

# TelevisionWeek™

\$3.50 SEPTEMBER 29, 2003

SPECIAL ISSUE

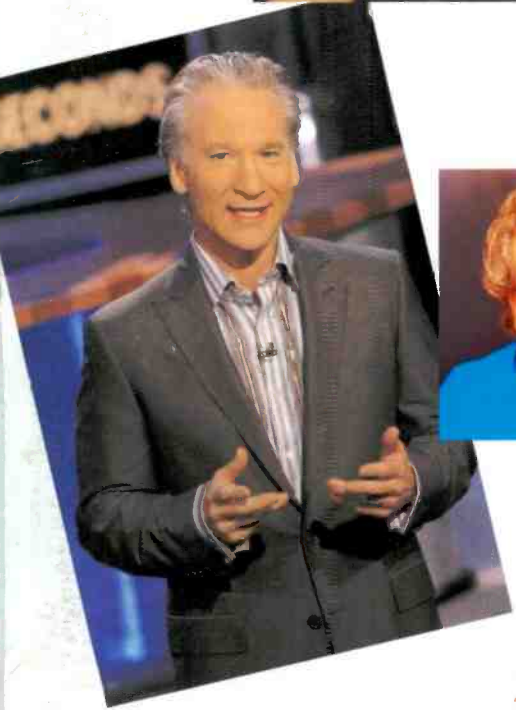
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**TOP HIT MOVIES**

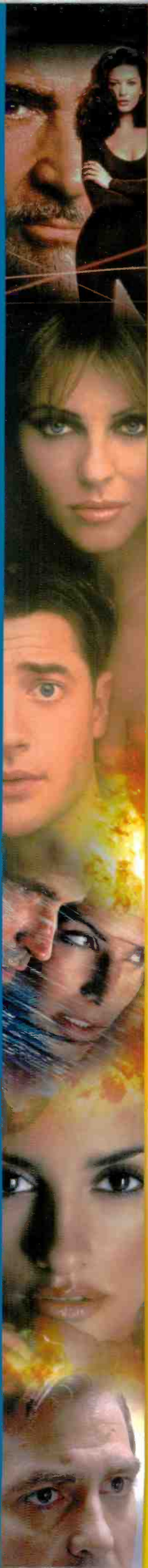
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HOLLYWOOD

Moulin Rouge!

Planet Of The Apes (2001)

Shallow Hal

Someone Like You

True Lies

Unfaithful

The X-Files: Fight The Future

X-Men

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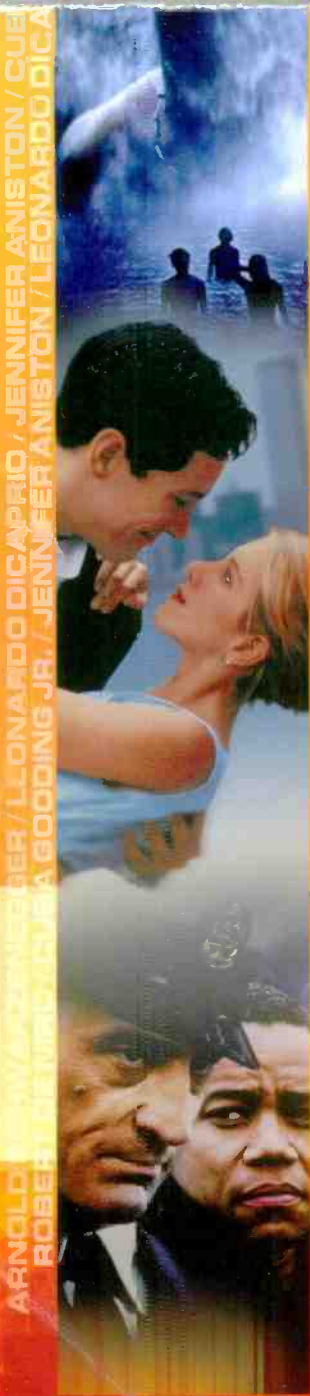


CATHERINE ZETA-JONES / SEAN CONNERRY / OLIVIA BETH HURLEY / BRENDAN FRASER / SANDRÁ BULLOCK / MICHAEL DOUGLAS / EDDIE MURPHY / MARK WAHLBERG / GEORGE CLOONEY / PENELOPE CRUZ / SANDRÁ BULLOCK



OVER  
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19  
CENTURY



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER / LEONARDO DICAPRIO / JENNIFER ANISTON / CUBA GOODING JR. / ROBERT DE NIRO



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# THE BIGGEST STARS...

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# TelevisionWeek

INCORPORATING ELECTRONIC MEDIA

\$3.50 SEPTEMBER 29, 2003

PREVIEWS



Summer Sanders

KIDS GETTING HEALTHY

"Nickelodeon's Let's Just Play Finish Line Festival" airing live Saturday from L.A. celebrates the first year of a grass-roots campaign with the Boys and Girls Clubs to get kids more physically active and encourage healthy lifestyles. The hosts are "U-Pick Live's" Candace Bailey and Brent Popolizio, Olympic medalist Summer Sanders and Mati Moralejo of Nick Games & Sports. There will be a relay race, an all-star basketball game and music from Clay Aiken, Hilary Duff and others.

SUPERSTATION BLOWS WEST

It was nearly 24 years ago that Ted Turner turned a local TV station in Atlanta into WTBS-TV, the first "superstation" to broadcast nationally over cable TV. It became the cornerstone of a media empire that is now merged into Time Warner. On Monday TBS will begin a separate programming feed to the West Coast for the first time over satellite galaxy 1R, transponder 16. Sports events will still air in real time, but other programming will now air three hours later than on the East Coast, which means it will be better suited to its daypart in the western United States.

JEWISH HOLY DAY ON TV

"Yom Kippur: Prayers of Atonement," a new version of the Jewish High Holy Day services featuring Rabbi David Baron, will air nationwide starting Sunday, presented by the Hallmark Channel's Faith & Values Media and Temple Of The Air (www.tota.tv). It also features segments shot on location at the Western Wall in Jerusalem by Bram Roos, producer of A&E's "Mysteries of the Bible." Participants in the service include Jason Alexander, Leonard Maltin, Larry King, Mary Hart, Theodore Bikel and the late Neil Carter. ■

## Fab Five's Fortunes Rise

'Queer Eye for the Straight Guy' Renewed; Cast Negotiating to More Than Double Initial Salaries



TOAST OF THE TOWN The cast and producers celebrate on Emmy Night.

By Chris Pursell and James Hibberd

The Fab Five—Kyan Douglas, Carson Kressley, Thom Filicia, Jai Rodriguez and Ted Allen of Bravo's "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy"—just capped off a week of public cavorting and private posturing with a potential deal on the table from Bravo that could put as much as \$400,000 in each maven's finely tailored pockets next season.

Bravo's leading men, who wowed viewers and celebrity fans at the Emmys and post-parties, are likely to see their fortunes rise much like their stars have risen. Bravo has made a

deal with Scout Productions to produce a second season of "Queer Eye" consisting of 40 episodes of the red-hot cable hit—twice the number of episodes in the freshman season. In addition, sources said, the cast's reps are working with Bravo on a deal that would give the Fab Five a per-episode salary increase from their initial \$3,000-per-episode fee to somewhere between \$6,000 and \$10,000 an episode.

That could settle any discontent within the ranks of the reality series, which was the subject of newspaper articles last week indicating the cast had grown unhappy with its current *continued on page 43*

## Fixing 'Good Morning, Miami'



Viewers watched, but critics scorned NBC's Thursday night sitcom last season. Many doubted it would survive, but it returns this week for a second season with a new focus, additional writers and new cast. See Page 41.

## New Awards to Premiere on Comedy

'Com mies' to Air Dec. 7; Satirical Outlook Promised

By James Hibberd

Two years after the American Comedy Awards were discontinued, Comedy Central will reinvent the humorist salute with the first "Commies."

The show, scheduled to tape at Sony Studios in Culver City, Calif., on Nov. 22 and air on Comedy Central Dec. 7, will include traditional categories such as Funniest Movie and Funniest Actor, as well as more skewed prizes such as Most Uninten- *continued on page 43*

## A&E Nets Faces Uneasy Future

Independence a Growing Disadvantage as Flagship Channel Fails to Find Hits

By John Motavalli

As A&E Networks nears its 20th birthday this December, there is

growing unease about what the future may bring for the group of three basic cable networks that has earned a lot of critical praise over the years.

In the past year, as a discussion among the three major investors about a plan to break up the company fizzled, A&E has been left as one of few major cable programmers not tied to a larger corporate group, a significant disadvantage in today's market. Bigger players regularly use their combined

muscle in ad sales and promotions and to win key retransmission agreements.

The partners in A&E are big, but they are not playing the same kind of role as with wholly owned properties. The major investors are The Walt Disney Co. (37.5 percent), Hearst Corp. (37.5 percent) and General Electric's NBC (25 percent). Since none has a majority, A&E's longtime management team—headed by *continued on page 42*

INSIDE

CABLE TALENT SPECIAL REPORT

Cable programming has become a vital launchpad for new TV talent. *TelevisionWeek* spotlights 10 of this year's most promising finds. Page 25



TOM SHALES

The level of mayhem and menace on TV is just criminal, Page 44



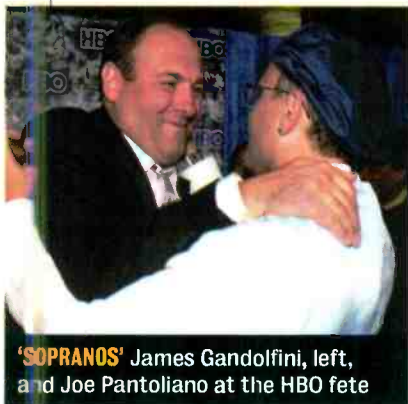
SPECIAL  
**Blink**  
THE NEWS BEHIND THE NEWS



**GOVERNOR'S BALL** Gerard Depardieu felt no pain.

**HBO: SEX, THE MOB AND RAY**

"Sex and the City's" Sarah Jessica Parker, with hubby Matthew Broderick, Kristin Davis and Kim Cattrall, made it to HBO's post-awards bash at the Pacific Design Center in West Hollywood, but Cynthia Nixon went home early, saying she wasn't feeling well. The mob also included "Sopranos" stars James Gandolfini and Edie Falco, who attended with her boyfriend, Stanley Tucci. HBO execs waiting to greet them included Chris Albrecht, Carolyn Strauss and Colin Callender. Time Warner's Jeff Bewkes was also on hand. The late shift featured most of the "Raymond" crew, including Ray Romano, Brad Garrett, Doris Roberts, Peter Boyle and Patricia Heaton, sitting with CBS topper Les Moonves and his date, Julie Chen. Others among the 2,000 guests wandering the "surreal garden" created by Butch Kavitz included Larry



**'SOPRANOS'** James Gandolfini, left, and Joe Pantoliano at the HBO fete

David and Cheryl Hines, Bonnie Hunt, Tyne Daly and John Karlin, Mike Myers and Rob Lowe, who hung out with "Friends" Jennifer Aniston and Courtney Cox Arquette. Dozens of *cloisonné* "bugs" used as decorations had completely disappeared, unlike the pumpkin ravioli on the generous buffet, by evening's end. ■

**GOVERNOR'S BALL**

That's very drunk French movie star Gerard Depardieu singing with the Glenn Miller Band as winners, losers and schmoozers networked their way through the two-level official Emmy after-party at the Shrine Auditorium. Jon Stewart had glittering awards in both fists as he made his way through a crowd that included Garry Shandling, George Lopez, Jeri Ryan, Jim Belushi, Charles Dutton, Martin Short, Paul Shaffer and a beaming Debra Messing. Dennis Franz and his wife, Joanie, as well as Michael Chiklis and his wife, Michele, may not have won, but seemed to be enjoying the beef



**'E.T.' PARTY** Cindi Leive, left, Randy Jackson and Linda Bell Blue

Wellington. Nobody was happier than the "West Wing" group led by producers John Wells and Aaron Sorkin, joined by Allison Janney, Bradley Whitford, John Spencer, Martin Sheen and others. And that was super-producer Jerry Bruckheimer carrying an Emmy for "Amazing Race." ■

**'E.T.': BANGLES AND STARS**

A reunion of the Bangles took center stage at the "E.T." bash, presented with Glamour magazine and Paramount TV at the Mondrian Hotel in West Hollywood. Although celebrities such as David Hyde Pierce, George Lopez, Rob Lowe and Jimmy Kimmel attracted attention, it was the plethora of reality stars who were kept busy signing autographs. From Ryan Seacrest, Paula Abdul, Simon Cowell and Randy Jackson of "American Idol" to the Fab Five of "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" to various participants of "The Bachelor" (including new bachelor Bob Guiney) as well as "Amazing Race," "Cupid," "Boy Meets Boy" and "For Love or Money," it was clear that reality ruled the crowd. ■

**TV GUIDE: FOO FIGHTERS**

The big deal at the TV Guide party at The Lot in West Hollywood was a concert by the Foo Fighters. Lead singer Dave Grohl took time out to thank two fetching young women perched on their dates' shoulders and doing a sexy dance in his direction. Guests included "The Bachelor's" Andrew Firestone and Jennifer Schefft; Jimmy Kimmel and Sarah Silverman; "Will & Grace" actress Shelly Morrison; "The Shield's" CCH Pounder; "Everybody Loves Raymond's" Doris Roberts; "The Simple Life's" Nicole Richie; actress Roma Downey; cast members from "Coupling" and "Luis"; and porn star-turned-gubernatorial candidate Mary Carey. ■



**FIGHTING FOO** Rocker Dave Grohl

**UNIVERSAL TAKEN WITH 'MONK'**

The world was looking better to Tony Shalhoub after his win as Outstanding Lead Actor in a Comedy Series, as he celebrated at the Universal Television Group's party at The Highlands in Hollywood. He was joined by his wife, Brooke Adams, and James Woods, Anthony Michael Hall, Dakota Fanning, the cast of "Coupling," the cast of "American Dreams" and Universal execs including David Goldhill, Steve Brunell, David Kissinger and Steve Webster as well as USA Net Prez Doug Herzog, producer Ben Silverman and Sci Fi's Mark Stern. Guests took home a bag full of DVDs, which included episodes of what else but "Monk." ■



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yes, dear

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yes, dear

Season Premiere

2.7 The Parkers (Orig.) UPN

3.1 FOX News: Pres. Bush Interview (Orig.) FOX

4.5 Primetime Live (Orig.) ABC

5.4 7th Heaven (Orig.) WB

7.6 Fear Factor \$ Million Giveaway (Premiere) NBC

COMING SOON FROM TWENTIETH TELEVISION



# TV Execs Irked by Late Ad Changes

**| Networks |** Young Buyers Blamed for Last-Minute Activity

**By Wayne Friedman**

Advertisers this season have made adjustments to their TV ad spending commitments later than the broadcast networks have ever seen—which has some executives expressing anger.

"Advertisers were still making adjustments as of last week," said one senior cable ad sales executive, speaking about the week of Sept. 15 to 19. "This year it's very, very late. The new season has already started. There seems to be a lack of respect for how the rules work in this business."

"Everyone came in late—it was such a long, hard summer," said Bob Cesa, executive VP of advertising sales and cable program sales for Twentieth Television.

Some of the changes were cutbacks; others were additions to upfront buys.

Media buying executives estimate that overall a typical 1 percent to 2 percent of the entire upfront television market was cut by advertisers. June's upfront broadcast advertising market was blistering hot, rising 13 percent to \$9.3 billion. This means approximately \$90 million to \$185 million was cut. Cable networks' healthy \$5.5 billion upfront has seen cuts in the

neighborhood of \$55 million to \$110 million, while syndication's strong \$2.2 billion upfront would calculate to a reduction of \$22 million to \$44 million.

Unilever U.S., Sears, L'Oreal USA and The Clorox Co. were among those making cutbacks, according to executives. On one major cable network, Unilever

Increasingly, television advertising sales executives are worried about these last-minute changes in advertisers' media plans. Typically, when advertisers make upfront commitments in June it is with the intent to go to order. Orders are usually completed by early to mid August, and somewhat later for

**“This year it's very, very late. The new season has already started. There seems to be a lack of respect for how the rules work.”**

*A senior cable ad sales executive*

cut 29 percent of its upfront buy. The cable network executive said similar cuts occurred across broadcast networks, syndicated shows and other cable channels.

"[Advertisers] spent so much more money this year during the upfront," Mr. Cesa said. "This was people protecting themselves. They tended to overcommit."

A Sears spokeswoman would only say, "We do not share competitive information." Executives at Unilever, L'Oreal and Clorox did not return phone calls.

syndication and cable.

"No calls were made to us like, 'Hey, we could have a problem,'" said the cable ad executive. "You can't tell me they only found out a day before they called [to place their orders] that they had a problem."

The upfront commitments are actually called "holds"—which hold the inventory until it is actually ordered. For many years holds were virtual orders—where few if any changes occurred. Now ad executives say young media buyers

*continued on page 42*

# Events Overtake Syndie Debuts

**| Ratings |** 9/11 Observance Pre-Empts 'DeGeneres,' 'Starting Over'

**By Chris Pursell**

A pair of national syndication debuts on NBC owned-and-operated stations were hit by midweek pre-emptions due to coverage of the 9/11 anniversary and a decline in overall daytime viewership across the country.

For the week ending Sept. 14, Telepictures' "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" came out of the gate at a 1.4, while NBC Enterprises' "Starting Over" earned a 0.8 household average, according to Nielsen Media Research.

They are two of five first-run strips launching this fall.

Buena Vista's second week of "The Wayne Brady Show" was unchanged week to week at a 0.9.

A slew of veteran talk, game, court and newsmagazine shows all made their season debuts. Among court shows, "Judge Judy" opened with a 4.9 household average, up 4 percent from the week before. Paramount's "Judge



**'STARTING OVER'** Debut earned 0.8 in households

Joe Brown" debuted at a 3.4, up 6 percent. Telepictures' "Judge Greg Mathis" launched its new season unchanged at a 2.0, while Sony's "Judge Hatchett" was down 6 percent from the previous week.

Among talk shows, Universal premiered two of its strips, with "Maury" slipping 11 percent to a 2.5 while "Jerry Springer" was off 16 percent to a 2.1. The only other talk show to premiere was Para-

mount's "Montel," which grew 5 percent to a 2.3 household rating.

KingWorld's trio of game shows premiered, and "Wheel of Fortune" continued to lead all syndicated series in overall households with a 12 percent climb to an 8.2. "Jeopardy" was unchanged week to week with a 6.4, while "Hollywood Squares" opened even at a 2.1.

In newsmagazines, Paramount's "Entertainment Tonight" rose 4 percent to 5.0, King World's "Inside Edition" was up 10 percent to 3.4, and NBC's "Access Hollywood" was even at 2.6.

Among weeklies, Paramount's "Entertainment Tonight" weekend edition saw a huge 64 percent spike in rating to a 4.1 due to its tribute to John Ritter.

Results for other new strips, along with off-net fare such as "King of Queens," won't be available for another week. ■



**'8 SIMPLE RULES'** The late John Ritter's show gave ABC a win in 18 to 49.

# Networks Down in Premiere Week

**| Ratings |** ABC Alone Sees Hike Over 2002-03

**By Leslie Ryan**

ABC was the only broadcast network up year to year after the first four nights of the broadcast season. Thanks to strong performances by its Tuesday and Wednesday lineups, ABC is up 12 percent in adults 18 to 49 and up 10 percent in total viewers.

Despite winning three of the first four nights of the new season in adults 18 to 49, NBC was down 6 percent in the demo and down 1 percent in total viewers. CBS was down 20 percent in adults 18 to 49 and down 13 percent in total viewers.

The WB—which saw dismal ratings on several nights last week—was down 36 percent in adults 18 to 49 and down 25 percent in total viewers. UPN beat The WB three nights in a row last week but also saw year-to-year declines. UPN is down 15 percent in adults 18 to 49 and down 18 percent in total viewers.

Fox, which hasn't yet launched its new programming, was down 26 percent in adults 18 to 49 and 25 percent in total viewers.

Premiere week highlights include:

## Thursday

**Adults 18 to 49: NBC, 10.3/27**

**Total viewers: NBC, 21.4 million**

NBC won the first Thursday night battle of the new season in adults 18 to 49 and total viewers, but CBS was right on its heels in total viewers with 21.2 million,



**'TWO AND A HALF MEN'** The CBS sitcom held on to 91 percent of "Everybody Loves Raymond's" viewers.

according to Nielsen Media Research fast affiliate data.

"Coupling," NBC's latest attempt at creating another hit Thursday night sitcom, debuted with adults 18 to 49 ratings that were 12 percent lower than "Good Morning, Miami's" debut in the same time slot last year (7.8/19 vs. 8.0/12).

CBS's "CSI" juggernaut was the most-watched show of the night with 26.9 million total viewers. It also won the hour in adults 18 to 49 with a 9.7/24, beating NBC's "Will & Grace"/"Coupling" combo.

NBC's "Friends" kicked off its last season with a super-size episode that won its time slot in adults 18 to 49 (11.8/33) and total viewers (24/5 million). "Survivor," which aired against "Friends" and part of "Will & Grace," finished a strong second in its time slot with a 7.5/21 in adults 18 to 49 and 19.9 million total viewers.

The 10 p.m. battle was won by "ER," which posted a 10.7/28 in adults 18 to 49 and 23.2 million total viewers. It beat CBS's second-place "Without a Trace" by an 88 percent margin in adults 18 to 49. However, "Trace"—which often beat "ER" in reruns this summer—did cut into "ER's" advantage. A year ago "ER" beat "Trace" by 7.4 rating points in adults 18 to 49 and by 10.5 million viewers. Last night "ER's" advantage in adults 18 to 49 was 5 rating points and 6.5 million total viewers.

## Wednesday

**Adults 18 to 49: NBC, 8/16**

**Total viewers: NBC, 16.6 million**

NBC's resurgent "West Wing" and stalwart "Law & Order" edged out strong performances from ABC's hour-long "My Wife and Kids" and two-hour "The Bachelor" to win Wednesday night in adults 18 to 49 by a tenth of a ratings point.

The 14-year-old "Law & Order" was the highest-rated

*continued on page 43*



# McCain Delays Cap Legislation

**| Government | Senator Reportedly Wants Tougher Ownership Rules**

By Doug Halonen

Throwing a monkey wrench into the congressional effort to overturn the Federal Communications Commission's media ownership deregulation, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., has put a hold on appropriations legislation that would roll back the cap on national TV ownership to 35 percent of the nation's TV households.

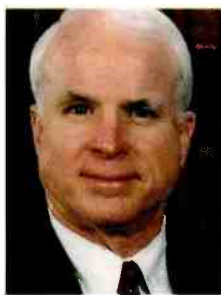
The senator is peeved, sources said, because he believes that media ownership issues should be decided by the Senate Commerce Committee—the committee he chairs—and not the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Sources said the Arizona maverick is also angling to force a Senate vote on far more ambitious rollback legislation that would overturn FCC deregulation clearing the way for broadcasters to buy daily newspapers in their markets.

But industry insiders said the lawmaker's effort to derail the appropriations measure is a long shot at best, because the appropriations legislation—approved unanimously by the Senate Appropriations Committee and

affiliates to limit the rollback to the cap alone—particularly in the wake of the Senate's recent 55-40 vote to approve a separate resolution that would overturn all of the FCC's deregulation.

The bill that Sen. McCain



**“Policy with respect to media ownership rightfully lies within the jurisdiction of the [Senate] Commerce Committee.”**

Sen. John McCain, R.-Ariz.

by a 400-21 vote in the House—has garnered strong support.

#### Uncertain Prospects

“He doesn't have the juice,” said one broadcast industry source.

Still, Sen. McCain's intervention raises additional uncertainty about the prospects for the campaign by the National Association of Broadcasters and the

wants put to a full-Senate vote not only would overturn the FCC's newspaper-broadcast cross-ownership ruling but also could force major group broadcasters, including Clear Channel Communications and Cox Communications to divest key radio properties. The Senate Commerce Committee approved the bill

*continued on page 40*

# A Media Blitz for New Bills

**| Advertising | ABC Scores \$10 Mil of Treasury's \$53 Mil Marketing Chest**

By Wayne Friedman

The ABC Network has entered into a wide-ranging and unusual \$10 million deal with the U.S. Treasury Department to market the new blue, peach and green \$20 bill, which will be released to the public Oct. 9.

The bill is the same size as regular paper currency and retains the historical image of Andrew Jackson, but otherwise has a new look that the government fears could confuse consumers. Thus, the agency has embarked on an overall \$53 million marketing campaign.

Media executives say Disney-ABC received almost 90 percent of the TV media buy from the campaign. Other marketing efforts will go to public relations and non-TV-related campaigns.

“The ultimate goal is to educate the pub-



**INCENTIVE** Host Meredith Vieira will offer \$1,000 in new-style \$20 bills to an audience member during a segment of “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire.”

lic,” said Bill Bund, senior VP of integrated sales at ABC Unlimited, which does cross-platform deals for the network. “People might not believe it is real money—[they might think] that it's funny money.”

What makes the campaign unusual is that ABC will provide both traditional 30-second spot advertising, promotion and expo-

sure more akin to product placement within specific shows, with the campaign spanning broadcast, cable and TV syndication.

For instance, on ABC's “America Funniest Home Videos,” host Tom Bergeron will pull out a wad of new twenties during the show's usual closing—when a confetti-like stream of money rains down on him and studio guests.

For Buena Vista Television's syndicated “Live With Regis and Kelly,” Regis Philbin and Kelly Ripa will discuss the new-colored bill at the start of the show.

Meredith Vieira, host of Buena Vista Television's “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire,” will offer during a segment of the show a wad of new \$20 bills totaling \$1,000 to an audience member who answers a question correctly.

On ESPN, for its college football games an image of a \$20 bill will be superimposed on the field at the same time the superimposed 10-yard marker is used during the game. The \$20 bill will look as though it is on the field.

Other components include promotional/marketing efforts with ABC Sports, ABC News, ABC Family, A&E Network, The History Channel, ESPN News

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# NEWS Briefs

## Nielsen Chides WJLA for Using Hurricane Ratings

Nielsen Media Research said last week it is ordering WJLA-TV in Washington to “cease and desist” touting its coverage of Hurricane Isabel's assault as the most-watched in the Washington area, where massive power outages rendered any data collected by Nielsen at the peak of the storm coverage too “unstable” for publication or promotion. The Albritton-owned ABC affiliate had asked for “any data we might have,” said Nielsen communications VP Jack Loftus. He said Nielsen shipped the station some data and made clear to WJLA that it was “not representative of anything” and could be used only for internal station analysis. However, the station ran on-air promos extolling its hurricane coverage and on Sept. 24 The Washington Times ran a story reporting the “big ratings” scored Sept. 18 by WJLA. Mr. Loftus said it was still unclear who gave The Times its data, which the newspaper attributed to Nielsen. But he added, “Whoever did that released bogus information into the market that was designed to mislead the market.” Nielsen made clear to WJLA that “the sample was way out of line, so it is not projectable,” Mr. Loftus said. WJLA President and General Manager Chris Pike said he had shared the information internally only, in an e-mail and in a meeting in the newsroom.

## UPN Extends Deal With Nine Fox Stations



MITCHELL STERN

Viacom-owned UPN has extended its relationship with nine affiliates owned by Fox Television Stations for what was described as a multiyear period under a deal that is retroactive to Sept. 1, 2003. The new affiliation agreement secures UPN outlets in the three top markets—New York, Los Angeles and Chicago, where WWOR-TV, KCOP-TV and WPWR-TV, respectively, are part of Fox-owned duopolies—and an overall reach of 24 percent of the country's TV homes.

Mitchell Stern, chairman and CEO of Fox Television Stations, said in the announcement: “This new agreement extending our UPN affiliations is a perfect fit with our business and operational plans, especially since in eight of these nine markets we have duopolies.” Mr. Stern's statement indicates that despite much speculation during the past year that Fox might pull some key legs out from under UPN's future by pulling crucial stations out of the UPN pack, the Fox-owned affiliates appear to be committed for at least three years.

## Norton Coming to Comedy Central, O'Donnell to CBS

Comedy Central is teaming up with British talk-show host and comedian Graham Norton, while CBS has signed Chris O'Donnell to a talent and development deal. Comedy Central's deal with Mr. Norton is a two-year pact that calls for the performer to host a talk show, perform in his own stand-up special and assume hosting duties on the cable network's series “Reel Comedy.” The Irish-born Mr. Norton received a 13-episode commitment for an hour-long variety/talk show that his production company, So TV, will produce. In addition, Mr. Norton will star in an hour-long stand-up comedy special and will host four installments of “Reel Comedy,” which profiles comedic films.

## Parsons Having 'A Conversation'

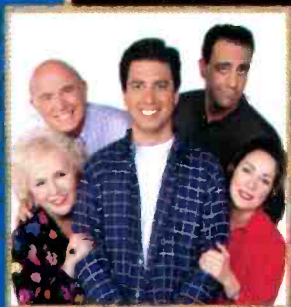
Time Warner Chairman and CEO Richard Parsons will be the special guest at the kickoff of the second annual outreach event “A Conversation With ...,” which Ken Werner, executive VP of distribution for The WB, inaugurated last year. The program is conceived as a series of casual conversations with four media moguls for the benefit of the Los Angeles minority business community. Mr. Parsons will appear with Mr. Werner Oct. 14 at the FAME Renaissance Media Center in Los Angeles.

## SAG/AFTRA, Advertisers Reach Agreement

Eager to avoid a repeat of 2000's protracted negotiation and strike, the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television & Radio Artists reached a tentative three-year agreement with the advertising industry after one day of face-to-face talks. The agreement will go to SAG/AFTRA's Joint National Board of Directors on Sept. 29. ■



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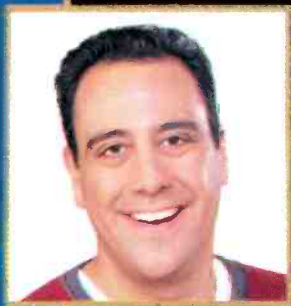
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**TUCKER CAWLEY**, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER  
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**RICK HIMOT**, RE-RECORDING MIXER  
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# Speedy Series Sales

**| Networks |** Spots in MLB's Championship Selling at Brisker Pace Than in '02

By Richard Linnett  
Advertising Age

This year Major League Baseball celebrates the 100th anniversary of the World Series and marketers are buying into the 2003 fall classic on Fox faster and earlier than last year, according to the network and media buyers.

The 2003 Series gets under way Oct. 18 and is now fetching on average \$325,000 for a 30-second spot in the first five games, with prices falling off in later games to about \$275,000, according to executives with knowledge of the deals. Last year, the average price for a 30-second commercial was \$300,000, according to media buyers.

"It does great numbers, comparable to prime time," said Andy Donchin, senior VP, director of national broadcast, for Aegis Group's Carat North America. "I'd rather be running ads in the World Series than against it."

Jon Nesvig, president, advertising sales, for Fox Broadcasting Co., said the network has already sold close to 80 percent of the Series inventory. "Like everything else in TV now, the Series is moving better," Mr. Nesvig said. "We pretty much sold out the divisional playoffs in the prime-time upfront as well as the [league championship series]."



**HIGH INTEREST** The popular Chicago Cubs are one of the teams that could make it to the playoffs this year.

Fox and Walt Disney Co.'s ESPN split the playoff and league championship series between them. According to executives, the early rounds of the playoffs are essentially sold-out, with unit prices averaging about \$90,000, while league championship series inventory is selling now at an average of \$115,000 a unit. About 25 percent of the World Series' ad time was sold in the upfront and in package deals to Major League Baseball

sponsors such as PepsiCo's Pepsi and Visa USA. Other advertisers already in for the 2003 games are RadioShack Corp., John Hancock Financial Services, General Motors Corp., Sprint Corp., Allstate Corp., Subway Restaurants and Bank One Corp.

"We are pacing 10 percent to 12 percent ahead of the rate at which orders came in last year," said Mr. Nesvig, adding that cost-per-thousand increases this year for the World Series

alone are in the 8 percent range. Fox, which has aired the World Series since 1996, is also selling virtual signage this year (which uses technology that allows advertisers to insert a message that appears to be in the stadium but is seen only on TV), a break from the past, when that signage was reserved for baseball's corporate sponsors and network promos.

Last year's regional battle between the Anaheim Angels and the San Francisco Giants did not draw large numbers of viewers from across the country, and advertisers did not flock to the games. According to Nielsen Media Research, the World Series games last year averaged an 11.9 household rating, whereas in previous years the average was a 16 rating.

Though the division games—airing on ESPN and Fox beginning Sept. 30—have not yet begun, team matchups are looking more promising, media buyers said.

"This has probably been one of the greatest Septembers in baseball in a lot of years," said John Muszynski, executive VP, chief broadcast investment officer, at Publicis Groupe's Starcom Worldwide in Chicago. "The fact that you have these great races, right down to the wire, helps the playoffs get off to a good start." ■

# NBA TV Signs First Three MSOs

**| Cable |** Coupled With Satellite, Basketball Channel Now Reaches 45 Million Homes

By Jay Sherman

NBA TV, a basketball-themed network owned and operated by the National Basketball Association, is expected to announce today that it has signed its first three cable operators to distribution deals. The network already has carriage deals with satellite operators DirecTV and EchoStar Communications.

The arrangements with Cablevision Systems, Cox Communications and Time Warner Cable will nearly double to 45 million the number of households able to access the channel, which features basketball games as well as other programming tied to both the sport and the lifestyle surrounding the sport.

Though terms of each cable distribution agreement were not disclosed, NBA officials said the channel will be part of the operators' digital offerings. It is up to each operator to decide

whether to package the channel as a standard digital channel or as part of some kind of tier.

"Here we have a high-quality, branded programming network associated with a sports league that has behind it not only all of the assets available to the NBA but also a library of NBA entertainment, production capacity and access that being part of the league affords us," said Ed Desser, president of NBA New Media and Strategic Initiatives, which runs the network.

Besides attracting loyal basketball fans, Mr. Desser is betting the network's plan to telecast 50 of nearly 100 scheduled games in high definition will help attract audiences to the channel, which currently is not tracked by Nielsen.

Launched five years ago as a companion channel to the NBA League Pass pay-TV service, NBA TV was

revamped a year ago, adding original programming and game coverage. It has been designed to serve as a link between network basketball coverage and the NBA League Pass service and is aimed at basketball fans who crave more hoops coverage than they might find on TNT, ESPN and ABC but aren't quite ready to step up to NBA League Pass, which can sell for \$99 per season and offers access to up to 40 games a week.

However, questions remain as to whether the channel is ready for the big leagues. Among the challenges facing the network is the proliferation of outlets that already show basketball games. Besides the Turner channels and ABC/ESPN, several regional sports networks telecast games. Some in the sports television business have reservations about whether NBA TV game coverage will generate audiences.

Mr. Desser responds to the charge that NBA TV is entering an already

*continued on page 40*



## PRIME 'CRIME SCENES'

On Tuesday, "Law & Order: SVU" collared its new time slot. On Wednesday, "Law & Order" kicked sand in the face of "The Bachelor." On Thursday, "L&O" franchise creator Dick Wolf was the object of signature seekers at Manhattan's legendary restaurant, Elaine's. The scene was to honor one of the most unlikely coffee table books ever: "Law & Order: Crime Scenes," on which Mr. Wolf shares writing credit with Jessica Burstein, who has been taking stills of the series' grim and gory scenes for nine years.

"It's not so bad," Mr. Wolf said with a grin, when asked how his week was going.

In the crowd of famous faces: Wolf ensemble members Jesse Martin, Jerry Orbach and Dann Florek; guest stars including former Big Apple first lady Donna Hanover and actor Michael Nouri; and at least one member of another TV crime family, "The Sopranos" Vincent Curatola. Also there was lawyer-commentator Mickey Sherman, who unsuccessfully defended Kennedy cousin Michael Skakel in the Martha Moxley case.

Among the familiar faces: Former HBO Chairman Michael Fuchs, who was beaming, positively beeeeeeeaming, and who had recently brought together about 150 former HBO players, including Court TV Chairman Henry Schleiff, who raved about the reunion.

Mr. Schleiff, who is the life of many parties, was making evening

rounds for the third time last week ("a hat trick," he called it) with his wife, Peggy. He reminded former NBC censor turned "L&O" co-executive producer Roz Weinman that he's to be honored Nov. 6 by the Anti-Defamation League ("They've run out of people") at a black-tie event emceed by his pal Regis Philbin. He revealed there will be a "Smoking Gun TV" awards show hosted by Mo Rocca in December. The Insider can hardly wait.

But she can keep secret the identity of the partygoer whom Mr. Schleiff thought was hitting on actress Nicole Vicious, whose job was to play dead at a cafe table on the sidewalk in front of Elaine's.

## WESTWARD HOME FOR DAVID NEUMAN

On Sept. 22, David Neuman, who joined CNN during the Jamie Kellner era at Turner Broadcasting, dropped a farewell e-mail into the CNN system in which he described his two-plus years as in-house development and talent consultant for the news network as "the most memorable and stimulating experience of my career."

Some sources said his contract was breached with the restructuring that had him reporting to new CNN/U.S. VP and General Manager Princell Hair rather than directly to CNN News Group President Jim Walton. The Insider hears that Mr. Neuman is headed back to Hollywood, where, a friend said, he has numerous options. ■



**ON THE SCENE** Dick Wolf and rent-a-victim Nicole Vicious at Elaine's in New York last week



**MICHAEL FUCHS**







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**EMMYS WRAP-UP**

**BIG WINNER** "Everybody Loves Raymond" won the Outstanding Comedy Series Emmy on its fifth try.

## Emmys Could Be Factor in CBS Renewals

**| Networks | 'Raymond' and 'Race' Await Decisions on Future Seasons**

By Leslie Ryan

CBS series "Everybody Loves Raymond" and "Amazing Race" went into the Emmys with their futures in doubt, and although they both left the Emmys toting their genres' top trophies, it was still unclear last week whether either would be on the network's schedule next season.

"Raymond's" future is foggy because creators Ray Romano and Phil Rosenthal have said they won't decide until January whether to go ahead with another season. CBS has yet to give "Race" an official order for a fifth edition.

**Roundtable on Emmys impact, Page 38; Party patrol, Page 2; Photos from the red carpet, Page 36**

The Emmy victories could influence those decisions, TV industry insiders said. "There's no question that an Emmy makes a difference," said talent agent Scott Schwartz, who packaged "Will & Grace." "When they say, 'And the winner is ...,' there's this euphoric high that is inexplicable. It's like the greatest drug ever invented. If it happens to you once—assuming that you believe in yourself—you want it again. I do believe it is an enormously strong impetus to come back."

Mr. Rosenthal and Mr. Romano have both said in the past that this year's eighth season will be the show's last. Backstage at the Shrine auditorium after winning their first Emmy for Outstanding TV Comedy after five tries, they reaffirmed what they've said recently: A final decision will be made in January.

Whether "Raymond's" Emmy victory for Outstanding Comedy Series sways them to continue the show or quit while they are on top is another question.

"There's two schools of thought," Mr. Rosenthal said. "One is this is very encouraging. The other is we should take this and go."

Mr. Rosenthal said they will take into account whether they have more stories to tell after the end of this season, considering they have already made about 175 episodes. "It takes a lot of stamina to do it," he said. "It takes a lot of stamina to do 175 of anything."

Not everyone was willing to concede that this could be the show's final season. Doris Roberts, who won Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy for her role as Marie Barone, said the writing, acting and directing on the show is still top-notch.

"I don't know how they can quit," she said. "I don't know how you can take that off the air. And I hope they won't."

Ms. Roberts also said she "absolutely" could see the show continuing even if Mr. Romano and Mr. Rosenthal bow out.

*continued on page 38*

## ALEX BEN BLOCK



### EMMYS BRING ON MENTAL ACID REFLUX

At the Governor's Ball after the 55th Emmys, I congratulated producer Don Mischer and his team on this year's show. As always, there were superb technical credits, loads of stars, a classy presentation and the show came in (almost) on time (a mere 12 minutes late).

Yet later, doubts lingered, like mental acid reflux bringing back flashes of previous shows. I realized that what most bothered me had to do with the annual patronage system under which the Emmys exist.

Pretty much since Emmy was born after World War II, the network presenting that particular year has had tremendous influence on the choice of host and other elements. Some nets, like drunks given a free key to the bar, load up each show with their favorite flavors of the season, turning the awards into another promotional opportunity.

And why not? They are simply following the Hollywood Golden Rule: He who has the gold rules. They paid for the rights, in the millions of dollars, so they get their way. At least that is conventional thinking.

There was a time the Emmys were a backwater show compared with the glamorous Oscars, and shilling for the network of the year wasn't a big deal. However, with the proliferation of truly unimportant and stupid award shows, the Emmys have gained a good deal of stature. They really do represent something worthy, some measure of excellence. They deserve better.

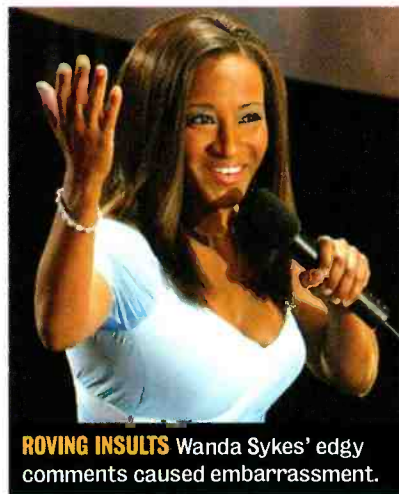
That is why I am troubled. I wish the enduring image from Sunday was of brave, brilliant Aaron Sorkin in front of "The West Wing" team graciously accepting the surprise award of the evening for best drama, pointing up the shame that Mr. Sorkin was forced off the show he created because of low ratings and late scripts.

I wish what stayed with me was the genuine delight in the eyes of Deborah Messing when she finally won for "Will & Grace," after years of watching all of her co-stars score golden ladies. I wish it were Walter Cronkite's recalling Bob Hope.

I wish that in a world often ruthlessly ruled by youth culture, I could bask in the knowledge that so many mature players got recognition, from a beaming Doris Roberts to Tyne Daly to veterans Ben Gazzara, Gena Rowlands and Maggie Smith. And how wonderful to celebrate Tony Shalhoub.

I wish I felt great for David Chase, HBO and the "Sopranos" gang, but I felt their pain when awards in acting, directing and writing didn't lead to the top award, best drama series.

I wish I could say that I was blown away by the comic styling of the dozen—or was it six dozen?—



**ROVING INSULTS** Wanda Sykes' edgy comments caused embarrassment.

"embedded" hosts. They were able comics, but it was like being at the Laugh Factory in West Hollywood. Each "name" did a short set, never to be seen again.

So Ellen, Conan and Garry, all brilliant when serving as the single Emmy host, were not nearly as effective this time. They didn't get to develop their theme and bring the audience in as co-conspirators. There were no keen

comic observations to put the late stages of the show into hilarious perspective. Let's hope that ABC will return to a single host next year (and isn't it great that Billy Crystal will return to the Oscars?).

I have done my best to forget "Saturday Night Live's" Darrell Hammond, under a ton of makeup,

doing his imitations of Arnold the candidate and the dour Don Rumsfeld. As flat as the Schwarzenegger bit fell, the Rumsfeld imitation was even more unfunny and inappropriate.

Unfortunately, the image that does stay with me is Bill Cosby, grimacing in his seat, his lips tight, as insult-comedienne Wanda Sykes marched by in the Shrine aisle playing roving reporter, trying to re-create the hip, edgy urban humor of her Fox show.

In her element, Ms. Sykes' barbs often hit home. At the Emmys, her humor struck me as out of place and lacking class. It took away from the genuine emotion of the evening. I felt she crossed the line by repeatedly plugging her show (as did others, including Mike Myers, who promoted his upcoming Dr. Seuss movie).

Dr. Cosby, one of TV's true pioneer heroes, did himself no great honor either with his dark glasses and an acceptance speech long on praise for the late Fred Rogers and short on any mention of recently deceased Bob Hope, for whom his award was named.

Three days after the show, I called Mr. Mischer to ask about some of my concerns. As it turns out, he felt the

same embarrassment I did at Ms. Sykes' appearances. He said he had seen her work before and felt it could be a funny addition. She was suggested by Fox but not forced on him. Unfortunately, due to her schedule, he said Ms. Sykes had to cancel several creative meetings and never discussed or rehearsed her on-air presentation with the producers before going live. "Choices were made that didn't work," said Mr. Mischer. "As producer, that is my responsibility."

That may be true, but the Emmy producer really isn't in total control. This was Mr. Mischer's eighth time doing TV's top awards show, but the first under a new eight-year contract between the TV academy and the major networks (ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox). This was supposed to be the beginning of a new era. It is the first Emmy contract to include a "creative rights" clause, said academy Chair Bryce Zabel, who helped negotiate the landmark deal. That means for the first time the academy had a real say in the content of the show, along with the network, host and producer.

While Fox certainly had its input this year, Mr. Mischer said Fox actually was less pushy than other networks have been in the past. So this isn't about Fox, or any one network. It is about making the Emmys a true industry showcase and not as much of a promotional vehicle for that year's distributor.

Which brings me to a proposal the academy probably can't bring forward itself. There may be seven years left on the new Emmy contract, but like Brad Garrett, Jane Kaczmarek and James Gandolfini, I think the TV academy should demand a renegotiation. The academy should have sole creative control, in consultation with the producer. The Emmys should be about what is best for the show, the audience and the honorees.

The fact is the best parts of the Emmys and most award shows are the genuine moments of unexpected wins and heartfelt emotions. The best thing any organization or producer can do is provide a classy environment and then get out of the way to

let the magic pour across the airwaves and into viewers' hearts.

The Emmys should not be a factor in Ms. Sykes' ratings or Mr. Myers' movie's box office take.

It is time to take the patronage out of the Emmys. In the 500-plus-channel universe, it is no longer about the net-

work, whether it is broadcast or cable. It needs to be about only one thing: Who did the best work during the past year, and what best serves the presentation? Anything less just tarnishes that solid-gold lady as she continues to hold up the world. ■



**DON MISCHER**



**BRUCE ZABEL**



# That '70s Show<sup>SM</sup>



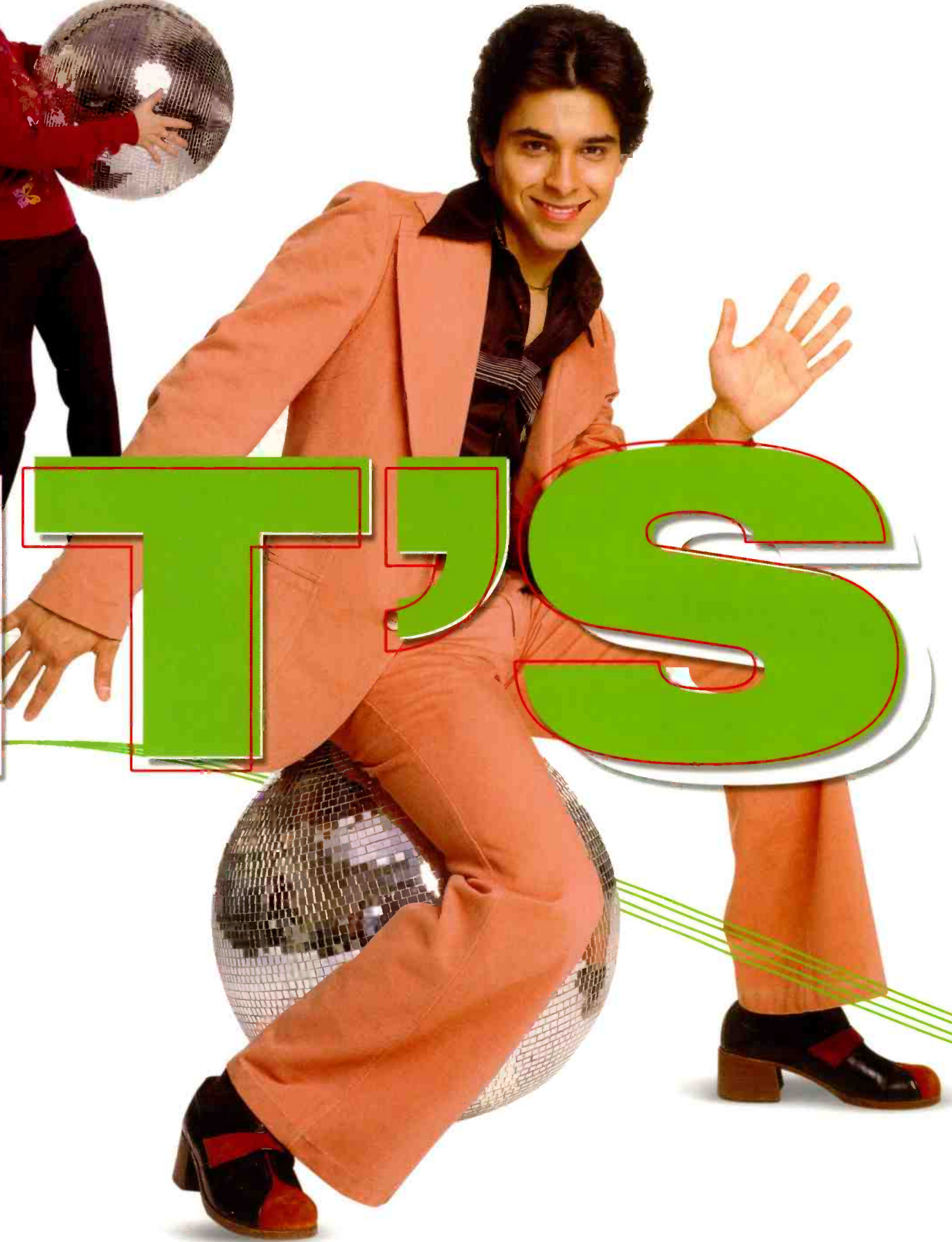
1. Source: NSS Galaxy Explorer, 2002-03 premiere to date, A18-49 GAA Rtg. Rank of new syndicated strips in the 2002-03 season. '70s Show averaged a 3.2 GAA. 2. Source: NSI SNAP3, May '03 versus May '02. Time period % improvement of off-net sitcoms based on unweighted A18-49 DMA Rtg. '70s Show averaged a 46% time period improvement. 3. Source: NSI SNAP3, May of each off-net sitcom's debut season versus prior May. Time period % change based on unweighted A18-49 DMA Rtg. 4. Source: NSI SNAP3, May '03 versus May '02. Unweighted % improvement of time periods in double-run markets. '70s Show's 54% time period improvement of A18-49 rating in double-run markets ranks #1 among all off-net strips w/ at least 25 double-run markets.

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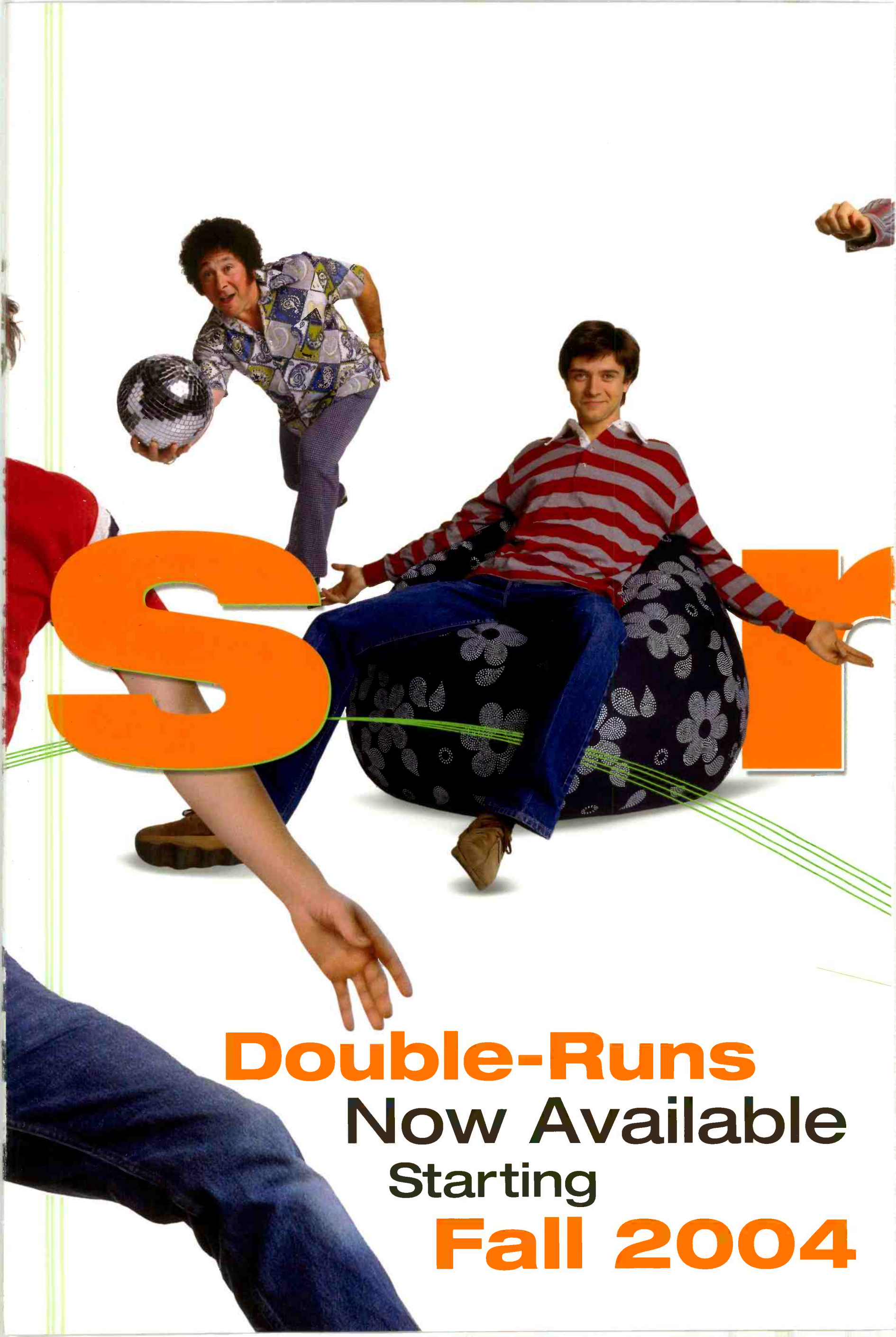
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## EDITORIAL

### Improving the Emmys Process

This year there seems to be more grumbling than usual about a number of the recent Emmy winners. Some of the most notable grumbling surrounded the supporting acting choices. Were Brad Garrett and Doris Roberts really Emmy-worthy again this year? And what was up, the naysayers asked, with "The West Wing" winning its fourth consecutive Emmy in the drama series category? The show clearly had a creative decline this past season, so the argument goes, while "The Sopranos" had another strong season. Furthermore, the grumblers point out, "The Sopranos" has yet to nab the Emmy in that category.

First and foremost, it needs to be pointed out that in recent years, the body that administers the Emmys—the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences—has worked hard to improve the selection process for Emmy winners. The biggest change the academy made was switching to a system in which it sends voters tapes of the shows to watch at home. This change has gone a long way to ensure that the most deserving talent behind the scenes and in front of the cameras really do win Emmys.

We would remind those who complained about the awards Mr. Garrett and Ms. Roberts won how these awards were chosen. First, only their peers—other actors—were allowed to vote for these awards. Furthermore, the nominees in these supporting categories submitted tapes of two episodes they felt best showed off their work. And based on these tapes, and only on these tapes, these Emmy winners were selected. The problem is that most of the public, including people in our industry, are ignorant of how these winners are actually selected. These acting awards are *not* given based on popularity or on one's perception of a performance over the course of an entire season.

However, the program awards are much more of a popularity contest. They are selected by anyone in the academy who elects to view two episodes of each nominee. But the question is, are all the tapes actually viewed? If not, are Emmy voters just voting for an old favorite out of habit?

But the biggest problem is how nominees are chosen. Tom O'Neil, the author of "The Emmys," has proposed a change to that process. First, he would have academy members volunteer to screen five to 10 tapes a month and judge which programs are best. After the season is over, the five highest-scoring programs would be the nominees. For the final balloting, Mr. O'Neil proposes that voters need view only one tape per contender, with each contender sending in a variety of samples. This method would likely ensure that some quality programs on The WB, for example, would finally get nominated.

The academy is on the right track. We heartily suggest that it adopt Mr. O'Neil's proposal and complete the process. ■

## QUICK TAKES BY NAOMIE WORRELL

### Who is your favorite cable TV star?



"James Gandolfini. Not only is his character, Tony Soprano, gritty and original but he is also very funny. Funny in a real, subtle, jokeless manner. It's a thing that the network shows have still yet to master."

John DiResta, executive producer and host, "Trash to Cash with John DiResta," FX

"Unfortunately, it's impossible to choose just one, so I'd have to say the entire cast of Sci Fi Channel's 'Farscape.' These actors have done a fantastic job of bringing their characters to life. It's commonly held that not much acting is necessary or done underneath makeup and costumes. I strongly disagree. I believe it takes even more effort and talent to make such characters real, and the 'Farscape' cast does it with style and class."

Jennifer Wendt, research industry specialist, First Marketing, Orlando, Fla.

## GUEST COMMENTARY By Dick Lippin



### Bring Back the Days When the Biz Was Fun

Whatever happened to the days when there was a level of excitement, energy, creativity and innovation that made the entertainment industry great? Are those days gone forever?

With the enormous consolidation that has taken place, the countless jobs that have been lost, the levels of insecurity rising to unparalleled levels and the use of technology to make our business even more impersonal, the picture is not a pretty one. How often have you spoken to people in our business who have said, "It just isn't fun anymore?"

Why are things this way? Well, consolidation eliminated many of the midsize and smaller companies that gave the majors a run for their money in terms of creativity and innovation. They also made the majors better because the competition was intense and the majors needed to rise to the occasion. Those days are gone.

The people who have lost their jobs are another reason for the industry's decline. So many good people who served our industry for years and remain among the "best and the brightest" are now unemployed by the powers that be because of age or expense-reduction considerations. Why can't we use their knowledge, experience and skills in some meaningful way?

Insecurity runs rampant. Executives who five years ago

would not hesitate to make a decision in minutes now take days. The fear of making the wrong decision and risking job loss is just too much to bear. Our industry is becoming populated by executives who are not willing to commit even though they know what is right.

It is hard to clearly define the role of technology in our society. On the one hand, it raises productivity levels significantly by allowing us to communicate

**Our industry is becoming populated by executives who are not willing to commit even though they know what is right.**

in a vastly accelerated way. On the other hand, it has reduced our contact to e-mails and totally eliminated the person-to-person interaction that is at the heart of our industry. The days of looking in someone's eyes, watching their body language and having a conversation, to some extent are gone.

How do we bring the fire and fun back into our business? Provide funding for smaller companies that want to be a part of our business

and populate them with executives with an entrepreneurial spirit, whether employed or not and regardless of their age. Out of this could come more creative ideas and a more intense competitive environment that would be healthy for the majors as well.

Reduce the level of insecurity by making management unafraid of taking risks. Establish a reward system that encourages new ideas and lowers the levels of potential job loss. Acknowledge success and do not punish well-intended attempts to make business better.

Finally, do not use technology as a substitute for interpersonal contact. No computer can ever replace people sitting together, talking and getting to know each other better. Set aside time to do this not only with employees but with customers as well.

Let's bring back the days when you sat in a meeting and the energy level and ideas flowed, when people argued with each other about how to do things and constantly challenged one another to take an idea to the next level. And when they left the room, they still had enormous respect for one another.

Those were great days. Can they return? For the sake of our industry, I hope so. ■

Dick Lippin is chairman and chief executive of The Lippin Group, a public relations and marketing organization.

## LETTERS

### Reality Check

Regarding "The Reality of Honoring Reality" (*TelevisionWeek*, Sept. 15), about ABC's proposed award show: I have to comment on a quote attributed to Bertram van Munster, creator and executive producer of "The Amazing Race."

"Hopefully, something like this has legs, because reality has done a lot for television. It has, in many ways, changed television as we know it."

And that would be a good thing, Bert?

John Jacobs  
 President  
 The AdWorks

### Stock Decline Misstated

I was very disappointed in the editorial fact-checking shown in "Deals in Limbo as Rules Debated" (*TelevisionWeek*, Sept. 15). The article reported "Young Broadcasting (whose stock lost nearly \$14 a share during the week in which the court stay was announced)." The court issued its ruling Sept. 3. YBI's stock closed at \$24.32 the Friday before Labor Day, Aug. 29, and at \$21.03 on the Friday, Sept. 5, after the order. This represents a \$3.29 decline, not "\$14 a share." Perhaps the article meant to say it was a 14 percent decline—a true statement—but it didn't.

James Morgan  
 Executive VP, Young Broadcasting



# SEX



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# AND THE CITY<sup>®</sup>

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# Advertising

TV BUYERS AND SELLERS: STRATEGIES AND RESULTS

## Infomercials Take Soft-Sell Approach

Fortune 1,000 Advertisers Are Flocking to Long-Form Commercials, Sending Time-Block Rates Skyward

By Brad Pomerance

Special to TelevisionWeek

You are watching the Discovery Channel one night and an episode of "Monster Garage" ends. You turn off the TV for the evening and fall asleep dreaming of hot cars, chrome and rumbling engines.

The next morning, you turn on the tube and there is another show about motor vehicles on the same channel. However, it isn't an episode of "Monster Garage." It's a 30-minute commercial that General Motors Corp. purchased on the national cable network to promote its line of GMC trucks. In other words, it is an infomercial, but with a difference.

Until now infomercials have mostly been the province of companies selling merchandise ranging from ab rollers to rotisserie ovens. Such companies run long-form commercials with a hard-sell pitch for

their product, all tied to a phone number, an address or a Web site where the product can be purchased immediately. It's like a shopping channel, but instead of running around the clock, stations sell blocks of time, typically in nonprime-time hours. It benefits the sta-

tions. But they don't use the same kind of hard-sell approach. As with the GM ads, which have been airing since July, it is a softer sell designed to enhance the image of the product and reinforce the brand identity. A GM spokesman declined to comment on

fortune 1,000 companies are getting into long form. It's a golden opportunity to sell their story in 30 uninterrupted minutes," said Bill McGowan, executive VP for advertising sales at Discovery Networks.

### Offbeat and Brand Items

And it isn't just GM. "Traditional advertisers such as BMW, Tropicana, Bissell, RadioShack and Dell are getting into direct response," said Barbara Tulipane, president and CEO of the Electronic Retailing Association.

DRTV typically finds a home on independently owned stations and cable networks hungry for revenue and only occasionally appears on major network affiliates in local markets. However, it has grown into a sizable business. The Direct Marketing Association estimated that the industry spent about \$23 billion last year buying media time for infomercials. Until relatively recently, most of that was for offbeat products from sellers who did not also run a bricks-and-mortar retail network. That began to change in recent years, said Mr. McGowan, who recalled that among the first to run brand-oriented long-form infomercials with "no call for action" were Apple Computers and Philips Electronics.

Efren Padilla of Telemundo's KWHY-TV in Los Angeles said the station already has a variation. The latest wrinkle is for "local car dealers to buy many of the long-form spots on local stations," Mr. Padilla said. These long-form ads don't sell the product instantly, but rather are designed to drive buyers into the dealer's local showroom.

While the entry of larger companies is good news for local stations and national cable networks with time to sell and has reinvigorated a business that has come under fire from consumers and viewers, the latest trend is bad news for the smaller entrepreneurs who started the industry.

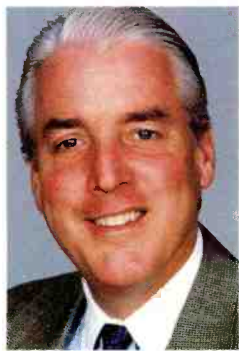
When larger corporations buy infomercials, "They buy up all the inventory and drive up the rates," said Bill McAlister, president of Direct Response Inc.

Discovery's Mr. McGowan concurs. "Fortune 1,000 corporations will drive pricing up due to ... supply and demand. It's the evolution of the industry."

Not everyone thinks the big companies are committed to

using infomercials. Nancy Marcum, whose Marcum Media of Phoenix acts as agent for various sellers, offers some dissent: "Infomercials lend themselves to the entrepreneurs selling products like Proactiv and The Firm. Brick-and-mortar companies are moving into long form, but they launch and then they pull back."

Nevertheless, Ms. Marcum lamented, "I cannot buy the time I want because it's too expensive. Stations are trying to make money back from the losses from 9/11, a bad economy and trying to get back to



**“Fortune 1,000 corporations will drive up pricing due to ... supply and demand. It's the evolution of the industry.”**

Bill McGowan, Discovery Networks

tions because they get more revenue than they could by simply selling ads, and advertisers are happy to provide turnkey programming ready to go on the air.

In the latest wave of infomercials, advertisers also purchase time, usually in half-hour blocks, from willing sta-

any aspect of the program.

However, earlier this month at the 13th Annual Electronic Retailing Association Convention in Las Vegas, the softer-sell approach and the entry of much larger corporations into what is known as direct-response television (DRTV) were the talk of the show. "For-



**HEEERE'S JOHNNY** A Carson DVD set advertised via infomercials has sold millions of units.

the e-commerce boom."

"Rates go up every single year, despite audience fragmentation," said Tim O'Leary, president of Respond2, which is based in Portland, Ore.

### Selling Old TV Shows

In the end, the time is hard to buy and rates go up because well-thought-out infomercials with the right products work. One success story has been the use of TV to sell old TV shows. That example dates to 1997, when Buena Vista Home Entertainment sold a Johnny Carson four-pack video.

Mr. O'Leary said Buena Vista had an idea to sell a new-and-improved version on video and DVD via direct response. Little did he know that the "Johnny Carson Ultimate Collection" would sell millions of units. In the process, for the fourth quarters of 2001, 2002 and the upcoming 2003, Mr. O'Leary has spent and will spend \$300,000 to \$500,000 a week on media, divided equally between local stations and national cable services. ■

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Lee Medick  
President





# Media Planner

THE IDEA EXCHANGE FOR PLANNING TV SPOTS

## Reaching the Involved Viewer

As Measurement Methods Are Perfected, a New Metric Is Becoming Increasingly Important to Media Buyers

By Joe Mandese

Special to TelevisionWeek

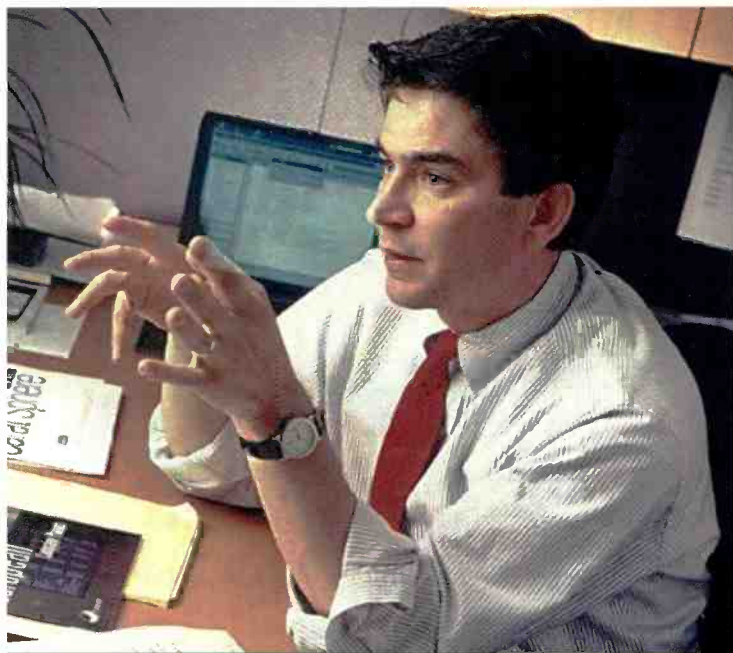
As audiences continue to fragment and as the number of media options continues to expand, Madison Avenue has begun embracing a new metric for targeting consumers: involvement.

Instead of raw media impressions data—the number of people who watch a TV show or read a magazine—they've begun focusing in on the percentage of people who are most involved in the media they consume. The approach is based on an assumption that the more involved viewers are with the shows they watch, or readers with the magazines they read, the more likely they are to be involved with the ads appearing in those media.

While the idea isn't new, it has been growing in importance as ratings for many mass-reach vehicles decline and their advertising costs skyrocket. But recently the approach has taken on a whole new impetus as some agencies have begun advocating involvement as the base economic model for advertising.

"It started with some San Francisco agencies," said David Verklin, CEO of mega-media shop Carat. "The concept is ROI: return on involvement."

Agencies such as Carat had already been leading the charge in terms of developing media



**'RETURN ON INVOLVEMENT'** Carat's David Verklin is working to quantify how engaged consumers are when they use various types of media.

plans and buys around the idea of involvement, but Mr. Verklin said they hadn't taken it to the next level—actually basing advertising performance on the metric—until they heard it being advocated by a small San Francisco agency, Red Ball Tiger.

"Essentially, it's based on digital technology. We started with the Internet and we're applying it to DVRs. As the digital universe gets larger it will become easier to measure advertising results on this basis," explained

Bob Ravasio, Red Ball Tiger's managing director and partner.

He's not alone. The American Association of Advertising Agencies and the Advertising Research Foundation have been trying to convince digital set-top manufacturers and cable system operators to share so-called clickstream data that would provide new measures of advertising and program involvement.

So far, they've been unsuccessful. Operators have cited consumer privacy issues or

have been too focused on other parts of their business to pay the Madison Avenue initiative much mind.

Meanwhile, agencies such as Mr. Verklin's Carat have been using surrogate measures from proprietary and syndicated research in an effort to determine how involved consumers are with various types of media.

Carat's system, called Foretel, uses both custom consumer research and some syndicated data from Marketing Evaluations, the Long Island, N.Y.-based research company that produces the TVQ scores.

While Q scores normally are used to evaluate the familiarity and popularity of TV programs and personalities, the firm recently has begun exploiting other components of its data, which it says are a proxy for viewer involvement. These so-called Impact Q scores measure whether a show or personality is among a viewer's favorites, and also how often he or she actually watches a show.

While the implications for planning media buys based on viewer involvement are obvious, the results sometimes are surprising.

Some of the most popular prime-time TV series, including NBC's vaunted Thursday night schedule, are not necessarily among the most involving, while many shows not normally in high demand on Madison Avenue are.

For example, a Saturday night drama such as ABC's "The District" is considered anathe-



**'SURVIVOR'** Reality show scores high in viewer involvement.

ma by many media buyers, but is among the highest-scoring in terms of viewer involvement.

And while reality shows are popular, they tend to score extremely low in involvement. The one exception is CBS's "Survivor."

"It's not like other reality shows. It's more like a drama," said Henry Schafer, executive VP of Marketing Evaluations. In fact, Mr. Schafer said, CBS's entire Thursday night schedule, from "Survivor" through "CSI" and "Without a Trace," has become the sweet spot for viewer involvement, making it a far stronger lineup than NBC's Thursday night.



**HENRY SCHAFER**

"If I'm an advertiser or media buyer, knowing what I know, I'd want to be on CBS that night," Mr. Schafer said, noting that while NBC's hits may generate higher overall Nielsen ratings, "The involved rating, if you will, is going to be a lot higher for CBS's shows." ■

### TVQ IMPACT Q SCORES

From surveys in second quarter 2003

Prime Time	Adults				Women				Men			
	18+	18-34	18-49	25-54	18+	18-34	18-49	25-54	18+	18-34	18-49	25-54
Survivor: The Amazon	54	55	56	53	56	57	60	56	52	53	53	51
Drama Average	53	54	52	53	55	52	54	55	49	54	49	50
Prime-Time Average	45	49	46	46	46	47	46	47	44	50	44	44

Source: Marketing Evaluations Inc.



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COMCAST NOW HAS OVER 40 INTERCONNECTS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. WITH INTERCONNECTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, COMCAST IS BUILDING A NETWORK THAT WOULD MAKE MOST AIRLINES ENVIDIOUS. AD-SUPPORTED CABLE IS THE MOST VIEWED TELEVISION MEDIUM, BUT HASN'T ALWAYS BEEN THE EASIEST TO BUY. NOW COMCAST'S EXPANDING FOOTPRINT OF INTERCONNECTED MARKETS FINALLY LETS YOU REACH THESE VIEWERS WITHOUT THE HASSLES. AND SINCE IT'S ALL THROUGH ONE COMPANY, YOU CAN BUY SPOT CABLE IN THESE MARKETS, WITH THE SAME EASE AS BROADCAST. IT'S AS SIMPLE AS ONE PHONE CALL AND ONE INVOICE. IN FACT, COMCAST NOW HAS MORE INTERCONNECTS THAN ANY SINGLE BROADCAST GROUP HAS OWNED AND OPERATED STATIONS. TO WATCH YOUR SPOT CABLE PLANS TAKE OFF WITH EASE, OR TO LEARN MORE, CALL YOUR COMCAST AD SALES REPRESENTATIVE.

\*Comcast affiliate market







2003

# Interconnect Showcase

A look at America's local cable ad networks

published by

**TelevisionWeek**  
Incorporating Electronic Media





### Special Advertising Section

# State of the Interconnect Business

by Jean Bergantini Grillo

In 2000, only 10 cable markets had interconnects with 80 percent penetration of all ad-insertable households, the generally accepted agency definition of a fully captured designated market area. Today, in the top 100 markets, 75 interconnects meet that criteria. Indeed, of all 210 interconnected cable markets, 108 now meet the 80 percent interconnect definition.

"MSOs have quickly recognized how important it is to fully interconnect their systems," says Greg Schaefer, chief operating officer of National Cable Communications, the cable industry's key conduit between national spot dollars and national advertisers and agencies.

NCC reps 207 of those 210 Nielsen-defined DMA markets, 98 percent of all ad-insertable cable households, roughly 68 million homes. According to Mr. Schaefer, NCC's national spot dollars for 2003 will be up in the low- to mid-teens over 2002. The Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau Fact Book projects 2003 spot revenues at \$3.6 billion.

Mr. Schaefer cites three reasons why cable interconnects work: "Ease of execution. Marketwide coverage. Targeted audience." He also touts NCC's stewardship in making spot cable easier to buy, network cable audiences share growth, the top 100 markets' averaging at least 35 insertable networks and the more efficient electronic platforms in place creating faster, better contract and invoice management for agencies.

"We're getting calls from senior agency planners on the status of our interconnected markets," Mr. Schaefer begins. "They're trying to establish plans for 2004 and want greater access to cable's growing audience share. We're still knocking on as many doors as possible, but it's nice to have them calling us as well." NCC's top five categories include automotive, entertainment, telecommunications, fast food/restaurants and media. Virtually all major and midsize agencies have electronic access to NCC through its agency.spotcable.com Web site, placing and confirming spot cable buys through various NCC e-tools. But there's more to come.

"In the very near future, NCC will provide planning resources to agencies on line," Mr. Schaefer says. "This will help guide them for future buys." Three multiple system operators, Time Warner, Cox and Comcast wholly own NCC. (Katz Media, once a partner, exits this year). Each is actively upgrading its own regional sales efforts, perhaps none so aggressively as Comcast.

Since merging with ATT in 2002 Comcast now serves 22 of the top 25 TV markets, launching 12 new interconnects in August alone. Forty-eight of the 71 markets in which Comcast has a presence were interconnected by July.

All of Comcast's owned-and-operated top 50 markets are now interconnected. Recently, Comcast announced an agreement with Adlink, the L.A. Interconnect, to

use Adlink's "Adtag" and "Adcopy" tools in Comcast's interconnects, starting with Chicago and Detroit. According to an Arbitron study, "Only 38 percent of all buyers, and 53 percent of all those who purchase national spot cable schedules believe the process is very or somewhat easy," notes Charlie Thurston, president, Comcast Ad Sales, "Fractionalization of the [cable] markets was the biggest issue."

"We've tried to create an affiliation with all our MSOs in each market," Mr. Thurston explains. "We've tried to get a standard of 40 network insertions in our top 25 markets, so that advertisers and agencies have a consistent lineup and menu. Third, we've upgraded our traffic and back-office, creating a one-stop buy: one invoice, one tape, one contract."

According to Mr. Thurston, Comcast spot cable revenues through July were up 11 percent. Billy Farina, VP, Cox Media Advertising Sales, notes Cox local and regional revenues are up 25 percent for 2003.

"Cox-dominant interconnects create an entity that behaves like broadcast," Mr. Farina notes. "We sell our product on gross rating points, frequency and reach. In our larger markets, 85 percent of our business comes from advertiser's agencies." Important categories for Cox include import automotive, financial and big-ticket home items such as home improvement and furniture.

"Interconnects are going to have more to contribute to an MSO's top-line revenue," Mr. Farina says, adding, "Right now, national and regional advertising is between 13 [percent] and 30 percent of MSOs' total revenues. But I think the goal is to look more like broadcast stations where spot is 45 [percent] to 55 percent."

"The more you look like broadcast, the better you are," says Larry Fischer, president, Time Warner Cable Advertising Sales. TW recently became managing partner for the 1 million-home Cleveland Media Connect, the first regional interconnect serving Northeast Ohio, but the big prize remains New York City, currently split between TW (1.2 million HH) and Comcast/Cablevision (3.6 million HH).

"We're challenged in New York," Mr. Fischer says. "As soon as one company owns it, it will be functionally operational as an interconnect." Right now, the New York Interconnect (repped by NCC) is defined as a "Metro IC," meaning only between 50 percent to 80 percent of insertable households can be reached by a single-contact, single-point operation. As to the future? Replies Mr. Fischer, "We're looking into it."





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**A**t Adelphia Media Services, we're working hard to make your life easy. Through market consolidation, we can now offer the simplicity of one phone call to achieve one buy, and on the back end, one invoice. We can support your investment through research, and now that ad-supported cable is the most viewed television medium, achieving your reach and frequency goals is a reality. Cable is truly the best of both worlds – *pinpoint targeting* and, yes – *broad reach*. Visit us at [www.adelphiamediaservices.com](http://www.adelphiamediaservices.com).

**Profile**

Adelphia Media Services is the television advertising division of Adelphia, providing local advertising insertion on national cable networks in over 5,000,000 homes. Areas serviced include households in California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia and West Virginia.

**Adelphia-Managed Interconnects:**

Market	DMA Rank	Households
WestPalm Beach	38	643,000
Burlington	89	164,500
Johnstown-Altoona	96	163,200

**Adelphia-Affiliated Interconnects:**

Market	DMA Rank	Households
Los Angeles	2	3,400,000
Boston	6	1,795,000
Washington, D.C.	8	1,337,100
Cleveland	16	1,000,000
Baltimore	23	795,000
Charlotte	28	546,300
Buffalo	44	479,000

**What Do**

**West Palm Beach, Cleveland,**

**Los Angeles, and**

**Burlington, VT**

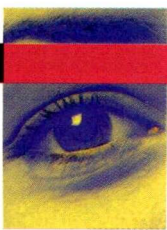
**Have in Common?**

**They Are All Interconnected  
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**We Make It Easy!**





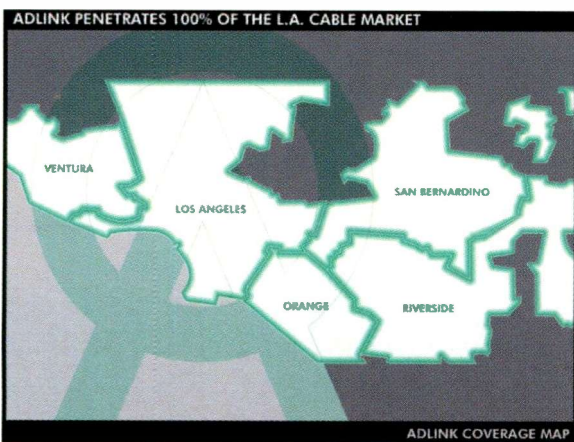
## Interconnect Showcase

### Adlink

# The Nation's Leading Interconnect

**Inter = Between, Among  
Connect = To Unite**

**W**hen most people hear the term interconnect they immediately think technology. Sure, Adlink has 4,000 miles of cable connecting systems across every major county in Los Angeles. Plus it's true, Adlink's state of the art digital infrastructure traffics nearly 100,000



Adlink has over 4,000 miles of cable, connecting 80+ systems across every major county in Los Angeles/.

commercials every day. But at Adlink, we want advertisers to know that our definition of interconnect goes far beyond the scope of technology.

At Adlink, interconnect means uniting advertisers with consumers via 44 top-rated television networks. It means providing more choice and more options for a media buy. It means being able to reach 100% of the L.A. cable market, roughly 3.4 million households, with one buy, one tape, one invoice. Quite simply, it means being able to do things that broadcast, radio and print can't.

#### More Choice

In greater measure each year, cable continues to invest in quality original programming that delivers results. The proof is evident as cable's share of audience continues to climb and

eclipse broadcast's share. Critically acclaimed shows such as FX's The Shield, USA's Monk and TNT's Original Movies are getting noticed by viewers and by advertisers. Every kid and parent knows who SpongeBob is, couples have learned redecorating tips from TLC's Trading Spaces, while family values have been displayed with America's favorite family, MTV's The Osbournes. The benchmark

for news coverage has been set by CNN, Fox News Channel and MSNBC. Plus, the very best in sports from the NFL, NBA, MLB, and NHL all have homes with Adlink. These are the programs viewers are watching. These are the programs advertisers are buying.

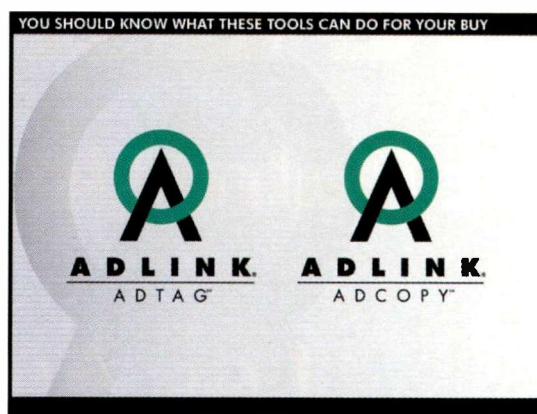
#### More Options

Adlink offers advertisers additional opportunities to maximize the value and impact of their media spending through promotional marketing programs. These award-winning programs enable advertisers to reinforce their brand and take advantage of the emotional connection viewers have with networks such as MTV, Lifetime, ESPN, Discovery Channel, Nickelodeon and more. Our marketing team loves the word customize. From program sponsorships and branding spots, to promotions, informational vignettes and integrated marketing programs, Adlink provides more options to advertisers by giving them another way to connect with consumers in Los Angeles.

#### Broadcast Can't Do This

Adlink has two trademarked tools called Adtag and Adcopy that take

a media buy to the next level. Adtag enables an advertiser to simultaneously air a commercial, which starts the same, but can end with over 80 different tags, targeted to numerous regions across the Los Angeles DMA. With Adcopy, an advertiser can air different commercials in different regions of the market at the same time. Adlink's ability to segment the Los Angeles DMA gives advertisers a powerful tool in making their television buys more efficient and more effective – and gives new meaning to the term “target audience.”



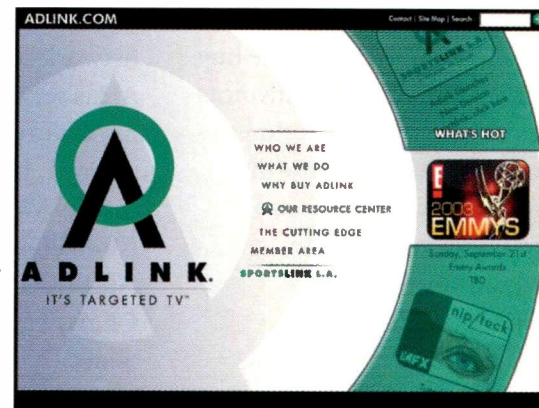
Adlink has two trademarked tools called Adtag and Adcopy that take a media buy to the next level by giving advertisers the ability to segment the market.

#### Sportslink L.A.

The best game in town has just tipped off. It's Adlink's new sports division, SPORTSLINK L.A. As everyone knows, there is no better advertising vehicle than sports to reach and unite fragmented demographic groups.

SPORTSLINK L.A. has every major sport and every local team covered 24/7 by the most recognizable and respected networks in all of sports. In fact, no one in L.A. can boast more hours of live event coverage – this race isn't

even close. An advertiser's must-buy, SPORTSLINK L.A. is officially in the game and positioned as the true leader for all local sports programming.



adlink.com - hit it now!

#### adlink.com

Adlink's Website, adlink.com, was designed with clients and agencies in mind. It's more than just user-

friendly – it's a power tool. Click through and you'll find current program schedules for our 44 top-rated networks, which can be sorted to suit your needs. Adlink.com also provides audience profiles, marketing and promotional opportunities, with video of some of our best examples, along with powerful research

pieces and so much more. It won't waste your time; it will help you become a smarter and savvier advertiser.

Bookmark this electronic asset.

#### Definition:

**In•ter•con•nect =  
see Adlink**





**ADLINK®**

**44**

Connecting advertisers with viewers across **FORTY-FOUR** of TV's most entertaining and informative networks . . .



**1,750**



**SPORTSLINK L.A.**  
A DIVISION OF ADLINK

Adlink's newest division is untouchable when it comes to sports advertising - over **1,750** live sporting telecasts including NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL, and NCAA games.

**80+**

**ADTAG™**

Allows an advertiser to simultaneously air a commercial, which starts the same but ends with up to **80** different tags - targeted across the market.

**ADCOPY™**

Allows an advertiser to simultaneously air multiple commercials with different creative - targeted across the market.





## Interconnect Showcase

### Bright House Networks

# Central Florida Cable Advertising

## Interconnects in Tampa and Orlando bring opportunities to newest MSO

**A**re you advertising in a bright house? You should be. Bright House Networks now owns two of the nation's most technologically advanced cable systems along the high-growth corridor of Central Florida. This new ownership has created a unique opportunity for cable advertisers to reach viewers through two of the industry's best interconnects in adjacent top-20 markets. Central Florida Interconnect in Orlando and Tampa Bay Inter-connect form a unique partnership affording cable advertisers the opportunity to target millions of Central Florida television viewers.

For the past 18 years, Central Florida and Tampa Bay cable operations have provided advertisers in both DMAs with media and marketing solutions unique to cable television. It is the marriage of a large variety of network programming options, the infrastructure of two state-of-the-art cable systems and industry-leading customer service that deliver Bright House Networks' promise of cable television to advertisers of all sizes.

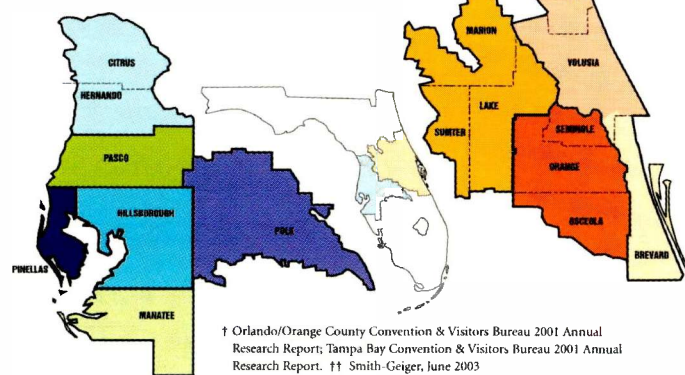
That promise includes the ability to deliver over 1,750,000 households in two contiguous top-20 markets all owned by the same company. Both Central Florida Interconnect and Tampa Bay Interconnect provide zones that mirror their markets' respective radio metros, newspaper distribution patterns and/or SMSAs. Orlando and Tampa are massive growth markets and have high cable penetration equating to critical mass buying power for advertisers. Advertisers can purchase individual zones or the entire market, giving them greater strategic flexibility.

### 15 million visitors provide a bonus audience

From the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf

of Mexico, Bright House Networks reaches over 100,000 hotel/motel and time-share units in addition to its residential subscribers. While this coverage is significant, Bright House Networks also reaches millions of tourists in subscriber homes throughout its coverage area. Over 50 million tourists visit the Orlando and Tampa areas each year. Thirty percent of these visitors – at least 15 million – stay with friends and relatives living in Bright House Networks coverage area.† This bonus market is not reported by

**tampa bay interconnect**



† Orlando/Orange County Convention & Visitors Bureau 2001 Annual Research Report; Tampa Bay Convention & Visitors Bureau 2001 Annual Research Report. †† Smith-Geiger, June 2003

traditional media measurement, but it is unparalleled anywhere in the world. For an advertiser trying to reach the tourist market, Bright House Networks' residential and tourist coverage can't be matched.

### Local news favorites with loyal followers

Central Florida News 13 and Bay News 9 are two 24-hour local news channels offered exclusively by Central Florida Interconnect and Tampa Bay Interconnect. Using advanced technology and commitment to the communities they serve, News 13 ensures viewers get the latest local news and weather on their schedule 24-hours a day. Central Florida News 13 has forever changed the viewing habits of news audiences across the Orlando DMA. With newsrooms in all four interconnect zones, combined with the resources of over 300 reporters from

Bright House Networks' partner the Orlando Sentinel, News 13 is Central Florida's leader in live weather and news coverage. It is also the number one choice for local news by Central Florida Bright House Networks subscribers.††

This success is mirrored in Tampa Bay, where Bay News 9 also serves Bright House Networks viewers 24 hours a day. Tampa Bay subscribers now have exclusive access to the most comprehensive local news and

weather coverage available anywhere in the Tampa Bay area. The combined power and reach of Bay News 9, with bureaus in each of the bay area's seven counties, and Spanish-language news channel Bay News 9 en Español makes Bay News 9 the number-one destination for news and weather for Tampa Bay Bright House Networks subscribers.

### We make it easy to buy, easy to track

The strengths of these interconnects would be meaningless without the finest traffic and billing departments in the business executing schedules. The Central Florida and Tampa Bay interconnects have a 99% fulfillment ratio, complemented by electronic billing and single line invoicing. With over 35 networks available for local ad insertion in each market, Central Florida and Tampa Bay

Interconnects ensure that buying each of these markets is simple, efficient, flexible and accurate.

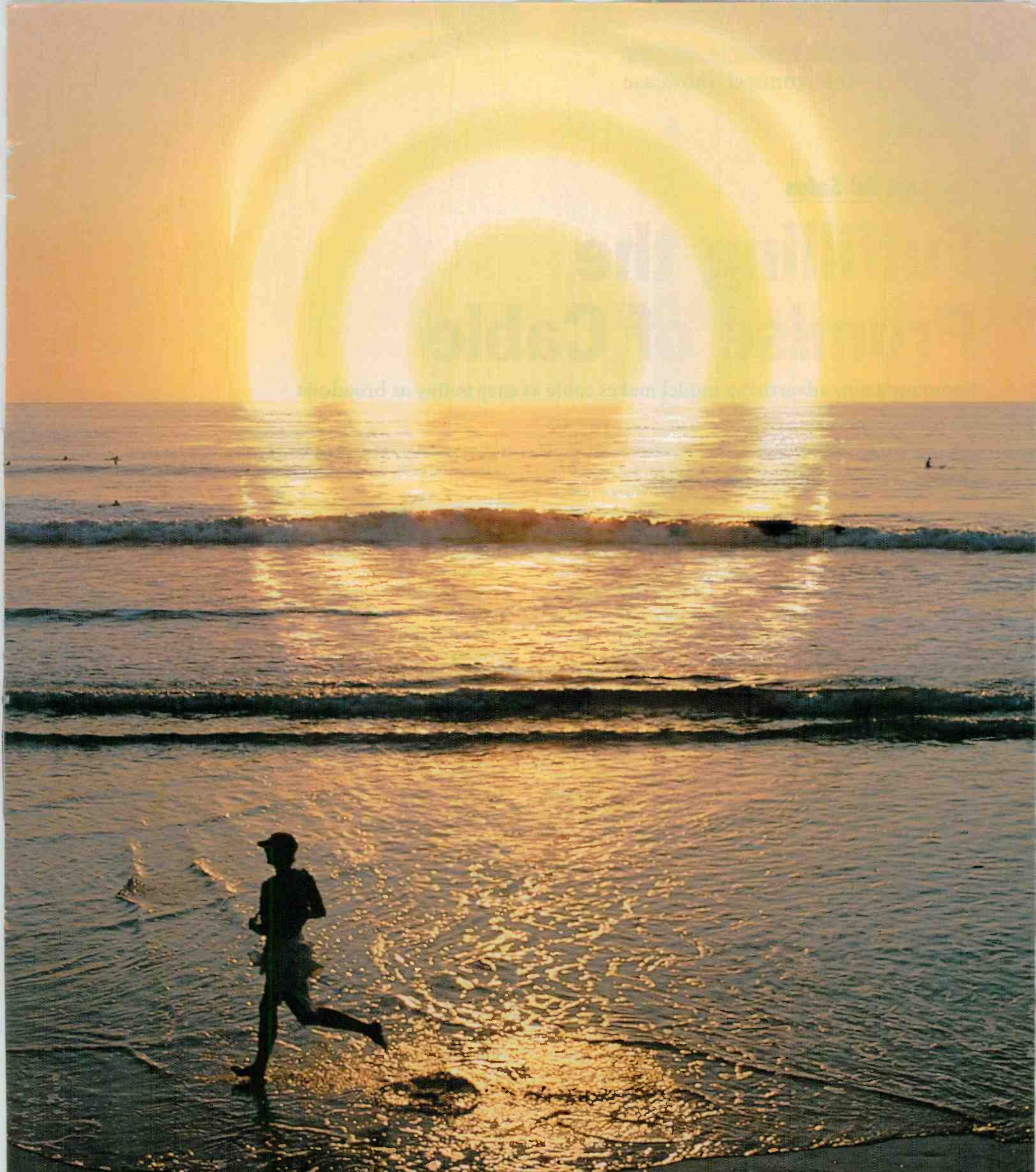
Easy navigation of the multitude of buying options for advertisers is a key service provided by the experienced team of interconnect advertising professionals. The management, account executives and support teams have rich, diverse backgrounds in radio, print, broadcast television, agency and Internet. With a customer-focused philosophy, they help create comprehensive marketing plans, which take the strength and diversity of cable network programming and match it with advertiser needs and objectives. That experience, along with a suite of research tools from Nielsen, Media Audit, Scarborough and CMR delivers results by placing the advertiser's message in front of consumers who buy their products.

Bright House Networks' Central Florida Interconnect in Orlando and Tampa Bay Interconnect offer advertisers solution-driven services with two fully interconnected, contiguous top-20 markets, two 24-hour local news channels and 99 percent fulfillment with electronic billing and single line invoicing. With state-of-the-art technology and a customer-focused approach, Bright House Networks Interconnects are fulfilling the needs of today's cable advertisers. More importantly, this means Bright House Networks Interconnects are poised to take those advertisers where they want to be, tomorrow and well into the future.



For sales information, contact the Central Florida Interconnect at (407) 215-5200 or the Tampa Bay Interconnect at (888) 232-2253.





## In Florida, Bright House is Where You Want to Be.

From households to hotels. From rec rooms to resorts. From East coast to West coast. A Bright House cable buy now reaches two Top 20 markets and 1.7 million subscribers. To put your TV campaign where the sun always shines, call Bright House.

**bright  
house**  
NETWORKS



Central Florida Interconnect 407-215-5200 | Tampa Bay Interconnect 888-232-2253





### Comcast Ad Sales

# Fulfilling the Promise of Cable

Company's new advertising model makes cable as easy to buy as broadcast

**C**harlie Thurston, President of Comcast Ad Sales, and his team are creating a new model for cable advertising that better meets the needs of the media community. This model is setting the benchmark for the way spot cable advertising is bought and sold and will change the way advertisers and agencies use cable television to market their products and services to consumers.

Comcast's blueprint for revolutionizing cable advertising includes five key components: consistent network offerings, expansive research capabilities, unique promotional and marketing opportunities, advanced technology and, the heart of the vision, market consolidation.

#### Market Consolidation

The crucial first step in implementing Comcast's model is a hard interconnect strategy. Comcast has already completed a record number of interconnects in 2003 and now has more interconnects than any single broadcast group has owned and operated stations. This momentum is due, in part, to Comcast partnering with other MSOs to create interconnects in markets where the company has a presence. Comcast now has a national footprint that covers more than 70 markets, including 22 of the top 25, and over 50 of these will be interconnected by 2004.

Interconnects increase the value of cable to national and regional advertisers by creating an easy, one-stop shopping experience on a scale never before seen in cable. In addition, interconnects increase the value of the local advertiser's buy through filling in market coverage gaps and providing the ability to reach every eyeball in the advertiser's trading area.

To ensure consistency across markets, Comcast has established a set of standards that all markets must meet in order to be considered an interconnect. This standardization assures uniformity and consistency, a single point of contact, standardized affidavits and easier invoicing.

#### Standardizing Network Offerings

The Comcast Ad Sales team believes the potential for cable to gain a larger portion of the \$28 billion spot TV marketplace and close the advertising gap with broadcast television is tremendous. A key to achieving this goal is standardized network offerings.

Comcast is working towards creating a consistent offering of 40 networks in major markets, allowing advertisers to place the same buy in multiple markets, effectively reaching their target audience across the country. By standardizing network insertion, Comcast and the industry as a whole will be better positioned to

compete against broadcast for a fair share of spot TV dollars.

#### Research

Cable television is experiencing an unprecedented viewership upswing, while the broadcasters continue to see their audiences shrinking. Comcast has made a commitment to research and to unifying analysis to better measure the value of cable viewership. Working with various suppliers and industry associations as well as collaborating with other MSOs, Comcast is looking to ensure cable television is properly measured locally, regionally and nationally.

For example, Comcast recently announced its support of Nielsen's rollout of Local People Meters in the top 10 markets. LPMs will have a major impact on cable's ability to provide demographic and household data to agencies on a daily basis instead of relying on sweeps diary data. In addition, Comcast subscribes to qualitative research tools such as Scarborough, The Media Audit, Griffin Research and MRI to assist clients.

#### Unique Promotional and Marketing Opportunities

Promotions are an integral part of the value cable television brings to an advertiser. Comcast Ad Sales is tapping into the equity of its network partners' brands and programming to provide

advertisers with a unique opportunity to target specific demographics. Comcast is working to raise the bar to a new level to provide integrated marketing opportunities that add significant value to an advertiser's cable buy.

#### Technology

Comcast Ad Sales is developing several new media opportunities that offer advertisers distinct ways to enhance the cable buy. The company is developing a portfolio of products/services that will allow advertisers to reach consumers through innovative vehicles such as video-on-demand and the Internet. In addition, Comcast will continue to roll out segmentation products that give advertisers the ability to target more precisely their audiences within a market.

Comcast Ad Sales is dedicated to enhancing the cable buying experience and providing advertisers at all levels with opportunities to reach target audiences most effectively. Comcast is committed to leading the charge to ensure advertisers are considering cable and the world of benefits it has to offer.



# SPOT CABLE. IT'S NO LONGER A DISCONNECT.



COMCAST NOW HAS OVER 40 INTERCONNECTS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. FINALLY SPOT CABLE MAKES SENSE. AD-SUPPORTED CABLE IS THE MOST VIEWED TELEVISION MEDIUM, BUT HASN'T ALWAYS BEEN THE EASIEST TO BUY. COMCAST'S EXPANDING FOOTPRINT OF INTERCONNECTED MARKETS FINALLY LETS YOU REACH THESE VIEWERS WITHOUT THE HASSLES. AND SINCE IT'S ALL THROUGH ONE COMPANY, YOU CAN BUY SPOT CABLE IN THESE MARKETS, WITH THE SAME EASE AS BROADCAST. IT'S AS SIMPLE AS ONE PHONE CALL AND ONE INVOICE. IN FACT, COMCAST NOW HAS MORE INTERCONNECTS THAN ANY SINGLE BROADCAST GROUP HAS OWNED AND OPERATED STATIONS. MAKING THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS IN SPOT CABLE HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER. TO LEARN MORE CALL YOUR COMCAST AD SALES REPRESENTATIVE.

\*Comcast affiliate market





# CONVERGING Media & Technology

WHERE TV  
INTERACTS  
WITH THE  
INDUSTRIAL  
ARTS

## HD Catching a Spark

| Programming | Expected Holiday Buying Spurs Content Creation

By Daisy Whitney

If the burst of activity this month is an accurate barometer, then the promises made about high-definition television over the past several years may be fulfilled.

In September alone iN Demand introduced two linear HD channels; EchoStar rolled out a package of four HD channels for \$9.99; Cablevision added local channels to its HD lineup and unveiled an HD video-on-demand service; The WB doubled its HD offerings from a year ago to 11.5 of its total 15 hours of prime time; HD service now reaches the top 20 markets after Comcast's introduction of service in Denver; and HDNet is finalizing a deal with a film production company to create original movies in HD starting in November.

A number of factors have collided to create this cascade of movement that may drive HD to



**ANGELS IN FOCUS** HDNet will premiere the first season of the classic TV show "Charlie's Angels" beginning next month.

manager of Discovery HD Theater, which plans to spend \$65 million over the next four to five years to produce 30 two-hour specials in HD. Mr. Stinchcomb listed factors affecting the current HDTV environment as the \$70 billion that cable operators have spent on network upgrades; declining HD set prices and set-top box prices; pressure from the Federal Communications Commission on broadcasters to convert to digital by 2006; and growth in HD content from broadcasters and cable networks.

That growth includes HDNet's expansion of original content through its nascent film project. HDNet plans to produce eight films each year in HD, said Mark Cuban, the outspoken founder of the all-HD network that launched two years ago. Each film's budget will range from \$1 million to \$25

million. "We're going all-out to take advantage of HD," Mr. Cuban said. "We're a network and not just trying to bring the analog world to HD."

As HDNet aims to expand aggressively, new competitor iN Demand introduced what some in the industry call the "Cuban Killer": its two all-HD channels, INHD and INHD2. The channels launched Sept. 15 on Comcast systems, with Time Warner, Cox and Brighthouse digital cable systems to follow this year. Those cable operators own iN Demand.

Content includes movies, documentaries, special events and sports such as Major League Baseball.

In time, iN Demand will produce original content for the channels, said Sergei Kuharsky, senior VP of marketing for iN Demand. The HD channels are

*continued on page 44*

PHILLIP

# SWANN



## A ROOM WITH A VIEW

**W**ant to see the future of television? Well, check into the nearest hotel. Many in-room TVs now offer everything from video-on-demand to high-speed Internet to TiVo-like functions, such as rewind, fast-forward and even pause. During a recent stay at a Los Angeles-area Hilton, I ordered "Gigli," the mother of all bombs, starring Jennifer Lopez and Ben Affleck. With the pause button, I could freeze the exact moment that Jen and Ben knew it was time to send back the wedding gifts.

The interactive services, which in-room entertainment providers LodgeNet and On

future. David Bankers, senior VP of products and technology for LodgeNet, says his company will deliver "a picture quality many guests have never seen before."

Hoteliers are giddy about the new revenues—and so are TV technology companies. Since cable and satellite TV operators have been rolling out interactive services at a snail's pace, it's been difficult to prove that U.S. consumers are actually interested in using them, much less paying extra for the privilege. However, for the first time, the TV technology industry can point to a real-life success.

In addition, millions of hotel guests are being exposed to new TV services, such as VOD and HDTV. When cable and satellite TV operators do offer those features, they won't seem foreign to anyone who has stayed in a hotel lately. Of course, just because someone used a product in a hotel doesn't mean it will eventually reach a mass audience. Just ask the creators of that coin-operated vibrating bed. But awareness is half the battle.

This point is not lost on Mark Cuban, owner of the Dallas Mavericks and HDNet, the hi-def network. Cuban has just purchased the 55-unit Landmark theater chain. My sources tell me that he will soon launch an HDTV film studio and eventually show hi-def films in Landmark theaters and others. Millions of moviegoers will see HDTV for the first time. The impact on sales of HD sets could be dramatic.

(Cuban also plans to show his HD films exclusively on his two hi-def channels, HDNet and HDNet Movies. This will encourage cable operators to add those channels to their lineups.)

So the next time you're in a movie theater, take note. What you see may soon be coming to a home near you. ■

*Phillip Swann is president and publisher of TVPredictions.com. He can be reached at Swann@TVPredictions.com.*

**The interactive services may not put more heads in beds, but they are bringing in more bucks.**

Command added to Hilton and other properties this year, may not put more heads in beds, but they are bringing in more bucks. LodgeNet reports that three movies—"Bruce Almighty," "Finding Nemo" and "The Matrix Reloaded"—each generated more than \$1 million in orders in August. That number of million-dollar sellers was an all-time company record.

"The performance of 'Bruce Almighty' ... demonstrates what can happen when a movie ... is supported with compelling in-room marketing and technology," said Holly Leff-Pressman, a senior VP for Universal, which produced the Jim Carrey film.

LodgeNet and On Command plan to offer high-definition TV in luxury hotels in the near



**HD NEWS** "World Report," HDNet's hi-def news program, is carried on Charter, Insight Communications, RCN, EchoStar and DirecTV.

widespread consumer adoption.

"I think what we have in place is the 'Perfect Storm' environment," said Clint Stinchcomb, senior VP and general

**Y!** What if your print ad or billboard could play video? What if it could be linked directly to TV listings? What if it could play the theme song to your new fall show? That'd be pretty cool huh?

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# CABLE TALENT

Class of 2003

## 'QUEER EYE' CAST

### Style Gurus

**Show:** Bravo's "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy"

**Length of time in current gig:** 3 months

**Breakout moment:** The Fab Five made the cover of Entertainment Weekly (Aug. 1) two weeks after their show debuted.

**Name:** Ted Allen

**Place of birth:** Chicago

**Previous credits:** Contributing editor to Esquire magazine, where he is co-author of the "Things a Man Should Know" advice column and four related books.

**Who knew?** The dine-and-wine expert once wore a brown polyester uniform and worked a deep-fryer in a cheap restaurant in Indiana.

**Name:** Kyan Douglas

**Place of birth:** Miami

**Previous credits:** Colorist for TLC's "What Not to Wear" and "While You Were Out"

**Who knew?** Used to give tot-size grooming makeovers as a colorist for Child Magazine.

**Name:** Thom Filicia

**Place of birth:** Syracuse, N.Y.

**Previous credits:** Founded his own interior design company and was named one of House Beautiful's Top 100 American Designers.

**Who knew?** Was discovered by a talent manager while they were stuck in an elevator.

**Name:** Carson Kressley

**Place of birth:** Allentown, Pa.

**Previous credits:** Independent stylist, often worked with Polo Ralph Lauren

**Who knew?** Is a onetime Olympic equestrian

**Name:** Jai Rodriguez

**Place of birth:** Brentwood, N.Y.

**Previous credits:** Angel in Broadway production of "Rent"

**Who knew?** Has his own dance single, "Love is Good" ■



**OH THOSE FAB FIVE!** The makeover masters from "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" are hotter than a flat iron.

# A New Crop of Breakout Stars

As cable TV increases original programming, it has become a launching pad for some of TV's most interesting new personalities. While a broadcast performer must have wide appeal, a cable star can be created by catching the fancy of a more targeted audience.

**By James Hibberd**

The fact that cable—not broadcast—is quickly becoming the most fertile ground to nurture the careers of TV talent was never more evident than at the Emmy Awards telecast earlier this month.

Three of the four top acting trophies went to performers for their work on cable—HBO's James Gandolfini and Edie Falco won drama trophies for "The Sopranos" and USA Network's Tony Shalhoub took the comedy nod for "Monk." What's more, it was the Fab Five of Bravo's "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" whom *paparazzi* and statuette-toting stars rushed at the after-parties and on the red carpet, where the reality show stars were working for "Access Hollywood."

Other cable superheroes include two of the most popular political comedians working today, Comedy Central's Jon Stewart and HBO's Bill Maher.

On the other hand, the biggest stars of broadcast prime time—the casts of "Friends," "Frasier" and "Everybody Loves Raymond"—are approaching the end of their series' runs.

The sudden glut of cable household names can be attributed to a combination of factors: more channels, rising cable viewership, increasing resources and that traditional cable attribute, guts.

"It's time for this to happen. It was bound to happen," said Lauren Corrao, senior VP of original programming and head of development for Comedy

Central. "On broadcast TV, you have to find performers who appeal to everybody, and everything gets safer and safer and blander and blander. And cable has been able to target their audience, be sharper and funnier, and cut through."

As an example, Ms. Corrao pointed to Dave Chappelle, host of "Chappelle's Show." "Dave developed many pilots for broadcast, but they kept watering him down and he never made it," she said. "So he decid-

**"In cable, you don't have to be all things to all people. ... Broadcast plays more to type, while cable plays against type."**

Ray Solley, network consultant, The Solley Group

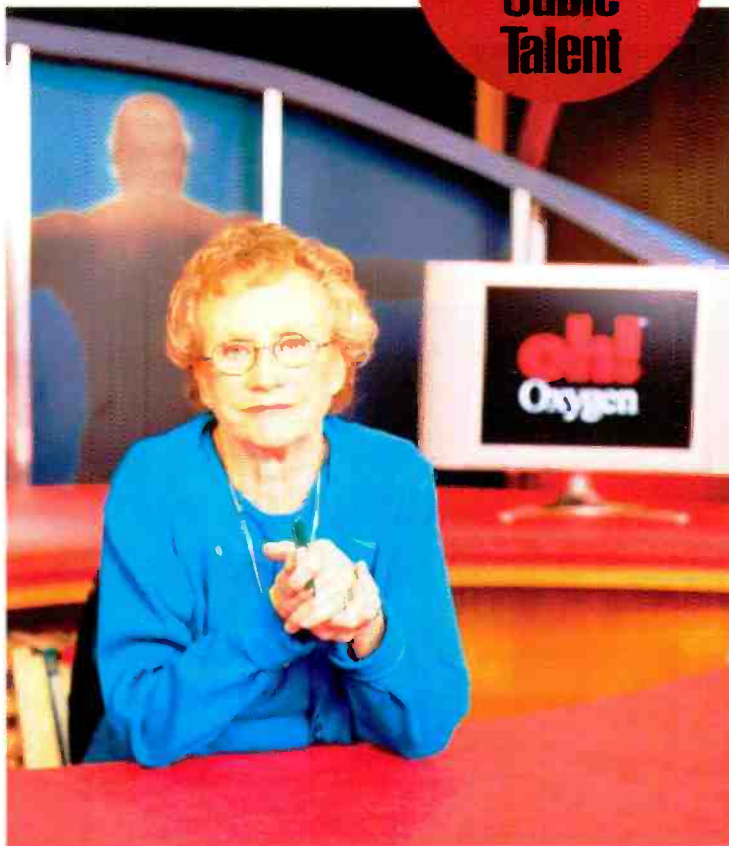
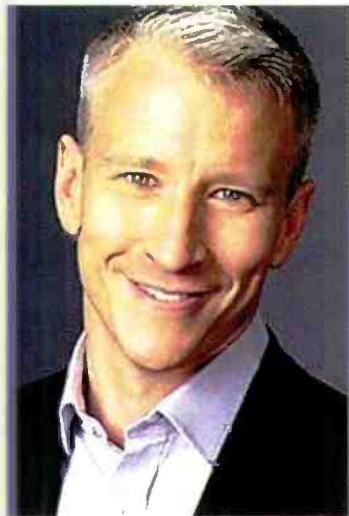
ed to just be who he is, and now he's having a lot of success."

Network consultant Ray Solley, founder of The Solley Group, also cited Mr. Chappelle as a good example of a "cable-type persona."

"In cable, you don't have to be all things to all people," Mr. Solley said. "Dave Chappelle doesn't have to be Johnny Carson. The bull's-eye is a different size bull's-eye for what the talent has to hit. And broadcast

*continued on page 26*





Class of 2003

## SUE JOHANSON

Sexpert

**Show:** Oxygen's "Sunday Night Sex Show"**Date of birth:** Her birthday is July 29. Ms. Johanson declines to reveal her age.**Place of Birth:** Toronto**Length of time in current gig:** 11 months**Breakout moment:** The U.S. version of Ms. Johanson's show debuted in November 2002 and immediately became the Oxygen network's highest rated original program, according to Oxygen. Ms. Johanson drew even more viewers with appearances on Conan O'Brien and David Letterman earlier this year.**Previous credits:** No other performing roles, but Ms. Johanson is the author of three books: "Talk Sex," "Sex Is Perfectly Natural but Not Naturally Perfect" and "Sex, Sex and More Sex."**Who knew?** Ms. Johanson inherited millions from her Aunt Gladys years before founding a birth control clinic and getting involved in sex education. Ms. Johanson maintains a decades-old sourdough starter in her refrigerator. She uses it to make sourdough scones, bread and muffins for the crew every Sunday night. ■

Class of 2003

## ANDERSON COOPER

Newsman

**Show:** CNN's "Anderson Cooper 360"**Date of birth:** June 3, 1967**Place of birth:** New York**Length of time in current gig:** 1 month**Breakout moment:** Mr. Cooper was the only Western journalist to interview Liberian President Moses Blah on the day Mr. Blah took office.**Previous credits:** Weekend anchor, CNN; ABC News correspondent; host of ABC's "The Mole" and "The Mole II: The Next Betrayal;" anchor, ABC's "World News Now"**Who knew?** He studied Vietnamese at the University of Hanoi. ■

## STARS

continued from page 25

plays more to type, while cable plays against type."

In other words, performers on cable do not have to appear idealized. In fact, it helps if they're flawed. Mr. Chappelle, Fox News Channel's Bill O'Reilly and even Hilary Duff, star of Disney Channel's "Lizzie McGuire," have cable personas that are more textured and that reveal stronger points of view than their typical broadcast counterparts. Which perhaps also explains the media attention. Journalists who find themselves writing about the same broadcast personalities every year are drawn to cable personalities like Mr. Stewart, whose shoot-from-the-hip sound bites are more likely to stir things up than would the stately Dan Rather.

"All good, successful television has to be character-driven, and we're able to present characters who are much more flawed," Ms. Corrao said.

Cable wasn't always this way, Mr. Solley said.

"Before, cable was not known for personalities," he said. "Cable has traditionally been the home of formats. It's been 'Biography.' How many years has TLC had hosts and talent on air, and now suddenly [Trading Spaces' host] Paige Davis is a star. As cable evolved, after they figured out how to slice-and-dice a documentary as many ways as possible, the next step was to have a point of view and personality."

Even if that personality is an earthy-talking granny such as Sue Johanson on Oxygen's "Sunday Night Sex Show."

Gerry Laybourne, chair and CEO of Oxygen Media, imported Ms. Johanson sex advice show from Canada last year, convinced that her blunt style could

connect with viewers.

"Good television personalities have been with us since the beginning of time, but what's different is that now, not just mainstream personalities are breaking through," Ms. Laybourne said.

Still, she added, "There isn't a broadcast network in the world that would have taken a chance on a grandmother talking about sex."

Doug Herzog, president of USA Networks, agreed that the key to pulling viewers to cable is "giving viewers something they're not giving them on the broadcast networks."

Mr. Herzog opts for a slightly more reliable method than taking chances on new talent—hiring well-known actors such as Tom Berenger for "Peacemakers."

"It doesn't hurt when you're in business with Tom Berenger, in business with a movie star," Mr. Herzog said. "On the same

token, Tony Shalhoub. People recognized and enjoyed them in movies and now on cable."

Yet another way cable has evolved: Now that many networks are profitable and more visible, they're not only launching new faces, they're attracting Hollywood veterans, who are further solidifying cable's reputation as a star stomping ground.

*TelevisionWeek* has chosen 10 performers who represent the range of stars on cable today, including a veteran actor, a Canadian sexpert, a teen idol and a stand-up comedian. Some have broken into the mainstream for the first time, while others have emerged from a career slumber. But they all scored career highlights in 2003. ■

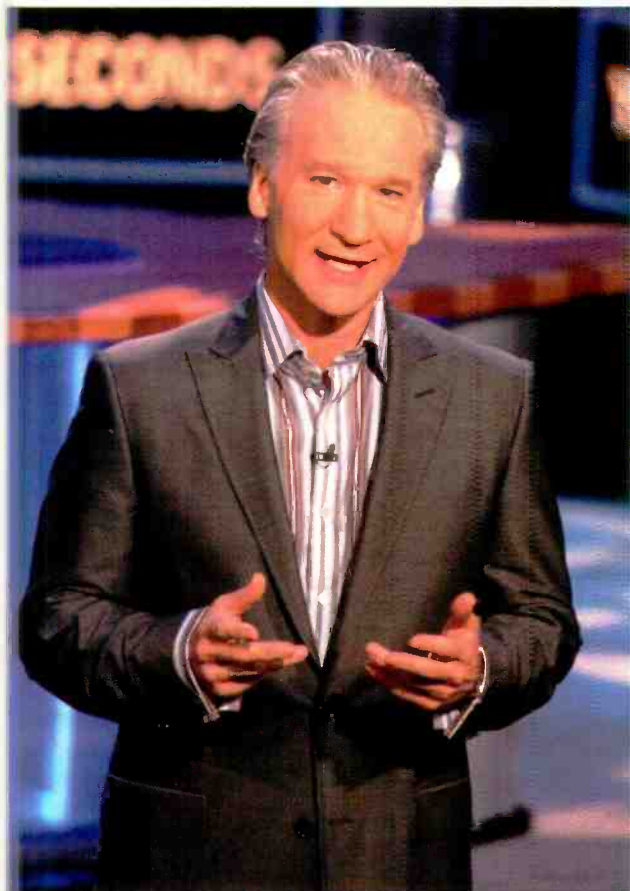


DOUG HERZOG

Class of 2003

## BILL MAHER

Political Gadfly

**Show:** HBO's "Real Time with Bill Maher"**Length of time in current gig:** 7 months**Date of birth:** Jan. 20, 1956**Place of birth:** New York**Breakout moment:** When ABC canceled "Politically Incorrect," which originated on Comedy Central, for Mr. Maher's controversial comments following 9/11, some wondered whether the embattled comedian would have a future in television. But Mr. Maher has flourished in the uncensored HBO format.**Previous credits:** Host of Comedy Central's, then ABC's, "Politically Incorrect"; author of "When You Ride Alone, You Ride With bin Laden" and the autobiographical "True Story"; acting roles in "D.C. Cab," "Cannibal Women in the Avocado Jungle of Death" and other films.**Who knew?** A vegetarian, Mr. Maher is also an animal rights activist, and is on the board of PETA. ■

Class of 2003

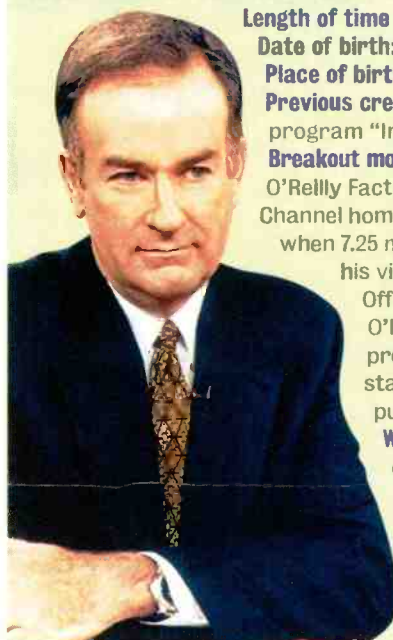
## BILL O'REILLY

Opinion Maker

**Show:** Fox News Channel's "The O'Reilly Factor"**Length of time in current gig:** 7 years**Date of birth:** Sept. 10, 1949**Place of birth:** New York**Previous credit:** Host of the syndicated program "Inside Edition"**Breakout moment:** In March 2003 "The O'Reilly Factor" got a 6.1 rating in Fox News Channel homes, its highest rating ever, when 7.25 million people tuned in to hear

his views on the eve of the Iraq war. Off that surge of popularity, Mr. O'Reilly has launched a new radio program on Westwood One, started his own Web site and published his fourth best-seller.

**Who knew?** He earned a master of political arts degree from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government between stints on "Inside Edition" and "The O'Reilly Factor." ■





**SPECIAL REPORT**  
**Cable Talent**

Class of 2003

**DAVE CHAPPELLE**

Comedian

**Show:** Comedy Central's "Chappelle's Show"  
**Length of time in current gig:** 1 year  
**Date of birth:** Aug. 24, 1973  
**Place of birth:** Washington  
**Previous credits:** "The Nutty Professor," "Con Air," "You've Got Mail"  
**Breakout moment:** Dave Chappelle first gained Hollywood's attention at the 1992 "Just for Laughs" comedy festival, but it wasn't until "Chappelle's Show" was the highest-rated premiere of a Comedy Central show among the network's 18 to 49 target demographic that Mr. Chappelle became a cable-household name.  
**Who knew?** Mr. Chappelle is an avid skateboarder. ■



Class of 2003

**HILARY DUFF**

Starlet

**Show:** The Disney Channel's "Lizzie McGuire"  
**Date of birth:** Sept. 28, 1987  
**Place of birth:** Houston  
**Length of time in current gig:** Began filming "Lizzie McGuire" at age 13, in September 2000. She left the production after 65 episodes, which continue to roll out as "premiere events" on The Disney Channel.  
**Breakout moment:** When "The Lizzie McGuire Movie" made double its production cost in only four weeks in spring 2003.  
**Who knew?** Ms. Duff approves all business decisions related to her merchandising empire and once nixed a Hilary Duff swimsuit idea, saying it looked "really obnoxious." ■

Class of 2003

**NICK LACHEY & JESSICA SIMPSON**

Pop Stars

**Show:** MTV's "Newlyweds: Nick & Jessica"  
**Length of time in current gig:** 1 month  
**Dates of birth:** Ms. Simpson, July 10, 1980; Mr. Lachey, Nov. 5, 1973  
**Places of birth:** Ms. Simpson, Dallas; Mr. Lachey, Cincinnati  
**Breakout moment:** Just when you thought star-driven reality shows were passé, "Newlyweds" became a buzzworthy hit for MTV, with the New York Post calling it "TV's new guilty pleasure."  
**Previous credits:** Ms. Simpson had a hit album two years ago and a recurring guest role on "The '70s Show." Mr. Lachey was in the boy band 98 Degrees.  
**Who knew?** The couple first met at the Hollywood Christmas Parade in 1998. ■



Class of 2003

**TOM BERENGER**

Thesian

**Show:** USA Network's "Peacemakers"  
**Date of birth:** May 31, 1949  
**Place of birth:** Chicago  
**Length of time in current gig:** 1 month  
**Breakout moment:** Despite receiving considerably less publicity than Bravo's "Queer Eye" or FX's "Nip/Tuck," Mr. Berenger's neo-Western outranked all the summer cable premieres in total viewers by earning a 4.2 rating in USA Network homes (5.2 million viewers)  
**Previous credits:** "Platoon," "Major League," "Born on the Fourth of July," "The Substitute," "Training Day"  
**Who knew?** "The Bare Facts," a guide to film nudity, gave three stars—its highest rating—to Mr. Berenger for his presence in "At Play in the Fields of the Lord" and "In Praise of Older Women." ■

Class of 2003

**MARC SUMMERS**

Veteran Host

**Show:** Food Network's "Unwrapped" and "Trivia Unwrapped"  
**Length of time in current gigs:** "Unwrapped" premiered July 2001 and is still on the air; "Trivia Unwrapped" premiered in August.  
**Date of birth:** Nov. 11, 1951  
**Place of birth:** Indianapolis, Ind.  
**2003 breakout moment:** Booking a spinoff from his Food TV show  
**Previous credits:** Hosted "Double Dare" (1986-1996) and other Nickelodeon game shows.  
**Who knew?** Mr. Summers has obsessive-compulsive disorder—but didn't know it until 1996, when a guest told him. ■





**DEALS****DIANE****MERMIGAS****WEAK LOCAL AD MARKET TAKES A TOLL**

The weakness in local advertising that has quietly persisted for more than 18 months is finally bringing media giants such as Viacom, The Walt Disney Co. and Fox Entertainment Group to their knees. It is a show of vulnerability that was supposed to be averted by their costly diversification plays of the past decade.

As it turns out, big media's Achilles' heel is the decline in the fundamental business of selling 30-second spots on their own grass-roots local television stations, whose fortunes remain totally dependent on advertising.

This decline comes at a time when other media businesses—including cable networks, Hollywood studios, theme parks and billboards—aren't providing enough of a financial offset.

Viacom, which is considered the most sure-footed of the media players, confirmed as much Sept. 24, when it lowered

spike hasn't yet surfaced.

The consolidation of TV stations that might have helped the slowdown with offsetting cost cuts and efficiencies is grounded by deregulatory gridlock. It no longer is possible to grow local TV station revenues fast enough the old-fashioned way since cable operators are aggressively claiming more local ad dollars and ad money, and viewers are becoming increasingly fragmented.

Having analyzed historical data, Bernstein Research analyst Tom Wolzien concludes that while local ad sales typically are slower to recover, there does appear to be a share shift under way to network broadcast and cable television from the national spot ads run by local stations.

"Television advertising moved into uncharted territory over the summer, as emphasized by Viacom's reduction of guidance," Mr. Wolzien said.

other faster-growing, fee-driven media businesses, which, according to consolidation principles, are supposed to kick in when revenues and earnings are in a cyclical downturn elsewhere in the company's portfolio. That isn't happening to the extent that it should for Viacom and its peers.

Viacom's MTV Networks are roaring along at 20 percent earnings growth on 18 percent revenue growth in 2003. But that is not enough to offset sluggish broadcast network and TV stations growth in revenues and cash flow of about 5 percent, along with a decline of about 2 percent in radio revenues and cash flow and a whopping 24 percent cash flow decline at Paramount studios and other entertainment operations.

Merrill Lynch analyst Jessica Reif Cohen, who was one of a handful of analysts who began reducing third-quarter and full-year estimates for Viacom earlier this month, last week started aggressively warning about a similar squeeze on overall earnings for similar reasons at Fox and Disney.

Fox Entertainment Group's 15 percent earnings growth to \$1.35 billion on 8 percent revenue growth to \$11.8 billion in fiscal 2004 will be largely driven by 19 percent growth in cable network cash flow. That will have to offset sluggish 2 percent growth in both cash flow and revenues at Fox's entertainment and studio operations, and the continuing anemic performance by its TV network and stations, which will go into a double-digit hike a year from now on the strength of election spending and improvements in its core businesses.

Disney is even more mixed. Its TV network and stations and theme parks will remain subdued for now, although the company's overall operating results are projected to improve in fiscal 2004, with operating income growing as much as 25 percent to \$3.8 billion on a 7 percent growth in revenues to \$26.9 billion. The big caveats: nearly all of that growth is tied to uncertain economic upturn and can be rapidly undermined by the big fall-off in its cable network-affiliate fees that is expected over the next 18 months.

On top of all that, Disney lacks the vertically integrated scale and leverage that ultimately may aid Viacom and Fox, Ms. Cohen said. And at the moment, it does not have the financial flexibility to gain more scale and leverage through acquisitions.

### **Viacom and other diversified media players have underestimated local TV ad sales' importance to their their big pictures.**

its initially bullish 2003 guidance. It now expects full-year operating income and revenues each to grow less than 10 percent largely because, it said, "The pace of local ad recovery is not as rapid as anticipated."

The larger concern on Wall Street is that if it can happen to Viacom, then it most certainly is happening to every other media conglomerate with local TV stations. In that case, the big questions are why, how bad will it get and what do they do about it?

Clearly, Viacom and other diversified media players have underestimated local ad sales' importance to and potential impact on their big pictures. They expected the healthy increases in network upfront advertiser spending and unit prices to trickle down to local TV and radio, which are currently struggling with virtually flat growth in difficult comparisons with last year's hefty political spending.

Even for the largest network-affiliated TV station groups, economics have been reduced to an artificial lift during the biennial elections and Olympic Games, with little notable growth in between. The all-important holiday-driven fourth-quarter advertising

Indeed, things haven't looked quite right for a while. Experts have been at a loss to fully explain the strength in national TV upfront ad spending while local TV and other media falter or grow nominally. Although upfront commitments are holding, fourth-quarter scatter sales are slow, suggesting they won't rise more than 10 percent above upfront prices. Not surprisingly, Mr. Wolzien, like many of his peers, cut his estimates on Viacom to 8 percent growth in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization in 2003—almost half of what is expected in 2004, on more modest 6 percent revenue growth this year. Local television station revenues will barely muster a 2 percent increase in 2003, but should grow 8 percent in 2004.

Such uncertainty brings to the forefront a question that media giants can no longer avoid: Just how real and sustainable is this year's record level of national upfront spending if it isn't trickling down to local television and radio or other media sectors, and what does it mean for the future of media's lifeblood?

Just as disconcerting is how little support these media giants are getting from their

**BIZ Briefs****Vivendi-NBC Agreement Near, Execs Say**

Vivendi Universal executives said last week they are probably a few weeks away from signing the contract that would link their Vivendi Universal Entertainment unit with General Electric's NBC division and that final approval from regulators in the United States, and Europe would come in the second quarter of next year. That news came as Paris-based Vivendi reported a narrowed loss of 632 million euros (\$725.2 million) for the first six months vs. a year-earlier loss of 12.3 billion euros (\$14.1 billion). VUE's television business saw its operating income fall 7 percent for the six-month period, mainly due to higher investments in original programming. Also, a federal judge in New York last week blocked deposed Vivendi Universal Chairman Jean-Marie Messier from collecting a \$23 million severance payment that a New York state judge on Sept. 11 ordered Vivendi to pay. The Securities and Exchange Commission then asked the federal court to block the payment while Vivendi and Mr. Messier are under investigation for accounting misdeeds.

**JEAN-MARIE MESSIER****Comcast, Liberty Ink Distribution Pact**

Comcast and Liberty Media's Starz! Encore cable networks said last week they had ended their legal fight over programming fees and inked a new multiyear distribution agreement that one analyst described as favorable to Comcast and that could portend the kind of muscle Comcast could flex with other programmers. Though financial terms of the deal were not disclosed, the two companies said the agreement calls for Comcast's systems to carry the Starz! and Encore pay-TV channels and makes available the channels' high-definition and subscription video-on-demand offerings in markets where Comcast offers such services. In a victory for Comcast, the pact also calls for Comcast to pay Starz! on a per-subscriber basis instead of the flat fee that Starz! had pushed for and that had been at the center of a nearly yearlong legal tussle between the two companies. ■

That said, Wall Street generally takes the view that Disney, Viacom, Fox and other media giants have unique and valuable enough assets to eventually return to double-digit earnings. But there are a few on Wall Street who are beginning to say "not so fast."

They say the bothersome adverse trends and factors coming into play now will continue to have an impact long after the companies' financial results are no longer masked by a periodic hike due to elections, Olympics or box office and prime-time hits even against a backdrop of lingering economic volatility. They claim a dysfunctional cyclical process is at work and cite a change in industry economics that simply won't go away.

That schism explains why Wall Street's response to Viacom's adjusted guidance has taken some curious turns.

For instance, Goldman Sachs analyst Anthony Noto has upgraded Disney stock to "outperform" on the belief that there is a potential 30 percent appreciation in its stock if there is a rebound in ABC prime-time ratings, theme park attendance and box office hits to offset looming declines in ESPN and other cable network affiliate fees and fluctuations in home video sales.

Banc of America analyst Douglas Shapiro upgraded Viacom to "buy," viewing the recent 12 percent sell-off in its

stock as an opportunity to get in cheap on a well-managed top collection of assets that usually yields the highest conversion rate of earnings into free cash flow—about 50 percent—of any media conglomerate.

But some analysts insist what's going on now is no economic hiccup, but is indicative of deeper trouble that will persist into a non-biennial 2005.

JPMorgan analyst Spencer Wang said he is troubled by "an implicit lack of margin expansion" in Viacom's revised guidance, "which suggests expenses will grow in line with revenues" and indicates Viacom is under pressure to spend more on its TV stations, CBS Network and radio programming than anticipated.

"This could suggest that even as gross domestic product and ad growth accelerate into 2004, the positive cash flow impact could be more muted than expectations," Mr. Wang said.

The bottom line, he said, is that the edge could be off Viacom's bounding earnings growth for longer than expected. Slower growth generally seems to be the order of the day. Not nearly enough of the consolidated buffer that was supposed to bolster corporate balance sheets during tough times is coming into play.

That sounds like more than an earnings outlook adjustment to me. ■



# PERFORMANCE TRACKER

## Nielsen Prime-Time Ratings

WEEK OF Sept. 15-21

Household ratings and shares (18-49 rating in parentheses)

### Monday

	8 p.m.	9 p.m.	10 p.m.	Avg. Rtg./Share
abc	<b>PrimeTime Monday</b> 5.6/10 (2.5) 5.8/10 (2.5)		<b>NFL Football: Dallas at New York</b> 12.1/19 (6.8) 13.9/22 (8.1)	<b>10.8/18 (6.0)</b>
cbs	<b>Yes, Dear</b> 5.5/9 (2.5)	<b>Still Standing</b> 5.9/9 (2.8)	<b>Everybody Loves Raymond</b> 9.3/14 (4.6) 10.5/16 (5.3)	<b>7.7/12 (3.8)</b>
nbc	<b>Fear Factor</b> 5.1/8 (3.4) 5.7/9 (4.1)		<b>Third Watch</b> 3.3/5 (1.6) 3.2/5 (1.4)	<b>4.2/7 (2.5)</b>
fox	<b>The O.C.</b> 3.0/5 (1.7) 3.2/5 (2.0)		<b>Paradise Hotel</b> 4.0/6 (3.2) 4.3/6 (3.5)	<b>3.7/6 (2.6)</b>
wb	<b>7th Heaven</b> 5.1/9 (3.2) 5.6/9 (3.4)		<b>Everwood</b> 4.0/6 (2.1) 4.0/6 (2.2)	<b>4.7/7 (2.7)</b>
upn	<b>The Parkers</b> 2.6/4 (1.4)	<b>Eve</b> 2.7/4 (1.7)	<b>Girlfriends</b> 2.9/4 (2.0) <b>Half and Half</b> 2.9/4 (1.9)	<b>2.8/4 (1.8)</b>

### Tuesday

	8 p.m.	9 p.m.	10 p.m.	Avg. Rtg./Share
abc	<b>A Life of Laughter: John Ritter</b> 8.7/15 (4.5) 10.0/16 (5.6)		<b>NYPD Blue</b> 4.8/8 (2.3) 4.5/8 (2.1)	<b>6.8/11 (3.7)</b>
cbs	<b>Big Brother 4</b> 6.3/11 (3.6) 6.6/10 (4.0)		<b>Judging Amy</b> 5.1/8 (2.2) 5.3/9 (2.1)	<b>6.0/10 (3.4)</b>
nbc	<b>Whoopi</b> 7.9/13 (3.7) 7.0/11 (3.4)	<b>Happy Family</b> 6.0/9 (3.0) 6.0/9 (3.0)	<b>Morning, Miami</b> 4.2/7 (2.1) 4.2/7 (2.1)	<b>6.6/11 (3.3)</b>
fox	<b>Performing As ...</b> 2.8/5 (1.7) 3.3/5 (2.0)		<b>The D.C.</b> 5.4/8 (3.9) 6.0/9 (4.3)	<b>4.4/7 (3.0)</b>
wb	<b>Gilmore Girls</b> 2.2/4 (1.2) 2.0/3 (1.0)		<b>Gilmore Girls</b> 1.8/3 (1.0) 2.0/3 (1.3)	<b>2.0/3 (1.1)</b>
upn	<b>One on One</b> 2.5/4 (1.6) 3.2/5 (2.2)	<b>Rock Me Baby</b> 2.1/3 (1.4) 2.1/3 (1.4)	<b>The Mulletts</b> 1.7/3 (1.1) 1.7/3 (1.1)	<b>2.4/4 (1.5)</b>

### Wednesday

	8 p.m.	9 p.m.	10 p.m.	Avg. Rtg./Share
abc	<b>My Wife and Kids</b> 5.5/10 (3.3) 6.7/11 (4.2)	<b>George Lopez</b> 6.1/10 (3.7) 5.6/9 (3.2)	<b>ABC Bloopers</b> 4.4/7 (2.5) 3.9/7 (2.3)	<b>5.4/9 (3.2)</b>
cbs	<b>60 Minutes II</b> 6.6/12 (2.4) 7.7/13 (3.1)	<b>Big Brother 4</b> 7.0/11 (4.1) 7.4/12 (4.4)	<b>48 Hours</b> 7.3/12 (3.6) 7.9/14 (3.8)	<b>7.3/12 (3.6)</b>
nbc	<b>Ed</b> 4.3/8 (2.0) 4.6/8 (2.3)	<b>The West Wing</b> 6.7/11 (3.0) 7.8/12 (3.6)	<b>Law &amp; Order</b> 8.8/15 (4.1) 8.8/15 (4.1)	<b>6.8/11 (3.2)</b>
fox	<b>That '70s Show</b> 3.9/7 (2.6) 3.8/6 (2.6)	<b>The Simpsons</b> 4.4/7 (3.3) 4.6/7 (3.6)	<b>Paradise Hotel</b> 4.4/7 (3.3) 4.6/7 (3.6)	<b>4.2/7 (3.0)</b>
wb	<b>Smallville</b> 1.9/3 (1.1) 2.0/3 (1.2)	<b>Smallville</b> 2.2/4 (1.3) 2.3/4 (1.4)		<b>2.2/4 (1.2)</b>
upn	<b>Enterprise</b> 2.6/5 (1.8) 2.6/4 (1.8)	<b>Jake 2.0</b> 1.9/3 (1.1) 1.9/3 (1.0)		<b>2.3/4 (1.4)</b>

### Thursday

	8 p.m.	9 p.m.	10 p.m.	Avg. Rtg./Share
abc	<b>Threat Matrix</b> 5.4/9 (2.4) 4.8/8 (2.0)	<b>Extreme Makeover</b> 4.7/7 (2.3) 6.9/11 (3.9)	<b>PrimeTime</b> 6.8/11 (3.7) 7.3/13 (4.0)	<b>6.0/10 (3.0)</b>
cbs	<b>Survivor: Pearl Islands</b> 11.6/19 (7.4) 12.3/20 (8.4)		<b>CSI</b> 9.5/16 (5.1) 9.2/16 (4.9)	<b>10.8/17 (6.7)</b>
nbc	<b>Friends</b> 8.1/13 (5.3) 9.1/14 (6.2)	<b>Will &amp; Grace</b> 7.6/12 (5.0) 8.2/13 (6.0)	<b>ER</b> 5.7/9 (3.5) 5.4/10 (3.3)	<b>7.5/12 (5.0)</b>
fox	<b>That '70s Show</b> 2.7/4 (1.7) 2.8/4 (2.0)	<b>Temptation Island 3</b> 2.6/4 (1.9) 3.6/6 (2.8)		<b>2.9/5 (2.1)</b>
wb	<b>Harvey's Big Time</b> 2.1/4 (1.3) 1.9/3 (1.4)	<b>What I Like</b> 1.9/3 (1.0) 1.9/3 (1.3)	<b>Run of the House</b> 1.9/3 (1.3) 1.9/3 (1.3)	<b>2.0/3 (1.3)</b>
upn	<b>WWE Smackdown!</b> 2.8/5 (1.8) 3.1/5 (2.1)			<b>3.2/5 (2.3)</b>

### Friday

	8 p.m.	9 p.m.	10 p.m.	Avg. Rtg./Share
abc	<b>America's Funniest Home Videos</b> 4.6/9 (2.3) 5.2/10 (2.8) 5.5/10 (3.0)		<b>20/20</b> 7.8/14 (3.5) 7.5/14 (3.3)	<b>6.0/11 (3.0)</b>
cbs	<b>Big Brother 4</b> 4.8/9 (2.6) 4.7/9 (2.8)		<b>JAG</b> 3.9/7 (1.4) 4.7/8 (1.6)	<b>5.2/9 (2.4)</b>
nbc	<b>Dateline</b> 5.4/11 (2.0) 6.3/12 (2.2) 6.5/12 (2.7)		<b>Boomtown</b> 3.8/7 (1.5) 3.5/7 (1.5)	<b>5.3/10 (2.1)</b>
fox	<b>Wanda at Large</b> 3.0/6 (1.9) 2.8/5 (1.9)	<b>Luis</b> 3.6/6 (2.2) 3.8/7 (2.2)	<b>Boston Public</b> 3.8/7 (2.2) 3.8/7 (2.2)	<b>3.3/6 (2.0)</b>
wb	<b>Reba</b> 2.9/6 (1.6) 2.5/5 (1.5)	<b>Like Family</b> 2.1/4 (1.3) 2.2/4 (1.2)	<b>All/Andersons</b> 2.2/4 (1.2) 2.2/4 (1.2)	<b>2.4/4 (1.4)</b>
upn	<b>Movie: Dumb and Dumber</b> 1.1/2 (0.7) 1.1/2 (0.8)			<b>1.1/2 (0.8)</b>

### Saturday

	8 p.m.	9 p.m.	10 p.m.	Avg. Rtg./Share
abc	<b>Miss America Pageant</b> 5.0/10 (2.0) 5.4/10 (2.1)		<b>7.7/14 (3.3) 8.6/17 (3.9)</b>	<b>6.7/12 (2.8)</b>
cbs	<b>48 Hours</b> 3.5/7 (1.3) 4.0/8 (1.6)	<b>Hack</b> 3.4/6 (1.2) 3.4/6 (1.3)	<b>The District</b> 3.6/7 (1.4) 3.8/8 (1.2)	<b>3.6/7 (1.3)</b>
nbc	<b>Whoopi</b> 3.4/7 (1.8) 4.0/8 (2.3)	<b>Happy Family</b> 3.7/7 (2.1) 3.8/7 (2.1)	<b>Law &amp; Order</b> 4.0/7 (2.3) 4.5/9 (2.5)	<b>3.9/7 (2.2)</b>
fox	<b>Cops</b> 3.5/7 (2.3) 4.0/8 (2.7)	<b>America's Most Wanted</b> 4.9/9 (3.2) 4.9/9 (3.0)		<b>4.3/8 (2.8)</b>

### Sunday

	7 p.m.	8 p.m.	9 p.m.	10 p.m.	Avg. Rtg./Share
abc	<b>America's Funniest Home Videos</b> 3.3/6 (1.4) 4.4/8 (2.2)	<b>Threat Matrix</b> 3.6/6 (1.9) 3.6/6 (1.9)		<b>Movie: Lethal Weapon</b> 2.7/4 (1.3) 3.1/5 (1.5)	<b>3.5/6 (1.7)</b>
cbs	<b>NFL Football</b> 12.6/24 (7.1) 7.3/13 (2.4)	<b>60 Minutes</b> 7.9/13 (2.4) 4.6/7 (1.7)	<b>Without a Trace</b> 4.9/7 (2.0) 4.2/6 (2.5)	<b>Survivor: Pearl Islands</b> 4.7/7 (3.2) 4.7/8 (3.1)	<b>6.2/10 (2.9)</b>
nbc	<b>Dateline</b> 4.7/9 (1.4) 4.9/9 (1.8)	<b>American Dreams</b> 3.0/5 (1.3) 3.5/6 (1.6)	<b>Law &amp; Order: Criminal Intent</b> 5.7/9 (2.8) 7.3/11 (3.4)	<b>Law &amp; Order: Criminal Intent</b> 6.7/11 (3.0) 7.1/12 (3.1)	<b>5.4/9 (2.3)</b>
fox	<b>Countdown to the Emmys</b> 2.9/5 (1.6) 3.7/7 (2.2)	<b>55th Annual Primetime Emmy Awards</b> 10.7/18 (6.5) 11.6/18 (6.8)			<b>9.7/16 (5.9)</b>
wb	<b>Harvey's Big Time</b> 1.3/2 (0.7) 1.4/2 (0.8)	<b>Movie: Save the Last Dance</b> 2.7/5 (1.4) 3.3/5 (1.9)			<b>2.7/4 (1.6)</b>

## THE RATINGS Wizard

BY LESLIE RYAN

Monday, Sept. 15, 2003-Sunday, Sept. 21, 2003  
TV Season Week No. 52

Boosted by the premiere of CBS's "Survivor: Pearl Islands" and Fox's "55th Annual Primetime Emmy Awards," the two networks tied for first in adults 18 to 49 for the week with a 3.4 rating/10 share. CBS won the total viewers race with an average of 10 million.

### Top Show of the Week

Adults 18 to 49: "Survivor: Pearl Islands" (CBS, Thursday) 8.4/23  
Total viewers: "Survivor: Pearl Islands" (CBS, Thursday) 21.5 million

### Top Shows by Day:

#### MONDAY

Adults 18 to 49: "Monday Night Football: Dallas at N.Y. Giants" (ABC) 7.6/22  
Total viewers: "Monday Night Football: Dallas at N.Y. Giants" (ABC) 18.3 million

#### TUESDAY

Adults 18 to 49: "ABC News Special—A Life of Laughter: John Ritter" (ABC) 5.0/15  
Total viewers: "ABC News Special—A Life of Laughter: John Ritter" (ABC) 14 million

#### WEDNESDAY

Adults 18 to 49: "Big Brother 4" (CBS) 4.2/12  
Total viewers: "Law & Order" (NBC) 12.3 million

#### THURSDAY

Adults 18 to 49: "Survivor: Pearl Islands" (CBS) 8.4/23  
Total viewers: "Survivor: Pearl Islands" (CBS) 21.5 million

#### FRIDAY

Adults 18 to 49: "20/20" (ABC) 3.4/12  
Total viewers: "20/20" (ABC) 11 million

#### SATURDAY

Adults 18 to 49: "America's Most Wanted" (Fox) 3.1/10  
Total viewers: "Miss America" (ABC) 10.3 million

#### SUNDAY

Adults 18 to 49: "55th Annual Primetime Emmy Awards" (Fox) 7.1/19  
Total viewers: "55th Annual Primetime Emmy Awards" (Fox) 17.9 million

## Basic Cable Ratings

For the Week of Sept. 15-21

RANKED BY HOUSEHOLD AUDIENCE PROJECTIONS	HOUSEHOLD RATING	COVERAGE RATING	HOUSEHOLDS (000)	
1. NFL Football, Sun., 8:28 a.m.	ESPN	7.3	9.0	7,867
2. NFL Prime Time, Sun., 7:50 p.m.	ESPN	3.4	4.2	3,722
3. WWE Raw Zone, Mon., 10 a.m.	Spike	3.2	4.0	3,482
4. SpongeBob, Sat., 9:30 a.m.	Nick	3.0	3.8	3,266
5. WWE Raw, Mon., 9 p.m.	Spike	2.7	3.4	2,959
t. SpongeBob, Sat., 9 a.m.	Nick	2.7	3.3	2,907
t. SportsCenter, Sun., 11:34 p.m.	ESPN	2.7	3.3	2,907
t. Fairly Odd Parents, Sat., 10 p.m.	Nick	2.7	3.3	2,892
9. Law & Order, Wed., 8 a.m.	TNT	2.6	3.2	2,806
10. Fairly Odd Parents, Sat., 10:30 a.m.	Nick	2.5	3.1	2,725

Note: Coverage area ratings are within each cable network's universe. Total U.S. ratings and household projections are based on 108.4 million TV homes. Ranking does not include programs under five minutes. Audience estimates are based on average-minute tuning. Source: Nielsen Media Research

## Top 10 Cable Network Ratings

For the Week of Sept. 15-21

HOUSEHOLDS	RATING	(000)
1. ESPN	2.0	2,126
2. TNT	1.5	1,629
t. Disney	1.5	1,596
t. HBO	1.5	1,577
5. USA	1.4	1,478
t. Nickelodeon	1.4	1,468
7. Lifetime	1.3	1,422
t. Cartoon	1.3	1,412
9. TBS	1.2	1,332
10. Fox News	0.9	956

### Total Day

1. Nickelodeon	1.1	1,203
2. Lifetime	0.9	972
t. Cartoon	0.9	967
t. Disney	0.9	956
t. TNT	0.9	948
6. HBO	0.8	889
7. ESPN	0.7	805
t. TBS	0.7	781
t. USA	0.7	749
10. Fox News	0.5	590



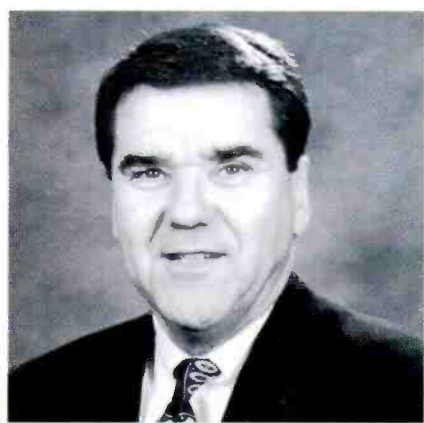
# INSPIRATIONAL

## A wing and a prayer

New religious, inspirational networks take flight, but are not yet landing on many cable systems

By Lee Hall

For some cable operators, one is enough. Even though more than 20 national inspirational or faith-based networks exist, few have reached the level of "full" cable distribution. Now, some inspirational programmers are developing new program services and spinoffs. They are finding it difficult, though, to make it onto channel lineups.



Thomas Holman, Inspiration Networks  
Senior VP of Affiliate Relations

The most successful programmers have been at it for many years. The Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), now closing in on 50 million subscribers, launched in 1981. Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), the grandfather of the group, has been around since 1973. Its distribution sits at around 60 million, although TBN boosts its reach through a network of 30 full-power and 350 low-power broadcast stations.

Inspiration-based networks, particularly those with a religious bent, have found the going tough for a couple of reasons. With few exceptions, these are independent services without the backing of huge media corporations. As a result, they lack the wherewithal to offer cable operators huge financial inducements.

"We have a small launch incentive that we offer, but it's not really competitive with a lot of the other networks by any means," said

Thomas Hohman, senior VP of affiliate relations at Inspiration Networks, Charlotte, N.C. "We're not-for-profit, so we are limited in what we can do."

That nonprofit status can complicate matters. Many inspirational programmers are viewer-supported and run few if any advertisements. Without a platform on which to insert local ads, cable operators are less likely to give them much consideration. Still, faith-based and

inspirational networks are chipping away. Some are even developing second and third program services for cable operators' digital tiers and coming up with marketing and promotion plans to attract what programmers see as a huge untapped market.

"We are trying to let the industry know that you cannot just add one channel to get people to upgrade to digital," said Robert Higley, VP of affiliate sales and marketing at TBN. "They are not

### Inspirational and faith-based cable networks

Service	Launch Date	Distribution	Notes
BET- Gospel	2002	N/A	
tHE Church Channel	2002	11,500,000	
Dream Network	1994	25,000	Includes broadcast
Ecumenical TV Channel	1983	500,000	Regional
EWTN	1981	50,000,000	
FamilyNet	1988	36,000,000	Includes broadcast
Goodlife TV	1985	12,000,000	
iLife TV	1998	6,000,000	INSP
INSP	1990	20,000,000	
JCTV	2002	3,000,000	TBN
Liberty Channel	2001	650,000	
Oasis TV	1997	1,500,000	Includes broadcast
PAX TV	1998	73,000,000	Includes broadcast
Praise Television	1996	N/A	
TBN	1973	80,000,000	Includes broadcast
The Word Network	2000	20,000,000	
Wisdom TV Network	1997	6,500,000	
Worship Network	1992	66,000,000	Includes broadcast

Source: individual networks, NCTA data.



# LATE TELEVISION

going to go out and upgrade for ESPN 6 or HBO 7. We are trying to help the cable industry understand and get into the faith community.”

**M**r. Higley totes reams of research about the potential television audience for faith-based and inspirational programs. Nearly 90 percent of Americans say they believe in God, and 40 percent attend at least one worship service a week. TBN recently launched JCTV, a music- and reality-oriented digital network aimed at teens and young adults.

“It’s an education process, but once we get in there and show the operators, they get it,” said Mr. Higley, who recently negotiated carriage agreements with Time Warner and Comcast.

The term “grass roots” takes on new meaning in the world of affiliate marketing for these programmers. Though subscriber base and ratings tend to be tiny by “big” network standards, these are very loyal viewers.

Mediacom Communications recently added iLife TV, a digital service from Inspiration Networks, to its system in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In one 60-day period, Mediacom recorded nearly 1,000 new digital cable customers. Forty-seven percent of the new customers cited the availability of iLife TV as their main reason for signing up.

“About 76 percent of the subs we added were ‘nevers,’ in that they had never subscribed to any cable

service,” Mr. Hohman said. Concerts and community events seem to be a big draw for supporters of these networks. JCTV recently co-sponsored a music festival in Huntsville, Ala., that attracted an audience of 250,000 people.

Religious programmers also have the benefit of knowing exactly where their viewers congregate. Network representatives frequently address audiences at local worship services in markets they want to target.

Inspirational networks can appeal to a widely diverse audience. The Word Network, based in Southfield, Mich., programs urban ministries and gospel music aimed at an African American audience. Viacom’s BET Gospel offers concerts and interviews from popular gospel artists.

The GoodLife TV Network in Washington, D.C., targets older viewers it describes as the “boomers and over” generation. Services such as Oasis TV in Beverly Hills, Calif., and the Bluefield, W. Va. Wisdom Network seek to attract a niche audience interested in programming relating to mind, body and spirit.

Choices for Hispanic viewers are expanding as well. TBN, which helped start Enlace in Costa Rica more than 15 years ago, has begun distributing the channel in the U.S. Inspiration Networks last year launched La Familia, aimed at Hispanic families.

## Sky Angel: ‘Worry-Free TV’

Religious and faith-based programmers who struggled early on to gain cable distribution found an angel waiting in the wings. Sky Angel, a subsidiary of Naples, Fla.-based Dominion Video Satellite, carries a package of 20 television networks and 16 radio channels.



Since 1996, Sky Angel has leased transponders on EchoStar III, a direct-to-home satellite positioned in a DBS orbital slot at 61.5 degrees west. The company’s roots, however, go back to 1981,

when its founder, Robert Johnson, became one of the first applicants for the nascent direct broadcast satellite service.

“Our primary motivation for doing this was because of the lack of access to cable,” Mr. Johnson said. “Anyone in the continental U.S. who wants to have just about every Christian program that is available in this country can have it in their home by installing an 18-inch satellite dish.”

Sky Angel uses DISH Network’s uplink facility in Cheyenne, Wyo., but plans to construct its own \$25 million uplink base in Florida early next year. The company has a contract to build and launch its own satellite in 2006, which would expand its channel capacity.

Subscribers to Sky Angel pay \$11.99 per month or \$120 annually, and must purchase and install their own equipment. Sky Angel uses the same infrastructure as DISH Network, which can integrate programming from both services into the customer’s electronic program guide. Mr. Johnson would not reveal subscriber numbers.



*Sky Angel founder  
Robert Johnson*

“We are worry-free TV,” he said. “People sign up primarily because of the inspirational programming or ministry programming, but we have family shows, health and fitness, some sports programming, some classic sitcoms and movies.”

Although Sky Angel has partnered with DISH Network for years, the relationship has at times been thorny. Since December, the companies have been embroiled in a disagreement over DISH’s addition of two religious networks, Daystar and FamilyNet, to its program lineup.

DISH contends it was complying with a federally mandated requirement that it devote 4 percent of its capacity to public service programming. Sky Angel countered that it has a long-standing contract with DISH to be the exclusive carrier of most religious networks. In July, a federal judge ordered DISH to drop the two networks.

—Lee Hall



## INSPIRATIONAL TELEVISION

# Looking for digital subs?

## Here's a demographic group to focus on

They have their own schools, hospitals, radio stations, stores, universities and planned

systems in cities such as Kansas City, Austin and San Diego have added a group of faith channels.



In addition, there's a top ten MSO that is planning to offer a package of faith channels to all of their systems.

There is also a satellite service that has recognized

communities. Presidents cannot get elected without successfully reaching this group. They easily outnumber the Hispanic and African-American households.

Who are they? They are the faith community and they represent 90 million Americans, or one-third of all households. Their numbers could be as high as 86% of the population if the criteria simply represented those who believe in God. But a true representative of the faith-community is one who attends church, reads a bible and prays on a regular basis. Since the faith community is so large, there may be an opportunity for the cable industry to add more digital subscribers if they make a more concerted effort to reach out to them. The industry is currently clamoring to add as many Hispanic channels as possible to reach a demographic that represents less than 15% of U.S. households; yet, there is a greater number of households represented among the faith community.

There are those in the cable industry that have already added more faith channels to better reach the faith community. Several cable

the need to provide a package of faith channels for the cable industry. Olympusat signed a multi-year agreement with Trinity Broadcasting Network to provide uplink and transponder space for all of its digital networks; TBN, TBN Enlace USA, The Church Channel, and JCTV. They are also in negotiations with a number of other faith channels to eventually include several more in their package.

Trinity Broadcasting Network, the world's largest faith channel, knows a lot about the faith community and has created a group of channels to reach them. Bob Higley, TBN's Vice President of Affiliate Sales and Relations, is getting this message out: "The faith community needs more than one faith channel on digital in order to give them a reason to upgrade. The cable industry has added several music channels, several Hispanic channels, several movie channels and many more in other genres. It is now time to add a group of faith channels to reach this all-important demographic," says Mr. Higley.

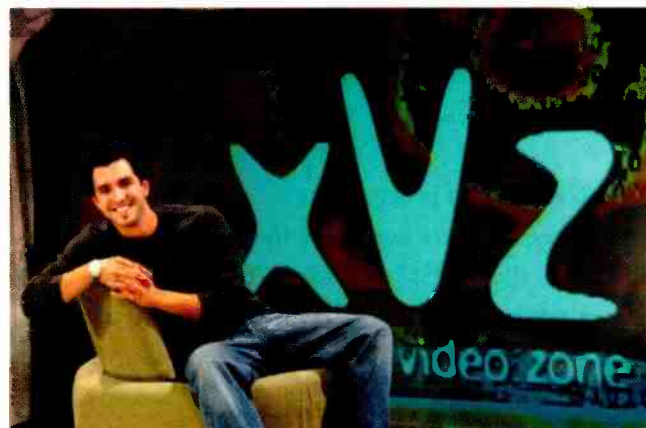
TBN is the flagship channel of TBN Networks. It just celebrated its 30th anniversary this year in May. Nielsen ratings show that it is America's most watched faith channel. It has become a faith-based lifestyle channel offering programs for every member of the family. TBN is now reaching every major continent via 33 satellites, and in the United States it is available to 92 million broadcast, cable and satellite households.

The Church Channel, TBN Networks' second channel, was created when TBN discovered that church services were the most watched category of religious television. The Church Channel features church service programs 24-hours per day and represents a wide variety of religious denominations, including Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish faith groups.

TBN Enlace USA is a faith-based Hispanic network that actually began in Latin America 15 years ago. After reaching most Spanish speaking countries throughout the world, TBN brought this popular Hispanic network to the United States. It features the most popular

programs from Latin America and the top-rated programs from TBN, all in Spanish.

The most recent creation from TBN Networks is JCTV, a new digital channel featuring trendy faith-based programs that include reality shows, cutting-edge music videos, game shows, relevant talk shows, comedy, and extreme sports for the 13-to-29 age category. JCTV features music from the contemporary Christian music genre.



JCTV's new program, "XVZ" (Extreme Video Zone), with Jamie Alexander

TBN Networks plan to help the cable industry obtain new digital subscribers and has developed a marketing campaign that will target its audience to let viewers know about its digital networks. The cable industry is in a great position to take advantage of this opportunity to target the faith-based households. So in addition to the Hispanic and African-American community, cable operators can gain new digital subscribers if they also target the faith community.

Contact Bob Higley, Vice President, Affiliate Sales and Relations, TBN Networks, 2823 West Irving Blvd., Irving, TX 75061; (800) 735-5542; [www.TBNnetworks.com](http://www.TBNnetworks.com).



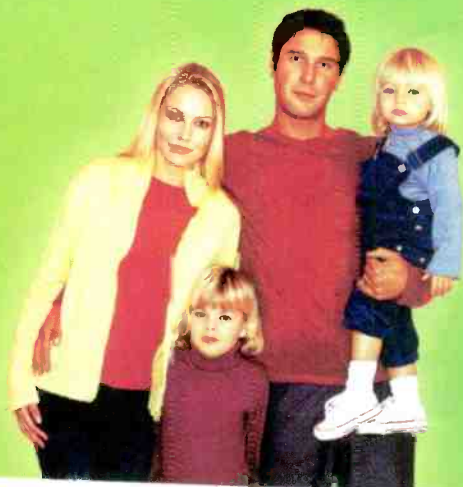
Scene from "Megiddo," an original film produced by TBN.





# Faith Channels for Everyone

## Lifestyle



## Worship

The Church Channel



## Hispanic



TBN **enlace** USA

## Youth



JCTV



TBN now offers four faith-based networks to help satisfy the needs of today's diverse faith culture. TBN Networks help give the faith community a reason to subscribe. All of TBN's networks are free and offer generous launch incentives.

(800)735-5542

[www.TBNnetworks.com](http://www.TBNnetworks.com)



INSPIRATIONAL TELEVISION

# Spreading the word

The popular urban religious channel continues to grow

**A**fter three action-packed years of aggressive development, The Word Network is now a mainstream media broadcaster for African American ministries and gospel music.

The Word Network offers value-positive religious family programming embraced by millions of African Americans in urban and rural markets. The programming covers a broad range of demographics, from teens and young adults, who are interested in contemporary gospel music, to families seeking values consistently presented in a positive way, to the slightly more mature urban populations that relate to many of the popular local, regional and national ministries.

This nonprofit network is the urban partner to cable operators and will work with them to continue to foster positive community relations and make significant contributions to their cities and its residents.

Based in Southfield, Mich., The Word Network is available in 32 million homes in the United States, Jamaica and the Bahamas, through DirecTV, Comcast, Time Warner

Cable, Bright House Networks, Cox, Cablevision, Charter, Adelphia, Insight, RCN, Mediacom, Millennium Digital Media, Sirius Satellite Radio and a host of smaller cable operators.

Programming from The Word Network is provided to 1 million men and women in the U.S. armed forces in 165 countries through the American Forces Network. The Word Network also provides programming to 75 million households in Africa.

The Word Network is the undisputed source for urban ministries and gospel music.



The Urban Religious Channel

## AFRICAN AMERICAN MINISTRIES

- Local
- Regional
- National

## GOSPEL MUSIC

- Traditional
- Contemporary

## CONCERTS AND SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

- Bobby Jones
- Jesse Jackson LIVE
- Jazzspel
- nContrast
- Tom Joyner's Family Reunion
- Behind-The-Scenes Specials

## NATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND CONFERENCES

- Full Gospel Baptist
- COGIC
- SCLC
- AZUSA
- Power Networking



Master control room at The Word Network – Southfield, Michigan.



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PHILADELPHIA SAN DIEGO TULSA  
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CHARLOTTE LOUISVILLE  
MILWAUKEE MINNEAPOLIS  
SAN FRANCISCO LAS VEGAS CHARLOTTE

# AND GOSPEL MUSIC

**THE**  
**WORD**  
Network

The Urban Religious Channel

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WAGON LOS ANGELES EUGENE

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# Emmys Spotlight ROVING Eye

Photos by  
Joe Coomber



1.



7.



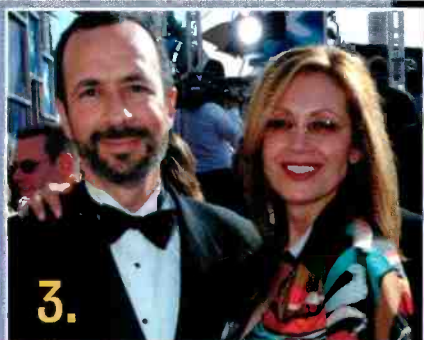
2.

**On the Red Carpet**  
A parade of television's top executives, creative talent and stars made its way down the red carpet and into the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles for the 55th Annual Emmy Awards Sept. 21.



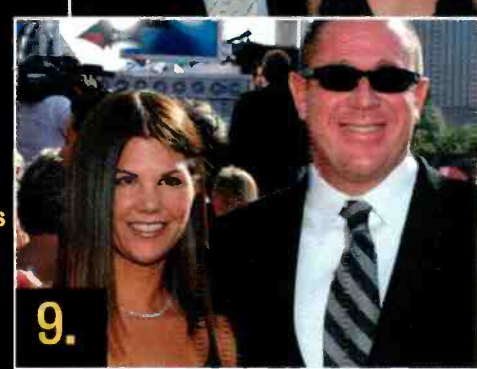
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1. ABC's **Lloyd Braun**, his wife, **Laurie**, second from right, and their daughters **Emmie**, left, and **Tessie**.



3.

2. Sony's **Steve Mosko**, left, **Russ Krasnoff** and **Yair Landau**.

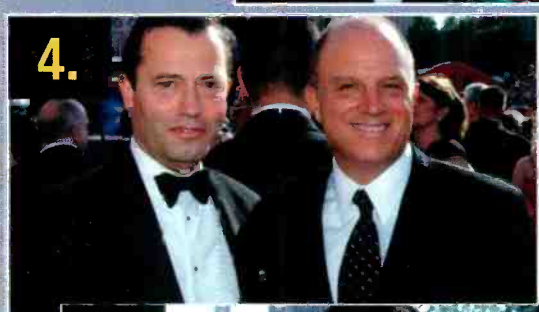


9.

3. "Curb Your Enthusiasm's" **Robert Welde** and his wife, **Linda**.



11.



4.

4. HBO's **Collin Callender**, left, and **Chris Albrecht**.



10.

5. Lifetime's **Carole Black**, left, her son **Eric**, of **Pie Town Productions**, and **Autumn Devitry**.



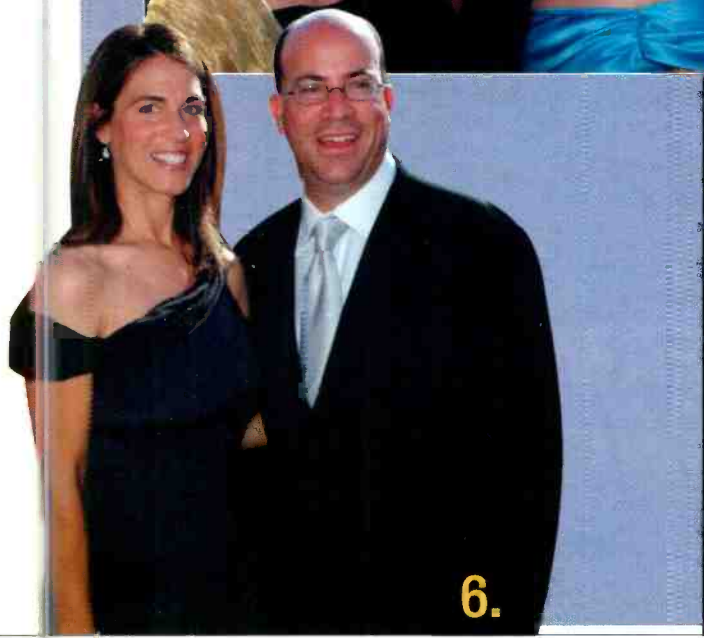
5.

6. NBC's **Jeffrey Zucker** and his wife, **Caryn**.



12.

7. Willam Morris Agency's **Greg Lipstone**, left, **Sam Haskell**, **Cori Wellins**, **Carey Nelson Burch** and **Mark Itkin**.



6.

8. Creative Artists Agency's **Adam Berkowitz**, left, with "Everybody Loves Raymond's" **Monica Horan** and **Phil Rosenthal**.

9. Fox's **Sandy Grushow** and his wife, **Barbara**.

10. Warner Bros. TV's **Peter Roth** and his wife, **Andrea**.

11. Endeavor's **Richard Weltz**, left, **Lisa Harrison**, **Ari Greenburg**, **Greg Hodes** and **Paul Haas**.

12. Academy of Television Arts & Sciences' **Todd Leavitt**, his wife, **Lauren**, left, and their daughter **Julla**.

13. United Talent Agency's **Marty Lesak**, left, **Sara ChazIn**, **Dave Park** and **Kevin Stolper**.

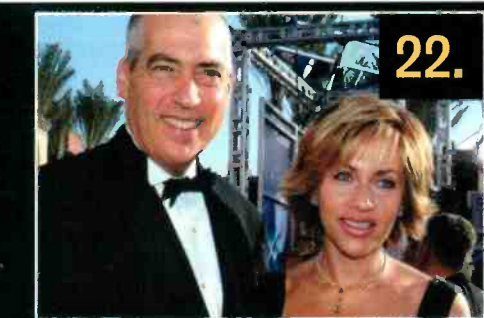


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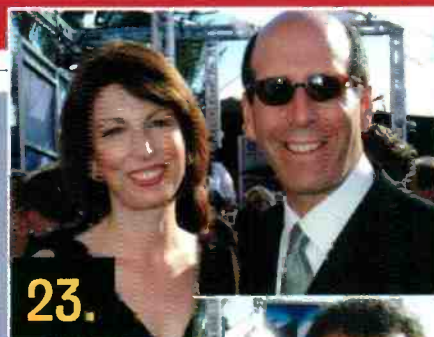


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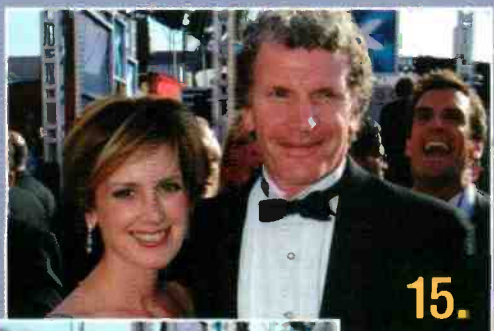


22.

**14.** William H. Macy and his wife, Felicity Huffman.



23.



15.

**15.** ABC Cable Networks Group's Anne Sweeney and her husband, Phil Miller.



24.

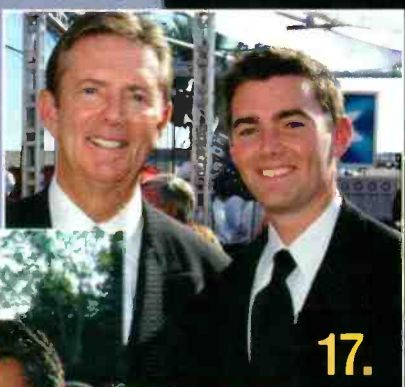
**16.** CBS's Nancy Tellem and her husband, Arn.

**17.** ATAS and Tribune Entertainment's Dick Askin, left, and his son Mike.



16.

**18.** Jerry Bruckheller Productions' Jonathan Littman and his wife, Nancy.



17.

**19.** USA Network's Jeff Wachtel and his wife, Sheryl.



25.

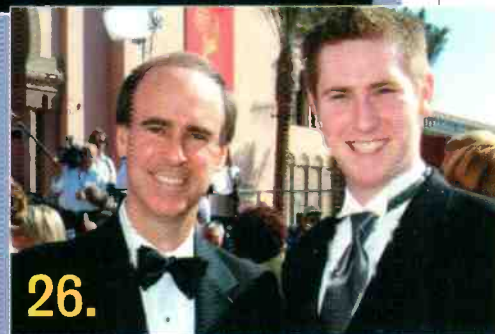
**20.** National Association of Television Program Executives' Rick Feldman and his daughter Sascha.



**21.** UPN's Dawn Ostroff and her husband, Mark.

**22.** 20th Century Fox TV's Gary Newman and his wife, entertainment attorney Jeanne Newman.

**23.** Showtime's Matt Blank and his wife, Susan.



26.

**24.** News Corp.'s Peter Chernin and his daughter Margaret.

**25.** Twentieth's Ivey Van Allen and her husband, CBS's Eric Steinberg.

**26.** NBC's John Miller and his son Justin.

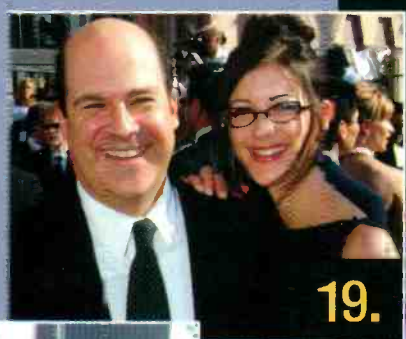


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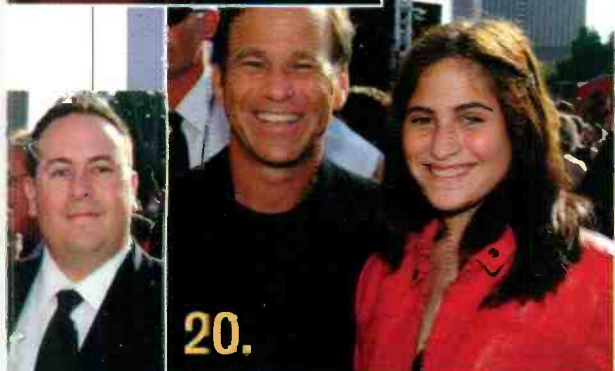
**27.** International Creative Management's Anne Pedersen, left, Nancy Etz and Jill Holwager.



18.



19.



20.



**28.** Universal's David Kissinger and his wife, Alexandra Rockwell.



28.

**29.** Warner Bros. Television's Bruce Rosenblum and his wife, Ande.



21.



29.



**EMMYS WRAP-UP**

**'AMAZING' COUPLE** Bertram Van Munster and his wife, Elise Doganieri, are the co-creators of CBS's Emmy-winning "Amazing Race."

**CBS**

continued from page 8

CBS's "Amazing Race" won the first-ever Emmy for Outstanding Reality/Competition Program, and the show's producers are hoping the victory will put them over the edge in their bid for renewal. CBS has given the go-ahead to start casting a fifth edition, but producers have not received an official order yet.

"Every day has been a little bit of torture," executive producer Bertram van Munster said.

Executive producer Jerry Bruckheimer gave a shout-out to CBS during his post-victory remarks backstage. "You know what feels great about it?" he said. "We still haven't been renewed, so this is wonderful. CBS, are you watching?"

The Emmy victory puts one more checkmark in the plus column for the show.

"It gives them something to promote," Mr. Schwartz said. "It looks good to the advertisers because all of a sudden it has a gilded edge. You have this patina of quality, and most of the time quality transmutes into commerciality."

"The West Wing's" victory as Outstanding Drama Series for the fourth year in a row gives NBC something to crow about in the wake of a season that many critics considered subpar and that saw a 21 percent ratings drop. The win over HBO favorites "The Sopranos" and "Six Feet Under" brought creator Aaron Sorkin to the stage to accept the award. Mr. Sorkin departed the series earlier this year in the face of criticism about the direction the show was taking and budget overruns from scripts coming in late.

In the final tally for the night, HBO won eight awards, including top drama acting honors for Edie Falco and James Gandolfini, who each won their third Emmys for their roles as Carmela and Tony Soprano, respectively, and a supporting actor nod for Joe Pantoliano, also for "The Sopranos." CBS won seven awards.

TNT, which won a slew of awards for made-for-TV movie "Door to Door," starring William H. Macy, tied NBC with four awards. Comedy Central won two awards for "The Daily Show With Jon Stewart." USA, ABC and Sci Fi each won one award. Broadcast host network Fox was shut out. ■

# Deconstructing the Emmys

## A Panel of Industry Insiders Breaks Down the Likely Impact of Key Awards

By James Hibberd

On the day after the Emmy Awards, network consultant Ray Solley of The Solley Group hosted a roundtable gathering of industry experts to discuss the show and determine the greater implications of the nominees and winners. What followed were debates on topics ranging from the snubbing of HBO's "The Sopranos" for best drama to how "Joe Millionaire" makes academy members schizophrenic.

The panelists were Meryl Marshall-Daniels, former president of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences and producer of "Happily Ever After"; Vance Van Petten, executive director of the Producers Guild of America and former executive VP of business affairs at USA/Universal TV and Twentieth Television; Kevin Beggs, president of programming and production, Lions Gate TV; writer-producer J.D. Zeik (TNT pilot "Witchblade," feature thriller "Ronin"); and Dr. Robert Kubey, director of the Center for Media Studies, associate professor of journalism at Rutgers University and author of "Creating Television."

In a *TelevisionWeek* exclusive, here are highlights from the discussion.

**Mr. Solley:** *What show do you think improved its chances with viewers, and maybe even with its network programmers, by winning an Emmy night?*

**Mr. Kubey:** Given that I'd never seen 'Monk,' I discovered who this guy is. This is where a show hasn't really gotten a lot of press, or enough press that I know about it. I'm much more likely to flip that show on.

**Ms. Daniels:** I agree. I think the other thing that happened is that there is an audience that discovered that there is good political comedy on the air. An older network audience that doesn't think of Comedy Central as a place that they would go to. The segment Jon Stewart [of Comedy Central's "The Daily Show With Jon Stewart"] did on the show, where he really took on TV news and took on Fox News. He then wins two Emmys. I think that was a very strong statement for him and for Comedy Central to an older audience that is missing political humor.

**Mr. Solley:** *Is Comedy Central really going, 'That's great! Now*

*we have older viewers who know about our show'?*

**Ms. Daniels:** It's credibility. But it's also something else. I think we're seeing more networks becoming like broadcasters on basic cable. TNT, A&E, now Comedy Central, may find themselves in that category, growing out of a niche and having, you know, broader sensibilities and stability in a broader audience.

**Mr. Van Petten:** We've not been successful in the past attaching the monetary impact to Emmy. This

particular award show provides two opportunities to assess the value of an Emmy. I think 'Monk' absolutely will benefit from the award to Tony Shalhoub. I also think to a smaller degree—but more measurable—will be the impact the Emmy will have upon 'Amazing Race.' A reality show out of nowhere, never getting the really huge ratings, but all of a sudden gets an Emmy, beating 'Survivor.' I think there can be a comparison of the two. On the premiere, a few days ago, of the new 'Survivor,' you saw a drop-off of less than 10 percent for a launch of its new season.

I'll bet you, I think what will happen is 'Amazing Race' will actually have a better premiere than its premiere episode last year. And that would be direct evidence of the benefit of having an Emmy.

**Mr. Solley:** *Does that theory hold true with Joe Pantoliano from 'Sopranos,' who won an Emmy for best supporting actor? He's going onto CBS's 'The Handler,' which premieres soon.*

**Mr. Van Petten:** There is an effect, but there's always been an inability to calculate the benefit. It's comparing an individual's win with the launch of a new series.

**Mr. Zeik:** It seems to me when you win an Oscar, what you get is more people to come to your movie. All they need to do is come once for you to see the impact of it. In TV, getting somebody to watch once, unfortunately, will result in only a one-time ratings spike.

**Mr. Beggs:** There's no question in my mind that the academy and the industry are very uncomfortable with the reality genre and what to make of it.

And you see that in that they didn't have five nominees, yet they couldn't just add 'Joe Millionaire.' So the ones that were nominated were 'safe' reality programs. The audience had to be thoroughly confused, because I was.

**Ms. Daniels:** You are correct for identifying schizophrenia in the academy about this reality category, because the concept of excellence as it has been interpreted over the years would not permit a 'Paradise Island' or a 'Joe Millionaire' to be interpreted as excellent. I think this area is certainly an expanding area for the audience, and the question is, 'Are values part of what you use to decide whether a television show is excellent or not?' And I don't think there's an agreed-upon answer to that.

**Mr. Solley:** *Which explains Bravo winning the alternative reality category with 'Cirque du Soleil.'*

**Ms. Daniels:** Correct.

**Mr. Kubey:** I think you're seeing fractures in the industry, which we know in five or 10 years were the beginning of the sea change in the industry. Because of what HBO has brought and [reality programming], you know, I think when people say 'Gee, how did the networks lose so much audience?' Of course, they're going to lose a tremendous amount of audience! We're seeing a new genre develop which has become really popular. The industry doesn't even know how to treat it or whether to respect it. And you've got a rival network, HBO, which is getting a huge percentage of the kudos—and then [the academy] can't give the Best Drama award to an HBO series! I think that's strange, that the academy seems more than happy to point out James Gandolfini over and over as being really good, but can't actually say his was the best drama.

**Mr. Solley:** *The other juggernaut is basic cable. TNT was a juggernaut this year with 'Door to Door.' Does anybody in this group think that cable can build the schedule or a brand off the back of one-time-only movies and one-time-only miniseries, if you're not pay cable?*

**Ms. Daniels:** I think it's diffi-

cult to build a schedule. You can build a brand. You can build a brand off of it, and that, I think, in effect, is what HBO did.

**Mr. Van Petten:** What Hallmark is doing now.

**Mr. Beggs:** Lifetime has a great movie brand.

**Mr. Solley:** *It seems to me that 'The Daily Show' may in fact be one of the big winners out of [Emmy] night, in terms of perception and notoriety. With the rise of cable news, is network news no longer a sacred cow?*

**Ms. Daniels:** Well, network news has invited it. I don't know if anybody had seen the Fox bombs-set-to-music piece when it originally aired, but I did. To me, they took themselves to exactly where they arrived last night. Which is that news is no longer sacred in

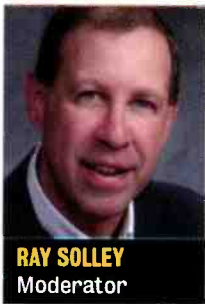
terms of it trying to convey information in an objective format as a clear source of information upon which policy can be made, decisions can be determined, people can cast votes. That's not its role. Its role is to entertain and deliver profits to the bottom line, and that's what's left of it. I think there's a price to be paid for that, and I think that's what we're seeing.

**Mr. Kubey:** CNBC and Fox and CNN are in the same ballpark with the standard network news sources. What's happened is that the standards have been dragged down by commercial imperatives.

**Mr. Solley:** *And proof that it's the same ballpark is that the News and Documentary Emmy Award for outstanding coverage of a continuing news story went to CNBC, to Brian Williams. ... At Peabody and the News and Documentary Emmy Awards, PBS still gets a lot of nominations, a lot of awards. There used to be a time when you would go to PBS to do your prestige project. My perception is now you take that same type project to HBO, to Showtime, to A&E, to TNT. Do you agree?*

**Mr. Zeik:** Completely. I don't think anyone's ever suggested to me in the last number of years to take anything to PBS. Recently, I was talking to somebody about a book that I have a great passion for, to make into a film. 'Oh no, it's too difficult. Go to HBO, go to Showtime.' None of my agents ever said, 'Let's think about

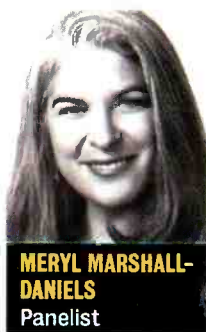
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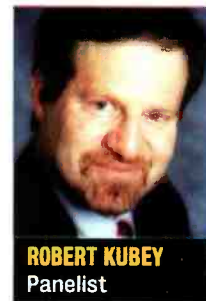
**RAY SOLLEY**  
Moderator



**VANCE VAN PETTEN**  
Panelist



**MERYL MARSHALL-DANIELS**  
Panelist



**ROBERT KUBEY**  
Panelist



**KEVIN BEGGS**  
Panelist



# Classified

## Career Opportunities

### WEATHER ANCHOR

Dominant NBC station has an opening for a weather anchor for a top rated 2 hour morning newscast. We have a strong ensemble team and are looking for someone with a lively personality and strong ad-lib and live skills. This is a high profile position in a number one rated newsroom. Send tape, resume, cover letter and references to:

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Youngstown, Ohio 44503. EOE.

*TVWeek.com: News*

### CREATIVE SERVICES DIRECTOR

Broadcasting partners Fox 59 and WB4 have a rare opportunity for a Creative Services Director to develop and recommend advertising policies, strategy, budgets and media for all station advertising and promotion programs. Position is responsible for the station's style and image in an effort to create station brand and increase viewership for both stations. Must possess strong leadership and effective communication skills. Requires a minimum of 5 years experience as an on-air writer-producer in addition to prior supervisory experience in an advertising/promotion department. Send resume with a cover letter stating position desired and referral source along with a non-returnable VHS with samples of your work to: Human Resources, WXIN/WTTV, 1440 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202. EOE.

*TVWeek.com: Creative Services*

### NEWS DIRECTOR

Need dedicated news professional to manage, lead, and train a great young staff at a strong #1 station in a beautiful and competitive mid-Atlantic market. Previous ND experience helpful, but also a great opportunity for a successful EP or AE to run his or her own shop. Station and company committed to news. EOE--women, minorities encouraged to apply. Tape, resume, news philosophy to: Television Week Classifieds, 6500 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 2300, Box 0929 Los Angeles, CA 90048

*TVWeek.com: News*

**TVWEEK.COM**

### DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING

ABC-13 / KTRK-TV is seeking a Director of Engineering. Candidate will have in depth knowledge of digital video and audio technology as well as a complete understanding of broadcast and microwave RF technology. Requires experience in TV broadcast engineering management including studio & transmitter facility maintenance, capital project planning and implementation, production and on-air operations, scheduling of technical personnel, preparation of operating budgets, knowledge of all building systems & compliance with all government and industry regulations and standards. Degree in technically related field or equivalent experience preferred. No phone calls please. Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/V/D

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President & General Manager  
KTRK-TV  
3310 Bissonnet  
Houston, TX 77005

*TVWeek.com: Engineering*

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KTRK-TV seeks a Marketing/Internet Account Executive to join our local sales staff. Applicants should have 3-5 years TV sales and internet sales experience. This position will be responsible for developing internet accounts, new business, and partnership opportunities, including the selling and execution of promotions and sponsorships. The position requires a proven track record in marketing/internet/new business development, with advertising agency, retail, vendor, and direct client contact. Writing and presentation skills, including Power Point a must. Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/V/D No phone calls please. Send cover letter, resume and references to:

Susan Buddeke  
Director of Marketing  
KTRK-TV  
3310 Bissonnet  
Houston, TX 77005

*TVWeek.com: Sales*

### LOCAL SALES MANAGER

WVLA NBC 33 T.V. has an immediate opening for a Local Sales Manager. Must have some college, good people and microsoft skills, and a proven record of managing a sales team, designing sales packages, and developing new local accounts. Fax resume to: (225) 769-9462. Attn: Fran (225) 766-3233. EOE.

*TVWeek.com: Sales*

### RESEARCH DIRECTOR

KOIN 6 TV, of Emmis Communications, in the 24th market, seeks a full-time Research Director to facilitate understanding and implementation of research data to maximize revenue and ratings. Must possess qualitative/quantitative analytical research skills, creatively probe solutions, develop presentations to strengthen sales strategies, and promotions, 2 yrs broadcast research experience, advanced knowledge of various applications/presentation software, Nielsen Media Research, Tapscan, Marshall Marketing, CRM. Apply on line: www.emmis.wfrecruiter.com

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**TV CURRENTS****EMMYS** *continued from page 38*

doing this with PBS.'

**Mr. Beggs:** I don't even know who you'd call. I called once and tried to talk to somebody, and they said submit it to a panel of people. It's ridiculous.

**Mr. Solley:** I read an article recently quoting an executive saying, 'That network show is so good, it really belongs on cable.' Do you think there is some credence to that, or do viewers not really know the difference and just surf through whatever is on the set?

**Ms. Daniels:** I think there's commercial and noncommercial. There are programs that have commercials in them and children will always know as they grow older that there are some channels that don't have commercials. But whether it's broadcast or whether it's cable or satellite is a meaningless distinction for the next generation.

**Mr. Van Petten:** I think on cable one hit show can do something for your network in the short term. Look what 'The Shield' did for FX. It put it on the map. 'The Sopranos' is already on the map, but it makes HBO an empire. The effect of a single show on network TV is seen in the long term, the way 'Friends' or 'Seinfeld' can make money forever.

**Mr. Beggs:** I think only one cable network is totally distinctive and that's HBO. Now they are their own brand.

**Mr. Van Petten:** Bigger than ABC, CBS or NBC?

**Mr. Beggs:** They are the brand of, 'If it's on HBO, it must be good.' 'Carnivale' numbers suggest that. If it's on HBO, people are coming. They already have. It's like NFL football on Monday night. They're coming out of habit and loyalty.

**Mr. Kubey:** In drama, my sense is if it weren't for 'The West Wing,' the standard old broadcast networks would really not have much to say for themselves in dramatic quality.

**Mr. Van Petten:** No, you're wrong. That's not fair. What about 'CSI,' 'Law & Order'? It's the golden age of drama that cuts across all TV venues. I think that I'll put up 'Law & Order,' 'CSI,' any of those shows against 'Sopranos.'

**Mr. Kubey:** I think you're right, 'CSI,' 'Law & Order,' some of those shows are exceptionally well done. But on the other hand, 'CSI' is so formulaic, while it may have a tremendous run and make a ton of money for a long time, critically, ultimately, it won't stand in the league with 'Sopranos' or 'Six Feet Under.' It can't, it won't, and nor will 'Law & Order.'

**Mr. Solley:** Is there one program that you would call 'show of the year'? The show that, looking back, 10 years from now, you'll say, 'This program in 2002-

2003 was a tentpole, a turning point, and represented some kind of interesting, watershed event.'

**Mr. Van Petten:** I'll venture out, bravely, to be cut down to my kneecaps: 'Trading Spaces.' I think that the viewers who watch traditional TV and those who would never look to TV for that kind of thing now find it actually enjoyable and addictive. What 'Trading Spaces' and reality TV has brought back to television is family viewing. Shows like 'Friends' have separated families for three, four, five years now; I will not let my daughters watch it.

**Mr. Kubey:** My choice for show of the year is 'Joe Schmo' on Spike. Not because it's any tentpole or anything like that, but it undoes the reality genre. What they're doing is so funny at poking holes in all the conventions that are in the reality genre. I find it an acerbic commentary on a genre that's taken the industry by storm.

**Ms. Daniels:** Its funny, the show that I felt did something really interesting this year and gets totally overlooked is 'The Wire' on HBO.

**Mr. Solley:** Given the Emmy wins by 'Everybody Loves Raymond,' 'West Wing,' 'Door to Door' and, to some degree, 'Spielberg's Taken,' does this mark the end of 'hip and edgy'?

Everyone: No. ■

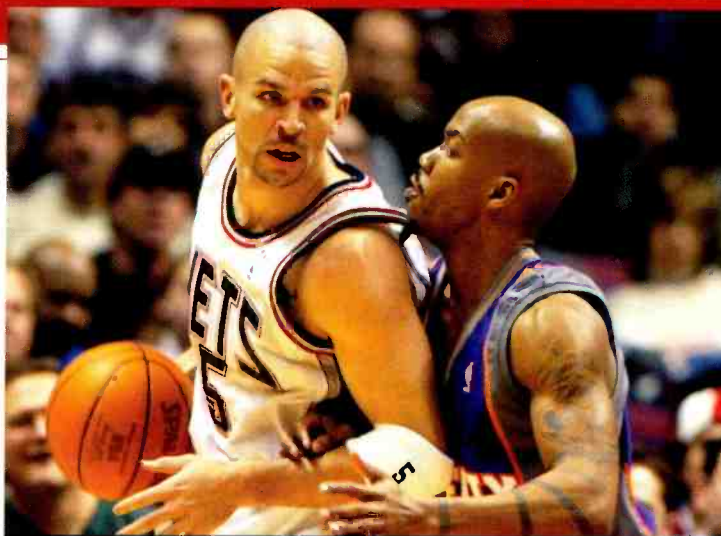
**Emmy Ratings Down**

An average of 17.9 million people watched the "55th Annual Primetime Emmy Awards" on Fox Sunday night, according to Nielsen Media Research final national numbers. The show scored a 7.1 rating and 19 share in adults 18 to 49. The total was down from the 20 million viewers who watched the show on NBC last year. However, it was still good enough to give Fox an easy win for the night in adults 18 to 49 and total viewers, as the other networks aired reruns or movies. The Emmys broadcast gave Fox its highest-rated Sunday night in seven months in adults 18 to 49 and total viewers.

This year's Emmys telecast—usually the biggest draw of the week it airs—finished third for the week in adults 18 to 49 and total viewers behind CBS's top-ranked "Survivor: Pearl Islands" premiere and ABC's "Monday Night Football."

The show was up slightly in total viewers from the last time Fox had the Emmys broadcast, in 1999, when it had 17.5 million viewers. ■

—LESLIE RYAN



**HD HOOPS** NBA TV, owned by the National Basketball Association, plans to telecast many games in high definition.

**NBA TV**

*continued from page 6*

crowded space by pointing out that the network's link to the league will provide an edge in the kind of coverage available on the channel. "We represent a unique and differentiated offering that an

ESPN or regional sports network might not," he said. "We represent all things that are basketball."

The NBA also is facing some long odds with respect to ratings. Without a Michael Jordan-like player to attract viewers these days, and with sexual assault charges confronting Kobe Bryant—who was once seen as a

**McCAIN** *continued from page 4*

in June.

"Policy with respect to media ownership rightfully lies within the jurisdiction of the Commerce Committee," Sen. McCain said in a recent letter to Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. "I urge you to remove the objectionable material."

**Ownership Hearings?**

In a glimmer of hope for Viacom and News Corp., sources said, Sen. McCain also has indicated that he wants to hold hearings on media ownership Thursday, Oct. 2, to re-examine rollback issues—particularly the issue of where the ownership cap should be set.

Like the riders on the appropriations bills, the Senate Commerce Committee legislation would roll the cap back from 45 percent to 35 percent.

But sources said the notion of finding a compromise—perhaps shifting the cap to 40 percent—is being batted around on Capitol Hill.

If the bar were moved to 40 percent, neither Viacom nor News Corp. would have to divest stations.

**Corporate Heartburn**

Pushing the cap back to 35 percent would cause major heartburn for both companies. Viacom's CBS currently owns stations reaching 39 percent of TV homes, while News Corp.'s Fox holds stations reaching 37 percent.

Network officials last week said they were unaware of compromise discussions.

But in a Sept. 22 interview on Fox News Channel, President Bush said the White House was going to "work with

Congress" on the rollback issue.

"There's always a chance [of compromise] before Congress finally acts," said President Bush, who, while expressing support for Republican FCC Chairman Michael Powell, stopped short of a commitment to veto override legislation.

Sen. McCain has criticized the rider on the appropriations bill because it targets only deregulation that the NAB and its affiliate-dominated TV board oppose, not FCC deregulation they support.

NAB and the affiliates have advocated, for instance, a rollback of the cap in the interest of checking the power of the networks.

But the association and the stations have vowed to fight efforts to overturn FCC action easing the newspaper-broadcast cross-ownership rules—deregulation that would be undone by the Senate Commerce Committee legislation.

"I continue to be mystified by the inconsistency," Sen. McCain said recently, his tongue firmly in cheek.

**Holds Can be Broken**

Despite Sen. McCain's druthers, some industry sources doubted he can derail the appropriations bill, because holds can be broken by the agreement of 60 senators.

Chris Murray, legislative counsel for the watchdog Consumers Union, said the commerce committee legislation would be good for the public because it is wider-reaching and could be permanent, while the appropriations bill would target one part of the FCC's deregulation and for only one year.

"It is an opportunity," Mr. Murray said. ■

likely candidate to achieve NBA ambassador status—casual fans seem to be turning elsewhere. Indeed, NBC, a longtime broadcaster of basketball, dropped its coverage in 2002, citing a 37 percent decline in ratings over the life of its most recent four-year contract. And this year's NBA Finals between New Jersey and San Antonio produced the lowest ratings for NBA Finals in Nielsen history.

For his part, Mr. Desser is confident that NBA TV has a following that will only get bigger. "If you think about it from the fans' standpoint, people no longer design their schedule around what is available on TV," he said. "People want what they want when they want it." He added that the NBA's deals with TNT, ESPN and ABC cover games on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights, leaving the rest of the week ripe for attracting fans interested in viewing games. ■

**BILLS**

*continued from page 4*

and ESPN Classic.

"The objective was to go beyond just buying 30-second commercials," said Fred Dubin, managing partner and director of national broadcast for the Treasury Department's agency Mediaedge:cia in New York. "Our challenge was to talk to everybody. We didn't have a lot to spend—but it is a lot for a two-week period."

Mr. Dubin wouldn't discuss price or overall dollar commitment. However, he did say that four other media conglomerates

**“We didn't have a lot to spend—but it is a lot for a two-week period.”**

Fred Dubin, managing partner and director, national broadcast, Mediaedge:cia

were also invited to pitch for the business—Time Warner, News Corp., NBC and Viacom Plus.

They eventually decided that Time Warner didn't have a major broadcast network component; News Corp. didn't have the breadth of television assets required; and NBC was too urban and upscale, Mr. Dubin said. That left Viacom's Viacom Plus division and ABC. Mr. Dubin, in explaining the decision, only said: "Disney was very responsive."

In a separate nonpaid media effort, the syndicated show "Wheel of Fortune" has been showcasing the new money. The bill was also shown as part of The WB's "Play for a Billion's" Sept. 14 telecast. ■



## TV CURRENTS

# 'Miami' Fixes Its Mistakes

Sitcom Defies Critics, Returns to NBC Lineup After Cast Changes to Focus on Workplace, Not Love

By Leslie Ryan

NBC's "Good Morning, Miami" was last season's No. 1-rated new sitcom in the advertiser-friendly adults 18 to 49 demographic that the network woos—yet its renewal was no no-brainer.

While an average of 13 million viewers tuned in each week, TV critics hated it with a passion usually reserved for sitcoms with such titles as "Shasta McNasty" and "American Wreck." It was just another mediocre sitcom in a long string of mediocre NBC sitcoms to fill the space between Thursday night hits, critics charged, and they were sick of it.

"Obviously, if we only went by what the critics said, the show probably wouldn't have been back," NBC Entertainment President Jeff Zucker told *TelevisionWeek*. "But that's not how we make our decisions."

Instead, the decision was made because NBC liked the creative direction the show was taking in the second half of the year and had faith in creators Max Mutchnick and David Kohan to iron out the kinks. NBC pays about the same amount of money to a studio for a first-year sitcom as a second-year sitcom, so finances didn't play a large role in the decision.

In April Mr. Mutchnick and Mr. Kohan pitched Mr. Zucker and a slew of NBC executives on how—if given a second season—they planned to turn the show away from the complicated love triangles that characterized season one toward more of a workplace comedy.

"As in so many of these cases, many of these shows need time to find their legs, especially when you premiere on Thursday night

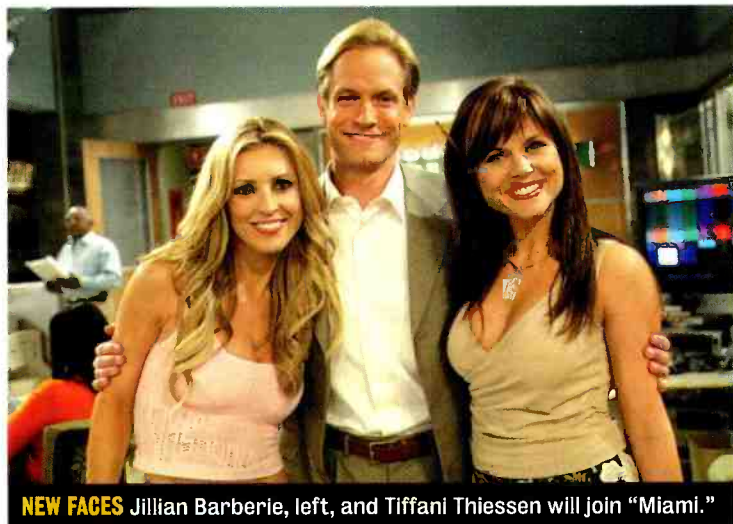
**"If we went by what the critics said, the show probably wouldn't have been back. But that's not how we make our decisions."**

Jeff Zucker, entertainment president, NBC

on NBC," said Mr. Zucker, who has always been a vocal fan of the show. "I just think you've got to let these shows try to find their legs."

"After you've invested all this money in promoting the show, you're a lot better off if you can make a go of that show in its second season than having to do it all over again."

However, the final decision wasn't made until the last minute. Mr. Mutchnick and Mr. Kohan were on a plane to New York for the broadcast networks' upfront presentations to advertisers in May when they got the



**NEW FACES** Jillian Barberie, left, and Tiffani Thiessen will join "Miami."

pickup from NBC.

"I think it happened somewhere over Indiana," Mr. Kohan said.

Mr. Mutchnick said it's worth it for NBC to give "Miami" another shot.

"If it works in the first 13 episodes, they are going to have a franchise," he said. "They are going to have another business that they can lean on for the next five, six, seven years. I really believe if this show works this year it will be on the air for six years, and I hope that a big lesson is learned for everybody."

With the official pickup in hand, that's when the real work began. Mr. Mutchnick and Mr. Kohan knew they had made creative mistakes early on in the show and needed to fix them. In essence, they came up with some rules of reinvention for the sitcom.

#### Bring in Some New Blood

With three shows in production—NBC's "Will & Grace" and "Good Morning, Miami" and CBS's "The Stones," a new sit-

com—Mr. Mutchnick and Mr. Kohan decided to hire a new showrunner for "Miami."

"When you're writing something and it's not going that well, you can get very inside the problem," Mr. Mutchnick said. "You can't see a way out. Going into the second year, we went out and said we have to find some new energy to bring into this writing process. We did that in hiring Bill Prady. [He] came in here with exactly the kind of energy we needed."

Mr. Prady was the showrunner/executive producer of "Dharma & Greg" after creator

Chuck Lorre left that show, and had been a writer on the sitcom "Dream On."

"Usually when you go in to talk to somebody about an existing product, there's a cautious approach to the conversation," Mr. Prady said. "What was really exciting about [Max and David] was they knew which elements of the show worked, and they were very open to discussing elements that they didn't feel had yet coalesced. When somebody is open to change, that's exciting. It's a pragmatic and forward-thinking approach."

The show's writing staff also has some new faces—about half the writing staff from last year was retained and new writers were added.

#### Give Leading Man Some Balls

Giving leading man Jake some *cojones* meant saying goodbye to Grandma. Last season, Jake (Mark Feurstein) originally came to Miami to visit his grandmother (Suzanne Pleshette), using a job interview at a low-rated TV morning show as an excuse. He stayed after he met and immediately fell for the station's cute hairstylist, Dylan (Ashley Williams).

Mr. Kohan and Mr. Mutchnick hated to see Ms. Pleshette go, but her character no longer served a purpose on the show.

"The problem was we had drawn a character that was the instrument of castration," Mr. Kohan said. "We gave [Jake] a grandmother who knew more about how to get women than he did. The idea of a leading man running home and telling his tales of woe to his Grandma, who has to support him, is not a good idea. It's not the way to best reflect on your leading man. That was our fault."

Another problem with Jake was the widespread perception among critics that he wasn't very funny. Mr. Prady said they can change that by making Jake's

character more assertive and using his authority as the morning show's executive producer to create more comedy.

"We shot something last night where [Jake] steps in to save [anchor] Gavin [Matt Letscher], and he has a really well thought-out but ultimately ineffectual plan, but his commitment to it made it very funny," Mr. Prady said. "The more we're able to solidify what his role is among these people, the funnier the character becomes."

#### Lose the Love Triangles

Last season the show was built around the fact that Jake moved to Miami to pursue Dylan, who was dating the morning show anchor, Gavin. All the while Jake's assistant Penny (Constance Zimmer) was secretly in love with Jake, though she hooked up with Gavin at the end of last season.

Confused yet?

Mr. Mutchnick and Mr. Kohan admitted they wrote themselves into a corner last season with tangled love triangles.

"There's an inherent problem built in with that because over time, if the boy doesn't get the girl, it's boring," Mr. Kohan said. "It ceases to be interesting. It's enough already. We knew going into the end of last season that there had to be some other kind of fundamental dynamic for the whole show."

This year Jake and Dylan will begin the season as an established couple and the show will evolve into a truer workplace comedy that explores the dynamics of all the characters as a surrogate family.

"There was so much potential in the secondary characters that because of the triangle story line [between Jake and Dylan], you hadn't really gotten a chance to explore these secondary characters," Mr. Prady said. "If you start to look at them, you start to realize they are all broken, damaged people who have found this place. The central question becomes can this group of people heal each other?"

After deciding to resolve the love triangles, the first order of business was to figure out what each character wanted and to plot what his or her goals were for the year.

"The three of us mapped out what each of their long-term objectives are," Mr. Kohan said. "Once you get Jake and Dylan

together, what you have are almost like surrogate parents of a troubled family. It opened up a world of possibilities. ... It seemed to present a greater variety of possibilities than who is going to get the girl."

#### Add a Common Adversary ...

... And it doesn't hurt if she's beautiful and funny.

Enter Tiffani Thiessen. She joined the cast of "Miami" this year in a recurring role playing Victoria, the new station boss sent by corporate headquarters to boost ratings.

"We had to bring in an outside force that would galvanize this group of people into a cohesive unit, almost like a family kind of unit," Mr. Kohan said.

Ms. Thiessen fits the bill perfectly, sashaying. She provides a threatening common foe for the characters and viewers at home to root against, but who has a few flashes of redeeming qualities.

"You see the bitch come in and just sort of be ruthless and unapologetic about it," Mr. Kohan said. "Because Tiffani is so good and because we wanted something else, we give her her own vulnerabilities. Suddenly you have an almost sympathetic character, which makes her a better opponent."

For example, one episode will show Victoria running into Gavin at his Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, adding another level to her character.

#### Populate the TV World

The producers will also take advantage of the fact that the show is set at a TV station, which makes possible other on-air personalities, staff and editors. "Good Day L.A." weather girl Jillian Barberie also joined "Miami" this season as recurring character Joni, a ditzy weather girl who aggravates serious news anchor Gavin.

While there are no plans to add any more permanent cast members this year, producers said additions will be organic, using the natural premise of employee turnover at a TV morning show. Joni was introduced in the first episode as a woman auditioning to be the station's new weather girl.

"We love Jillian, but if we hadn't liked her, then there would have been another audition and another woman there," Mr. Prady said. "Gavin would have said 'I can't work with that woman,' and then you would have seen another audition scene and another woman sitting there. That's how we're going to find our cast." ■



**BILL PRADY**



**MAX MUTCHNICK**



**DAVID KOHAN**



**TV CURRENTS****A&E NETS** *continued from page 1*

President and CEO Nick Davatzes and Executive VP Whitney Goit—has enjoyed an unusually high degree of independence over the past two decades.

Tom Rogers, who represented NBC on the A&E board in the 1990s, praised Mr. Davatzes: "Given the underlying partners, it is remarkable that Nick has held the partnership together so well, without significant issues and conflicts."

However, in an era of consolidation, questions remain whether A&E will stay independent. Many analysts doubt that it can in the long run. One problem that must be addressed quickly is that A&E today has one of the oldest audiences in cable. The average viewer is 59, which is considerably higher than the 18 to 49 and 25 to 54 demographics advertisers chase. "It's one of the bigger challenges we face," Mr. Davatzes acknowledged in an interview with *TelevisionWeek*.

This past year, for the first time in the history of the partnership, sources said, A&E has not achieved the fiscal results expected by the owners, causing concern among them.

Ray Joslin, president and group head of Hearst Entertainment and Syndication, who is on the executive committee overseeing A&E, acknowledged A&E has not met the board's financial goals. He cites as a reason the overall U.S. advertising downturn and the fact that A&E is already very widely distributed, which means it does not have as much room to grow its distribution.

Profit margins off the roughly \$1 billion A&E Networks is slated to produce in revenue this year, once solidly 40 percent, have fallen to about 35 percent. While A&E is still highly profitable and delivers solid free cash flow returns to the three partners, that kind of decline

could put in doubt its future as an independent.

The three partners held informal discussions earlier this year about breaking up A&E. Sources said neither NBC nor Disney is willing to let the other buy it out. The compromise proposed was to have Disney take over the A&E channel, while NBC would take the History Channel. Hearst, which would have taken a minority stake in both, apparently saw little benefit in such an arrangement and vetoed the split. According to an executive familiar with the partnership contract, there is no "buy/sell provision," meaning that a change in equity ownership would have to be approved by all three partners.

Besides the regular A&E board, the three investors also have an executive committee that meets to discuss strategic matters, including equity changes. This committee comprises Anne Sweeney, president of ABC Cable Networks;

NBC Cable President David Zaslav; and Hearst's Mr. Joslin. However, no workable new structure has emerged so far, and talks have stalled over valuation and control issues. A proposal by A&E management four years ago to do a public stock offering, which would have allowed the equity owners to cash out if they wished, was quickly quashed by the investment partners.

"If there's change, there's change," said Mr. Davatzes, who has enjoyed an unusually long tenure in his job. "There has been a lot of speculation. I can tell you this: All of our partners would like to have it all."

Mr. Joslin acknowledged there has been a lot of discussion concerning possible realignment of the A&E partnership. However, he denied anything will happen soon.

about the same as a year ago. It breaks down this way: CBS is looking for \$100 million; NBC, \$150 million; ABC, \$90 million; Fox, \$50 million; The WB, \$35 million; and UPN, \$20 million.

**Modest Increases**

For the previous fourth quarter, the networks' collective goal was around \$400 million, according to media buying executives. Networks easily outperformed those projections and, in addition, posted wildly high CPM (cost per thousand viewers) increases anywhere from 25 percent to 30 percent.

Media executives expect this fourth-quarter period to be more modest, with only 5 percent to 7 percent increases for broadcast, higher for cable. Higher ratings from network summer program-



"There's always conversations, but no deal has gotten so far along as to be really serious," he said.

Mr. Joslin and Mr. Davatzes both joke that they haven't even taken a look at the finer details of the partnership agreement "in about 150 years."

According to sources, NBC has assured A&E's top management tier that it has too much on its plate right now to be seeking major change in the near term. Through spokeswoman Alyssa Donelan, NBC Cable had no comment. Eric Hollreiser, a spokeswoman for ABC Cable, said: "We are always looking for ways to strengthen the business but we can't comment on any specific discussions."

Others believe that once NBC digests Vivendi's U.S. entertainment assets, it will look to expand even more. "NBC is on a tear now and sees the wisdom of spreading the wealth across as many compatible networks as possible. Don't be surprised if you see A&E come into the new entity NBC is setting up with Vivendi Universal," said Porter Bibb of Mediatech Capital.

For most of its history A&E has been highly profitable and enjoyed good ratings with high-quality programming that lived up to its latest tagline: "The Art of Entertainment." The A&E channel has carved out a niche

with an emphasis on three genres of programming: biography, documentary and drama.

The problem is that the market is changing rapidly, even as new competitors such as Trio appear and existing entities such as Bravo relaunch with notable success. That has led to erosion in A&E's viewership.

According to data supplied by Nielsen Media Research, over the past year A&E's prime-time household rating has fallen to 0.8, with a 1 share (for the period Sept. 23, 2002, through Sept. 23, 2003), with the network being watched in 880,000 homes in prime time. That contrasts with the same period in 1999, when A&E was scoring a 1.1 rating in prime time, and a 2 share. While 1.3 million people were watching A&E in prime time in 1999, today 1.1 million are.

One reason for this erosion is fairly clear—A&E has been copied to death. While "American Justice" is a pioneering show, its success has been duplicated endlessly, on Discovery, Court TV, The Learning Channel and other outlets. The "Biography" format has morphed into E!'s "True Hollywood Story," VH1's "Behind the Music," Lifetime's "Intimate Portrait" and even an MSNBC series, "Headliners & Legends." "It's nice to be cloned, but it's like breaking a story [as a journalist] and having somebody else make a movie out of it," said the Chicago-based Bill Kurtis, host and producer of "American Justice" and producer of A&E's "Cold Case Files."

Abbe Raven, executive VP and general manager of the A&E Network itself, acknowledged that her primary goal is to attract a younger audience.

"I have crafted a new vision, a new contemporary approach," she said, noting there are about 30 pilots in development. She proudly points to current shows such as the British co-production "M1-5" as the direction the network is headed. It is a younger-skewing police drama.

A&E also beat out heady

competition to acquire basic cable rights to the hit drama "CSI: Miami," which will air starting in 2005, at a price considerably above what A&E has previously paid for off-net fare. (The loss of another off-net drama, "Law & Order," a top 10 cable show now on TNT was a grievous blow to the channel.)

Ms. Raven said "Biography" is now featuring younger subjects such as Russell Crowe. A&E had a John Ritter "Biography" on the air the day after he died, she added, indicating a timely responsiveness not previously associated with the network.

A&E also has struggled to follow up "Biography" with another strong original franchise. "A&E needs to come up with a new signature show, which is the hardest thing to do in TV," said Larry Gerbrandt, analyst at Paul Kagan Associates.

Andy Donchin, senior VP and director of national broadcast at media buyer Carat North America, added, "We're a big supporter of A&E. We spend a lot of money with them, and we would like to see them re-establish their brand."

A&E investor NBC has recently demonstrated what can be done. It has helped launch a hit, Bravo's "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy," through promotion on outlets such as "The Today Show," "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno" and "Will & Grace." Moreover, because of cross-promotions and other tools, large consolidated network groups now possess the power to virtually remake cable channels at will. Viacom, in an impressive

move, lowered the age of the average viewer on Spike TV (formerly The National Network), from 57 to 37.

As a result of this marketing and promotion clout, the four biggest consolidated cable network groups (Fox, Disney, Viacom, Time Warner) completely dominate basic cable. In the week of Sept. 8 to 14, as listed in *TelevisionWeek*, only one show came from a network that is not part of these groups. And that was an original movie on Lifetime (which has a simpler ownership structure, shared equally by Hearst and Disney).

Larry Divney, CEO of Comedy Central and a former A&E executive, cautioned that concern about retransmission clout and cross-promotions offered by being part of a large group can be overemphasized.

Mr. Davatzes likes sports metaphors, and he offered one to explain why A&E can prevail in a heavily consolidated world. "Look at all the money that the Yankees have, and you know they will be in the playoffs," he said. "But the Mets [who are not doing well this season] spend just about as much money, and look where they are." ■

**NICK DAVATZES****WHITNEY GOIT****LATE Q4***continued from page 3*

don't necessarily adhere to the historical honor system of the "holds" process. This is causing some havoc among sellers estimating and planning future ad revenue—especially in the fourth quarter.

"It's too early to tell [about the fourth quarter]," said Jeff Lucas, president of advertising sales for Vivendi Universal's Universal Television Networks. "It's slow to materialize."

While media buyers and sellers haven't seen much money from advertisers yet, they say the six broadcast networks have set preliminary goals amounting to \$445 million in fourth-quarter "scatter" revenue. This is



## TV CURRENTS



**SLOW DEBUT** The new NBC sitcom "Coupling" debuted lower than "Good Morning, Miami's" premiere last year in the same time slot.

## PREMIERES

*continued from page 3*

show of the night in adults 18 to 49 with a 7.6/20 and scored its most-watched season premiere ever with 20.9 million total viewers. The Aaron Sorkin-less "West Wing" won the young-viewer battle in the competitive 9 p.m.-to-10 p.m. time slot with a 6.2/16. "The Bachelor" finished second in its 9 p.m.-to-11 p.m. time slot with a 6.0/16. "The Bachelor" had its highest opening night adults 18 to 49 rating and total viewers (12.5 million) in four editions. ("The Bachelorette," though, did open to bigger numbers last year.)

While the finale of CBS's "Big Brother" finished third in its 9 p.m. time slot, it still had a strong performance with a 4.2/11 and 10.7 million total viewers. CBS's new David E. Kelley drama "Brotherhood of Poland, N.H." didn't fare nearly as well, pulling a third-place 2.6/7 in adults 18 to 49 and 8.3 million viewers from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m.

From 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. ABC's "My Wife and Kids" dominated the hour with a 5.8/17 in adults 18 to 49—41 percent ahead of NBC's second-place "Ed"—and 13.6 million viewers.

The WB had a disastrous night. Its "Hilary Duff's Birthday" at 8 p.m. barely registered with a dismal last-place 0.7/2 in adults 18 to 49 and a mere 2.3 million viewers. A repeat of the first episode of "One Tree Hill" managed only a 0.7/2 in adults 18 to 49 and 2 million viewers.

UPN saw a slight uptick for "Enterprise" week to week (1.9/6 vs. 1.8/6), while "Jake 2.0" held steady at a 1.0—a 47 percent drop from its lead-in.

### Tuesday

**Adults 18 to 49:** ABC, 5/13

**Total viewers:** CBS and NBC, 12.2 million each

The season premiere of "8 Simple Rules ... for Dating My Teenage Daughter" helped propel ABC to victory in the adults 18 to 49 demo. The first of three episodes filmed before star John Ritter's death, it scored a whopping 7/21 in the demo and 17

million total viewers.

Benefiting from the lead-in, ABC's new sitcom "I'm With Her" won its time period in adults 18 to 49 (5.7/16) and in total viewers (13.2 million).

CBS's "Navy NCIS," a spinoff of former time slot occupant "JAG," got strong sampling with 13 million viewers tuning in. It finished fourth in adults 18 to 49 (2.7/8).

"Law & Order: SVU's" move to Tuesdays at 10 p.m. paid dividends for NBC. It won its time slot by a 37 percent margin in adults 18 to 49 over ABC's second-place "NYPD Blue" and gave NBC a 27 percent increase over its year-ago premiere week number in that time slot.

### Monday

**Adults 18 to 49:** NBC, 5.7/15

**Total viewers:** CBS, 16.4 million

A two-hour "Fear Factor" helped drive NBC to its first outright victory in adults 18 to 49 on premiere night since 1988. The strong "Fear" lead-in pushed viewers to sample new drama "Las Vegas." "Vegas" finished third in adults 18 to 49 (5/13) and total viewers (12.3 million) but was up against tough time slot competition from CBS's "CSI: Miami" (5.9/15 and 17.4 million) and ABC's "Monday Night Football" (7/19 and 17.3 million).

CBS's "Everybody Loves Raymond" was the most-watched show of the night with 20.1 million total viewers and won its time slot in adults 18 to 49 (6.5/16). New sitcom "Two and a Half Men" gave CBS its best retention of any program following "Raymond." It retained 91 percent of "Raymond's" 18 to 49 audience with a 5.9/14 and 89 percent of total viewers with 18.4 million.

UPN's sitcom block grew 22 percent in adults 18 to 49 over premiere night last year. The combination of "Girlfriends" and "Half & Half" beat The WB's "Everwood" in adults 18 to 49, but The WB won the night in the demo, thanks to a strong performance by "7th Heaven." ■

## FAB FIVE

*continued from page 1*

deal. The last seven episodes of the first season are set to be taped in coming weeks as part of an earlier deal.

David Collins, "Queer Eye's" co-creator and executive producer, told *TelevisionWeek* that when the show was first produced, it was considered "just another cable reality show" and therefore the original salaries were appropriate. Since the rise of the show has been so meteoric, with the Fab Five going from television debut to rock-star status in mere weeks, Mr. Collins said it should not be surprising that the sudden popularity might take time to affect the cast's paychecks. The mechanics of business among NBC, Bravo and Scout do not move faster than the speed of media hype, he said.

"It's unfortunate it's been getting played out in public," Mr. Collins said. "But with the show's success, everybody will be taken care of appropriately—and that's all there is to say about that."

NBC has sold the series as well as its format internationally and some expect the distributor to earn \$15 million to \$20 million on the initial sale of the hour-long show with deals ranging from Australia to England. In addition, after scoring "strong" ad buys on Bravo and in prime time over the summer on NBC because of the popularity of the show, agents for the quintet were quick to point out that the hosts of the series were underpaid. (NBC is expected to continue repurposing episodes.)

"The cleaning ladies here made more money than they did," one source close to the Fab Five said. "It was absolutely ridiculous that we had to even

fight for it the way we did, considering they put that channel on the map."

Agents are making sure the cast is taken care of in other ways. A \$1.23 million book deal is already in place for the five-some, and they have signed a deal to jointly promote a women's product for advertisers. The quintet also is scheduled to appear in the second episode of sophomore NBC comedy "Good Morning, Miami."

Individually, members of the group are earning at least \$50,000 for speaking engage-

at the "Entertainment Tonight" party and were approached by a constant stream of civilian fans Friday night before the Emmys at the Avalon Hotel bar in Los Angeles, where they stayed for the weekend.

The Fab Five also rubbed elbows with many other TV big shots on the crowded red carpet of the Emmy Awards, where they were on assignment for NBC Enterprises' "Access Hollywood" on Emmy night. It was a tall order for a group of guys who had little or no television experience until a few short

## It became clear during Emmy weekend that the Fab Five are some of the biggest stars in the television business right now.

ments. Food maven Mr. Allen scored an endorsement deal with General Mills, Mr. Filicia is discussing a way to create his own line of furniture, and insiders said Mr. Kressley could soon see some time behind the microphone as a style analyst for some news shows.

The flurry of interest surrounding the Fab Five's compensation has been nearly as intense as the interest in the reality stars themselves.

It became clear during Emmy weekend that the Fab Five are some of the biggest stars in the television business right now—perhaps even bigger than the slew of highly paid, statuette-toting actors who requested photos with them after the awards show. One of the most telling moments was the point at which Ray Romano, who is earning an estimated \$40 million for this season of "Everybody Loves Raymond," approached them for a photo at HBO's after-party. The Five likewise turned heads

months ago. The group, however, made it through the crush relatively unscathed. They were slightly tardy after the Hummer limo they were scheduled to ride in had problems with its air-conditioning system and had to be replaced by a traditional white ride. Mr. Kressley, like so many Emmy guests over the years, misplaced some jewelry, a diamond piece from a borrowed watch, for which "Access" is making an insurance claim.

"It was actually a thrill for all of us—from going to the red carpet to going to the Emmys, to the Governor's Ball," Mr. Collins said. "Carson made sure we all looked phenomenal. At the Governor's Ball, we got to spend time with the NBC and Bravo family. Everybody from [NBC Entertainment President] Jeffrey Zucker to [NBC's exec VP in charge of alternative programs and Bravo President] Jeff Gaspin was hanging out with them." ■

*Melissa Grego contributed to this report.*

## AWARDS

*continued from page 1*

nationally Funny Moment in a Drama and the Just Shoot Me Award for the "comedy program that's been on the air too long."

Lauren Corrao, senior VP of original programming and head of development at Comedy Central, said the network was eager to resuscitate a venue for awarding comedic performers.

"Comedy is extremely difficult to do well, and a lot of great comic performances are often overlooked by the other awards," Ms. Corrao said.

The American Comedy Awards were produced from 1986 to 2001 and utilized a traditional awards show format. The show aired for many years on ABC until moving to Fox from 1998 to 2000, then jumped to Comedy Central in 2001. Ms. Corrao said the Commies will take a more satirical approach.

"I think that when Comedy Central got the American Comedy Awards, it was in its last cou-



**TWO-FISTED TALENT** "The Daily Show With Jon Stewart" was a double Emmy winner.

ple of years and there seemed to be a diminished excitement," she said. "We want to rejuvenate the awards. At every point along the way, every element needs to be funny—whether a music act or an award or a presenter. We're hoping to bring the funny to all those traditional elements."

The show will make Comedy Central the latest network in the Viacom family to create a signature awards show. Though the irreverent categories seem to suggest inspiration from MTV's video and music awards, insid-

ers said the project was in development before Viacom bought out Time Warner's stake in the channel.

The Commies telecast will consist of award presentations peppered by music acts, clip packages and stand-up comedy. Winners in most categories will be chosen by viewers voting on the Comedy Central Web site. "Miss America" and "Teen Choice Awards" veteran Bob Bain will executive produce. The trophy itself will be shaped like a bobblehead.

Though Jon Stewart, host of Comedy Central's "The Daily Show With Jon Stewart," would be an obvious choice for host, Comedy Central said the host slot has yet to be determined. After last week's Emmy Awards, however, Ms. Corrao confirmed the Commies will definitely not have 11 comics sharing hosting duties.

"It's so funny because when I heard they were doing that, I thought that it might not be a bad idea," Ms. Corrao said. "Then I was sitting there watching it and saying, 'Oh my God.'" ■



# TOM SHALES



## SAPPY SITCOMS SEEM SWEET AFTER GALLONS OF GORE

finally caught Michael Moore's film "Bowling for Columbine" on pay-per-view the other night. Moore can alienate even those in basic agreement with some of his ideas, as he did with his calculated misbehavior at the Oscars. It was galling, too, that he trotted off to Cannes with his film to compete for (and win) a top prize there; when shown in other countries, especially those hostile to the United States, "Columbine" becomes rabble-rousing anti-American propaganda. And no rabble are roused so easily as French rabble.

But viewed in its native land, the film is impressive both for its sobering analysis and for sequences that are stunningly insane, like the opener in which Moore discovers a bank in Michigan that gives away free guns to new customers. Near the end, Moore interviews a befuddled Charlton Heston, who gets mad and walks out indignantly, even though the interview takes place on his own property. Heston is no Dorian Gray; all his words and deeds are right there in his grisly visage, topped with a hairpiece that appears to have fallen haphazardly out of a tree.

What makes the film relevant to television are the segments devoted to what Moore sees as America's culture of fear, and these portions are more relevant now that many shows of the new fall TV season have premiered. They prove again that fear is good business and that those in a position to exploit it for profit can make themselves tidy, if unseemly, fortunes. Night after night, it's murder murder murder. Crime shows are nearly as dominant as Westerns were in their prime.

On any given night of the week, you can cuddle up with crime and crimefighters. Yes, most crimes are resolved and criminals apprehended in each of these hour-long ordeals, but having a prime-time schedule so overloaded with mayhem and menace has to be unhealthy. It encourages fear instead of allaying it, contributing to what media scholar George Gerbner once dubbed the "mean-world syndrome"—the TV-fostered impression that the world is even

more fraught with peril and horror than it actually is.

The world changed, of course, on Sept. 11, 2001. At the end of the great British film about the Titanic, "A Night to Remember," a surviving officer says he doesn't think he'll ever feel certain about anything again. When airplanes crashed into the towers, and another into the Pentagon, some Americans had to be thinking they would never feel safe again. We are all still living with a communal version of post-traumatic stress disorder. A shock like this may never be shaken off, nor perhaps should it be.

Isn't it disturbing, then, considering the cloud of danger under which we all now live, that so many television shows exploit the fear of being harmed or killed and now even

**Night after night, it's murder murder murder. Crime shows are nearly as dominant as Westerns were in their prime.**

deal specifically with the terrorist threats of a post-9/11 world? The premiere of CBS's wildly unnecessary "Navy NCIS" conjured an attack on the president himself and had agents running all over Air Force One looking for a terrorist on a mission of murder. That new series leads off an entire night of law and order on CBS: "NCIS," then "The Guardian," then "Judging Amy."

ABC has made Sunday, of all nights, terror night on the network. "The Wonderful World of Disney" has been banished to Saturday—even on this Disney-owned outfit—and once "America's Funniest Home Videos" is out of the way, ABC spooks viewers with "10-8," a show about cops fighting crime on L.A. streets (there's a fresh concept for you); "Alias," about a shapely and sultry CIA agent fighting international criminals in her jogging bra; and "The Practice," reconfigured and recast but still about murders and the folks who commit them, and intent on being "shocking."

CBS gave one of the week's most prominent pieces of real estate, Sunday night at

8, after "60 Minutes," to "Cold Case," a very well-done but very violent new show about a shapely if not sultry policewoman who digs up old unsolved murders and tries to close the books on them. The pilot included gruesome shots of dead bodies as well as graphic flashbacks to the killing in question. That's another fairly recent development in the increasingly competitive network world: Blood-spattered corpses and close-ups of gashes and wounds, once verboten, are now commonplace.

Even CBS's aggressively wholesome new "Joan of Arcadia," about a 16-year-old girl who gets personal visits from God, has to include a serial killer at loose in at least the show's first arc. The ratio of serial killers on TV to serial killers in real life must be about

2,000 to one. That goes for the movies, too, of course. Killers, killers, everywhere. You watch enough TV, you get the idea that a trip to the supermarket is like a dash through a minefield, like going to the boundary between North and South Korea and making faces at the commie guards.

Blaming "the media" for violence in America is specious and cheap. But in letting the current crime wave get out of hand, and all in the pursuit of a competitive advantage and more ad revenue, the networks are acting irresponsibly. Maybe they're doing it just so that those of us who used to say "please, no more sappy sitcoms" will feel remorseful and chagrined. OK, fine. Herewith a request: More sappy sitcoms, please. Even more embarrassing "reality" shows and no-talent talent contests and peephole tours of Smut Island and Foreplay Hotel.

Anything but another hour of prime-time terrorvision—because there's a lot more at stake here than ratings, shares and demographics. ■

## SPARK

continued from page 24

commercial-free and rely on affiliate fees as the revenue stream. "I think we're going to evolve and focus on what the future business model should be for a network," he said. "We are exploring a lot of different ways of doing that—everything from sponsorships to promotional relationships. Unless you are in front of 40 [million] to 50 million eyeballs, you can't sell ads," he said.

The networks are currently available to about 500,000 Comcast subscribers who have HD-

capable set-top boxes. Mr. Kuharsky said iN Demand will talk to satellite operators about carriage.

Since iN Demand is owned by four cable operators, it's possible that HDNet could be shut out of those multiple system operators, since they will be carrying INHD and INHD2, said Adi Kishore, analyst with the Yankee Group.

Mr. Kishore added that the approach of Christmas is driving HD activity. "As we get closer to that, we will see more and more consumers walking into retail

outlets looking to buy a TV set and getting sold HD," he said.

By the end of the year, 9 million homes will have HD-capable sets and about one-third of those can receive HD content today, he said. By the end of 2007 nearly 47 million homes will have HD sets and nearly 42 million of those will be able to receive

HD content, Mr. Kishore added. According to the National Cable and Telecommunications Association, as of Sept. 1, 60 million cable homes are in an area



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# TelevisionWeek

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