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December 2000

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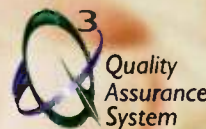
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FEATURES

The Intersection of Hollywood and Christianity **24**

BY DOUG TROUTEN

Movies with a decidedly Christian message are coming in vogue. Are they the next big thing in Hollywood's future? Veterans and newcomers in the Christian film industry try to read the road map of the future.

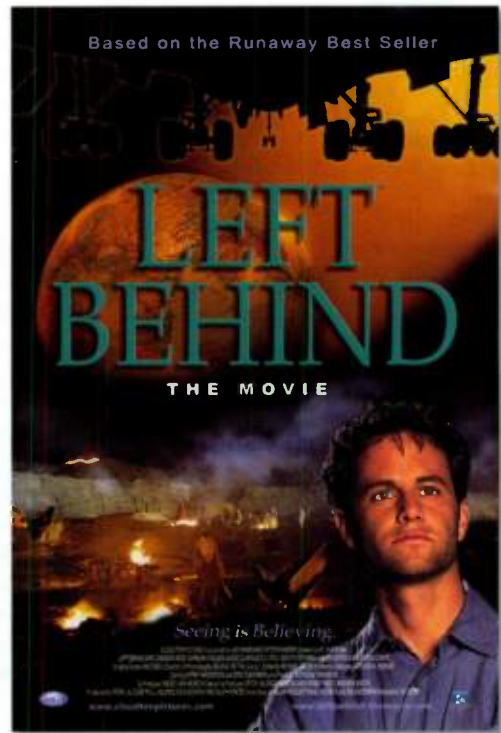
Convergence **34**

BY PHIL COOKE

Want to make an impact on the digital age? It'll take a lot more than wanting. In a world of unlimited channels, you'll have to build a door people want to open. Put out the welcome mat with these six keys to convergence!



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Team NRB



Michael T. Glenn is vice president of NRB and associate publisher of NRB magazine. He may be reached at mglenn@nrb.org or 703-330-7000, ext. 502.

The summer Olympics in Australia has run its course. The much-anticipated "Subway Series" World Series just concluded. The NFL season is well underway. Professional hockey and basketball recently began their long, annual quests for their respective championships. Culture's thirst for sports is seemingly unquenchable.

I think of NRB as a team. We have a Hall of Fame. We are comprised of coaches and players who understand the value of producing better programs, of continually improving fundraising techniques, of evaluating fiduciary responsibilities, of recruiting and developing young players through the Intercollegiate Religious Broadcasters and of seeking new and better ways to communicate the Gospel.

Similarly, the NRB office is a team and provides the crucial information and support you need through workshops, exhibits, magazine articles, weekly broadcast faxes, e-mail alerts and networking at regional and annual conventions. Our corporate face and name is known at the FCC and on Capitol Hill.

Name a communications sport — radio, TV, print, music, A/V, the Internet or the spoken word — and you'll find a strong NRB team lineup, with skilled offense, ready defense and balanced strengths. We have the best arenas in the world as we reach into cars, homes and businesses. And we send our signal into the sky in an Olympic feat, reaching areas previously untouched by our message.

God has gifted many people with unique player skills in speaking, writing, production, marketing, administration and so on. This team is not limited by the physical standards of man; it

doesn't require a 6'5" bruiser who weighs 275 pounds, has a vertical leap of 48 inches, runs like a deer and has eyes like an eagle. We are in the most significant game of all, in which God uses every size, shape, age, color and gender to enhance the Kingdom. We must be certain to maximize every gift.

Professional players know their job is on the line every day. Someone can move into a spot in the starting lineup at any moment. Off-season, players work on weaknesses and implement rigorous physical training programs to be the best player possible. But there is no off-season in Christian communication. We are in a game — a non-stop battle royale. And we have the best playbook ever penned, written by the ultimate Coach.

The outcome of our battle is more important than gold-plated trophies or one-pound platinum rings. We are engaged with our communities to make an impact in order to literally win our world for Christ. As C.S. Lewis wrote, "He works on us in all sorts of ways. But above all, He works on us through each other. Men are mirrors, or 'carriers' of Christ to other men."

Do you wear your team colors? Do you circuit train to be ready in season and out? Do you avidly support teammates? Do you hold yourself to a holy standard and play by the rules God has given? Team NRB can afford nothing less than your absolute best. Get excited about it! After all, the New York Yankees don't have the most widely known and recognized logo; we do. It's the cross of Jesus Christ.

A Progressive Prayer

At the recommendation of a good friend, I just read *The Prayer of Jabez* by Bruce Wilkinson (Multnomah, 2000). Hidden in a string of genealogies in 2 Chronicles, Jabez prayed a four-part prayer that can make all the difference in your life.

- "Oh, that You would bless me indeed..."
This is not just a "bless me, bless me" prayer, but a request for all of God's fullness in our lives. We ask that His supernatural goodness would so infuse our lives that we would overflow with His blessings.
- "Oh, that You would enlarge my territory..."
Once our lives are filled with God's blessing, He will expand our influence to others. Here we're asking God to expand our borders and give us more ministry opportunities.
- "Oh, that Your hand would be with me..."
Once God blesses us and enlarges our ministry influence, we need His continual touch of greatness on our lives. God's hand upon us in our lives makes our work bold, effective and compelling.

- "Oh, that You would keep me from evil..."
The susceptibility of leaders to pride, lust and power reminds us of our need for God's protection from evil and danger. In our ministry, we need to pray that God would keep evil far from us at times when we're prone to make mistakes.

I strongly suggest that you begin to pray this prayer regularly in your personal and ministry life. As many Christian leaders begin to make this progressive prayer a part of their lives, we will begin to see an outpouring of God's blessing, the expansion of ministry influence, the power of the Holy Spirit in our endeavors and strong protection from the enemy.

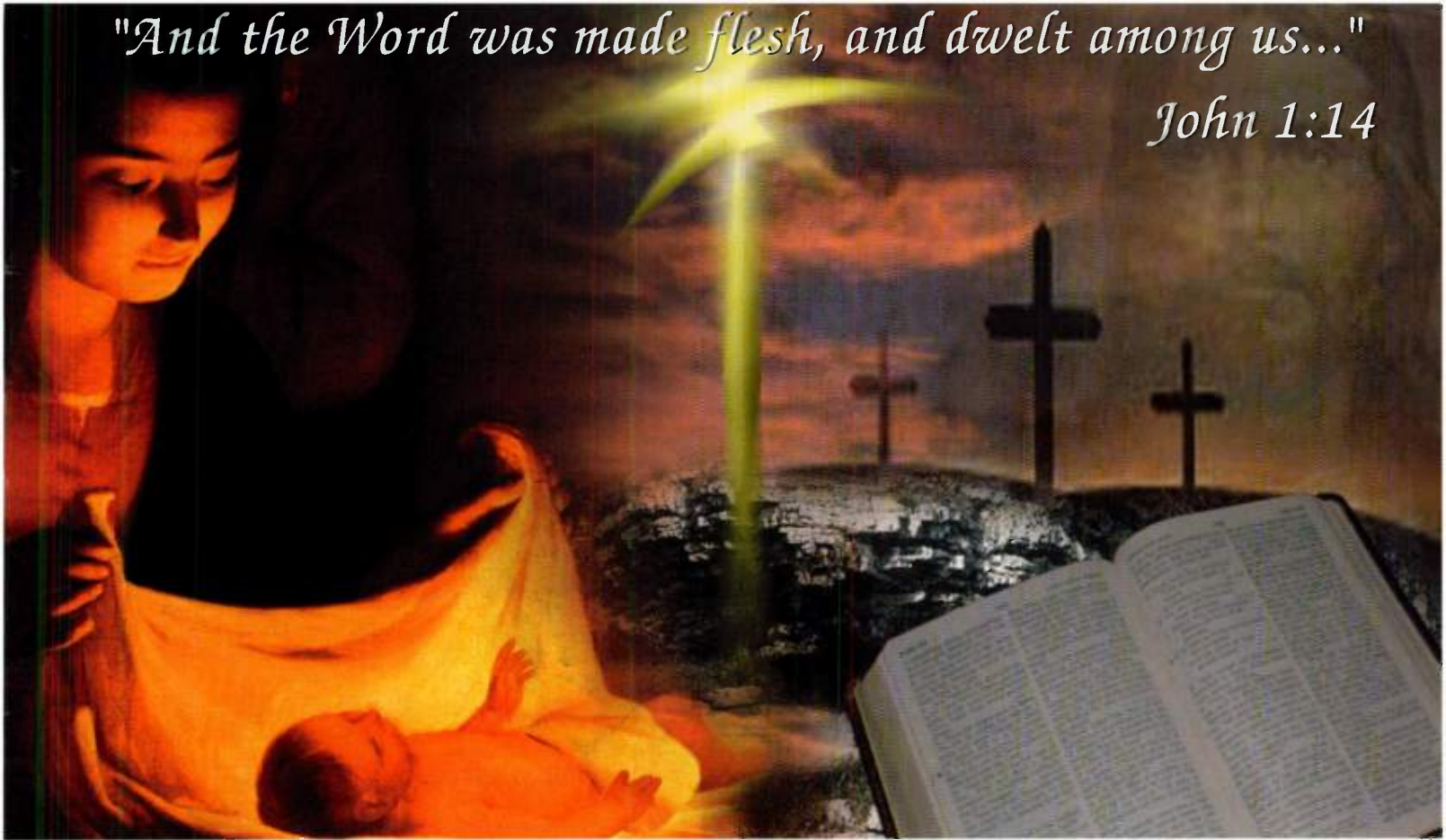
This is my prayer for you and for every member of NRB!



Wayne Pederson is chairman of NRB and executive vice president of Northwestern College Radio Network in St. Paul, MN. He may be reached at wap@nwc.edu or 651-631-5000.

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us..."

John 1:14



Dick Bott
President

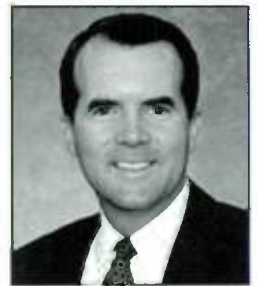
2000 years ago God gave us His Word in human flesh. At this time of year we celebrate the birth of Jesus. But we must also remember His sacrificial death on the cross, and His **victorious resurrection**. The Living Word of God still changes lives today. What

a wonderful gift available to all who accept it.

That's why . . . **Bott Radio Network** still features the preaching and teaching of **God's Word** as our **first** priority. We also serve our audience with news, issues and current events from a **Biblical** world-view.

Our goal is to help people grow in the Lord, and then to apply their Christian faith to their daily lives . . . not just at Christmas, but throughout the year.

At Bott Radio Network, we believe that knowing God's Word, and then applying it to our lives, as well as to the issues of our day, is the only way to effect real change ... in the hearts and the lives of people in America ... as well as the rest of our world.



Richard Bott
Executive
Vice President

Merry Christmas from **BOTT RADIO NETWORK**

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Kansas City Kansas City St. Louis St. Louis Oklahoma City Shawnee Memphis Ft. Wayne Wichita Topeka Richmond Kirksville Sunrise Beach Lincoln Fresno/Modesto



CALENDAR

- **January 6-9, 2001**
2001 Consumer Electronics Show;
Las Vegas, NV. 703-907-7600.
- **January 22**
Association of Local Television
Stations Convention; Las Vegas, NV.
Angela Giroux, 202-887-1970.
- **January 22-25**
National Association of TV Program
Executives (NATPE) Annual
Convention; Las Vegas, NV. 310-453-
4440.
- **February 1-4**
Radio Advertising Bureau RAB 2001;
Dallas, TX. 972-753-6740.
- **February 10-13**
58th Annual NRB Convention &
Exposition; Wyndham Anatole
Hotel, Dallas, TX. Gina Ebhardt, 703-
330-7000, ext. 503.
- **April 23-26**
National Association of Broadcasters
NAB 2001; Las Vegas, NV. Kathleen
Muller, 202-775-3527.

- **May 20-23**
Broadcast Cable Financial
Management Association 41st
Annual Conference; Toronto,
Ontario. Mary Teister, 847-296-0200.
- **February 16-20, 2002**
59th Annual NRB Convention &
Exposition; Opryland Hotel,
Nashville, TN. Gina Ebhardt, 703-
330-7000, ext. 503.

DALLAS NRB 2001 TEXAS

February 10 — 13, 2001
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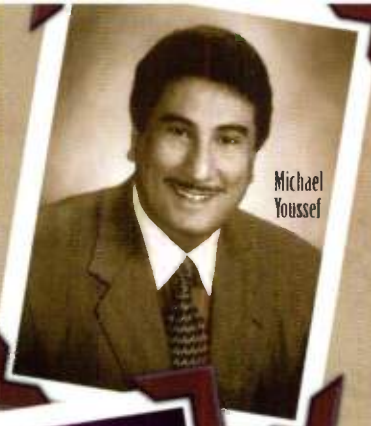
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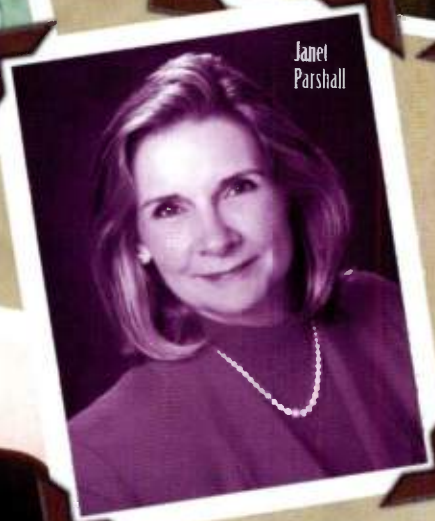
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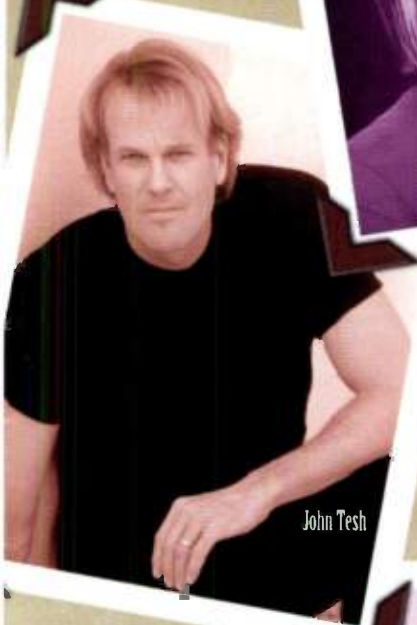
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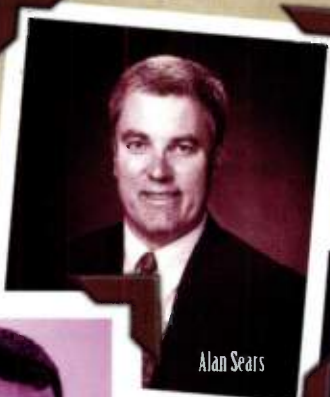
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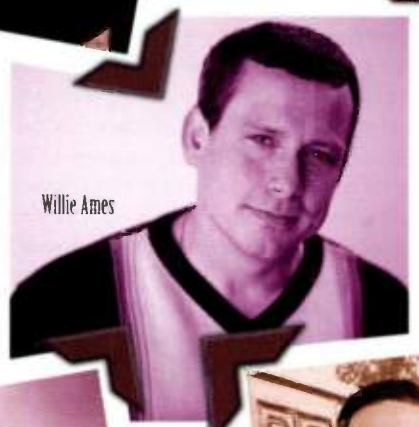
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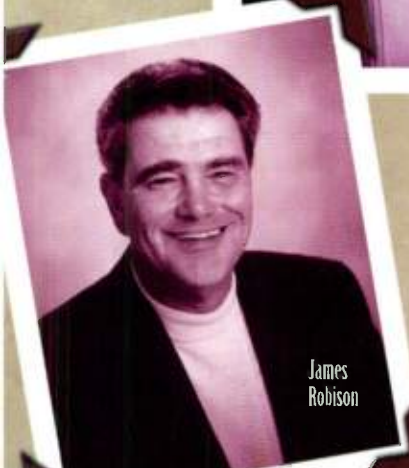
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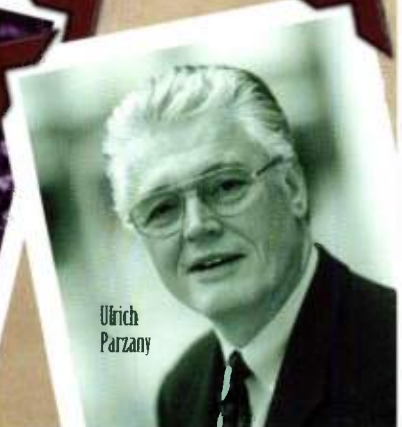
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FCC Considering Heightened TV Content Regulation



NRB general counsel Richard E. Wiley is a former FCC chairman. He is a partner in the law firm of Wiley, Rein and Fielding. Partner Rosemary C. Harold assisted in the preparation of this column.

The Federal Communications Commission recently signaled a renewed interest in broadcast content regulation — by proposing new rules that are in some ways reminiscent of speech mandates swept away during the Reagan era. Specifically, the Commission is considering a significant increase in the level of detailed record-keeping required of television broadcasters under the so-called “issues/programs” rules and the Children’s Television Act of 1990.

As explained below, the FCC’s proposals would not fully revive the obligations that applied before the broadcast deregulation of the early 1980s. Rather, the new initiatives — if adopted — effectively would require TV licensees to increase the scrutiny of programming and control their program schedules in order to comply with more elaborate reporting mandates. The proposals also reflect the agency’s growing interest in the Internet; the FCC is considering broadly requiring broadcasters to replicate the paper contents of their public file in online form.

Whether these concepts ripen into regulations may hinge on the outcome of the November elections. Republican control of the White House, which would lead to a GOP majority on the now Democrat-controlled FCC, could abort such new initiatives.

Public Interest Programming

The most controversial of the proposed content regulations stems from the agency’s ongoing “digital public interest” rulemaking. Since last year, the FCC has been considering whether it should adapt or increase the existing public interest programming obligations to digital television (DTV) which, among its other technical attributes, allows for the transmission of multiple program streams.

Among the existing rules is a mandate requiring all broadcasters to air programs that address community issues. A station must document its compliance with the obligations by drawing up its own quarterly “issues/programs” list for its public file, but there is no specific FCC form required for the purpose.

The agency now proposes to devise a standardized form because it perceives a need to help the public scrutinize stations’ compliance with their obligations. The FCC also has tentatively concluded that the need for “consistency and uniformity” of these reports warrants current use of the form for analog operations, regardless of the status of licensees’ DTV facility build-outs. (While the FCC has not yet proposed requiring radio licensees to use the form, its legal rationale is not limited to TV.)

In addition, the agency seeks comment on whether a standardized form should require licensees to identify specific categories of programming they have aired — including news, public affairs, “political discourse programming for underserved communities,” public service announcements, closed captioning, and video descriptions — as well as the communi-

ty issues addressed. Critics of this proposal contend that it would improperly express a governmental preference for certain types of programming and could create a “soft quota” for some content.

Furthermore, the FCC proposes to require broadcasters to provide a narrative description of the actions they take “to assess [their] community’s programming needs and interests.” This concept harkens back to the formal “ascertainment” procedures that the agency required until 1984. However, the Commission distinguishes the new proposal by noting that it would involve a more informal process and less detailed data-reporting.

Finally, the FCC tentatively concludes that it should order broadcasters to post the new issues/programs form — as well as all other documents in their public inspection file — on the Web sites of stations or of state broadcasters associations. Stations would have to update the online form on a quarterly basis (as is required now for the paper documentation) and maintain the Web site material throughout the license term.

The agency will accept comments in this rulemaking through December 18, 2000. A complete copy of the proposal is available via the FCC’s Web site at www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Mass_Media/Notices/2000/fcc00345.pdf.

Children’s Television Programming

In a separate rulemaking, the FCC is considering a range of suggestions on how its children’s programming (kidvid) rules should apply to DTV — a number of which would increase a licensee’s current obligation to air at least three hours of educational fare per week. The agency also seeks comment on whether it should tighten the permissible preemptions of children’s programs, impose additional commercial limits on kidvid fare and restrict promotions that are “unsuitable for children.”

Through another rulemaking docket, the FCC also amended certain aspects of the current “Children’s Programming Report.” Among other things, the new regulations extend the requirement that broadcasters file the kidvid reports with the FCC (a mandate originally set to expire this year) and direct stations to provide more detailed information concerning any preemption of children’s shows. Additionally, the agency asked for comment on one aspect of its action on the forms — a proposal for requiring licensees to post their kidvid reports on their Web sites or to provide a link to the FCC’s Web site, which already provides the reports for all stations.

As with the public interest programming proceeding, comments in the two kidvid dockets are due by December 18, 2000.

For more details on the proposals:

www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Mass_Media/Notices/2000/fcc00344.pdf

www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Mass_Media/Orders/2000/fcc00343.pdf

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AIRWAVE NEWS RADIO

Atlanta, GA - Contemporary Christian music radio station WFSH-FM signed on the air. Salem Communications obtained the radio station through an asset exchange agreement with Cox Radio earlier this year when it acquired Cox's WALR-FM transmitting facility and signal. WALR-FM moves to 104.1 FM. WFSH streams online at www.oneplace.com. (Tricia Whitehead, 615-599-7746)

Zarephath, NJ - WAWZ FM, serving the New York, New Jersey and eastern PA region, launched a one-day financial appeal on September 27 for the NeedHim National Media Outreach. NeedHim Executive Director Drew Dickens and Director of Operations Bob Thayer joined WAWZ morning host Scott Taylor and Zarephath Bible Institute President Rob Cruver on the air. (Allen Lewicki, 732-469-0991)



Nashville, TN - GSF & Associates announces a new agency relationship with Mission Network News (MNN), a ministry of Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids, MI. MNN partners with more than 70 international mission organizations to provide a broad perspective of missions activities through short feature radio programs. (615-361-1810)

Dallas, TX - In September, the stations of Criswell Communications conducted their annual SHARE fundraisers, with listener-supported pledges totaling over \$2.8 million. KCBI-FM, the flagship station of Criswell Communications, went over its goal of \$2.6 million in a record five-day SHARE event. Criswell Communications' KSYE-FM/Frederick, OK, also set a new mark with \$72,568 pledged from 536 listeners. KCRN AM-FM/San Angelo also set a new record, with pledges totaling \$142,650. (Troy Kriechbaum, 817-792-3800)

Sacramento, CA - K-LOVE Radio Network added three stations in Memphis, TN: KSUD-AM-FM, and WPLX-AM. In addition, an FM translator was recently added in Casper, WY. (Lloyd Parker, 916-282-1400)



Fort Wayne, IN - Homeless veterans in Northwest and West Central, OH, and Northeast Indiana will have new winter clothing, thanks to the WBCL Radio Network's project Warm Hands, Warm Hearts. New winter apparel, clothing and undergarments were collected from September 25 to October 28. Donations and an easy-to-read Bible in the Contemporary English Version were distributed through local veteran's offices to coincide with Veterans Day. (Terry Foss, 219-745-0576)



AIRWAVE NEWS TELEVISION

Burbank, CA - *The Millennium Chorus* video and DVD from Ascent Music, directed by Phil Cooke, received the Platinum Best of Show award at the National Aurora video awards. The competition included AT&T, Chase Manhattan Bank, the History Channel, PBS and other nationally known companies. (Phil Cooke Pictures, Inc., 818-563-2125)



Chicago, IL - In September, TLN introduced the newly formed TLN Affiliate Stations Group, consisting of more than 80 Christian television stations nationwide of full- and low-powered commercial and non-commercial stations, broadcasting the new TLN FamilyTime TV programming block. In other TLN news, *Encounters With the Unexplained* is being touted as the top-rated show on the PAX TV Network for the fall season. The primetime mystery series, hosted by NBC's *Law & Order* star Jerry Orbach, is averaging nearly 2 million viewers every Friday evening. (Debra Hall, 312-433-3838)



Lynchburg, VA - *Listen America*, a nationwide television call-in program hosted by Jerry Falwell, recently completed its 100th program. (Channing Shipley, 804-239-5879)



Forest, VA - *Escape From Hell*, a feature film shot in high definition by filmmaker Danny Carrales is currently in post-production. (DRC Productions, 804-239-6763)



Lynchburg, VA - The Liberty Broadcasting Network recently received an RIAA certified gold video award for its role in producing the long-form video, *Kids Sing Christmas* for Brentwood Music. The award is the video equivalent to a gold record, certifying video sales of 50,000 or more. (Bob Lauro, Producer/Director, 804-582-7525)

Fort Worth, TX - FamilyNet added two new affiliates: WPNS-TV-Channel 8/Pensacola, FL; and WACW-TV-Channel 20/Wilson, NC. (Denise Cook, 817-737-4011)



Nashville, TN - Multi-platinum selling Grammy and Dove Award winning band Jars of Clay taped a segment for a *CNN World Beat* special on Christian music, which was set to air nationwide and internationally in November. Jars of Clay recently celebrated career sales of over 4 million units in less than five years. (Rick Hoganson, 615-459-9870-9907)



L-R: *CNN World Beat* reporter Chris Murphey on the set with Jars of Clay members Matt Odmark and Dan Haseltine

Nashville, TN - "Return of the King" is the first release in *Kingdom Under the Sea*, a 13-video series from Bridgestone MultiMedia. The series will be available on DVD and VHS video, and is distributed by Provident Music Distribution. In addition, ancillary products such as plush, apparel, VBS curriculum, board games and computer games are scheduled to be introduced incrementally beginning in spring 2001. The first of these new products will coincide with the March 2001 release of the second episode in the series, "Red Tide." (800-523-0988)

Airwave Anniversaries



West Point, NY - On Sept 30, former NRB executive director Dr. Ben Armstrong honored founder Dr. Gordon Simpson Anderson for the 50th anniversary of his ordination. Anderson has served as TV host for 40 years on *Focus on Faith* and served 52 years as an

official evangelist of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. The occasion also cited the 46th anniversary of the founding of Tele-Missions International, now under the executive direction of Dr. Gordon S. Anderson, Jr. (Michael Ireland, mireland@usfamily.net)



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ETHIOPIA - HCJB World Radio, in a cooperative effort with FEBA Radio, Far East Broadcasting Co. and Trans World Radio doubled its broadcasts in the Oromo language to Ethiopia and Kenya. *Just One Moment*, a weekly 30-minute program, has been broadcasting to Ethiopia from FEBA's transmitter site in the Seychelles since 1998. A new program, *The Way of Righteousness*, targets non-Christians, while *Just One Moment* targets those with a nominal Christian background. (Jim Ferrier, 719-590-9800)

Moscow, RUSSIA - On October 5, HCJB World Radio — in cooperation with the Evangelical Covenant Church — announced the first satellite service to air in Russia. Initially targeting Russia's 30 largest cities, the 24-hour-a-day network will be available even to the tiniest villages. The network supplies programming at no charge to affiliate sta-



tions across the region from a central hub in Moscow. Indigenous producers provide 80 percent of the programming while the remaining 20 percent comes from a consortium of producers who are well known to the region, including: Earl Poysti's Russian Christian Radio, Peter Deyneka's Association for Spiritual Renewal, Thru the Bible and various HCJB World Radio Broadcasters. (Jim Ferrier, 719-590-9800)

Moscow, RUSSIA - The Moscow School of Communications, founded by Hannu Haukka of Finland, recently offered an intensive, three-month television educational course for 21 Christian students from Russia and Ukraine. The school provides teachers from around the world to instruct on lighting, sound, camera, directing, etc. (Phil Cooke, 818-563-2125)

DALLAS NRB 2001 TEXAS

2001 NRB Program Showcase

Once upon a time, a TV program aired on a few stations. Six years later, it aired on three satellites, 1300+ cable stations and 120 broadcast stations. What made the difference? It was entered into the NRB Program Showcase!

The program was *CrossTalk*, hosted by Dr. Randy Weiss. Now he's integral in getting out news about the Program Showcase. And he wants you to enter.

Can you make Christian TV more relevant? Are you currently producing compelling, entertaining and informative Christian visual media? If your answers are yes, you should consider sharing your work with leaders in the Christian television and Internet industry at NRB 2001.

The NRB Program Showcase is looking for 2:00 demos to be shown in front of many broadcasters who are longing for new programming. Maybe this is your year!

February 10 — 13, 2001
Wyndham Anatole Hotel
www.nrb.org

Can your program be picked up by broadcasters? Yes! Can your program win a spot in a national broadcast schedule? Yes! Can your program win an NRB People's Choice Award? Yes! Can your program be seen if you don't enter? No!

You should have received information by now via fax or e-mail from NRBinfo@crosstalk.org. The deadline is very close — December 1. But don't despair if you're just hearing about it. Contact TV Committee members Weiss (randy@crosstalk.org or 972-572-1567) or Sam Wagner (sbw@videoid.com or 309-444-4323) and ask for a little grace. Keep in mind that a little grace does not mean two weeks before the convention.

When you get to NRB 2001 in Dallas, stop by the TV Committee booth in the exhibit hall and say hello. Don't keep a good program in the dark — showcase it!

BACK TO THE BIBLE



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TRADE TALK



TECHNOLOGY

Los Gatos, CA - Streaming21, Inc., demonstrated the first **Streaming21** streaming solution to deliver broadcast-quality audio and video over the Internet on HP-UX and Windows NT platforms. The integrated system is engineered to address the distributed needs of telecommunications firms, service providers (ASPs, ISPs, BSPs, etc.), cable operators and enterprises. (Sinan Kanatsiz, 714-854-0800)

Nashville, TN - Optimized to run faster than its predecessor, the new **SADiE 4 SOFTWARE SYSTEM** software offers faster editing speeds and improved response time. In order to maintain compatibility with future 32-bit operating systems, it runs on Windows 95/98, Windows NT and Windows 2000. SADiE4 also includes a number of advanced features and functionality such as the optional CEDAR DeCrackle plug-in. In other news, SADiE replaced its established SADiE Classic with the RADiA as the new entry-level radio production platform, especially suited for radio production and speech editing markets. (Debra Pagan, 631-784-7865)

Newbury Park, CA - Westlake Audio released the three-way Lc3w10V Monitor Speaker System, which offers extensive electro-mechanical-acoustical

dampening, an integrated passive crossover for single or bi-amp operation and tremendous output in a compact size. In other news, the company completely redesigned the classic version of the BBSM-5 Near-Field Monitor System. (Jennifer Craigen, 631-784-7865)

**Westlake
Audio**

Cincinnati, OH - Harris Corporation has been selected to provide turnkey studios for Information Network Radio, a content provider for the satellite radio industry. (Angie Delaynes, 217-221-7442)

Salt Lake City, UT - Utah Scientific, Inc., released its new series of automation systems: the Max-MC master control system, the Max-RS event-based router automation system and the Max-RX time-based router automation system. All three offer graphical interpretations of traffic logs and can be manually operated at any time without interruption in functionality, as well as support the equipment of numerous major manufacturers. (Sunny Branson, 801-533-2669)

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MUSIC

Nashville, TN - *Inspirational Journey*, the first Christian recording from multi-platinum country artist Randy Travis, was released by Atlantic Records Christian Music Division to the CBA market and by Warner Bros. to the general market on October 24. (Emily Kohl, emily@turningpointpr.com)



Nashville, TN - Bebe Winans' Motown Records project, *Love & Freedom*, debuted on an Oprah episode devoted to Winans the week of September 4. It is distributed by Provident Music Distribution. (Gina Adams, 615-331-3314)

Franklin, TN - Three years since its last studio project, NewSong — sporting three new members — introduced *Sheltering Tree* on Benson Records. (Jackie Marushka Smith, 615-261-6439)

**BENSON
RECORDS**

Nashville, TN - New Haven Records and Point One Entertainment announced the release of two projects: *Whatever It Takes*, *The She Said Yes Music Project* and its companion video. Participants donated royalties to The Cassie Bernal Foundation. (Rob Michaels, 615-373-8000)



The magazine for Christian communicators

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PUBLISHING

Odessa, TX - Damah Media announced the release of *Dying to Live: The 21st Century Church* by Thomas Hohstadt. For the aware Christian leader, Hohstadt explains the perils and promises of the postmodern age. (Damah Media, damahmedia@caprok.net)



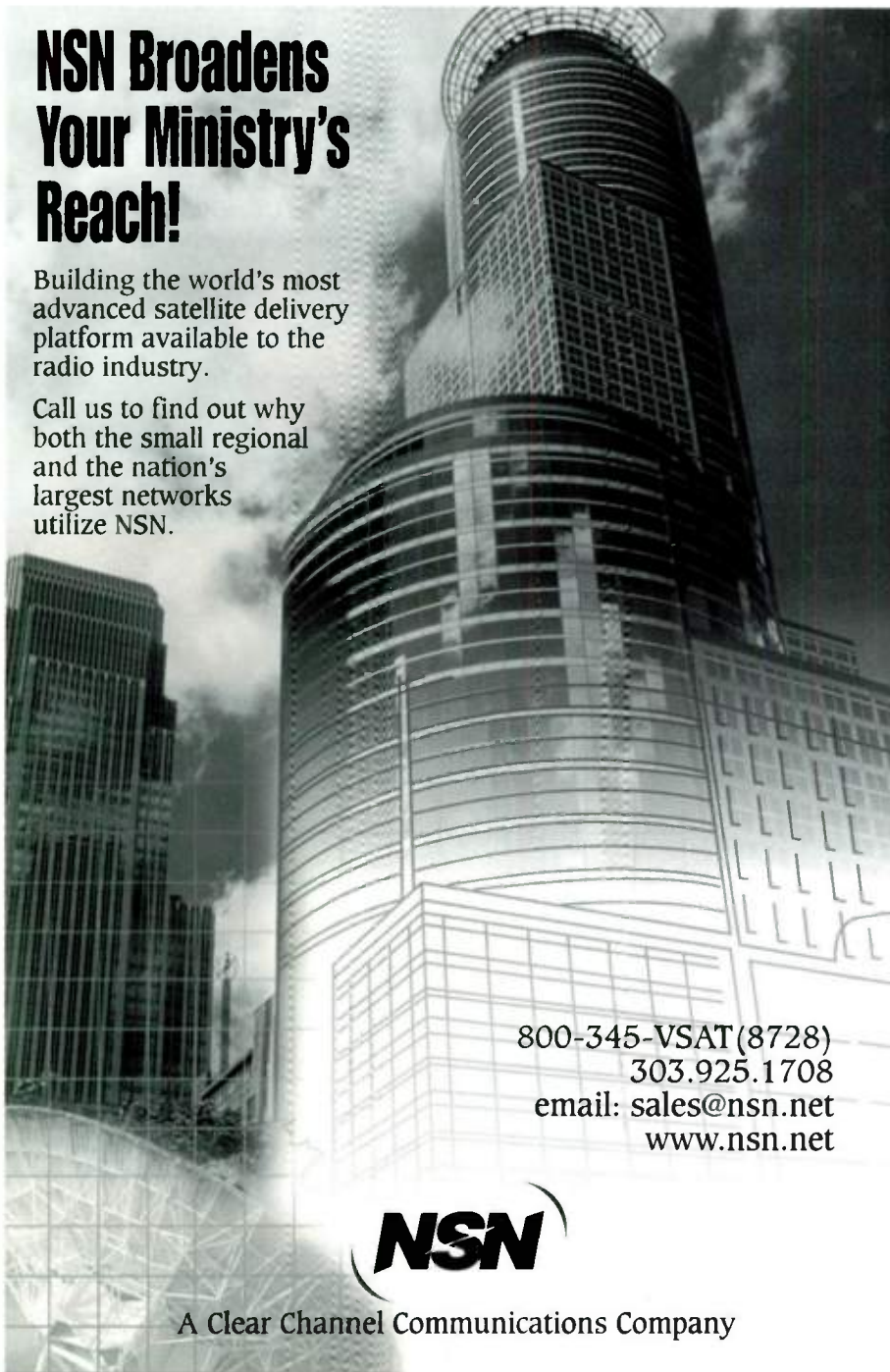
NEWS

Gainesville, GA - Larry Burkett, CEO of Christian Financial Concepts and host of *Money Matters* radio program, and Howard Dayton, CEO of Crown Ministries, announced the merger of their respective ministries on September 30, creating the largest Christian financial ministry, Crown Financial Ministries. (Debbie Payton, 770-813-0000)

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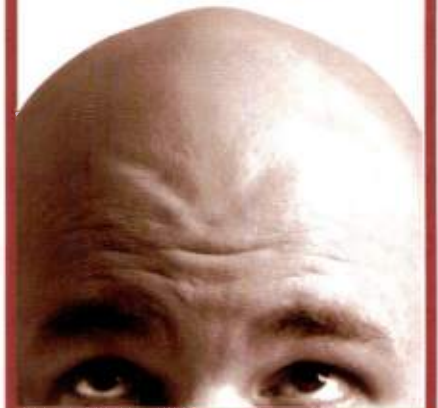
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TRADE TALK



INTERNET

Chantilly, VA -

Crosswalk.com featured an exclusive interview with Gov. George W. Bush, probing his personal faith and beliefs and how they might impact his policies as president. The interview, conducted by constitutional lawyer Michael Farris, appeared exclusively at Crosswalk.com's "City On The Hill" election coverage site at news.crosswalk.com/city. Vice President Al Gore's campaign did not respond to Crosswalk.com's interview request. (Steve Biggerstaff, 703-968-4808)

crosswalk.com

Anchorage, AL - KATB-FM and KAFC-FM can be heard via the Web at www.katb.org or www.kafc.org. (907-333-5282)

-KATB-
Christian Radio

Charlotte, NC - The Bible Broadcasting Network (BBN) site (www.bbnradio.org)



enables visitors seeking help or information from BBN staff at headquarters to enter into live chats. In other news, the fall Sharathon took place on October 2, the 29th anniversary of BBN. (Harold Richards, Hrichards@bbnradio.org)

Nashville, TN - ZJAM Youth Ministries, home of the ZJAM Radio Network, will be launching Teenhopeline.com.



Students will be able to talk with a live adult to address issues and needs they're facing. Teenhopeline.com will premiere January 1, 2001. The ZJAM Radio Network and Dawson McAllister Live will be promoting this site to teenagers on a weekly basis. Spots will be made available to radio stations throughout the country. (Bill Scott, 615-591-4301)

Muskegon, MI - Reports from Nielsen/NetRatings, revealed that Gospelcom.net was the most-visited Christian site in August 2000. According to the report, Gospelcom.net also attracted a larger unique audience than Kodak.com, Palm.com and online book reseller Borders.com. (J.R. Whitby, jrw@gospelcom.net)

Washington, DC - The Covenant News (www.CovenantNews.com), a Christian Internet News Service, launched a public service ad campaign to reach women who have experienced pain and suffering because they took the abortion pill RU-486. Utilizing the talents of the nation's three top post-abortion counseling and referral organizations, this campaign will help women find medical attention, emotional counseling and medical malpractice attorneys. Access the RU-486 Referral Service page at www.CovenantNews.com/ru-486.htm. (Jim Rudd, editor@covenantnews.com)

Silicon Valley, CA -

Christianity.com has integrated with MapQuest.com, a mapping, directions and destination service. (Brian Rodgers, 972-267-1111)



Dallas, TX - The broadcast Web card, developed specifically for the broadcast industry, builds a bridge between the radio station and its Web site. It's a marketing tool that marries print, video, audio and animation into one interactive business-card-sized CD-ROM to integrate a station's marketing materials and Internet presence. (Linda Tuley, 972-463-6833)

Top Three Qualities for Success in Christian Communications



— NRB magazine e-mail survey of NRB Board of Directors, September 21, 2000

IRBNEWS

Torch Bearers

Intercollegiate Religious Broadcasting member Asbury College was the only school in the United States to have students hired to work at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia.

Eighteen students and four faculty/staff members from the school — located in Wilmore, KY — worked as camera operators, researchers, videotape operators and loggers.

Most of the students were hired by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and worked in the International Broadcast Center near the Olympic Stadium.

Several students had the opportunity to share about their Christian faith during the Games. One said, "It proved to me once again that God can use any situation to bring glory unto Himself and we must always be ready for those situations."

Asbury College expects to have more than 50 students working in broadcasting positions at the 2002 Winter Games in Salt Lake City, Utah.

— Associate Professor Doug Walker, Asbury College

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Family News

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PEOPLE

Laguna Hills, CA - Scott Shuford was named Vice President of Big Man Creative Inc., an award-winning creative services firm in Orange County, CA. Shuford is the former music channel producer for Crosswalk.com. (949-206-9806)

Chicago, IL - Holly Swanson was named Station Manager of The Total Living Network's station WCFC-LP-Channel 51/Rockford, IL. Swanson formerly headed TLN's Affiliate Relations in Chicago. (Debra Hall, 312-433-3838)

Atlanta, GA - Jill Lego, formerly Vice President of Business Development for Clarion Marketing and Communications, has been appointed to the position of National Sales Manager for WVJ-FM. (770-487-4500)

Dallas, TX - The following are new staff members at KMA Interactive: Roger Young, Director of Operations; Scott Nice Warner, Customer Care Manager; Andrew Slatt, Internal Application Developer; Ryan Russell, Maintenance Developer; and Amy English, Customer Care Representative. (Melanie Dobson, 970-626-2500)



Agoura Hills, CA - Joni and Friends announced the appointment of Norman Newman as Vice President, Development. Co-founder of Development Marketing Services, Newman brings 30 years of management experience in fund development for such Christian ministries as Food For The Poor and the Christian Broadcasting Network. (Mike Yuen, 818-707-5664)

Huntington Beach, CA - NRB member Warren Duffy was inducted into the Ohio RadioTelevision Broadcasters Hall of Fame in Akron. (Sandy Gray, 714-847-9403)

Stoke on Trent, ENGLAND -

In a series of management changes at UCB, founder Ian Mackie returned to the position of Managing Director. A four-man directorate was created with three men joining Mackie: Chris Cole, Executive Director; Gareth Littler, Director; and Richard Willoughby, Company Secretary. Additionally, UCB recruited Andrew Urquhart as the new Program Controller. (Good News Broadcasting, 8/00)



Washington, DC - Family Research Council named Ken Connor, a Florida trial attorney and pro-life leader, as the organization's new president. (Kristin Hansen, 202-393-2100)



PROFILE



Pastors Clinton and Sarah Utterbach, hosts of *Listen to Jesus*, receive the Percy Award during the Eastern NRB convention. The ENRB convened during late September at the Sandy Cove Bible Conference Center in North East, MD.

NRB

Communications Connection

NRB magazine is a great way to keep up-to-speed on what is happening with various stations across the country. New hires, moves and transitions are easily tracked with the help of this useful resource.

— Tracy Fessenden
Media Manager
KMA Media Group

“All’s Well That Begins Well.”



Once the flag has been planted and the medals pinned, no one remembers those long months of preparation. Yet painstaking planning is the heart and soul of a successful expedition.



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— Sir Edmund Hillary
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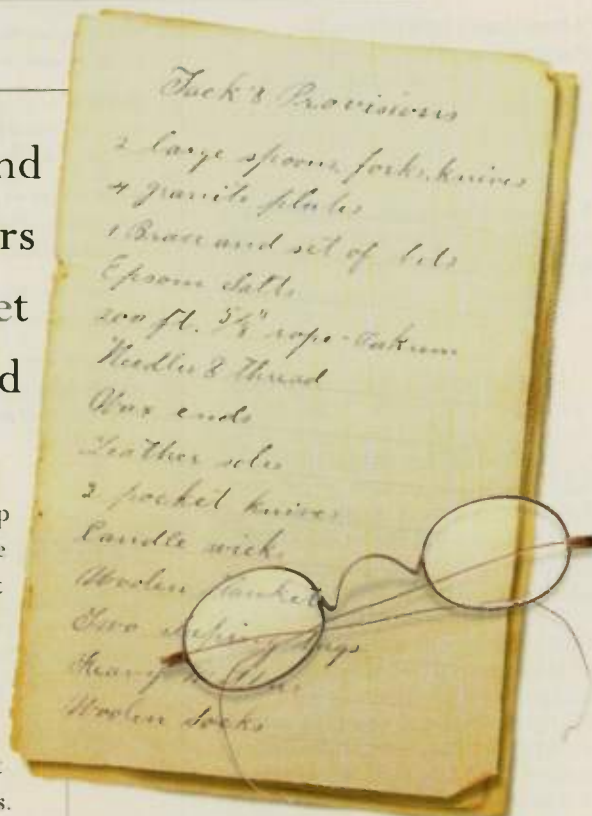
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David Ingram; Ft. Smith, AR

First broadcast in January 1985, "Pro-Life Perspective" is the official radio broadcast of the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC), the nation's largest pro-life group. Pro-Life Perspective is hosted by NRLC president Wanda Franz, Ph.D. and features occasional guest speakers prominent in the Pro-Life movement.

Since its first broadcast, "Pro-Life Perspective" has attracted hundreds of thousands of listeners, an audience which continues to grow. With personal, professional and insightful discussion of pro-life issues, "Pro-Life Perspective" is the best means by which pro-lifers across America, including your listeners, can remain informed on current life issues.



Wanda Franz Ph.D.

Pro-Life Perspective

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WEBWATCH Visual Media

Editor's Note: Viewer discretion may be advised on some sites.

Crosswalk.com — movies.crosswalk.com
NRB member. Film and video reviews, Top 10 lists. Christian worldview.

Film.com — www.film.com
Reviews of new movies, plus an archive of past reviews, a database of videos and industry news.

FilmsOn.com — www.filmson.com
Searchable, offers reviews and links to thousands of films available for online viewing.

FlickerTube.com — www.flickertube.com
Streaming cartoons, film and animation.

Hollywood.com - MovieTalk — www.hollywood.com/movietalk
Actors on their projects, archive of streaming sound clips.

InterneTV - Film —

www.internetv.com/html/film.htm

Film shorts and trailers for studio and independent films.

LikeTelevision — www.liketelevision.com
Movies, classic TV shows and music videos in broadband streaming-media formats.

MediaTrip — www.mediatrip.com
General directory for media clips, including TV shows and interviews

Movieguide — www.movieguide.org
Site by NRB member Ted Baehr. Reviews feature Christian worldview.

Letters

I was just looking at NRB magazine and thought I ought to tell you what huge improvements are evident — at least in my humble opinion. The new font and design are so readable and interesting — really nicely done!

— Peggy Campbell
Ambassador Advertising Agency
Fullerton, CA

I offer my condolences to the staff and families of KWBI in Denver. Seeing a chance to boost the financial standing for their educational goals, Colorado Christian University (CCU) sold the station to an all-music satellite network. The price was the replacement of a community-based ministry and, I heard, the dismissal of the staff.

Allegedly, CCU's desire was to find someone to continue with Christian radio ministry. However, gone are the children's programs, Bible teaching, the wonderful Sunday morning worship and the community involvement. Now we have adult contemporary hits, 24/7 (much of which is lyrically shallow and musically boring). They could have done better. The few who are blessed by a song will never compare with the many who are enriched by sound biblical teaching and contact with local staff. And I meet people all the time who feel alienated by AC music. Whatever happened to Inspirational?

Ever since radio became a commodity, the enjoyment of "doing radio" has greatly diminished. And it's a volatile field; we recently saw five stations suddenly swap formats in Denver. I imagine that uprooted a lot of families too. It's commonly said that there is no job security in broadcasting, except for a few.

That's one reason I'm no longer in the business. With over 20 years' experience I know what a radio ministry could be. But the entrepreneurs crank out turn-key programming designed to boost ratings. Usually it lacks imagination, creativity and, most importantly, the local touch.

I guess I will forever be a button-puncher.

— Duane L. Burgess, Littleton, CO

Editor's Note: Gary Hoag, VP of Development for Colorado Christian University, responded to the managing editor via e-mail. He wrote, "I would direct you to www.kwbi.org for our press release, questions and answers and other valuable information about the changes in our radio network."

Hoag added that the site features a link to find programs on regional stations that were no longer carried on KWBI. Three questions regarding staff changes soon will be placed on the site's Q&A section.

Hoag continued, "(Mr. Burgess's) letter does not present a true picture of the situation, only the perception of the listener. A few of the KWBI radio voices have made their way back on the air with K-LOVE."

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pete Sumrall".

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NRB: A Year in Review

FCC

After NRB responded to the FCC's Cornerstone decision and the agency reversed its decision in January, NRB pushed for legislation to prohibit another attempt to restrict religious speech on noncommercial educational channels. In a June vote of 264 to 159, the House of Representatives voted to pass HR 4201, the Noncommercial Broadcasting Freedom of Expression Act. As of this writing in late October, the bill has not passed the Senate. Other legislative and regulatory issues NRB has worked on this year include low-power FM, Class A status for low-power TV and digital must carry.



Inside NRB — For Members Only Newsfax

The Association's newsletter fax began as a monthly update. Eventually the newsletter was issued twice a month. This year the newsletter began weekly publication with late-breaking news and up-to-date information about NRB and the industry.

Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance Kit

St. Louis radio station KFUO was in hot water with the FCC for 10 years over an EEO dispute. NRB came to the station's defense and eventually the station was vindicated of any wrongdoing. In the process, the courts declared the FCC's EEO rules unconstitutional and threw them out. Earlier this year, the FCC implemented a new set of EEO regulations for stations to follow.



To help Association members to comply with the new regulations, NRB and law firm Wiley, Rein and Fielding published the *NRB Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance Kit*. It's available to members only through the NRB store. Order it at www.nrb.org/store.htm or phone Valerie Fraedrich at 703-330-7000, ext. 516.

NRB Magazine

This year, the Association's magazine won acclaim from print professionals. In May, the Evangelical Press Association recognized the publication with an Award of Merit for Most Improved Magazine and a Higher Goals Award Second Place for Best Redesign. Additionally, Duluth, MN-based Davidson Printing Company received the Pewter Award from Publishing and Production's Annual Gold Ink Awards for printing the February/March 2000 issue.



Directory of Religious Media

The bigger and better 2001 *Directory* is slated to be shipped this month. Look for this indispensable industry resource soon, with nearly 5000 vital media contacts. If you haven't ordered a copy, visit the NRB store at www.nrb.org/store.htm or contact Valerie Fraedrich at 703-330-7000, ext. 516.

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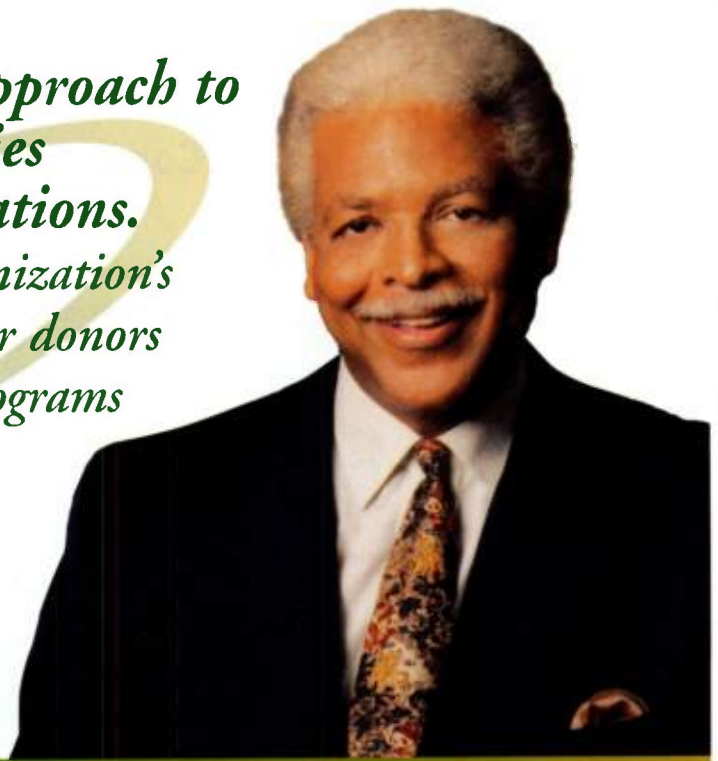
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NRB: A Year in Review, Continued

New Member Notebooks

Your Association is growing, and nowhere is it more evident than in the materials produced for members. New notebooks were mailed to members this year and include topics such as chapter contacts and information; NRB committees and Board of Directors; and business discounts.

The side pocket of the notebook contains camera-ready art of the NRB logo. Member organizations are encouraged to use the NRB seal on letterhead and other publications.



Insurance Benefits

Members asked for insurance benefits and NRB responded. Royal and SunAlliance offers a competitive property casualty insurance package. Members are particularly pleased that Royal and SunAlliance will work with a member's own agent.

Health, Retirement, Disability, Life Insurance and Long-term Care

Christian Retirement Coalition will do a review of employee benefits and suggest new plan designs with cost-effective options. The Association will unveil the program at NRB 2001 in Dallas, TX. Just one more reason to attend the convention!

NRB Listserve

This new e-mail connection provides an open forum between members, uniting them electronically. What's on your mind? What do you need help doing? Throw out a question and get answers from the brightest minds in the Christian communications industry.



IRB

Students at Huntington (IN) College produced a video promoting NRB's college membership. Footage includes shots of the NRB 2000 Job Fair and student award ceremony. The video was sent in September to more than 300 Christian schools. Get a copy from membership by contacting Geri Harper at gharper@nrb.org or 703-330-7000, ext. 510. IRB: Networking Christian Students for Today's Media.



NRB 2001 — Saddling up for the New Year!

Ride into Dallas, TX, for NRB 2001, February 10-13. New features: an innovative church media production track for educational sessions; registration for Saturday Boot Camps included in full convention registration; a business casual dress code; more workshop opportunities (choose eight to attend from more than 40 sessions). If you haven't registered for the industry's premier event, log on to www.nrb.org/convention.htm or phone Gina Ebhardt at 703-330-7000, ext. 503. Join the wagon train to Dallas ... don't get left in the dust!

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Adrian Rogers
Dr. Adrian Rogers



Congratulations on the nomination!

I often find talk radio to be pretty predictable. *For Faith & Family*, isn't. It consistently presents a fresh viewpoint on news and public policy issues from a Christian world-view. It is clear to me why the audience for the program has been growing rapidly.

David W. Clark
David W. Clark



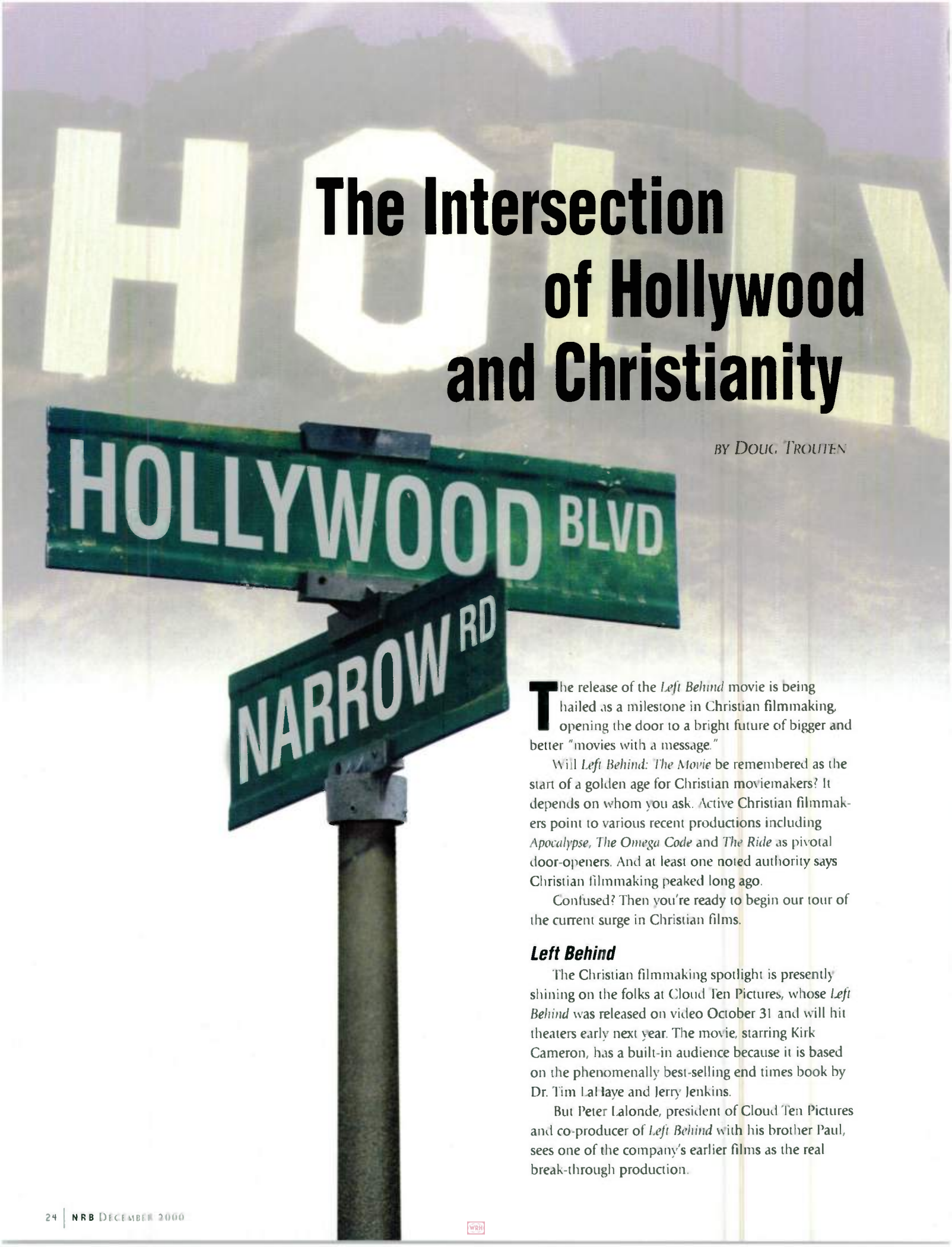
Dr. Richard Land is an articulate voice with intellectual depth, who has been an effective spokesman for the cause of Christ in the public square. We at Focus on the Family extend our best wishes to Dr. Land and his team, and congratulate them for this well deserved nomination.

James C. Dobson
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The Intersection of Hollywood and Christianity

BY DOUG TROUTEN

The release of the *Left Behind* movie is being hailed as a milestone in Christian filmmaking, opening the door to a bright future of bigger and better "movies with a message."

Will *Left Behind: The Movie* be remembered as the start of a golden age for Christian moviemakers? It depends on whom you ask. Active Christian filmmakers point to various recent productions including *Apocalypse*, *The Omega Code* and *The Ride* as pivotal door-openers. And at least one noted authority says Christian filmmaking peaked long ago.

Confused? Then you're ready to begin our tour of the current surge in Christian films.

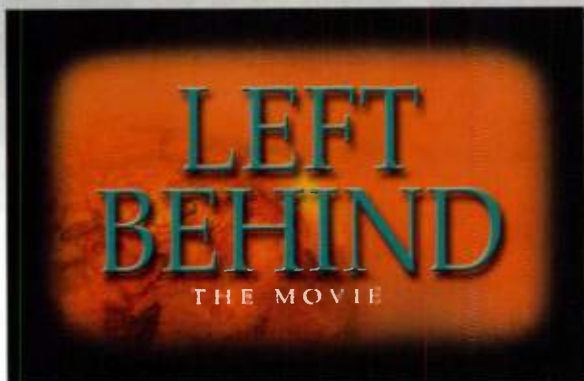
Left Behind

The Christian filmmaking spotlight is presently shining on the folks at Cloud Ten Pictures, whose *Left Behind* was released on video October 31 and will hit theaters early next year. The movie, starring Kirk Cameron, has a built-in audience because it is based on the phenomenally best-selling end times book by Dr. Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins.

But Peter Lalonde, president of Cloud Ten Pictures and co-producer of *Left Behind* with his brother Paul, sees one of the company's earlier films as the real break-through production.

“When *Star Wars* came out it started the science fiction trend. *Die Hard* started an action trend, and *Airport* started a disaster trend. *Left Behind* could amaze Hollywood. If we fill the theaters, it will empower other independent filmmakers to rise up and make good films.”

— Peter Lalonde, president of Cloud Ten Pictures and co-producer of *Left Behind*



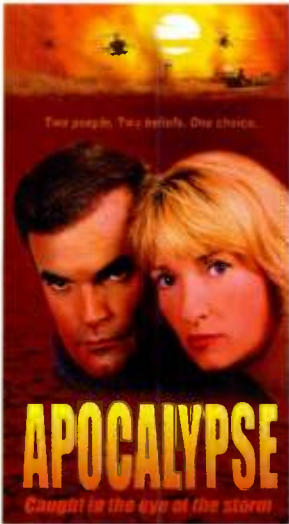
“At the risk of not sounding humble enough, I think a big part of it began with our movie *Apocalypse*,” he says. “Christian filmmaking had not been a big-budget, big-effort thing for 25 years before then. It’s not that *Apocalypse* had a huge budget by any stretch of the imagination, but it proved it could be successful, even by Hollywood standards. I think people saw that.”

Apocalypse kicked off a trilogy of end-times films, continuing in *Revelation* and *Tribulation* — each with a larger budget than its predecessor.

“*The Omega Code* stunned the world last year when it hit number 10 at the box office,” notes Lalonde. “That built momentum as well. Now you have Providence Entertainment, ourselves, the TBN people — all fairly well capitalized, with the ability to make quality films. The opportunity is huge, and everybody recognizes it. It now appears to be viable, and that’s what we wanted to show all along.”



Scenes from *Left Behind*



If *Apocalypse* pointed out a possible path, the \$17 million *Left Behind* will show how far we've gone down that path, says Lalonde. "I personally believe *Left Behind* will determine that," he explains. "It's the right project at the right time — something the Christian community can galvanize around."

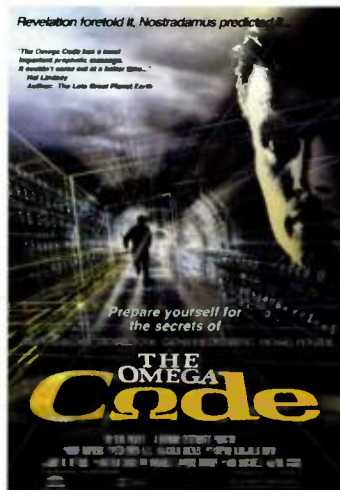
"When *Star Wars* came out it started the science fiction trend. *Die Hard* started an action trend, and *Airport* started a disaster trend. *Left Behind* could amaze Hollywood. If we fill the theaters, it will empower other independ-

ent filmmakers to rise up and make good films.

"It won't be just Christian [companies] making these films, but the big studios might start to make them. If we market it right, I think it can take the whole thing up a quantum leap. But you never really know until you get there."

The Omega Code

Victor Vanden Oever, CEO of Providence Entertainment, already knows what it's like to "get there." Last year his company distributed *The Omega Code*, an action/thriller in which scholars decipher an ancient coded message in the Bible. In its opening weekend,



In its opening weekend, *The Omega Code* grossed \$2.4 million on only 304 screens, ranking 10th nationally in overall movie grosses and first in per-screen averages, earning almost \$9,000 per screen.

The Omega Code grossed \$2.4 million on only 304 screens, ranking 10th nationally in overall movie grosses and first in per-screen averages, earning almost \$9,000 per screen. *The Omega Code* was the second-highest grossing independent film of 1999, and has shipped more than one million home video units.

"It's my opinion that *The Omega Code* was the first film that kind of popped a hole in the dam, so people

could see that [despite] all the resistance, all the walls, all the major paradigm shifts that had to happen, there was a crack in the armor," says Vanden Oever.

The result was a new enthusiasm for collaboration among Christians with a vision for film, he says. "Christian filmmakers around the country had been fragmented. You'd have a screenwriter in Boise and an actor in Des Moines, and a producer in Orlando. All had been islands to themselves, but when they were able to see that a film could be written, directed, produced and distributed just like a regular Hollywood film — well, the Word talks about 'Without a vision the people perish.'

"I'm biased, but I believe *The Omega Code* painted a vision."

"Christian filmmaking is probably where Christian music was 10 or 15 years ago — it's really on the edge of breaking loose."

— Barry Werner, director of operations for World Wide Pictures

The Ride

Barry Werner, director of operations for World Wide Pictures, the film division of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, is delighted with all of the activity in an area his ministry dominated for decades.

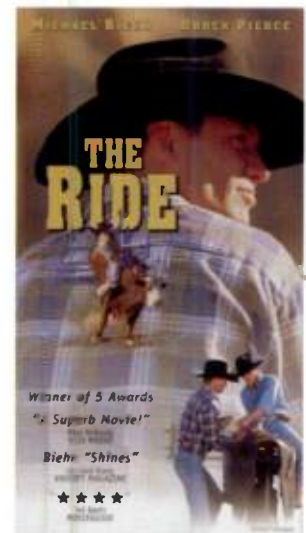
"There are a lot of films starting to hit the theater marketplace," he notes. "Once films go through the theaters, there's a formula that says, 'If you can do this, then Target, Wal-Mart, Blockbuster and everybody will take them.' It's based on what they do in the theater.

"Christian filmmaking is probably where Christian music was 10 or 15 years ago — it's really on the edge of breaking loose."

What pushed it to that edge? Werner says one breakthrough was the 1997 World Wide Pictures film *The Ride*.

"When I think back before 1997," he says, the Christian movie industry "almost looked like it was dead and gone. In 1997 we did *The Ride*, and released it in 150 theaters around the country. We used three different [promotional] tests to see which method would work. Out of one of those came an American Airlines deal."

The parents of a film buyer for American Airlines urged their son to consider *The Ride* as an in-flight movie — a move that opened new doors for Christian film. "That was publicized in the Christian world, and I started getting calls saying, 'We didn't think that was possible.' Now believers have seen that it can be done."



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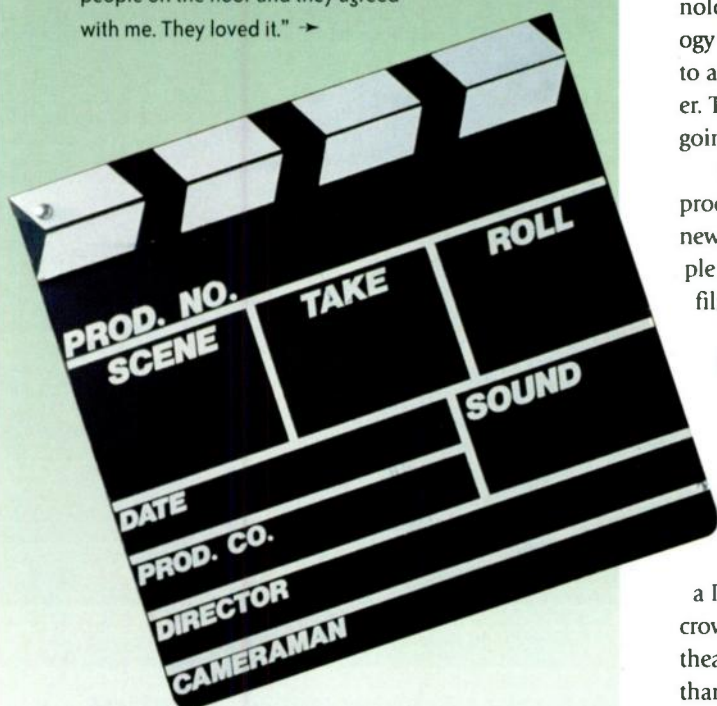
THE MOTION PICTURE MINISTRY OF THE BILLY GRAHAM EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION

Breaking the Barrier

If *Left Behind*, *The Omega Code* and *The Ride* show that it's possible to create a film with a strong Christian message and to have it succeed in the world of secular movie distribution, then ABC's *The Miracle Maker* breaks the same barrier for network television. The animated story of the life of Christ was the network's Easter Sunday special, displacing the holiday standby *The Ten Commandments*.

Judith Tukich, a Christian who attends Jack Hayford's church (The Church on the Way in Van Nuys, CA), is director of synergy and special products for ABC, and was largely responsible for bringing *The Miracle Maker* to air.

"People send me tapes all of the time, seeing if we want to license something," she explains. "I watch a lot of everything. The distribution company [for *The Miracle Maker*] had called — the guys who brought us *The Blair Witch Project* — and said they were sending over this Jesus movie. When I put it in, I knew within moments that this was something I would definitely be finishing. It was terrific! I approached a couple of other people on the floor and they agreed with me. They loved it." →



Werner adds, "I think it's a movement of God at this moment. Proverbs says it's wonderful to have the right advice at the right time. Cloud Ten has taken advantage of the turn of the millennium. That's wonderful timing on their part. They're marvelous marketers.

"All of a sudden, everybody believes it can be done. That's just God. Proverbs 2:1 talks about how the Lord turns the thoughts of the king like water in an irrigation ditch. I think that's what's happening in the Christian film industry. These people are already trained and have done their due diligence — now it's a matter of believing it can be done."

Earlier still?

Though he's impressed by the strides made by films like *The Ride*, *The Omega Code* and *Left Behind*, veteran Christian filmmaker Russ Doughten puts the Christian film breakthrough decades earlier.

"The growth of Christian film started back in the 1930s, and with Moody in the '40s, Gospel Films in 1948 and '49 with Ken Anderson, and after that the growth of several others, including our own films," says Doughten, who is president of Mustard Seed International and renowned in Christian circles for the *A Thief in the Night* film series. "Now there are dozens of Christian film producers and through all of this there has been a tremendous desire to put the truth on the screen and show it to those who don't know the truth — people who are not Christians. The Christian film industry has had a tremendous impact on the world in spreading the Gospel."

That impact continues to grow, says Doughten. "I think the Christian communicators are now really trying to say something relevant, within the whole texture of society. We've learned the technology. If Christian film from a technology and production viewpoint is equal to any other film, then that isn't a barrier. There's a real opportunity now because of the revolution that's going on with the technology."

Pointing to such developments as direct-to-video movies, digital production and the growth of the DVD format, he adds, "All of these new venues are open to Christian film. Christians buy DVDs, and people who buy DVDs want to see new products — or even old classic films on DVD will find different markets than they found before."

Much, much earlier

Doughten's appraisal of the beginning of the Christian film boom is headed in the right direction, but needs to go farther back, says Dr. Ted Baehr, chairman of the Christian Film & Television Commission.

"Christian filmmaking has been around for a long time," Baehr insists. "The first movie to be shown in Paris in 1897 was a Passion Play. 1908 saw the first feature length Passion Play, and the crowds lined up for three blocks around the Madison Square Garden theater. That convinced people that audiences would sit through more than a single Nickelodeon reel.





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Tukich took to the road, showing the program to Christian leaders and doing dozens of interviews to promote it. It all paid off the night *The Miracle Maker* aired.

"We had a terrific night," she recalls. "We came in second place, and first place with the all-important demographic of 18-49.

"I've had tons of phone calls from people around town who are interested in this kind of programming. I had a call from the guy who oversees Namesake Entertainment, and now we have a project in development on Pontius Pilate."

Tukich says there's clearly an appetite for programs with a spiritual message. "I think a lot of people underestimate the power of this," she says. "There are people out there who want to watch this. There is a need and a desire to see inspiring programming. I would never have wanted to license this if it wasn't spiritually pure to the Word of God, but it is, and it's top-quality material."

Going with an animated special wasn't much of a risk, says Tukich. "You're always going to have people who won't take it seriously because it's claymation, but we had a terrific response not only from a spiritual perspective, but also from a pure entertainment perspective. We got much better reviews than the live-action miniseries [about Jesus] on CBS."

While she was at work promoting *The Miracle Maker*, Tukich met a lot of Christians who expressed an interest in getting into the entertainment field — a topic on which she has strong views.

"The single greatest way to evangelize the world is through the media," she insists. "We send our kids off to Borneo and New Guinea, but I reached more people that night than probably every church on the Pacific Coast. ... This is the reality of it; this is where the power lies. Clearly we touched a lot of people that night."

Tukich says a project with a strong spiritual message can be greenlighted if it's a good project. "The gospel message [can be] there. But if it's not going to be entertaining, forget it. ... The fact that I was able to pick up this stunningly beautiful project and preach the Word beautifully and also entertain people — it was the best experience of my professional career."

Today's leading Christian filmmakers agree with Tukich on the value of producing an entertaining product.

Peter Lalonde, co-producer of *Left Behind*, says, "Christian films have been thinly disguised sermons. We're getting better at it. You have to have a great story, great characters, great production values. If you tell a story that entertains them for two hours, you have something. →

"There was Cecil B. DeMille's *King of Kings*, which led a lot of people to Christ. There were biblical epics, and the Billy Graham films that were so terrific through the 1970s and 1980s. So it always amuses me when a new young Christian filmmaker gets up and says 'We're the first Christians to release a movie nationwide.'"

Looking ahead

Although opinions differ on where the current boom in Christian film started, there's more agreement on where we're headed. Today, the future of Christian film looks bright.

"I think there ought to be a tremendous future," says Doughten. "I think it's wonderful that *Left Behind* is getting such attention, and will be a first-run film that will compete with everything else on the screen. It's only the beginning. I think there's a tremendous hunger in the world for truth, and the only real truth is Scripture, and the center of that truth is Christ.

"The world wants to know what is true, and a Christian film that sheds light on that truth is something the world wants to receive."

Lalonde says, "For 20 years we somehow got this idea that the darkness in the theater was so dark that no light could penetrate there. That was a tactical mistake by the Christian community. Our culture is formed in the mass media of our day. If we empower people and they rise up, and Christians who are committed to excellence make films, I think the future is very bright.

"But I'm concerned. I look at Christian television, and it's still in the '60s as far as production value is concerned. It might as well be Christian radio. People sit, sing, give testimonies and preach; you don't need visual media for any of that.

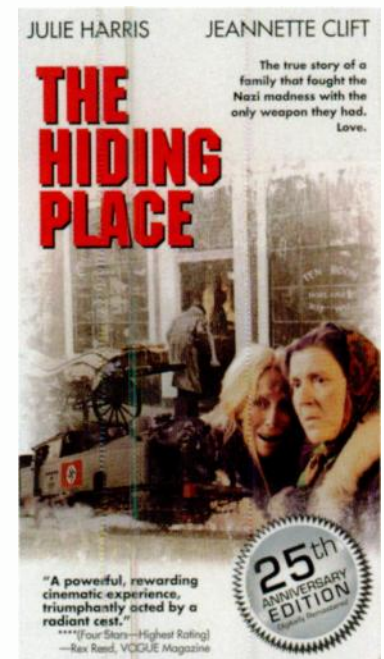
"I think if we're going to reach the culture we have to excel. If we do that, there is a great possibility. We could be the great undiscovered market."

Vanden Oever's vision of the future is even more optimistic. "I think you're going to see, in a couple of years, anywhere from six to 10 high-quality, full-feature motion pictures coming out of Hollywood specifically for the faith-based demographic. A decade from now, assuming the Lord tarries, I believe there will be at least one [Christian] mini-major studio — along the size of today's Artisan Entertainment or a Lion's Gate Entertainment, or a Castlerock — that will have everything in-house.

"That's what we're trying to do, and by the grace of God we hope we get there. We'll be able to produce in-house, write in-house, distribute, market, do all foreign sales to all worldwide territories, have an

"Christian filmmaking has been around for a long time. The first movie to be shown in Paris in 1897 was a Passion Play."

— Ted Baehr, founder/president of Christian Film and Television Commission



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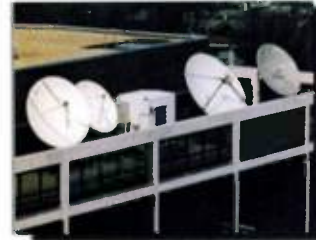


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"It's not like Hollywood makes *26 Reasons to Be a Secular Humanist*. We must make our films with excellence. I think the day of the big whiz-bang, blow-them-up movies is coming to an end. People have seen it all. People are looking for real stories now. You have to tell a great, compelling story.

Russ Doughten, best known for the *A Thief in the Night* film series, agrees. "A good film is a good film. Whether it's Christian or non-Christian, whether it's in the '50s or the 2000s, if it has a really good story and good characters then it can be entertaining all the way through.

"Of course, making a film has always taken a lot of money, compared to writing a book. It's a very expensive medium. But it's very effective when it's done well. Money is certainly a relevant element, but not the most important. A good storyteller can tell a story without maximum special effects that put the budget over the top."

Barry Werner, director of operations for Billy Graham's World Wide Pictures, adds, "Everything is based on the foundation of the script. People are getting better at that. Once you have a good script you can get good actors. They don't want to put their names on something that's bad. Several professional organizations are out there encouraging believers that they can not only compete, but that they can be better. A good film that's well advertised really draws a crowd."

But Ted Baehr, chairman of the Christian Film & Television Commission, warns that making a Christian film that can compete with Hollywood is harder than it looks. "Hollywood raises the ante, so it's hard for anybody to get into the poker game," he explains. "Everybody wants to be in movies. Last year 300,000 scripts were submitted to the writers' guild, and only 270 movies were released at the box office — and 60 percent of those only got 5 percent of the box office between them.

"It's a craft. Just because you can watch brain surgery on TV doesn't mean you can do it."

— DT

"There are dozens of Christian film producers and through all of this there has been a tremendous desire to put the truth on the screen and show it to those who don't know the truth — people who are not Christians. The Christian film industry has had a tremendous impact on the world in spreading the Gospel."

— Russ Doughten, president of Mustard Seed International

in-house home entertainment video/DVD division, have an output deal with HBO/Starz/Encore, have an in-house music department that creates and distributes soundtracks and a network television output deal. I believe there's going to be a studio like this, perhaps in less than five years."

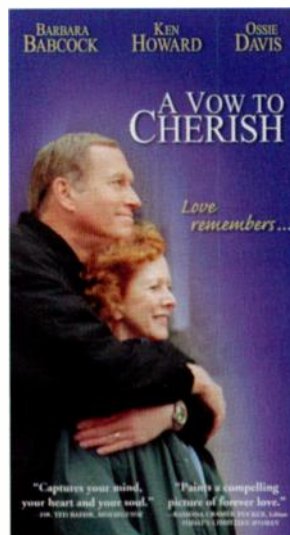
Baehr isn't sure if that's the best possible future for Christian film. "There are two places we could be headed," he says. "One, we could be headed into a new narrowcasting, or "ghetto-ization" of Christian films, where you reach Christians, and cater to Christians.

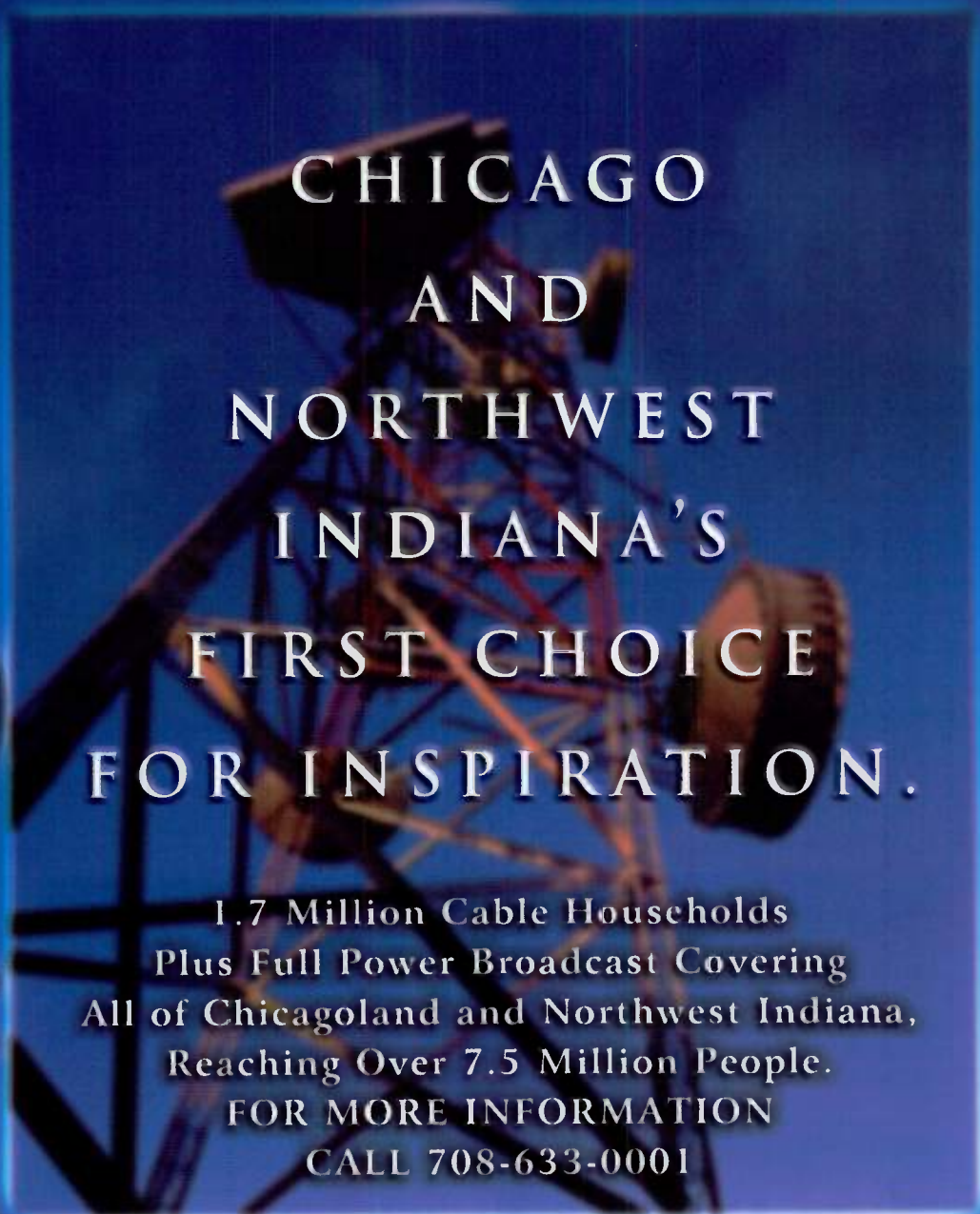
"There's nothing wrong with that — people need discipling and encouragement, and I'm glad there are people doing this. But it takes a lot of resources out of the mainstream when you put it into narrowcasting. I'd hate to see Christian film become an isolated marketplace.

"I think we also need to be present," Baehr continues, "with *Bless the Child* and *Amistad*, and all these movies where people of faith and values are working in the marketplace of ideas to put their values across. To be heralds, we need to go toe-to-toe with the major players. We could actually learn our craft and become a significant force in the entertainment industry, or we could develop an alternative industry."

Although it's hard to know which vision of the future will be realized, Werner is hopeful. "The Christian film industry has been down for a long time," he says. "In 1965, when we released *The Restless Ones*, there was a boom; but in 1986, we actually stopped production because there was no market. But in recent years, we've seen it turn the other way. Believers have understood that we can't just give that industry up. "I look for this to be the tip of the iceberg for a fairly long run. The believers who are making these films are very young, but they've been in the industry. I think we'll see fruit from this group for the next 20 to 25 years. I'm very optimistic about the future."

Doug Trouten is senior editor for *Beard Publications* and teaches journalism at Northwestern College in St. Paul, MN. He can be reached at djt@nwc.edu.





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CONVERGENCE

The Next Step in the Digital Age by Phil Cooke

Everywhere we turn we hear about convergence. Trade magazines, technical reports, white papers and entire conferences are dedicated to it. But what exactly does it mean, and how will it affect churches, ministries and those of us in Christian media?

Simply put, "convergence" means looking at a single box. Depending on who you talk with, information resources such as computers and entertainment resources such as television will merge into a single unit within three to five years. In essence, we will be able to surf the Web, do our computing and watch the latest television program on the same piece of equipment.

In this context, the possibilities are nearly endless. A 500-channel universe? That's nothing in the world of convergence. For instance:

- The local video store will be a thing of the past. We can download any movie in existence as easily as downloading e-mail.
- We can finally make television programs truly interactive.
- We can video conference anywhere on the planet.

- We can insert Web hyperlinks into television programs to help people locate more information by instantly accessing the Web.
- We can find out immediate and accurate information about who's watching particular programs and why.
- We can have millions of entertainment choices at our fingertips — music, movies, television programs, Web sites, etc..
- And the list goes on.

Right now, numerous Hollywood studios, television networks, multimedia companies and others are working feverishly to make the concept of convergence happen. Web sites such as www.atomfilms.com are making short films available on the Internet right now. Other companies like www.ifilm.com and www.on2.com are trying to develop broadband video technology that will blend computers and television sets.

Each of these and a myriad of other sites are trying to do two things:

1. Develop a creative entertainment format that people will want to view in the context of a computer environment.

2. Develop the broadly accepted technology that will become the "VHS tape," if you will, of the industry. The company that develops the universally accepted technology that allows convergence to happen will reap billions.

But in our industry we must keep returning to two critical questions: 1) What does this mean to Christians, and 2) How can we be ready to use the new medium for presenting a message of hope to a world desperately in need?

There are brilliant people in companies such as George Lucas's Industrial Light and Magic who are working to create the technology. My interest is in how we, as Christians, will embrace the medium and use it to change the world.

To accomplish that, I've created six "Keys to Convergence" that we must comprehend if we want to make an impact in this rapidly approaching age. These are important principles that will help you to create a more effective message within the context of this new medium, and help you to cut through the clutter and advertising hype that surround the world of convergence.

NRB 2001 Boot Camps

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- Promotions and Advertising
- Online Ministry Integration
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Key No. 1: The Media Is Today's Pulpit

Growing up as a pastor's son in the South of the 1950's, I knew the moral climate of America was determined in the pulpit. But today, it's quite different. Today's moral climate is determined in TV studios, movie theaters and on the Internet.

However, I find a remarkable number of pastors, evangelists and church leaders who are out of touch with today's culture. Don't believe me? Go on the Web and use a search engine to find Christian youth sites. You won't believe the terrible sites you'll find. Some have excellent resources for young people, but their graphic presentation is so out of style, no young person would even consider looking.

Producers often don't keep up with current programming and graphic styles, and I'm amazed at the number of Christian media professionals who never even watch television. If we're going to make an impact in this culture, we have to understand what makes it tick. Just as Paul in Acts 17 used his knowledge of Greek literature and culture to establish a "common ground" with the philosophers at Mars Hill, we need to understand the music, literature, films and television that this culture creates. Otherwise, they will continue to believe that our message is irrelevant and unimportant. Remember, when it comes to the age of convergence, it's not worth doing if it isn't done in a style and language this culture understands.

Key No. 2: Get Financing in Place

Many Christian producers are plagued by a lack of funds for media production and equipment. Television, for instance, is probably the most expensive outreach your church or ministry will ever encounter, and poor decisions regarding financing can literally destroy an entire ministry organiza-

tion. I always recommend that you have six months of funding in the bank before you begin a new media outreach. On most cable systems today, there are a minimum of 70+ channels, so it takes between six months to a year of broadcasting before your program begins to establish itself with your audience. In the world of convergence, the number of "channels" are potentially endless, and the competition is even greater. That means it could be months or years before you receive any significant prayer or financial support from your audience — they simply need time to find the program! It's critical that you be able to fund your program at least during that first year, or your media ministry will never have the chance to make an impact.

Key No. 3: Storytelling Works in Any Medium

As far as I'm concerned, convergence isn't about equipment, it's about content. While we'll need the technology to bring this diverse media together, it's the content that will decide its direction, impact and legacy. That's why so many streaming media Web sites have failed: the technology was there, but they haven't figured out its most effective use.

As we enter the digital age of convergence, let's spend more time learning how to tell a story more effectively. It doesn't matter the program format — preaching, music, documentary, variety, drama, whatever — every program is telling some type of story, and until that story is told most effectively, the audience is never going to be interested and it's never going to translate to another medium.

There's no question that our storytelling abilities will be greatly challenged and expanded with the advent of convergence. The ability to interweave the Internet and a television program, to add a hyperlink to a movie or to integrate mov-

ing video into Web sites will allow us to tell our stories as never before. But don't allow links, transitions and other gimmicks to distract us from the need to tell a story effectively.

Essentially, it hasn't changed from the time Hebrew storytellers sat around campfires in the desert telling the stories that became the Old Testament.

The medium doesn't matter as much as the message. In the coming age of convergence, let's make a new commitment to storytelling, understanding that unless we can tell a powerful and effective story, the delivery system won't matter.

Key No. 4: Internet Programming Changes Daily

The Web is a fluid, changing environment, yet much of Christian programming is predictable and rarely changes. In Hollywood, millions of dollars are spent every year on pilot programs, many of which never see the light of day! The major studios and networks understand that audiences are always changing, so they aren't afraid to experiment and update programs and program ideas.

Conversely, most Christian programs are doing the same thing they did 10-15 years ago and many Christian Web sites rarely get updated. In the age of convergence, the most successful media ministries will be ministries who aren't afraid to change, update and present a fresh, new approach to an ever-changing audience.

Key No. 5: Don't Stop at Preaching

Preaching is a wonderful thing and there always will be room in Christian media for good, solid preaching. But one of my greatest disappointments in Christian Internet sites are churches and ministries that simply fill the site with video and audio clips of sermons. That should be only the first step. We already

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Sharing Life Through Television



James Robison is founder/president of LIFE Outreach International in Fort Worth, TX. He and his wife, Betty, co-host LIFE Today, which airs daily.

When God led me to television outreach in 1968, my first thoughts were, How can I communicate with people I can't see? How can I identify with their needs? Since 1962, I had delivered the Gospel in crusades and revivals. Preaching to large groups of people came naturally, and I had grown accustomed to reading the crowd.

Through prayer, God revealed to me that the same needs typical of people in a vast crowd are multiplied many times over in the world of television. Supernaturally, God gave me the capacity to "see" the very people I talk to via television and to identify with their heart-felt needs and pains.

In the early days of television ministry, I remained a "standup preacher," although my pulpit had changed. Nevertheless, it didn't take long to see the positive effects of television. I previously had ministered in hundreds of citywide crusades and saw many people accept Christ as their personal Savior. After we went on television, however, decisions for Christ jumped from our highest number of 200,000 in a year to more than 2 million.

In the 1980s, new doors began to open, taking us beyond America's borders. Everywhere I turned, I saw incredible suffering — precious children dying of hunger and disease, and adults unable to help them.

God gave me a clearer understanding of 1 John 3:18: "Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth" (NAS). I knew it was important to demonstrate God's love to the hungry if we wanted them to hear the Gospel. Guided by that insight, we began combining humanitarian efforts with the verbal sharing of the Gospel. Further, to better represent this changed scope and direction, we changed our ministry name from James Robison Evangelistic Association to LIFE Outreach International.

In the mid-1990s, I was led to become a servant to others — no longer the focused center of attention. We pointed people to others who magnified the Lord. When we changed our format to be more conversational and casual, I received letters and phone calls from concerned (and sometimes angry) people. But I know that God directed us to this type of outreach, and our organization is committed to it.

With a little bit of coaxing and a lot of prayer, Betty soon joined me on the set and we adopted the interactive format that we now use. *LIFE Today* deals with real issues and allows real people to share the answers they have found in Christ. It's not built around a television celebrity, but around Christ's power in the lives of individuals to whom viewers can relate.

The Internet and television are becoming more integrated, and we are attempting to stay current with the latest technological advances. *LIFE Today* now can be seen on our Web site, www.lifetoday.org, which provides limitless options for today's busy schedules.

Personally, I don't know of a more effective way to reach the masses than through television. It crosses all lines and penetrates all barriers — socioeconomic, racial, denominational, political and cultural. God's message of truth is for all people.

Through television, we are able to let people know about critical needs all over the world. This enables us to bring the mission fields of the world directly into viewers' homes. Once we show people the need, they are able to pray for the outreaches and the relief workers involved, as well as to undergird their efforts with financial support.

More than 6 million Africans have accepted Christ since 1990 as a result of crusades and feeding centers in remote areas of Africa. To date, we work in more than 20 countries. In the future, our goal is to launch effective "Mission Life" outreaches in every population center in the world, beginning with developing countries.

Currently, less than 10 percent of our calls come from those who want to help support our outreach programs. This illustrates the importance of encouraging viewers to share life with others. I don't feel embarrassed to ask people to help others in need. I believe it's our privilege and responsibility to get involved. Each of us is designed to be a river of life, not a reservoir. Jesus said in John 7:38: "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water."

The call of God is like immersing yourself in a river of life. That river carries you in different directions, in different ways, at different times. But the purpose of the flow is always to deliver a river of life to those who are dying of spiritual thirst. This gives a meaningful witness to the power of love, the importance of forgiveness, the necessity for compassion and the power of active participation in Christ's cause.

When we tape our shows, I can honestly say that I see families, individuals, children and an opportunity. Going on television isn't something "learned"; I believe it's something that God has equipped me to do as a result of a whole-hearted pursuit of God's will. I continually pray that I will communicate not only what is in my heart, but more importantly, what is in God's heart. If I can help others to discover their purpose in life and to fulfill it, then I have fulfilled my purpose in life.

The views expressed in this column are not necessarily those of NRB.

One Question, Three Answers

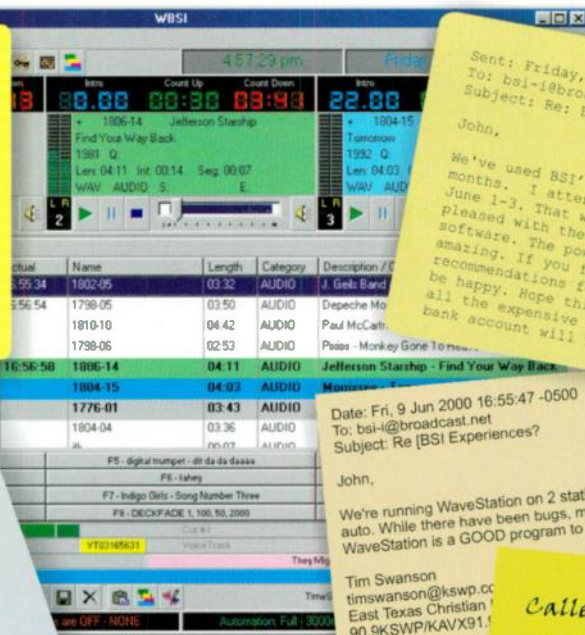
An actual email thread,
June 8-11, 2000 on broadcast.net

Thursday, June 8, 2000
To: bsi-i@broadcast.net
Subject: BSI Experiences?

We are a small AM station considering implementing BSI software to automate our station. It seems to have all the functionality that we would need. Is this a good solution? Thanks for your input.

Sent: Sunday, June 11, 2000 4:50 AM
To: bsi-i@broadcast.net
Subject: Re: BSI Experiences?

John,
We started using WaveStation in January and are extremely pleased with it. It's been running glitch free. We use it weekdays in live assist to play our spots, PSA's, etc. and on weekends in full-automation. At 1p.m. both days, we lock the door and leave. WaveStation plays programs recorded earlier, picks up some programs live from satellite...joins news live at the top of the hour....records a couple of sports updates for playback a few minutes later...fades programs out...runs fill music...fades fill music, etc.
We currently have only one computer set up for WaveStation. We will probably purchase a second one in the not too distant future.
Perhaps it's a sad commentary on life, but WaveStation is much more reliable and dependable than the human beings we used to use...and "Wave Station," as we call the system here, doesn't ask for vacations or pay raises.



Sent: Friday, June 09, 2000 6:09 PM
To: bsi-i@broadcast.net
Subject: Re: BSI Experiences?

John,
We've used BSI's WaveStation for about four months. I attended their training session June 1-3. That was great. We are also very pleased with the capability of the BSI software. The power of WaveStation is amazing. If you follow BSI's recommendations for your hardware you will be happy. Hope this helps you. BSI will do all the expensive systems will do and your bank account will look better.

Date: Fri, 9 Jun 2000 16:55:47 -0500
To: bsi-i@broadcast.net
Subject: Re: BSI Experiences?

John,
We're running WaveStation on 2 stations, one is live-assist the other fully auto. While there have been bugs, most of ours have been PC related. WaveStation is a GOOD program to consider. I give it 2 thumbs up.

Tim Swanson
timswanson@kswp.com
East Texas Christian
90.9KSWP/KAVX91.1
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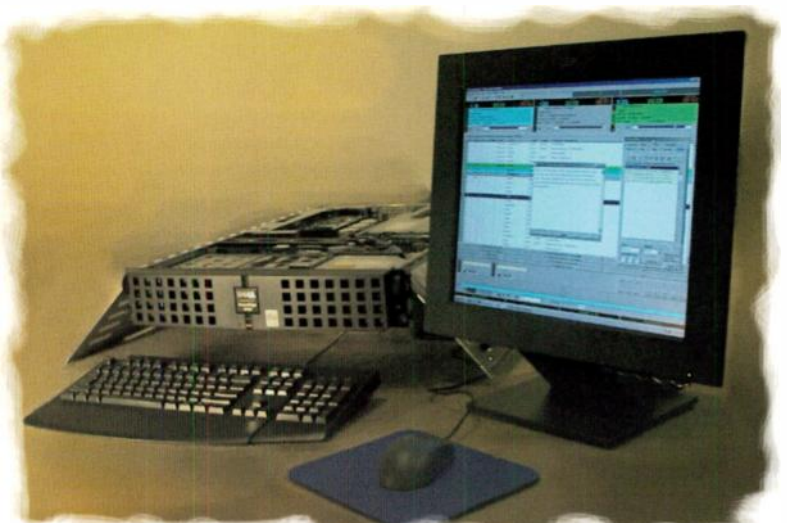
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