resume to 6120 S. Yale Avenue, 2nd Floor, Tulsa, 74136.

HELP WANTED FINANCIAL

Business Administrator. Feature Story, the global TV, Radio and Internet news provider for the 21st century, seeks a full-time Business Administrator to oversee the company's financial operations worldwide. Based in the company's headquarters in Washington DC, the winning candidate will run the company's business operations, oversee billing and accounting procedures, speak the language of international affairs and commerce, and become an integral part of our small, flexible, talented team. Resumes only to: Simon Marks, Chief Correspondent, Feature Story Productions. Fax: (202) 296-9205. No phone calls.

HELP WANTED NEWS

Senior Broadcast Producer/Reporter. National award winning University PR shop is looking for a newsroom pro to do broadcast media relations as part of our comprehensive communications effort. You are a write-starter who will work the phones, produce, write, shoot, and general placements! We have the tools if you have the talent! (AVID, BETACAM, ku-band uplink) BA/BS and 3 years newsroom experience required, but 10 years preferred. No calls please. Send Resumes to The University of Alabama Employment Office, PO Box 870364, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0364. Tapes will be requested of finalists. Position closes January 18th, 1999. AA/EOE.

HELP WANTED FACULTY

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Continued from page 98

Cincinnati (see WMXY(AM)-WZLG(FM), WCOH(AM) and WMKJ(FM) item, above)
Seller: Herbert Regenstreif, Lennie G. House and Vicki S. Bell House, Lexington, Ky.; no other broadcast interests
Facilities: 107.9 mhz, 3 kw, ant. 328 ft.
Format: Mainstream urban

KIOL(FM) Lamesa, Texas

Price: \$270,000
Buyer: GBE of Abilene LLC, Odessa, Texas (William Graham, managing member); also owns one AM and two FMs
Seller: Noalmark Broadcasting Corp., El Dorado, Ark. (William Nolan, principal); owns three AMs and seven FMs
Facilities: 104.7 mhz, 100 kw, ant. 800 ft.
Format: Soft hits

KRBZ(FM) Reedsport, Ore.

Price: \$260,000
Buyer: Umpqua River Broadcasting

Inc., Coquilla, Ore. (William Williamson, Connie Williamson, Linda McCormick and Matthew McCormick, all managing members); members also jointly own three FMs
Seller: Pioneer Broadcasting Co. Inc., Seattle (Richard P. Kale, CEO); no other broadcast interests
Facilities: 99.5 mhz, 6 kw, ant. 236 ft.
Format: AC

KQZZ(FM) Devils Lake, N.D.

Price: \$250,000
Buyer: Two Rivers Broadcasting Inc., Valley City, N.D. (Janice M. Ingstad, president/80% owner); also owns three AMs and five FMs
Seller: American Wireless Inc., Valley City (Robert J. Ingstad, owner). Ingstad owns 20% of buyer
Facilities: 96.7 mhz, 45 kw, ant. 512 ft.
Format: Classic rock

AMS

WCSV(AM) Crossville, Tenn.

Price: \$1.4 million
Buyer: Commonwealth Broadcasting

Corp., Glasgow, Ky. (Brereton Jones, chairman); also owns three AMs and five FMs
Seller: WCSV LLC, Crossville. (Charles Whiteaker, president); Whiteaker also owns WAEW(AM) and WXLV(FM) Crossville
Facilities: 1490 khz, 1 kw
Format: Tourist radio

WYHI(AM) Fernandina Beach, Fla.

Price: \$225,000
Buyer: RJM Communications Inc., Kalamazoo, Mich (Rickman Morrison, president); no other broadcast interests
Seller: Northeast Florida Radio Inc., Anniston, Ala. (Sylvia Hogan, principal); Hogan also owns 30.56% of wxki(FM) Moulton, Ala. and 26.66% of whog(AM) Hobson City, Ala.
Facilities: 1570 khz, .03 kw
Format: Dark

—Compiled by Alisa Holmes

DATEBOOK

MAJOR MEETINGS

- Jan. 25-28**—35th annual *National Association of Television Programming Executives* conference and exhibition. Ernest Morial Convention Center, New Orleans. Contact: (310) 453-4440
- April 19-20**—*Television Bureau of Advertising* annual marketing conference. Las Vegas Hilton Hotel, Las Vegas. Contact: (212) 486-1111
- April 19-22**—*National Association of Broadcasters* annual convention. Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas. Contact: (202) 429-5300

- May 17-20**—39th annual *Broadcast Cable Financial Management Association* conference. MGM Grand Hotel, Las Vegas. Contact: Mary Teister (847) 296-0200
- June 10-15**—*21st Montreux International Television Symposium and Technical Exhibition*, Montreux Palace, Montreux, Switzerland. Contact: (800) 348-7238
- June 13-16**—Cable '99, 48th annual *National Cable Television Association* convention and exhibition. McCormick Place, Chicago. Contact: Bobbie Boyd (202) 775-3669

JANUARY

- Jan. 20-22**—"Leadership Conference," *Women in Cable & Telecommunications* Don Cesar Beach Resort & Spa, St. Pete Beach, Fla. Contact: Sarah Bilissis, (312) 634-2337.
- Jan. 21-23**—*Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau* cable sales management school. Mission Inn, Orlando, Fla. Contact: Nancy Lagos, (212) 508-1229.
- Jan. 23-28**—12th annual *International Teleproduction Society* president's retreat and management conference. Hilton Jalousies Resort and Spa, St. Lucia, W.I. Contact: (703) 319-0800.
- Jan. 25**—*Nebraska Broadcasters Association* annual legislative reception. Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln, Neb. Contact: Dick Palmquist (402) 778-5178.
- Jan. 25-26**—*West Virginia Broadcasters Association* winter meeting and legislative reception. Charleston Marriott Town Center, Charleston, W.Va. Contact: (304) 744-2143.
- Jan. 25-28**—35th annual *National Association of Television Programming Executives* program conference and exhibition. Ernest Morial Convention Center, New Orleans. Contact:(310) 453-4440.
- Jan. 30-Feb. 2**—56th annual *National Religious Broadcasters* convention and exposition. Opryland Hotel Convention Center, Nashville. Contact:(703) 330-7000.

FEBRUARY

Feb. 2-3—*Arizona Cable Telecommunications Association* annual meeting. Phoenix Hilton Hotel,

- Phoenix. Contact: (602) 955-4122.
- Feb. 4-6**—*Eckstein, Summers & Co.* annual conference on new business development for the television industry. Don Cesar Beach Resort, St. Pete Beach, Fla. Contact: Roland Eckstein, (732) 530-1996.
- Feb. 4-7**—RAB '99, 19th annual *Radio Advertising Bureau* international conference. Hyatt Regency Hotel, Atlanta. Contact: Wayne Cornils, (800) 722-7355.
- Feb. 8-10**—16th annual *CTAM* Research Conference. Hilton San Diego Resort, San Diego. Contact: (703) 549-4200.
- Feb. 9-12**—*Milia*, the international content market for interactive media. Palais de Festivals, Cannes, France. Contact: Patrick Lynch, (212) 689-4220.
- Feb. 10**—"The Cable Presidents," *Hollywood Radio and Television Society* newsmaker luncheon. Beverly Hilton Hotel, Los Angeles. Contact:(818) 789-1182.
- Feb. 15-17**—39th annual *Broadcast Cable Financial Management Association* conference. Amelia Island, Fla. Contact:(847) 296-0200.
- Feb. 16-17**—"DBS: The Five Burning Questions," presented by *The Carmel Group*. Sheraton Gateway Hotel, Los Angeles. Contact: (831) 643-2222.
- Feb. 21-24**—21st *Monte Carlo TV Market* conference and exposition. Loews Hotel, Monte Carlo, Monaco. Contact: (201) 869-4022.
- Feb. 22-24**—*North American National Broadcasters Association* annual general meeting. The Freedom Forum, Washington. Contact: Paul Ferreira, (416) 598-9877.
- Feb. 23-24**—Great Lakes Broadcasting Confer-

- ence and Expo, presented by the *Michigan Association of Broadcasters*. Lansing Center, Lansing, Mich. Contact: (800) 968-7622.
- Feb. 24-26**—Texas Show '99, cable convention and exhibition presented by the *Texas Cable & Telecommunications Association*. San Antonio Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas. Contact: (512) 474-2082.

MARCH

- March 3-5**—*CTAM* digital and pay-per-view conference. New Orleans Marriott Hotel, New Orleans. Contact: (703) 549-4200.
- March 4**—*Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau* 17th annual Cable Advertising Conference. New York Marriott Marquis, New York City. Contact: (212) 508-1214.
- March 10-13**—30th annual Country Radio Seminar, presented by *Country Radio Broadcasters Inc.* Nashville Convention Center, Nashville. Contact: (615) 327-4487.
- March 15-17**—*North Central Cable Television Association* annual convention and trade show. Hyatt Regency Hotel, Minneapolis. Contact: Karen Stamos, (651) 641-0268.
- March 18**—15th annual *National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters* Communications Awards Dinner. Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington. Contact: (202) 463-8970.
- March 22-25**—*SPORTELamerica* TVMarket conference and exposition. Miami Beach, Fla. Contact: (201) 869-4022.

—Compiled by Nolan Marchand

Tek's prexy in turnaround mode

Tim Thorsteinson hasn't had it easy since taking over Tektronix's Video and Networking Division in August 1997. Sales have continued to lag in a soft broadcast market, leading to heavy layoffs and the folding of Tektronix's Lightworks nonlinear editing unit this past fall. Now, Thorsteinson is seeking to revitalize the Grass Valley unit, while pushing such growth areas as the Profile video servers and the new VideoTele.com unit, aimed primarily at non-broadcast markets.

"I'm really focused on turning the business around, and I think I've got a team of people that feel the same way," says Thorsteinson, 45. "It's a great business; there's no reason it can't be a success."

The way Thorsteinson sees it, Tektronix video-and-networking problems have stemmed in large part from a lack of focus. So he has cut out businesses in which he doesn't think Tektronix belongs, such as nonlinear editing and systems integration, and homed in on the division's core competencies in routing and switching, video servers, and networking. At the same time, he is investing heavily in Tektronix VND's research and engineering in order to come up with a steady flow of new products.

"We've increased the engineering budget," notes Thorsteinson. "I've always had that belief—cut all you want, but you've got to have new products."

New product flow has been a long-term stumbling block for Tek's Grass Valley unit. Its high-definition products shown at the National Association of Broadcasters convention last year were the "first fundamental new products introduced in a couple years," Thorsteinson says. NAB '99 should be a big one for Grass Valley, with several new routers and switchers. There will also be new Profile video-server offerings.

Thorsteinson isn't hanging Tek's hopes on DTV sales; instead, it's on the overall conversion of broadcast plants from analog to digital. In that vein, he says Tek's partnership with Avid Technology to pursue the digital newsroom market is going well.

Product innovator is just one more role played by Thorsteinson, a corporate jack-of-all-trades with broad-based experience in training, human resources, operations, and sales. After playing college football (both quarterback and wide receiver) and



"...cut all you want, but you've got to have new products."

Timothy Edward Thorsteinson

President, Tektronix Video and Networking Division, Beaverton, Ore.; b. Dec. 6, 1953, Sacramento, Calif.; B.A., psychology, University of Pacific, Stockton, Calif., 1976; National Semiconductor, Santa Clara, Calif.: manager of fabrication training, 1979-80, and director of productivity and quality improvement, 1980-85; Semiconductor Group of National Semiconductor: director of human resources, 1985-88, director of international human resources, 1988-89, and director of total quality, 1989-91; vice president, human resources and total quality, Tektronix, Inc., Wilsonville, Ore., 1991-95; president, Tektronix Pacific Operations, Hong Kong, 1995-97; current position since August 1997; m. Kimberly Emerson, June 6, 1998

doing graduate work in psychology, the California native took his first job as a trainer at National Semiconductor in Santa Clara, where he used his sports background to shape teams of new hires into semiconductor fabricators. That led to a position in improving National Semiconductor's quality and productivity. Thorsteinson would visit all 25 National Semiconductor locations every 90 days and also call on big customers such as AT&T. "It gave me exposure to lots of different operations," he remarks.

Thorsteinson was quite successful in improving National Semiconductor's corporate quality, winning Singapore's Gold Medal (the equivalent of the U.S.'s Malcolm Baldrige award for quality). He left to join Tek in 1991 to oversee both total quality and human resources.

"When I came to Tek, it gave me the opportunity to work for a CEO [Jerome Meyer] that was trying to turn a company around," says Thorsteinson. "The idea was to come into the HR job and move into an operations role within the first 24 months. We pretty much restocked the entire management team at the time."

Thorsteinson also oversaw Tek's huge layoffs in 1993. He had dealt with layoffs before while at National Semiconductor, which experienced such business fluctuations in the 1980s that it hired 3,000 workers one year, then laid off 2,000 the next.

"I've been on both ends of that," says Thorsteinson. "Anytime you have layoffs, you introduce a variable into the culture that takes a year or year-and-a-half to overcome."

After serving in a human resources/total quality role for four years, Thorsteinson took over Tek's Pacific Operations in 1995 and grew the business substantially, with orders up 24% in fiscal 1997. That success led to the VND post when then-president Lucie Fjeldstad departed in 1997.

Thorsteinson hasn't been surprised by the rough road he's traveled in his first 16 months on the job. He became well aware of VND's difficulties when serving in his Pacific post, which was primarily a sales position. "I was on the receiving end of products that didn't come," he remarks.

Heading into 1999, Thorsteinson says morale is on the upswing at Tek VND. As proof, he notes that the company hasn't lost an engineer in six months.

—Glen Dickson

BROADCAST TV



Mooser

K. Ashley Mooser, manager, broadcast business development and technology promotion, Silicon Graphics, Mountain View, Calif., joins BBC Worldwide Americas there as director, business development.



Maranon-Cancela

Appointments, Telemundo Network, Los Angeles: **Lizette Maranon-Cancela**, VP, media resources, Cruz/Kravetz, Los Angeles, joins as VP, marketing and advertising; **Susan Solano**, senior

director, programming, Hialeah, Fla., named VP, East Coast marketing; **Teri Thompson**, director, creative services, Fox Sports, Los Angeles, joins as VP, on-air promotions.

Appointments, WTVZ-TV Norfolk, Va.: **Sandra Yost**, VP/station manager, named president/general manager; **Marge Nelowet**, general sales manager, named co-manager of local/national sales; **Bill Mantos**, regional account executive, named co-manager of local/national sales;

John Rezabeck, general sales manager, WVBT(TV) Virginia Beach, Va., joins as account executive.

H. Joseph Lewin, president, Russian broadcasting, StoryFirst Communications, Moscow, joins WHTM-TV Harrisburg, Pa., as general manager.

Ashok P. Pakiam, senior research analyst, Blair Television, New York, joins Fox Television Sales there as manager, group research.

Pat Bodet, production manager, KMOL-TV San Antonio, Texas, named director, production and outreach.

Leo Demers, president, Demers Broadcast Consultants, Hudson, N.H., rejoins WGBH-TV Boston as director, engineering, production services.

Exiting Ga. Gov. **Zell Miller** joins Gray Communications Systems, Atlanta, as member, board of directors.

Mary Carole McDonnell, VP, programming and marketing, Argyle Television, Los Angeles, joins Raycom Media, Montgomery, Ala., as VP, programming.



Oberg

Tom Oberg, local sales manager, KWBP-TV Portland, Ore., named general sales manager.

Peggy Madigan, general sales manager, WNEM-TV Saginaw, Mich., joins WJXT-TV Jacksonville, Fla., in same capacity.

Appointments, KFXA-TV Cedar Rapids, Iowa: **Kelly D. Acton**, local sales manager, named general sales manager; **Edward Baugh**, account executive, named national sales manager.

PROGRAMMING

Sioban Oldham Cummins, manager, development, Tribune Entertainment Co., Los Angeles, named director.

JOURNALISM

Peter Giddings, chief meteorologist, WGO-TV San Francisco, joins KOLO-TV Reno, Nevada, in same capacity.

Michael Dreaden, news director, WGNX-TV Atlanta, joins WSB-TV there as managing editor.

Helen Chickering, health reporter, WBTV(TV) Charlotte, N.C., joins the NBC NewsChannel there in same capacity.

RADIO

Dave Dillon, VP, programming, Capstar Broadcasting Corp., Houston, joins Journal Broadcast Group, Milwaukee, as VP, radio programming.

Dick Taylor, general manager, Delmarva Broadcasting Co., Ocean City, Md., joins Connoisseur Radio Center, Waterloo, Iowa, in same capacity.

Alan Prater, sales manager, KGNC(AM) Amarillo, Texas, joins Gulfstar Communications there as sales director, Amarillo group.

Brian Check, station manager, WAEB(AM/FM) Allentown, Pa., named regional programmer of parent company Atlantic Star Communications.

CABLE



Abernethy

Jack Abernethy, VP, finance and administration, Fox News, New York, named senior VP/chief financial officer.

Howard Sherman, director, production and strategic planning, creative services, Showtime

Networks, New York, named VP, production, creative/marketing services.

Ibis Kaba, account manager, HBO, Dallas, named 1998 winner of the Brad

Personnel changes at Warner Bros.

Jim Moloshok, senior VP, corporate marketing and advertising, Warner Bros., Burbank, Calif., has been named to the newly created position of president, Warner Bros. Online. Under Moloshok's leadership, Warner Bros. Online has launched a number of



Garofolo

online projects, including the official *Seinfeld* companion site and *The People's Court* Online, which was the first TV show site that allowed viewers to participate live via the Internet. He will be succeeded by Yelena Garofolo, VP, corporate marketing and advertising, Warner Bros. In her new position, Garofolo will oversee the marketing efforts for Warner Bros. Domestic Television Distribution and Telepictures Distribution. She has been with the company since 1988.



Moloshok

OPEN MIKE

NATPE wants more expansive view

EDITOR: I found the article in the Jan. 4 issue of your publication on the upcoming NATPE Conference to be unbalanced and sorely lacking in understanding the essence of NATPE's evolution.

As the largest content conference and truly the only international gathering of buyers and sellers of its kind, NATPE is continually evolving to reflect the needs of an ever-changing marketplace.

While we place great value on the station community, we also recognize that for NATPE to truly serve its growing membership through extensive outreach and educational programs, we needed to make the annual conference more diverse and more compelling for exhibitors and content buyers alike.

Although syndicators and the domestic stations are the foundation upon which NATPE was built, our goal is to constantly broaden our outreach to create new revenue opportunities for those who attend the conference. This initiative is best exemplified in the dramatic growth of our international constituency and growing participation from representatives from the worlds of new media, advertising and finance.

We hope that in the future, *BROADCASTING & CABLE* will take a less narrow and more expansive view of NATPE's relevance to industry professionals from around the world.—Bruce Johansen, president/CEO, NATPE, Santa Monica, Calif.

Wojocoski Memorial Award. The award recognizes the cable industry employee or company that has contributed most significantly to the fight against AIDS in his or her community. Kaba is an active AIDS speaker and serves on several AIDS-related organization boards.



Kaplan

Dena Kaplan, VP, sales strategy and communications, Game Show Network, Culver City, Calif., named senior VP, marketing.

ADVERTISING/MARKETING/ PUBLIC RELATIONS

Lee Rudnick, director, DBI Media, New York, named president.



Spector

Neal Spector, creative director, Foote Cone & Belding, Los Angeles, joins Creative Domain there as VP/associate creative director.

Robert McCoy, director, licensing, TLA/CONSOR, La Jolla, Calif., joins Pittard Sullivan,

Culver City, Calif., as VP, licensing and merchandising services division.

Dorothy Smith, director, administrative services, David Burnap Agency, Dayton, Ohio, named VP.

Michael Barnett, director, CBS Promotions Group, New York, joins Chancellor Marketing Group there as

senior VP of national sales.

DEATHS



Iron Eyes Cody

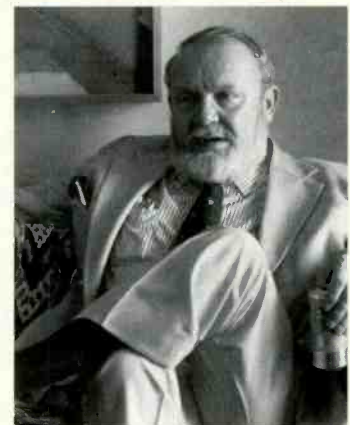
Iron Eyes Cody, actor, died Jan. 4 of natural causes. He was believed to be in his 80s or 90s. Cody was best known as the "Crying Indian" in the 1970s Keep America Beautiful ads, which showed

him shedding a single tear over the sight of a litter-filled landscape. He spent the next 25 years promoting the public service announcements in public appearances and in schools. Born in Oklahoma circa 1907, Cody followed his Cherokee father, Thomas Long Plume, as a performer in circuses and Wild West shows and made his first film appearance as an extra in the 1919 film *Back to God's Country*. He went on to appear in 80 other films such as *Sitting Bull*, *The Great Sioux Massacre* and *Ernest Goes to Camp*. Cody also served as a technical adviser on Indian matters in films. His television credits include guest appearances on *Bonanza*, *Gunsmoke* and *Rawhide*. He is survived by a son and three grandchildren.

—Compiled by Mara Reinstein
mreinstein@cahners.com

Howard Head dead at 79

Howard Head, 79, former chairman of consulting engineering firm A.D. Ring & Associates, Washington, died of a heart attack Dec. 29 at Roberts Health Center in North Kingstown, R.I. He had Parkinson's disease. As a self-described "midwife" to the broadcasting industry in a broadcast engineering career that began in the 1940s, Head saw his mission as closing the gap between the engineer and the rest of society. "Political decisions are made by people who really don't understand technology," he said in 1978. "The technician crawls into his shell and is almost afraid even to vote. We have to do something to reverse that." Head took an active interest in broadcast politics, particularly spectrum allocation issues at home and abroad. After a stint at RCA Labs in the early 1940s and a hitch in the Signal Corps lab during World War II, Head joined A.D. Ring in 1945. He was named a partner in 1953, managing partner in 1969 and chairman in 1984 when the company incorporated. He retired in July 1986. Head is survived by two sons and two daughters.



—John Eggerton

Worldvision Enterprises has cleared its third-year court series *Judge Judy* in 74% of the country and freshman court show *Judge Joe* in more than 70% of the nation for the 1999-2000 broadcast season. The Spelling Entertainment-owned distributor has also cleared sitcom *Mo'isha* in more than 65% of the country for a fall 2000 launch.

Telepictures Distribution has cleared its new talk show for the fall, *Latifah*, in more than 70% of the country. The Queen Latifah-hosted, single-issue talker has been licensed on 65 stations, including 11 Fox owned-and-operated stations.

Tribune Entertainment has cleared its new action-hour *BeastMaster: The Legend Continues* in 65 markets, representing 60% of the country for next fall. The syndicator has also cleared its talker *Richard Simmons' Dream Maker* in 58 markets covering 55% of the nation. Both shows are cleared on all 18 Tribune Broadcasting stations, including New York, Los Angeles and Chicago.

Turner Broadcasting System has acquired the network broadcast window rights to several films from Warner Bros.—the recently released *You've Got Mail*, *Jack Frost*, and *Why Do*

Fools Fall in Love. Turner will share broadcast rights to *You've Got Mail* with CBS in a deal that gives TNT broadcast premiere rights to the film. CBS's broadcast rights kick in after the film debuts on TNT, which at the earliest will be in the year 2000. Turner and CBS will share the rights fees to the movie, with Turner's share estimated at about 10% of the film's box office gross and CBS's at about half that.

Laurie Rhodes has been named vice president of programming at Paramount Domestic Television. Rhodes will oversee daily production of Paramount's daytime talk show *The Montel Williams Show* and will serve as the East Coast programming executive for Paramount Domestic Television. Rhodes was previously executive director of programming and production at Paramount Domestic Television.

Cable industry officials last week said they are ahead of the government-imposed schedule for separating the channel-surfing and security functions of digital set-top boxes. "Even at this early date, orders for over 200,000 digital security modules have been placed by cable companies," Cable Television Laboratories and eight MSOs told the FCC. To encourage a retail market for set-top boxes, the agency

last June said cable systems will be prohibited from offering channel-surfing equipment to subscribers beginning July 2000. Cable Labs said it has met the December 1998 deadline for developing specifications for digital security modules. Ahead of the government's timetable, the group has also developed the interface that will allow the security modules to connect with channel-surfing equipment sold by retailers.

Third quarter 1998 broadcast TV advertising sales were up 2.7% to \$7.693 billion, according to estimates compiled by Competitive Media Reports and released by the Television Bureau of Advertising yesterday. For the first nine months, broadcast TV was up 7.8% to \$24.68 billion. National spot and local TV combined for the third quarter totaled \$3.74 billion, up 0.8%, and depressed significantly by the General Motors strike last summer. TVB said that breakouts for local and spot were not available because of some changes in CMR's product category classifications, including shifts of some categories from local to national spot. The nine-month figure for combined local and spot is \$11.15 billion, up 6.5%. Network TV (ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, WB, UPN and for the third quarter, Pax-TV) ad sales were up 4.7% for the quarter to

\$3.30 billion, and up 8.7% for the first nine months to \$11.56 billion. Syndication was up 4.7% in the third quarter to \$638 million, and up 9% for the first nine months to \$1.95 billion.

Sony Online spins out two new interactive versions of its online *Jeopardy!* game, *Jeopardy! 2001* and *Sports Jeopardy!* to expand its popular multi-player experience. PC users will be able to access both the high-tech *Jeopardy! 2001* and the sports trivia game on Sony's Station Website. The planned debut of the new sports game is slated for the first week in February, when the NBA will be back in action. Sony says *Jeopardy!* is already the most popular game online, with 750,000 games played weekly on The Station, which claims 2.3 million registered users.

Rep. Richard Burr (R-N.C.) last week reintroduced his bill that permits direct broadcast satellite companies to retransmit local TV signals into local markets but requires DBS companies to carry all the local signals in any market they choose to serve. Burr is working with Local TV on Satellite, a subsidiary of Capitol Broadcasting of Raleigh, N.C., which wants to build a satellite system that would uplink all the local broadcast signals in the nation and then resell them to DBS providers.

Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.) plans to reintroduce a bill that would freeze cable rates until Congress could rewrite cable policy, DeFazio aide Jessica Zufolo said. Besides placing a moratorium on cable rate hikes, the bill would require the

Teen suspects blame 'Springer'

Two Florida teen-age boys say an episode of Studios USA's *The Jerry Springer Show* gave them the idea to molest their 8-year-old half sister, according to Hollywood, Fla., police reports. The 13- and 15-year-old boys were arrested in early December in Florida and charged with sexual battery and lewd and lascivious acts. Police say the older boy confessed to having sex with the girl, whose disclosures to a teacher led to the arrests. A *Springer* spokeswoman said, "We have never had a show that is even remotely close to this situation, and, unfortunately, there are situations in the world for which we are blamed."

FCC to submit a report within six months of enactment that examines the rise of cable rates since Oct. 1, 1992. It also would include a provision, borrowed from Rep. Ed Markey (D-Mass.), that would postpone deregulation of cable's upper programming tiers past the March 31 expiration date included in the 1996 Telecommunications Act.

Democrats on the House Commerce Committee are protesting the ratio of Democrats to Republicans on the panel. "We do not have the proper representation on this committee to which we are entitled," said ranking minority member John Dingell of Michigan. There are 29 Republicans to 24 Democrats on the committee. At 54.72%, the ratio is 3.45% higher than the 51.26% ratio of 223 Republicans to 211 Democrats in the entire House. The difference is the highest in favor of the majority in 50 years. Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) asked committee chairman Tom Bliley (R-Va.) to take the matter to new Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.). Bliley agreed to talk to Hastert, but the committee voted along party lines to leave it as proposed.

The FCC last week said TV stations have until Feb. 10 to begin electronic filing of their annual children's programming reports. Mandatory electronic filing was previously scheduled to begin Jan. 10.

HDTV blooms at Rose Parade

Los Angeles WB affiliate KTLA(TV) kicked off this new year with a 1080i HDTV local broadcast of the Tournament of Roses Parade on Jan. 1 using Sony equipment on board National Mobile Television's HD-2 production truck. Frank Geraty, operations director, engineering and broadcasting, KTLA, said the Parade's colorful floats offered the station the perfect venue to show viewers HDTV's picture clarity and color sharpness. "Some floats were made of apples, and when you saw it in high def, you saw each apple and each stem," he said. While technical uncertainties and financial woes surrounding HDTV have caused broadcasters many headaches, the broadcast renewed Geraty's love for the business. "In the moment we dissolved from the 4:3 pre-show to the 16:9 main parade broadcast, the culmination of all the preparation and work was a reminder of why I got into the business in the first place." —Karen Anderson



Attorneys challenging CBS's acquisition of wwj-tv in Detroit said last week that the network is running a "pirate" television station and asked the FCC to shut down the operation. CBS has continued to operate wwj-tv even though an appeals court in Washington last August ordered the FCC to revisit its dismissal of a challenge to CBS's acquisition of wwj-tv. Alexander Serafyn asked the FCC to block a transfer of the station's license to CBS on the grounds the network intentionally distorted the news in a 1994 segment about the Ukraine. Serafyn charged that *60 Minutes* unfairly portrayed Ukrainians as anti-Semitic. The FCC dismissed his petition without a hearing, but the court ruled that the commission did not adequately explain its decision.

CBS was the top-rated network in total viewers and households at

the end of its regular season NFL coverage. CBS averaged 10.3 rating/24 share for the NFL's 17-week regular season, according to Nielsen Media Research.

TCI Communications and Time Warner say they are creating a cable operations partnership in Texas with slightly more than 1 million subscribers. The 50/50 joint venture, which Time Warner will manage, includes TCI's Houston and southern Texas systems and Time Warner's Houston, El Paso and southern Texas systems. Creation of the joint venture permits TCI and Time Warner each to move about \$640 million in debt off their respective balance sheets into the venture. The deal is part of a sweeping restructuring of cable operations that TCI President Leo Hindery has engineered since joining TCI nearly two years ago.

Broadwave Communications on Friday asked the FCC for permission to launch a terrestrial-based video and data system on the same spectrum used by digital broadcast satellite providers.

"We're seeking to create a new video network that will compete head-to-head with cable," said Sofia Collier, president of Broadwave. She said the company also should have a big edge of DBS companies because it can offer local broadcast signals. Collier said she hopes to reach agreements with local stations to transmit Broadwave signals over conventional television towers. She predicted that the company would be able to offer a 96-channel service for \$17.95 monthly. Broadwave's system was developed by Northpoint Technology, which Collier also heads. A demonstration of the technology is under way in Austin, Texas.

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Digital II

The second generation of digital television sets occupied Las Vegas's convention center last week at the Consumer Electronics Show. The occasion was less instructive for technological advancements than for emphasizing the inexorable progress of a medium that has yet to sell its first 20,000 sets.

The real news was off the convention floor, where the visionary acuity was at least 1080. Howard Stringer, the chairman and chief executive of Sony Corporation of America, and John Chambers, president and CEO of Cisco Systems, described the home and office of the future with television and the Internet at the hub of electronic control centers. Indeed, the distinction between those two media seems destined to blur. Said still another CES panelist last week: "Investors are trading the Internet as though it were the next generation of television." The present generation may want to give that some thought.

Stringer emphasized that digital would be a consumer-driven enterprise, still another concept echoed around the convention halls. If there was a consensus, it was that the viewer-customer would call the shots regarding programming in the digital age, and that commerce would be the driving force in organizing the market. What all these markets need at the moment are common standards and interoperability that will effect a national digital grid. To hear them tell it, television as we know it may be a secondary factor in this future shock.

Stringer, whose company is one of the world's technology leaders, emphasized the need to make technology user-friendly in the digital environment—an effect that will require extensive cooperation across companies and industries that is often difficult to come by. He stressed the importance of HAVI—that is, Home Audio-Video Interop-

erability—in avoiding consumer gridlock among all the new systems.

As for the digital television technology, most of the action appeared to be going on behind the scenes as manufacturers retool their product with firewires and set-top boxes for a second run at the market this Christmas. So too with broadcasters, who are fine tuning their own strategies to match the new millennium. One thing is clear. Digital television will be a medium of many players, many motives and many disciplines. It will not be for the faint-hearted.

Good news, bad news

The Project for Excellence in Journalism's study on local TV news gave us the encouraging conclusions that a high quality newscast can be successful and that—contrary to other reports' findings—local news generally is not overrun by sensational stories. It also gave us the less encouraging finding that a low-quality broadcast can also pull viewers.

Of course, we suspect that few involved in producing the newscasts ranked as poor would agree with the study's conclusions. And some are adamant that the work they do is of high quality and responsive to their communities.

We wonder if there can ever be an industry consensus on what makes a good newscast. Certainly the number of approaches—and the number of consultants—suggests not. The Project for Excellence offers compelling criteria, looking at the range of topics, focus, level of enterprise, local relevance, balance and sourcing. But we suspect that even the most objective criteria include some degree of subjectivity. And while we agree with the Project for Excellence that there are surely some values that are universal, we also agree with Radio-Television News Directors Association President Barbara Cochran that perhaps the greatest contribution of such a discussion is the discussion itself.

New York 245 West 17th Street, 10011; 212-645-0067; Fax 212-337-7028

Harry A. Jessell, *editor*

Stephen McClellan, John M. Higgins, *deputy editors*
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Nolan Marchand, *assistant editor*

Ed Reynolds, *assistant art director*

Mara Reinstein, *editorial assistant*

Washington 1705 DeSales Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-463-3700 Editorial Fax: 202-429-0651

John S. Eggerton, *assistant managing editor, bureau chief*

Dan Trigoboff, *senior editor*

Elizabeth A. Rathbun, *assistant editor*

Paige Albinlak, Bill McConnell, *staff writers*

Alisa Holmes, *Web production manager*

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213-549-4100; Fax 213-937-4240

Michael Stroud, *bureau chief*

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Denver 28310 Pine Dr., Evergreen, CO 80439;

303-670-4124; Fax 303-670-1082

Price Colman, *bureau chief*

Broadcasting & Cable

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Circulation Inquiries

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International Group

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Randi T. Schatz, *associate publisher*

212-337-6944; Fax 212-337-6948

Julie DesRoberts, *US sales manager*

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London, Broadcasting & Cable (Editorial)

6 Bell Yard London WC2A 1EJ England;

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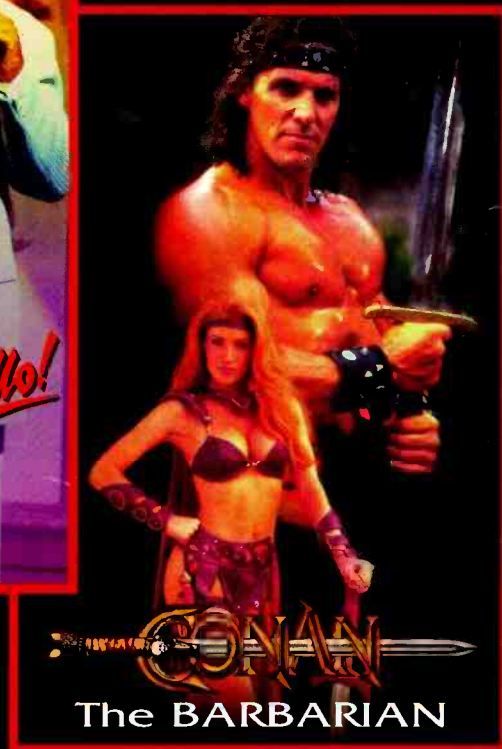
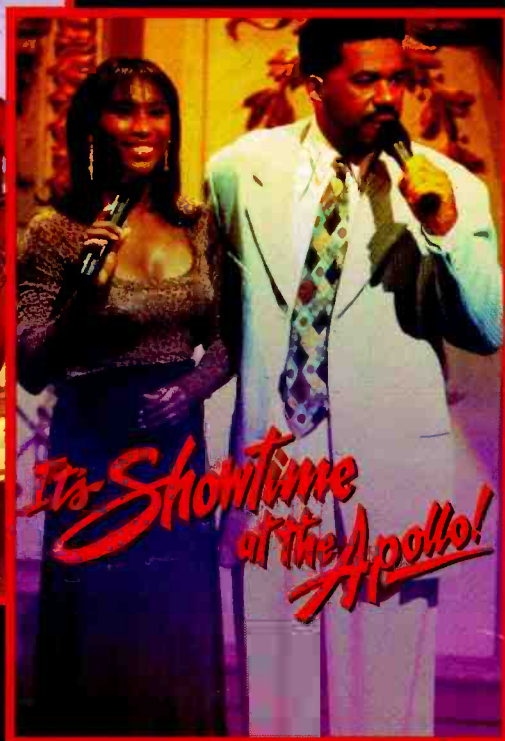
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