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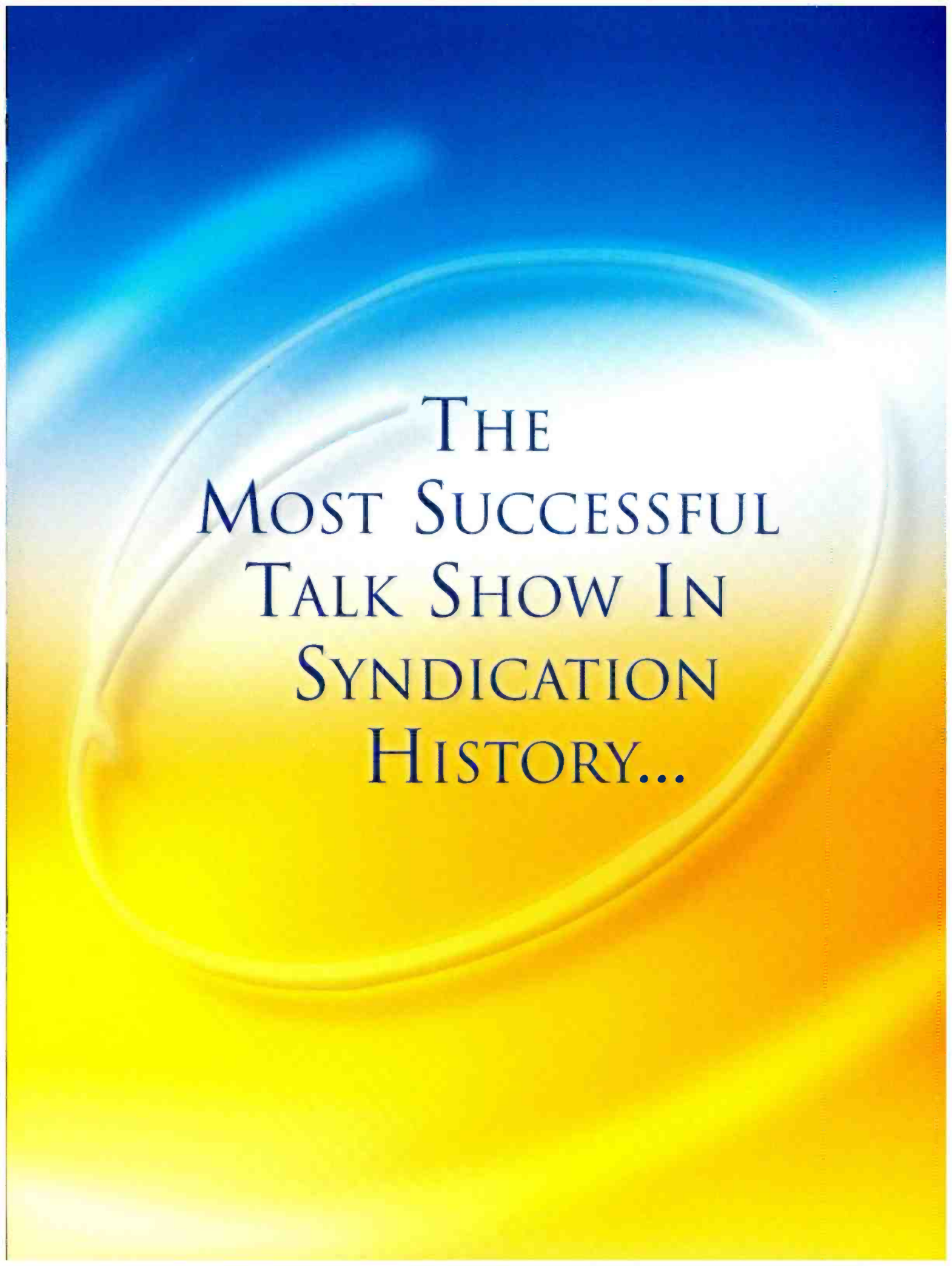
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PITTSBURGH	WTAE-TV

The background is a dark blue gradient. In the center, there is a large, glowing oval shape that transitions from a bright yellow at the bottom to a light blue at the top. The text is centered within this oval.

THE
MOST SUCCESSFUL
TALK SHOW IN
SYNDICATION
HISTORY...

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Cover Illustration: Paul Schultenburg / SIS

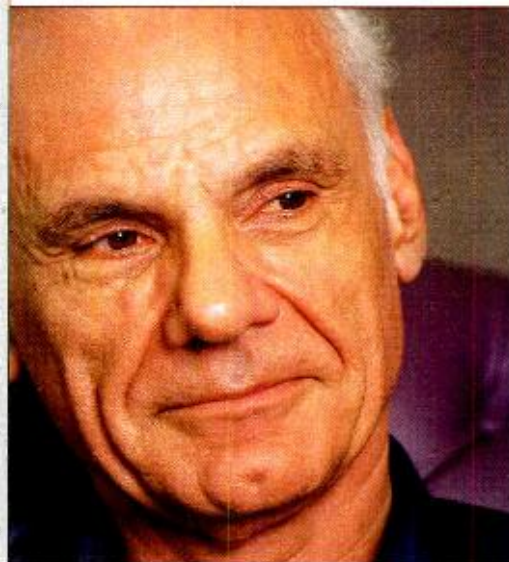
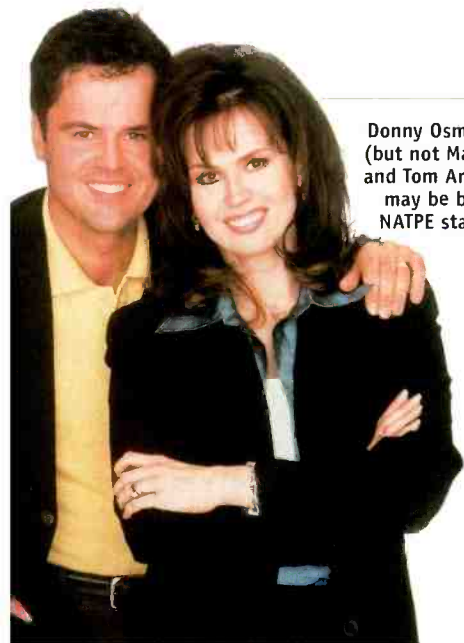


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Donny Osmond (but not Marie) and Tom Arnold may be big NATPE stars.

BCEYE

NETWORKS

Stuffing the ballot?

UPN COO Adam Ware (below) returned-to-sender a piece of unsolicited mail sent to his Los Angeles home late last month: a Nielsen Florida diary for the week starting Thursday, Nov. 23. The letter was addressed to "TV Research Home." It came with incentives: five crisp one-dollar bills and a letter from Nielsen President John Dimling. The letter explained how important the diary is, how every viewer is important. Says Ware: "As tempted as I was to fill it out with UPN from morning till night, our ratings are already way up this season and Florida has enough ballot-box problems."

SYNDICATION

Gongs and Pyramids

Donny Osmond and Tom Arnold are leading Columbia TriStar's parade to NATPE. Sources say the co-host of the studio's cancelled *Donny & Marie* is a likely NATPE 2001 and prime time TV entry, headlining a new take on *The 25,000 Pyramid* called just *Pyramid*. Both the syndicated version, offering a \$100,000 top prize, and the network edition (\$1 million in loot), could air simultaneously. Arnold just shot a pilot for *The Gong Show*, a 'reality-enhanced' version of the classic.



Geocast's Geobox may receive satellite or DTV signals when it launches next year, but not both.

TECHNOLOGY

Geocast cuts staff, looks skyward

Datacaster Geocast has laid off 45 of its 245 employees and may scrap the launch of a terrestrial DTV service next year. The company is leaning instead toward a DBS launch via EchoStar in second-quarter 2001. John Abel, VP business development, says Geocast was "running a little too fat." Although Geocast is still testing a DTV system in five markets, Abel says, "it can't do both at once. The company will decide in the next month whether to launch via satellite or DTV. Whichever isn't picked, says Abel, will probably "slide back in timing" to first quarter 2002. Geocast has \$85 million, enough to last to mid-2001.

TAUZIN MEETS HEYWARD

Rep. Billy Tauzin (R-La.) met with CBS News President Andrew Heyward in New York last week to discuss election-night snafus and how to remedy them. Meanwhile, House Commerce Committee investigators met with Voter News Service executives to determine what went wrong there. And Tauzin last week joined Democratic Rep. Ed Markey to sponsor a uniform-poll-closing bill. A Tauzin spokesman said that would be Tauzin's only legislative initiative on the subject. "We will not be introducing any legislation that prevents exit polling or forbids the networks from making prediction."

8-VSB REPRIEVE

The current 8-VSB digital TV standard is expected to get an endorsement, albeit a lukewarm one, in several industry and government reports due soon. In a victory for 8-VSB supporters, an Advanced Television Systems Committee task force has delayed until at least Jan. 25 its assessment of 8-VSB to wait for NAB/MSTV field tests comparing it to rival standard COFDM. The verdict is expected to be inconclusive, so the government won't have reason to replace 8-VSB. Sinclair Broadcasting's Nat Ostroff, a COFDM supporter, called an ATSC delay "self serving."

TAKE MY STATION, PLEASE

Clear Channel apparently will get less for CBS affiliate WPRI-TV Providence, R.I., than it paid for it. In 1996, Clear Channel paid \$68 million. Now it's selling it to Smith Broadcasting for an estimated \$50 million-\$60 million. The scenario of Clear Channel taking less than it paid is unusual, but the company feels it doesn't have a choice, a spokesman says. Under new FCC duopoly rules, Clear Channel by next August would have to give up owning WPRI, while also managing Smith Broadcasting's WNAC, the market's Fox affiliate. Clear Channel doesn't like standalone stations.

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Partners in programming

NBC, Hearst-Argyle, Gannett team up to develop and distribute syndicated shows



The Other Half is the first show to come out of the new programming alliance.

By Steve McClellan

For years, broadcasters have complained that syndicators don't adequately address marketplace needs with their programming development. Last week, three of the biggest TV groups banded together to do something about it.

NBC, Hearst-Argyle Television and Gannett Broadcasting have formed what they say is an unprecedented syndication-programming development and distribution alliance. The debut show for the alliance is *The Other Half*, described as a *The View*-type show but with guys, which will launch next fall.

Combined, the three station groups represent 60% coverage of the U.S. And, together, they comprise the largest single syndicated-program launch pad in the business. Also, as the only major network without a studio to lean on, NBC gains new synergy through its alliance with the broad-

cast groups.

It may not start big: Due to time period commitments, not all stations in the three groups will carry *The Other Half* at launch, but the partners are shooting for "full participation" by 2002, said Ed Wilson, president of NBC Enterprises, which will oversee syndication of the shows the partners develop.

In many cases, *The Other Half* will air at 10 a.m., including on a number of the NBC stations that now have the underperforming *Men Are From Mars*, *Women Are From Venus*.

But many of the Hearst-Argyle stations already have agreed to pick up the new King World talk show *Ananda*, which is likely to air at 10 a.m. on many of them.

Ownership of each show in the partner-

ship will vary and will be based on a weighted average of Nielsen market households delivered by each group, said Wilson. NBC Syndication will be responsible for selling shows the partners choose to the rest of the country, for a separate distribution fee, he said.

The station groups like the new arrangement because it gives them input into the development process. Usually, they complain, they don't have that when dealing with syndicators.

Also if a show tanks, they won't be stuck with it for two years, which increasingly has become the initial commitment that syndicators want for new shows. Case in point: *The Roseanne Show*, the King World-distributed talk show that died earlier this year after a two-year run.

Roseanne was particularly irksome because it was expensive to buy and clearly wasn't working after its first year, but stations signed on for an initial two-year period. CBS bought King World Productions after the show debuted and insisted that the show continue a second year so that it could collect the lucrative license fees.

Wilson said that was just one example of the type of situation the partners want to avoid. "How many failures do you want me to cite?" he asked.

NBC Stations President Jay Ireland, a relative newcomer to broadcasting, said he is disturbed by the fact that, in syndication, "there is

no discussion between the customer and the supplier" about the shape and direction of programs.

But Hearst-Argyle Executive Vice President Tony Vinciguerra is an industry



For Hearst-Argyle's Tony Vinciguerra, "the issue is more flexibility."

veteran, and he too finds it disturbing that syndicators don't pay more attention to stations' programming needs. "We've been sending signals pretty aggressively without response," he said. "The issue is more flexibility."

Said Wilson: "Distributors want the highest license fee they can get from the best station in the market. That's their focus. What we want is successful shows."

Some outsiders like the idea, in theory. Katz Television Vice President, Programming, Bill Carroll said that, if the alliance can generate a hit show within the first four or five tries, it may become the model for future development. "On paper, it would seem to be a better way to go about it because it calls for development with specific stations and time periods in mind vs. fill in the blanks, figure out where to put it and hope for the best."

Craig Dubow, newly named president of Gannett Broadcasting, called the deal an extension of a "longstanding, significant and very positive partnership" with NBC. In fact, talks of this alliance emerged earlier this year during negotiations to renew affiliation agreements for the Gannett and Hearst-Argyle stations.

There is some overlap among the station groups in terms of coverage. In the event of a conflict when more than one of the partners wants a jointly developed show in the same market, the NBC-owned station gets first crack at it. After that, the NBC affiliate takes priority.

The shows will be developed and produced through NBC Studios, run by Ted Harbert, with input from the partner groups, they said. Development will focus on daytime programming, particularly 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3 to 5 p.m., according to Wilson. "We will all agree on a format, and we're not limiting ourselves to typical syndication-type fare," he said, somewhat cryptically.

Asked what happens if a developed show is working for one or two of the groups but not the others, Wilson said the likelihood of that happening is next to nil. "When it fails, it fails," he said of most syn-

dication programs.

The Other Half was previously known as *The Other View*, until ABC made it clear it would sue if NBC didn't change the name. But the idea is similar: a multigenerational cast designed to give the female-targeted audience insight into lots of ordinary stuff, but from the male point of view.

In the pilot, Dick Clark, 71, was cast as the Barbara Walters alter ego. He was joined by Danny Bonaduce, Fox's Steve Santigati and Dr. Jan Adams, a Beverly Hills plastic surgeon. Sources say they wouldn't be surprised to see changes in the cast by the time it hits air.

Hollywood syndicators had mixed reactions, but surprise wasn't one of them. Some said the alliance was made to cut overhead costs for NBC's start-up syndication company. Some were reminded of

several consortiums that came and went in the late 1980s, including one with King World and four TV groups called the R&D Network. It failed, sources said, essentially because the partners couldn't agree on projects.

Some questioned whether the partnership structure would appeal to other profit participants, particularly talent. Joe Scotti, president of distribution and marketing for Pearson Television North America, asked, "At some point, if you have a hit show, are you going to get the maximum license fees from your own stations, vs. going out and hopefully getting competition in the marketplace to drive up the license fee?"

Others agreed that the partnership appears to de-emphasize license fees and, thus, the profits if a show becomes a hit.

New Line Television President Bob Friedman doesn't think the new pact will change the business dramatically and said he's not worried about selling shows to NBC, Hearst-Argyle or Gannett stations down the road. "You're always disheartened when there's some kind of strategic alliance that hurts shelf space. But, at the same time, I'm a believer that, if there's a really good property, regardless of where it originated, it will get bought."

A number of rival syndicators called the alliance simply a way for NBC's new syndication division to get going without a big, expensive sales force. Since NBC's pipeline of off-network product is rather thin right now, with only Friday-night drama *Providence* coming in the near future, syndication rivals believe NBC is trying to avoid a lot of overhead.

"This now allows Ed [Wilson] to go cheap on having a full-fledged syndication team," says one top studio executive. "Basically, it says they are not going to hire a lot of sales people, because all they have to do is clear the small markets." ■

With reporting by Joe Schlosser and Susanne Ault



NBC Enterprises' Ed Wilson will oversee syndication of the shows developed.

Market by market

NBC: Owns 13 television stations, covering 28% of the nation's households, including outlets in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington, Miami and Dallas/Fort Worth.

Gannett: Owns 22 stations covering 17.4% of the nation, including stations in Washington, Atlanta, Tampa, Minneapolis, Phoenix, Cleveland and St. Louis.

Hearst-Argyle: Owns or manages 26 television stations reaching about 17.5% of the nation, including stations in Boston, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Cincinnati and Kansas City, Mo.

Overlap: The three station groups have overlaps in Washington, Tampa, Sacramento, Miami and Greensboro, S.C.

Source: Company data, BROADCASTING & CABLE RESEARCH

Dubow in at Gannett

No need for shakeup, says new president. He aims at 'strengthening what we have' and adding duopolies

By Elizabeth A. Rathbun

Despite declining ratings, stock-market hits and a gloomy advertising outlook for 2001, Gannett Broadcasting's new president, Craig Dubow, is excited about the future of television. With 22 TV stations and 99 Gannett Co. Inc. newspapers to leverage, content is a lock, he says. But the key is moving that content onto new platforms, a space he calls "e-media."

Though acknowledging that these are "challenging times," Dubow is adamant that "it's also a time of tremendous opportunity." Gannett's advantage? "Brands in every local marketplace." With these, "we want to provide as much original content to as many areas as we can."

Dubow assumed the presidency of Gannett Broadcasting last Tuesday when it was announced that the 15-year veteran of the post, Cecil L. Walker, will ease toward retirement. He will remain CEO of Gannett Broadcasting and become its chairman.

Despite Gannett Co.'s troubles over the past year, particularly on Wall Street, the change in leadership is planned and orderly, Dubow says. In fact, there's no need to move in and shake up Gannett's TVs, he says. What's needed is "strengthening what we have."

To that end, one of Dubow's first plans is to beef up Gannett TV's morning-news shows. That's the fastest-growing TV day-part, and Gannett already has three of the nation's top-nine-rated morning shows: at KSDK St. Louis (No. 1), KUSA-TV Denver (2) and KARE Minneapolis/St. Paul (9). But Gannett also wants its stations to be first- or second-rated overall in all its markets, he says.

The company also would like more duopolies. So far, it has just one, in Jacksonville, Fla. As with expansion into other markets, Dubow says, "we will

always be looking for opportunities ... that make sense."

Dubow joined Gannett in 1981 at KUSA-TV, becoming national sales manager in 1983. After other sales stints, he became general manager of KVUE Austin, Texas, in 1988 (KVUE is no longer owned by Gannett). In 1992, he was named general manager of WXIA-TV Atlanta and became executive vice president of Gannett Broadcasting in 1996.



Taking over at Gannett Broadcasting, Craig Dubow says his first goal is to beef up the morning-news shows.

He lives in Atlanta with his wife and three children but plans to move to the Washington area, where Gannett Co. is based. ■

Nielsen chastises KSWB-TV

But rival stations don't think punishment fits the crime

For the first time, Nielsen Media Research has "delisted" a TV station for targeting Nielsen families during a sweeps promotion. But rival station executives suggested that the measure was negated by a too weak punishment.

Tribune's KSWB-TV San Diego was delisted after the ratings service concluded that it engaged in activities "designed to influence or change the viewing habits of Nielsen Media Research sample panel members in the San Diego DMA" (B&C, Nov. 13).

Just before the sweeps, KSWB-TV mailed out about 75,000 videotapes with a card that read: "ATTENTION NIELSEN HOMES: Please watch KSWB 5/69. Diary homes, please write down KSWB 5/69 in your Nielsen diary. Thanks to all Nielsen homes for watching KSWB 5/69."

A promo aired in early sweeps said: "Attention Nielsen family households, you're watching KSWB 5/69. Please write it down in your Nielsen diary." The promos brought protests from outraged executives at San Diego TV stations, who called the

campaign a blatant violation of Nielsen practices and demanded action.

Nielsen, which had announced a crackdown on such actions during the sweeps (B&C, Nov. 20), issued a client notice last week. Delisting could cost a station dearly, because, station execs say, ad agencies won't buy ads without ratings. But while KSWB-TV data will not be included in the Viewers in

Delisting could cost a station dearly because agencies won't buy ads without ratings.

Profile book, household and demographic information will be available for the station's use and in a custom tape. Tribune does not expect station revenues to be adversely affect and defended General Manager Lise Markham.

KSWB-TV rivals agreed that Tribune might not suffer much from the purported punishment, but some disagreed that that was a good thing. Local station execs also wondered whether Nielsen considered Tribune's stature as a large and important station group in softening the punishment.

Nielsen denied that. "This action speaks for itself," said spokesman Jack Loftus. "Our objective was to make the point but not disadvantage the entire marketplace." ■

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Midseason maneuvers

Networks prune schedules: NBC axes 'Michael Richards'; Fox closes 'The Street'; UPN kills 'Freedom'

By Joe Schlosser

Nearly every network killed off a new show and/or ordered something new, as midseason lineups started to take shape.

Perhaps most significant, ABC made its first schedule change with *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*—taking it off Tuesday nights and moving it to 8 p.m. ET on Fridays. In *Millionaire's* former Tuesday slot will be new reality series *Who is the Mole?*

NBC pulled *The Michael Richards Show* and *Titans*, ABC yanked Gabriel Byrne's new comedy *Madigan Men*, Fox said goodbye to *The Street* and UPN gave *Freedom* a quick death. On the positive front, NBC ordered four more episodes of new sitcom *DAG*, called up midseason comedy *Three Sisters* and shuffled its Tuesday-night lineup—putting veteran series *3rd Rock From the Sun* into the lead 8 p.m. slot.

"Everyone had to give their midseason programming orders to producers, and it turned out to be quite a week," said one network executive. "I'm sure it will continue for the rest of the month."

Three Sisters is from Eileen Heisler and DeAnn Heline (*Ellen*, *Roseanne* and *Murphy Brown*). It's a comedy about a family of grown-ups. Dyan Cannon is one of eight regular cast members.

ABC debuts *Who Is The Mole?* on Tuesday Jan. 9. The reality/adventure series follows 10 real-life players trying to detect a mole amongst them. The last player standing after nine weeks wins \$1 million. The series took contestants to two continents, four countries and 34 cities.

After killing off its teen-skewing TGIF franchise last season, ABC learned that



Fox's *The Street* had a run of only six episodes, averaging a 2.4 rating in adults 18-49, before being pulled.

adult comedies couldn't do the trick without some help. Enter *Millionaire*. The rat-

ings magnet makes its move on Friday, Jan. 5, replacing *Two Guys and a Girl* and *Madigan Men*. *Two Guys* moves up to 9 p.m. and *Norm* moves to 9:30. ABC execs say *Madigan Men* is only on hiatus; industry sources say it's dead.

As expected, Fox executives canned the pricey Wall Street drama *The Street* (after Dec. 13), after only six episodes. The series, from Michael Ovitz' ATG studio, was averaging 5.1 million viewers and a 2.4 rating in adults 18-49. No replacement was named; expect a reality entrant.

UPN dumped its new Friday action series *Freedom* (after Dec. 29) after six weeks on the air. The Warner Bros. series averaged a lowly 1.1 national Nielsen rating and 2.6 million viewers. ■

A sudden freeze at the networks

NBC, News Corp. say soft ad market means no new hires until first or second quarter

By Dan Trigoboff and Steve McClellan

Look to the malls for seasonal hiring, not to the networks. The soft advertising market has slowed hiring, in some cases, down to a halt. News Corp. and NBC have imposed company-wide hiring freezes.

News Corp. President Peter Chernin told a New York crowd at the UBS Media Conference last week that News Corp. imposed its hiring freeze last month. Maybe things will loosen by the second quarter, he said.

Sources inside News Corp. suggest it may be saving money to acquire DirecTV. Spies say Eddy Hartenstein, senior executive vice president at DirecTV parent Hughes Electronics, was seen at a News Corp. retreat in Palm Springs two weeks ago.

NBC sources confirm its hiring freeze that began last month will lift after New Year's Day, "but it could be extended," cautioned one source. An internal memo from NBC's Hartford station WVIT(TV) suggests that the market slowdown had led NBC to ask its divisions not to hold holiday parties in December. Some NBC entities will still party; others are postponing their "holiday" bashes until January, "just to get it in a different business cycle," said one source.

ABC doesn't have a freeze, but openings are getting stronger review than they might have a year ago. CBS on Friday issued a "no comment." Discovery networks and Time Warner said it was business as usual. "Any successful business tries to be prudent when it comes to spending resources," said a Discovery spokesman. ■

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ANANDA

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IN BRIEF

POLL POSITION

Rep. Edward Markey (D-Mass.) last week introduced a bill requiring polls in all states to close at the same time. "We have an opportunity now to rectify this situation, establish a uniform poll-closing time and minimize the potential that future premature projections by the television networks regarding the winners of a presidential election will influence voter behavior in other states," he said.

The bill would close nationwide polls at 9 p.m. ET. The law would require western states to delay for two weeks the change to daylight savings time so polls there also would close at 7 p.m.

CARRIAGE CLARIFIED

Rules for carriage of local TV stations on direct-broadcast-satellite systems were issued by the FCC last week. They generally mirror cable-carriage requirements, with some exceptions:

- Commercial stations must invoke must-carry rights or elect retransmission consent by July 2001 for the Jan. 1, 2002, cycle. Election deadlines for subsequent cycles will be Oct. 1 of the preceding year.

- Election cycles last three years, except the first, which lasts until 2006 to synchronize with cable.

- Market areas will be determined by Nielsen's 1999-2000 publications. The commission cannot modify DBS TV markets, as it can with cable.

- Carriage of noncommercial stations will not satisfy DBS carriers' public-interest set-aside obligations.

- Channel lineups must feature local stations contiguously.

- All program-related material must be carried, including material in a station's vertical blanking interval. Exceptions only when carriage is technically infeasible.

Paying for net play

Radio stations will pay into a royalty pool for streamed signals

By Paige Albinak

Radio broadcasters will have to pay additional royalties to copyright holders to stream their signals over the Internet, the U.S. Copyright Office ruled last week.

Broadcasters argued that they should be exempt from new fees because they already pay music licensers ASCAP and BMI some \$350 million per year to play music on the radio, and the signal they stream is an exact replica of that radio signal. But according to the ruling, broadcasters now will have to pay into a second royalty pool to be able to stream those signals.

The Recording Industry of America, which won the decision, argued that in the 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act, Congress narrowly tailored the law to apply only to over-the-air broadcasters who are converting from analog to digital. Broadcasters argued that digital covered their Internet streaming activities as well, but the Copyright Office didn't see it that way.

"This is an important right for artists and record companies. We look forward to working with the broadcasters for a smooth transition into this marketplace," said Hilary Rosen, president and CEO of the Recording Industry Association of America.

A smooth transition is highly unlikely at this point, because broadcasters plan to continue fighting the Copyright Office's decision in at least one court, the federal district court for the Southern District of New York. There, the National Association of Broadcasters and RIAA are fighting the same battle, and that court has yet to rule.

"NAB believes this ruling is directly contrary to existing federal law and congressional intent

as expressed in the Copyright Act. That's why NAB has asked a federal district court in New York to settle the issue," said NAB President Eddie Fritts. "Broadcasters currently pay hundreds of millions of dollars annually to the licensing societies representing the authors, composers and publishers, and have never been required to pay additional fees to the record companies and artists."

But even if the New York court rules against broadcasters, they still can seek relief by asking Congress to change the law, or they can challenge the Copyright Office's decision in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit.

In the meantime, broadcasters will likely apply to be included in blanket music licenses the Copyright Office is preparing to give Webcasters. An arbitration panel that is scheduled to begin May 21, 2001, will

determine Webcasters' royalty fees. Radio stations that apply for the license will be approved by the Copyright Office based on their ability to meet nine criteria. One of the most difficult for radio stations to meet is a requirement that stations not pre-identify a song and then go

immediately to a commercial before playing it.

Still, many radio stations meet those criteria and should be able to qualify for the blanket licenses, said Seth Greenstein, an attorney with the Washington law firm of McDermott, Will and Emery, outside counsel for the Digital Media Association (DiMA).

"I don't think this decision is going to affect broadcasters in a negative way," Greenstein said. "Quite to the contrary, it's going to force them to think more creatively about the Internet and how to use it to advance their business objectives." ■



NAB's Fritts is still fighting against additional fees.

'This is an important right for artists and record companies.'

—Hillary Rosen, RIAA

America's Wild About Sheena!

Over the Past 5 Weeks, Sheena Has Posted Impressive Growth All Across America!

Market	Station	Time	% Increase
New York	WNYW	5:00pm	+79%
Los Angeles	KABC	12:30am	+82%
Chicago	WPWR	9:00pm	+27%
Philadelphia	WTFX	1:00pm	+40%
San Francisco	KTVU	5:00pm	+260%
Dallas	KDAF	5:00pm	+43%
Wash, DC	WBDC	2:00pm	+200%
Atlanta	WAGA	5:00pm	+89%
Houston	KPRC	12:00am	+21%
Seattle	KIRO	1:30am	+50%
Miami	WAMI	4:00pm	+125%
Sacramento	KQCA	4:00pm	+71%
St. Louis	KPLR	4:00pm	+26%
San Diego	XETV	12:00am	+400%
Hartford	WBNE	3:00pm	+150%
Charlotte	WFVT	12:00pm	+41%
Raleigh	WKFT	5:00pm	+56%
Nashville	WNAB	10:00pm	+220%
Salt Lake City	KUWB	12:00pm	+200%
Memphis	WLMT	11:30pm	+70%
Norfolk	WVBT	4:00pm	+40%
Buffalo	WNYO	2:00pm	+44%

SHEENA

part animal
part legend
all woman

COLUMBIA TRISTAR



TELEVISION
DISTRIBUTION

The Leader In Young Adult Programming.

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Source: NSI WRAP OVERNIGHTS, HH Rtg. week of 11/20/00 vs week of 10/23/00, except San Francisco, Sacramento and Salt Lake City (did not air in 1st week of 10/23, uses data for week of 10/30/00 instead)

Univision speaks

Barry's lingo: \$1.1B

Already the leader, Hispanic network acquires Diller's 13 TV stations and plans to form a second Spanish-language net

By Steve McClellan

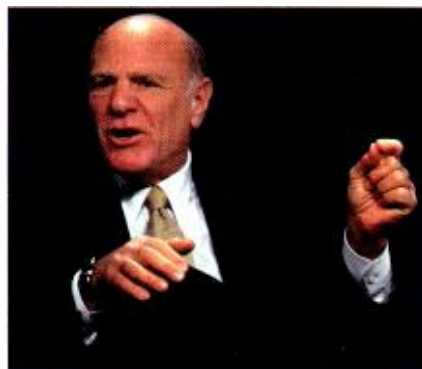
Three years ago, Barry Diller came up with a plan to convert his rag tag bunch of barely visible UHF TV stations from hawkers of zirconium jewelry into "portals" of local news and information, sports and entertainment—most of which was to be locally produced.

Last week, saying he had been "overly ambitious," Diller abandoned broadcasting altogether, selling his still barely visible 13-station TV group to Univision, which plans its *second* Spanish-language broad-

cast network.

While Univision has led the market for more than a decade, the competition to reach the nation's 32.4 million Hispanics (with \$440 billion in spending power) is heating up. Hispanic TV advertising is expected to grow 15% a year or more for the foreseeable future.

Indeed, if Univision does proceed with the launch, as company officials told analysts last week that it would, there could be as many as six U.S. Spanish-language networks up and running by 2002. Five



Barry Diller's Cityvision concept never worked the way it was touted.

of them would be over-the-air; the sixth, Galavision, is a Univision-owned cable network.

Univision's lagging competitor, Telemundo, declined comment last week. But sources said the network would continue to look for other station buying opportunities. It recently signed a letter of intent to buy a second station in Los Angeles.

Then there's Azteca America, a venture of Pappas Telecasting and TV Azteca of Mexico set to debut next year. Last week, Harry Pappas, the network's CEO, said Univision's USA deal didn't affect the network's plans. "We're moving forward," said Pappas. Azteca America still has holes in its distribution, including New York and Chicago, although, Pappas says, there are still opportunities in both markets.

Earlier this year, the publicly traded Fort Worth-based Hispanic Television Network launched a service that currently covers one-third of U.S. Hispanic TV households. Its mission, says company CEO Marco Comacho, is to specifically serve the Mexican-American audience, which comprises the biggest chunk of the U.S. Hispanic universe. Comacho says he hopes to get HTVN up to 70% coverage of Hispanic homes by sometime next year. Just last week, HTVN completed a deal with Mexican broadcaster MVS Television to jointly produce and distribute programs.

But if this is the continuation of a Hispanic dynasty, it's also a less-glorious page for Barry Diller's empire building plans.

In 2000, Diller's USA Broadcasting

USAvision

Here's what the combined Univision/USA group looks like. Duopolies are highlighted in red:

Market	Univision Channel	USA Channel
New York (1)	WXTV (ch. 41)	WHSE-TV (ch. 68)
Los Angeles (2)	KMEX-TV (ch. 34)	KHSC-TV (ch. 46)
Chicago (3)	WGBO-TV (ch. 66)	WEHS-TV (ch. 60)
Philadelphia (4)	WHSP-TV (ch. 65)	—
San Francisco (5)	KDTV (ch. 14)	—
Boston (6)	WHSH-TV (ch. 66)	—
Dallas/Fort Worth (7)	KUVn (ch. 23)	KSTR-TV (Ind.; ch. 49)
Atlanta (10)	WHOT-TV (ch. 34)	—
Houston (11)	KXLN-TV (ch. 45)	KHSH-TV (ch. 67)
Tampa/St. Petersburg, Fla. (13)	WBHS-TV (ch. 50)	—
Cleveland (15)	WQHS-TV (ch. 61)	—
Miami/Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (16)	WLTN (ch. 23)	WAMI-TV (Ind.; ch. 69)
Phoenix (17)	KTVW-TV (ch. 33)	—
Sacramento, Calif. (19)	KUVS (ch. 19)	—
Orlando, Fla. (22)	WBSF (ch. 43)	—
San Antonio, Texas (37)	KWEX-TV (ch. 41)	—
Fresno, Calif. (54)	KFTV (ch. 21)	—
Bakersfield, Calif. (130)	KUVI (ch. 45)	—

* Univision would also acquire WHSE-TV'S satellite station, whsi-tv Smithtown, N.Y.

group will rack up approximately \$62 million in operating losses, according to Wall Street analysts. "We still believe in localism," Diller said. "But to build stations from a standing start in a world of duopoly and consolidation became an impossibly difficult task."

Credit Diller with realizing a good investment opportunity when he sees it—he bought the station group (then called Silver King Broadcasting) in 1995 for \$215 million. He sold it last week to Univision for \$1.1 billion. In addition, Univision is assuming \$100 million in programming liabilities, most of which is for rights to sports teams, including the Miami Heat and teams in Dallas and Boston, as well as some syndication programming.

On top of that, Univision agreed to split any windfall it derives (after the first \$100 million) for the ch. 60-69 UHF spectrum auction that the FCC is planning for next year. Eight of USA's 13 broadcast outlets are located on those channels.

Diller had called his abandoned concept Cityvision, which in many respects was based on a concept that has worked fabulously well for City TV, a Canadian programmer. The Miami station, WAMI-TV was the first to be converted, back in 1998, and was to be the model for the rest of the group, which was to have rolled out the Cityvision format over a four to five year period.

But by 1999, WAMI was generating 1's and hash marks in the ratings and was known most for a bizarre pair of disembodied lips that read news headlines than for any particular shows it created. It also made headlines with a tasteless print ad promoting a nightly talk show host, Neil Rodgers, who happened to be gay, liberal and somewhat controversial. The print ad featured a drawing of a supposed Ku Klux Klan member saying, "Git yur torches, Neil's a comin." The station later apologized for the ad, after viewers and advertisers expressed outrage.

It was pretty clear by then that Cityvision wasn't going to work. Last year, when USA converted its next two stations,

in Dallas and Boston, they embraced more traditional independent strategies combining sports and off-network programs. It didn't spend a lot on syndication. The Boston outlet was running *Barney Miller* and other vintage fare.

With the USA Broadcasting acquisition,

While Univision has led the market for more than a decade, the competition for the nation's 32.4 million Hispanic viewers is heating up.

Univision lays in place the distribution for a second network virtually over night. The USA Stations cover 60% of the nation's Hispanic households. The deal also gives Univision duopolies in 7 of the top 8 Hispanic markets (see chart).

But programming the second channel won't be the slam dunk that programming Univision 1 has been, through a program licensing deal with Mexico's Televisa that

goes to 2017.

For one thing, Univision would have to negotiate for the right to program a second broadcast channel with Televisa programming, Univision chief financial officer Andrew Hobson told analysts last week. Univision would also need Televisa's permission to shift or repurpose Galavision programming onto any new channel, Hobson said.

And beyond that, the relationship between Televisa and Univision isn't as warm and fuzzy as it once was. Their deal was first put in place by Univision head Jerrold Perenchio and Televisa founder Emilio Azcarrago Milmo, who died in 1997. His son, Emilio Azcarrago Jean now runs the company and is said not to have as warm a relationship with Perenchio as his father did.

The two sides have been in litigation over a plan by Televisa to bring at least one of its Mexican networks into the U.S. via satellite. Univision took its partner to court over the issue, contending that its license with Televisa gives its exclusive U.S. distribution rights. ■

Telemundo—second yet again

Poor Telemundo. Second to Univision Communications in the ratings, second again when it comes to announcing what it had hoped would be the nation's first Spanish-language TV duopoly, in Los Angeles.

Telemundo Group has been confirming recent reports that it was in negotiations to buy KWHY-TV Los Angeles, which it would pair with its KVEA-TV in the nation's top Hispanic market. But that deal was still in the works last Wednesday, when Univision said it would pay \$1.1 billion for USA Networks' 13 TV stations. The deal gives Univision not just one duopoly in Los Angeles (with KMEK-TV and USA's KHSC-TV), but in five more markets.

As of last Thursday, Telemundo's purchase of KWHY was still being finalized, said Ted Guefen, spokesman for the nation's No. 2 Spanish-language network. While a broker familiar with the market pegs KWHY's value at about \$200 million, the going price now is higher than that, several sources say. No word on when *that* deal will be announced.

Telemundo likes the independent KWHY's self-produced shows, which could be used on the national Telemundo network. "[Ch.] 22's always been an innovator in programming," Guefen said. In fact, Telemundo already plans to start running a "tweaked" version of a KWHY court show in January or February 2001. All Spanish-language KWHY, currently owned by Harriscope Corp., also airs three evening newscasts.

—Elizabeth A. Rathbun

IN BRIEF

COMMITTEE CLASH

Reps. Billy Tauzin (R-La.) and Mike Oxley (R-Ohio) last week each tried to convince members of the House Steering Committee that he is the best man to head the House Commerce Committee. House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) holds the most votes, while House Majority Leader Richard Arney (R-Texas) and House Majority Whip Tom DeLay (R-Texas) also cast weighted votes. A decision is expected Jan. 3.

PEGASUS SUES DIRECTV OVER PATENT

DBS provider Pegasus Communications filed a patent-infringement lawsuit last week against DirecTV and DirecPC parent Hughes Electronics. The suit, filed in conjunction with interactive-TV firm Personalized Media Communications, alleges that DirecTV, Hughes Electronics and consumer-electronics manufacturers Thomson and Philips infringed on intellectual property relating to pay-per-view authorization and electronic-program guides that Pegasus licensed from Personalized Media last January.

MAXIMUM SERVICE'S WHITE TO RETIRE

Maximum Service Television Inc. Friday named LIN Television general counsel Gregory Schmidt interim co-president. He will serve with 14-year president Margita White, who retires in June and has health problems.

CORRECTION

An article on Voter News Service (Dec. 4,) says that Fox News made a commitment in late November to refrain from calling the results of a state on election night until all the polls in that state are closed. Fox News had made that commitment earlier, on Nov. 10.

Saban set to sell his Fox Family stake

FFW chairman could force News Corp. to buy at market value

By John M. Higgins

Despite Haim Saban's public posturing that he wants to stick by Rupert Murdoch, the Fox Family Worldwide chairman has retained an investment banker either to sell his majority stake in the company to its News Corp. partner or to shake out a buyer for the whole company.

Industry executives said Saban has hired Morgan Stanley Dean Witter to represent him in his "put," his right to sell his 49.5% stake to News Corp. The big task is trying to justify the \$6 billion valuation for the company's assets that Saban was seeking just six months ago before he and News Corp. supposedly kissed and made up. Securities filings show that Saban has until Dec. 31 to declare whether he's going to trigger the put and News Corp. would have 30 days to complete the deal.

That valuation would make half the FFW assets worth around \$3 billion. After Saban's share of Fox Family's \$1.8 billion debt is subtracted, though, the executive's take would be worth \$2.1 billion.

Some Wall Street and industry executives dismissed the valuation, given the poor operating performance of Fox Family Channel, the continuing revolt of TV stations over the Fox Kids syndicated block, and the pounding that media stocks have taken in recent months.

Saban's window comes at a terrible time. Murdoch is trying to stage a \$30 billion bid for Hughes Electronics and its DirecTV, a move that would give him a long-coveted play in the U.S. DBS game.

With his stock price down 40%, Murdoch is not thrilled at the prospect of paying with that depressed currency either.

"Rupert can afford to give up equity," said one Wall Street executive. "He can't afford to give up cash."

Still, Saban is trying to stir interest from other media companies to motivate News Corp. into paying up, agree to take on a new partner or simply buy FFW outright. Companies being pitched are those most hungry for that rare media artifact, a fully distributed cable network: Viacom Inc., Sony Pictures and USA Networks Inc.

Other media companies being pitched are those most hungry for that rare media artifact, a fully distributed cable network.

A couple of industry executives are looking at the same thing Saban is: the recent \$3 billion sale of Black Entertainment Television to Viacom. That deal priced BET at 22 times cash flow and, arguably, \$47 per subscriber. Valuing Fox Family Channel off its raw cable and satellite distribution, rather than its current shrunken

cash flow, one former News Corp. executive said that he could come close to justifying Saban's asking price.

Under a shareholder agreement among Saban, News Corp. and Allen & Co., which owns 1% of FFW, Saban has the right to "put" his shares to News Corp., forcing Murdoch to buy them at market value. Each side retains an investment banker to value the shares. If their appraisals are too far apart, the companies hire a third banker to decide the fair-market value.

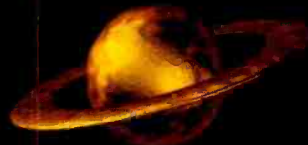
Saban doesn't have another clear shot at selling his stake for two years.

Saban and News Corp. could avoid a showdown by extending the put exercise date. "Stocks are down, why sell now?" asked one investment banker. On the other hand, if the economy and ad spending really are going into the tank, "Fox Family may not be worth much in two years." ■

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* Nielsen Media Research NFM Sample, Households, M+Su 24 hours, September 1998 to present. DUNE E-11PM airing Dec. 3, 2000.
** INVISIBLE MAN premiere telecast, June 9, 2000 8-10PM.

scifi.com/cune

FINANCIAL WRAP-UP

Week of December 4-8

WINNERS

	12/8	% change
Liberty Satellite	\$13.00	23.81
Adelphia	\$19.56	16.79
Emmis Comm.	\$11.38	15.79
Salem Comm.	\$11.81	13.86
Univision	\$24.38	13.04

LOSERS

	12/8	% change
Pegasus Comm.	\$22.69	(17.87)
Liberty Digital	\$5.25	(16.83)
Citadel Comm.	\$9.38	(12.28)
Comcast	\$34.31	(9.85)
Shop at Home	\$1.25	(9.09)

BROADCAST TV (12/10/99-12/8/00)

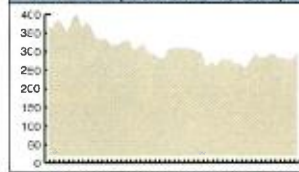


Week ending 12/8/00

Close.....283.88
High.....283.88
Low.....263.09

7.8%

CABLE TV (12/10/99-12/8/00)



Week ending 12/8/00

Close.....277.45
High.....277.45
Low.....259.45

4.8%

RADIO (12/10/99-12/8/00)



Week ending 12/8/00

Close.....566.41
High.....566.41
Low.....544.72

5.7%

DOW JONES

Week ending 12/8/00
Close.....10712.90
High.....10898.70
Low.....10560.10

3.3%

NASDAQ

Week ending 12/8/00
Close.....2916.02
High.....2916.02
Low.....2615.75

10.2%

S&P 500

Week ending 12/8/00
Close.....1369.54
High.....1376.54
Low.....1324.97

4.1%

FCC's radio revamp

Commission aims to change rules for measuring markets

By Bill McConnell

In a move that could prevent some radio mergers, the FCC last week proposed to change the way it measures local markets.

At issue is an FCC policy that some commissioners say allows owners to control more outlets in a market than intended by government rules. The number of stations an owner may control in a market is capped according to a sliding scale based on the total number of stations there. In large markets, the number tops off at eight.

Under the FCC's new plan, which must go through two rounds of public comment and a final vote by the five commissioners, the agency would scrap its complex formula based on the number of stations with overlapping signals, relying instead on Arbitron's market definitions.

Commissioners Gloria Tristani and Susan Ness have long argued that the FCC's differing measuring sticks often overcount the number of total stations in a market or undercount the number of stations one company owns.

"Real listeners in real communities have been harmed by a consolidation of the air-

waves that should not have been permitted to take place," said Commissioner Gloria Tristani.

Although 80% of the U.S. population lives in the 850 counties tracked by Arbitron, the FCC asked for advice on measuring the 2,250 that aren't. The FCC also asked for comment on retaining a signal overlap instead, but making the measurements for market size and corporate control consistent.

A separate FCC effort to resolve another angle of the radio-concentration debate was sent into limbo last week when Anderson Broadcasting withdrew its application to sell five Bismarck, N.D., stations to Cumulus Media.

The merger was slated to be reviewed by an FCC administrative law judge. Out of an estimated 200 "red flagged" radio deals, the merger was the first to be designated for hearing. To clamp down on rapid industry consolidation, the agency in 1998 began red flagging mergers that would allow one com-

pany to control 50% of a market's ad revenue or two companies to hold 70%.

Although the public is invited to comment on any red-flagged deal, the FCC has no clear policy for resolving concerns about the mergers, and the Anderson case was expected to provide the first guidance. Radio owners have complained that the policy has accomplished little more than delays.

Now, the FCC will have to bring another merger before a judge or simply launch a general rulemaking on the red-flagging issue.

'Real listeners in real communities have been harmed by a consolidation of the airwaves that should not have been permitted to take place.'

—Commissioner Gloria Tristani

FCC foot-dragging prompted one station-group owner to ask federal judges for help. William Bennis, owner of five stations in the Parkersburg, W.Va., area said the agency has held up his applications to sell the outlets to Clear Channel for more than 13 months with no justification.

With 10 of the market's 15 stations controlled by two companies, the deal was red flagged on Sept. 22, 1999. A month later, PBBC Inc., which also owns five stations in the market, urged the FCC to deny the sale. Ironically, PBBC was permitted to sell a 60% interest in its group in August.

Barring the Clear Channel purchase is unjust, Bennis argues in a suit filed with the federal appeals court in Washington. ■

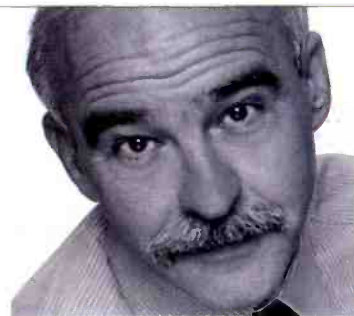
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The 'real' show business

A new NATPE documentary celebrates syndication

Once, when NATPE was being held in New Orleans, I snuck two women from the town into the show. They couldn't believe it. Back then (it was 1986, I think), NATPE was not just the syndication bazaar it still is. It was the syndication *bizarre*, really.

You could walk down an aisle, and behind you suddenly would be one of the chimps from the Mutual of Omaha booth walking with a beautiful handler. Around the corner would be Elvira—"a nice, normal woman," everyone said as they left with an auto-graphed photo—and walking around everywhere would be models dressed like robots, cowboys, rock stars.

Seeing the show with 'civilians,' as they gasped (and ate shrimp), I realized as I do every so often: This is a very strange business.

This year, NATPE has produced *From A to Ziv: The Legends of Syndication*, an 80-minute documentary videotape available through its Web site. In ways that are mainly laudatory, it captures the whole, sometimes odorous, essence of the business that gave the world

everything from *Baywatch* to *Bishop Sheen*. Here's the line NATPE can put in its press kit: Everybody in this business should see *From A to Ziv* to understand how syndication got to where it is. For good and bad.

Few folks walking around at NATPE today remember Sandy Frank, who has an appropriately large presence in *A to Ziv*. In his prime, he seemed to exist to give syndication a bad name. Fact is, that guy could sell, and as this tape points out, he succeeded by sheer drive: He wouldn't stop bothering a general manager until that guy bought one of Sandy's game shows. It was Success-by-Annoying.

At NATPE, he was so

aggressive neighboring booths kept security guards around to stop Frank from stealing their customers. Once, legend has it, a Dallas station manager faked a heart attack to see if that would stop Sandy from going through his flip-card presentation. When Frank saw what was happening, he allegedly exclaimed to the program director, "Christ, now I have to start all over again!"

A to Ziv gets half its title in a reference to Fred Ziv, who was, let's just say, the first TV syndicator ever. He gave us shows like *Sea Hunt* and *Highway Patrol* and did good things such as insist that every station get a clean copy of the shows it was buying from him.

I never met Ziv, but I know

his friend, Don Dahlman, the elfin former Multimedia executive who was the fellow who tapped Phil Donahue back in 1967 in Dayton, Ohio, and gets some justifiable face time in this tape. So do men like Greg Meidel and George Back and Martin Grieve and Joel Berman and Bob Muller and many others with good stories to tell.

These were guys (and we don't see many women here except Lucie Salhany) who invented and sold and loved what they were doing. There's a good piece in this documentary featuring Warner Bros. syndication chief Dick Robertson that makes me realize that for

what a hard case Robertson can be, he is one of just a few syndication executives I know who is openly/blatantly excited about what his company produces for stations.

But sometimes, of course, he's just *selling*. On the tape, he recalls a sale earlier in his career in which the general manager, right after agreeing to overpay for a package of bad films, had a diabetic episode and seem-

ingly nearly died. "But he bought the films! He bought the films! He shook my hand!" Robertson recalls screaming at the time.

I love that scene (the tape, written and produced by Shirley Neal, features a few recreations of events), because it speaks to the fact that those syndication executives are always selling, and doing it so well that you sometimes forget it's a business for which they are paid extremely well.

The beauty of *A to Ziv* is that throughout, it's as much about what they sold as how they sold it. And for those of us mesmerized by the *show* and the *business*, this little videotape is just about perfect.

If you have a war story about a syndication deal you made, either as the seller or buyer, write us or e-mail it to pbednarski@cabners.com and include a daytime number so we can verify it. We'd love to run some of the better ones, but in some instances we can omit names.

Bednarski can be reached at pbednarski@cabners.com or at 212-337-6965.

If you have a scary war story about a crazy syndication deal—as a seller or a buyer—we'd really love to hear about it.

Programming

Armed with action hours

Pearson, Lions Gate, New Line ready weekly dramas for NATPE

By Susanne Ault

With NATPE 2001 a little more than a month away, syndicators polish up action hours for a tightening market, with an eye toward slots expected to be vacated by departing old-timers.

Pearson Television is preparing two weekly dramas. In *Lean Angle*, executive-produced by Patrick Hasburgh (creator of *21 Jump Street*), Antonio Sabato Jr. plays a pro motorcycle racer hampered by family problems. *Undercover Blues* (working title), executive-produced by Adam Rifkin (feature film *Small Soldiers*) and Steve Bing (Chuck Norris' *Missing in Action*), offers supermodel Angie Everhart and *Baywatch* alum Brooke Burns as sisters who are FBI agents working undercover as Las Vegas showgirls.

For NATPE 2001, Pearson will choose just one show from its pool of contenders, which also includes *Colosseum*, with comic Andrew Dice Clay portraying a Chicago street hustler sent back in time to book gladiator-type fights.

Carsey-Werner, in its debut effort at first-run syndication, is going in a different direction, with a reality-based hour-long weekly. But Lions Gate Television, also in its inaugural go at syndication, is bringing out an action-hour vehicle for *Highlander's* Adrian Paul.

The marketplace, though, seems tighter than ever for weekly hours. Studios USA yanked *Xena: Warrior Princess* because many stations' ratings-ready time slots are going to the networks. And cable outlets like Sci Fi and TNT are also angling for

viewers attracted to quick-paced storylines. Plus, most of the rookie weeklies—Tribune's Kevin Sorbo-starrer *Andromeda* is the exception—are struggling: *Sheena*, *Queen of Swords*, *The Cindy Margolis Show* and *The Immortal* all posted below 2.0 household ratings, according to Nielsen Media Research, for the week ended Nov. 19.

'With a lot of people leaving, with Xena and Hercules out of the picture, that leaves a lot of room.'

—Kevin Beggs, New Line

"Obviously, it's a tough business," says New Line Executive Vice President, Series Television, Kevin Beggs. "But, with a lot of people leaving, with *Xena* and *Hercules* out of the picture, that leaves a lot of room."

Katz TV's Bill Carroll agrees. "There are a couple of [weekly] shows that are in their last year. This opens up opportunity for probably three or four new ones."

Says Beggs, who's hoping for big things out of the Adrian Paul project (at one time known as *Tracker*): "Honestly, in terms of competition, this may be one of the best years to launch something."

Executive-produced by Gil Gates, executive consultant on *Relic Hunter*, the project will star Paul as a lawman who must capture aliens that appear suddenly on Earth having escaped from intergalactic jails. The concept is expected to attract viewers, because "sci-fi continues to be a performer as evidenced by *Andromeda*," which placed 15th among all syndicated efforts for the period ended Nov. 19, Beggs says.

Also, Lions Gate, Pearson and New Line (currently shopping its *Hard Knox* actioner) are all expecting to land international distribution to increase the profit margin on their shows. The studios wouldn't be able to produce these series strictly for domestic distribution, with an action hour typically costing \$1 million an episode. ■

Comedy tonight

Laughs instead of music for NBC's late-night time slot

By Susanne Ault

NBC is launching a late-night comedy show—its title is still in the works—starting Jan. 5. Replacing music-video series *Friday Night* at 1:35 a.m., the new effort from NBC Studios will feature five upstart stand-up comics per episode. Going the edgy-comedy route made sense for NBC because "we've considered the 1:35 a.m. late-night time period an experimental one, and this move reflects the network's desire to find new and interesting programming formats," says Entertainment

President Garth Ancier.

Developed by Lisa Leingang, NBC Studios vice president of prime time series, the stand-up show will be executive produced by Matt Kunitz (*Real World*) and taped at Hollywood's Knitting Factory nightclub.

Friday Night, which debuted as *Friday Night Videos* in 1983, played new and classic music videos, with viewers calling up the show to vote for their favorites. Ancier wished *Friday Night's* current host Rita Sever well, saying she had done a "terrific job." ■

SO

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OF THE COUNTRY

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IN BRIEF

UPN SWEEPS UP

UPN's November-sweeps performance showed improvement across the board—and not just on Thursday night with *WWF Smackdown!* For the period, UPN was up 13% in adults 18-49 (1.8 vs. 1.6 rating a year ago), 13% in adults 18-34 (1.8 vs. 1.6) and 20% in adults 25-54 (1.8 vs. 1.5).

It was UPN's best November since 1997 in total viewers (4.2 million), adults 18-49 and adults 25-54. It was also the network's best sweeps results since February 1997 in men 18-49 (1.9) and men 25-54 (1.9). *WWF Smackdown!* now ranks fourth among all network programs in male teens.

UPN's November ratings were inadvertently omitted from a Dec. 4 edition story on networks' sweeps performance.

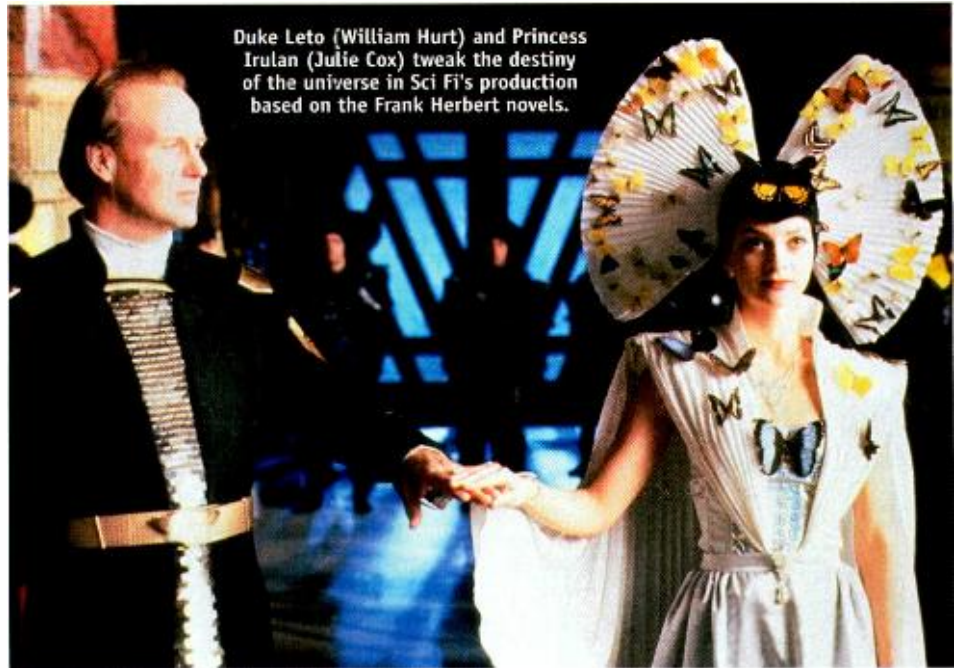
USA'S COMMON SENSE

Common sense, not pressure from one of television's top advertisers, was behind the demise of *Who Killed Sue Snow?*, according to a USA Network spokesman.

The made-for-TV movie was based on the 1986 case of a woman who tried to cover the murder of her husband with poisoned Excedrin by lacing bottles on store shelves, mimicking the 1982 Tylenol tamperings.

Johnson & Johnson, maker of Tylenol, reportedly threatened to pull advertising.

"They said, look, we think this movie will cause a big problem," said one USA insider, but it was the network's new General Manager Rob Sorcher who pulled the plug. Taking a look at the project, he was concerned about the potential for another wave of copycat killings. "And you know what would happen," the insider said. "People would say it's because of that movie USA did."



Duke Leto (William Hurt) and Princess Irulan (Julie Cox) tweak the destiny of the universe in Sci Fi's production based on the Frank Herbert novels.

Dune does it for Sci Fi

Sandworms and spice bring in record numbers for channel

By Deborah D. McAdams

Despite a slow start and a notoriously complicated storyline, Sci Fi Channel's adaptation of Frank Herbert's *Dune* became the most-watched program in the network's history.

The three-night miniseries pulled in a 4.6 rating with 3 million homes on its first installment on Sunday, Dec. 3. Over all three nights, it averaged a 4.4/2.9 million households, doubling all viewership records for Sci Fi and placing it among the top 10 of basic cable's original miniseries in the past five years. Two of the three installments also rated among the year's top 10 original cable movies.

Dune is the futuristic tale of a universe balanced on the ever fragile control of spice, a narcotic necessary for stellar navigation. The sole source of spice is Arakis, a desert planet inhabited by monstrous sandworms the size of small skyscrapers. Characters of biblical proportion battle for control of Arakis.

The miniseries' average 4.4 rating/2.9 million households placed it among the top 10 of basic cable's original miniseries in the past five years.

With an extensive history preceding the tale of the fight for Arakis, screen adaptations of the series of novels have misfired before. A theatrical release in the mid-1980s bombed after being edited so much to shorten it that

theaters had to issue a cheat sheet so the uninitiated could follow the storyline. Sci Fi's six-hour miniseries was able to stay true to the novel without getting bogged down in Herbert's esoterica. And gigantic computer-generated sandworms munching down huge machines and people like popcorn probably didn't hurt

Sci Fi's numbers either.

The miniseries is a decided home run in Sci Fi's first year of extensive programming investment: \$146 million, up from around \$86 million in 1999, according to Kagan & Associates numbers.

On the other end of the scale, the network's clumsy, first-time live coverage of the legendary Greenwich Village Halloween Parade

**THEY SAY
ONE SWEEP
DOESN'T MAKE
A TREND.**

HOW ABOUT

SWEEP	A18-34	A18-49
Nov. '99 vs. '98	+60%	+33%
Feb. '00 vs. '99	+50%	+23%
May '00 vs. '99	+70%	+55%
July '00 vs. '99	+100%	+63%
Nov. '00 vs. '99	+19%	+13%

For the 5th straight sweep UPN has posted gains at mid-season premieres of "Gary & Mike," the X "Chains of Love" and "Manhunt" - the t



Source: NTL Galaxy Explorer, 11/4/99 - 12/1/99 vs. 10/29/98 - 11/25/98, 2/3/00 - 3/1/00 vs. 2/4/99 - 3/3/99, 4/27/00 - 5/24/00 vs. 4/29/99 - 5/26/99, 11/2/00 - 11/29/00 vs. 11/4/99 - 12/1/99. UPN prime ratings. Includes preliminary data. Qualifications available upon request.

THE FASTEST GROWING

5 IN A ROW.

A25-54	M18-34	W18-34
+15%	+111%	+27%
+23%	+91%	+15%
+36%	+73%	+60%
+50%	+150%	+63%
+20%	+5%	+21%

Among all the key adult demographics. And with the NFL, "All Souls," "Special Unit 2," "Off Limits," trend is sure to continue. **STAY TUNED...**



WWE
NETWORK IN AMERICA
IS STILL GROWING!

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IN BRIEF

BET.COM SCORES \$3M VERIZON DEAL

Verizon Communications has entered into a three-year, \$3 million pact to sponsor the Lifestyle Channel on African-American-targeted Web site BET.com.

The site provides movie reviews, industry gossip and entertainment news. Verizon will tout its telecommunications and wireless services.

Before BET was swallowed by Viacom, the company persuaded Microsoft, Liberty Digital, News Corp. and USA Networks to invest \$35 million in BET.com.

FOX NEWS RULES

Fox News Channel beat CNN in prime time on seven of eight nights leading up to the Monday, Dec. 4, Supreme Court ruling on the presidential election.

On that Monday night, Fox News Channel did a 2.1 rating/ 1.2 million households, compared with CNN's 1.3/1.0 million—the first time since the election that FNC has beat the monolith news channel in households as well as rating. Fox News' *The O'Reilly Factor* carried the night with a 3.1/1.7 million, from 8 to 9 p.m.

From Monday, Nov. 27, to Monday, Dec. 4, CNN tied Fox News Channel only once, on Sunday, Dec. 3, when both pulled in a 1.1 in prime time, with 637,000 households going to FNC and 896,000 going to CNN.

GRAND OLE OPRY GOES OFF-LINE

Gaylord Entertainment Co., owner of the Grand Ole Opry, is dumping its Internet division. Gaylord Digital will be sold off or closed by Dec. 31, and 85 jobs will be eliminated. The shut-down is expected to result in a \$35 million, one-time charge for Gaylord in the fourth quarter.

was widely panned. Among new series, *Crossing Over With John Edward* created some initial buzz, but numbers softened as the newness wore off, and *Exposure*, a series showcasing short, independent films, never

generated much noise. Traditional science-fiction series like *Babylon 5*, *The Outer Limits* and *Invisible Man* continue to be the network's workhorses, with movies and events bringing in the occasional ratings spike. ■

TV's DeSalvo debunker

WBZ-TV producer, and relative of Boston Strangler victim, concludes that confessed killer is the wrong man

By Dan Trigoboff

Before the *Night Stalker* and the *Son of Sam*, there was the Boston Strangler. Or was there?

A Boston TV producer has revived a nearly four-decades-old investigation and has concluded that the late Albert DeSalvo—subject of articles, books and film—was not the infamous murderer who terrorized Boston in the early 1960s.

In fact, says WBZ-TV producer Casey Sherman, there may have been no single strangler but a number of rapists and killers who committed the crimes to which DeSalvo confessed.

"DeSalvo was a nut who confessed," says Sherman. "Don't get me wrong; he was a bad guy: a rapist and a thief. But he was not the Boston Strangler. He was a guy who didn't want to go to prison; he wanted to be studied in a psychiatric facility." DeSalvo died in a Massachusetts prison, however.

Sherman is neither a professional historian nor a theorist fixated on an event like the Kennedy or King assassinations. He comes by his fascination with the Boston Strangler murders naturally: The last alleged victim of Albert DeSalvo was his aunt, 19-year-old Mary Sullivan, who had come to live in Boston from Cape Cod a few days before.

In recent weeks, Sherman's own family and that of DeSalvo himself have cooperated in having Sullivan's body exhumed from her Cape Cod grave, and they have sued police to release evidence in the case. Now the state of



Was Albert DeSalvo really the infamous Boston Strangler? Casey Sherman thinks not.

Massachusetts has reopened the case. Sherman is hoping that DNA and other evidence—including some newly discovered in a medical examiner's office—will lead investigators away from DeSalvo and toward his aunt's real killer.

Sherman began studying the Strangler as a journalism student at Boston University in the early 1990s. "My family never believed DeSalvo was the Strangler. I wanted to prove that it was him, to bring some closure. But all the evidence points away from DeSalvo."

His own belief is that the death of his aunt came at the hands of a man still alive, still living in New England, someone who knew his aunt and failed two police lie-detector tests. Sherman has not identified the suspect, but he has spoken with him and made his accusation known. "Once we exonerate DeSalvo, we will go after the prime suspect," he said. DeSalvo's confession, he says, allowed investigators to wrap things up neatly, despite the doubts of many.

Sherman and WBZ-TV have already done several pieces on the Strangler case for WBZ-TV, and his work is gaining notoriety outside Boston. He has even debated one of DeSalvo's lawyers: F. Lee Bailey, to whom DeSalvo confessed the killings. ■

StationBreak

BY DAN TRIGOBOFF

WAMI(TV) BAGS NEWS

Only days before its announced sale by USA to Univision but after ratings that continued to disappoint at the end of two years, WAMI(TV) Miami will discontinue its newscast after this Friday. *The Times* was an ambitious news-with-attitude project from Barry Diller's company but managed a regular viewing audience of only about 10,000 in the large Miami-Fort Lauderdale market.

The station tried various changes to attract an audience, including time-switches and twice-nightly runs. The decision to drop the newscast—the company's only one—puts 27 full-time staffers out of work. The staff had been a bit larger, but some staffers left in anticipation of the newscast's being dropped.

News Director David Silverstein said he and his staff had a great run and "I've loved every minute of it. We had two of the biggest stories in the country down here [Elián González and the Florida-centered election con-

troversies], and we had a field day with them. We had a talented and dedicated group here. This has been the best experience I've ever had" in TV news."

WBBM-TV SETS ANCHOR TEAM

WBBM-TV Chicago last week named David Kerley and Tracy Townsend the new anchor team for its 5 and 10 p.m. newscasts, beginning Jan. 15. Kerley has been co-anchoring the late news since Carol Marin's newscast was discontinued in late October. His co-anchor, Linda MacLennan, who had been co-anchor of the late news before Marin, will now anchor at 11 a.m. as well as solo-anchor the 4:30 p.m. newscast she has been anchoring. Ratings for the temporary team were up over the previous sweeps periods. Townsend comes to Chicago from CBS' Kansas City affiliate KCTV(TV), where she anchored the 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. news.

There had been much speculation about who the station's

anchors might be after Marin went back to reporting full time for CBS News and *60 Minutes II* following her highly praised but low-rated effort. That speculation included former *Later Today* host Asha Blake and CBS News correspondent Randall Pinkston.

DEFAME AND FORTUNE?

According to local reports, an Orem, Utah, physician won a \$3 million verdict against KTVX(TV) Salt Lake City for hidden-camera stories aired in 1995 and 1996 that portrayed the doctor as an irresponsible dispenser of diet pills.

Most of the damages, \$2.2 million, were based on economic loss from what the jury determined was defamation and showing the doctor in a false light. The rest of the award was in punitive damages.

Station officials did not comment last week on the likelihood of an appeal but, historically, the media frequently fares better on appeal than at trial in defamation cases.

VETERAN BAY AREA NEWSMAN RETIRES

Dave McElhattan, a 50-year veteran of the broadcasting industry, retired from his anchor job at KPIX(TV) San Francisco.

Springing it on viewers rather suddenly, McElhattan told them that "this is my final newscast for Eyewitness News. For some time, I had been hearing the clock tick louder and louder." Approaching his 72nd birthday, he said he "decided to quit while I'm ahead. I don't want to wait until I'm too old to enjoy retirement. Why such short notice? The answer is I'm an Irish marshmallow ... I'm a great hello but terrible at goodbye. But goodbye it is and, as I used to say on the 11 o'clock news, good luck."

In his lengthy career as a broadcaster, McElhattan had two employers: KCBS radio and KPIX television—something short of the average for a 50-year TV news career.

BATTLE OF THE BULBS

WHDH-TV Boston claimed victory in the Holiday Tree Lighting category, scoring a 7.8 rating/15 share for its Saturday, Dec. 2, Prudential Center tree-lighting show. WCVB-TV drew a 4.2 rating/7 share for its Sunday-night Boston Common tree-illuminating ceremony.

All news is local. Contact Dan Trigoboff at (301) 260-0923, e-mail dtrig@erols.com, or fax (202) 463-3742.



Santa Pops

WCVB-TV Boston's two-hour Christmas celebration with the Boston Pops aired last Friday in Boston and will air on cable net A&E this Friday.

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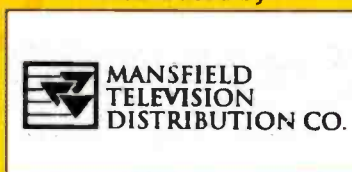
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CableWatch

NOV. 27-DEC. 3 Cable programing ratings according to Nielsen Media Research

C A B L E ' S T O P 2 0

Following are the top 25 basic cable programs for the week of Nov.27-Dec.3 ranked by rating. Cable rating is coverage area rating within each basic cable network's universe; U.S. rating is of 100.8 million TV households. Sources: Nielsen Media Research, Turner Entertainment.

Rank	Program	Network	Day	Time	Duration	Rating		HHS (000)	Cable Share
						Cable	U.S.		
1	NFL/Lions/Vikings	ESPN	Thu	8:30P	186	7.4	6.0	5907	11.3
2	NFL/Packers/Bears	ESPN	Sun	8:30P	182	6.4	5.2	5151	9.5
3	WWF Entertainment	TNT	Mon	10:00P	68	5.4	4.3	4284	8.5
4	m/Dune Part I"	SCFI	Sun	9:00P	121	4.6	4.6	3062	6.6
5	WWF Entertainment	TNT	Mon	p900P	60	4.4	3.5	3484	6.0
6	NFL Primetime	ESPN	Sun	7:30P	58	5.7	3.0	3025	5.7
7	m/"The Wedding Singer"	TNT	Sun	8:00P	120	3.6	2.9	2900	5.0
8	SR/Gore National Address	FOXN	Mon	8:55P	6	3.5	2.0	1990	4.9
9	Rugrats	NICK	Sun	9:00A	30	3.4	2.7	2687	9.7
10	Rugrats	NICK	Sun	9:30A	30	3.3	2.6	2643	9.0
11	Spongebob	NICK	Sat	10:30A	30	3.2	2.6	2575	9.3
11	Rugrats	NICK	Sat	9:30A	30	3.2	2.5	2521	9.3
13	m/"The Wedding Singer"	TNT	Fri	8:00P	120	3.1	2.5	2490	5.2
13	Rugrats	NICK	Tue	7:30P	30	3.1	2.5	2474	4.8
13	Rugrats	NICK	Sat	9:00A	30	3.1	2.5	2451	9.5
16	Spongebob	NICK	Sat	10:00A	30	3.0	2.4	2404	8.6
16	Rugrats	NICK	Mon	7:30P	30	3.0	2.4	2384	4.6
16	Rugrats	NICK	Mon	4:30P	30	3.0	2.4	2365	7.0
16	Spongebob	NICK	Sun	10:30A	30	3.0	2.4	2355	7.6
16	Wild Thornberrys	NICK	Mon	5:30P	30	3.0	2.4	2340	5.8

D E M O T R A C K E R : F E M A L E S 1 8 - 4 9

Following are the top-10 basic cable programs for the week of Nov. 27-Dec. 3, ranked by rating. Cable rating is coverage area rating within each basic cable network's universe; U.S. rating is of 100.8 million TV households. Source: Fox Family Channel

Rank	Program	Network	Day	Time	Duration	Rating		HHS (000)	Cable Share
						Cable	U.S.		
1	m/"The Wedding Singer"	TNT	Sun	8:00P	120	3.1	2.4	1528	6.6
2	WWF Entertainment	TNN	Mon	10:00P	68	3.0	2.3	1476	7.4
3	m/"The Wedding Singer"	TNT	Fri	8:00P	120	2.5	2	1229	7.2
4	Saturday Movie	LIF	Sat	4:00P	120	2.5	2	1239	11.2
5	NFL Regular Season	ESPN	Sun	8:28P	186	2.4	1.9	1201	6.3
6	WWF Entertainment	TNN	Mon	9:00P	60	2.4	1.9	1191	5.2
7	NFL Regular Season	ESPN	Sun	8:28P	182	2.3	1.8	1159	5.5
8	SFC Original Movie	SCFI	Sun	9:00P	121	2.3	1.6	1007	5.3
9	m/"The Wedding Singer"	TNT	Fri	10:00P	120	2.3	1.9	1168	7.1
10	TNT Sunday Movie	TNT	Sun	6:00P	120	2.2	1.8	1111	6.3

Premieres boost cable nets

Showtime, Court TV pull in big numbers with new original fare

By Deborah D. McAdams

Say what you will, murder and sexuality make for popular television. Showtime's debut of *Queer as Folk* doubled the network's prime time average rating, and Court TV's new reality series about life in a homicide unit delivered a record number of households on its first night out.

The Sunday-night Showtime debut of *Queer*, the serial drama about gay life in Pittsburgh, pulled in a 4.5 rating with a little over 1 million households. That's the highest rating of any series premiere on the network in three years. It will continue to occupy the Sunday 10 p.m. spot.

On Court, the first of three consecutive episodes of *Brooklyn North Homicide*

Squad premiered Tuesday, Dec. 5, at 10 p.m. to a 1.1/528,000 households. *Brooklyn* set a record for Tuesday nights and delivered the most households ever for Court.

Homicide Squad will be run as a series of docu-specials, the first three having run on consecutive nights last week. The next premieres will come in late March or early April, and, depending on ratings, the show may travel to different units throughout the country, a Court spokeswoman said. ■

Syndication Watch

NOV. 20-26 *Syndicated programming ratings according to Nielsen Media Research*

TOP 20 SHOWS

Rank/Program	HH AA	HH GAA
1. Wheel of Fortune	9.6	9.6
2. Jeopardy	7.8	7.8
3. Judge Judy	6.7	9.6
4. Wheel of Fortune (wknd)	6.1	6.1
5. Entertainment Tonight	5.9	5.9
6. Friends	5.4	6.2
7. Oprah	5.2	5.3
8. Seinfeld	4.8	4.8
9. Frasier	4.4	4.
10. Entertainment Tonight (wknd)	4.2	4.3
11. Judge Joe Brown	3.8	5.0
12. X-Files	3.7	4.1
12. Andromeda	3.7	3.9
12. Live With Regis	3.7	3.7
15. Jerry Springer	3.6	3.9
15. Maury	3.6	3.7
15. Seinfeld (wknd)	3.6	3.6
18. Friends (wknd)	3.5	3.9
19. Drew Carey	3.3	3.6
20. Stargate SG-1	3.3	3.4
20. Xena	3.3	3.4
20. Hollywood Squares	3.3	3.3
20. Montel Williams	3.3	3.3

TOP MAGAZINE SHOWS

	HH AA	HH GAA
1. Entertainment Tonight	5.9	5.9
2. Entertainment Tonight (wknd)	4.2	4.3
3. Extra	3.1	3.2
4. Inside Edition	3.0	3.0
5. Access Hollywood	2.3	2.4

According to Nielsen Media Research Syndication Service Ranking Report Nov. 20-26, 2000

HH/AA = Average Audience Rating (households)

HH/GAA = Gross Aggregate Average

One Nielsen Rating = 1,008,000 households, which represents 1% of the 100.8 million TV Households in the United States

N/A = not available

20 years old and still growing

Conventional wisdom says, the longer a show is on the air, the less desirable it ultimately becomes. But after 20 years, with 1,000 episodes under its belt, *Entertainment Tonight's* weekend edition is still fattening its audience base.

ET Weekend posted an average weighted metered-market 4.8 rating/10 share during last month's sweeps period, a 9% jump from November 1999, according to Nielsen Media Research. Paramount's showbiz series has also expanded well past its competitors, placing a clear first among syndicated weekly hours.

Far behind *ET Weekend*, by 66%, is *Xena: Warrior Princess* (2.9/6, down 6% from the same time last year). Following *Xena* are *Stargate SG-1* (2.9/6, flat); *ER* (2.8/7, flat); and *Andromeda* (2.8/5, down 3%). One of the few syndicated efforts to show growth last month, *ET Weekend* is doing better than such syndicated stalwarts as *Oprah* (6.1/15, down 9%) and *Judge Judy* (5.1/11, down 7%).

"I think it's hard for people to accept the fact that, as *ET Weekend* has gotten older, its ratings

have gone up. It's unusual," says Frank Kelly, co-president of

Paramount Domestic Television Distribution, who can also point to an upswing in *ET's* daily version (6.8/11, up 6%), also in its 20th season.

Kelly attributes *ET Weekend's* viewer surge to the show's recent switch to a Hollywood-nostalgia format, which is completely different from the strip edition's late-breaking entertainment-news focus. Up until last year, viewers weren't watching *ET* on Saturday and Sundays because "it suffered from the perception that it was just like the Monday through Friday show," Kelly explains.

Now *ET Weekend*, hosted by Julie Moran, Mark Steines and Jann Carl, crafts such segments as November's "Whatever Happened To..." "TV's Biggest Scandals" and "Famous Hollywood Firings."

Linda Bell Blue, executive producer of both *ET Weekend* and *ET*, thanks November's never-ending election for driving viewers to *ET Weekend*: "People were inundated with information about the election, and this was an escapist place to turn."

—Susanne Ault



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Source: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH, NOV. 2000 SWEEP, M-F.
#1 talk show ranked by HH (Reg. Str. History) WRAP Sweeps (1996-1999).
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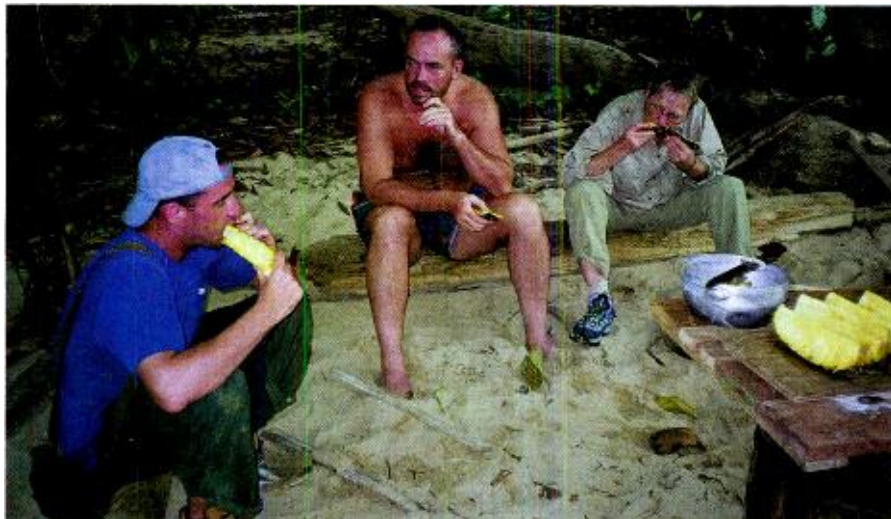
BroadcastWatch

COMPILED BY KENNETH RAY

NOV. 27-DEC. 3 Broadcast network prime time ratings according to Nielsen Media Research

Week	abc	CBS	NBC	FOX	PAX TV	UPN	WB
9	11.1/17	9.9/15	8.2/12	8.4/12	1.0/1	2.5/4	4.4/6
8:00	50. 20/20 Downtown 7.4/12	28. King of Queens 9.0/14	47. Crocodile Hunter: On Camera 7.7/11	45. Boston Public 7.8/11	134. Miracle Pets 0.7/1	102. Moesha 2.6/4	63. 7th Heaven 6.0/9
8:30		28. Yes, Dear 9.0/13				104. The Parkers 2.5/4	
9:00	7. NFL Monday Night Football—Green Bay Packers vs. Carolina Panthers 12.5/21	3. Ev Lvs Raymd 13.1/18	45. Law & Order 7.8/11	27. Ally McBeal 9.1/13	128. Touched by an Angel 0.9/1	102. The Hughleys 2.6/4	100. Roswell 2.9/4
9:30		11. Becker 11.7/17				107. Girlfriends 2.3/3	
10:00		39. Family Law 8.3/14	28. Third Watch 9.0/14		119. Diagnosis Murder 1.3/2		
10:30							
9	9.6/15	9.7/15	8.4/13	7.1/11	1.1/2	3.1/5	3.4/5
8:00	2. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? 14.3/21	23. JAG 9.6/14	78. Mich Richards 5.3/8	54. That '70s Show 7.1/11	128. Mysterious Ways 0.9/1	97. UPN's Movie Tuesday—The Players Club 3.1/5	94. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 3.6/5
8:30			74. 3rd Rock fr/Sun 5.5/8	61. Titus 6.1/9			
9:00	33. Dharma & Greg 8.8/13	39. 60 Minutes II 8.3/12	8. Frasier 12.1/18	47. Dark Angel 7.7/11	123. Touched by an Angel 1.1/2		96. Angel 3.2/5
9:30	50. Geena Davis 7.4/11		25. DAG 9.5/14				
10:00	60. Once and Again 6.3/10	14. Judging Amy 11.2/18	28. Dateline NBC 9.0/15		122. Diagnosis Murder 1.2/2		
10:30							
9	11.6/18	5.8/9	11.0/17	4.2/6	1.2/2	3.4/5	3.4/5
8:00	1. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? 15.0/23	63. Bette 6.0/9	49. Christmas at Rockefeller Ctr 7.5/11	70. Malcolm/Middle 5.8/9	131. Twice in a Lifetime 0.8/1	95. Star Trek: Voyager 3.6/5	93. Dawson's Creek 3.8/6
8:30		81. Welcome to NY 5.0/7		84. Normal, Ohio 4.8/7			
9:00	21. Drew Carey 10.0/15	36. CBS Wednesday Movie—A Perfect Murder 8.4/13	6. The West Wing 12.6/19	97. The Street 3.1/5	116. Touched by an Angel 1.5/2		97. Felicity 3.1/5
9:30	35. Spin City 8.7/13						
10:00	20. David Blaine: Frozen in Time 10.1/16		5. Law & Order 12.9/21		119. Diagnosis Murder 1.3/2		
10:30							
9	10.3/16	6.7/10	10.7/16	4.5/7	1.0/2	4.4/7	3.1/5
8:00	66. Whose Line Is It 5.9/9	41. 48 Hours 8.2/13	10. Friends 11.9/19	82. Britney: No Place Like Home 4.9/7	126. It's a Miracle 1.0/2	88. WWF Smackdown! 4.4/7	107. Gilmore Girls 2.3/4
8:30	54. Whose Line 7.1/11		33. Cursed 8.8/13				
9:00	3. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? 13.1/19	74. City of Angels 5.5/8	19. Will & Grace 10.3/15	91. NSync 'Ntimate Holiday Special 4.1/6	126. Touched by an Angel 1.0/2		101. Charmed 2.7/4
9:30			21. Just Shoot Me 10.0/15				
10:00	13. Primetime 11.3/18	50. Diagnosis Murder 6.5/10	11. ER 11.7/19		123. Diagnosis Murder 1.1/2		
10:30							
9	6.0/10	6.8/12	9.0/16	4.0/7	1.1/2	1.4/2	2.1/4
8:00	50. America's Funniest Videos 7.4/13	72. The Fugitive 5.7/10	50. Providence 7.4/13	92. Fox Movie Special—Anastasia 4.0/7	131. Encounters With the Unexplained 0.8/1	116. Freedom 1.5/3	107. Sabrina/Witch 2.3/4
8:30							104. Sabrina/Witch 2.5/4
9:00	86. Norm 4.7/8	44. C.S.I. 8.1/14	36. Dateline NBC 8.4/14		123. Touched by an Angel 1.1/2	119. Level 9 1.3/2	111. Popular 1.9/3
9:30	89. Madigan Men 4.3/7						
10:00	61. 20/20 6.1/11	58. Elton John: Greatest Hits 6.6/11	17. Law & Order: Special Victims Unit 11.1/19		116. Diagnosis Murder 1.5/3		
10:30							
9	7.9/14	5.9/10	5.1/9	5.2/9	0.6/1	KEY: RANKING/SHOW TITLE/PROGRAM RATING/SHARE • TOP TEN SHOWS OF THE WEEK ARE NUMBERED IN RED • TV UNIVERSE ESTIMATED AT 102.2 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS; ONE RATINGS POINT IS EQUAL TO 1,022,000 TV HOMES • YELLOW TINT IS WINNER OF TIME SLOT • (NR)=NOT RANKEO; RATING/SHARE ESTIMATED FOR PERIOD SHOWN • *PREMIERE • PROGRAMS LESS THAN 15 MINUTES IN LENGTH NOT SHOWN • S-T-D = SEASON TO DATE • SOURCES: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH, CBS RESEARCH	
8:00	41. Big 12 Championship—Oklahoma vs. Kansas State 8.2/15	66. Frosty/Snowmn 5.9/11	80. NBC Saturday Night Movies—The Arrival 5.1/9	84. Cops 4.8/9	136. Miracle Pets 0.6/1		
8:30		66. Frosty Returns 5.9/10		74. Cops 5.5/10			
9:00		63. Ice Wars: USA vs. The World 6.0/10		79. Guinness World Records 5.2/9	134. Twice in a Lifetime 0.7/1		
9:30					136. Mysterious Ways 0.6/1		
10:00							
10:30							
9	7.7/12	10.9/16	6.0/9	7.3/11	0.8/1	1.9/3	
7:00	73. Winnie the Pooh 5.6/9	(nr) NFL Game 2 12.3/21	54. World's Most Amazing Videos 7.1/11	89. Futurama 4.3/7	138. Encounters With the Unexplained 0.5/1	113. Jamie Foxx 1.8/3	
7:30	70. Tangerine Bear 5.8/9	9. 60 Minutes 12.0/18		74. King of the Hill 5.5/9		113. The PJs 1.8/3	
8:00	86. Christina Aguilera: My Reflection 4.7/7	14. Touched by an Angel 11.2/16	54. Dateline NBC 7.1/10	28. The Simpsons 9.0/13	128. It's a Miracle 0.9/1	110. Steve Harvey 2.0/3	
8:30				36. Malcolm/Midd 8.4/12		115. Hype 1.7/2	
9:00	14. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? 11.2/16	23. CBS Sunday Movie—Papa's Angels 9.6/15	82. NBC Sunday Night Movie—The John Lennon Story: In His Life 4.9/7	41. The X-Files 8.2/12	131. Pax Big Event—An Unexpected Family 0.8/1	106. Nikki 2.4/3	
9:30						111. Grosse Pointe 1.9/3	
10:00	26. The Practice 9.4/15						
10:30							
AVERAGE WEEK	9.1/14	8.3/13	8.2/13	5.9/9	1.0/2	3.0/5	
S-T-D	9.0/15	8.6/14	8.7/14	6.7/11	0.9/1	2.8/4	

Business



Like the original (pictured), *Survivor II* is expected bring in big numbers.

CBS' sunny forecast

NBC and News Corp. notwithstanding, Viacom's Karmazin says his ad sales will rise about 11% this quarter

By Steve McClellan

While NBC and News Corp. have imposed hiring freezes as a result of what they see as a softening advertising economy, Viacom President Mel Karmazin says the ad business is "better today than ever before." At least that's what he told attendees at last week's Credit Suisse First Boston Media Conference in New York. (Company Chairman Sumner Redstone delivered the same message to those attending the UBS Media Conference, also held last week in New York.)

Karmazin said the company's TV, radio and cable sectors would show sales gains in the 11% range (pro forma) in the fourth quarter despite the collapse of the dotcom spending that gave a huge boost to the fourth quarter in 1999. "The overall climate for advertising is really good," said Karmazin.

Karmazin said Wall Street was "sort of screwed up" for punishing media stocks on as yet unproven speculation that the economy is headed toward a major slowdown. "I

wish there was a recession so we could show how well we can perform in one," he said.

Karmazin said CBS is 95% sold out for the first quarter of 2001, when the network has the Super Bowl, *Survivor II* and the NCAA College Basketball Tournament.

Indeed, Super Bowl Sunday may set a

record for the most revenue generated by a broadcaster in one day, Redstone told his audience. Game-related fare on Super Bowl Sunday (Jan. 28) will rake in more than \$200 million in advertising for the CBS network (more than \$150 million) and stations (\$50 million), sources say. That doesn't include *Survivor: The Australian Outback*, set to debut after the game. That show has nine sponsors spending between \$12 million and \$13 million over the series 13-week run, plus additional advertisers buying smaller amounts of time.

CBS will produce 19 hours of Super Bowl XXXV-related programming over the weekend that the Big Game is played, most of it targeted not to hard-core sports fans but to those millions who simply tune in to see what all the excitement is about.

But game-focused sports nuts don't have to tune in until about 5:30 p.m. on game day, said CBS Sports President Sean McManus. After that, it will be all business through the conclusion of the game, which is scheduled to start at approximately 6:25 p.m. in Tampa, Fla., with Greg Gumbel and Phil Simms in the announcers' booth. "No one has ever devoted the resources to produce so much diverse programming," around the Super Bowl as CBS is, said McManus. ■



CBS also expects to be a big winner on Super Bowl Sunday Jan. 28.

ONE MONTH. ONE NETWORK.

#



UP 70%



#1 SHOW



UP 124%



UP 49%

This November Sweep, NBC finished #1 in adults 18-49 as well as in homes, outperforming all other networks in Primetime.



UP 25% IN TIME PERIOD



#1 NEWSMAGAZINE



#1 COMEDY



BEST ADULTS 18-49



UP 26%

PRIMETIME.

NBC IS FIRST

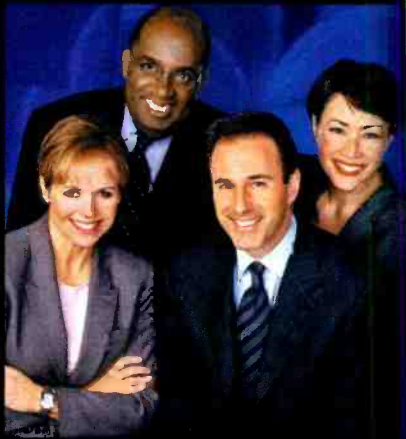
Primetime Nov. 2000 Sweep (11/2-11/29/00 - includes preliminaries). NTA AA% estimates for A1849 and HH for average primetime daypart. NTA A1849 AA% estimates for regular programs Nov. 2000 sweep v. Nov. 1999 sweep. Subject to qualifications upon request.

ONE REMARKABLE PERFORMANCE.

#



UP 26% BEST SWEEP SINCE 1993

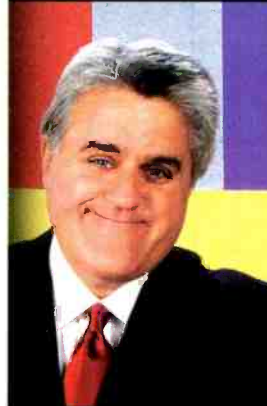


UP 27% BIGGEST SWEEP



BIGGEST SWEEP EVER

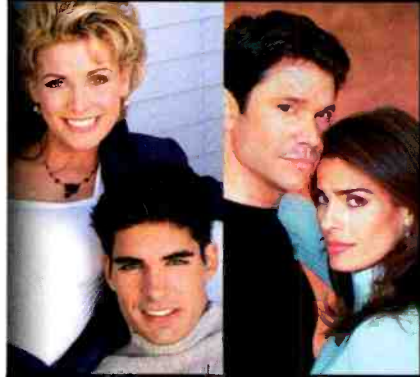
And NBC is #1 in key demos across every part of the schedule – Morning, Daytime, News, Late Night and Primetime.



BEST SWEEP SINCE 1997



BEST SWEEP SINCE 1997



BEST SWEEP SINCE 1997



UP 62% BIGGEST SWEEP

ALL DAY LONG.
THIS NOVEMBER.

NBC's AA* (unless noted) estimates for regular programs during Nov. sweeps, Nov. 2000 sweep: 11/21/29/00 (includes preliminaries). Historical references date back as noted or through Nov. 1997 sweep. Percent increase for Nov. 2000 sweep v. Nov. 1999 sweep. Morning (A2554). M-F Today Show v. Good Morning America (includes Early Show 1 & 2, Meet The Press v. Face The Nation, This Week and Fox News Sunday, Daytime (W1849)). NBC v. ABC & CBS daytime. News (A2554). M-F NBC Nightly News v. ABC World News Tonight and CBS Evening News; Late Night (A1849). Tonight Show v. Late Show/David Letterman and Nightline/Politically Incorrect, Conan O'Brien (AA (000)) v. Late Late Show/Craig Kilborn and Saturday Night (AA (C00)) v. MAD TV. Subject to qualifications upon request.

As the digital world churns

Cable operators are finding out that customers of new services are tough to keep

By John M. Higgins

For all cable operators' boasts about the success of digital cable, many consumers are subscribing and canceling the new services at a high rate.

Cable operators report that they are seeing churn rates of around 5% a month, meaning that 60% of digital customers will disconnect service within a year.

That's about the churn rate seen for years by pay services Home Box Office and Showtime. But it's higher than cable executives had expected when they started launching fat packages of digital services, and it has remained stubbornly high.

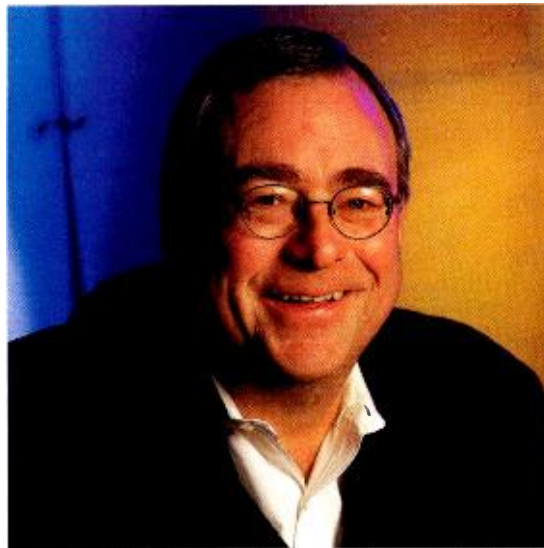
Digital cable is one of cable's chief weapons against direct-broadcast-satellite services and their ability to offer 200-plus channels.

By digitally compressing seven to 10 channels into the 6 MHz space soaked up by a conventional analog-TV signal, cable operators can add a few dozen extra "basic" and pay-movie channels, plus 30 or more pay-per-view channels for an extra \$15 to \$20 in monthly revenue.

About 16% of all cable homes now also subscribe to digital packages.

But wary DBS executives are gloating at the rate of digital cable churn, with Eddy Hartenstein, senior vice president of DirecTV parent Hughes Electronics, noting that DBS churn is still just 1.5% monthly.

Reviewing Cox Communications' digital churn rates at UBS Warburg's media-investment conference in New York last week, Cox CFO Jimmy Hayes said that when systems initially introduce digital, churn runs 7% to 8% month-



AT&T Broadband's Dan Somers says only that his digital churn runs about the same as for basic cable.

Cox CFO Jimmy Hayes says that, when systems initially introduce digital, churn runs 7% to 8% monthly. But that generally settles down to a more manageable 4% to 5% after several months.

ly, or 84% to 96% annually. That means the systems' entire digital-customer base would turn over within a year. But it generally settles down to a more manageable 4% to 5% after several months and initial aggressive marketing campaigns fade somewhat.

Hayes said that the high rate comes from heavy initial marketing, "I don't want to say forcing the sell, but pushing it," Hayes said. That drives heavier sampling but also heavier churn.

Comcast and Charter are seeing digital churn around 5% as well. AT&T Broadband Chairman Dan Somers would not detail his digital

churn, saying it runs about the same rate as the cable division's basic churn. But an AT&T executive said the digital churn is running about 5%.

Churn is nasty business for cable opera-

tors because, to maintain growth, they need to first replace all the customers they've lost, then find new ones. For years, basic-cable churn has averaged around 25% annually. Some of the churn is easily explainable: People move. Every time a cable customer gets a new house or apartment, he or she disconnects cable in one place and connects it in another.

The rest is from lost customers, often to DBS service, bad debt or people who simply drop out.

Pay-TV churn has typically run far higher, as systems entice new basic subscribers with

cheap HBO or Showtime deals. They often disconnect as soon as the cheap price expires. The pay services spend hundreds of millions of dollars on marketing, particularly in support to cable operators, to maintain their subscriber base.

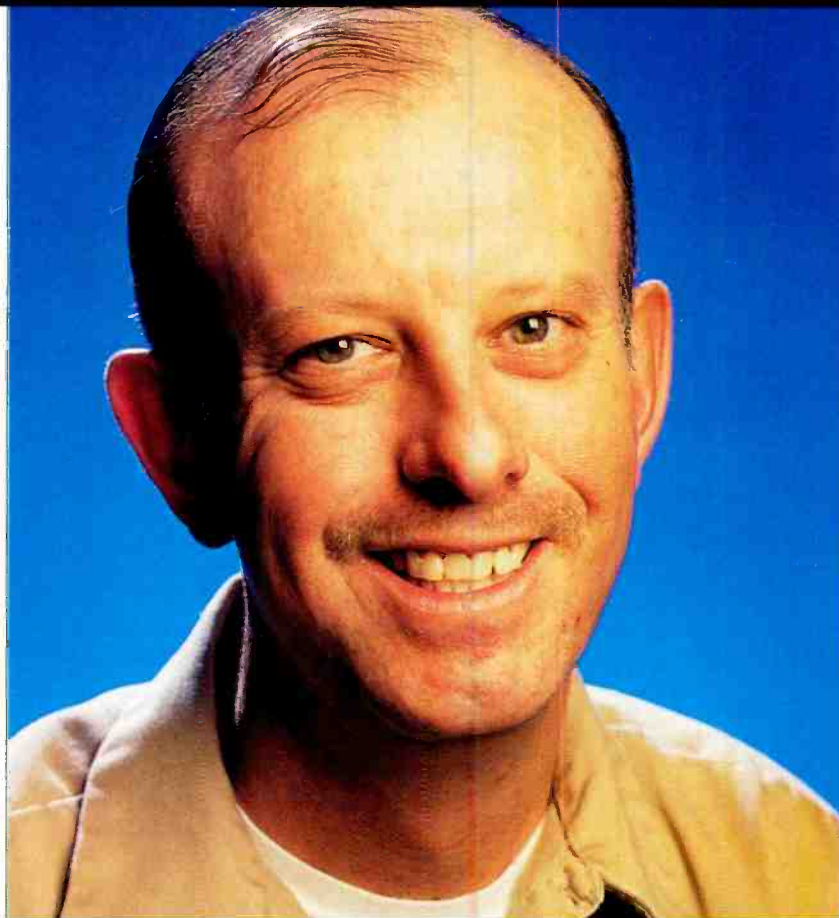
UBS Warburg cable analyst Tom Eagan says he's not alarmed at the rate of digital churn, but he'd like to see improvement. Pay-TV networks have built multibillion-dollar companies despite their high churn rates. The major difference is that cable systems need to recover pricey \$300 digital converters from a canceled subscriber's house.

"Digital churn costs more," Eagan said.

Adelphia Communications Treasurer Jim Brown said that churn levels vary depending on how advanced a system was to begin with. His company's churn rate is running just 2.5%, but that's because digital has been rolled out largely in low-capacity systems where customers were hungry for more channels.

"When you already have 75 to 80 channels," Brown said, "companies are seeing higher turnover." ■

This OTG Hero's So Good Even the Governor Noticed.



To build loyalty and succeed, you have to treat the customer right.

Midcontinent Communications, Service Technician, Neal Gunderson

"When the envelope arrived, I was really surprised," says Neal Gunderson, service technician for Midcontinent Communications in Watertown, SD. He's talking about a letter and Certificate of Recognition from South Dakota's governor commending him for his outstanding service. The governor sends out a small number of special certificates each year to award skill and hospitality in serving customers. ✉ don't know who brought me to the

governor's attention," notes Neal. But his colleagues have some ideas. "Neal's top goal is to be helpful to people," says Paul Foust, Local Systems Manager. "He went into an assisted living facility to install service and ended up programming the customer's TV for her. At another customer's house, he did some extra re-wiring for free to make sure the reception would be the clearest possible. He doesn't stop until the customer is satisfied – and he

always manages to be on time!" ✉ Neal's philosophy is simple: Be on time. Be friendly. Do the job right. And explain everything – so people can get the most out of their cable service. ✉ "To build loyalty and succeed, you have to treat the customer right," says Neal. "Cable's On-Time Guarantee (OTG) is part of what tells folks we'll do just that." ✉ Neal Gunderson proves it: When the OTG is combined with great service... people notice!



Emmis, DirecTV hit impasse in Portland

Chairman Smulyan refuses to just 'give' his signal away

By Elizabeth A. Rathbun

Still angered by broadcast TV's "give-away" of their channels to cable in the 1970s, Emmis Communications Chairman Jeffrey H. Smulyan says he's not going to take it anymore. This time, he wants to be paid for his local TV stations' products.

Smulyan is the first broadcaster to take a public stand against what he labels "outrageous" offers from satellite-TV companies for local TV signals. In his case, Hughes Electronics' DirecTV has offered pennies per subscriber to carry Emmis' KOIN(TV) Portland, Ore. CBS affiliate KOIN has not been available to DirecTV customers since the satellite-delivered service launched in the market on Aug. 25.

Although some KOIN wannabe viewers have complained, Smulyan says his strategy is "sit there and wait. We're just not going to give our signal away."

DirecTV charges \$5.99 per month per subscriber for local stations—meanwhile offering the four local stations a total of 40 cents per subscriber. That's just 10 cents per viewer, KOIN General Manager Peter Maroney said in the Nov. 24 edition of the *Portland Business Journal*. Maroney did not return a telephone call last week seeking comment.

"Whether they're offering 10 cents a month, five cents or 12 cents, they're charging \$1.50 per subscriber for *my* signal," Smulyan says of DirecTV. And there's no way it costs DirecTV that much to provide the signal, he says.

Nonsense, DirecTV spokesman Robert Mercer responds. "We're using *extremely* valuable capacity ... and it *is* expensive" to carry local TV stations, he says. While Mercer declines to disclose any financial details, he says DirecTV made "a very fair

offer [to Emmis]. It's the same offer that we've made to other stations in other markets" that were accepted.

DirecTV currently offers all Top Four network affiliates in almost all its 38 markets.

DirecTV competitor EchoStar Communications has retrans agreements with all top-four affiliates in the 34 markets where it currently offers its Dish Network satellite service, including Portland, EchoStar spokesman Mark Lupkin says.

He cannot disclose details of any agreements, but "they are on a case-by-case basis, and



Smulyan is the first broadcaster to take a public stand against offers he calls "outrageous."

they are negotiable."

Disagreements during retrans negotiations are not unusual. Most recently, on Sept. 29, Hearst-Argyle Television and EchoStar announced retrans agreements for NBC affiliates WLWT(TV) Cincinnati and WYFF(TV) Greenville, S.C. (Dish launched its service on other stations in those cities on Sept. 5.)

Not all broadcasters are as unhappy as Smulyan. One executive says his group, which owns mostly top-four affiliates, is "happy with the deals that we got" with satellite-TV providers.

Tongue-in-cheek—or maybe not—Smulyan says he is willing to break the impasse between KOIN and DirecTV: "I will pay all their costs and double it if they give me all the revenue." That's the same stand he will take should either DirecTV and/or EchoStar enter any other market where he owns TV stations, he says. ■

Not out of breath yet

Oxygen gets an infusion of new money from an old backer

By John M. Higgins

Following the trend of the "new" new economy, Oxygen Media raised another \$100 million from backer Paul Allen, then promptly restructured its Internet operation and laid off 10% of its workers.

It became increasingly clear that Oxygen's Internet strategy was overkill, with 17 different Web sites on topics of interest to women, such as beauty outlet Picky or Moms Online. But the sites were too expensive to produce and maintain.

So the company will boil the operation down to four sites: Oyg.com, Oprah, Young Audiences and health site Thrive. They may use much of the content of the folding sites, but the move will eliminate

technical costs, particularly since some of the sites were produced on disparate platforms.

The company will cut 44 full-time and 21 part-time workers and shutter its Seattle office.

Reducing the network's losses—which one industry executive pegged to be \$250 million so far—helped persuade Allen to re-up. Last year, he had put in \$100 million, buying somewhat safer preferred stock rather than straight common equity.

Oxygen Chairman Geraldine Laybourne said in a statement that, with the layoffs the company is "streamlining Oxygen's business by redirecting our resources and staffing, and consolidating our operations in New York." ■

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Changing Hands

TVs

WPRI-TV Providence, R.I.

Price: Estimated \$50 million-\$60 million
Buyer: Smith Broadcasting Partners LP, St. Petersburg, Fla. (Robert N. Smith, president/59% owner); owns Sunrise Television Corp., which owns/is buying 11 TVs, including WNAC-TV Providence.

Robert Smith also owns KEYT-TV-AM Santa Barbara, Calif.; 54.2% of Smith Broadcasting Group Inc., which controls three Alaska TVs, and 52% of company that owns 85% of WFFF-TV Burlington, Va. Smith also controls KOLO-TV Reno, Nev., and WETM-TV Elmira and WKTU-TV Utica, N.Y. Note: Because Providence lacks eight independent TV owners, Smith will have to divest WNAC-TV

Seller: Clear Channel Communications Inc., San Antonio (L. Lowry Mays, chairman; William R. "Rip" Riordan, chief operating officer, Clear Channel Television/executive vice president, Clear Channel Communications); owns/is buying 18 TVs and about 1,120 radio stations, including WHJJ(AM) and WWBB(FM) Providence, WHJY(FM) and WSNE(FM) Providence/Boston, and WJMN(FM) and WKXS-AM-FM Boston/Providence; has LMA with WNAC-TV Providence. Clear Channel also owns nearby WJMN(FM) Boston, WTAG(AM)-WSRS(FM) Worcester/Boston, Mass., and WGIR-FM Manchester, N.H./Boston. Note: Clear Channel bought WPRI-TV for \$68 million in May 1996 (see other items, below)

Facilities: Ch. 12, 316 kW visual, 31.6 kW aural, ant. 910 ft.

Affiliation: CBS

Combos

WRKD(AM)-WMCM(FM) Rockland/Portland/parts of Bangor, Maine

Price: \$3.5 million cash (includes two-year, \$5,000 noncompete agreement)

Buyer: Clear Channel (see preceding item; Randy Michaels, chairman, Clear Channel Radio); is buying the following Bangor-area FMs: WLKE Bar Harbor, WBFB Belfast/Brewer, WKSQ Ellsworth/Brewer, WVOM Howland, WGUY Dexter/Newport and WBVA Searsport (see other items, below)

Seller: Rockland Radio Corp., Rockland (Peter K. Orne, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: AM: 1450 kHz, 1 kW; FM:

Station Trades	
By dollar volume and number of sales; does not include mergers or acquisitions involving substantial non-station assets	
THIS WEEK	
TV/Radio	□ \$0 □ 0
TVs	□ \$60,000,000 □ 1
Combos	□ \$8,378,000 □ 4
FMs	□ \$174,450,000 □ 6
AMs	□ \$4,910,000 □ 5
Total	□ \$247,738,000 □ 16
SO FAR IN 2000	
TV/Radio	□ \$2,133,450 □ 1
TVs	□ \$1,243,026,089 □ 33
Combos	□ \$3,694,730,127 □ 105
FMs	□ \$1,623,540,292 □ 176
AMs	□ \$293,323,885 □ 116
Total	□ \$6,856,753,843 □ 431

103.3 MHz, 20.5 kW, ant. 771 ft.

Formats: AM: MOR, Beautiful Music, oldies; FM: country

Broker: Richard J. Hayes and Associates Inc. (seller)

WPTX(AM) (formerly WMDM)-WMDM-FM Lexington Park, Md./Washington

Price: \$2.25 million (includes three-year, \$100,000 noncompete agreement)

Buyer: Somar Communications Inc., La Plata, Md. (Roy E. Robertson Jr., president/50.6% owner); owns WKIK-FM California, WKIK(AM) La Plata and WSMD-FM Mechanicsville, Md.

Seller: Southern Maryland Broadcasting Corp., Potomac, Md. (Stephen J. Garchik, president/1% owner). Garchik owns 10% of four FMs and two AMs, all in Virginia

Facilities: AM: 1690 kHz, 10 kW day, 1 kW night; FM: 97.7 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 273 ft.

Formats: AM: news/talk; FM: country

Broker: Jack Maloney Inc. (seller)

WMRE(AM) Charles Town, W.Va./parts of Washington, WXVA-FM Charles Town, W.Va./parts of Washington and Baltimore

Price: \$1.525 million cash (includes two-year, \$5,000 noncompete agreement)

Buyer: Clear Channel (see preceding and following items); owns the following FMs reaching nearby Hagerstown, Md.: WFRE Frederick, Md./Washington, and WRVW

and WWKL-FM Harrisburg, Pa. Clear Channel also owns the following FMs in or reaching nearby Winchester, Va.: WFQX Front Royal, Va., WWDC-FM Washington/Hagerstown and WUSQ-FM Winchester/Hagerstown. Clear Channel also owns WGAY(AM) Washington, WWRC(AM) Bethesda, Md./Washington, WCAO(AM), WOCT(FM) and WPOC(FM) Baltimore, WFRE(FM) Frederick/Baltimore, WASH(FM) WJMO-FM, WMZQ-FM, WTEM(AM), WTOP-AM and WWDC-FM Washington/Baltimore, WTOP-FM Warrenton, Va./Washington/Baltimore and WBIG-FM Washington/Hagerstown/Baltimore

Seller: Heritage Broadcasting Co. LP, Thurmont, Md. (Charles R. Walmer, president/51% general partner). Walmer owns WTHU(AM) Thurmont

Facilities: AM: 1550 kHz, 5 kW; FM: 98.3 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 300 ft.

Formats: AM: adult standards; FM: country

Broker: Blackburn & Co. Inc. (seller)

WIKE(AM) Newport/Derby-WM00(FM) Derby Center/Derby/Newport, Vt.

Price: Up to \$1.103 million (included non-compete agreement)

Buyer: Northstar Media Inc., Haverhill, Mass. (William J. Macek, president/owner); no other broadcast interests

Seller: Steele Communications Co. Inc., Derby (Thomas Steele, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: AM: 1490 kHz, 1 kW; FM: 92.1 MHz, 2.25 kW, ant. 619 ft.

Formats: AM: country; FM: oldies, classic hits, AC

FMs

WNIB(FM) Chicago and WNIZ-FM Zion, Ill.

Price: \$165 million

Buyer: Bonneville International Corp., Salt Lake City (Bruce T. Reese, president; Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, owner); owns two TVs, 12 other FMs and five AMs, including WLUP-FM and WNND(FM) Chicago and WTMX(FM) Skokie/Chicago, Ill.

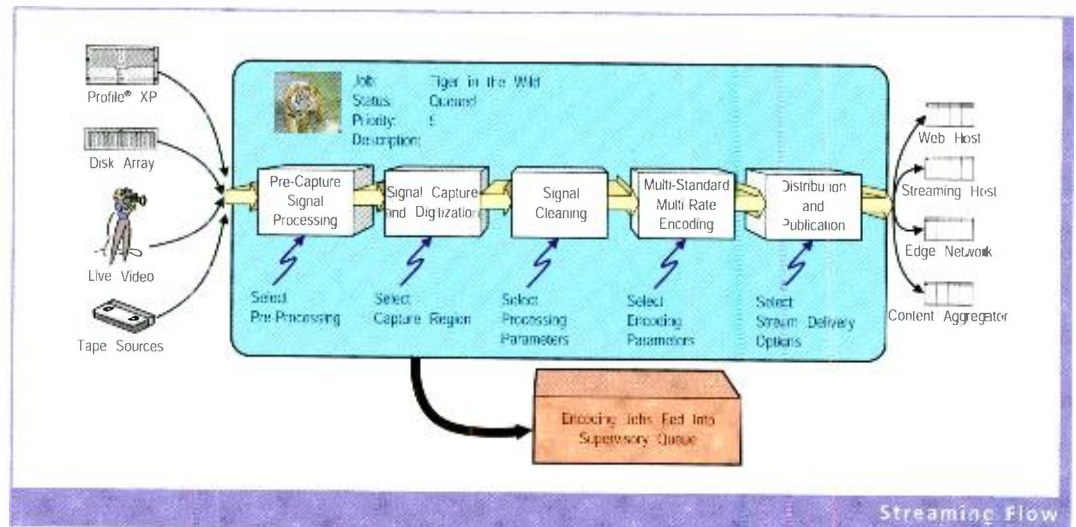
Seller: Northern Illinois Broadcasting Co., Chicago (William C. Florian, president/owner); no other broadcast interests.

Note: \$165 million is a record price for a Chicago FM

Facilities: WNIB: 97.1 MHz, 8.4 kW, ant. 1,196 ft.; WNIZ-FM: 96.9 MHz, 50 kW, ant.



TRUE STREAMING DEMANDS TOOLS, NOT TOYS



The future is all about streaming content. Streaming content is a lot about video. And the Grass Valley Group has four decades of expertise in dealing with both.

That's because traditional broadcasting *is* streaming. Substitute radio waves for data packets and rabbit ears for Ethernet jacks, and the concept is the same: move images and sound through a broad distribution network with the greatest quality possible. Where do you see the Grass Valley Group today? Look at the high-quality video on your television screen; more than 90% of television signals worldwide are touched by our hardware and software solutions.

As a company that works with the world's pre-eminent content creators, the Grass Valley Group has seen a tremendous amount of interest on the part of broadcasters and other professional content creators to integrate digital streaming into their production and distribution operations. From networks and post-production houses to broadband ISPs and Fortune 500 companies to encoding labs and services, these companies are metamorphosing into a new breed of content creators—Digicasters. These professionals recognize the key role that the

Internet and streaming media will play in digital entertainment, news, and services. Naturally, how the *μ*dc so depends on the adoption and deployment trajectories of broadband technologies. Nonetheless, they recognize that streaming will transform Web-based experiences and media, making them more compelling and interactive across multiple digital devices.

Get it right, and rich media and rich opportunities abound in this market.

Tools, Not Toys

Digicasters need tools, not toys, for streaming. And that's where the Grass Valley Group comes in.

Short on time and long on content, Digicasters want to streamline and simplify the manner in which they re-purpose their content for the Web and e-commerce venues. They want a Web publishing application that will associate the appropriate metadata with the mountains of digital assets through which they sift daily—descriptive information, pricing information, legal rights, content shelf life. They must have the ability to easily access any asset at any time regardless of the original application. And they want



2000: A hard act to follow

A 'soft landing' is expected next year, as the advertising market retreats from the exceptional gains of recent years

By Steve McClellan

When it comes to predicting next year's TV advertising outlook, it's all in the eye of the beholder. Several media executives offered widely varying opinions on the 2001 ad picture at last week's UBS Media Conference in New York.

What they did agree on was that there will be some growth but it will be smaller than the gains made in recent years. "Soft landing" was the term used by more than one expert to size up the 2001 ad market.

For network TV, the projections ranged from a bearish 1% gain (for ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox combined) to a somewhat more bullish 7% increase.

On the low end was Robert Coen's prediction. The senior vice president and director of forecasting for Universal McCann, the media-buying arm of McCann Erickson Worldwide, expects it to be "very difficult" for the networks to surpass what he considers exceptional performance in 2000. That performance was driven by first-half online marketers, the Olympics and a generally robust economy, he said.

A 1% gain would put ad revenue for the Big Four networks next year at about \$15.9 billion, Coen said.

CBS Executive Vice President, Planning and Research, David Poltrack projects a 7% gain in ad sales by the four major networks, to approximately \$16.8 billion. He cited double-digit prices already locked up from the upfront negotiations last spring. As for Coen's prediction, Poltrack proclaimed it "mathematically impossible,"

saying, "There would have to be no scatter market to come in at that level."

And Poltrack's calculation doesn't factor in 13 weeks of *Survivor II*, which wasn't negotiated in the upfront. But he did caution that his 7% prediction doesn't take into account a possible strike by both writers and actors. Such a strike could have an

audience-delivery impact of 5% to 10%, although there would be an equal or greater saving on the cost of entertainment programs not produced and aired, he said.

Between Coen and Poltrack on the optimism scale was Zenith Media Chairman and CEO John Perriss, who forecast 5% to 6% growth for U.S. television network advertising next year. Generally, he said, the ad business is headed for a "soft land-

ing" in 2001, with respectable growth rates smaller than this year's.

Even Coen said the overall outlook for advertising is "quite good. Nobody is expecting a recession in 2001." Total U.S. advertising will "come close to matching nominal GDP [gross domestic product]." Thus, he said, the ad climate will fall in between the two extremes of exceptionally robust and recessionary.

Poltrack did acknowledge fourth quarter 2000 softness in the ad economy, attributing it to the late Olympics, which drained some money out of the scatter market. The Olympics also delayed the start of the new season, which in turn reduced make-good liabilities (with the exception of *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*). That added inventory created a buyer's market, he observed.

The overall forecast is 'quite good. No one is expecting a recession in 2001.'

—Robert Coen, Universal McCann

But things will turn around in the first quarter, Poltrack said, because there will be no Olympics to suck money out of scatter. He also pointed out that upfront sellout rates for the first through third quarters are historically higher than in the fourth quarter and, at least for CBS, advertisers are not opting out of upfront commitments beyond expected levels. "There is no evidence to support a continuation of the supply-demand imbalance into the new year," he said.

Coen predicts a down year for the national spot television sector. Sales will drop 1%, to \$11.9 billion, he believes, noting the tough comparison with 2000, which had both the Olympics and the political elections.

Cable TV advertising should grow by 12.5%, to \$10.1 billion, next year, Coen said. Syndication TV advertising should be up 6%, to \$3.3 billion, and national radio 5.5%, to almost \$5 billion, he said. Local television advertising will grow 3%, to \$14 billion, while local radio will post a gain of 6.5%, to almost \$16 billion. ■

2001 Ad Outlook		
	\$billion	Change*
Network TV	\$15.9	+1%
National spot TV	\$11.9	-1%
Local TV	\$14.0	+3%
Cable	\$10.1	+13%
National radio	\$4.9	+6%
Local radio	\$15.8	+7%

*from 2000
Source: Universal McCann, New York. Note: Network TV estimate is for ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox combined.

Washington

FCC tech chief takes stock

Departing head of engineering and technology says he's still optimistic about DTV, argues that 8-VSB does what it was meant to do—deliver television to the home

By Bill McConnell

Three years after being hired by Chairman William Kennard, Dale Hatfield last week left his post as chief of the FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology. Somewhat weary of Washington, Hatfield is returning to his hometown of Boulder, Colo., to head the University of Colorado's interdisciplinary graduate program in telecommunications. FCC engineers were busy during Hatfield's watch, working doggedly, if not always successfully, to speed the digital TV transition, to create a low-power FM service and to make the spectrum more flexible. Hatfield shared some parting words with BROADCASTING & CABLE Assistant Editor Bill McConnell. An edited transcript follows.

As your tenure ends, the future of the digital TV transition is still very uncertain because of a variety of inter-industry conflicts. What do you make of the DTV mess?

I'm disappointed we're not further along. One thing I've gained in the last three years is an appreciation for the complexity of the digital transition. It's difficult because the industry is split into different parts and those parts have to cooperate to get the whole thing to work. But all have different incentives and different paces of wanting to do things.

There's no sign that cable, Hollywood and broadcasters will resolve the cable-compatibility and copy-protection issues soon. What can break the logjam so that consumers can have DTV sets worth buying—meaning ones that are



Photography by Amber Blursik

Hatfield testifies in Congress on the DTV transition.

cable-ready?

That's more the bailiwick of the lawyers. Giving them their due, the issue of how much protection you should give against unauthorized copying is value judgments. We engineers can talk about the technology necessary to give certain levels of protection, but, ultimately, how much society chooses is for private negotiations or the market. I would think with a new administration—no matter who it is—that's one of the fundamental issues: How activist a government you want in these areas.

The debate over the digital-modulation standard continues unabated, even as the FCC and industry groups wrap up

field tests. Is there reason for the FCC to undo its commitment to 8-VSB, particularly to aid indoor reception and foster development of mobile services?

I've not seen any evidence yet that calls into question the basic decision made in favor of 8-VSB. If you want the network to do something different than it was originally intended [video delivery, particularly high-definition] there will be tradeoffs. But for its original purpose, I'm very comfortable with the selection.

DTV was designed almost exclusively to provide HDTV. Now, many station owners say that might not be the right way to go. Shouldn't the FCC make sure the system can accommodate additional services, such as datacasting?

Broadcasters need to take advantage of their architecture. The clear message to me is they need to be broadcasters first. Additional services need to complement or extend the basic television experience. My optimism is first based on being able to do digital television, particularly HDTV. The Internet is wonderful at delivering one-to-one type stuff. Broadcast is really optimized for one to many, and what is needed is a smooth integration between the two.

In a controversial decision, the FCC has paved the way for a new competitor to cable by allowing a terrestrial multi-channel service in the satellite TV band. How confident are you this won't cause serious interference for direct-broadcast satellite customers?

This is where having internal engineers capable of understanding and doing

NATPE Buyer's Guide

What's on your shopping list?

1 Real Life Adventure
 2 Prime Time Comedies
 Movie of the Week
 Game Show
 1 Hospital Drama
 1 Nature Show
 2 Cartoons

More than browsing is necessary at this year's NATPE conference. With a plethora of new programs from talk shows to action adventures, this year is sure to be a programmer's lollapalooza.

Broadcasting & Cable's special issue contains a broadcaster's Buyer's Guide for the NATPE conference. It will feature detailed descriptions of the major new first-run and off-network offerings, with the latest on who's buying what shows. This special report is a must-have for industry leaders to get a jumpstart on what to expect at this year's conference.

This NATPE issue will reach thousands of industry leaders including key executives in the Broadcast, Cable, Satellite, DBS, Network, Advertising Agency, International and New Media segments. Reserve your space and reach over 36,000 industry leaders with your message on the lucrative shopping strategies of your company.

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Monday, Jan. 8, 2001

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Tuesday, Jan., 2001

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analysis is absolutely critical. I was proud of the job our engineers did. It was extremely complex and illustrates the stuff we have to do as spectrum is getting more and more valuable. We have to beef up our analytical techniques so we can safely allow sharing of the spectrum.

The creation of the terrestrial service and the approval of low-power radio have created a lot of political heat for the FCC. Has opposition from lawmakers colored your technical recommendations about these new services?

You just can't let that happen. That's for other people, the politically appointed people, to handle. I've always regarded my responsibility to do the engineering analysis as straight as I possibly can and as honestly as can be. I've felt very comfortable with my decisions in that respect. That sort of pressure is just part of the job. The question is what you do with that pressure and how you maintain your objectivity. But the town here is not as friendly as it once was. It's a little more vicious than it was 25 years ago. It makes your job a lot less pleasant.

Will DTV ever be a success?

Believe it or not, I am still optimistic. I really believe digital television and, particularly, high definition is a quantitatively different product. As people see more and more, it will gain in popularity. I am absolutely convinced that it's a matter of timing and when we get there. ■

Supreme question

Is a tape of an intercepted cell-phone call protected speech?

By Dan Trigoboff

Supreme Court justices last week expressed concern that a federal wiretap prohibition used against a radio station that aired material illegally intercepted (by another unknown party) from a cell phone conversation violated First Amendment protections, keeping information from journalists and a public who had done nothing wrong.

But justices also pondered during oral arguments whether such prohibitions were necessary for "applying respect [for] basic dignity to the new world" of "wireless communications," in the words of Justice Antonin Scalia.

The government and lawyers for the labor negotiators argued that such content-neutral prohibitions are necessary to protect privacy rights and have no "censorious motive." But press-freedom advocates say such a law keeps important information from the public if it comes from questionable or even unknown sources.

The case began in 1994, when a phone call between representatives of a teachers union was somehow intercepted and taped. One of the negotiators made

remarks that were taken as threatening, suggesting that "we're gonna have to go to [school board members'] homes ... to blow off front porches."

The ill-advised comments became the subject of numerous reports by Wilkes-Barre radio personality Fred Williams. Williams and his station, WILK(AM), were sued for allegedly violating state and federal bans against wiretapping.

On the defendants' motions for summary judgment, a federal trial court in 1996 rejected their contention that imposing liability in this case was unconstitutional. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit disagreed and the case went

to the Supreme Court.

Justice Anthony Kennedy questioned the scope of the prohibitions. "You're taking a class of speech and saying it can't be repeated by anybody."

Lawyers representing Williams said the speech should be judged only on whether it's accurate and of public interest. But lawyers supporting wiretap bans said the laws actually protect speech by protecting the "sanctity" of people's ability to speak "in a candid and unadulterated fashion." ■

Your taking a class of speech and saying it can't be repeated by anyone.'

—Justice Anthony Kennedy

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Helping Hollywood convert to digital

Media 100 locates its new streaming service center in Burbank

By Ken Kerschbaumer

Media 100 continues to distance itself from its original incarnation as a manufacturer of nonlinear editing systems. Steps taken last week move the company further downstream into the new-media market.

Leading the way is the company's Streamriver Division, which has opened a Streamriver Service Center in Burbank, Calif., to more readily serve the "Digital Hollywood" community. It's the third such center opened by Media 100.

"Our service offerings include hosting, encoding, consulting and even live Webcasting services," says Mike Savello, vice president of the Streamriver Division. "The majority of what we'll be doing will be encoding and consulting, where we'll take the assets and turn them into encoded assets for delivery over the Internet. On the consulting side,

we may help set up encoding workflows within an organization so they can do the process themselves."

The reason for opening a facility in Burbank is simple, according to Savello. Hollywood is full of valuable media assets, some as old as 80 years, and the last thing studios want to do, the company believes, is stick a valuable asset in a FedEx envelope and send it across the country to be encoded.

"If you want to do business with them, you have to be located close to them so they can bring their assets to your office in the morning," says Savello.

While the service centers are a nice offshoot of Media 100's business, their primary revenue is still driven by product introductions. The latest is iFinish 4 for the Windows 2000 platform.

"iFinish 4 really helps create interactive content specifically for distribution on the Internet to Windows 2000 platform,"

The last thing studios want to do, the company believes, is stick a valuable asset in a FedEx envelope and send it across the country to be encoded.



Streamriver's Savello touts Media 100's new iFinish4 system for broadcasters seeking to repurpose content for Web delivery.

Savello explains, "and it also adds some pretty advanced support for MPEG-2 and DVD authoring, which we think makes it ideal for producing video over the new digital-distribution mediums."

The system has the same support for broadcasters that previous Media 100 products have had, Savello says. "Plus, it has some great cross-over tools for people that need to produce content for broadcasts that also need to be repurposed for distribution over the Web or other distribution mediums. It's an ideal machine for broadcasters looking to distribute over the Internet and broadband because they can produce content for all the mediums."

There are four versions of the system. The lowest-end version, v20DV, is priced at \$2,995 and offers a maximum data rate of 150 kb per frame; the v60 version is priced at \$9,995 and has audio-processing capabilities. The highest-end version, the v80 at \$14,995, provides access to a digital video interface and a serial digital interface. ■



The Games Ju

Mixed Signals Technologies

Wheel Of Fortune and

Truly Interactive Every Night

RealNetworks raises server iQ

Internet-server technology is designed to improve streaming

By Ken Kerschbaumer

RealNetworks is hoping its RealSystem iQ Internet-server technology will prove a smart move for both itself and its customers. The system, available Dec. 18, will offer several improvements to its streaming servers and the networks they sit on.

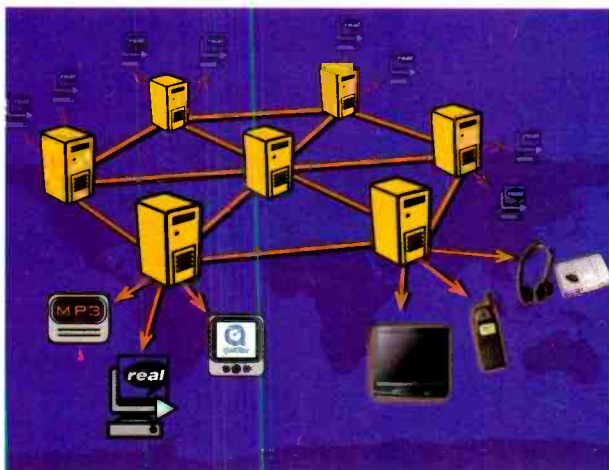
"The biggest opportunity is, it allows the servers to operate as a collective," says Ben Rotholtz, Real-

Networks general manager, products and systems. "If one goes down, the other can pick up and re-juggle their capacity."

RealSystem iQ will comprise Server 8, Proxy 8 and Producer 8.5. Server pricing will remain the same, with the "Gold release" RealSystem iQ available as an upgrade.

Rotholtz cites a number of advantages that the new architecture will offer, including taking in satellite-delivered content and handling content in Quicktime format. But it's the ability to establish a foundation for "content peering" that makes him most enthusiastic.

With iQ, servers will be able to backstop each other: Ones low on traffic can serve as a release valve for those getting crunched with traffic. "It offers a level of redundancy within a network," says Rotholtz.



Servers will be able to backstop each other: Those low on traffic can serve as a release valve for those crunched with traffic.

One customer already familiar with the new system is Tim Desai, manager, InstaStream network for Mirror Image Internet, a content-delivery network that has servers around the world. He sees an advantage in Server 8's support for Quicktime, which means that Mirror Image Internet does not have to buy additional servers to handle that format. But he particularly likes its dynamic license allocation, which allows Mirror Image to pool its streams collectively as opposed to having to guess how many should be allocated to each server.

RealSystem Proxy 8, a dedicated streaming-media proxy-cache, will allow Internet service providers to rebroadcast a single live stream to multiple players. And caching the content closer to the end user can minimize transmission difficulties. ■

CABLE TV SITES

October 2000

Ranked by gender composition

SITE	Composition males (%)
1 CNBC.com	72.3 up
2 ESPN*	65.2 up
3 CNN.com	61.6 up
4 CourtTV.com	59.0 up
5 SciFi.com	58.6 down
Total WWW	40.1 down
Cable and Network Universe	47.1

SITE	Composition females (%)
1 LifetimeTV.com	70.7 down
2 HGTV.com	65.6 up
3 FoodTV.com	53.7 up
4 ABC*	52.7 up
5 Discovery.com	49.6 up
Total WWW	40.8 up
Cable and Network Universe	47.4

Source: Media Metrix

TOP NEWS SITES

October 2000

Ranked by gender composition

SITE	Composition (%)	
	Males	Females
1 Bloomberg.com	76.3 up	22.3 down
2 CNNfn.com*	75.2 up	23.0 down
3 CNBC.com	72.3 up	21.7 down
4 CNN.com	61.6 up	32.4 up
5 FoxNews.com	58.4 down	38.5 up
6 MSNBC.com*	58.3 up	36.6 down
7 ABC News*	54.5 up	41.1 down
8 CBSNews.com
9 WebFN.com
Total WWW	40.1 down	40.8 up

Source: Media Metrix

... = Statistically insignificant traffic

* Represents an aggregation of commonly owned/branded domain names.

Up/down compared to last month.

NC = no change

Media Metrix definitions:

Composition: The percentage of a Web site, channel or application's visitors that belong to a specific age/gender grouping.

Cable and network universe: The total number of unique pages viewed on the sites belonging in the cable and network TV category of Web sites.

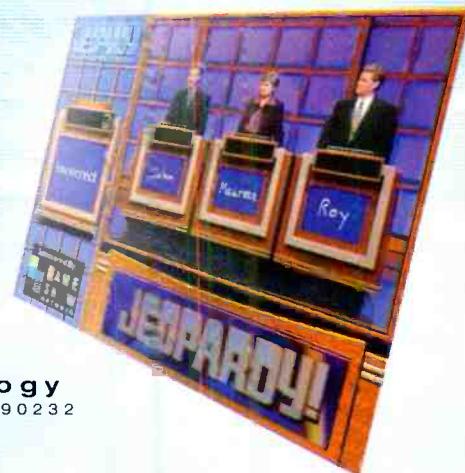
Sample size: Approximately 60,000 individuals throughout the U.S. participate in the Media Metrix sample.

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Useful, and also fun

Two sites that inform, playfully, could aid television executives

What, nothing about post-election online coverage? Yes, breaking a pattern that has held true for three of the last four weeks, Common Ground is now an official politics-free zone.

Instead, I'd like to tell you about two incredibly useful Web sites. One may help you monetize your newsgathering efforts, and the other just may tell programmers why a former ratings-winner has slid in ratings and popularity.

TVEyes.com (www.tveyes.com) keeps viewers informed about subjects they're interested in that have may been mentioned within newscasts. Here's how it works.

A user goes to the TVEyes.com site and fills out a brief form listing the keyword or keyphrase they are most interested in, along with their e-mail address. Users can specify mentions by entering a "search string," such as "repair" and "frauds."

TVEyes.com's word-recognition software then monitors the

closed-captioned text of broadcasts on such outlets as CNNfn, CNBC, Bloomberg Television, MSNBC, ABC, NBC, CBS, FOX News, CSPAN, ESPN and several public television stations.

When a word or keyphrase that a TVEyes.com user has indicated is mentioned within a monitored broadcast, the user receives an e-mail, noting that, indeed, their term or terms of interest were mentioned. The e-mail includes a brief transcript of what was said, along with a link to the broadcaster's site or even a specific program page that may, in turn, include instructions on how to purchase a full transcript or video copy of the show.

In the middle of last week, the most popular transcript

request term was "Florida recount." Oops, we promised! OK, some of the *non-political* terms in TVEyes.com's top 10 were "Microsoft," "Britney Spears," "Mideast violence" and "Strong buy."

Not much commonality there. I mean, how many Britney Spears fans are interested in the seemingly endless cycle of violence in the Middle East, or in stock tips? Yet, it is easy to spin this non sequitur to the conclusion that TVEyes.com's service, called TV Alert, has broad appeal.

On the morning of Wednesday, Dec. 6, I tried it out, and was quite impressed. I entered "Microsoft" and my personal e-mail address into the appropriate boxes on the

sign-up page.

Ten minutes later, I received my first TV Alert—that the term "Microsoft" was spoken during NBC's *Today* show. A very brief text excerpt followed, which included a link to a page with a longer extract. That page, in turn, had a link to MSNBC.com, which, in turn, offers a link to a page of info about *Today*.

TVEyes.com supports itself by advertising on search-results pages, as well as a couple of fee-based services that let broadcasters know when certain words are mentioned on their



TVEyes.com offers short excerpts from TV newscasts, based on searches you create.

own, or competitors', broadcasts, and notify investors when the names of specific companies are cited on the networks and stations the service monitors.

Financial television is hot, but what about offerings that are past their prime? If you are a programmer, you may be scratching your head about why that former winner is now in the middle of the pack. Surely,

you've commissioned focus groups to diagnose the problem. You may even have tried to fix it by not renewing a bit player's contract, telling the scriptwriters to change the story arc.

On the Web site "Jump the Shark" (www.jumptheshark.com), fans and former fans vote to quantify the moment that the show turned sour.

"Jump The Shark" might not be as scientific as a focus group, but it's far more no-holds-barred. Currently airing shows on the Shark's Vote Getter List include *The Simpsons*, *The X-Files*, *Friends*, *Buffy*, *The Vampire Slayer* and *Ally McBeal*.

Show loyalists can cast their votes for specific turning-sour landmarks, or even maintain that the show is as good as ever. For the record, the most mentioned turning-sour point for *The X-Files* was *The Movie*—presumably on the defensible premise that the cinematic version resolved too many of the show's hanging plots.

For *Friends*, one of the episodes that most turned off fans is listed as "They Did It (Ross and Rachel)." Much to some of their fans later regret, not to mention Ross and Rachel's. ■

Russell Shaw's column about Internet and interactive issues appears regularly. He can be reached at russellshaw@delphi.com.

Watch while you surf

Zenith, TeleCruz and TransCast integrate Internet with 27-inch TV

By Ken Kerschbaumer

Channel surfing and Web surfing will collide head-on next year when Zenith, with the help of TeleCruz Technology and TransCast, brings a 27-inch television to market with an integrated 56.6k modem and free Internet access.

The key technology is the TeleCruz TC702 chip, a single-chip product that has an integrated modem enabling two-way communication for interactive services.

Owners of the set will be able to plug their phone line into the set's telephone jack, turn on the TV and sign up for the free TransCast Internet service, which is designed specifically for TV sets.

"Two years ago, I saw that the other established players like Microsoft or AOL were going after the broadband market, and that makes a lot of sense for them," says Ramon Cazares, TransCast founder and vice president of marketing. "But I saw an opportunity being ignored: building the service right into the device because the electronics are there."

TransCast has created a TV portal that is similar to a traditional portal in that it aggregates content, Cazares says. Once viewers sign on, they'll have access to a "walled garden" of Internet services designed specifically for display on the television, according to Kris Narayan, TeleCruz founder and chairman. Giving room for the walled garden to grow will be 12 MB of DRAM and Flash ROM storage built into the set. That storage space will be capable of holding 30-plus e-mails and 30 pages of full-color information.

"The portal has certain elements that reside cached inside the TV in the Flash ROM," says Cazares. "Other content resides on our servers using

the same templates and form factors optimized for the TV."

Having content cached inside the TV, Narayan notes, can improve access speed.

Another important part of the package is the keyboard. According to Cazares, it will have a number of function keys hardwired to elements of the service, such as e-mail or shopping. "If you want to switch to the portal while watching TV, you would hit the TV/Web button, and that would take you into the portal."

Picture-within-a-picture will allow the viewer to watch TV while surfing the Web.

A key advantage that Narayan sees over America Online's AOLTV or Microsoft's WebTV is that the consumer is not asked to buy a product or subscribe to a service. "You go to the store, and you decide to buy the

TV with the feature, and it's a free service."

The set will be priced about \$600, according to Zenith spokesman John Taylor.

Narayan says that TeleCruz expects to announce a deal with another manufacturer and a well-known ISP within the next three weeks. ■

Owners will plug their phone line into the TV set's telephone jack, turn on the TV and sign up for the free Internet service.

CAST OUT

Microcast is the most recent streaming-content enabler to hit the skids. According to CEO Paul Nash, the company failed to complete its latest round of \$75 million funding or find a buyer and, as a result, 85 of its 101 employees were let go last week.

"When the market turns against you, there's nothing you can do," Nash explains. "We could have thrown in the towel earlier, but the bottom line is, there isn't a lot that dotcoms can do. The venture-capital community has dried up."

The company has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, and liquidation of equipment will help square debts with creditors. Customers have been moved to other service providers, including Akamai and eMedia.

STOP THE PRESSES

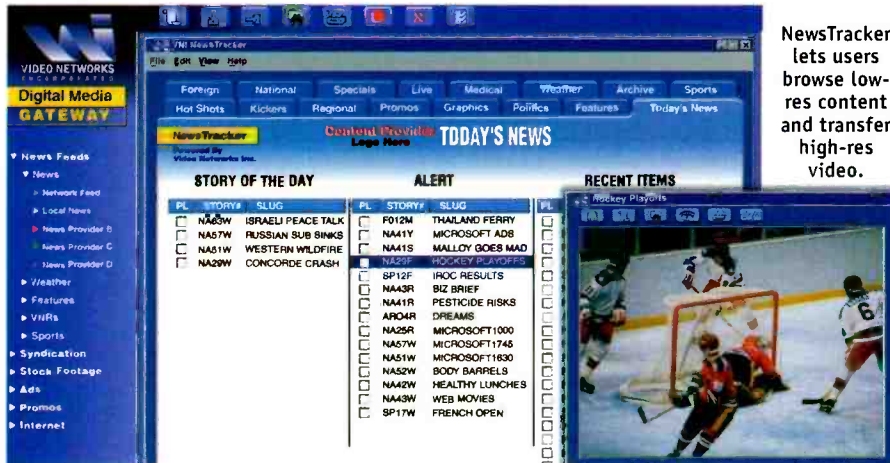
In an effort to further localize its content, MSNBC.com has signed deals with the Web sites of the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, *The Knoxville News Sentinel* and *New Hampshire's Manchester Union Leader*. The MSNBC.com affiliate network now has more than 90 local TV stations and 11 print outlets covering 37 markets.

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Technology

ABC taps VNI for digital news

Internet Protocol-based system is slated to be rolled out to beta sites in the spring



NewsTracker lets users browse low-res content and transfer high-res video.

By Glen Dickson

ABC NewsOne, ABC's affiliate news service, has signed a deal with Atlanta-based Video Networks Inc. to use VNI's store-and-forward delivery system to digitally transmit news clips to more than 180 ABC affiliates and 30 national and international clients.

The deal is similar to one signed by NBC News Channel, which has been using VNI's NewsTracker system to deliver digital news clips to affiliates since 1999.

ABC News has been looking for a digital delivery system for about two years, according to Vice President of Telecommunications and Distribution Services Rich Wolf.

NBC's success with NewsTracker was a big reason for ABC NewsOne's deal with VNI, he says. "Sometimes, it's not that foolish to be second or third in a new technology."

VNI, which plans to change its name to Pathfire in 2001, uses MPEG-2 compression and Internet Protocol (IP) packet technology in NewsTracker to distribute video content as digital files that can be transmitted over satellite and received and stored on video servers. News producers can browse content in low-res form on their desktop and then transfer it at full resolution to videotape, production servers or nonlinear editors. The receipt of the IP packets is also verified through the

Internet, allowing VNI to discover files not completely received and retransmit them via satellite.

ABC will roll out NewsTracker to 25 to 30 beta sites in March and hopes to have it deployed to all ABC NewsOne affiliates by July. The network will encode and transmit news material from ABC NewsOne headquarters in New York, using its capacity on the Loral Telstar 4 and 5 satellites. ABC will also create uplink, or "upload," capability for the VNI system at key news bureaus—such as Washington, Dallas, Chicago and Los Angeles—and ESPN Center in Bristol, Conn. The Seattle and Atlanta bureaus will also be able to encode and transmit NewsTracker material through fiber connections.

ABC NewsOne will compress video at 5.5 Mb/s, the same encoding rate ABC is using for its aggressive digital satellite news gathering (DSNG) initiative. Roughly 40 SNG trucks affiliated with ABC's ABSAT program have switched to digital uplink gear, and Wolf hopes that the remaining 45 trucks and 35 fixed uplinks will be converted to DSNG by the end of 2001. Although the two efforts are separate, the switch to digital technology at both ABC NewsOne and ABSAT allows ABC to most efficiently use its

WETA, WCBS, WSB, KHOU, WFAA, KGO, WXIA, WTHR, WPVI, WBNS, KING, KTVT, KPRC, KIRO, KMOV, KTVI, KBHK, KCTS, WMVS, WTAE, KRIV, WFLD, KFOR, WSVN, WBBM, KPTV, KTRK, WBAL, KARE, KPNX, WTSP, KDKA, KMSP, KUTP, KTXL, KBWB, KNTV, WJZ, WWOR, KQED, WABC, KCET, WCYB, WRDW, WCVB, WEWS, WSPA, KSWB, **WFTV**

*Due to contractual agreements, some stations not listed.

100 DTV station installations.* We like to think of them as letters of endorsement.

Thomson goes B2B

Buys into pro-equipment manufacturer Philips Broadcast

existing satellite capacity, he says.

The biggest change with the VNI system, however, will be a gradual change to "push-and-pull" news distribution, says Wolf. Since NewsTracker provides verification, ABC will get a clear picture of which affiliates are using what content and may be able to deliver more-targeted news.

"I think the overall network infrastructure allows for ABC NewsOne to decide what content it pushes to all, and what content it doesn't push at all but is left for individual affiliates to pull when they require," says Wolf.

In addition to news deals with NBC and ABC, VNI also distributes commercials to cable headends for Charter, National Cable Communications, AT&T, Insight Communications and Time Warner. The company has launched a product based on NewsTracker: Digital Media Gateway lets producers access a variety of content, including stock footage and syndicated material, through their desktops. VNI also has created applications to allow NewsTracker customers to easily stream content to the Web.

VNI Chief Operating Officer Floyd Christofferson says the ABC deal should provide a boost to VNI's goal of using NewsTracker to deliver syndicated programming and commercials in addition to news. The same hardware and software can be used for any content, he says, noting that delivering different IP files to different desktops within a station is no harder than delivering different e-mails to different addresses.

"With this contract, we've achieved critical mass," he says. "ABC puts us into nearly 50% of the broadcast footprint." ■

By Glen Dickson

Thomson Multimedia, parent company of Thomson Consumer Electronics and European broadcast supplier Thomson Broadcast Systems, is sharpening its focus on the professional video market by acquiring part of camera and switcher manufacturer Philips Broadcast.

Thomson and Royal Philips Electronics, the parent company of Philips Broadcast, have preliminarily agreed to set up a holding company that will comprise Philips' camera, routing, switching, telecine and systems-integration businesses, with Thomson immediately acquiring 67% of the new company and Philips holding on to 33%. Philips will keep two divisions of Philips Broadcast: Digital Networks, which makes DVB-compliant compression products for the satellite market, and MP4NET, which includes the Media Pool video server line.

The five businesses Thomson is acquiring had roughly \$220 million in revenue in 1999 and 1,050 employees. Thomson will have the option of acquiring the rest of Philips' 33% stake in the holding company over the next two years. Terms of the initial transaction, expected to be completed in first quarter 2001, were not disclosed.

Thomson says the Philips deal will

strengthen Digital Media Solutions, a business unit it formed in August to sell professional equipment to broadcasters and cable networks. The company has also created a joint venture with Alcatel called Nextream to target the interactive-television market.

"Thomson is making an aggressive move in the business-to-business area to complement their consumer products," says Jeff



Says Philips' Jeff Rosica, "We believe we can be a very formidable force in the broadcast industry."

Rosica, vice president and general manager of North American sales for Philips Broadcast and its top-ranking U.S. executive.

Rosica indicated that Philips Broadcast's current senior management would continue with the new holding company. He added that there has not been any discussion of integrating Philips Broadcast with

Thomson Broadcast Systems, which makes a full line of transmission and production gear and caters mostly to the European market.

Philips Broadcast counts Fox, ABC and Turner Studios as major U.S. customers for its camera and routing products. The company has 275 employees in the U.S., with a sales organization headquartered in Burbank, Calif., and a major manufacturing facility in Salt Lake City. Additional sales offices are located in Rosemont, Ill., and Ramsey, N.J. ■

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CuttingEdge

BY GLEN DICKSON



nCUBE's n4 server will provide storage and playback for the combined NDS/nCUBE video-on-demand solution.

NDS, NCUBE GET TOGETHER ON VOD

UK technology firm NDS and Foster City, Calif.-based video-server manufacturer nCUBE have teamed up to develop a video-on-demand system that will provide cable and DSL customers with personal video recorder functionality from the headend. The system, set for beta testing in first quarter 2001, will combine nCUBE's "n4" video-server technology with NDS' XTV software, which installs pre-encrypted files on a VOD server.

"We're putting our meta-data handling and PVR functionality on top of what nCUBE already has," says Nigel Smith, NDS director of broadband Internet. "The advantage here is, the cable operators can offer lower-cost boxes that offer the same kind of functionality [as set-top PVRs], by centralizing the storage instead of getting a lot of boxes out individually." Terri Richardson, nCube vice president of strategic business alliances, says NDS' pre-encryption technology was the key to enabling PVR function-

ality in a VOD environment. "They're the first to come forward and say we're going to have this solution."

ECHOSTAR ADOPTS HI-DEF PROFILE

DBS operator EchoStar is using Grass Valley Group's (GVG) Profile XP video server to originate the HDTV pay-per-view channel it launched this fall. Part of EchoStar's DISH-On-Demand pay-per-view service, the new channel uses two redundant Profile XP Media Platforms to support widescreen HDTV pictures with Dolby Digital sound. EchoStar is a longtime GVG customer and already uses two large GVG Series 7000 routing switchers (with nearly 2.5 million combined crosspoints) as the core of its digital plant infrastructure.

ODETICS TO BEGIN AIRO TESTS

Automation supplier Odetics Broadcast will begin beta tests this month of AIRO version 8.5, the Anaheim, Calif.-based company's latest broadcast-facility-management solution. AIRO 8.5 includes the ability to promote local IDs and links to station news crawls. Key

features of the Windows NT-based system include satellite record control; enhancements for Philips' Saturn master-control switcher that allow for control of keys and A-B roll; and the ability to control all new classes of devices, including character generators. Odetics is also adding the Grass Valley Group Series 7000 router interface and GVG 2100 master-control switcher interface to AIRO version 8.5, which will begin full deployment in early 2001.

SUPERTOWER GOES UP IN MOBILE

Tower developer SpectraSite Broadcast Group has begun installation of a 2,000-foot community broadcast tower in Mobile, Ala. The tower, which will weigh roughly 1.9 million pounds when completed in second quarter 2001, is designed to accommodate more than 20 television stations and FM broadcasters. SpectraSite will own the tower



A SpectraSite crew sets the base for the 1.9 million-pound Mobile, Ala., tower.

and lease space on it. So far, Pegasus Broadcast, Clear Channel Communications and PBS have agreed to lease space for their digital revision transmissions. Although Cary, N.C.-based SpectraSite has similar projects under way in Tallahassee, Fla.; Green Bay, Wis.; and Albuquerque, N.M., the Mobile project is unique because of the sheer size of the tower, says SpectraSite Broadcast Group President Doug Standley. Its weight, he points out, is double that of most comparable community towers because of the extra requirements of Mobile, which is located in a hurricane zone. SpectraSite has created special rigging for it, including guy wires more than 3 inches thick.

DTV BENCHMARK

To demonstrate the ineffectiveness of the current digital television standard, Sinclair Broadcast Group will conduct reception measurements of analog broadcast television to document "benchmark service" for television portability: that is, the ability of a television with a small indoor antenna to move from place to place and receive signals, while stationary, without requiring connection to a large outdoor antenna. "The public expects" DTV portability, says Sinclair Vice President Nat Ostroff. "In volume sales, the most popular analog TV is the 19-inch set, which consumers can easily move from place-to-place."

SONY

“DTV Broadcasting was just one reason to go with HDCAM.”

— Pat Holland, VP Technology, Fisher Broadcasting.
— Mark Simonson, Director Of Engineering, KOMO-TV Seattle.

“We were determined to be a leader in DTV,” says Fisher Broadcasting’s Pat Holland. “Our flagship, KOMO, became the first U.S. station to broadcast news in an interoperable DTV standard, including 1080i, 720P. We’re now broadcasting DTV full time. And Sony helped us every step of the way. They showed us how HDCAM® camcorders and VTRs could meet our DTV requirements. And we’ve discovered what HDCAM production can also mean to our analog broadcast signal.”

According to Mark Simonson of KOMO, “When HDCAM material runs on our analog channel, it dramatically improves the on-air look. HDCAM production has completely transformed our news openings, closings and bumpers. And when we rebuilt our studios, we went to all Sony Hi-Def cameras. Because they use the latest technology throughout, their SD outputs deliver a noticeably better viewing experience.”

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After the



Illustration: Paul Schulenburg / SIS

gold rush

What's next for streaming media

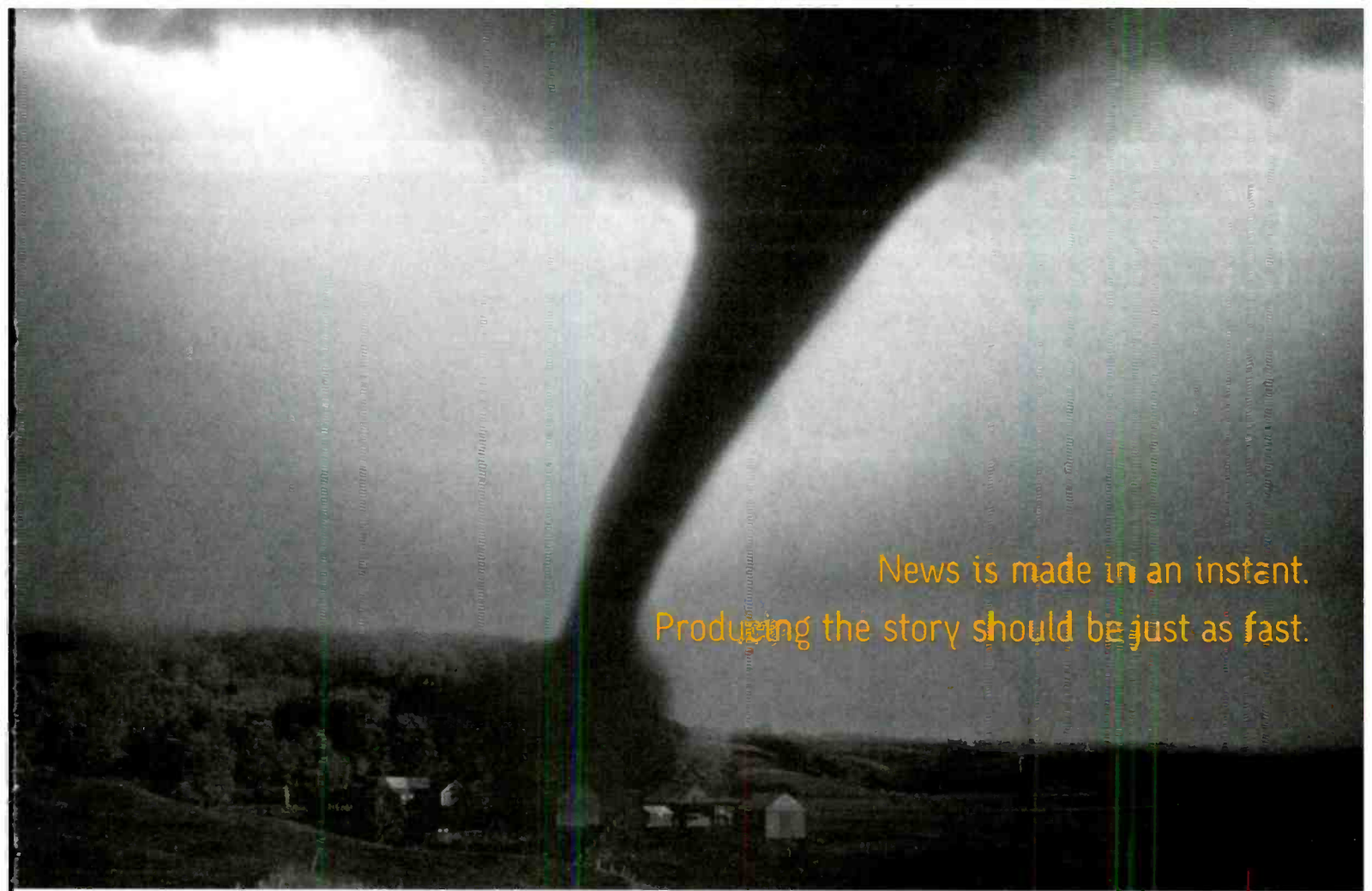
By Ken Kerschbaumer

When the streaming-media industry last gathered at Streaming Media East in June, the troubles of Digital Entertainment Network (DEN) were still fresh headlines. Many were unsympathetic to DEN's plight, blaming the company's failure on corporate excess and its poor management style. But in the months that followed the show, DEN's failure became an industry cliché—a dotcom feed-money hungry for revenue that never came.

"It's clear that you need a viable business plan with diverse revenue streams and that you don't just focus on a business-to-consumer play," says Brian Burke, Atom Films director of business development. "The key for us and for anyone playing in this market right now is to have solid revenue channels."

The problem facing the industry is what exactly are those revenue channels? DEN, Pseudo and Zatso all had what their company executives said were different revenue models and partnering structures to help ease the financial burden of content creation. Yet they all fell victim to lack of funding and revenue. And entertainment streaming sites such as POP, which had names like Steven Spielberg, David Geffen and Jeffrey Katzenberg behind it, stopped the bleeding before it really had a chance to start.

"POP, in many ways, made the responsible decision," says Eric Scheirer, analyst with Forrester Research. "They had the money in their pocket, and they looked at the market and asked if there was a market for what they wanted to do. They looked at it, said no, and closed up shop, spending a relatively small portion of the money available to them and returning the rest to



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Online-entertainment companies like Atom Films understand the importance of broadening their potential revenue streams with services like “Atom ToGo,” which brings content to portable devices, serving as a new way to expand viewership, drive advertising and satisfy investors.

investors. To me, that’s a very responsible way to run a business.”

The broad brush of public opinion, however, paints all of the dotcom woes with the same brush: executives with too much money and too little experience promising to change the world. The reality is that each of the companies has had its own problems, but there are some unifying factors.

THE FACTORS

“They didn’t bet on broadband,” says Jonathan Klein, president and CEO of The FeedRoom. “You cannot be in the streaming business and bank on 56k, nickel-sized windows to inspire anyone’s imagination. That isn’t where the viewing numbers are going to be delivered.”

But not betting on broadband when many of the companies in the streaming-media market took flight may have been a safer short-term gamble. At the time many of the online entertainment companies began, broadband had been deployed in less than 2 million households. In the chase to reach maximum viewers, technical infrastructures were put in place to reach them at any speed. Klein says that approach would have been similar to a company in 1951 creating TV content that was essentially radio because everyone had a radio but they didn’t have a TV.

“What you don’t want to do is create a streaming company that offers up a low-quality product. And the only way you can ensure quality is to bank on broadband,” Klein adds. “But those companies were afraid to bet heavily on broadband, so you have interfaces that are walls of text that have a little tiny video player. But you’ve got to look at where things are going, not where they are.”

The other common thread was that they were all in a market that simply couldn’t support the number of players that existed.

“Like most things on the Web, there is no room for 10 companies in a category,” says Steve Stanford, CEO and co-founder of Icebox, an animation Web site. “It usually consolidates, and there are usually four or five players in a category, with the No. 1 player tending to have a disproportionately large market share.”

Stanford believes that by the end of 2000, there will be three or four companies that will have a meaningful market position in the online entertainment market: iFilm, Atom Films, Media Trip and Heavy.com. The possibility of new companies joining seems pretty remote given the current climate.

“It would be hard for us to come in today and create what we created when we started in November 1999,” he adds. “Because of the skepticism of the business models. I don’t think we’re seeing a lot of

new venture capital being poured into companies like this.”

Scheirer concurs that the shakeout will continue. “A lot of the companies that are pure video plays will not be around by 2003. There will be some, and streaming video will continue to penetrate, but it’ll be in a parasitic kind of way. And what I mean by that is it will be video that is already in the can for offline use—for example, it will be part of a CNN or Warner Bros. online strategy that has a mission bigger than just bringing video to the Internet.”

WEB VS. TV

The problem Scheirer sees with the online content space is that there is only a marginal Web-based business model compared to a TV-based business model. One of the challenges facing the early players in a new medium is that they often apply the old-economy revenue models to the new economy. In addition, consumers need to catch up as well. And, at this point, it appears that the old-economy habits and revenue model have yet to succumb to new-economy opportunities. “For a lot of these businesses, there is no business until people can start to watch the content on television, because that’s where people have their sofas.”

Scheirer believes the number of consumers watching online content through the TV will hit critical mass sometime in 2004. “The question is whether there is a business model in the interim for some of these other kinds of content. And their next

You cannot be in the streaming business and bank on 56k, nickel-sized windows to inspire anyone’s imagination.

—Jonathan Klein, The FeedRoom

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Atom Films' *Capitol Hill* is a popular hip-hop parody of Washington goings-on, especially during the current election drama.

question will be whether they can make the right kind of deals to get themselves onto the television set."

The industry, however, has focused on the deployment of broadband, hoped that the increased speeds will make the online streaming experience better—thus driving viewership. But it'll be a while before penetration remotely resembles that of television.

"If you're looking at anything that can be compared to television-size audiences, you're looking at 2010. But a respectable audience will be around 2005," says Atom Film's Burke. "By then, there will be enough of an audience out there that the market for the well-known brands will be huge."

So the goal for many of today's content providers is getting from today to a still-to-be-determined tomorrow. And the hunt is already on for revenue streams. Atom Films, for example, has already turned to syndication as a form of revenue, with about 60% of its revenue generated from syndication to television outlets such as HBO, Sundance Channel, Canal Plus and Delta Airlines. The other 40% is advertising.

"The key is that we are selling our shorts—our short-form content," adds Burke. "We own the exclusive rights, so

we're also looking for the possibility of incubating these properties online to eventually be taken offline, possibly as a whole series."

THE FLASH EFFECT

Another key driver seems to be finding a niche. For example, online animation seems to be separating itself as a new medium rather than just another form of streaming. The reason for this is the popularity of Flash animation and Shockwave, which essentially rely on sending instructions to the viewers computer to create the content rather than having to send the actual content. The result: The ability to offer quality-of-service, a concept that has held the Internet back.

"We're almost seeing a new development of a genre around a technology, which is interesting, although I guess not too unusual," says Scheirer. "Historically it has always been the case that, when new technologies come out with particular strengths and weaknesses, that art form mutates to take advantage of the new technology. And that's what

we're seeing with Flash animation."

By basically sending instructions to the computer and then having the computer "create" the content, artists have a chance to have their content delivered in a way that looks good and gives a reasonable experience to people. "They're finding that Flash is a reasonable medium for them to work in," adds Scheirer. "Colors are flat, and huge regions have the same color so it's easy to transmit, whereas video has subtle gradations and requires a lot of bandwidth."

For Stanford, that reasonable medium has resulted in Icebox, started with three TV producers: John Collier, co-executive producer of *King of the Hill*; Rob LaZebnick, co-executive producer of *The Simpsons*; and Howard Gordon, who was executive producer of *The X-Files* and now has a development deal with Fox.

Stanford says that the lack of a quality technical experience and bad storytelling has been the primary reason for low viewership of streaming content. But the approach taken by Icebox, where animation rules, is an attempt to address the technology limitations.

"Anything we're doing now that is comedy-oriented really has to be animation, because the Flash is a download technology that doesn't end up with buffering issues," he says. "You lose comic timing if you're trying to stream, and a lot of people didn't think about that. Even people who are creating shows didn't think about that."

With the technical consumer experience improved, Icebox then turned to the storytellers. "We have the people who created many of the best shows on television. And the idea was that's how you're

going to end up with the best stories, particularly if we're doing serialized entertainment. It doesn't matter if it's three, five or 22 minutes—a story is a story."

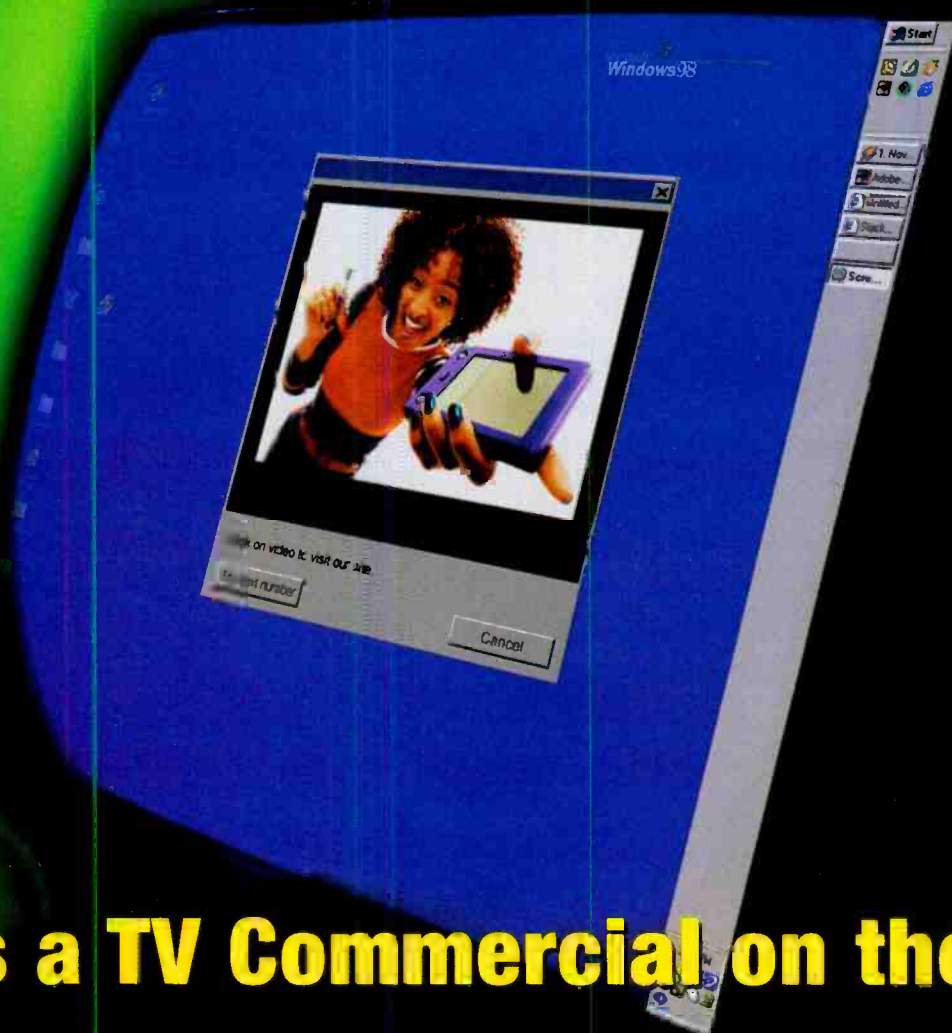
But even with the storytelling part and the technology part solved, animation still faces the problem that all streaming content faces:



Atom Film's Burke: "It's clear that you need a viable business plan with diverse revenue streams and that you don't just focus on a business-to-consumer play."

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Queer Duck is an animated short film series streamed on Icebox that has attracted a cult following and includes gay-themed games trivia.

revenue. “We look at this like the early days of cable,” says Stanford. “Then, because of the cost structure, you had to be able to find different revenue streams. Even today, cable [networks] still make their money through subscription fees they get from the MSOs.”

THE REVENUE HUNT

Stanford acknowledges that the road to profitability will be more difficult for an online entertainment company than for cable. But he does believe Icebox and, in turn, other Web sites, offer something for the advertiser. “We’re providing a couple of things. One is a place where the audience can see cutting-edge entertainment, because we can take creative risks that people can’t take on television. Our bandwidth isn’t constrained, so we don’t have to worry about losing our Thursday-night audience by putting on a risky show.”

Of course, that’s the kind of claim that was heard from DEN and Pseudo—that consumers will flock to cutting-edge content in high enough numbers to attract advertising. The difference might be that the ad market for the Internet is as soft as it’s ever going to be, or so says Scheirer.

“Sites that can organize and attract audience attention are going to find it much easier to make money from advertising starting in late 2001, middle of 2002. And the average online consumer spends an hour a day there.

So if you’re an advertiser, either you advertise online to chase those consumers or you give up on them for that hour.”

Klein believes that advertising revenues will take off in 2001, and at a figure high enough to grab ones attention. “Advertisers are looking to discover what is going to work online, because banner ads have been



Icebox has signed a licensing deal with Fox for a live version of its animated program *Zombie College*.



Talk to Taka comes out of Atom Films’ MogulMaker project, in which registered users submit scripts and pick the winners.

so discredited that they aren’t going to want to continue throwing good money after bad. And they’re very interested in what is going to work. So what we’re engaging advertisers with is a partnership to take advantage of all the tools that broadband has to offer, and in particular the tools a place like the Feed Room has to offer.”

Those tools include enhanced targetability that will enable advertisers to move from shouting at consumers to a conversation. “Advertisers won’t be standing in the middle of a stadium hoping that five out of 85,000 people will hear their shouting and want to make a purchase,” Klein says. “Metaphorically, advertisers are going to want to be led down into a room and allowed to have a one-on-one conversation with a viewer. The cost per lead is better, and the quality of the experience the user has of the product is going to be fundamentally different.” And, he believes, better.

“We’re bringing new forms of storytelling to the advertising community. And I think it will be very fruitful for our advertising partner,” Klein adds. In addition, there is the potential for programs to migrate from online to on TV. Icebox recently signed a licensing deal with Fox for a live version of its program *Zombie College*, the company’s second such deal. The other was for *Starship Regulars*, a property that will become a live-action, half-hour program on Showtime in the summer of 2001—and there may be more.

“We’re negotiating for about four other shows,” adds Stanford. “Again, because the creators of the shows are guys who have created TV shows before, we have a willing audience to look at them and hear our pitch.”

There’s a certain amount of irony attached to new-media companies being proud of attachments to old-media companies. After all, it wasn’t too long ago that investors were so enamored with dotcoms that television and radio seemed passé. But it just might turn out that new- and old-media companies may find the best way to move forward in a world where media is everywhere, is to continue working together to hunt for viewers. ■



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The wireless wave of the future

Internet radio's promise is in personalized programming, but will anyone pay for it?

By Carl Lindemann

In the future—according to the most fervent Internet aficionados—wireless Webcasting will quickly and irrevocably displace traditional radio. In only a few years, the next-generation cell-phone network will take the Internet into one of the few places currently beyond its reach. Cars equipped with in-dash minicomputers will be able to tap into narrowcast-interactive audio experiences, transforming drive-time listening habits. As Internet radio fans see it, the FCC may as well begin scheduling auctions for the AM/FM bandwidth to feed this wireless world.

Sounds futuristic? Well, that scenario isn't so far off. The wireless Webcast is already more than fantasy. One of the highlights at last September's NAB Radio Show in San Francisco was a demonstration of in-car Internet audio by Live365.com, a Web-based audio-content portal. The hardware used was strictly off the shelf: a Sprint PCS cell phone and a Hewlett Packard Pocket PC connected to a car stereo's auxiliary input.

Live365.com's custom-software tuner tapped into their online inventory of music. The audio streams were limited by the slow speed of the current cell-phone network. Though not "CD quality," the sound was at least as good as AM radio. Of course, listening in the parking lot of the Moscone



Live365.com, a Web-based audio-content portal, used a Chrysler PT Cruiser at September's NAB Radio Show in San Francisco to demonstrate in-car Internet audio. Even though it wasn't CD quality, the sound was at least as good as AM.

Center is not the same as traveling from cell-to-cell down the highway.

But today's limits don't dampen Alan Wallace's enthusiasm for what is to come.

As vice president of marketing for Live365.com, he anticipates that wireless Webcasts will exceed expectations. "I think it's really going to be the next big wave in radio—a broadcast entity that goes beyond AM/FM," he says.

For all the impact the soon-to-arrive satellite services are supposed to have, this will render the new service largely



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irrelevant. "It gives every radio station, large and small, all the functions satellite radio offers. It will have the same incredible digital sound. But it will come through one standardized system—not two competing ones [from XM Radio and Sirius Radio]. Better than that, it allows two-way communication. Listeners can talk one-on-one to the deejay through e-mail and instant messaging."

For Juan Esteban, founder of La Musica.com, a Latin music and entertainment portal recently purchased by Spanish Broadcasting System, wireless Webcasting will play to radio's traditional strength, localism.

"For Webcasting to be really successful, it will have to strip out the local elements [from the content provided by the signal's station of origin] and put in what's appropriate to the market the listener is in. Even if we're side-by-side on the road, we have different likes and dislikes, and so we can be served by totally different advertising. This is mind-boggling."

Ad insertion marks a quantum leap past today's media marketing. Unlike the present hit-or-miss approach, such targeted advertising zeros in on interested and attentive ears. These capabilities come from several converging technologies. "Take Webcasting, ad insertion technology and put GPS [Global Positioning System] in the mix. With this, we can broadcast to you anywhere on the planet, but also give that local-radio feel," Esteban says.

But the real promise is to go beyond mere localism and into personalized programming. Ads are just one of many programming elements that can be custom tailored. Today, a commuter might switch between a music and news/talk format to find out about traffic conditions. The wireless Webcaster can sidestep this tune-out with intelligent systems that learn personal preferences. Traffic updates can be inserted as desired. On days when it isn't a

concern, the listener gets the music uninterrupted.

Sandy Cohen, president and founder of Savos, a wireless technology company enabling streaming Internet audio to cell phones, sees this as creating a new depth to radio. "It's going to change the world of listening," he predicts. "In the long-term, programming is going to change with this kind of interactivity. News and entertainment will be packaged for this kind of use."

Beyond the need for increased bandwidth, another issue for in-car Internet access is ease of use. Harry Edison, a founder and board member of SurferNetwork, the Webcasting company that recently acquired controlling interest in leading radio Webcaster BroadcastAmerica.com, sees simplicity of operation as key. "The devices are very important here. Everyone knows how to work a radio. Internet radios need to be as simple. That is crucial for making this a legit consumer medium. Inside, sure, it's a computer. But

The car has been impervious to the Internet. But it's not going to stay that way forever.'

—Rick Mandler, ABC Broadcasting

the box should have the familiar radio interface," says Edison.

To meet this requirement, Pat Kerrigan, marketing manager for Intel's in-car computing operation, is developing voice-control interfaces with major auto-electronics manufacturers like Visteon Corp. "The devices we're advocating allow you to talk to the machine. If you've programmed it properly, you'll be able to keep your hands on the wheel and your eyes straight ahead. That's tantamount to success in this," he says.

Initially, these kinds of devices are usually priced beyond the mass market. But what Kerrigan calls the Personal Vehicle Assistant (PVA) will be cheap from the outset. "If the PVA sounds like a Personal Digital Assistant [PDA], there's a good reason for it. If you look at the guts, they're identical. The PVA will enjoy the same economy-of-scale of these other common devices. The automobile manufacturers say they'll have the PVA as a standard offering in the next few years."

Live365.com plans to release the service demonstrated at NAB by the third quarter 2001. By that time, a crucial technological leap should be within sight—the next-gen-



Paul Cattrone, director of wireless development, Live365.com, holds the Sprint PCS cell phone and Hewlett Packard Pocket PC for the in-car Internet audio demonstration.



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Visteon Corp. has developed voice-activated controls for Web radio and other in-car electronics. Intel Marketing Manager Pat Kerrigan says, "If programmed properly, you'll be able to keep your hands on the wheel and your eyes straight ahead."

eration "G3" high-speed cell-phone network, capable of 384 Kb/s data speeds.

According to AT&T's Tom Trinneer, vice president of wireless-portal strategy, the end of 2001 will see the first release of G3. Nationwide deployment will be complete by 2003. But the availability of broadband cell communications will not be the defining issue for wireless Webcasts.

"You have to look at business models. With G3, we will have sufficient bandwidth to do a credible job [of streaming audio]. The challenge is deciding whether we want to give all our bandwidth to a few customers to deliver the ultimate experience, or spread it out to a larger number of people with capacity constrained," says Trinneer.

The key factor will be price. Will listeners pay premium rates for the higher

data rates? "Anything that costs several magnitudes greater than terrestrial delivery isn't likely to make it," he says. "Bandwidth is scarce. We may eventually change from an economy of scarcity to abundance, but we don't see that happening anytime soon."

Trinneer isn't the only one to doubt that wireless Webcasting will be an attractive alternative to free, over-the-airwaves broadcast. Rick Mandler, vice president of new media for ABC Broadcasting, doesn't see portable Internet streams as having much impact in the near term.

"Obviously, it's something we're keeping an eye on. But it is not part of our plans for the coming year. The car has been impervious to the Internet. But it's not going to stay that way forever."

For Mandler, the technological issues

may be greater than some anticipate. "Wireless IP to a moving target is a real challenge. You can't go across town and even maintain a cell-phone conversation. With most kinds of data transmission, it's not an issue. But drop-outs are unacceptable for an audio product."

Even presuming that these are overcome, cost is critical.

"I don't think anyone is going to pay a premium for this. Flat-rate pricing is one model that would make people want to opt for this over free radio. Given the recent history of the Web, it seems that networks tend to go to flat-rate schemes. But if I were a service provider, wireless IP would scare me," says Mandler.

Emmis Broadcast Chairman and CEO Jeff Smulyan is confident that terrestrial radio can hold its own against new-media

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"The idea that streaming wireless will replace terrestrial signals is a notion based on a view of the world quite different than mine."

—Jeff Smulyan, chairman and CEO, Emmis Broadcast

incursions. Smulyan is no stranger to the opportunities afforded by the Internet. Recently, he took on the role of chairing the Local Media Internet Venture (LMIV), a consortium of broadcasters that explores and exploits new-media opportunities.

"Obviously, we're going to take LMIV wherever the public leads us. If this [wireless Webcasting] is a business, we want to be there. But the idea that streaming wireless will replace terrestrial signals is a notion based on a view of the world quite different than mine," he says.

Smulyan has many bottom-line questions for proponents of the wireless worldview. "We don't have an answer yet as to whether this is really viable with the listeners paying for it. The problem with an advertiser-based business model is that it's hard to aggregate enough listeners to make it attractive to advertisers. It is hard to find advertisers for very small audiences." As for the possibility of wireless carriers offering a flat-rate service, that just begs the question. "Flat-rate service could come around. But if people use it 24/7, pretty soon the carriers find that they're losing money. There's a lot of technology out there that's attractive—until you have to pay for it."

Still, Savos' Cohen finds the cell-phone carriers receptive. "What we're going to market with now works for today's infrastructure on today's phones. The wireless

carriers understand this as a new application for them, a new opportunity for customers to use their service. They are asking us to bring content to them to bring to their customers. At the same time, content providers are looking to connect with the carriers to reach those same customers," he says.

Even so, his average user is hardly average. In fact, the company has redirected initial efforts from the consumer to business-to-business markets. "At first, the customer base is the heavy cell-phone user. They might listen five to 10 minutes at a time [to an audio stream on a cell phone]. For example, a broker might listen to an analyst's report. If it's a strategic advantage to get this information early, it's worthwhile." But for now, Cohen expects to create a listener base using time leftover from calling plans. "There's a percentage of cell-phone users with a spare 100 to 200 minutes a month—about six or seven minutes a day. That's a foundation for building this business."

Besides bandwidth costs, Webcasters may face an additional expense. Terrestrial radio broadcasts are exempt from paying performance rights for recordings. Fees are paid to rights organizations to compensate authors. But performers and their record companies see a return in increased record sales instead. And the Recording Industry Association of America is seeking performance rights fees for Webcasts.

Dennis Wharton, the NAB's senior vice president of corporate communications, calls this an unreasonable demand that could cripple the entire nascent medium. "We obviously take great umbrage that we should be paying additional fees to the record companies. It's always been Congress' opinion that we're exempt from performance rights because on-air listening generates music sales. We already pay \$300 million a year to rights organizations like BMI and ASCAP. That's right off the bottom line. Now, on top of that, they're asking us to pay millions and millions more."

Negotiations between the NAB and RIAA broke down last spring. "In mid 2000, the RIAA filed a request for a decision on this from the Copyright Office of the Library of Congress. As a preemptive action, we filed against the RIAA. Right now we're waiting for an opinion," he says.

Wharton believes the RIAA's actions are shortsighted and possibly self-defeating. "Initially, this could result in a huge amount of revenue. That's their game—take the money and run. But it could limit the amount of music you actually get to hear online."

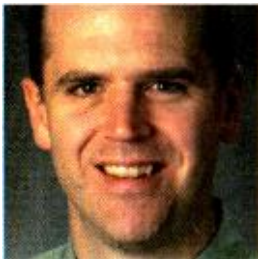
Despite the many uncertainties, broadcasters ignore wireless Webcasting at their own risk. Live365.com's Wallace is sure the technical issues will be resolved.

"If there's one thing consistent here, it's that people underestimate how quickly things happen and forget the problems once they get fixed. It seems like yesterday we had 286 computers and wireless was a dream," he says.

That only leaves the doubters that consumers will pay for a service that's already free over the airwaves. Radio broadcasters putting faith in the fact that no one will pay for something that's free sounds uncomfortably familiar—like some network TV executives in the '70s who voiced the same objections to the viability of cable TV. ■



ABC's Mandler: "Wireless IP to a moving target is a real challenge. You can't go across town and maintain a cell-phone conversation."



AT&T's Trineer: "Bandwidth is scarce. We may eventually change from an economy of scarcity to abundance, but we don't see that happening anytime soon."








NAB's Wharton: "We take great umbrage that we should be paying additional fees to the record companies. We already pay \$300 million a year."

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Internet killed the radio star

Customizable listening may expand audiences but could be a double-edged sword for radio stations and content owners

By Carl Lindemann

The first video aired on MTV was the Buggles' classic "Video Killed the Radio Star." The Internet has resisted such grandiose and dramatic pronouncements. But in another couple years, the Buggles may want to record a new version called "Internet Killed the Radio Station."

Forrester Research calls it the "self-serve audio evolution." Until now, those who wanted to store audio files on their computers and create online music libraries to share and access was pretty much limited to desktop computers. But a number of portable audio devices capable of storing literally hundreds of hours of audio files are on the way. Once the equipment is more affordable, it will usher in the ultimate evolution: the arrival of Internet "anytime, anywhere." The arrival date for that era, according to Forrester, is circa 2005.

"Certainly, Internet radio has been growing in popularity," says Jeremy Schwartz, Internet consultant and former analyst at Forrester Research. "More important, the way consumers think about audio experiences is changing with the ability to hear what you want when you want it." And in-dash Internet radios will only further make the case for Internet anytime, anywhere. But 2005 is another four years away. During that time, Forrester says stage two of the evolution will take place. That stage, called the "device era," will see streaming and downloadable media move out of the PC and into devices with the ease-of-use akin to home electronics. Some of those devices

are already available, but they tend to be costly—in the neighborhood of \$300 to \$400—well above the impulse-buy price range.

"We're still in the early days," adds Schwartz. "MP3-type players are pricey in relation to the cost of the amount of storage. As the technology gets cheaper and easier to use, this kind of listening will become more pervasive."

While the technology may still be in the early stages, companies have crafted business plans to travel down this road to the future. One such company is Audible.com, a Web-based service for spoken-word programming. Audible.com has already forged innovative relationships with traditional media, including radio, newspapers and book publishers. Audible.com offers listeners "choice and control" over content and so extends and expands audiences for content providers. Newspaper "readers" can access articles while at the wheel. Moreover, radio listeners are freed from the constraints of the broadcast schedule.

John Barth, senior director of original programming, came to Audible.com after four years as general manager of news, politics and reference for America Online. Barth is convinced that self-serve audio is the wave of

the future.

"People's schedules change all the time, and concepts like 'prime time' and 'drive time' are dissolving," he explains. "They used to be predictable 15 years ago. So the question is how do we accommodate this?"

The way Audible.com works is akin to programming a VCR to record a show you'd otherwise miss. The user downloads compressed audio files to a computer and transfers them to a portable digital player. While the majority of their offerings are digital versions of books-on-tape, commuters can also download time-sensitive content. An audio version of *The New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Wall Street Journal* are available each morning for the

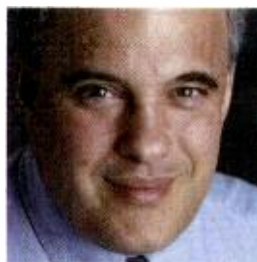
daily drive. Likewise, many of the best-known public-radio programs are also available.

So where does radio programming fit in? Barth says partnering with public-radio producers is a natural fit, because public radio's audience has a high level of Web access, education and income.

"Public-radio listeners are online," he says. "It's a dream demographic. So we've marshaled the crown jewels of the programs from National Public Radio and Public Radio International. This has created a sizable audience in a short time, faster than we thought it would."

Another advantage is that radio listeners are a different audience than the books-on-tape crowd, allowing for cross-selling of content. "There's always going to be a book audience, people hooked on that kind of listening," Barth adds. "Radio brings in a new audience you

can expose to this, and vice-versa." But there is a potential problem for radio stations. If NPR listeners turn to Audible.com for their content, they won't be listening to



Internet consultant Schwartz: "As the technology gets cheaper and easier to use, this kind of listening will become more pervasive."



MPR's McTaggart says that online support for local programming is a good thing. "This is not a new-media issue. It's a branding issue for local stations."

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NPR on local station affiliates.

Jon McTaggart, senior vice president for new media at Minnesota Public Radio (MPR), doesn't see that as a major issue.

MPR produces many programs, including *Marketplace* and Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion*, that are available through Audible.com and other new-media outlets.

McTaggart says that affiliates increasingly recognize the importance of such online support for programming.

"Take National Public Radio," he says. "The listeners have an expectation that if they miss a story, they can get it later on the NPR site. Most local stations realize that shows have to be supported appropriately to meet such expectations."

'The way consumers think about audio is changing with the ability to hear what you want when you want it.'

—Jeremy Schwartz, consultant

In fact, stations that know how to promote themselves properly can actually use this to increase traffic on their own Web sites. "This is not a new-media issue. It's a branding issue for local stations," he says.

Offering online access can also create value for back catalogs of programming that would otherwise sit in storage. "In 1998, we produced a 10-part series on infertility called *The Fertility Race*. After it aired, we offered tapes and transcripts. By continuing to promote this series in use-Net groups and Internet search engines, we have a steady stream of listeners interested in the subject coming to visit this site," McTaggart points out.

Increasing the availability of such infor-

mation is also in keeping with public broadcasting's mission. "MPR is committed to accessibility. We want to give access to this programming in any way that makes sense for our audiences and ourselves. Our daily discipline is, is this really an opportunity to provide public service? Does it enhance our mission?"

"We may have created the content first for radio," he continues, "but, as we offer these programs through other platforms, our audiences are telling us it's a tremendous value to them. More and more want to listen on portable devices, so why not support that?"

For McTaggart, these initial explorations are the groundwork for creating a new public-service media model. "People understand what public service is in radio and television. What's undefined is what it means to provide public service through multiple platforms." ■

Internet radio to go

Internet radio is all well and good. But wouldn't it be nice to tune in without being trapped in the same room with your PC? The makers of Sonicbox think so. Sonicbox Inc. designed the \$99 device to make listening to Internet radio streams around the home or office as easy as listening to AM or FM on a Walkman.

Sonicbox turns the PC into a micro broadcast station. The base unit is a low-power transceiver that rebroadcasts the PC audio to a portable receiver, while receiving commands from a separate remote control. The base unit attaches to a PC via a USB connector. Although the receiver runs on AAA batteries, it also comes with an external AC power supply. This allows a long-term wireless hookup with, say, a stereo located at the other end of the house.

The remote tuner is slightly larger than a TV remote control and has an array of but-

tons alongside a tuning knob. The buttons toggle through 25 categories. Turning the knob switches between audio streams in these categories. Altogether, there are some 700 pre-set "channels." Each has been selected for both quality and kind of content, as well as reliability of online access. Additional audio-streaming sites not included in the Sonicbox "channels" can be programmed in.

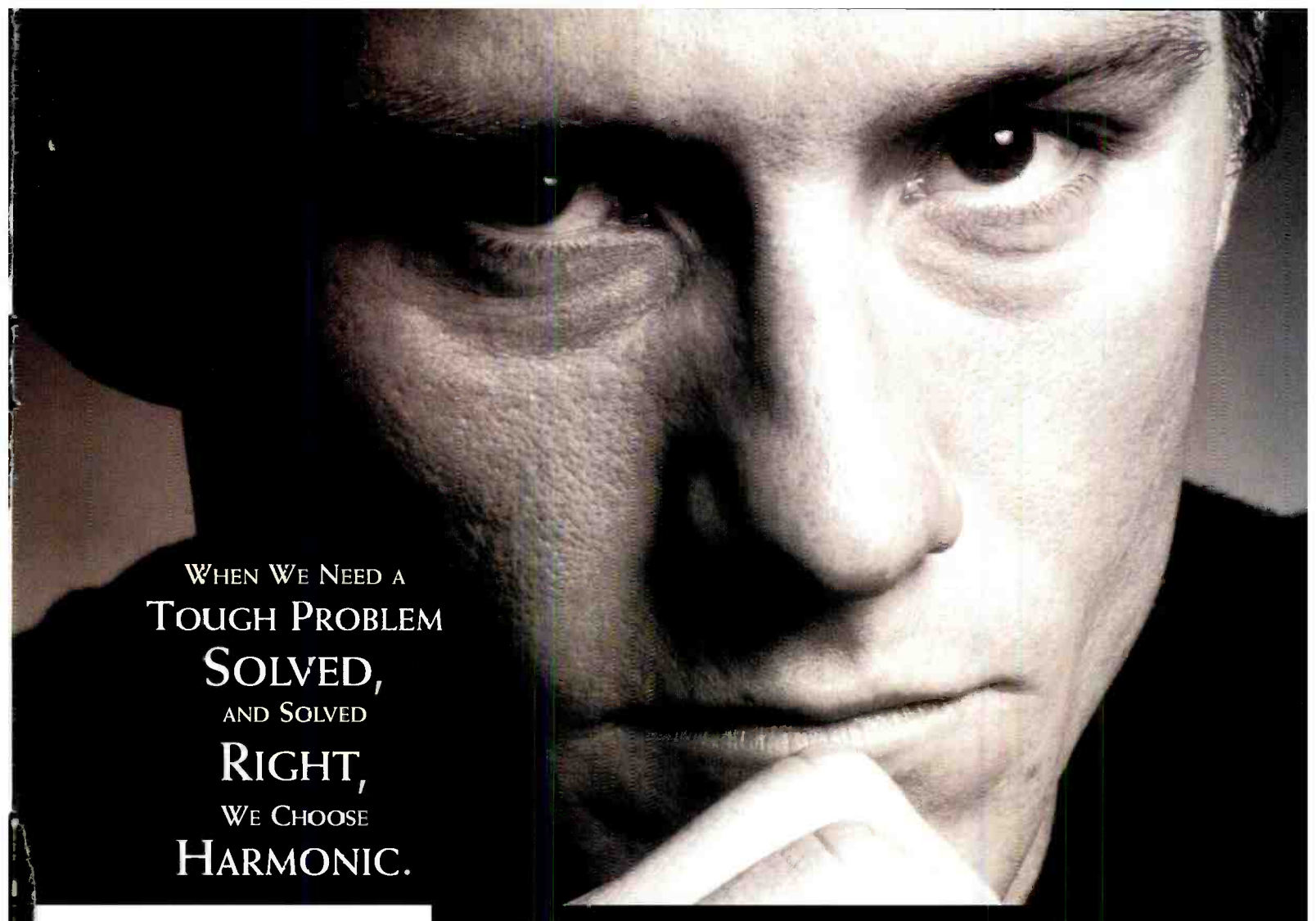
The layout of the remote is obvious and intuitive. Channel surfing here isn't quite like over-the-air radio, because packet-based Internet audio isn't "instant-on." A data buffer is usually gathered before playback to reduce dropouts. The Sonicbox tuner thoughtfully plays a custom clip of pre-recorded music to fill what would otherwise be dead air. As audio kicks in, sound quality is dictated more by the PC's Internet connection of the computer—the higher the bit rate, the better the quality—than by Sonicbox.

—C.L.



The three-piece Sonicbox system hooks into a PC and allows the user to listen to Internet radio streams from anywhere in the home or office.





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The impossible stream



CNN uses the Anystream Agility encoding platform, which allows the network to take files or tape and stream them in different formats and at different bit rates.

By Ken Kerschbaumer

The challenge facing any company that enters the streaming-media business is getting its content ready for distribution—whether it's downloaded from media players Microsoft, Real Networks or Quicktime. Not only does the company have to deal with preparing content for different formats, but it also has to accommodate different bit rates. When it comes to streaming media, companies must be all things to all users—regardless of how content is delivered.

Unfortunately for content providers, there is no easy way around the multiple-encode dilemma. One option is to purchase a system that can automate the task. But that means making a larger capital investment. The other option is to make content available through only one player or at only one or two bit rates. But that option creates a compromise with the one player that streamers don't want to frustrate—the consumer.

Streaming content almost certainly requires media companies to convert to multiple formats, says Jeremy Schwartz, an independent consultant and former analyst for Forrester Research. However, “depending on whether they're delivering over broadband, narrowband or both—they may have multiple versions of the content within each of those formats at different bit rates,” he says. “So there may be up to nine different versions of the content that have to be stored and sent down through the delivery networks.”

“If a content provider chooses the Real server, it can't stream Microsoft and Apple formats from that server,” says Neil McGowan, vice president of sales and marketing for Kasenna, a software spin-off of

Multiple formats, multiple encodes could give way to one format, one encode

SGI that helps scale networks for broadband video. “And the same applies to the Microsoft and Apple server.”

As a result, most content providers support all the players—Microsoft's Media Player, Real Network's Real Player and Apple's Quicktime—in an effort to reach as many eyeballs as possible. There are some solutions available from companies like Avid, Sonic Foundry, Pinnacle, Adobe, Kasenna, Media 100 and others that can make it easier to handle multiple bit rates from one source, but encoding for the different formats continues to be a challenge. In addition to requiring more employees to handle the encoding, it also requires more storage space on servers.

“The challenge for commercial-grade solutions goes beyond streaming,” adds McGowan. “For example, you need management, security, distribution and e-commerce capabilities. Real, Microsoft and Apple are all vested in their own or third-

'The issue for consumers will be the irritation of having to download the player and figuring out which one is going to become the default player.'

—Jeremy Schwartz, consultant

party software relationships that are not compatible. So you could end up with each server not only streaming different formats, but also using different rights management, distribution and content-management systems. This is where companies like ours, with a horizontal platform technology, come in, because you can stream all the formats from a single server.”

THE SINGLE-SERVER SOLUTION

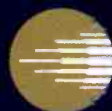
The experience at CNN.com and CNNI.com is typical of the problems and



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potential solutions for media companies. Tom Gerstel, CNN.com manager of content development, says that the company added the Anystream Agility encoding platform that allows the network to take one file or tape and stream it out to many different formats and bit rates.

“They do all that legwork for us, taking the proprietary formats and accommodating them so we can encode them,” he says. “But before integrating Anystream, we had three production processes for each format. And it’s certainly not an impossibility that another format might come online. The notion of us having a fourth process was unthinkable, so [Anystream] brings us centralized control of our streaming resources.”

As is the case for many companies, streaming is a business, and, according to Gerstel, CNN needed “enterprise-level” tools to support it. “While the individual providers give away their free tools, we didn’t want to run a business on a set of free tools loosely integrated by one of our developers that did it on a project-by-project basis,” he explains. “For people that are serious about streaming, I think it’s a worthwhile move.”

Though there are solutions to the encoding challenges posed by multiple formats, the obvious question is will there ever be standardization among the media-player manufacturers to ease the burden on the content creator and distributor? The short answer is—not today, but maybe tomorrow.

“Currently, there isn’t enough demand for standardization because there aren’t enough customers with broadband connections,” says Jim Stroud, an analyst with the Carmel Group, a media research firm. “But in the next couple of years, as broadband becomes more widely available, I think you may see demand for some sort of standardization of content.”

Stroud believes the standardization movement could start out as an independent effort by consumers with add-on support from streaming content providers. “If there was a movement, they [content providers] may jump on the bandwagon because there



CNN.com’s Tom Gerstel: “Before integrating Anystream, we had three production processes for each format.”

is some cost involved in making content compatible with all three players.”

THE CASE FOR STANDARDS

The argument for standardization is often seen as similar to one used in the early days of television—if the broadcast networks had each had their own separate broadcast standards, would television be what it is today? For the most part, the consumer on the other end of the streaming experience is fairly tech savvy. But in order for streaming to really take off, it has to become a much simpler experience.

“The issue for consumers will be the irritation of having to download the player and figuring out which one is going to become the default player,” says Schwartz. “So there’s a certain level of consumer irritation that comes from that. And when the consumer has to go through that process, it alienates a lot of consumers who aren’t tech savvy.”

But Ben Rotholtz, Real Networks general manager, products and systems, says that standardization today—with constant

advances in codecs and the innovations made by companies like his with each successive generation of streaming technology—could hinder technical progress.

“In the world of television, there was a hardware decoding side and transmission pieces that had to standardize,” says Rotholtz. “In the world of auto-updateable software there’s a lot more fluidity than that.”

There has been some discussion of MPEG-4 forming the core for a streaming standard. But Rotholtz adds that creating standards based on something like MPEG-4—with its current broad definition—defies the notion of delivering the best streaming experience. “And that would probably do more to hold back the industry than not,” he adds.

However, there’s no question that standardization will increasingly find itself on the radar screen of content providers and consumers as a necessary part of the streaming solution.

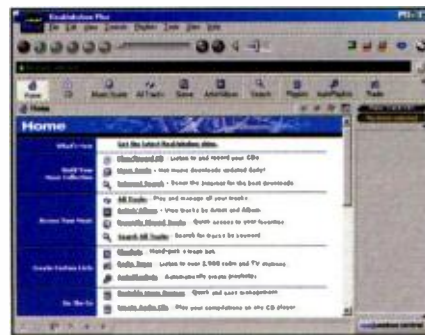
“Standardization has to emerge for three key reasons,” says Geoff Stedman, director of strategic marketing for Preview Systems, a company that has developed a digital-rights commerce platform that works across different formats. “First, the lack of standardization makes the consumer experience complicated and unwieldy, a problem that will become more acute as the broadband universe expands beyond the techie crowd.

“Second, without standards, the market will remain highly fragmented, which limits the commercial opportunity for content providers. Ultimately that will drive the industry to standardize.”

Stedman believes another factor is that PCs will become less and less the primary delivery vehicle for online content, as other connected “appliance-like” devices emerge. “This new class of devices will also help force some level of standardization,” he adds.

FORMAT VS. CONTENT

Nobody really knows if and when consumers will become fed up with a multiple-format world, or even who will feel the brunt of that anger. For now, at least, online consumers are willing to download the



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player they need in order to reach the content they want. As a result, the scramble among the streaming players is to try to make exclusive deals with the right content providers. Quicktime, which lags behind in terms of the number of downloaded players, has probably had the two most-publicized deals. The first was the movie trailer for *Star Wars: Phantom Menace*, and next came the trailer for *Lord of the Rings*.

“People want to watch the content. They don’t care about the players,” says Stroud. “And that’s why you’ll see these astronomical numbers bandied about by Microsoft and Real Networks as far as how many players have been downloaded.”

While content may be king as far as attracting downloads, as pointed out in a recent Jupiter Research report on streaming video, the content provider stands on the sidelines of a server and format battle between Real Networks and Microsoft that defines the market. Even Apple, which offers Quicktime format, is pretty much out of the fray, in what Jupiter refers to as a “durable duopoly”—the current state of competition for dominance.

“Although Real Networks’ server solution is more expensive [as opposed to Microsoft’s free-with-NT pricing], Real Networks remains platform agnostic and maintains an edge in codec quality,” according to the report. “Real Networks continues to outmaneuver Microsoft’s OEM distribution advantages by bundling with Microsoft platform competitors such as AOL and Netscape.”

The report says that Media Matrix SoftScan numbers indicate that Windows Media Player enjoys a slightly higher distribution than Real Networks, due to bundling with Microsoft. It adds that the finding includes an older version of the Media Player, which did not support streaming video.

EVERYONE SUFFERS WITHOUT STANDARDS

Not only is the lack of standardization among media players affecting the Internet experience, but it could also have an impact on interactive television services. With



Microsoft makes use of the MPEG-4 standard for some of its streaming, but “improved” it.

cable set-tops and other computer-like devices sitting closer to the television, there will be an opportunity to incorporate Internet content into the television viewing experience. But media player formats could stand in the way of allowing those less “tech-savvy” consumers to expand the interactive-television-viewer universe by inhibiting downloads and plug-ins.

“I think standards are going to become crucial, because it’s my belief that IP video will be at the center of interactive television,” says Jonathan Taplin, president and CEO of Intertainer, an interactive TV content provider. “The cable industry, as well as the DSL industry, has to look at standardizing so that we can create really rich interactive television. And the only way I see that being possible is a combination of IP, HTML and MPEG-4. So anything that helps those become more standardized is a good thing.”

Taplin’s company is a bit of a rebel when it comes to selecting a

streaming standard, opting to use only Microsoft’s Media Player. It’s the rare company that is interested in streaming video content that will select only one standard. It’s estimated that only about 10% of streaming content is not available on a combination of at least two of the three media players. Taplin’s decision was made easy for one reason: Microsoft’s Media Player offers digital-rights management, something that Apple and Real Networks don’t currently offer in their encoding products.

DIGITAL-RIGHTS MANAGEMENT

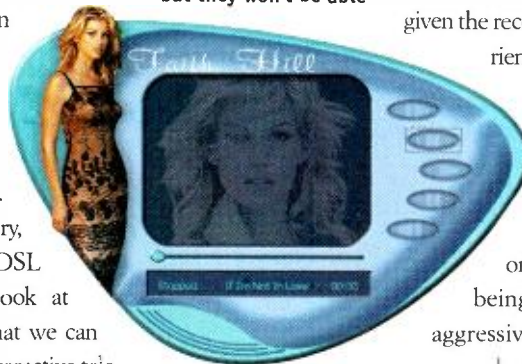
“The other players are fine for people with content that they don’t mind having ripped off. But for us, the crucial part is the digital-rights management,” adds Taplin. “My big fear about bolting digital-rights management onto an existing player is it’s easier to hack it.”

Mike Aldridge, Microsoft’s digital-media-division product manager, says that finding video-streaming customers like

Taplin who are interested in digital-rights management is becoming increasingly easy, especially given the recent headaches experienced by the audio industry with protecting copyrighted material.

“The key content owners on the video side are being much more aggressive and proactive because

Microsoft’s “Skins” help users of Media Players personalize the look, but they won’t be able



to hear Faith Hill (above) or Beck if the audio isn’t encoded for Microsoft first.



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they're learning lessons from the audio industry," says Aldridge. "So the decision between the players will come down to who has the most compelling set of attributes in terms of meeting the content owners' needs for a mature rights-management system. And today we have a second-generation digital-rights-management system that Real does not."

Rotholtz counters that Real hasn't lost any traction today because of its approach to digital-rights management. "We do care about DRM. But we also think there are multiple solutions, and we believe the world is a heterogeneous environment," he adds. "And the collection of technologies that make up DRM are probably heterogeneous. And flexibility is absolutely key."

The rhetoric coming from the camps can make one wonder if they ever really could get on the same page with regard to working together on a joint standard. But given the relatively small size of the current streaming market, each company believes it can become the dominant player.

The plan is pretty simple: by maintaining proprietary technology, it can offer advantages through better quality or easier functionality over competing formats. If it can convince enough content providers to exclusively use its technology, it can build a critical mass and become a de facto standard.

CREATING PROPRIETARY STANDARDS

"They want to protect their current customer base, and the way to do that is not to open up their proprietary encoding and streaming capabilities," adds Stroud. "There may come a time when the argument becomes can the pie be larger if they standardize the equipment, compete on an even standard playing field, and enhance the standardized content? Or, should they keep it proprietary and live with players that may not be compatible with the whole content pie? That's going to be an interesting battle."

Those who discuss standardization today often invoke the MPEG-4 standard and the potential for it to eventually



More than 160 million users have registered for a RealNetworks' RealPlayer.

become part of a standard. "As streaming becomes more important across all platforms, it will be important to have a standard, and my guess is that will be some version of MPEG-4," says Taplin.

But it's important to note that when MPEG-4 is mentioned, the phrase "some version" is usually mentioned as well. Microsoft, for example, has taken MPEG-4 and improved it. However, in the process Microsoft has made it proprietary. And Quicktime, which is also working with it, wraps MPEG-4 encoded material in a wrapper that requires the Quicktime player to access it. But does the approach run counter to the concept of a standard?

"Somewhat," laughs Schwartz.

"When it comes to standard formats such as MPEG-1 and MPEG-2, these companies have implemented some Trojan horse solutions," says McGowan. "But they wrap the MPEG envelope around their formats and, in most cases, it isn't native MPEG."

But the contradiction in the media players' approach is also an indication that the companies are not comfortable with MPEG-4 in its current form. "MPEG-4 is not acceptable today, and Microsoft had



"Skins" help both Microsoft and Real Networks users personalize their players.

to do some things to it that made it proprietary in order to force-fit it into their world, and we're of a similar mind," explains Real's Rotholtz. "One of the basic issues of MPEG-4 is trying to home in on what we mean when we say MPEG-4, because there's a definitional concern of what it means. And also, it's based on H261 which is a 16-year old standard that is not a bad standard but it's awfully old."

Rotholtz says that he believes there may be some interesting solutions around it, but that people need to understand what they're driving through. "There are enormous licensing fees associated with MPEG-4 of \$6 [per stream], and that doesn't even get you past all of the potential patent infringements and hurdles associated with it," he adds.

Third-party companies like TeleStream and SGI are offering products that can help ease some of the burden of multiple encoding at multiple bit rates. SGI, for example, is introducing—at Streaming Media West—the Kasenna Media Base 4.01 product on Linux, which will join its Irix-based product. "It will allow people to do Real, Quicktime, MPEG-1 and MPEG-2 content on the Linux platform.

"As people try to enhance from the base standard to get better quality you're going to see different types of encoding being used to maximize the content quality over the narrowest band," says Louise Ledeen, SGI market development manager. "There are a number of SGI engineers involved in the MPEG-4 and MPEG-7 committees, and when you see the number of people involved in trying to drive toward a standard you certainly hope that's going to happen."

But Ledeen adds that these discussions have gone on for years, going back to JPEG. "We have to create an environment where we can address whatever the prevailing standards are, and our hope is that we can drive toward a standard that is agreed upon and excepted. And, hopefully, working together, we can come up with some that have the capability of being extensible as well as having a long life in terms of acceptance." ■



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Coming eventually: TV on the PC

The world waits and waits for mass deployment of broadband

By Kira Greene

When video over the Internet first made its debut some four years ago, it was slow, jerky, grainy and small. For most Internet users today, it's still slow, jerky, grainy and small. But despite the promise that broadband—essentially high-speed Internet connections—would bring TV-quality video online to the masses, the waiting continues.

Predictions vary as to when the world will have a true television experience on the PC, and opinions differ on the magical bit rate that will make that happen. But one thing is certain: There's a race to get there first.

In the near term, the competition between the two dominant providers of broadband service promises to be interesting. The cable industry has a massive lead on the phone companies' digital-subscriber line (DSL) platform. But then, cable had a head start. Of all U.S. households with high-speed Internet connections, 75% are signed up with cable, while 25% are wired for DSL,

according to Cambridge, Mass.-based Forrester Research.

But DSL is gaining fast and is widely expected to catch up with or even surpass cable by 2004, according to Forrester. Look for wireless residential broadband including satellite, MMDS and fixed-wireless local loop in the arena as well, but those platforms are expected to serve only niche markets in geographical areas not served by cable or DSL.

"There's an ongoing fight about who is better," says Mark Zohar, research director for Forrester. "But it comes down to this: Nobody cares. People just want broadband. Whoever gets to the market first wins. If the cable company is there with cable-modem service, people will get that. If there's DSL, they'll get that. If there's both, then there's competition, and it will be whoever has the best price, service and brand name."

Indeed, the demand is there. According to a Forrester survey, 55% of traditional dial-up users say they are prepared to switch to broadband service once it becomes available. But with only 3% of the nation's 100 mil-

lion households wired for high-speed connections, the waiting game will continue for most Americans, who are rapidly going online.

More than half of U.S. households, nearly 54 million, now have computers, and about 42% of those have Internet access, up from 26% in 1999 and only 19% in 1998, according to a Commerce Department study of computer usage released in October. The FCC's most recent report on broadband access, released in August, refers to predictions that the number of households online will double within five years, encompassing two-thirds of all U.S. households.

The reality is that cable and DSL are plagued by problems, including network constraints that keep the services out of reach for most consumers. The big issue: the so-called "last mile" to the home.

Although cable networks today employ a combination of new fiber-optics and traditional coaxial cables—a hybrid fiber coax—the same coaxial wires that have

been in use for years still complete the connection to the home. Upgraded electronics, however, do help boost capacity.

CABLE'S MAIN DRAWBACK

But cable's big weakness lies in its party-line nature: The greater the number of customers logged on in a neighborhood, the lower the bandwidth and the slower the stream. As MSOs sign up more customers for modem service, the shared-network design is a growing problem. But the industry has come up with a solution to the issue: node splitting. Fiber from the network terminates in nodes located on neighborhood street corners where coax takes over and runs into the home. Fiber-optic lines can be split at the node, creating a second line to relieve the original fiber of half its load.

With DSL, users effectively have their

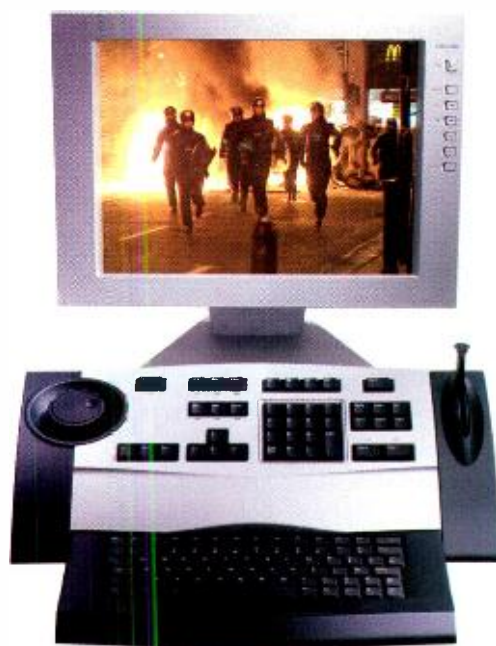
'Someday, I expect to be sitting at home surfing channels, and I won't know—or care—whether I'm getting that video feed from a TV channel or a cable channel or a satellite or from a Web site.'

—Rex Bullinger, NCTA



Akamai monitored Steve Jobs' speech to MacWorld in July through its Network Operations Command Center in Cambridge, Mass.

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own dedicated service directly from their home to the local telephone company's network. As a result, DSL service does not deteriorate as more users sign on. But video service can be pushed only over short distances, no more than 12,000 feet of line from the central office. SBC, however, is addressing that problem, among others, as it spends \$6 billion over the next three years to rebuild its plant for the digital age. By laying fiber to what it calls "neighborhood broadband gateways," or remote terminals, and copper to the customer's curb, the company is extending its reach to homes that otherwise would have been outside the service area.

Another difficulty telcos face is that copper lines upgraded with digital-loop carriers (DLCs) do not tolerate the massive compression needs of DSL and must be replaced with fiber. Bell South, in particular, must deal with this issue, since up to 30% of its network has been built out with DLC.



SBC is spending \$6 billion over the next three years to upgrade its network and expand its services through the use of remote terminals like this one.

It is estimated that there are 20 million to 30 million homes that will be unable to receive cable or DSL anytime soon, a natural market for satellite-delivered broadband. But high-speed Internet by satellite is more expensive for consumers—who will pay \$59.99 per month for StarBand compared to a little more than \$40 for cable modem or DSL service—and for the com-

ment is available in 2001, at the earliest." The study also reports, "There are too many technological uncertainties to view MMDS as a likely candidate to become a near-ubiquitous third network."

The broadband study speculates that complementary broadband plays—combining a satellite channel with DSL or digital television with DSL—could find attractive niche markets in users with demand for Internet-based video or in markets where cable is slow to upgrade. More interesting, the study points out that these alliances could, over time, compete with cable's offer of video, voice and data. However, the McKinsey study says, in the long-run, cable has the edge. "Even if continued advances in VDSL [very high-speed DSL] and MPEG video technology allow telcos to offer improved video packages, we expect that hybrid fiber-coax players [cable], with their greater bandwidth and inherently

'People just want broadband. Whoever gets to the market first wins.'

—Mark Zohar, Forrester Research

Satellite did not offer true broadband connections until early November, when StarBand Communications—a joint venture of Gilat Satellite Networks, EchoStar Communications and Microsoft—launched a two-way, always-on, high-speed satellite service for consumers. Hughes Network Systems will be next in early 2001, when it upgrades its one-way system—DirecPC—to two-way.

Late next year, iSky—a fledgling satellite company owned by Liberty Media, TV Guide, TRW, EchoStar and TeleSat—is also scheduled to deliver two-way high-speed data to residential markets. That venture intends to use Ka-band spectrum and spot-beam technology. And WildBlue, a Denver start-up, plans to get into the two-way game in 2002. WildBlue, in partnership with EchoStar, which owns 12% of the company, will offer consumers a bundled satellite TV service and Ka-band satellite broadband Internet service. The partners are developing a single dish and single box, which will combine the set-top box and PC modem.

panies that launch the birds. Satellite deployment is an expensive undertaking.

Moreover, satellite Internet service is not without its own technical difficulties: It can be affected by weather conditions such as wind and lightning, by the distance signals must travel from the satellite and by too many PCs hooked up to a single dish.

The wireless-based broadband-distribution platform, MMDS, is providing Internet-access services today. Some already consider it a solid player in niche markets for broadband. Long-distance providers MCI WorldCom and Sprint together spent about \$3 billion last year acquiring companies that held MMDS spectrum. Both Sprint and MCI WorldCom have DSL initiatives, which they view as a way to reach customers unlikely to receive wireline DSL.

A study conducted by investment analyst Sanford C. Bernstein and McKinsey & Co., called "Broadband!," concluded that, while MMDS has promise, it's "late to the game and will certainly be far behind cable and DSL by the time new MMDS equip-

more video-friendly networks, will be able to stay at least one step ahead."

BANDWIDTH—THE NEXT LEVEL?

But infrastructure is only part of the deployment needed to get to the next level of TV on the Internet. Bandwidth, which has quadrupled in the past four years, must continue to grow to accommodate the stringent requirements of streaming video, as well as the increasingly discriminating tastes of viewers in video quality.

These days, the fastest transmission speeds touted by cable and DSL services are in the range of 500 kilobits per second (kb/s) to 640 kb/s for downstream signals and up to 384 kb/s upstream. VHS quality is pegged at 300 kb/s, while DVD comparable video would require nearly 4 megabits, according to industry experts. With most high-speed services, connection rates of 300 kb/s to 400 kb/s are common and considered reasonable quality video over PCs. Streaming video on the Web requires roughly 175 kb/s, and television-quality over the Internet takes 750

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kb/s or more. Traditional telephone modems deliver data at roughly 44 kb/s to 56 kb/s. From the FCC's point of view, high-speed services are those offering more than 200 kb/s in at least one direction.

Bit rates that deliver at least tolerable video are, indeed, here and now. But there are many factors that degrade video streams: the number of users on the network, dropped connections, noise and other kinds of traffic. Servers can also contribute to the slowdown.

Even with a cable modem or DSL, users can encounter jerky motion simply as a result of congestion on the Internet itself, not because of last-mile problems. Packets, blocks of data that carry the information necessary to be delivered to an address, are routinely dropped when there is heavy traffic on the Web and must be re-requested from the Web site before being delivered to the user's PC. With content such as e-mail or any file transfer, the arrangement of packets is not important. But with video or audio streaming, packets must be sent in the appropriate sequence or the stream will not go through.

Companies such as Cidera, PanAmSat's NET-36 venture, Akamai Technologies and iBeam Broadcasting are bypassing Internet bottlenecks using satellites to bring video streams to edge servers located closer to users.

"The Internet is just not designed to support streaming. Never was. That's the fundamental issue," says Rex Bullinger, director of broadband technology, National Cable Television Association. "The only way to fight [packet loss] is with brute force: powerful routers and networks."

However, bandwidth requirements do vary according to content. Video with lots of motion such as sports content call for higher bit rates than a newscast or a lecture. And when it comes to movies, while not always action-packed, viewers expect a certain level of quality.

Granted, 300 kb/s does not provide a television experience. But as Jupiter

Research analyst David Card points out, users currently are willing to accept lower quality for content not available elsewhere, such as concerts or short films. The short form, in fact, has become popular simply because Web sites now offer the genre, for which outlets have been scarce.

THE NIGHTMARE: 'EVERYONE GETS BROADBAND'

If the magical bit rate that delivers true TV over the Internet is upwards of 750 kb/s, then how soon will the many millions of homes be tuned in?



About three-quarters of all U.S. households with high-speed Internet access are signed up with cable, which uses providers like Excite@Home.

"That's beyond our forecast horizon," says Jupiter's Card. "Right now, real honest-to-goodness DVD quality probably requires something like a 4-Mb/s bandwidth. Nobody is deploying that."

Card ventures a guess anyway, and says the day may come in fewer than 10 years, but it will definitely be more than five years. "Let's say you do it by building out the infrastructure, putting in a lot of fiber, put a lot of content at the edge of the network. We're not even talking multicasting, which doesn't work yet either. But store movies in the local cable headend rather than in the center of the Internet. You could technically do it, but it would be very, very expensive."

Others are more optimistic. SBC's Mark Hubsher figures broadband service will be in 20 million homes within three years, an

estimate that EchoStar Data Network's Jim Stratigos agrees with. Peter Negulescu of Excite @ Home thinks it could happen in less than two years.

Independent consultant and former Forrester analyst Jeremy Schwartz forecasts high-speed access will reach a "critical mass of homes by 2002 or 2003." The research company estimates penetration at 18.8 million households by 2002 and 40 million by 2005, and those numbers do not include offices and multidwelling housing. By comparison, there are 100 million TV households in the U.S. and 75 million homes with cable.

Nevertheless, Forrester's Zohar points out that massive numbers of users on the Internet could be "a huge nightmare." He believes that, when content-delivery company Akamai streamed Steve Jobs' speech to MacWorld earlier this year, nearly 6% of the Internet's capacity was consumed by users logging in for the event. Attributing the line to Akamai, Zohar says, "The worst thing that can happen to the Internet is for everyone to get broadband. Each part of the Internet needs to be bolstered, not just the last mile."

Zohar concedes that a number of companies are working on the problem with satellite solutions or terrestrial content-distribution services. But even so, he says, "the notion of getting 50 million households on concurrently is beyond our thinking right now. We forecast only about 47 million households with broadband access by 2005. I'd say it will be 2007, 2008 before we start to see that kind of world."

Despite connectivity and bandwidth impediments and the inevitable billions it will require to overcome those problems, the day will come when the PC will deliver broadcast-quality video. "It's going to happen," says NCTA's Bullinger. "Some day I expect to be sitting at home surfing channels, and I won't know—or care—whether I'm getting that video feed from a TV channel or a cable channel or a satellite or from a Web site. Some day I won't care." ■

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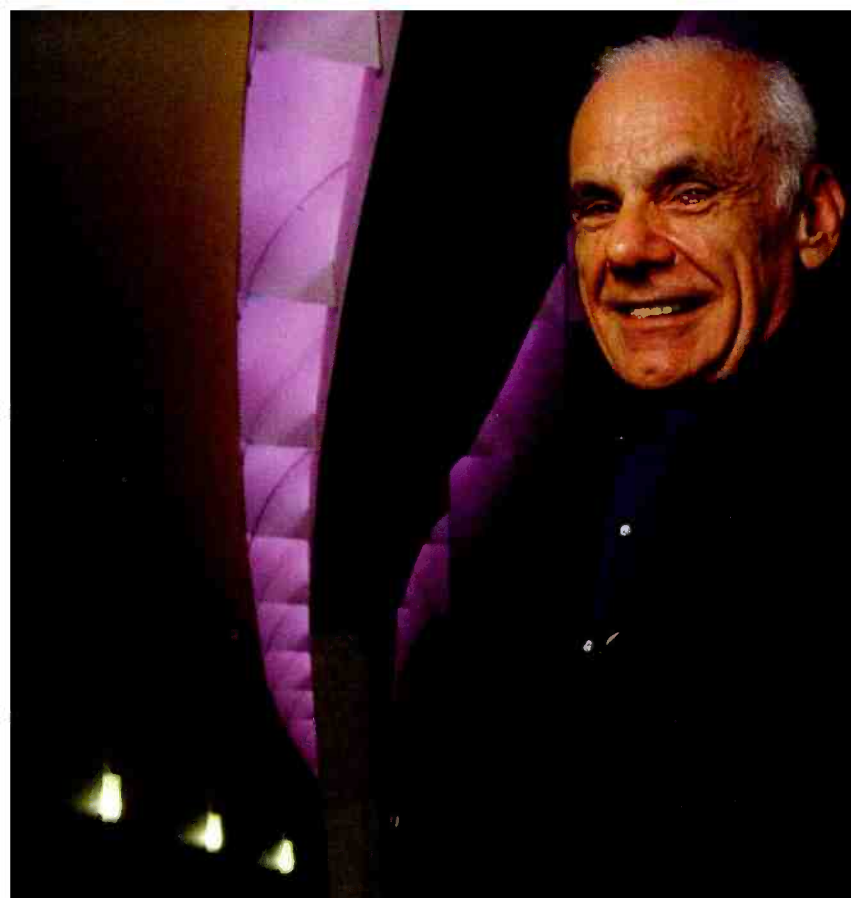
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The next BIG thing

One of the Internet's founding fathers shares his thoughts about the emergence of streaming technology

Laying claim to being a father of the Internet can be a dicey proposition—just ask Al Gore. But it is one title that Dr. Larry Roberts can claim with some conviction. In 1966, Roberts was ARPA's chief scientist when he began work on the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET), part of the Defense Department. The project specifically involved helping turn Leonard Kleinrock's packet-switching theory into a working network—which played a major part in the evolution of the Internet.

Since those days, Dr. Roberts has continued to advance data-networking technology, whether with Telenet in the '70s, NetExpress in the '80s or ATM Systems in the '90s. Today, he is CTO and chairman of Caspian Networks, an Internet infrastructure company. He lives in Silicon Valley in northern California and is, in a strange way, master of the valley. He recently took time out to discuss—with BROADCASTING & CABLE Associate Editor Ken Kerschbaumer—the Internet and where streaming media fits in.

As someone who has been involved with the Internet from the very beginning, what is your take on the whole direction of the Internet movement in the past year or so?

I think that e-commerce, of course, has been a lot of the focus, which is fairly misleading. E-commerce is actually only a small part of the Internet business. I think what has happened in the last year, in the last two years really, is something that's really remarkable. But what people haven't noticed as much as e-commerce is that the industry has taken off in internal business activities. For example, companies getting material from each other—parts ordering and parts information—all of the business traffic has moved to the Internet, pretty much.

As for the traffic on the Internet, it's been doubling each year or maybe a little faster until last year, when it went up by four times. This year, so far, it has grown by eight times, and it will continue to grow for the next four years or so. But around 2005, I think Internet traffic will have to start

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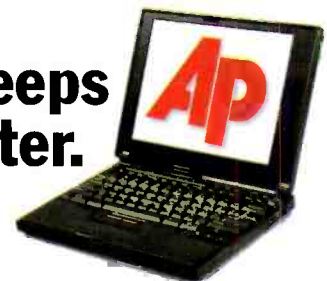
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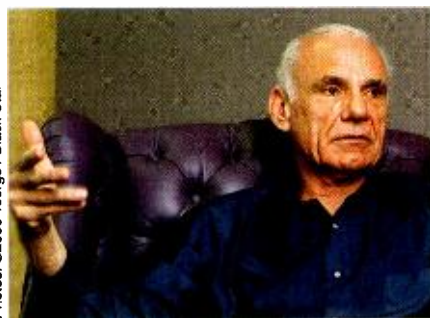
The news keeps getting better.



tapering off, because we will have reached the amount of money that is spent on telecommunications today. I don't think people will spend more of the gross domestic product on telecommunications than they do today.

In any case, they're rapidly shifting over from the telephone and other things, and spending money other ways. And the carriers who are providing Internet access are really struggling to find technology to install, because they can't grow fast enough.

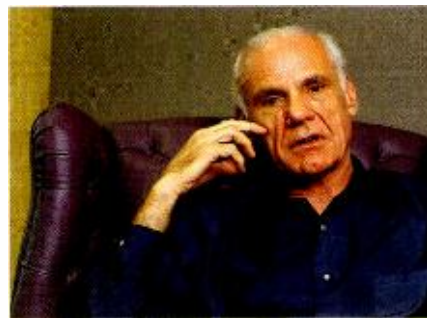
Where do you see the Internet fitting—as a medium—compared to television and radio?



Photos: ©2000 Torge / Black Star

Then what are the implications for traditional radio stations and their businesses?

One of the implications is that I will be able to select whatever I want to hear, say the news coverage in Florida of the election, and I'll just select that. I won't have to listen to the rest of the stuff. But one of the questions that introduces is: How do programmers get paid? Ads don't work as well, and I think subscriptions are annoying to people, because they like to jump around and do whatever they want to do. So my guess is that there is going to be a very easy mechanism for me to pay a flat bill each month to my ISP, and whoever I'm talking to gets

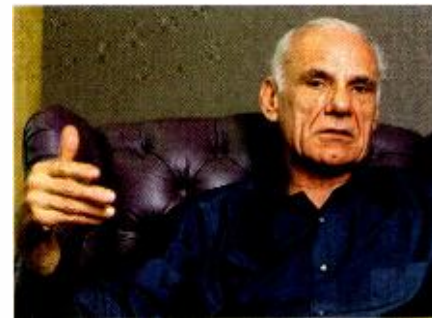


What will be the impact of wireless wideband?

Wideband wireless is going to be in place next year. The technology that I've seen will virtually eliminate fading, because it uses two antennas rather than one. So when one fades, the other doesn't. The effect of that is actually dramatic, because it means that you can go almost anywhere and not have any substantial fading.

What about advertising? Will people accept commercials as part of the experience?

Well, I think that, once subscribers start paying for subscriptions, then they don't have to



'Wideband wireless is going to be in place next year. The technology that I've seen will virtually eliminate fading, because it uses two antennas rather than one. So when one fades, the other doesn't. The effect of that is actually dramatic, because it means that you can go almost anywhere and not have any substantial fading.'

I think you'll immediately start seeing streaming audio and video take off in business activities, because more and more businesses are being connected at very high bandwidth. There's a lot of high-bandwidth stuff going on in business, and almost all the business-related connections are at least a T-1 connection.

I also believe radio, through the Internet for the home, is going to take off very shortly. The bandwidth for the average user at 56 kilobits is sufficient for radio. The question in my mind is, when are we going to start seeing Internet radios—devices that are made for that? I suspect that, within a year or two, we'll start seeing actual devices that are just purely Internet radios.

a piece of that. It won't cost very much because there are millions of listeners.

The result is Internet radio is going to be very attractive for people who want to listen to exactly what they want to—the kind of music they like, or the news when they want, or the traffic when they want.

The real issues are twofold. One is, how do subscribers pay, which I think is easily solved. And the other is, how do your subscribers select content easily. When you're in your car or when you're doing other things, it's not easy to select a Web site. In your car, I suspect it's got to be speech interpretation. And I think it could be the same in the home. The radio will listen to what you say, because you don't want to put your hands and eyes on something.

experience the commercials, and I think that is what they'll choose to do where they can. But you will have people who want to hear about various products, and the Internet is actually a pretty good way to do that. The challenge is how do programmers insert advertising, because people will be able to fast-forward past the commercials—there's absolutely no reason why they have to listen to the stream.

If you have TiVo, you've already seen how that works. You just space over them. I think that the commercial people have to take a different tack. They'll have to find out what consumers want, and make better guesses as to who consumers are and what they want. But I don't know if people will accept it.

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the fathers of the Internet. How different is where we are today from your vision?

Well, I didn't expect we'd necessarily get into the areas that we've gone into. The primary emphasis when I started it was to get information from any computer to anybody, anywhere, and we do have that. But while that expands the knowledge base, it

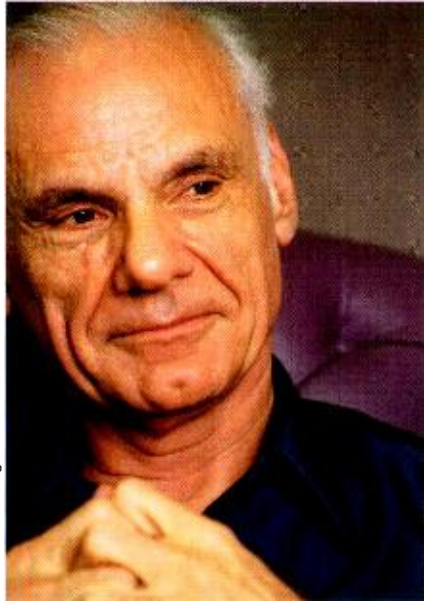


Photo: ©2000 Toerge / Black Star

doesn't change commerce, and it doesn't change entertainment. And now what has happened is we've gone through e-commerce, which had never worked before, and we didn't really expect it would work. It has worked pretty well, even though too many people started companies.

When you first started getting involved with the Internet, and you started to realize some of its potential, when did it become apparent to you that this would become a medium that could be as widely accepted as television and radio?

In the 1970s, I don't think I ever thought that it would get this big, because we didn't have personal computers. It was all mainframes, and the potential was far more limited. But, by the early 1980s, I think it was pretty clear that it was going to grow this big. In fact, in 1981, I made a prediction

that voice would convert in 2001 to the Internet, which, in fact, I think it will.

So, I was pretty accurate in predicting that communications would transfer over to the Internet. As for television, because it had the highest bandwidth, I was projecting it to hit the Internet probably in 2010. Now I think it will be 2005. Things are changing much faster.

'I think what consumers want out of streaming audio and video is the same experience as we have today, except selectable. In other words, I would like to be able to go to a Web site that has the news I want at the moment, the information I want or the program I want to see. I don't want to be controlled by the programmer's timing.'

There has been a lot of heartache with start-up companies that came along and seemed to see the Internet as a way to compete with traditional media companies and programmers. And there were others who said companies couldn't compete unless they made the content interactive to take full advantage of what the Internet has to offer. How important is it to have content that's interactive, as opposed to just streaming the equivalent of a video sequence?

I think what consumers want out of streaming audio and video is the same experience as we have today, except selectable. In other words, I would like to be able to go to a Web site that has the news I want at the moment, the information I want or the program I want to see. I don't want to be controlled by the programmer's timing.

I think the other part of the picture is that there will be a new activity in interac-

tivity where people want to interact with other people. They'll do that in things like aviator games, where they really can start interacting with other people.

How important is standardization in streaming media?

Well, I don't think that's a big problem, because you can always download the software. In almost any device we build in the future, you'll be able to do that.

Are there any other areas where you do see some standardization problems?

One of the problems I see is that the Internet network isn't supporting streaming media very well today. And it won't, unless the person originating the stream provides more information to the Internet about what kind of media they're sending and the requirements for quality of service. I think that companies like mine are going to build equipment that can support quality service over the Internet so that we can support video and voice far better.

But, again, the server sending the content has to say something more—in terms of the protocols to the Internet—like what speed it needs or what delay variance it wants, or it won't be handled properly. The protocol that is used today—UDP—is about the worst at giving information of any I've ever seen. It just doesn't give any information about the speed and the quality of the service required. Of course, when people built the Internet, they didn't think there was going to be any quality of service.

How are companies attacking this quality-of-service issue?

There are many people attacking it at the edge, but we're probably the only ones really attacking it at the core—to really fix it overall. It will get fixed in the next couple of years, because I don't think it's a big mystery as to how to undertake fixing it. But the real issue with standards is at least getting something at the beginning of a transmission, some command that tells the Internet what you want.

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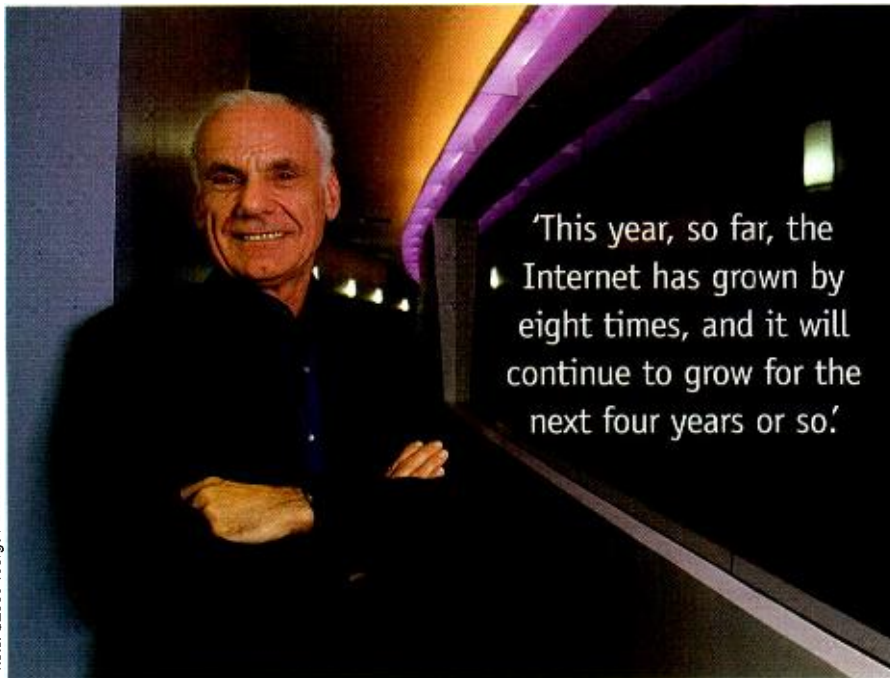
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So the command will sort of tell the Internet that it needs this much speed to deliver the content?

Right, this speed and this delay variance. Those are the two primary things.

I guess a similar quality-of-service problem comes up when cable operators offer cable modems with access to the Internet at speeds up to 100 times faster than 56k, with speeds relying on traffic. And on the DSL side, the problem seems to be just meeting demand for rollout. How do you see those services rolling out over the next couple of years, and how will operators improve their services?

There are three services really, because wideband wireless will start competing, very heavily. My guess is that cable will continue leading for about two or three more years, and then both wireless and DSL will surpass it in actual bits moved.

The problem facing cable with cable modems is they have to rearrange their bandwidth allocation, because, as people start using more and more bandwidth, they're going to overload the 30 megabits that are available. They're also going to have to offer fewer channels and more

Internet bandwidth, because they'd really like to use several hundred megabits for the Internet so they can handle more people. But they're going to have to change their equipment a lot, and that's one of the problems that cable is going to have.

Another problem they face is most people who use a cable modem see great service when they start, and then it gets worse and worse. But DSL won't have that problem. In fact, as the business improves, they'll put fiber closer and closer to your house so it will be easier and easier. That's why I think DSL will overtake cable modems in time very easily, in terms of bits moved. And people will find it to be a more consistent service that isn't always changing as the cable operator forgets to invest.

Fixed wireless has a huge upside potential, because it basically can give you 10 megabits or wide bandwidths, in every cell, but the cells can be as small as you want.

How does fixed wireless work?

It uses a new technology that has less fading because it uses multiple antennas at the transmitter and multiple receive antennas—two and two, preferably. And then you just have a packet-delivery system, which basically sends and receives packets

of information.

The technology has been available for a very long time. But, the solution to the radio problems didn't come up until recently. So, now we can really do 10 megabits or more in a cell, and at that point, you go to a radio store and pick up your device, take it home and start using it. That dramatically simplifies the installation process. And so, I think that's why it can outstrip the others for a period of time, until they can get DSL to your house.

So, when do you see that service rolling out?

Everybody's saying next year.

In the online-entertainment area, there have been a number of non-starters and companies that have gone out of business. Do you think these companies were just ahead of the technology curve? Did the people who were investing in them not understand the technical side?

I don't think the technology is there yet. For radio delivery, it's just barely there. And for TV, it's too early for people to get good quality. What's happening is people are always going to be experimenting at the fringe, and if something happens, they'll find some users who can afford it or have wide enough bandwidth access.

I think you'll always see that kind of activity at the start of an area. But we're going to see such a fast growth in the Internet bandwidth, at about eight times per year. The average delivery to a person is under a kilobit today in the U.S., but if that's 8 kb next year and 64 kb the next year, then, in two years, we have tremendous capability for any kind of high-quality radio. And then, by 2005, we have very good-quality TV. The kind of thing we're doing at Caspian Networks will support the quality of service, and the streaming and its efficiency will be better. Secondly, the devices the services will then go on will progress a bit, and there will be devices that are just Internet radios or Internet TVs. And that will change the market, dramatically. ■

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This Week

Dec. 12 *New York Association of Black Journalists* 14th Annual NYBJ Scholarship & Awards Dinner. Roone Arlege Auditorium, Alfred Lerner Hall, Columbia University, New York City. Contact: April Prince or Renée E. Warren (212) 370-5483.

Dec. 12 *SCTE* Cable 101 training seminar. Hyatt Regency Hotel, Chicago. Contact: Ginny Nagle (610) 524-1725, ext. 210.

Dec. 13 *IRTS* Annual Christmas Benefit Luncheon. Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York City. Contact: Marilyn Ellis (212) 867-6650, ext. 303.

Dec. 13 *Broadcasters' Foundation* Sonny Awards. New York Athletic Club, New York City. Contact: Gordon Hastings (203) 862-8577.

Dec. 15 *HRTS* Premiere of HRTS Mentoring Foundation Benefit (formerly the HRTS Holiday Party). Beverly Hilton Hotel, Beverly Hills, Calif. Contact: Gene Herd (818) 789-1182.

January 2001

Jan. 6-9 *CEMA* International Consumer Electronics Show. Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas. Contact: Jeff Joseph (703) 907-7664.

Jan. 8-10 *SCTE* Conference on Emerging Technologies. New Orleans Hilton Riverside Hotel, New Orleans. Contact: Alex Springer (800) 524-5040, ext. 232.

Jan. 11-14 *National Educational Telecommunications Association* The NETA Conference. Hyatt Regency, Savannah, Ga. Contact: Beth Helberg (803) 799-5517.

Major Meetings

Jan. 6-9 *CEMA* International Consumer Electronics Show. Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas. Contact: Jeff Joseph (703) 907-7664.

Jan. 22-25 *National Association of TV Program Executives* 37th annual Conference and Exhibition. Las Vegas. Contact: Lana Westermeier (310) 453-4440.

April 21-26 *National Association of Broadcasters* Annual Convention. Las Vegas Convention Center and Sands Expo Center, Las Vegas. Contact: Kathleen L. Muller (202) 775-3527. *TVB* Annual Marketing conference, **April 23-24**. Contact: Janice Garjian (212) 486-1111.

May 6-9 *EIA* and *CEA* Spring Conference. Washington. Contact: Jeff Joseph (703) 907-7664.

June 10-13 *National Cable Television Association* Annual Convention. Chicago. Contact: Bobbie Boyd (202) 775-3669.

Sept. 5-8 *National Association of Broadcasters* Radio Show. New Orleans. Contact: Gene Sanders (202) 429-4194.

Sept. 12-15 *Radio-Television News Directors Association* International Conference and Exhibition. Nashville. Contact: Rick Osmanski (202) 467-5200.

Jan. 18-19 *E.J. Krause* International Sport Summit/Sport Summit Interactive 2001. Marriott Marquis Hotel, New York. Contact: Chyril Dorcas (212) 714-1280, ext. 337.

Jan. 22 *Association of Local Television Stations* ALTV Convention. Las Vegas Hilton, Las Vegas. Contact: Angela Giroux (202) 887-1970.

Jan. 22-24 *National Cable Television Cooperative* Winter Educational Conference. Dallas. Contact: Caprice Caster (913) 599-5900, ext. 305.

Jan. 22-25 *NATPE* 37th annual Conference and Exhibition. Las Vegas. Contact: Lana Westermeier (310) 453-4440.

Jan. 23 *IRTS Foundation* Q&A Seminar: Integrated Marketing. NBC, Conference rooms A & B, New York City. Contact: Michelle Marsala (212) 867-6650, ext. 303.

Jan. 27 *Television News Center* Advanced Anchor Training. Washington. Contact: Herb Brubaker (301) 340-6160.

Jan. 28-31 *CTAM* Research Conference: Enabling Broadband's Future. The Sheraton Bal Harbour Hotel, Bal Harbour, Fla. Contact: Barbara Gural (703) 837-6540.

Jan. 29-30 *Access Conferences International* Broadcast Graphics & Virtual Studios. Mandarin Oriental, London. Contact: Katie Milton +44 (0) 7840-2700.

Jan. 30-31 *The Carmel Group* DBS 2001: The Five Burning Questions. The Sheraton Hotel at LAX, Los Angeles. Contact: Natalie McChesney (831) 643-2222.

February 2001

Feb. 1-3 *Eckstein, Summers & Co.* The Television Industry's Annual Conference on New Business Development. The Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club, Naples, Fla. Contact: Roland J. Eckstein (732) 530-1996.

Feb. 1-4 *Radio Advertising Bureau* RAB2001. The Adams Mark Hotel, Dallas. Contact: Renee Cassis (212) 681-7222.

Feb. 6 *CAB* Cable Advertising Conference. New York Marriott Marquis, New York. Contact: Joleen Martin (212) 508-1214.

—Compiled by Beatrice Williams-Rude
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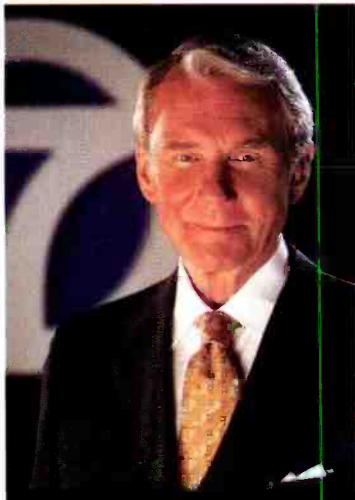
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BEUTEL SLOWS DOWN

WABC-TV's Bill Beutel, the senior anchor presence in the nation's No. 1 market, will cut back his work load in the new year and move from the anchor desk to a reporter's role. He will have his own producer assigned, and General Manager Tom Kane commented that "we want him on every day, as often as we can get him."

Approaching 70, Beutel has been with ABC since the early 1960s and, in 1970, was a key player, with late co-anchor Roger Grimsby, in the legendary early days of *Eyewitness News*. He first cut back a year ago, dropping his 11 p.m. shift. His replacement there, Bill Ritter, is a candidate to replace him on the earlier show as well. "We want to look at *Eyewitness News* anchors before we go elsewhere," said Kane.



CBS' Les Moonves shares a Kennedy Center Honors moment with President Clinton.

Bye to the Chief

Maybe you think it's just the end of the Clinton Administration. But, for CBS, the Dec. 27 broadcast of the *The Kennedy Center Honors: A Celebration of the Performing Arts* is the last one at which Bill and Hillary Clinton will have the center booth at Kennedy Center, where they've sat for the past eight years. The show ends with a retrospective from the previous shows (only President Reagan has presided over as many). This year, the Kennedy Center awards go to Mikhail Baryshnikov, Chuck Berry, Placido Domingo, Clint Eastwood and Angela Lansbury, but of course television-savvy viewers will spot CBS execs like Les Moonves and Mel Karmazin in the good seats. Used to be television wasn't technically rated during Christmas week. It is now, and this upscale special sets no Nielsen records, but it's probably the classiest thing on the tube all year long.

A BETTER MOUSE TRAP

ABC has moved to the Mouse House. Network executives have started moving into state-of-the-art offices in Burbank—where they will be just across the street from The Walt Disney Studios and within earshot of Disney Chairman Michael Eisner. Several hundred execs exited the old Century City headquarters, and another 100 left the New York City offices for the 10-story ABC Building. Corporate headquarters remain in New York, though, and ABC TV Network President Alex Wallau, ABC Broadcast President Bob Callahan and several other high-ranking executives will maintain offices there. In a welcoming memo, Eisner said, "Electronic communication is a wonderful thing, but there's still nothing like true face-to-face interaction." (And at Disney, interaction is often animated.)

ACHTUNG, TIX!

Radio station's request lines are usually inundated with calls when giving away concert tickets. But, when the station is the only source to score freebies and the concert is U2 rocking at a small dive, inundated is an understatement. "Nothing has rung the bell the way this has," says Steve Kingston, program director for WXRK(FM) New York.

BACKSTORY



With news of NBC's syndication partnership with Hearst-Argyle and Gannett and the tough times for syndicators generally, let's not forget that, about this time in 1986, Milt Grant was filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection for three of his stations: Miami's WBFS-TV, Chicago's WGB0-TV and Philadelphia's WGBS-TV.

Grant had been trying to renegotiate deals with syndicators, but, by the second week in December, representatives from 15 to 20 syndication companies

met at Paramount in Los Angeles to prepare their own solutions.

Grant Broadcasting System had anticipated 1986 revenue of \$56 million, of which \$40 million was to go to program suppliers, BROADCASTING reported. When revenue fell below that, the stations were in trouble, and so were syndicators. They were in and out of bankruptcy court with various remedies for most of the next year.

F A T E S & F O R T U N E S

Broadcasting

Appointments at NBC, New York: **Susan Weiner**, senior VP, law and deputy counsel, named acting general counsel; **Joanna Jamerson**, director, program standards, named senior director, program standards; **Deborah Lake**, director, program standards, named senior director, program standards; **Betty Torres**, director, program content systems and standards, named senior director, program standards; **Ken Samuel**, director, program content and compliance, named senior director, program standards.

Dunia A. Shive, chief financial officer, Belo, Dallas, also named executive VP.

Rafe Oller, director of special projects, USA Broadcasting, Miami, Fla., joins Fox Broadcasting Co., Los Angeles, as creative director, on-air promotion, special ops.

Carl Caldwell, producer and host, WILL-TV Urbana, Ill., named station manager.

Kate Burns, family service counselor, SCI, Virginia Beach, Va., joins WTVZ(TV) Norfolk,

Va., as account executive.

Cable

Appointments at TechTV, Calif.: **John Kopchik**, president AT&T broadband Western Division, Calif., joins as CFO; **Alyssa Donelan**, director, public relations, Turner Broadcasting Systems, Atlanta, joins as director of corporate communications and public relations.

Mark Walker, manager, corporate marketing, Starz Encore Group, Englewood, Colo., named director of affiliate marketing and digital strategy.

Radio

Frederic Serino, director of membership WOED-FM Pittsburgh, joins WDUQ(FM) Pittsburgh as director of development.

Technology

Dale Betts, account director, Motorola Broadband Communications Sector, Denver, appointed senior director of sales, Canal + U.S. Technologies, Denver.

Scott W. Doyle, partner, Dorsey & Whitney LLC, Denver, joins ACTV Inc., Denver, as chief intellectual property officer.

Programming

Richard Frankie, senior VP, business affairs, Columbia TriStar Television Distribution, Culver City, Calif., named executive VP, business operations.

Michael Maliani, senior VP, development, DIC Entertainment, Burbank Calif., named chief creative officer.

Mary Basich, director, business and legal affairs, Universal Television & Networks Group, Universal City, Calif., named VP, business and legal affairs.

Appointments at USA Network, Los Angeles: **Jackie Lyons**, VP, drama series, ABC Television Network, joins as senior VP, original series programming; **Chris Sloan**, senior VP/creative director of marketing and promotion, USA Broadcasting, named senior VP, reality program-

ming and specials.

Appointments at Court TV, New York: **John Moran**, VP, broadband distribution and regional sales, named senior VP of that function; **Glenn Moss**, VP, business affairs, named senior VP, business affairs; **Ellen Schned**, VP, national accounts and regional sales, named senior VP of that function; **Geoff Figgis**, director, Northeast region, named VP; **Tom Wolfe**, director, affiliate ad sales and strategic marketing, named VP of that function.

Philip Segal, senior executive VP, television production, Amblin Entertainment, Los Angeles, joins Tribune Entertainment Co., Los Angeles, as senior VP, scripted programming and development.

Peggy Masutani, controller, original programming, TNT, Los Angeles, named VP, strategic planning and finance. Appointments at MTV Networks, New York: **Leslie Leventman**, senior VP, creative services, special events and travel management,



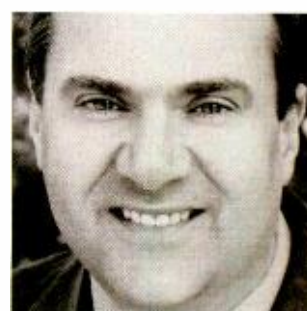
Carl Caldwell



Dale Betts



Richard Frankie



Philip Segal

F A T E S & F O R T U N E S

named executive VP of that function; **David Sussman**, senior VP and general counsel, law and business affairs, named executive VP of that function.

Adam Holzer, manager, network sales eastern region, Fox Sports Net, New York, named VP.

Appointments at Moviewatch, St. Paul/Los Angeles: **Jan G. Schuth**, senior VP, marketing, U.S. Satellite Broadcasting, joins as VP, marketing; **Bernard Weiss**, senior VP and chief financial officer, U.S. Satellite Broadcasting, joins as executive VP, finance and administration.

Lee Villas, account executive, Northeast, King World Productions, New York, named VP, Northeast sales.

Peggy Giordano, freelance producer, joins CN8, the Comcast Network, Philadelphia, as news director/station manager.

Appointments at Lifetime Television, Los Angeles: **Amanda Gibbs**, regional account manager, named

director, distribution and field marketing; **Alexandra Carsia**, marketing and promotions coordinator, CableRep, Phoenix, Ariz., joins as manager, distribution and field marketing; **Arlene Damasco**, marketing communications specialist, Cox Communications, San Diego, joins as manager, distribution and field marketing.

Christine Alvarez, senior manager, business development, publishing unit, Discovery Networks, U.S., Los Angeles, named director, licensed promotions.

Journalism

Nancy Kramer, producer, 20/20, New York, joins 60 Minutes, CBS News, New York, as producer.

Appointments at The National Geographic Channel, Washington, D.C.: **Tom Foreman**, substitute anchor, newsmagazines, ABC, Denver, joins as co-anchor, *National Geographic Today*; **Susan Roesgen**, news anchor, WDSU(TV) New Orleans, joins as co-anchor, *National*

Geographic Today.

Vinnie Politan, reporter/anchor, Central Florida News, Orlando, joins Court TV, New York, as legal news reporter.

Stacy Case, reporter/fill-in anchor, WCPO-TV Cincinnati, named co-anchor.

Milissa Rehberger, morning anchor, KOCO-TV Oklahoma City, Okla., joins WOFL(TV) Orlando, Fla., as co-anchor.

James Irby, reporter, WFTX(TV) Cape Coral (Fort Meyers area), Fla., joins KTRK-TV Houston as reporter.

Chris Heinbaugh, reporter, KOMO-TV Seattle, joins WFAA-TV Dallas as reporter.

Natalie Martinez, anchor, WXXA-TV Albany, N.Y., joins WMAQ-TV Chicago as general assignment reporter.

Allied Fields

Mike Granowsky, director of postproduction, USA Networks, N.J., appointed, general manager, Sideshow Post, Soho, N.Y.

Dana Rodriguez, coordinator, media relations, BMI, New York, named associate

director, media relations.

Satellite/Wireless

Mike Fowler, director of international Internet sales, Loral Skynet, Arlington, Va., joins Newpoint Technologies, Salem, N.H., as director of sales, western region.

Associations/Law Firms

John J. Sie, founder, chairman and CEO, Starz Encore Group LLC, Englewood, Colo., also named member, board of trustees, The T. Howard Foundation, Alexandria, Va.

Clarifications

Don Shelby is news anchor at WCCO-TV Minneapolis, not WCCO(AM). He adds to his duties those of afternoon radio host, WCCO(AM) Minneapolis.

In the obituary for **Dennis J. O'Mara**, it was not mentioned that he is also survived by his wife, Patricia.

*Compiled by Beth Shapouri
bshapouri@cabners.com*



Jan G. Schuth



Peggy Giordano



Mike Granowsky



Dana Rodriguez

T H E F I F T H E S T A T E R

Playing in the big time

The NBA's top TV honcho now seeks to exploit video streaming

When Ed Desser left school after completing his MBA at USC, he figured he was destined for a staid desk job in the business world. "I figured I'd have to have some sort of boring profession," he recalls. "I expected to be a lawyer or something." He figured wrong.

Desser had already been bitten by the sports-media bug. An odd succession of radio jobs in production, programming and sales that started while he was still in high school in Los Angeles led to a job as executive producer for the Los Angeles Lakers radio network. And by the ripe old age of 20, he was director of broadcasting and executive producer for both the Lakers and Los Angeles Kings NHL team at California Sports. "It was in my blood," he says.

Moving to the National Basketball Association seemed a natural move but hardly a slam dunk.

Desser had developed a friendship with the league's general

counsel, David Stern, and their court-side conversations led to Stern's making Desser an offer he was initially inclined to refuse. "I thought I had a great life in California. The thought of moving to New York was as unappealing as can be."

But Stern succeeded in persuading the young sports-media man to go east in 1982. And Desser has never looked back. He had already learned the basics of the league's broadcasting business from the team side, mastering the intricacies of what were then new technologies like cable TV and MMDS and marketing concepts like subscription TV.

But Desser arrived on an NBA landscape that was shifting radically. Recovering from

its checkered reputation as a drug-ridden also-ran among major sports empires, the NBA was on the eve of the arch-rivalry between the Boston Celtics' Larry Bird and the Lakers' Magic Johnson. And the age of Michael Jordan would signal a further rise in the NBA's fortunes.

"What happened in the '80s," Desser recalls, "was the transformation of the NBA from classical sports organization to major entertainment company."

And he played a key role in that transformation. As vice president and general manager of NBA Entertainment, he had a hand in the negotiations that led to the league's first cable-TV contract with Ted Turner's



Edwin Desser
President, NBA Television

B. April 5, 1958, Los Angeles; B.A., economics, UCLA, 1980; MBA, marketing, University of Southern California; various radio jobs in production, programming and sales, 1972-77; executive producer, Los Angeles Lakers Radio Network, 1977-78; director of broadcasting and executive producer, California Sports, 1978-82; director of broadcasting and executive producer, National Basketball Association, New York; vice president and general manager, NBA Entertainment, 1984-91; added title of vice president, international TV, 1986-94; current position since 1994.

TBS superstation in 1984 and to the advent of international broadcast distribution of games in 1987.

What Desser calls a "landmark" deal with NBC followed in 1990, spawning a new era for NBA Entertainment with the debut of *Inside Stuff* and other weekly shows devoted to pro basketball. As president of NBA Television, he has been intimately involved in forging the relationship with NBC and bringing the NBA into the new age of interactive media.

The NBA arrived in the realm of convergent media with the recent introduction of its NBATV.com vehicle for satellite TV. The league has been the most aggressive of the major sports leagues in posting video clips on its site, and the prospect of streaming games in selected foreign venues is a distinct possibility. "Streaming video," he says, "is a very good way of serving niche products to disparate and dispersed audiences."

He emphasizes, though, that broadcast distribution remains the most efficient means of transmitting NBA games, abroad and domestically. But the NBA is constantly exploring new-media menus for "slicing and dicing" NBA content, he notes. "What we've done is morph the various forms that we package the product in to accommodate the ever increasing array of distribution opportunities."

It's an array that's steadily proliferating, and only Ed Desser can predict what the NBA's next media play may be.

—Richard Tedesco

Classifieds

Television

TECHNICAL CAREERS

BROADCAST MAINTENANCE ENGINEER

A broadcast engineer is needed in the Boston area. Successful candidate should have a minimum of three years experience in the installation and maintenance of all broadcast related equipment. Must be able to repair to the component level. SBE and/or FCC certification desired. Must be willing to work flexible hours. EIC, Computer networking and satellite uplink experience is considered a plus. Cover letter and resume and salary requirements to Chief Engineer, 70 Brookline Ave. Boston MA, 02215 or E-mail to ddesro@nesn.com

Media General Broadcast Group

www.mgbg.com

WCBD-TV Charleston, S.C.

BROADCAST ENGINEER

We are looking for candidates with 2+ years television experience who can repair and maintain Sony BETACAM and BETA VCR systems. Must be able to troubleshoot and repair to the component level. Sony BETA school a plus. Benefits package including 401K and relocation package. Send resume to HR Dept Job # 78, P.O. Box 55590, Lexington, KY 40555 or e-mail to hr@wtvq.com. EOE M/F Drug Screen.

TELEVISION ENGINEERING

We are a leader in the design and construction of many of the most prestigious broadcast television facilities in the nation. The explosion in electronic media and the digital revolution has dramatically impacted our growth opportunities. As a result, we are seeking a number of highly-motivated people to help us grow. Opportunities exist for Senior Project Managers, Engineers, Applications/Proposal Engineer, Support Specialists, Computer System/Network Engineers with video experience, Installation Personnel and Supervisors for permanent or freelance positions. If you have experience in television engineering or a related discipline and would like to join a dynamic company, we would like to hear from you. Please send your resume and a letter describing your career interests to: Employment Manager, A. F. Associates, Inc. 100 Stonehurst Court, Northvale, NJ 07647. Fax: 201-784-8637 or e-mail: hr@afassoc.com (No attachments please). No phone calls please. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer

TECHNICIAN - ELECTRONIC GRAPHIC ARTIST

KCNC-TV, is looking for a highly motivated, self-starting, dynamic Graphic Artist who will lend his or her talent and creativity to the Graphics Team. Working with Producers to create visually appealing graphic material for on-air use, including but not limited to news, sports, promotion, public affairs and sales department. Broadcast design experience in the television news environment, knowledge of graphic still design and graphic animation design. Must be able to work quickly under time pressure situations and short deadlines. Strong interpersonal skills required.

Ability to use Quantel V-Series Paintbox, Harriet or Hal Express upgrade. Knowledge of Quantel Picturebox, Chyron Infnit, Grass Valley Switchers and Macintosh Computer. Familiar with basic television production principles a plus! Send resume, to: KCNC-TV, 1044 Lincoln, Denver, CO 80203, Attn: Sherri Velte - svelte@cbs.com EOE

DIRECTV - AN ENTERTAINING PLACE TO WORK!

DIRECTV's Los Angeles Broadcast Center (LABC) is one of the most technologically sophisticated in the world. Located in the Marina Del Rey area of Los Angeles, just minutes from the Pacific Ocean, this facility works in tandem with our Castle Rock Broadcast Center in Colorado to deliver exciting, multi-channel programming via our satellite fleet into DIRECTV customers' homes across America. Join the LABC and you'll be on a team of creative professionals dedicated to providing quality service to our customers.

MANAGER, BROADCAST OPERATIONS

We seek a proven leader to organize, plan, control and manage employees engaged in transmitting signals of live or pre-recorded TV programs. We'll rely on you to ensure company standards for high quality and continuity of programming on a 24-hour basis as well as manage the development and implementation of standard operational procedures and techniques. Requirements include an undergraduate degree and 5-10 years of experience in the broadcast industry. An in-depth knowledge of administrative and technical aspects of broadcast operations, objectives and strategies combined with a broad technical understanding of supporting computer systems and technology is essential. The ability to effectively organize/manage skilled technicians in our fast-track environment as well as work rotating shifts, overtime and holidays as necessary are also important. Job code: #202842

BROADCAST OPERATORS

We also have 2 opportunities for team players to monitor signals on assigned channels using electronic measuring instruments and computer control systems. You will insert programming material in programs being broadcast through live switching reconcile playlists to channel mapping and program guides, and monitor/troubleshoot automation systems and other computers. To qualify, you must have 2 years of college or technical schooling and the ability to monitor multiple simultaneously-occurring events and react rapidly to selectively pinpoint problems and/or insert promotional material. The ability to use complex electronic measurement and test instruments and excellent communication and interpersonal skills are also necessary. You will be required to periodically rotate shifts and regular days off and must be willing to work overtime and holidays as required. Job code: #202860NB/202861NB

DIRECTV offers you the opportunity to work for a high-growth company, which is delivering the future of entertainment today! We offer our employees excellent career opportunities for growth and advancement, as well as great personal and family opportunities for surfing, skiing, hiking and fishing, plus all the cultural and lifestyle benefits of living in Los Angeles and the surrounding areas. Please send your resume, indicating appropriate job code, to to DIRECTV, Inc., Attn: Human Resources, 12800 Culver Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90066 or email (text format only, no attachments) to labc-hr@directv.com. EOE M/F/D/V

Check out our website at
www.directv.com.



GEMSTAR TV GUIDE PASADENA, CA

Work with Support Services team providing support to licensees of Interactive Program Guide technologies. Home electronics/Customer Service experience required. Please fax resume to 626-792-8276.

CALL KRISTIN PARKER

AT 617-558-4532 OR

NEIL ANDREWS AT 617-558-4481

FOR INFORMATION ON ADVERTISING.

STUDIO MAINTENANCE ENGINEER

Must be able to perform the following duties: install and maintain studio transmission equipment including video switchers, audio consoles, DVE, CG, SS, cameras, and robotics. Familiarity with automation systems and master control environment. Should possess a general computer/networking background. Must be able to work on a rotating shift schedule. Candidate should have an engineering degree or equivalent technical training. SBE/FCC certification a plus. If you want to be a part of the exciting transition to HDTV in the most exciting city in the world, please send your resume and cover letter to: Kurt Hanson, Chief Engineer, WABC-TV, 7 Lincoln Square, New York, NY 10023. No telephone calls or faxes please. We are an equal opportunity employer.

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Television

EXECUTIVE CAREERS

PRESIDENT & CEO THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA'S PUBLIC TELEVISION STATIONS WASHINGTON, DC

The Board of Trustees of the Association of America's Public Television Stations (APTS) seeks applications for the national leadership post of President & Chief Executive Officer. APTS is a nonprofit membership organization established in 1980 to support the continued growth and development of a strong and financially sound noncommercial television service for the American public. APTS provides advocacy for public television interests at the national level, as well as consistent leadership and information in marshaling grassroots and congressional support for its members, the nation's public television stations. APTS also conducts planning and research functions, policy development, and regulatory advocacy on behalf of its member stations. The president & CEO reports to a board of trustees elected by public television station representatives, consisting of nine public representatives, nine professional representatives, and up to six at-large trustees who may be elected by the board. The president & CEO also serves as a board member. APTS has a \$3.5 million budget and an 18 member staff.

The president & CEO is responsible for overall APTS leadership and direction, consistent with the missions, goals and interests of the APTS Board of Trustees and member stations. The ideal candidate should have: a minimum of a bachelor's degree in a relevant academic discipline, with an advanced degree preferred; at least ten years of successful and relevant senior management experience in business, education, government or public telecommunications with accountability to a governing board; demonstrated understanding and appreciation of public broadcasting; exceptional oral, written, analytical, administrative, strategic and financial planning, fund raising, entrepreneurial and interpersonal skills; demonstrated and successful public policy experience with state/federal government and a wide range of diverse constituencies; the ability to define, communicate and implement an organizational and system vision; an understanding and appreciation of new technologies and services; a commitment to EEO; and the intellectual and physical vigor and administrative versatility required for successful and dynamic leadership of a national public telecommunications organization.

The deadline for receipt of applications is January 12, 2001. Applications must include: 1) a narrative letter describing how training and experience relate directly to the outlined job responsibilities and qualifications; 2) a detailed professional resume; and, 3) the names, addresses and phone numbers of no less than five professional references who can attest directly to the applicant's suitability for this leadership post. Attractive and competitive salary and fringe benefits, commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Applications should be directed to
Ronald C. Bornstein
Bornstein & Associates
1524 East Crown Ridge Way
Tucson, AZ 85737-7100



APTS is an equal opportunity employer

PROMOTION CAREERS

PROMOTION DIRECTOR IN THE ROCKIES

KCNC-TV, is looking for a highly motivated, self-starting, dynamic Promotion Director who will lend his or her talent and creativity to our energized Creative Services Team.

Work hands-on supervising our promotion team, enhancing our brand and media strategies in this highly energized and creative market. Also superior creative, people, and organizational skills. Strong conceptual skills and the ability to translate news information into compelling image and topical promotions are key requirements. 5 Years experience in broadcast television, along with strong shooting, writing, editing and supervisory skills are a must.

Send resume, writing and promotion samples to:
KCNC-TV, 1044 Lincoln, Denver, CO 80203,
Attn: Dan Diamond - ddiamond@cbs.com EOE

MEDIA BUYER

STOP AND ASK YOURSELF THESE 3 QUESTIONS:

- 1) Are you a short form buyer going nowhere?
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- 3) Are you searching for a dynamic company with growth opportunities?

If you have answered yes...we'd like to talk to you immediately. We are seeking a team member to play a vital role in growing our ever expanding short form department. We offer 100% paid medical, dental and vision. Plus 401k. Need a working knowledge of Nielsen. All inquiries remain confidential. Fax us your resume NOW! (805)543-7570.

CREATIVE SERVICES

DESIGN DIRECTOR

KCRA-TV/KQCA-TV is looking for a creative designer and strong manager to lead our design team. The successful candidate must have solid hands-on design skills and knowledge in all aspects of on-air and print production. Experience with news graphic production and able to work well in a fast-paced news environment is a must. Knowledge of Quantel and Macintosh equipment is essential. Familiarity with PhotoShop, Illustrator, After Effects and Pinnacle FX Deko is preferred. Five plus years of experience in broadcast graphics design is required.

RESUME TO: KCRA-TV/KQCA-TV, Attn: Gene Robinson, Creative Services Director, 3 Television Circle, Sacramento, CA 95814.

KCRA-TV/KQCA-TV is an EOE

DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE SERVICES

Denver's WB2, a Tribune Broadcasting Station, seeks high energy, self-starter to lead the Creative Services Department. Position is responsible for the development of station image and the image of the live newscasts. Must have a Bachelor's degree with minimum 5-8 years major market experience in advertising/promotion, including 2 years supervisory. Live newscast experience a must. Knowledge of design, budget management, computer literate, and strong leadership qualities required. Mail resume to KWGN-TV, HR Dept. #CSD 66, 6160 So. Wabash Way, Englewood, CO 80111. EOE.

To Advertise, Call

617-558-4532 or 617-558-4481

SALES CAREERS

SALES

CONUS Communications is looking for a Satellite Sales Professional

Do you have a passion for new business development? Applicants must be proficient in proposal writing, cold calling, and have strong organizational skills. The successful candidate will sell satellite space for a variety of applications to clients nation wide. The ability to prospect creatively is essential.

CONUS brings you all the sales tools and resources you need to succeed. Base Salary plus commission.

Qualified candidates should forward resume and cover letter to:

CONUS Communications
Human Resources, Job #208-00
3415 University Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55114
FAX: 651-642-4314
EMAIL: apply@hbi.com
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ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES WFAA-TV, Dallas, Texas

Top rated ABC affiliate and Belo flagship is building the sales department of the future. The success of our new sales re-structure has resulted in the need for additional Account Executives. Applicants should have 2-5 years television sales experience and proven ability to develop new business.

Please send resumes to: WFAA-TV, Attn: Human Resources, 606 Young Street, Dallas, Texas 75202
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WFAA-TV is an equal opportunity employer
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SALES

Aggressive self-starters needed to join VITAC's leading sales team in Washington, D.C. expanding our market share of closed captioning, video indexing and transcription services. Sales experience and knowledge of broadcast industries and government agencies a plus. Please fax cover letter and resume to Deborah Schuster at (818) 755-0411. NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE.

REGIONAL SALES MANAGER

The Ackerley Group's West Coast Television Stations seek a Los Angeles based Regional Sales Manager. We are looking for a dynamic, self-starter who can sell innovative concepts beyond traditional spot sales, as well as, work with national sales representatives to negotiate for shares. You will represent Ackerley's dynamic stations in Santa Barbara/Santa Maria/San Luis Obispo, Bakersfield, Fresno, Monterey/Salinas, Santa Rosa, Eureka and Eugene, (four CBS affiliates, two FOX affiliates, two NBC affiliates and an independent). The Ackerley Group is a leading media company at the forefront of technological innovation with Digital Central Casting that ties its West Coast stations together through a digital fiber network. If you have a strong track record of local and national sales performance, as well as management and leadership experience, and want to be on the cutting edge of media and marketing, please send your resume to:

The Ackerley Group
Central California Regional Station Group
Attention: Stella Schreiber
2120 "L" Street
Bakersfield, CA 93301-2331

Please respond by: December 29, 2000

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PRODUCERCAREERS

CBS it's all here

WRITER/PRODUCER

Can you write & produce a great promo? Show us... Intelligent, driven and creative writer/producer needed to join a dynamic team in the On-Air Promotion department. The ideal candidate should have a minimum of 3 - 5 years experience writing and producing television promotion and must be able to work well under pressure with tight deadlines. No beginners, please. Please submit resume and tape to:

CBS
7800 Beverly Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90036
Attn: On-Air Promotion
Equal Opportunity Employer



PROMOTION PRODUCER IN THE ROCKIES

KCNC-TV, is looking for a highly motivated, self-starting, dynamic Promotion Producer who will lend his or her talent and creativity to our energized Creative Services Team.

The successful candidate will focus their creative writing, shooting and editing skills to produce effective promotion that generates results.

Strong conceptual skills and the ability to translate news information into compelling image and topical promotions are key requirements. 5 Years experience in broadcast television, along with strong shooting, writing, non-linear editing skills are a must.

Send resume, writing and promotion samples to: KCNC-TV, 1044 Lincoln, Denver, CO 80203, Attn: Dan Diamond - ddiamond@cbs.com EOE

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

Daily nationally syndicated newsmagazine INSIDE EDITION is searching for a show open Associate Producer based in NYC. Ideal candidate has three or more years news production or promotion experience, a great eye for shots and thrives under pressure.

Send resume/reel to: Joany Battagliese, 515 W. 57th Street, New York, NY 10019

PROMOTION PRODUCER

WANE-TV is looking for a Promotion Producer to complement our award-winning department! Strong writing skills are necessary and digital editing experience is an absolute must. Ideal candidate will have a great attitude, be creative under stress, and be independently task-motivated. If you love television and are able to think outside the box, then we want to talk to you! A college degree in broadcasting or work experience in digital editing is required. No phone calls, please. Send resume and non-returnable tape by December 20th to:

Promotion Manager,
WANE-TV
2915 W. State Blvd.
Fort Wayne, IN 46808
M/F EOE

MANAGEMENTCAREERS

GENERAL MANAGER

Immediate opening at our Springfield/Champaign, Illinois FOX affiliate. We are looking for someone who has a passion for our business, is committed to winning and possesses strong leadership qualities. Send resumes to Cullie M. Tarleton, Senior Vice President, Bahakel Communications, PO Box 32488, Charlotte, NC 28232. EEOC.

MEDIA RELATIONS MANAGER WANTED

Past public relations and/or news experience is a must, as well as having extensive broadcast contacts and the ability and desire to forge and maintain new relationships. Candidate should have a background in client servicing, be well-organized and detail-oriented.

Additional qualifications include having news judgment and journalistic writing skills. Midtown NYC location.

Please send resume to: cdcom@aol.com

GENERAL MANAGER

Group owner of TV stations in Southern U.S. seeks highly energetic entrepreneurial General Manager for expanding properties. Candidate should have previous GM and/or GSM experience, history of operating LMA's and multi-channel is preferred. Competitive GM compensation package that rewards growth including equity for the right person. Minimum of 5-7 years management experience. Please send resume and references to: Broadcasting & Cable, Box 1204, 275 Washington Street, Newton, MA 02458 EOE, minorities are encouraged to apply.

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Lead a team of local sales professionals and achieve and surpass sales goals through the generation of new revenue opportunities and by increasing share of existing business. Bring to the table an in-depth understanding and demonstrated abilities in sales and sales management. This position requires "hands-on" leadership skills and an understanding that new business development is the key to unlimited success.

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Local Sales Manager Job Search
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Colorado Springs, CO 80901
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You may fax your resume with a cover letter to:

858-505-5050

or send to:

**KUSI-TV, Attn: HR,
4575 Viewridge Ave.,
San Diego, CA 92123**

Candidates wishing more information may call the Human Resource Manager at:
858-505-5193

All inquiries are confidential.



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NEWSCAREERS

TELEVISION OPPORTUNITIES

AT NEWS 12 NETWORKS

Our successful news program is seeking the following professionals:

CHIEF ENGINEERS (2)

Selected candidates will have exceptional organizational skills to prioritize and coordinate maintenance efforts. Position also involves scheduling and repairing equipment and facilities and participation in planning and implementation of projects. Must have a 4 year degree or equivalent and a minimum of 3 years broadcast engineering experience. Strong leadership and interpersonal skills beneficial. Positions are located in Woodbury, NY & Norwalk, CT. REF # 1211B&C0403PMD

STUDIO TECHNICIAN

Our busy Operations Department is seeking an individual to operate production equipment technically as well as creatively, including operating cameras, lighting, audio, videotape playback and floor directing. Will perform various duties associated with television production in a live on-air or tape environment. Bachelors degree or equivalent and minimum of one year experience in television production required. Familiarity with production equipment and knowledge of production methods and techniques for live and taped production a must. Flexible hours include weekends, evenings and holidays. REF # 1211B&C1332PMD

SNG/TRUCK OPERATOR

Seeking an individual with a minimum of four years experience as a videotape editor/photographer to operate the Satellite News Gathering vehicle. Position involves maintenance of vehicle, KU satellite up-links & down-links in accordance with FCC & CONUS regulations as well as editing and site setup. Bachelors degree or equivalent, understanding of elements of news stories and production and familiarity with production equipment required. Valid driver's license a must. REF # 1211B&C1331PMD

We offer an excellent compensation and comprehensive benefits package. Send resume, which must include REF # in cover letter, to: Rainbow Staffing, Dept PMD, 1111 Stewart Avenue, Bethpage, NY 11714 or Email: careers@cablevision.com (include REF # in subject line of email). Equal Opportunity Employer

ASSIGNMENT MANAGER

6News, Sunflower Cablevision. Coordinate assignments between reporters and photographers. Liaison between 6News and CNN News source and AP. Please send all resumes and tapes to Donna Wiley, Human Resources Mgr., Lawrence Journal-World, 609 New Hampshire, Lawrence, KS 66044-0888. Also see our listing at www.ljworld.com/jobs. EOE, ADA compliant.

TELEVISION Make Headlines Around the Nation Literally!

CONUS, a 24 hour television headline news service, is looking for someone to help deliver fast, accurate news to viewers throughout the country as a Director. This position is responsible for working with producers, writers, graphics and editors on story and broadcast pre-production. This individual will have previous experience directing live news broadcasts, be able to call and switch news programs, and able to work evenings, weekends and overnights. Prefer candidates to have experience with Grass Valley switchers, Graphics Factory and Chyron Max character generators, good typing and spelling skills. Geography an current event knowledge helpful.

If interested, please send resume to:

CONUS Communication
Human Resources
Job #207-00

3415 University Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55114

Fax: (651) 642-4314

Email: apply@hbi.com

Jobline (612) 253-5780

No Telephone Calls Please

Equal Opportunity Employer

NEWS DIRECTOR

6News, Sunflower Cablevision. Responsible for overseeing award-winning cable news / sports department. Please forward all resumes and tapes to Donna Wiley, Human Resources Mgr., Lawrence Journal-World, 609 New Hampshire, Lawrence, KS 66044-0888. Also see our listing at www.ljworld.com/jobs. EOE, ADA compliant.

INVESTIGATIVE PRODUCER

KCNC-TV, is looking for a highly motivated, self-starting, dynamic Investigative Producer who will lend his or her talent and creativity to the NewsTeam.

Responsible for overseeing all elements of our investigative efforts, in concert with the Investigative Reporter. Accountable for generating investigative story ideas, researching tips, monitoring story development and follow up, searching public records, shooting stories, conducting interviews, writing stories, updating News Director of investigation progress, managing photographer and editor assigned to projects.

Should demonstrate knowledge of strong storytelling skills, strong production techniques, knowledge of the first amendment law and computer-assisted reporting, knowledge of the Freedom of Information Act, strong interviewing skills, computer skills and good judgement. Well rounded education, college degree in related field, strong news background. Send resume, writing and production samples to: KCNC-TV, 1044 Lincoln, Denver, CO 80203, Attn: Angie Kurcharski - akurcharski@cbs.com EOE

NEWS DIRECTOR

KTVE Region 10, the NBC television station for El Dorado, Arkansas and Monroe, Louisiana has a tremendous opportunity for the right person. If you have experience as a News Director or Executive Producer and would like the challenge of dual coverage in a hyphenated market we need to hear from you. We need a teacher, leader, with strong producing, organizational and people skills. Send resume, cover letter, and news philosophy to: Sam M. McLeod VP/GM, KTVE, 2909 Kilpatrick Blvd., Monroe, LA 71201. GOCOM is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

BUSINESS REPORTER

TV station looking for a broadcast journalist who understands business. The person will deliver on-air business news for local television news program. Candidates must possess solid reporting skills and be able to deliver news in studio and in field. Candidates should send a vhs audition tape and resume to Ron Bilek, 120 W. Morehead St., Charlotte, NC 28202 EOE

NEWS PRODUCER

Successful candidate will be able to help create & format vibrant news shows using sound editorial judgment. Ability to write correct, concise copy under deadline pressure is required. Three years experience of producing TV newscast is a plus. Send resume & recent show tape with a brief critique tape (no calls/faxes) to Camille Edwards, Assistant News Director, WPVI-TV, Suite 400, 4100 City Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19131

NEWS PRODUCER

WTVR-TV, a Raycom Media station, is looking for a high-energy main show producer. Are you looking to make your mark in a fast-paced aggressive newsroom? Do you live for both breaking news and enterprise reporting? If you're a leader who takes ownership of your newscasts, this job is for you. Strong writing is a must. Send resume and last night's show to Mark Neerman, News Director, WTVR-TV, 3301 W. Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23230. WTVR-TV is an EOE M/F.

NEWS ANCHOR / REPORTER

One of the world's leading financial services firms has a contract position open for a daily in-house financial newscast. News Anchor/Reporter to write, research and report on-camera. Broadcast financial news experience a must. Position is five days a week. Email resume and salary history to videojob@exchange.ml.com. Place resume in body of email. Do not send attachments.

PHOTOJOURNALIST

WESH-TV, the Hearst-Argyle/NBC station in Orlando, is looking for a top-notch photojournalist. We expect our staff to combine excellent lighting and composition with high NPPA standards to show our viewers the day's events.

Five (5) years news photography/editing experience required, college degree and the NPPA workshop is preferred. Experience with microwave trucks is critical, as is a commitment to teamwork and a professional, passionate attitude. If you're up to the challenge of not just being better than the competition, but being better than you were the day before, send me your resume and BETA or VHS tape ASAP. No Phone Calls, Please!

Pat Gribbin, Chief Photojournalist
WESH-TV
P.O. Box 547697
Orlando, FL 32854

An Equal Opportunity Employer

NEWS ANCHOR / REPORTER

6News, Sunflower Cablevision. Involves anchoring 6 & 10pm newscasts five nights per week. Also requires writing and editing stories. Please send all resumes and tapes to Donna Wiley, Human Resources Mgr., Lawrence Journal-World, 609 New Hampshire, Lawrence, KS 66044-0888. Also see our listing at www.ljworld.com/jobs. EOE, ADA compliant.

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Radio

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The name and address of the debtor (the "Debtor") is: Southern Nights Entertainment Corp., whose last known address is 13254 Heather Ridge Loop, Fort Myers, Florida 33912. The Debtor also maintains an office address at 1706-D Capital Circle, NE, Suite 6, Tallahassee, Florida 32308.

The sale will be held at the offices of Foley & Lardner, 106 E. College Avenue, Suite 900, Highpoint Center, Tallahassee, Florida 32301. The terms of the sale will be cash or certified check, payable at the conclusion of the sale.

The Secured Party reserves the right to credit bid up to the amount of its claim.

The assets being sold are described as follows: All of the Debtor's right, title and interest in and to the licenses, permits and assets of the low power television station WVUP-LP, Tallahassee, Florida.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the successful Buyer must apply to and receive the consent of the Federal Communications Commission before the sale can be consummated. The sale is conditioned on and subject to such consent.

Inquiries regarding the above, and requests for a copy of any of the Licenses, and list of the available equipment may be directed to Ned R. Nashban, Esquire, Quarles & Brady LLP, 1900 Glades Road, Suite 355, Boca Raton, Florida 33431, (561) 368-5400, (561) 368-1996 Fax, and will be provided to the extent available.

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Applicants should submit a cover letter, vitae, complete with reference information to:

Dr. Renee W. Everett
Chair, Dept. of Communication
108 Alumni Coliseum
Eastern Kentucky University
521 Lancaster Ave.
Richmond, KY 40475-3102
Fax: 859-622-8214

or email at: renee.everett@eku.edu

Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Review of applications will begin January 15 and continue until the position is filled. Appointment will become effective August 15, 2001.

For a full description of the position, go to www.masscomm.eku.edu and click on Jobs.

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—Nancy Franklin, *The New Yorker*, on NBC's new dramedy, *Ed*, produced by David Letterman.

"We have never been able to rise to the level of the Bill Clinton bunko squad, where we can get money directly from a Riady family or someplace in China. However, I understand the executives of Fox are meeting with Time Inc. and are going to get some tips over there."

—Bill O'Reilly to *Time* magazine's Joel Stein when asked, "Does Fox News get money directly from the GOP or does it have to launder it first for the sake of the FCC?"

"There are people in Congress who regularly threaten us, and they are just venal enough to do something to make our lives miserable."

—Wendell Bailey, NBC chief technologist for advanced broadband planning, at a Dec. 6 Visual Communications Symposium in Murray Hill, N.J., explaining why NBC continues to broadcast HDTV programming.

"In focusing on a tattooed, leather-strutting, aggressively sex-

ual segment of the gay community, this series creates its own danger, that of demonizing all gays as predators who are incapable of controlling their desires."

—Howard Rosenberg of the *Los Angeles Times*, on Showtime's *Queer as Folk*.

"You could say I'm a guy who loves his Absolut [vodka] and who loves to spend his Sunday mornings on one of his three BMW motorcycles. Besides, you can bet your chaps I wouldn't trust a religious organization as far as I

could throw them."

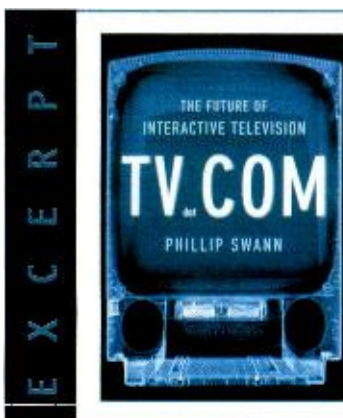
—Bill Florian, owner of WNIB(FM) Chicago, quoted in the *Chicago Sun-Times* in 1995, the first time it got an offer to sell from Bonneville International Corp., operated by the Mormon Church. On Nov. 29, Florian and his wife sold the classical-format station to Bonneville for \$165 million.

"You seem to stick to the issues, and you don't go after one's personal life. You don't go after cheap shots and I appreciate that. So I'll reward."

—Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura, pledging last Tuesday to drop his opposition to state funding for public radio and TV stations. From the Associated Press.

"I asked for a blood test."

—Richard Lester, director of the Beatles film, *A Hard Day's Night*, in *The Newark Star Ledger*, when told his film's style led to his moniker as "the father of MTV."



Below is an excerpt from *TV.COM—The Future of Interactive TV* (TV Books), by Phillip Swann, the founder of *TV Online Magazine*, and former publisher and editor of *Satellite DIRECT* and *Satellite ORBIT* magazines. Here he warns enthusiasts of the privacy-robbing potential of this new technology:

"I will refrain from mouthing the usual Orwellian clichés, but the people who run television networks and Interactive TV companies will know nearly everything about you. They will know which shows you watch, which products you order, the number of phone calls you make and to whom you make them. Each time you make a selection

on your remote control, your digital set-top box will collect that data and send it to the powers-that-be. Philosophers say a person can be defined by the sum of his or her choices. If that's true, your Interactive TV company will have a pretty good idea of who you are.

"WebTV, the Internet TV company owned by Microsoft, has been gathering data on its customers for several years. Every night, WebTV downloads its subscribers' Web site and TV-viewing choices. They then share the information with advertisers so that they can more effectively target their messages."

Don't blame us

Fault for the slow rollout of DTV lies with FCC, set makers

By Margita White

When inaccuracies are widely disseminated and repeated by respected sources, the facts face high hurdles. A pervasive and egregious example is William Safire's frequent assertions (most recently in his Oct. 9 *New York Times* column "Spectrum Squatters") that there are "great chunks" of fallow radio spectrum lying out there that broadcasters have "stolen" to provide digital-television services, but that might otherwise have been auctioned for up to \$70 billion. Particularly galling was that FCC Chairman Kennard, who should know better, the same week used this \$70 billion number in a speech coining the "spectrum squatters" phrase to justify a fee on broadcasters for not moving the DTV transition forward quickly enough.

The fact is that the radio spectrum being used for DTV was salvaged from the buffer channels used to protect analog TV channels from interfering with each other. The notion that this spectrum could have been auctioned for anything close to \$70 billion was debunked by government economists years ago.

Lost sight of, in the effort to paint broadcasters as villains, is the fact that it was Congress and the FCC which determined the public interest was best served by assuring that the benefits of our free and universal national and community-based television-broadcast system be transferred from

analog to digital technologies. The only way to accomplish this without abruptly shutting down current service and turning television screens blank was to lend broadcasters those buffer channels to gradually transition to digital.

To make that happen, broadcasters are well on their way to spending \$10 billion to construct digital facilities that replicate their existing analog service. Broadcasters have so far built 165 digital-television stations serving two-thirds of the American public. And they have made the investments, even though there are few working receivers available.

Many stations are mortgaging their futures on DTV, even though few have access to the 70% of viewers who are cable subscribers. Meanwhile, the FCC is still "squatting" on a rulemaking that Congress ordered it to launch three years ago dealing with set compatibility and cable carriage of digital signals.

Safire also picked up on Chairman Kennard's inapt comparison of broadcasters' situation to that of the owner of two rent-controlled apartments that leaves one empty. Never mind that broadcast stations are meeting the FCC requirements that they inhabit *both* apartments (both channels) even though such dual occupancy is difficult, expensive and currently offers no additional revenue to the broadcaster. Let's examine the real-estate analogy. The original broadcasters were like homesteaders



White is president of the Association for Maximum Service Television, a Washington group representing broadcasters.

who settled fallow land and, by dint of their labors, made it valuable. Few original broadcasters remain and most of today's broadcasters bought their "properties" from others at the price of improved land and often, in turn, made it more valuable still. When digital technology emerged, present-day broadcasters agreed to use this more intensive farming technique on their existing land, so that eventually they could turn back a quarter of the land to be resold to others, with all the proceeds of the sale going to the government.

It's time for Safire, Chairman Kennard, and those who quote them to stop repeating inaccuracies and to get the facts and analogies right. Broadcasters would like nothing better than a successful transition, which then would allow spectrum to be returned to the government. But the timing of that "give-back" is now primarily in the hands of the receiver manufacturer and cable industries, regulators and ultimately the consumers. Broadcasters can do no more than build the DTV facilities, put programs on the air and hope they will come. ■

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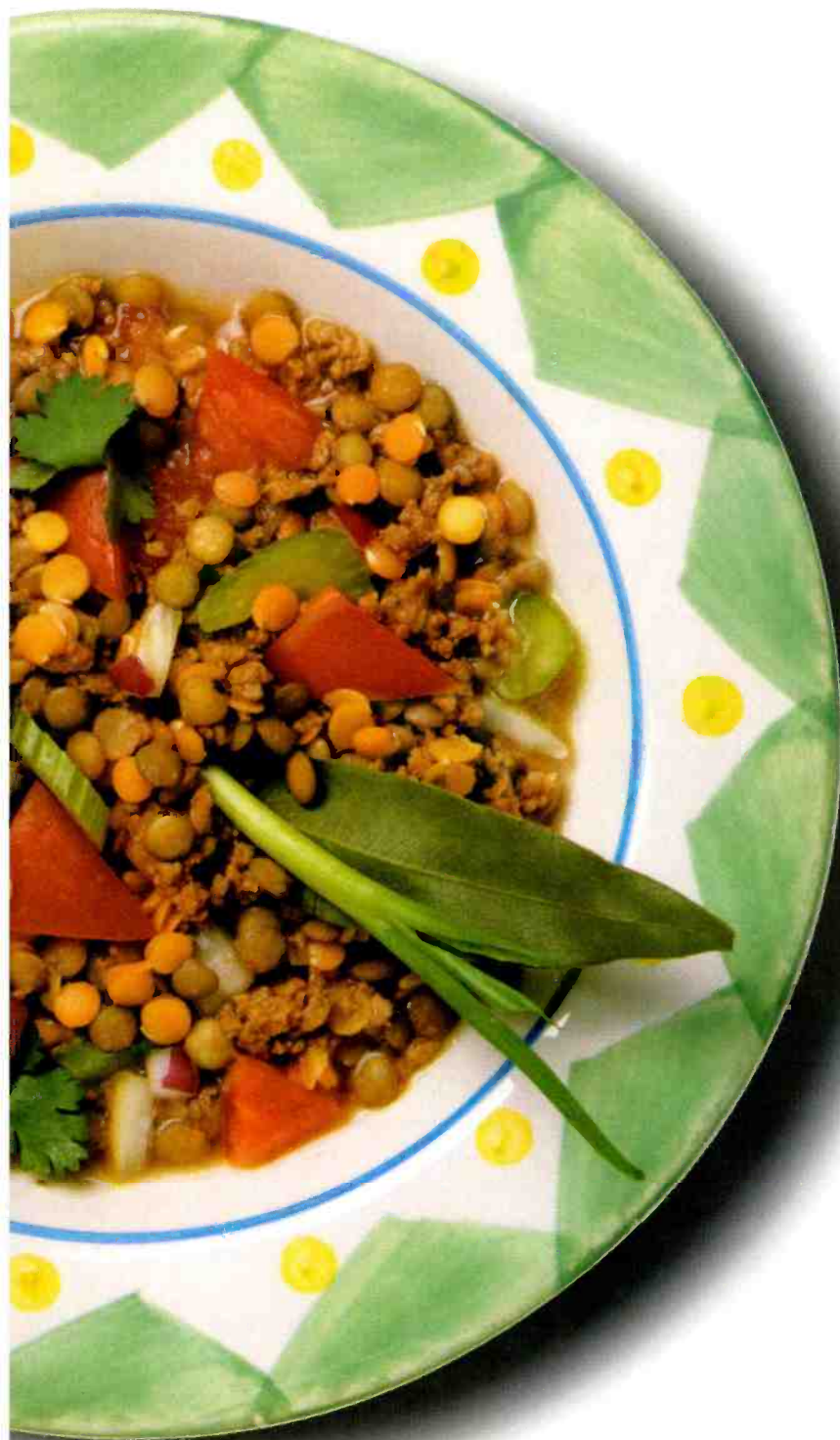
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NATPE <i>Syndication Strategies for the Top 25 Station Groups</i>	Mon., Jan. 22, 2001
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Editorials

COMMITTED TO THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Same time next year

Massachusetts Democrat Ed Markey (joined notably by Louisiana Republican Billy Tauzin) has taken an important step toward resolving the problems surrounding election-night coverage. Markey last week introduced a uniform-poll-closing bill that strikes us as the best way to guard against mistaken election calls' affecting an election. We were heartened to hear that Tauzin, chairman of the House Telecommunications Subcommittee and the most vocal critic of the network's premature calls, will not push for legislation beyond the poll-closing measure, recognizing broadcasters' legitimate interest in conducting polls and making predictions. The fact that this was the closest election in more than a century, perhaps ever, does not get the networks off the hook. The emotional roller coaster precipitated by those calls, un-calls and re-calls was bad enough, but of more concern was the possibility that early calls discouraged voting in an election decided by so few votes.

This race may have been an aberration on the order of a hundred-year flood, but it was one that exposed the flaws in network reliance on a communal polling service. And while the media must remain free to interpret as well as report the news, recent events suggest there is a civic interest in discouraging anyone from crying "winner" in a crowded polling place. Creating a sort of "election standard time" (Alaska and Hawaii remain problematic) will, as Markey says, "minimize the potential that future premature projections by the television networks regarding the winners of a presidential election will influence voter behavior in other states." For their parts, we encourage all the networks to decide not to call races in individual states until all the polls are closed in a state, not simply most. We also think they should clearly identify their calls as predictions, not gilt-edged guarantees. And we think the industry could volunteer to put some PSA muscle behind a uniform-poll-closing voter information campaign should the Congress finally pass this overdue bill.

We promise to wait until all the votes in the House and Senate are cast before calling passage of such a bill a victory both for election coverage and the electorate.

TV's star witness: Itself

It was wall-to-wall court TV last week, or at least it seemed like it sometimes. Last Thursday, we surfed the networks only to find a roadblock of judges, lawyers and witnesses (Fox, though, at least in Washington, turned out to be the syndicated *Divorce Court*). We would argue that a stronger case for cameras in appellate courts, state and federal, was made in a few days of Florida election cases last week than has been made in all the years preceding. That's because three of the most important court dates in recent history were going on, almost simultaneously, in front of the cameras. While criminal trials remain more problematic, given the dynamic added by the presence of juries and defendants, appeals courts seem to us a no-brainer. At least as conducted in Florida last week, they are great civics lessons, not to mention high drama that has yet to end—and have done nothing but instill confidence in the process at a time when that has arguably never been more important.

Those looking for portents might find one in the fact that two of the cases were before judges Lewis and Clark. Perhaps they will be trailblazers in the effort to persuade federal appeals courts to open their doors to the 21st century. It was fascinating, instructive and one of the citizen-friendliest aspects of a process that otherwise looks surprisingly like the unbridled prosecution of competing political interests, the public interest be damned.

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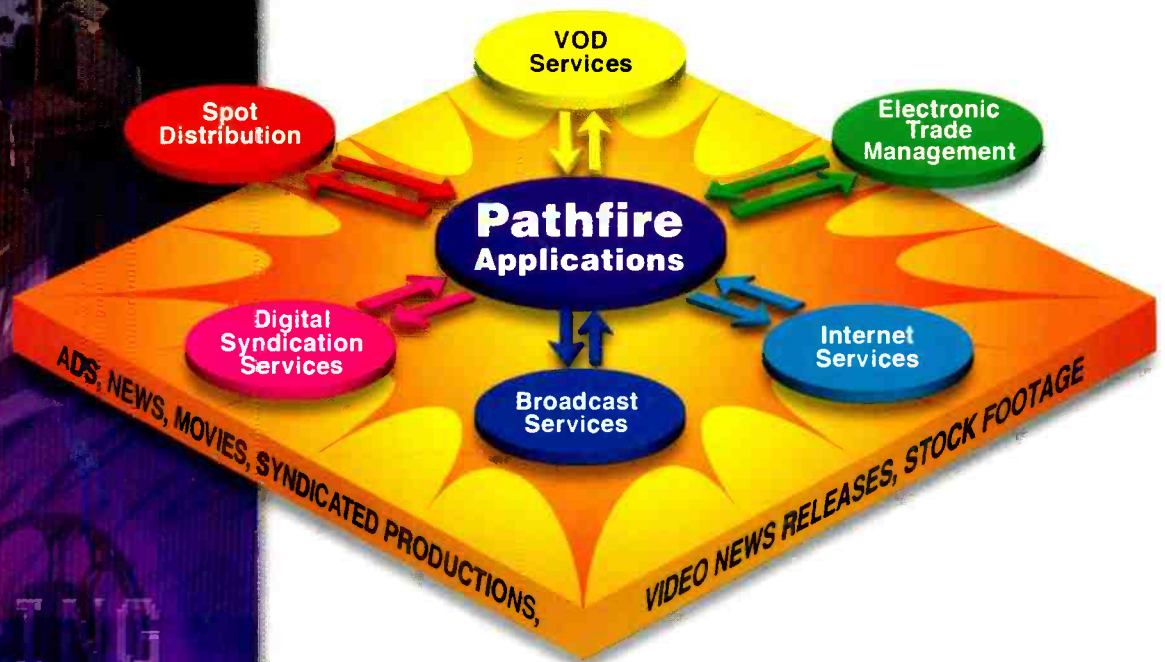
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