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WB in upfront heaven

Fifth network commands 30% price increases; six-network take could hit $6.9 billion

By Steve McClellan

A white-hot upfront market—ignited by the WB—swept through Madison Avenue last week, leaving broadcast network sales executives a group of tired, by happy campers.

Some media buyers got their fingers singed by higher-than-anticipated prices that didn’t thrill their advertiser clients. The market will undoubtedly be a record, probably falling in the $6.7 billion to $6.9 billion range—up 12%-15% from last year’s $6 billion upfront.

At deadline last Friday, WB, Fox and CBS were basically done, while NBC and ABC were still wheeling and dealing but getting close to finish.

WB was first out of the chute and first done. It did close to $450 million in business, an impressive 50% gain over a year ago. The weblet got huge cost-per-thousand gains—exceeding 30% on average, and climbing as high as 35%, several media buyers said.

Those gains, coupled with the overall strength of the market, panicked some buyers, who forced the market to go early for fear of facing even higher prices later and even the possibility that they would be shut out altogether. “Even we were surprised at how strong the demand was, so you can imagine how surprised they were on the other side of the table,” said one top network sales executive. But another sales executive added that buyers should not have felt blindsided. “We warned them in pre-upfront meetings that the increases were going to be huge. They didn’t believe us.”

Fox was in mop-up mode by early Friday, with sources estimating the network would pull in a little more than $1.3 billion in ad commitments, up 18% from a year ago. CBS was done by Friday evening, with sources estimating its take at approximately $1.45 billion, up 16% over a year ago.

Industry sources said ABC’s take would be about $1.7 billion, including Monday Night Foot-

WB’s Jamie Kellner: "I’m delighted that being optimistic in this case ended up being factual.

ball, which some count as sports marketplace money, while others count as prime time. A year ago, ABC did about $1.6 billion, also including NFL dollars. Excluding football, sources say ABC will do about $1.5 billion, compared to about $1.45 billion a year ago. This year, the network was said to be getting CPM gains of roughly 10%.

Sources estimated that NBC’s upfront would probably end up at around $1.9 billion, down 5% from the $2 billion it achieved last year. The network was said to be getting CPM increases in the 8% to 9% range, which was not enough to offset double-digit ratings declines this season.

“The market was a runaway freight train,” last week said one senior seller. Key factors cited by numerous executives were the overall strength of the economy, the strong scatter market and the use of new “optimizer” formulas by buyers that showed network prime time to be one of the strongest values in TV advertising. For example, MCI, relying

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on optimizers, is said to have shifted millions back to network prime, after shifting them last year into cable and syndication.

Aggressive category wars also spurred the market on, sources said, including campaigns by long distance and cellular phone companies. Internet advertising is up and so is traditional retail advertising in an attempt to counter the perceived threat from e-commerce. "Nobody was cutting money back," said one seller. "In fact, if anything, we underestimated the size of budgets this year, probably by 5% or more on average."

The WB's impact was as much psychological as it was real, executives said. "Even though it's a niche, when you start hearing 30% price increase it affects your mindset. There definitely was enormous urgency on buyers to get their money down to avoid getting closed out of the market and to avoid higher prices."

WB head Jamie Kellner predicted last January that the network would do $450 million in this upfront. "When I did that I thought I was being optimistic," Kellner said last week. "I'm delighted that being optimistic in this case ended up being factual."

Kellner said the network practically eliminated the pricing gap between the WB and the major networks in the 18-34 demographic. "We deserve it, we've done a good job," he said. And he insisted that WB would continue to focus on its younger niche and not try to expand to a broader demo appeal over time. "The future of this business is radio," he said. "That means having a format and a brand and loyal clientele that you never disappoint. And you don't try to get their mothers."

### Fox affils yield on take-backs

#### Deal expands amount of reverse compensation paid by the locals to the network

**By Steve McClellan**

Fox affiliates were relieved last week to reach a compromise with the network concerning its proposal to take back 20 units of prime time inventory.

The Fox Affiliate Board approved a plan under which affiliates will pay cash to retain the 20 units. The compromise is subject to approval by the individual station owners.

Affiliates who sign on will receive 15 additional prime time spots per week, giving them a total of 105 30-second prime time spots to sell locally.

Unlike the original plan, the local affiliates will not have to kick back to Fox 25% of the revenue derived from the sale of the additional 15 spots.

The compromise agreement takes effect July 15 for a three-year term. Cash payments will total about $60 million annually, or $180 million. And during that time, Fox has pledged to leave both prime time and NFL inventory levels at current agreements.

The deal, in effect, expands the amount of reverse compensation that Fox affiliates have agreed to pay their network. Last year, affiliates agreed to pay Fox between $45 million and $50 million annually to help the network pay for National Football League rights (B&C July 27, 1998).

Though the board approved the compromise, it was not unanimous, said Fox affiliate board chairman Murray Green, vice president, station development, Raycom Media. He did say the plan was unanimously approved by a subgroup of the board, known as the "owners committee," that includes Tribune, Meredith, Sinclair, Emmis, Raycom and Clear Channel.

Fox now has to go back to the owners and get them to sign off individually on the compromise plan. Fox said it will reclaim the 20 units, giving them (and the 15 extra units) back when station owners agree to cash payments.

Fox Television president Larry Jacobson declined to say what the network would do in cases where it and stations can't come to a deal. But in a letter to affiliates two months ago announcing the original plan, the network said it was prepared to sell time both regionally and locally in markets where affiliates don't go along.

Jacobson said that the compromise agreement was struck quickly, compared to other Fox-affiliate negotiations (seven months on the NFL and 18 months on a plan to transfer Fox Kids' Network from the stations back to Fox). "It's a testament to the strength in our relationship," he said. "The stations have been incredibly responsive and now we can move forward."

Green, however, said it was "the best deal we could work out." One of the biggest sore points was the network's July 15 start date. "Quite frankly," said Green, "the board feels that the July date is an outrageous disregard for the best interests of the affiliates," pointing to Oct. 1 as a better time. "We're dealing with an extra 15 units of inventory in every market for the third quarter, which is pretty well sold at this point."

Jacobson said Fox "tried to mitigate the impact to the stations with additional inventory," adding that, "We've had discussions about how the network business has eroded and the need for some sort of change addressing it.

Tribune Broadcasting president Dennis FitzSimons said that with the compromise deal in hand, "it's time to move on to more constructive things. Are we happy that there will be a reverse form of compensation? No, but I think everybody has to look at the realities that exist right now. Both sides compromised to some degree. It's considerably better than the original proposal."

The network and affiliates still have major issues to grapple with, including exclusivity and digital retransmission rights, said Green. But those are issues to be discussed over time, he said. Asked how close the board got to recommending that affiliates challenge inventory plan in court, Green responded, "I don't think we want to talk about that."

**MAY 31, 1999 / Broadcasting & Cable**

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**Fox's Jacobson: 'The stations have been incredibly responsive and now we can move forward.'**
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AT&T’s incredible shrinking plan

Regulatory concerns prompt sale of TCI systems partnerships

By John M. Higgins

E arning that AT&T’s sweeping reach into cable could jeopardize regulatory approval of its planned MediaOne Group Inc. takeover, company executives are shrinking its cable portfolio by shedding investments and partnerships with other cable operators.

Industry executives familiar with AT&T’s plans said that the company wants to unwind a series of deals that had been crafted by Tele-Communications Inc. before it was acquired by AT&T.

TCI had tried to streamline operations by merging systems in certain regions with nearby clusters of other MSOs. TCI also had long backed smaller operators who were left to manage the systems.

The recent deal to take over MediaOne will leave AT&T owning at least part of systems serving more than 60% of U.S. cable homes. That has spurred industry critics to ask Congress and the FCC to block the deal.

The plan drawn by AT&T Chairman Mike Armstrong and AT&T Broadband President Leo Hindery involves systems serving 4.9 million subscribers and passing 8.4 million homes worth $19 billion; AT&T’s equity stake in those systems averages 42%.

Last week’s sale of 1 million-subscriber Falcon Cable TV Inc., in which TCI acquired a 46% stake less than a year ago, to Charter Communications Inc. is only one element of the divestiture plan.

Another element is Bresnan Communications Inc., which is shelving plans to go public. Instead, it will put its 614,000-subscriber operation up for auction. AT&T is looking to sell its half of a 750,000-subscriber joint venture that last year combined TCI’s Los Angeles systems with those of Century Communications Inc.

Adelphia Communications is looking to buy that when it completes its takeover of Century. AT&T is also in talks to sell to Adelphia its one-third interest in a separate 465,000-subscriber venture, which owns a group of New York state systems centered in Buffalo.

Elsewhere, industry executives expect a 33% stake in a 302,000-subscriber Texas system partnership with TCA Cable TV to be sold to Cox Communications Inc. when it takes over TCA later this year.

AT&T started moving to shed systems “the minute they got an agreement to buy MediaOne,” said an executive with one MSO involved in a partnership with AT&T.

AT&T would not comment on the divestiture plan. However, one executive acknowledged that, “You can see where it would be in our best interests to go into the [MediaOne approval] process with a smaller portfolio.”

Armstrong initially bragged that all these partnerships dramatically extended AT&T’s tentacles. But the problem is that the $69 billion MediaOne deal will clearly put AT&T in violation of federal rules that limit a cable operator to owning no more than 30% of the homes passed by cable.

The rules—currently in abeyance after operators challenged the Federal Communications Commission in court—count not only wholly owned-and-operated systems but also attribute ownership for investments as small as 5% in another MSO.

Buying the 4-million subscriber MediaOne and its 26% stake in Time Warner Entertainment’s 10-million subscriber operation will boost AT&T’s cable holdings to more than 60% of both the nation’s 67 million cable subscribers and 100 million homes passed by a cable system.

The Senate Commerce Committee is expected to hold hearings this summer to review telecommunications mergers. AT&T’s heavy cable ownership is expected to be a central issue.

Critics of the MediaOne deal were surprised by the plan. Mark Cooper of the Consumer Federation of America said that AT&T’s executives’ stance had been that “they would walk through” the approval process. The plan shows “at least they recognize they’ve got a problem,” but the deal list would only trim AT&T’s holdings to around 50% of the industry.

The biggest question centers around

Charter’s new course

Flush with deals to acquire Falcon Cable and Fanch Communications, mega-billionaire Paul Allen’s cable deal making may shift focus, with his Charter Communications Inc. looking less for bulk deals and concentrating more on pruning its portfolio.

In passing its goal to amass systems serving 5 million subscribers, Charter’s buying pattern shows that sheer size has been a bigger priority than organizing tight local and regional clusters. Last week’s $5.6 billion spending spree will push Charter to 5.5 million subs.

Now the goal is to make geographical sense out of the operation spread among more than 30 states with few major urban or suburban clusters, Charter President Jerry Kent said. Kent said he will target acquisitions whose markets fit tightly with existing markets and try to trade systems that don’t fit for other systems that do.

“Our next turn at the Monopoly board will be to do some swaps, get all the same colors and build houses and hotels,” Kent said.

Charter agreed to buy Falcon Cable Holdings for $3.6 billion in cash, stock and assumed debt, adding about 1 million subscribers in Allen’s home turf of Oregon and Washington, plus California, North Carolina and 22 other states. Falcon Chairman Mark Nathanson owns 25% of the company, AT&T Corp. owns 50% and institutional investors own the remainder.

Charter also confirmed that it has cut a deal to acquire systems serving 547,000 subscribers from Denver-based Fanch. Terms of that deal were not disclosed, but industry executives familiar with the deal put the price at around $2.1 billion. Waller Capital Corp. held an auction on Fanch’s behalf.

—John M. Higgins
SMART bombs
Nielsen wannabe couldn’t survive with flaws and freeloaders

By Steve McClellan

The plug has been pulled on Systems for Measuring and Reporting Television (SMART), the five-year-old ratings service that the broadcast networks hoped would compete with Nielsen Media Research.

In canceling plans to take on Nielsen in the national TV ratings game by 2001, Statistical Research Inc., SMART’s parent company, cited a lack of financial support from the industry.

About 30 SMART staffers were laid off last week. Officials at the four major networks said they couldn’t justify the $50 million being asked of them in seed money. Others said there was concern the current measurement technology may be obsolete in five years.

Like previous efforts to develop a second TV ratings system, SMART was born out of frustration with Nielsen Media Research, which has a monopoly on both local and national TV ratings. SMART is the third would-be competitor to Nielsen on the national TV ratings front in a decade.

The networks spent tens of millions of dollars over five years subsidizing SRI’s development of the SMART service, including a two-year TV ratings market test in Philadelphia, which ended earlier this year.

Just last year, the four major networks, several cable networks, including USA and Discovery, and more than a dozen ad agencies signed letters of intent to negotiate service contracts for the SMART service. But they were contingent upon SRI coming up with an acceptable business plan for launching the system nationwide.

Ultimately, that business plan proved unworkable, because it relied too heavily on upfront seed money from the major networks. SRI found a strategic partner in Andersen Consulting in January. SRI estimated it needed $100 million to launch the service nationally. And Andersen concluded that it would need the industry to put up half the money in order to raise the remaining $50 million in capital markets.

Each of the major broadcast networks was being asked to put up $12 million as an upfront investment in the service, in addition to agreeing to a long-term service contract. In addition, they would also need to continue to take Nielsen. “That’s a big nut to crack, particularly in this economic environment,” said NBC research president Steve McClellan. “The other problem was there were a whole bunch of entities that were clearly not interested in supporting it. They were happy to draft behind the paying customers.”

Nevertheless, Wurtzel and most of the other network executives said they were disappointed that SMART won’t go forward. “I feel badly about it,” said Wurtzel. “They achieved a tremendous amount in terms of the research that they conducted. But I think we vastly underestimated the complexity of the business aspect of this initiative.”

Wurtzel also holds some hope that an alternative business plan can be developed that will get SMART to the marketplace. “There is still an opportunity if we can figure out another way to do the financing. I don’t think anybody disagrees [that] it’s a great idea.”

David Poltrack, executive vice president for planning and research at CBS, said he too was “very disappointed” that SMART won’t come to market. “There is a growing recognition that we need a better measurement system,” said Poltrack. And the best way to achieve that, he said, is through competition.

The good news, said Poltrack, is that Nielsen has already responded with some significant improvements to its service “in reaction to SMART.” One of the biggest improvements, said Poltrack, is a new Nielsen offering that allows clients to do reach and frequency and flow studies based on respondent-level data.

Like Wurtzel, Poltrack said that while SMART’S research was above reproach, the business plan was flawed. For one thing, he said, it was unclear whether SMART would be embraced by the entire industry and therefore effective as a true competitor to Nielsen by 2001. And by 2005, he said, the current measurement technology—for both SMART and Nielsen—will probably be obsolete. In its place, he said, will likely be some form of two-way interactive measurement technology. “The numbers just didn’t work out,” he said.
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CBS’ affinity for the great Outdoor
While Chancellor pulls back, Infinity pays $8.3 billion for largest billboard company

By Elizabeth A. Rathbun

Infinity Broadcasting Corp. last Thursday cut an $8.3 billion deal to acquire the country’s largest billboard company. Infinity Chairman Mel Karmazin’s big move into multimedia platforms comes as another major media player, CBS Corp., is looking to get out of the business by putting its billboards on the block (B&C, May 24).

Infinity, the radio arm of CBS Corp., which already owns 2,000 billboards, is buying Outdoor Systems Inc. and its 112,000 billboards for about $6.5 billion in Infinity stock and $1.8 billion in assumed debt.

“This is a deal that was absolutely a natural” and will provide “one-stop shopping” for advertisers, Karmazin said during a conference call moments after the deal was signed. Karmazin, who also runs CBS, said there was “a lot of logic” behind reaching people “while they’re in their car, hearing that commercial [on the radio], seeing that billboard. In the outdoor industry, “billboard” is the generic term used for all out-of-home advertising, not just billboards but bus shelters, street furniture and mall and airport displays.

Only seven months ago, Chancellor’s Jeffrey Marcus was touting similar synergies, talking about how the combination of TV, radio and the company’s 42,500 billboards could give Chancellor a multimedia hold on the market. “They’re compelled to do business with us,” Marcus told BROADCASTING & CABLE in an October interview.

So why are two radio giants that trumpeted such synergies taking divergent paths?

In Chancellor’s case, it has experienced a management shakeup. Marcus was shown the door and the multimedia strategy was shelved—at least for now—by new Chairman Tom Hicks.

“Were we too early with that,” Hicks said during last March’s shakeup, although he says the strategy should work “eventually.” Chancellor is also looking to cut some debt.

Another difference, says Paul T. Sweeney, an analyst with Salomon Smith Barney Inc., may be the scale on which CBS can cross-promote. CBS will have 114,000 billboards. Outdoor Systems has signs in 90 U.S. metropolitan areas, including all top-50 media markets.

There are some overlaps with Infinity radio stations in 33 of those markets, giving Infinity a “very, very significant position in radio and outdoor together,” Karmazin said.

And CBS has more arrows in its cross-promotional quiver. In addition to selling ad packages of radio and billboard ads, Outdoor Systems under the CBS umbrella can offer cross promotion on CBS TV stations, the CBS TV network, syndicated shows and CBS’ cable and Internet ventures, according to Karmazin.

Additionally, CBS set up a cross-media advertising sales division, called CBS Plus, last November to explore getting more bang for its buck.

While outdoor advertising depends mostly on local advertisers, national advertisers will be attracted to this cross-media platform, Karmazin said. “The more significant you can be to an advertiser...the better and healthier you are.”

Despite the recently imposed ban on tobacco ads, billboard is one of the fastest-growing advertising segments, as are radio and the Internet, Karmazin said. Outdoor Systems is an “extraordinary company on its own, very well run, but we really believe the combination of radio and outdoor together...made all kinds of sense.”

Station brokers take note. Infinity, which owns about 160 radio stations, will look to buy radio stations in the markets where it does not yet overlap with Outdoor Systems, Karmazin said. Other outdoor deals are also possible, including perhaps Chancellor’s 42,500 billboards.

With Outdoor Systems, CBS, which controls most of Infinity’s stock, becomes the world’s largest outdoor company. In addition to billboards, Outdoor has about 125,000 subway displays in New York City, while Infinity boasts another 1 million subway signs worldwide.

ET calls Paramount home

Paramount Television Group last week acquired 100% of syndicated news magazine Entertainment Tonight and assumed distribution rights to all of Rysher Entertainment’s television programming in a complex arrangement with Cox Broadcasting.

In a deal that had been widely anticipated for months, Paramount Television Group will handle all domestic and international distribution of Rysher Entertainment's library and current cable, network and first-run TV programming. Cox Broadcasting, which acquired Rysher Entertainment in 1993, will retain ownership of all of the Rysher programs, with the exception of ET.

Paramount, which created and has co-owned ET with Cox Broadcasting for 18 years, will now own the series outright and handle barter syndication sales. Paramount and Cox executives would not comment on the terms of the deal.

“Rysher obviously had some very attractive assets in its library and what was most attractive to us was Entertainment Tonight,” says Paramount Television Group Chairman Kerry McCluggage. “We bought out Cox's share of ET and also enabled them to do what they wanted with Rysher, which was essentially liquidate the company. Yet [Cox] wanted to keep the Rysher assets, which are valuable assets to be protected and in the best hands possible.”

In addition to the distribution deal, Paramount will produce Nash Bridges for CBS, OZ for HBO and the first-run syndicated series Judge Mills Lane. Paramount has also acquired international distribution rights to a number of HBO series and films, including Sex and the City and Arli$$. On the feature film front, Paramount has also acquired worldwide distribution rights to films including Dear God, Kingpin and It Takes Two.

By year’s end, Paramount is also expected to add Worldvision Enterprises’ first-run product (Judge Judy and Judge Joe Brown) and extensive TV library product to its fold through parent company Viacom Entertainment.

Joe Schlosser
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McCain hits FCC merger power
Kennard, Powell clash on possible redundancies among federal antitrust authorities

By Paige Albinak and Bill McConnell

The FCC’s three Democrats last week were left defending the agency’s right to review mergers, as House and Senate Republicans made plans to move legislation that would take that authority away.

On the day the Senate Commerce Committee held a hearing on the topic (May 26), Commerce Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.), Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) and Sen. John Ashcroft (R-Mo.) introduced legislation that would reduce the FCC’s role in reviewing mergers. If that bill became law, assessing the legality of such mergers would be a task left largely to the two agencies responsible for antitrust oversight—the Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission.

Accordin to the bill, the FCC would not be allowed to begin a merger review until Justice or the FTC said, in writing, that a given combination had problems. Should that happen, the FCC would have 60 days to complete a review. However, if either agency approved a merger, the FCC would have to transfer the licenses immediately.

FCC Chairman William Kennard fervently defended the agency’s merger review process, which focuses on the public interest, as an essential complement to antitrust analysis.

“The FCC does not conduct an antitrust review of mergers that is cloaked in public interest rhetoric,” Kennard said. “There seems to be a common misunderstanding that we have overlapping jurisdictions. That is not the case.”

The public also has the opportunity to provide input with public comments during FCC reviews, unlike the secretive Justice Department analyses, added Commissioner Susan Ness, a Democrat.

The FCC also requires merging parties to demonstrate that approval would be in the public interest, whereas other agencies require merger opponents to prove their case, added Commissioner Gloria Tristani, another Democrat.

But Republican Commissioner Michael Powell dismissed his Democratic colleagues’ suggestion that FCC merger reviews are different from the studies conducted at the Justice Department. FCC reviews are “nearly identical to the sort of review we would have conducted in the antitrust division,” said Powell, once chief of staff for the Justice Department’s antitrust division. FCC staffers make “great use of antitrust merger guidelines,” he said.

One Senate staffer asserted that the McCain/Hatch measure has little chance of becoming law because the administration is unlikely to pass a bill that would keep the FCC out of the process of reviewing telecommunications mergers.

Sens. Mike DeWine (R-Ohio), chairman of the Senate antitrust subcommittee, and Herb Kohl (D-Wis.) have introduced a bill that would require the FCC to approve mergers within strict time limits—three months for small mergers and six months for larger ones. The antitrust subcommittee passed that bill in early May. Sources say that bill, because it is less heavy-handed, is more likely to be enacted.

In the House, Rep. George Gekas (R-Pa.), chairman of the House Judiciary’s commercial and administrative law subcommittee, last week said he’s considering introducing legislation similar to McCain’s.

Like McCain, Gekas suggested that the FCC and other federal agencies should be barred from reviewing specific issues that have already been considered by Justice.

“The issues resolved in the Department of Justice [should] never be brought up again,” Gekas told reporters after a hearing on the FCC’s merger review authority.

FCC Commissioner Harold Furchtgott-Roth, a Republican, testified at that hearing that the FCC’s frequently broad merger reviews are an abuse of its “narrow” authority to block license transfers that result from mergers.

“The commission does not possess statutory authority under the Communications Act to review, writ large, the mergers or acquisitions of communications companies,” Furchtgott-Roth said.

Gekas criticized the DeWine-Kohl legislation because the bill doesn’t question whether the FCC has any merger authority.

“That’s like saying Congress surrender,” Gekas said. “Go ahead and do [a merger review] but do it in 14 hours.”

Both hearings were prompted by complaints about FCC foot-dragging in its review of the SBC-Ameritech merger.
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Senator targets broadcast licenses

By Paige Albinak

S
en. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) last week threatened TV stations' licenses for airing what he and other critics believe is too much sex and violence.

"Maybe it is time for the FCC to consider programming content when they decide if a TV station's license should be renewed," Lieberman said at a press conference where the Parents Television Council released a study showing TV violence on the upswing.

The study—which compared two weeks of November sweeps programming in 1996, 1997 and 1998—found that sex, violence and bad language on TV had increased by 31%. PTC found that ABC aired the most offensive programming, followed by Fox.

"Plainly put, television is the raunchiest it has ever been in spite of, or perhaps because of, the [program] ratings system," said Brent Bozell, PTC chairman.

Sexual content alone jumped 42%, with ABC, Fox and WB airing the most sex. Use of adult language rose 30%, with NBC leading this category. PTC said CBS is the most violent network, but airs little sex or foul language, making it the network PTC labels "least offensive."

Lawmakers also used the report to call on TV to clean up its content, saying programmers are using the newly developed TV ratings system as an excuse to put even more objectionable content on TV.

"There is a difference between taking out the trash and giving it a label," said Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kansas). "It may be worthwhile to stick labels on trash TV. But it would be even better to take out the trash."

Bozell, Lieberman and Brownback also used the occasion to call on TV viewers and advertisers to stop patronizing programs with offensive content.

WASHINGTON

Sorry, wrong number

Broadcasters won't have to honor telephone requests for election advertising records they must keep at their main studios. Last Friday the FCC said that it would exempt political information from rules issued in August requiring broadcasters to honor phoned-in requests for copies of their public file documents. Broadcasters argued that they would be deluged with requests for information during election campaign seasons. Regulators also agreed to limit broadcasters' obligation to grant telephone requests for general public file information to inquiries made by people residing within a station's coverage area. All others must travel to the studio to check out the information. Additionally, the commissioners ruled last week that stations do not have to honor any phone requests if they maintain their public files within their community of license. The rules issued last summer allowed stations to move their main studios from their primary community, as long as the offices remained in their general coverage area.

DENVER

Allen watch

With all the real cable deal activity, the rumor mill ought to be running low on fuel. Still, talk that Adelphia Communications is mulling a sale is demonstrating staying power, despite Adelphia statements to the contrary. Some on Wall Street are convinced that each Adelphia acquisition is simply another piece of dowry for a marriage.

The latest iteration couples Adelphia and Paul Allen's Charter Communications, which recently announced plans to acquire Falcon Communications and Fanch Communications. Those deals would push Charter to No. 4 in the subscriber rankings with 5.5 million customers, a bit ahead of Adelphia's roughly 4.9 million subs. But don't hold your breath. In addition to Wall Streeters close to the company, Adelphia's owners—the Rigas family—quietly emphasize that they have no plans to exit cable. Some trades, maybe even a joint venture, are likely, given Adelphia's and Charter's shared interest in certain areas, including Los Angeles. Adelphia, via swaps last week with Comcast, now has the biggest chunk of the L.A. market—one that Allen reportedly covets.

NEW YORK

Spike Lee's Pacers putdown

As the New York Knicks and Indiana Pacers square off in the NBA playoffs this week, director Spike Lee is likely to be on the scene. He was slated to make a cameo appearance, at least electronically, during Sunday's first game in a sequel to a Pizza Hut spot aired earlier this year. The BBD&O spot, which could be repeated later in the series, has an incredulous Brooklynite Lee reacting to Pizza Hut's low prices with the tagline: "What do you think this is, Indiana?" It's a reference to the long-standing dislike Lee, a long-suffering Knicks fan, holds for the Pacers and forward Reggie Miller. Lee has had words with Miller, who buried the Knicks with a three-point shot he released right in front of Lee's courtside seat in last year's playoffs.

WASHINGTON

Show me the study

Much to the chagrin of FCC staffers, officials from the National Association of Broadcasters last week crowed that regulators have no evidence to show that today's radio receivers are precise enough to produce a clear sound under looser interference standards—an assumption essential to the agency's low-power FM plan. During a Media Institute luncheon, NAB General Counsel Jeff Bauman complained that the FCC has no studies demonstrating that low-power service can be added without creating signal conflicts. The NAB's latest argument ranks FCC staffers because broadcasters are counting on just that type of precision to implement "in-band, on-channel" digital radio technology.
The dish on satellite bills
Congress and Senate prepare to hammer out regs for delivering local TV via DBS

By Paige Albinak

Broadcasters and satellite TV companies still have several sticking points to resolve as satellite TV reform bills approved by the House and Senate in May move into a conference meeting between the two after Memorial Day. Lawmakers hope to resolve those issues and pass a law before the August recess.

The key point of contention is a provision that would require local TV stations to give all multichannel video distributors nondiscriminatory pricing and nonexclusive access to programming until 2006. The broadcast networks want the provision out. They say it will hamper their free-market rights to negotiate a fair value for their programming. EchoStar CEO Charlie Ergen will oppose any leg-

ther buttressed, say Hill sources, because broadcasters, not satellite carriers, fought to include the measure.

Carriers also would like the must-carry deadline extended. EchoStar CEO Charlie Ergen says it is unlikely he can meet full must carry requirements in the little more than two years the legislation would give him.

Finally, broadcasters are opposed to a provision in the House bill that would allow satellite TV companies to import distant signals to within 35 miles of a TV station's market. They say that will shrink their coverage area, but members of the House Commerce Committee included the measure because they want consumers to have programming choices, says a staffer.

The two bills agree to:
- Grant compulsory copyright licenses for programming in local markets, but

Differences between the House and Senate bills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provision</th>
<th>House* (H.R. 1554)</th>
<th>Senate (S. 247, amended with S. 303)</th>
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</table>
| Retransmission consent        | Satellite carriers must obtain retransmission consent from local stations, and must obtain | Satellite carriers must obtain retransmission consent for local signals, but not for distant signals as long as the satellite carrier complies with program
|                               |                   | isivity rules                        |
|                               |                   | included in Senate bill              |
|                               |                   | tinues use of current standar        |
|                               |                   | dize, which requires any househ      |
|                               |                   | olds to get a TV signal of the      |
|                               |                   | desired strength using a 20-mile    |
|                               |                   | rooftop antenna to do so             |
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|                               |                   | del that FCC developed and fin    |
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|                               |                   | on this topic last February        |
|                               |                   | Friends service to households        |
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|                               |                   | ignal contour until Dec. 31, 99,    |
|                               |                   | while making sure all              |
|                               |                   | of households qualify to get        |
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|                               |                   | tinue service unless               |
|                               |                   | FCC proves broadcasters will         |
|                               |                   | er "material" harm                  |
|                               |                   | Requests FCC within 90 days of ef    |
|                               |                   | fecting to sort out the rules        |
|                               |                   | for providers to hand out          |
|                               |                   | waives and perform tests within a   |
|                               |                   | limited period of time              |

Footnote: Additionally, the House bill would require satellite providers to give free antennas to subscribers who lose their distant signals; would require the National Telecommunications and Information Administration and the U.S. Copyright Office to conduct a study on how to expand local into local into small and rural markets; and would not subject recreational vehicles to programming-exclusivity rules.
require satellite carriers to get permission from each local TV station before it can retransmit its signal;
- remove a 90-day period a cable customer must wait before subscribing to a satellite service;
- lower compulsory copyright fees for satellite carriers to almost 19 cents per subscriber per month for superstations and almost 15 cents for networks;
- extend the compulsory copyright license for distant signals for five years and grant the local license permanently;
- require satellite carriers to submit lists of their subscribers to the broadcast networks within 90 days of signing them up as well as a monthly update on which subscribers were dropped or added;
- require local broadcasters to provide, at their cost, a "good" TV signal to the satellite carrier, although the House bill requires satellite carriers to get permission from local TV stations if the signal receive facility is located outside of local markets, and
- allow satellite carriers to offer a national public broadcasting feed as long as public broadcasting grants satellite carriers access to its national signal.

The bills are scheduled to be reconciled in a conference meeting after Congress' Memorial Day recess, which ends June 7. Sources say conferees from the Senate and House Commerce and Judiciary committees will not be determined until after the recess. Because Republicans hold the majority in Congress, they will bring an additional Republican from each committee.

**The commission connection**

The FCC would have its work cut out for it with passage of a satellite bill. The House and Senate bills would require the FCC to conduct expeditious rulemakings on several issues:

**Retransmission consent:** House bill requires FCC to start within 45 days of enactment and finish within one year a rulemaking that would govern retransmission consent for satellite providers.

**Programming exclusivity:** House directs FCC to write programming exclusivity rules, which would make sure that satellite carriers were not showing customers the same programming on two or more stations, similar to the rules faced by cable. Senate would ask FCC to write programming exclusivity rules within six months of enactment if such rules are found to be economically and technically feasible and in the public interest.

**Signal reception standard:** House bill directs FCC to determine new standard by which picture quality is judged within 2 years of enactment.

**Predictive model:** House bill directs FCC to establish new model to predict whether viewers can receive over-the-air signals that takes into account terrain, vegetation, obstacles such as buildings, land use and land cover.

**Rural satellite service:** Senate bill requires FCC within six months of enactment to report to Congress on providing local-into-local service in small and rural markets.

**Waivers:** Senate bill requires FCC within three months of enactment to develop guidelines for satellite TV subscribers seeking waivers from broadcasters so they can get distant signals even if they live within the broadcaster's market.

**ADIs to become DMAs**

TV stations in 135 counties across the country likely will find themselves carried on different cable systems next year because the FCC is changing the way it decides in which market a station belongs. The agency last week switched from a model developed by the Arbitron Co. to the designated market area model created by Nielsen Media Research. The change is necessary because Arbitron no longer publishes the area of dominant influence (ADI) model used by the FCC. The change will reportedly alter the boundaries of about 80 markets and will affect the next round of must carry and retransmission consent negotiations, which begin Oct. 1.

**Finance guys call cable's bluff**

The cable industry’s threat to pull out of the broadband business if the FCC forces them to open their high-speed networks to Internet competitors is little more than a bluff, two financial analysts told the FCC last week. Legg Mason Wood Walker’s Scott Cleland and Janney Montgomery Scott’s Anna Maria Kovacs said the potential rewards for offering new services are so great that cable companies will find a way to live with whatever government regulations might be imposed. They made their comments during the second of two days of private sessions between FCC staffers and major players in the market for high-speed telecommunications services. The hearings were the first formal proceedings by FCC officials charged with monitoring developments in the broadband fight. The two main camps in the dispute stuck to their positions—telephone companies and dial-up Internet providers said that cable companies should be required to open access to their high speed networks to Internet competitors while cable companies said the government shouldn’t interfere with the nascent business.

**Matthews joins Ness**

Kim Matthews yesterday was named interim mass media and cable adviser to FCC Commissioner Susan Ness. Matthews, who joined the FCC in 1994, is an attorney with the Mass Media Bureau’s policy and rules division. Children’s television is among Matthews’ specialties. She replaces Anita Wallgren, who is leaving the FCC June 1 to become vice president for business affairs at Geocast Network Systems in Menlo Park, Calif. Geocast is a start-up firm developing video streaming technology. Wallgren “is an exceptional person and friend and will be sorely missed,” Ness said in a prepared statement.
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Don’t look on a map for the town. Starting July 5, you’ll find it only on NBC’s daytime schedule. It’s the setting for Passions, the network’s newest entry in one of broadcasting’s oldest genres—the soap opera.

The show is also an act of faith—faith that there is still room for a new soap despite the genre’s diminishing daytime audiences and NBC’s own daytime troubles. The network is axing one low-rated soap, Another World, and pondering closing another, Sunset Beach.

Overall, soap ratings have dropped 24% in the past five years, according to Nielsen figures supplied by ABC. Plus, the statistics show, ratings for women 18-49, the most sought after group of viewers, are down 28% compared to a 22% dip experienced by prime time programs aired by the six networks.

Nonetheless, the genre is still healthy. Most soaps still make plenty of money. ABC and Columbia are promising around-the-clock soap channels for cable (see story, page 26). And at least NBC believes the market isn’t saturated.

Passions may go a long way in answering the question of just how much life is left in the soaps. “I think Passions has enormous pressure to show the networks that a drama can make money, can bring in viewers and find other ways to bring money into the company,” says Susan Lee, senior VP, daytime programming, NBC.

Launching a new soap in daytime is “very problematic,” says Mary Alice Dwyer-Dobbin, executive-in-charge of production for Procter & Gamble Productions. P&G is not only a significant advertiser in soaps, but also produces Another World, As the World Turns, and Guiding Light. P&G licenses the shows to the networks.

“It takes at least five years for a soap to get up and running. You’ve got to give a show time to find itself and its audience,” says Dwyer-Dobbin. Thus the answers about the viability of soaps may not come quickly.

But if Passions takes off, the rewards will be great for NBC, which is producing the hour-long show in association
with Outpost Farms Productions.

The average hour soap costs about $60 million a year. That's a little more than $200,000 for each of the 260 of so episodes. The most popular soaps take in between $150 million and $200 million, according to Competitive Media Reporting.

The soaps have "always been a cash cow," says Angela Shapiro, president of ABC Daytime Television. While revenues may have dropped along with viewership, Shapiro says ABC's four soaps are the "most profitable part of the network." ABC, he notes, is also the only network that owns all of its soaps.

"Twenty years ago the daytime profits held up the network," says CBS' Lucy Johnson, senior vice president, daytime/children's programs and special projects. "That's not true today, but that doesn't mean it's a negative, it does very well."

NBC needs a winner in Passions if it is to catch up with CBS and ABC. ABC's General Hospital is first with women 18-49, with CBS' The Young and the Restless a close second. The Young and the Restless and Y&R focus on the lives and loves of the Newman, Abbott and Winters families in the fictional Genoa City. The hour-long drama airs at 12:30 p.m. ET.

The Roundtable: "Season-to-date rating, women, 18-49, according to Nielsen Media Research."

Owner: ABC
Wendy Riche, executive producer

General Hospital has been a remarkable daytime TV success story. The hospital's dominant ratings in the 1980s, attracting millions of teens to serials as never before, and it still remains among the top five soaps. A 1981 wedding was the highest rated show in daytime history. Known for its fantastic storylines—such as Mr. Freeze—and for attracting big-name guest stars—Elizabeth Taylor, Ricky Martin—General Hospital is produced on the West Coast. ABC airs the program at 3 p.m. ET.

Owner: CPT Holdings
William J. Bell, senior executive producer

In 1973 William Bell brought prime-time production values to daytime with The Young and the Restless. With a focus on glitz and glamour, Y & R's story lines have tackled everything from AIDS to aging—even offering TV's first on-screen facelift. Aimed at a younger audience than most soaps, Y&R focuses on the lives of the Newman, Abbott and Winters families in the fictional Genoa City. The hour-long drama airs at 12:30 p.m. ET.

Owner: ABC
Jean Dadario Burke, executive producer

One of the most popular and well-known actresses in a daytime drama, Susan Lucci, who plays Erica Kane—headlines one of daytime's biggest casts. On the air since 1970, the show was among the top two daytime dramas throughout the 1980s. It started slipping in the ratings during the 1994-95 season and has yet to return to the top. ABC has brought back the show's creator, Agnes Nixon, as its head writer (see interview, page 28). Produced in New York, it airs at 1 p.m. ET.

Our Shapiro: The soaps are "the most profitable part of the network."

"When you have a good story, good writing and an appealing cast, I think people will come," says ABC's Lee. "Passions will give the audience what they need in this daypart. It has romance, suspense, and characters you care about, but it will also have some very unexpected twists."

NBC is the only network that allows affiliates to run soaps anywhere in daytime they want to. But that will soon change. Indeed, some 78% of NBC affiliates are expected to run Passions after Days of Our Lives. Putting the soaps in pattern, NBC executives believe, will help them find an audience.

The soap audience may be slipping away, but production and acting on the shows have improved over the years, says Lynn Leahey, editor-in-chief of Soap Opera Digest. Indeed, Leahey says, the programs have attracted prime time and screen stars such as Valerie Perrine, who's been on CBS' As the World Turns, Patti D'Arbanville, who starred on CBS' Guiding Light, and Sally Kirkland, who's appeared on Days of Our Lives.

The daytime audience is smaller because more women are in the work force, Leahey explains. And, she says, stay-at-home moms are "a lot busier running from soccer practice to piano lessons." But Leahey also thinks the daytime audience has dwindled because of the Internet. More women, she says, are using their spare time to...
The current Nielsen ratings system does not monitor out-of-home viewing, says Lee. "What we do know about the daypart is that more and more people are watching soaps out of the home."

She says programmers need to go to Nielsen and say, "You're not servicing us. People are watching at the office, in schools, in dormitories, and at hospitals," argues Lee. "We are just constantly stunned that our anecdotal evidence doesn't reflect what Nielsen's numbers do. There's something wrong with this picture."

Regardless of ratings trends, the soaps "are not going down the tubes overnight," says CBS' Johnson. A soap with a 3.5 rating is still "a strong long-term franchise compared to a new show that comes on or a talk show that barely makes it. We just all have to adjust to what the new ceiling is, new expectations perhaps."

And the networks must find new ways to attract viewers, Johnson adds. "Ultimately, the responsibility rests more with the show itself to capture attention than automatically assuming that the one generation will teach the future generation to watch."
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Will two soap channels wash?

Disney/ABC and Columbia TriStar aim to launch 24-hour cable networks in January

By Kim McAvoy

Is the world ready for two 24-hour soap-opera cable channels? Disney/ABC and Columbia TriStar Television Group think so.

Both are moving forward with plans to launch cable soap channels next January.

Reaction to the proposed channel from cable operators has been “very good,” says Anne Sweeney, president of Disney/ABC Cable Networks. “It’s very easy to understand the channel, it’s easy to identify the base of viewers, and it’s something we can do because we own the soaps.”

Disney/ABC declined to discuss any specifics of its negotiations with cable companies.

“We’re in discussions with all major cable and satellite players,” says Andy Kaplan, executive vice president, Columbia. “We’re talking to some players about taking equity in the channel and there’s certainly the traditional pay launch fees and get subscriber fees back,” says Kaplan.

Would the studio offer the channel without charge? “I don’t think we would offer it for free on a long-term basis,” says Kaplan. “We wouldn’t do what the Food Channel did, which was 10 years free or something like that.”

There has been some conjecture that the two companies would eventually join forces to deliver one channel of soap programs. Sweeney, however, dismisses the possibility as merely “a rumor.” Kaplan, on the other hand, says “anything is possible,” but the two programmers are not “talking at this time.”

Disney/ABC’s service will carry same-day repeats of all ABC’s soaps: General Hospital, All My Children, One Life to Live and Port Charles. The channel is also likely to carry other programming that would be compatible with soap operas, including movies. Right now the studio is researching what that programming would be, says Sweeney.

Disney/ABC feels a 24-hour soap channel will give fans who have returned to work or have other demands on their time more opportunity to see their favorite shows. “I see it as an adjunct to the network,” says ABC’s Angela Shapiro, president, ABC Daytime Television. “Convenience is very important.”

Attaining carriage on analog cable channels will be a challenge for the two channels. But Sweeney is confident there is room. “There is analog space left despite what you hear. We discovered that with Toon Disney when we launched it a year ago. Toon Disney has a fair amount of analog subscribers, I don’t believe we have any digital to date,” says the Disney/ABC executive. (Analog channel reaches all a cable operator’s subscribers; digital, only that fraction equipped with digital set-tops.)

“It will be tough” to launch two soap channels at once, admits Kaplan. But Columbia thinks the market is ripe. “The way we look at it, right now, three networks are running soap operas four hours a day against each other. They’ve been doing that for thirty years. Clearly there’s a voracious appetite for the form. There are eyeballs out there to support a three-network profitable environment.

“We think two channels that are similar in nature but not identical can be viable,” adds Kaplan. And Columbia’s SoapCity will be different from Disney’s entry. “We won’t be as dependent
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The Scheherazade of soaps

Columbia, which produces Days of Our Lives with Corday Productions, will offer the drama on a same-day basis, probably in prime time. The studio also produces The Young and the Restless for CBS and would like to include it in the channel. It is in discussions with CBS about how it might be done.

SoapCity will also carry past episodes of soaps produced by Procter & Gamble Productions, which include Another World (which has been canceled by NBC), As the World Turns and Guiding Light.

CBS and NBC, which provide viewers with a steady diet of daytime dramas, say they’ll be watching to see how the proposed soap channels do. But right now, neither appears likely to get involved in such a project. “We have an exclusivity arrangement with our affiliates, we’re honoring that now,” says Lucy Johnson, senior vice president, daytime/children’s programs and special projects at CBS. Nor is a soap channel on “our agenda,” says Susan Lee, NBC’s senior vice president, daytime programs.

Do you think daytime serials will always have a home on broadcast television?
Yes, I do, I truly do. I am not saying they all will. Again, because it is a story. A good story well presented is just as movies are, it’s entertainment. It’s human stories and people are interested in people.

What do you think about serials appealing?
It’s a form of entertainment nearest to real life. Every day is a new episode, there’s that appeal, as well as the fact that it’s never repeated. I think there’s something about a continued story. Charles Dickens was a serial writer; people use to wait in Boston for the boat to come from England with the next installment to see what was going to happen to Little Nell. Also, you have to have believable characters. Sometimes, soaps have gotten into characters that were not believable. The characters have to be three dimensional, someone with whom the audience can identify. Stories have to be believable, suspenseful, interesting and involving.

What do you think about proposals for 24-hour soap channels on cable?
I am very excited by it. I also think we’ll get a truer measurement of viewership. The Nielsen ratings don’t list VCRs and we know there’s a vast audience that tapes and watches soaps later. I frankly think we don’t have a true picture now of measurement of audience viewership. Plus there’s something nice about the fact that what I do will be seen again. I am thinking particularly about the actors now. I think it brings us a little more satisfaction.
CBS, NBC claim victory

Peacock preens over 18-49; CBS eyes total picture

By Joe Schlosser

With the television season coming to a close last week, two networks came out claiming victory in the Nielsen ratings.

NBC executives exited the May sweep last week proud of their victory in the key adults 18-49 demographic and their delivery in the category over the entire season. NBC widened its gap in adults 18-49 as the season went on and the network grabbed its 17th win in the past 18 sweeps in the demo.

Over at CBS, network executives were toasting their win in total households and viewers during the 1998-1999 season. For CBS, it was the first time the network has topped the household and total viewers charts since the 1993-1994 season and the first time under CBS President Leslie Moonves.

So who exactly is the winner? Do both networks have legitimate claims to the crown? And more important: Who will get the bigger piece of the projected $6.5 billion network upfront market?

To no one's surprise, it depended on whom you asked.

"It is an achievement to win households. There is no question about that. We are all competitive people and we all would like to win in every possible category," said NBC's West Coast President Scott Sassa on a conference call with reporters last week. "But we do this for business purposes. Our [30-second ad] spots sell in the range of $160,000 per spot and the network [CBS] that is number one in households, their spots sell at $80,000."

Moonves disputed Sassa's assertion last week.

"I'd like to congratulate NBC for doing so well in the 18-49 demographic. I'd just like to question one number that Mr. Sassa threw at all of you: That they [NBC] average $160,000 per spot versus $80,000 for us," Moonves told reporters. "Number one, our $80,000 is much higher, and if, in fact, they were selling at $160,000 per spot, their upfront total would be well over $3 billion and we know that is not the case."

Moonves would not say how much CBS is receiving per spot, but he says the CBS sales staff is making "big" strides in getting advertisers to change their ways. It will need to. CBS finished fourth in 18-49, the first time a season winner has ranked so low with the demo. Moonves says the network's top sitcom, Everybody Loves Raymond, had many 30-second ads selling at over $200,000 and a CBS spokesman says the network's average ad price is close to $100,000.

CBS is the only major broadcast network that doesn't program to the younger demographic and Moonves says his network's strategy is going to start paying off with all the competition coming from cable and outside forces.

"Our goal has obviously been to program to the widest possible audience as we look to the future, and it appears everyone [else] is going so very young with their new shows," Moonves says. "We think we are the most distinctive because we are going a different way and we think we can become more and more profitable as more and more fragmentation occurs. The fact that we have more eyeballs at CBS only bodes well for the future versus those other guys who seem to be going for the same audience."

At ABC, where the Disney-owned network was the only major broadcaster to improve in adults 18-49 in the May sweeps, network executives don't believe CBS's strategy is going to pay off anytime soon.

"We are still competing for that same audience. The advertisers have not changed their way of doing business," says Jamie Tarses, ABC's Entertainment President. "From what I understand, we are still selling advertising the same way we have been and if [CBS] is making headway, it's because they have higher household ratings and that may be bringing up the number in certain places, but I don't think they'll be able to convince Madison Avenue that you want to target that older market."

Steve Sternberg, senior vice president and director of broadcast research at ad agency TN Media, says 18-49 is still king when it comes to the advertising community.

"NBC is making the most money in terms of ad dollars, bottom line," Sternberg says. "I think CBS is getting more than $80,000 per spot, but they are certainly not getting as much as NBC. I don't know exactly what the figures are. It's not [only] half as much as NBC, but it's certainly nowhere near what NBC is getting."

Sternberg says there are a number of new drug companies buying advertis-
tion aimed at older-skewing viewers and that they are placing many ads on CBS, but he doesn’t predict a trend away from the key adults 18-49 demographic anytime soon.

NBC executives came out of the final sweep period of the year on a roll in the demo.

“The real story for us in the May sweep is momentum,” NBC’s Sassa says. “The momentum we built across the season.”

NBC declared it will win the May sweep with an advantage of 1.3 rating points over its closest competitor in the 18-to-49 race, up from its margins of victory in November (two tenths of a rating point) and February (nine tenths of a point). For NBC, the victory in adults 18-49 was the network’s fifth consecutive May sweep win. NBC also had the top-rated drama (ER), comedy (Friends) and news magazine (Dateline Tuesday) during the May book.

At CBS, it was the culmination of a four-year rise under Moonves to claim the top spot in households and total viewers for the season. In 1995-96, CBS trailed NBC by 3.32 million viewers. By the 1996-97 season, CBS had cut that lead to 1.43 million viewers and last season the network ended the season trailing NBC by only 800,000 total viewers. CBS’ staff says the network will average 13.03 million, ahead of NBC’s 12.67 million average and ABC’s 11.76 million. In households, CBS is expected to finish the season with a 9.0 rating/15, outpacing NBC’s 8.9/15.

“It has been a long, uphill battle,” Moonves says. “It has been a struggle all the way, we have had to withstand a lot of adversity. It is very gratifying to be able to say that more people watch CBS than any other network.”

USA vows toned-down Springer
Second attempt to cut fighting comes amid growing anti-media-violence climate

By Joe Schlosser

The fighting is over on The Jerry Springer Show, for real this time.

That’s what Studios USA executives were saying last week.

Studios USA, the distributor of Springer’s popular syndicated talk/fight show, said they will no longer send local stations episodes of the show that contain violence or profanity.

The move comes nearly a year after Studios USA executives said they would “tone” down the violence on Springer’s long-running talker. But the constant fighting and bleeped-out profanity continued through this season and even into last month’s May sweeps.

“I think this time it appears to actually be happening, I think they are serious,” says Petry Television Vice President and Director of Programming Dick Kurlander of Studios USA’s attempt to curb the show’s constant fighting. “It’s serious because the last time they said the physical violence would stop was pretty much lip-service. This time I don’t think that’s the case.”

Sources say the decision came from Studios USA chief Barry Diller and that the policy first took hold over a week ago at the show’s Chicago studio.

“We will produce and distribute a program that we feel is responsible — no violence, physical confrontation or profanity,” a statement from Studios USA says. “That program will either be an original or a qualifying re-edited repeat.

We will inform stations that we are not providing any Jerry Springer program if these standards cannot be met.”

The decision to cut the violence may come with a price to USA’s pocketbook.

The Jerry Springer Show recaptured the top spot in the national ratings last week, overtaking The Oprah Winfrey Show for the third week of the May sweeps. Springer, who had fallen behind Winfrey for the first time in three months during the second week of May, climbed 3% to a 6.6 national rating for the week ending May 16, according to Nielsen Media Research. But Springer’s ratings have slipped more than one full rating point from a year ago, and some believe the lack of violence will bring down the ratings even further. The Jerry Springer Show averaged 7.9 national household rating during the third week of May last year and the show is off 22% among viewers 18-34 from a year ago.

“By eliminating the confrontational nature, there is every reason to believe that the audience will be less attracted to the show,” says Bill Carroll, vice president and director of programming at Katz Television.

So long ride-alongs
Court holds that accompanying police violates privacy

By Dan Trigoboff

When police read suspects their rights, they may have to add the right not to appear on the news or in syndication.

The Supreme Court last week dealt a blow to reporters’ ride-alongs with police—a tradition in journalism, and more recently a staple of “reality” programming—holding that police can be sued for bringing reporters along when executing search or arrest warrants. The cases had been closely watched by media companies, many of which had filed friend of the court briefs favoring the ride-along practice.

The unanimous decision in two companion cases found that ride-alongs violate suspects’ Fourth Amendment privacy protections. Fourth Amendment protection against searches and seizures, Chief Justice William Rehnquist wrote, “embodies centuries-old principles of respect for the privacy of the home....It does not necessarily follow from the fact that the officers were entitled to enter [a suspect’s] home that they [are] entitled to bring a reporter and a photographer with them.”

“The reasons advanced by respondents to support the reporters’ presence—publicizing the government’s efforts to combat crime, facilitating accurate reporting on law enforcement activities, minimizing police abuses and protecting suspects and the officers,” Rehnquist wrote, “fall short of
Your Universe Is Expanding.

**who** is your global news distribution partner... offering in-country expertise to explain local media customs, produce expert translations and provide a bi-weekly World Holiday calendar?

**where** can you find unparalleled proprietary Global Entertainment circuits... offering exceptional international and general media trade reach as well as posting in more than 600 Web sites and online databases?

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justifying media ride-alongs.”

The cases involve the execution of search and arrest warrants, with media—CNN, in the case of a warrant served at a Montana ranch—invited along by police. The practice is used by police to gain publicity, and by media to provide a better view of events.

Complaints have been raised before over media use of photos and footage from police raids, arguing that the coverage often subjects suspects to unwarranted embarrassment. The justices have not decided whether to take a related case against CNN, in which they could decide whether the journalistic organizations can be financially liable for ride-alongs as well. However, because the court found that the law was unclear when the raids in these cases took place, the police involved will not have to pay damages. CNN could be found free from liability as well under that principle.

Radio-Television News Directors Association President Barbara Cochran said she was disappointed but not surprised by the outcome of the cases, because the justices had appeared extremely skeptical about the practice during oral arguments in March.

Still, Cochran noted that the court made it clear this was a case in which Fourth Amendment rights were upheld, rather than First Amendment rights struck down.

Jane Kirtley, executive director of the Reporters’ Committee for Freedom of the Press, said she was particularly disturbed that the court made “no concession to the idea that there’s any public interest here. What I find so difficult to understand about this is that the court finds that having the press present is a greater invasion of privacy than having law enforcement present. The reality is that the guys with the camera do not pose the same threat as the guys with the handcuffs and the guns.”

John Langley, who pioneered so-called “reality-based” television as creator and executive producer of COPS, aid that “while we do not necessarily agree” with the Supreme Court’s decision, “we are obligated to point out that, as a so-called ‘ride-along’ show, we are unaffected by the decision because we obtain releases from everyone involved in our program.”

Longtime San Francisco newsman Fred Zehnder, who retired last week as KTVU(TV) Oakland, Calif., news director, said the ride-alongs remain a staple of television news as well as “reality” programming. But Zehnder said he was not bothered by the Supreme Court decision because the ride-alongs were sometimes contrived, “with playing cops,” and often were, in fact, an invasion of privacy. “They make good television,” he added, “but not particularly good journalism. It just fosters covering a lot of crime news, which is generally less significant news.”

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**PBS station going way of WB**

**Tribune Co.’s $18.5 million purchase of WMHQ(TV) utilizes affil’s commercial license**

By Elizabeth A. Rathbun

PBS station WMHQ(TV) kissed a frog last week and will turn into a WB affiliate under new owner Tribune.

Tribune Co. is paying $18.5 million for WMHQ Schenectady/Albany ch. 45, which is operated by PBS affiliate WMHT(TV) as a PBS station, though it has a commercial license. Tribune says it will convert WMHQ to a WB affiliate.

There is some local opposition to selling WMHQ, says Donn Rogosin, president and general manager of both stations. WMHQ has been used as an alternative, offering shows not on the main PBS feed.

It also produces a local news show.

That multicasting will again be available when WMHT goes digital, hopefully in 2002, Rogosin says. With the money from the sale of WMHQ, WMHT plans to “do it right” and build an all-new digital facility. “It gives us comfort to know we’re going to be able to make the transition,” Rogosin says.

Rogosin is fortunate to have a secondary station with a commercial license, says Nancy Neubauer, spokeswoman for the Association of America’s Public Television Stations. “If and when we convert to digital, we have to have the money.”

There are just two other PBS stations in the country with commercial licenses: WNED(TV) New York and Wned-TV Buffalo, N.Y. Wned-TV’s plans to swap its commercial license to sister WNEQ-TV and sell WNEQ-TV to Sinclair Broadcast Group Inc. have been stalled at the FCC. WNED, one of PBS’ flagship stations and programmers, remains solidly in the noncommercial camp.

WMHQ has been searching for a buyer for some time, Rogosin says. Last June, Sinclair said it would pay $23 million for the station. The deal fell through this past March as Sinclair started selling stations to improve its balance sheet. As for the smaller price Tribune is offering, Rogosin says, “I guess markets change.”

The station will be Tribune’s smallest market. Albany is the nation’s 53rd-largest market, according to Nielsen. The deal does not change Tribune’s position as No. 4 on Broadcasting & Cable’s Top 25 Television Groups (April 19).

Albany is “an excellent market,” Tribune Broadcasting President Dennis FitzSimons said in a news release last Monday. He was not available for comment. Upon FCC approval, the deal is expected to close in the third quarter.

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**Herzog taps Nevins**

New Fox Entertainment President Doug Herzog last week named David Nevins the network’s executive vice president of programming. Nevins will be in charge of all development and current programming for comedy and drama series, as well as miniseries and made-for-TV movies. Nevins had been senior vice president of prime time series at NBC since 1996. “I’m looking forward to the opportunity to do more daring programming and I like and respect Doug a lot,” Nevins says. “I’m excited about working for such an interesting company that has so many resources.”
IT'S THE BEST ADVICE ON TELEVISION. PERIOD.

Wall Street Week With Louis Rukeyser Is Still By Far The Most-Watched Money Program For One Very Good Reason: Week After Week It Gives People The Best Advice.

Why do more people tune into Wall Street Week With Louis Rukeyser than all other money programs combined? It's simple. This is where, week after week, investors know they'll receive the best information, hear from the most interesting guests, and gain the most insight into what's happening with their money. And all it takes is one half hour of their time.

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Cops, news copters duel in Milwaukee

Charges that news choppers interfered with police were raised in Washington County, Wis., over coverage of a 13-hour standoff with an armed man in a farmhouse. Sheriff Jack Theusch complained to local newspapers that local stations went live with footage of police movements—which could have been dangerous to police if the suspect were watching television—and that the noise from the choppers nearly drowned out police communication, and later with the suspect. Theusch said he might ask for legislation regarding the news choppers, although contacted later by BROADCASTING & CABLE he said he was satisfied that local news directors appreciated his concerns and understood their role.

For their part, Milwaukee-area news directors denied that they had been intrusive, and said they cooperated fully, particularly when police asked them to pull their helicopters back—a move the sheriff acknowledges.

“We would not put the lives of police officers at risk,” said wrt(tv) Vice President for News Bob Clinkingbeard. Clinkingbeard said the sheriff was mistaken about the showing of tactical movements, and that the noise levels were exaggerated. “After the sheriff called me about the noise, I went out and had my chopper pilot go about 3,000 feet up and a mile and a half away, which is where they were during this incident. I couldn’t hear it. I had them take it up further and I could barely see it.”

Ironically, Milwaukee was one of the first communities to recognize potential problems with news choppers in crisis situations. News directors and police early last year came up with guidelines for coverage following a stakeout of a house in which suspects who had fired on police were thought to be hiding.

The luxury of Norfolk, Va., limos

Limousines in the Norfolk, Va., area may offer drinks, munchies, TV and phones, but they won’t pay hospital bills in the event of an accident. WAVY-TV took an “on your side” consumer-report look at the limo business in the area, and found that most were operating with neither state-required proof of insurance nor the insurance itself.

With the prom and wedding season in full swing, and May sweeps still going, the story had a lot of appeal for the public and the station. And, noted news director Dave Strickland, “It was a pretty easy story to do. We were able to eyeball a lot of the limos, and the state lists those in compliance on the Internet. Every limousine provider but one was not in compliance. Most did not talk to us. Some said they were in compliance, but were not. As soon as we confronted them, most went right down and got their licenses.”

Freedom of movement

Freedom Broadcasting should probably cut its classified ad budget. The company made a series of personnel moves that saw four management openings all filled in-house.

Doreen Wade, vice president and general manager of wrgh(tv) becomes VP, general manager, at wpec(tv) West Palm Beach, Fla. She replaces Bob Peterson, who left after 10 years at the station for wral-tv Raleigh, N.C. Wade will be replaced by Tom Long, who replaced Wade three years ago as VP, general manager, at wlne-tv Providence, R.I. Kingsley Kelley, who has been VP, general manager, at kvtl(tv) Medford, Ore., replaces Long. And Susan Kelley, who has been news director at Freedom’s wwmr(tv), replaces Kingsley Kelley.

Freedom President Alan Bell told the company staff that although he had been contacted by TV managers about the opening in West Palm Beach, or somewhere down the line in the event that the wpec job were filled internally, he concluded that “the great strength that led to these promotions was sitting on our own bench.”

Bay Area news mainstay retires

The average life span of a TV news director, currently a little less than two years, is dropping significantly as the 21-year tenure of KTVU(tv) Oakland’s Fred Zehnder ends. Zehnder outlasted myriad news directors in the area and five general managers at the station, until Kevin O’Brien stabilized that job at the Cox-owned Fox affiliate during the mid-1980s.

“In the first four months after I got here, all the other stations in the Bay Area changed their news directors. So I was the ranking news director from about four months in.” Zehnder had been with the station a few years as assistant news director to Ted Kavanaugh and took over the reins in 1978.

Among the early stories covered on his watch was one of the city’s biggest—the shootings of Mayor George Moscone and Councilman Harvey Milk. Since that time, there’s been a steady diet of earthquakes and Super Bowls, and the station has maintained its position as news leader for most of that time.

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

By Elizabeth A. Rathburn

PBS’ fall subjects range from the intimate to the inexplicable. Offerings include a private glimpse into the life of a mixed-race family and the exploration of the possibility of life on other planets.

The Public Broadcasting Service plans to announce its fall lineup officially June 6-9, during its annual meeting in San Francisco. Here, however, is a preview of fall on PBS.

In An American Love Story—scheduled to air Sept. 12-16 and encompassing 10 hour-long episodes (two episodes per night)—producer/director/camerawoman Jennifer Fox wants viewers to see beyond the social limits imposed on her chosen couple—the woman white and the man black—to realize the limits of television itself. Her show is very different from what’s out there,” Fox says. TV sound bites and 20-minute magazine pieces don’t “truly reflect the struggle of our lives.”

She spent 18 months with Bill Sims and Karen Wilson and shot more than 1,000 hours of film to come up with what she says is more like “episodic TV” than a documentary. “No cable company would touch a series this big,” much less a commercial broadcaster, she says.

Best-selling author Timothy Ferris wants his viewers to think about the possibility of extraterrestrial life. His Life Beyond Earth is scheduled to air Nov. 10, followed directly by another running of his 1985 PBS film, The Creation of the Universe.

The first hour of the new two-hour special concentrates on the origin of life on Earth and where life might be found elsewhere. The odds are good given that ours is just one of 100 billion galaxies out there, he says. The second hour centers on the origin of intelligent life and efforts to communicate with other life forms.

While Ferris doesn’t expect to educate people, he does hope to stimulate them. “If [films like his] are done right, they can turn people to careers in science,” he says. It’s what our society does best.”

One thing society has not done well is recognize the importance of the early days of the women’s movement, says Paul Barnes, co-producer with Ken Burns of the dual biography Not for Ourselves Alone: The Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Susan B. Anthony. He hopes viewers of the two-part film, airing Nov. 7 and 8, end up “as angry as I was that this story has been so buried.”

Other offerings this fall include one from Ken Burns’ brother, Ric. In a presentation of The American Experience, Ric Burns examines the evolution of New York City over nearly four centuries. The series is produced in association with the New-York Historical Society.


Preschoolers can journey to an imaginary land in the latest addition to PBS’ daylong kids’ block, Dragon Tales.
### May 17-23

Broadcast network prime time ratings according to Nielsen Media Research

#### Top Ten Shows of the Week

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<th>Network</th>
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<th>Time</th>
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<td>NBC</td>
<td>The Norm Show</td>
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<td>ABC</td>
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<td>8.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>Everybody Loves Raymond</td>
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<td>NBC</td>
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<td>NBC</td>
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<td>ABC</td>
<td>Home Improvement</td>
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#### Network Prime Time High Ratings (10:00-11:00 PM)

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#### Network Overall Prime Time Ratings

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#### Network Overall Prime Time Average (8:00-11:00 PM)

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The season finales of 'ER,' 'Frasier' (left) and 'Friends' finished one-two-three, but that still wasn't enough to give NBC the lead over CBS.
DBS-telco combine woos subs

DirecTV and Bell Atlantic add Boston, Pittsburgh and aim for other clusters

By Price Colman

In an effort to blunt cable's competitive juggernaut, DBS provider DirecTV and Bell Atlantic are pushing hard to gain market share.

Since forming a marketing-distribution joint venture with DirecTV a year ago, Bell Atlantic has launched DBS service in six markets. The latest, announced last week, are Boston and Pittsburgh, important clusters for MediaOne and AT&T, respectively. Bell Atlantic also is offering DirecTV in Washington-Baltimore, New Jersey, Philadelphia and northern Delaware.

And once the DBS industry obtains government approval to deliver local signals, perhaps as soon as early summer, Bell Atlantic almost certainly will target the potentially vast subscriber base of New York.

"Local into local...makes that a very attractive market for us to look at," says Bell Atlantic spokeswoman Katie Stefan.

The battle's about more than just video subscribers; increasingly, the fight encompasses new revenue streams from high-speed data and voice services coupled with video in what's called "bundling."

The consensus is the cable industry, which owns its hybrid fiber-coaxial infrastructure, may be best positioned to exploit bundling. Conversely, DirecTV has no telephony products and a weak data offering. Its Baby Bell partners—which include Southwestern Bell, GTE and Cincinnati Bell—in addition to Bell Atlantic—have video products that are limited at best. But together, they're using joint ventures to play the bundling game to counter cable.

"It's in its early stages, but strategically, it's DirecTV's answer to the proposed bundled services of cable and phone companies, like AT&T-TCI," says Mickey Alpert of Alpert & Associates, a Washington research and consulting firm. "It's not clear whether consumers are attracted to one-stop shopping. I think Bell Atlantic will find out you don't have to own the video service...but you can offer digital TV, high-speed Internet, long distance, perhaps some security service."

Helen Latimer, DirecTV's vice president of special markets, won't disclose subscriber counts or projections for the telco alliances, but does say, "We're on track to hit our expectations and we've been fairly bullish."

Jimmy Schaeffler of The Carmel Group, publisher of the DBS Investor newsletter, sees numbers that are modest but meaningful: about 600,000 combined DBS-telco subscribers by the year 2000, out of a domestic DBS universe of roughly 14 million. As the DBS-telco alliances' ability to offer bundled services grows, the potential for their subscribers defecting to cable declines.

Subscriber acquisition is only part of it, says Michael Harris of the Phoenix research and consulting firm Kinetic Strategies: "Just as important is the ability to throw a wrench in the cable competitors' business plans."

To get the distribution, local presence and deep-pocket market clout of a Bell Atlantic alliance, DirecTV was willing to give up 50% of the video profits, sources say.

DBS competitor EchoStar Communications has been overwhelmed by such economics thus far, but "If the world goes bundled, I'm pretty confident that EchoStar will be owned by a telephone company," says Bear Stearns analyst Vijay Jayant. "I'm not so sure about DirecTV because of its ownership by Hughes, which is a tracking stock for GM."

Meanwhile, Bell Atlantic will bet on more than DBS as a video play, says Stefan. GTE, which Bell Atlantic is acquiring, is testing a video digital subscriber line (VDSL) in Florida and the outcome could give Bell Atlantic another chip to play.

MAY 31, 1989 / BROADCASTING & CABLE 37

Swap around the clock

First, you acquire. Then you trade.

That's the evolving scenario for the consolidating cable market, witness last week's three-way swap among Adelphia Communications, Comcast Corp. and Jones Intercable.

After their recent multibillion-dollar deals to acquire smaller and larger cable systems, Adelphia, Comcast and Jones are moving to improve key clusters and shed nonstrategic operations.

For each operator, clustering has apparently become a major factor in cable consolidation. Their goal is gaining economies of scale by reducing headend numbers, and then using money saved to upgrade and introduce new products and services.

As a result of last week's swaps, some of which are contingent upon pending acquisitions, Los Angeles will become Adelphia's largest cluster with about 1.1 million subscribers. Until early this year, when it went on a buying binge that included the $5.2 billion acquisition of Century, Adelphia had no systems west of the Mississippi River.

Now, Adelphia is poised to become the single largest operator in the Los Angeles market, one of the most fragmented in the U.S. And with AT&T, Time Warner, Cox and Charter also having substantial operations in and around Los Angeles, consolidation of that market is likely, according to analysts.

The other swaps push Comcast-Jones' East Coast "super cluster" past the 4 million-subscriber mark, making it the single largest collection of owned and managed cable systems in the United States.

Adelphia also is trading about 464,000 subscribers to Comcast and Jones for about 440,000 subscribers—including more than 335,000 in greater Los Angeles and nearly 50,000 in the Palm Beach, Fla., area. Adelphia's subscribers are in New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, New Mexico, Michigan, Indiana, Florida's west coast and the District of Columbia.

—Price Colman
Recovery fights road to ruin

Despite some home remedies, network’s financial hangover persists

By John M. Higgins

A fter dodging a bullet that threatened to knock it off the air, fledgling self-help cable programmer Recovery Network has trimmed its third-quarter losses—but it’s far from resolving its financial crisis.

The year-old network is facing familiar problems faced by many startup programmers: an inability to secure carriage on cable systems. With systems crowded by existing networks and rival start-ups offering hefty cash payments to operators just to get on, Recovery’s programming—aimed at those suffering substance or emotional abuse—is limited to part-time carriage on systems serving just 5 million subscribers.

Much of that carriage is secured by unconventional deals for time on government-access channels. For example, carriage is so precious that the network recently touted a carriage deal on an in-house cable system in a Jefferson City, Mo., jail.

The company warned that it only has enough cash to keep it operating until June 30, and a new financial report contains no update on a “European institutional investor” who signed a letter of intent March 25 to inject cash into the company.

Recovery solved its most immediate problem by coming to terms with Group W Satellite, the CBS Corp. subsidiary that uplinked the network to cable operators. Group W had threatened to cease transmitting Recovery to operators in March. The cabler settled the bill by giving Group W 500,000 shares of stock plus some cash, but it is no longer available in the daytime.

In April, Recovery’s feed dropped from 24 hours of programming repeated in four-hour blocks to just nine hours daily—11 p.m. to 8 a.m.

The company is renaming itself RnetHealth.com, hoping to emphasize its companion Web site. But it still must depend on the cable network to drive traffic to the Internet site.

Company executives did not return calls seeking comment. But securities filings show that amidst efforts to cut executives and expenses, keep on the air and hunt for new cash, Recovery’s growth has stalled.

For the three months ended in March, Recovery’s revenues dipped 5% compared to the same period a year earlier, to $268,000. That’s also a few percentage points below revenues posted during the second quarter of fiscal 1999 that ended December 1998.

The company was also able to cut its net loss by more than half—to $999,000 from $2.1 million—entirely by reducing expenses.

But much of those savings came by slashing spending on programming by 61%.

“Not a good way to attract operators,” said one MSO executive.

The filings show that Recovery was down to just $90,000 in cash as of March 31.

In recent weeks, the company has been negotiating with existing shareholders for a $500,000 immediate loan that would be followed by another $1.5 million loan if the company can regain a listing on NASDAQ, which delisted the company’s stock because of Recovery’s financial problems.

Other than that, Recovery has had an investment banker trying to find new investors, declaring in March it had recruited a European institutional investor, who then sought the exit of Recovery President Gary Horowitz, an two other top executives.
Number of average monthly pay-per-view households up by nearly 50% since 1996, to over 500,000 • Feel the impact
Struggling health nets join forces

Fox’s wallet seen resuscitating barely breathing channels

By Deborah D. McAdams

Fox will send a fledgling to fight an eagle this summer when it unveils The Health Network just two weeks before the launch of Discovery Health. The program roster for The Health Network, the combined entity that was America’s Health Network and Fox’s Fit TV, will still be under development when the new network is launched in mid-July, according to Mark Sonnenberg, a Fox executive vice president who will oversee the new network. Discovery Health, a $350 million leviathan with a fully formed schedule and plenty of advance publicity, will come online Aug. 2.

Sonnenberg said programs on The Health Network will fall into four categories: daily news, community health concerns, alternative medicine and live events. Discovery’s slate is heavy with live events. Both networks will have complementary Web sites.

Fox is sinking a “significant” amount of money into new programming, production and branding for the new channel, to take “advantage of a highly needed void in the health field,” he said.

Yet if America’s Health and Fit TV were any indicators, there’s little evidence of such a void. Both networks reached about 9 million homes, but their ratings were abysmal. America’s Health Network averaged only 4,000 viewers during prime time hours in the first quarter of 1999, according to Brad Adgate, director of corporate research at Horizon Media, Inc. in New York. Fit TV viewership was about the same, he said.

Fox will change all that, Sonnenberg said.

“Remember, both networks were just acquired,” he said. Fit TV was purchased last year and relaunched in January, while America’s Health was acquired last week.

“What limited their growth up to now was questions about what’s behind them. Now that Fox has come in, that has gone away.”

AHN Chairman and CEO Web Golinkin will preside over the cable side of The Health Network, while Todd Featherling will oversee the Internet side. The network will be a 50-50 venture between Fox and AHN shareholders. Based on the old networks’ contracts, The Health Network will reach about 12 million cable homes and 5 million satellite homes. Some, but not all MSOs pay subscription fees on the current contracts, Sonnenberg said.

Worldgate wins patent approval

WorldGate Communications says the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office has approved all 62 WorldGate patent application claims. WorldGate’s technology enables consumers to access the Internet via TV sets using analog and digital set-top converter boxes. The patent, to be published in the next 90 days, broadly relates to a system and method for providing interactive access to an information source, such as the Internet, through a networked distribution system similar to that used for distributing television programming. This patent also describes the fundamental concepts behind WorldGate’s method of enabling cable television viewers to interactively link from a television program or advertisement to a related fully interactive Web site with the push of a single button on their remote control or keyboard.

EchoStar announces stock split

EchoStar Communications Corp. plans to conduct a 2-for-1 stock split on July 1. Shareholders of record as of the close of business July 1 will be entitled to one additional share of common stock for each share owned. The split will increase the number of shares of Class A common stock outstanding from approximately 16 million shares to approximately 32 million shares and Class B common stock outstanding from approximately 29.8 million shares to approximately 59.6 million shares.

MTV nabs Met for awards show

Sign No. 231 that the millennium is upon us: The 1999 MTV Video Music Awards will be held at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, it was announced Wednesday. It will be the first time an awards show will be broadcast from the historic Met, according to MTV president Judy McGrath. The 16th annual awards show, which honors the year’s best music videos, will be broadcast live on Sept. 9 at 8 p.m. ET.

Bell Atlantic hawks service

Bell Atlantic, moving to capitalize on its distribution relationship with DirecTV, is aggressively pushing the satellite service in two key markets, Boston and Pittsburgh. In a joint-marketing effort with DirecTV, Bell Atlantic is offering installation of DirecTV for $99 and a $5.99 per month rental option for hardware, while DirecTV is offering $100 worth of pay-per-view programming for new customers signing up between May 27 and July 11. The aggressive promotions come as the battle between DirecTV and EchoStar’s Dish Network heat up in the wake of the creation of DirecTV com.
Like expert sailors who know how to take advantage of the wind to achieve desired velocity and direction, cable advertising sales managers have to master the winds of change to be propelled to their sales goals. CAB’s 1999 Local Cable Sales Management Conference will show you how to set your sails to stay on course for revenue growth in this rapidly-changing media environment.

FEATURING...

- Special in-depth tracks for making more money with the Internet, national spot, research, promotions, ethnic marketing and more.
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- The industry’s largest exhibit hall dedicated to local cable advertising
- The 1999 Cable Advertising Awards ceremony honoring outstanding achievement in local sales.

For registration and program information, call (212) 508-1229.
MTV wants it all online
SonicNet buy is MTV's latest move to become Web megaforce

By Richard Tedesco

Everyone should want MTV online—at one Web site or another. That's the vision MTV is bringing to building what will ostensibly be an Internet music monolith composed of disparate sites, created or acquired, to serve every imaginable music fan's needs. Fred Seibert, president of MTV Online, isn't sure what niches the respective MTV sites will ultimately occupy. But starting with its current portfolio of SonicNet, MTV.com and the "Buggles" project still in development, MTV wants to be the juggernaut of a kaleidoscopic Net music landscape.

"The notion of how we speak to the [Web] audiences in the future, I can't tell you," says Seibert. "The thing that is absolutely certain is that we are determined to succeed in establishing the ultimate music destinations on the Internet."

MTV's sites will maintain independent identities: MTV sees SonicNet as a music news outlet, with its own MTV.com streaming music videos and presenting other content as a counterpart to its on-air networks. The Buggles—based on the acquisition of Imagine Radio—will be "personalized radio," embracing a broad range of genres when it launches in June, Seibert says. The common elements will be an e-commerce infrastructure, along with technical links and some shared content.

MTV plans to continue its quest for Web music dominance by both creating and acquiring additional online properties, according to Seibert, which it aims to weave a web of sites that lend it disparate content that also grows audience share online. "We have survived and thrived by being destinations for people with specific interests," says Seibert, acknowledging the fragmented nature of the Web music business where "we have 80,000 competitors."

The acquisition of TCI Music, and SonicNet with it, served a larger MTV purpose in neutralizing a potential competitor formerly in the AT&T orbit, according to Bruce Leichtman, director of media entertainment and strategies for the Boston-based Yankee Group.

"The deal was largely offense by defense. A major part of it was taking out a major competitor," says Leichtman. "It gives them a much clearer field to run through."

Leichtman views The Box video service, also part of MTV's deal for TCI Music, as a throw-in "that's been struggling for a long time."

But SonicNet and affiliated sites Addicted to Noise and Streamland, devoted to Webcasting concerts and music videos, give MTV an alternative music audience to go with the mainstrem crowd on MTV.com. The combination gives MTV more than 2 million visitors to the sites monthly, which Nicholas Butterworth, SonicNet president, foresees growing quickly to 10 million visitors. "It's a very fragmented space and we've created a new category," says Butterworth, who expects expanded streaming, broadband links and digital distribution to bring online music to a "whole new level."

Last week, AT&T, Matsushita, Bertelsmann's BMG Entertainment and Seagram's Universal Music Group became the latest allies to strike a deal aimed at delivering digital music. And that's an arena where MTV also has aspirations, according to Seibert, who says talks with the major record labels are under way.

"As the rights are protected, I'm sure we'll be involved in that business," he says, referring to the current initiatives to ensure secure downloading music honoring copyrights.

When MTV gets into that game online, it could really be all things to all Web music aficionados.

WebTV exec exits

Steve Perlman, WebTV president and co-founder, is leaving the Silicon Valley start-up this week to pursue other possibilities.

Perlman departs four years after establishing WebTV Networks with Phil Goldman and Bruce Leak, who succeeds him as president. Two years ago, they sold the company to Microsoft Corp. for $425 million. WebTV currently claims 800,000 subscribers.

Perlman, 35, is calling a time-out while he considers other entrepreneurial prospects. "I've got to move on. I'm just very tired," he says, citing what he calls a "grueling" pace over the past four years.

So after taking an extended summer-long vacation, Perlman plans to contemplate his next move while noodling in what he describes as a "state-of-the-art laboratory and studio" he has set up in San Francisco. "I've got a real bug inside of me that wants to create things," he says.

Prior to playing a pivotal role in launching WebTV, Perlman put in stints at Catapult and General Magic, two other Silicon Valley start-ups. Before that, he spent several years at Apple Computer.

He discounts the transition to Microsoft ownership of WebTV as a factor in his departure, saying he would have left sooner if that were an issue. But he notes, "There certainly have been bumps in the road."

Perlman isn't completely severing ties with WebTV: He'll retain an advisory role with the company, and intends to continue promoting ideas to future development of the Internet-over-TV technology.

WebTV is currently launching with EchoStar, and will be included in Windows CE software Microsoft will provide for set-top cable boxes to be deployed by AT&T and Tele-Communications Inc. —Richard Tedesco
Five Years Old and Flying High
A Salute to DIRECTV
All Great Pioneers Are People Of Vision And Courage

Congratulations to everyone at DIRECTV® on your Fifth Anniversary.

All of us at Hubbard Broadcasting are proud to have partnered with you in blazing the trail for providing people a better way to entertain their families.
Sitting on Top of the World

From a fledgling direct broadcast satellite service in 1994 to the nation's leading direct-to-home satellite television provider in 1999, DirecTV is blazing a trail into next-generation service using high-definition digital technology. And with new key acquisitions and partnerships in place, burgeoning subscriber numbers and record-setting revenue in the first quarter of 1999, it would seem DirecTV's course is on an upward climb.

Since its launch a mere five years ago, DirecTV—a unit of Hughes Electronics Corp.—has evolved into a pervasive digital TV entertainment service comprising more than 200 channels of television shows, premium movies, sports and pay-per-view events, plus audio channels. DirecTV President Eddy W. Hartenstein attributes the company's rapid growth to strong consumer demand for superior television entertainment.

"DirecTV subscribers were provided with entertainment choices they couldn't get anywhere else," he says. "It's clear that consumers are selecting DirecTV for our exclusive and differentiated programming, for the quality of our picture and sound and our first-class customer service. We're providing 200 channels today and it's not a huge stretch of the imagination that in the next few years we can double that number."

Exclusive and Differentiated Program Choices

Hands down, DirecTV's strong suit is in its abundance of programming partners and the variety of program choices they provide. From exclusive sports programming such as the NFL Sunday Ticket™ package featuring virtually every National Football League game; to thematic multiplex channels such as Encore; to à la carte and niche services and specialty channels on topics such as family, education and religion, DirecTV delivers on its goal of being the premier entertainment and information distribution service.
When the center of what you do is located more than 22,000 miles above the Earth, the view from the top can be pretty awesome. Just ask Eddy Härtenstein, the dozens of strategic partners or the 7 million subscribers DirecTV has garnered in its meteoric rise to become the leading U.S. satellite TV provider in just five years.

DirecTV programming is delivered by three HS 601 Hughes-built satellites co-located at 101 degrees west longitude.

platform for consumers across America. And sticking to its formula for success, DirecTV succeeds in attracting and retaining premium programming partners such as Encore Media Group.

On May 19, Encore signed a long-term extension of its affiliation agreement with DirecTV for the carriage of 12 channels and its revamped 24-hour premium movie channel. The deal cements a long-standing partnership between the two digital pioneers. DirecTV will continue carriage of five STARZ networks, two Encore and six thematic multiplex channels such as Westerns, Love Stories, Mystery and WAM!

"It's been a great relationship," says Encore Chairman and CEO John Sie. "We grew up together on the digital platform. We were pioneers of multiplex, mood-on-demand channels. They took thematic multichannels when they launched. With the consolidation of PrimeStar and USSB, we are very well positioned on DirecTV's platform to help improve the premium TV business. We have created a virtual video store at home to actually save the customer money. Together, we will continue to make video history."

Encore recently spent $2.3 billion in pay television rights for 800 films from Disney, Warner Bros. and 20th Century Fox, and launched a $20 million promotional campaign that pitches "A Great Movie Every Night—Guaranteed."

Development and production of original television series and movies also are a priority of DirecTV owing to its recent agreement with Action Adventure Network (ANN). Sweeps week 1999 saw the premier of "The Lost World," an updated version of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novel. Encore will continue carriage of five STARZ networks, two Encore and six thematic multiplex channels such as Westerns, Love Stories, Mystery and WAM!

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Telcos offer links to millions of potential subscribers in 30 states.

Says DirecTV spokesman Bob Marsocci: “It has evolved into a dynamic where [retail] is and always will be our core distribution, but our ability to cut deals with phone companies will give us strong incremental subscribers.”

Local Channel Access

One of the last hurdles of consumer resistance to DBS service may be overcome in the very near future. Existing legislation precludes DBS providers from carrying local channels except in the case of those households that are at too great a distance to pick up regular local broadcasts. DirecTV customers can either connect an off-air antenna to their receiver or request a basic “lifeline” package from their local cable company if offered.

But with expected passage of H.R. 1554, the Satellite Copyright, Competition, and Consumer Protection Act of 1999, satellite carriers will be allowed to offer local signals with getting copyright clearance from local stations. The House of Representatives approved similar legislation by a vote of 422-1 in April, and the Senate last week unanimously approved legislation that would allow satellite TV companies to offer local broadcast signals, which should allow them to compete more effectively with cable. The bill requires satellite companies to carry all the local signals in the markets they serve by Jan. 1, 2002. Observers expect a bill to be signed into law following a conference meeting of the House and Senate, likely after Congress’ Memorial Day recess.

“Our commitment to delivering local channels via satellite, complemented by our nationwide roll-out of advanced digital off-air solutions, will provide consumers with new local channel solutions that will maximize their choices,” said Hartenstein in a DirecTV announcement in early May. “We will continue to work with members of Congress to revise certain provisions in the bills to ensure that the legislation establishes a workable framework for the delivery of local-into-local service.”

Once the logistics have been ironed out — FCC approval of orbital licenses and
Congratulations to DIRECTV from MTV 2.

A music lover's dream come true. A multi-media all music channel that knows no boundaries. Only from MTV².
retransmission consent deals with local broadcasters, and delivery of dishes and set-tops to customers—DirecTV will offer local network affiliates by satellite to approximately 50 million homes, or about half of the nation’s TV households. This “local-into-local” service will be provided via a dual-feed 18 x 22-inch dish from its satellites at 101 and 119 degrees which provide coverage of the entire continental United States (CONUS). DirecTV gained control of a full-CONUS license at 119 degrees in its transaction with Primestar.

The delivery of local channels into local markets by DirecTV is contingent upon FCC approval of the acquisition of the remaining Tempo high-power assets, which will provide the DirecTV with full-CONUS capacity.

Where once rabbit ears antennas or coat-hangers and tinfoil ruled the day, new generation TV antennas will seamlessly deliver high-quality signals from local TV stations directly to DirecTV systems with just a push of a remote. These new antennas include:

- Omnidirectional UHF/VHF—Compact enough to fit behind the DirecTV satellite dish and able to pick up signals from different directions, this type is ideal for consumers living between two stations’ transmitters.
- Omnidirectional UHF/VHF—A saucer-shaped antenna that mounts on the roof and picks up most television signals in a 360-degree radius.
- Imbedded off-air antenna—Developed and manufactured by RCA, this off-air antenna is imbedded directly into the 18-inch satellite dish.
- Directional UHF/VHF antenna—This traditional rooftop antenna works well at much greater distances from the television station, but it is larger than most of its new-generation cousins.

Interactivity: The World at Our Fingertips

Not since Alice popped down the rabbit hole has a single portal opened such a world of exciting choices and possibilities as interactive TV. Viewers will be able to browse the Internet, conduct e-commerce, balance checkbooks, get weather forecasts, play interactive games all without leaving their easy chairs. The goal is to make each television set an “interactive multimedia portal in the home.”

Time-shifting technology will be incorporated into DirecTV receivers to allow subscribers to personalize their viewing experience. They can pause a live TV broadcast or pay-per-view movie and watch favorite shows on demand, not according to the network’s schedule.

And in a classic role reversal, viewers can even “teach” the TV to mimic their own viewing habits to create personalized programming lineups.

DirecTV came a step closer to making all this a reality with its May 11 partnership agreement with America Online, the Dulles, Va.-based world leader in branded interactive services. In a four-part pact with DirecTV, Hughes Network Systems, Philips Electronics and Network Computer Inc., AOL will take its hallmark ease-of-use and convenience and bring it to television. AOL TV will give subscribers the ability to connect to a new AOL interactive service designed to enhance the television viewing experience.

“Our partnership with AOL will take television entertainment to the next level,” says Larry Chapman, DirecTV executive vice president. “By aligning ourselves with the world’s leading online service we are able to offer customers all the benefits of connected interactivity that will create an even richer experience — truly giving DirecTV subscribers the world at their fingertips.”

HNS Senior Vice
Warmest congratulations to Eddy Hartenstein and the staff of DIRECTV on five incredibly successful years!
And to our friends at USSB and Primestar, we applaud your many years of dedication and achievement.

From your friends at HBO
President Paul Gaske adds: “At Hughes Network Systems, we’ve always prided ourselves on our industry-leading expertise in the area of convergence technology, and we’re glad to be applying that knowledge towards the design of this exciting new AOL TV/DirecTV product. Hughes Network Systems’ overarching goal is to maintain its lead in the satellite convergence race through key strategic partnerships and compelling multimedia product design.”

Set-top boxes will be connected to AOL through built-in 56K modems over standard phone lines, enabling digital subscriber line (DSL) connectivity as well. This is part of AOL’s “AOL Anywhere” strategy to make AOL available through multiple connections and multiple devices.

Other innovative technologies on the digital drawing board include improvements in advanced digital platforms. The infrastructure is already in place to support local and national broadcasters in providing enhanced television capabilities to their customers. Low-cost integrated set-top receivers add an interactive overlay to a broadcaster’s digital programming services, be it high-definition, standard-definition or multiplexed programming.

Enhancements will be added to new digital TV sets and receivers giving customers the interactive ability to make instant purchases of products advertised on TV, request additional information about products and send other messages directly to the broadcasters.

**Emerging International Markets**

DirecTV expanded its global reach with year-end achievements in 1998 that included net subscribers of nearly half a million in Latin America and more than 230,000 in Japan. It also expanded service in Latin America and the Caribbean to 20 countries, including Argentina, El Salvador and Honduras, reaching 96 percent of the region’s target market of over 100 million TV households. DirecTV service is provided by Galaxy Latin America (GLA), a partnership that is now 70 percent owned by Hughes along with major communications and media firms in Venezuela and Brazil. Broadcasting in both Portuguese and Spanish, GLA delivers 197 channels and 35 audio channels, with subscribers spending an average of $42 per month.

In 1998 some 184,000 new subscribers were added, bringing GLA’s total to more than 484,000. GLA’s transition to the new Galaxy VIII-i satellite gave the DirecTV service higher power, 34 new channels and a larger footprint throughout the region.

During 1999 and 2000, DirecTV expects to launch in Puerto Rico, Peru, Paraguay, Uruguay and the remaining countries in the region. Also, it will add another 50 video and audio channels, including new data and interactive service.

Last year DirecTV completed its first year of service in Japan and initiated Asia’s first interactive satellite television service. The DirecTV/Japan partnership includes Hughes and nine Asian firms delivering a service that offers up to 153 TV channels and 35 audio channels. Many programs have been created specifically for the Japanese market, and year-end 1998 found Japanese subscribers spending an average of $40 per month. In its first full year, DirecTV attracted 231,000 subscribers in Japan, including a record-setting 25,000 in December alone. A new service, InteracTV, offers viewers interactive service such as weather reports, wagering and sports scores via computer.

**Stay Tuned...**

What’s on the horizon? Hartenstein says DirecTV’s priorities for this year are “to complete the USSB, Primestar and Tempo transactions; make interactive services a core offering; and continue to improve distribution, capacity and new services to attract more subscribers.” And with its penchant for striking key manufacturing and distribu-
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continuous news updates from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday. Also features hour-long original programming hosted by veteran newscasters Neil Cavuto, Bill O'Reilly, Mike Schneider and Catherine Crier.

HEADLINE NEWS Every 30 minutes, Turner Broadcasting's 24-hour news service delivers an updated, concise report on the day's top stories in business, sports and entertainment news for the on-the-go viewer.

MSNBC A revolutionary 24-hour news, talk and information network from NBC and Microsoft. Delivers extensive global and local news coverage, plus 14 hours of original programming daily from such respected anchors as Tom Brokaw, Katie Couric and Jane Pauley.

NEWSWORLD INTERNATIONAL The alternative perspective in world television news 24 hours a day. Features reports from the Canadian Broadcasting Corp's award-winning correspondents, plus feeds from major news services and unedited international newscasts.

THE WEATHER CHANNEL Provides 24-hour reports on regional and rational weather conditions, special weather-related features and reports on unusual weather phenomena.

tion agreements, DirecTV will be rolling out a variety of enhanced viewer services and products this year and the years ahead. Things to look forward to include:

- DirecTV, in partnership with Wink Communications, is pursuing a two-tiered interactive strategy to deliver virtual channels offering advanced electronic program guides, VCR-like time-shifting, Web-like content, full-screen graphics and text and other channel enhancements to digitally literate consumers. Local weather information from The Weather Channel and a bonus channel of news from CNN Interactive also will be part of the Wink interactive service.
- DirecTV is moving forward with high-definition television with high-definition television (HDTV) service. The infrastructure already is in place to offer consumers HDTV programming, and Thomson Multimedia will build a DirecTV system into every RCA and ProScan HDTV set. Consumers will need to purchase an HDTV set enabled with the DirecTV satellite receiver or an HDTV-enabled DirecTV receiver that connects to their analog TV to take advantage of enhanced HDTV viewing.
- A partnership with TiVo and Philips, announced in April, will launch Philip’s Personal TV service offering features such as time-shifting, e-commerce and data. Both new services, slated to launch this year, will require new set-tops with the TiVo/Philips box likely to be a high-end unit offering multiple hours of disk storage. Advanced set-top boxes will enable subscribers to receive special services such as full-screen graphics and text to provide information, entertainment and electronic commerce along with HDTV and Internet browsing.
- A compact, elliptical dish will snatch DirecTV programming from orbital locations at 101 and 95 degrees west longitude, while an off-air antenna will receive local analog and digital broadcast signals. This precludes DirecTV's need to divert transponder capacity from DirecTV's current standard-definition programming and allows for future expansion.
- DirecTV will expand HDTV programming as consumers are able to take delivery of HDTV sets later this year.
- A second broadcast center is scheduled to be fully operational by the end of the year. The DirecTV Los Angeles Broadcast Center (LABC) is being built in suburban Marina del Rey and will be capable of transmitting more than 200 channels. The 200,000 square-foot facility sits on 11 acres of land and will be equipped with an emergency power system including a 3 million watt battery power system and three 1.2 million watt generators. The LABC will share program origination responsibilities with the existing Castle Rock Broadcast Center in Colorado.

“We're at the brink of a very exciting time evolutionarily in the broadcast paradigm,” Hartenstein says. “There are a whole host of things that I think can be brought to people to enhance not just the visual sense of broadcasting, but to enhance the richness of the information content as well.”

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Is Proud to Congratulate
DIRECTV and Eddy Hartenstein
On Their 5th Anniversary
The DirecTV System
Formula for Success

The DirecTV system allows U.S. consumers to view more than 200 channels of digitally delivered entertainment programming with the use of its 18-inch satellite dish. DirecTV offers more than 185 channels plus, owing to its recent acquisition by parent company Hughes Electronics Corp., up to 25 channels from U.S. Satellite Broadcasting (USSB). The DirecTV system hit the American landscape in June 1994 and has become the fastest-selling consumer electronics product in history—surpassing first year sales of the VCR and CD player.

DirecTV licensed Thomson Consumer Electronics to develop and manufacture its proprietary technology using state-of-the-art News Datacom’s signal encryption technology. It is distributed under the RCA name.

The DirecTV system is made up of an 18-inch satellite dish, a digital set-top decoder box and remote control. An interactive on-screen program guide allows subscribers to scan and purchase pay-per-view movies and events, activate parental controls, build favorite channels lists and set spending limits for movie purchases. An installed access card provides security and encryption information and stores pay-per-view billing information. The system uses MPEG-2 digital compression, which ensures compatibility with new television services and interactivity applications.

Lock-out features, blocking capabilities (using V-chip technology) and spending limits offer parents a high level of flexibility and control over what their children can watch.

How is it Sold?
Consumers can purchase the DirecTV system at more than 26,000 consumer electronics and satellite retailers across the U.S., including Best Buy, Radio Shack, Circuit City, Sears and WalMart. The average price to purchase and install the system, according to Hartenstein, has dropped dramatically from its original price of about $700 to about $150 for individual households. Programming

SPORTS NETWORKS

ESPN
America’s number-one sports network delivers all sports, all the time, plus diverse sports-related news and information. Features “Sunday Night NFL,” Major League Baseball and NCAA basketball.

ESPN2
An exciting, fast-paced mix of sports events, news, information and entertainment, plus pro hockey.

ESPN Classic Sports
The first 24-hour, all-sports television hall of fame, featuring the world’s largest library of rare and exclusive programming from the NFL, NBA, NHL, Major League Baseball, classic boxing, Olympic Games, golf, tennis, figure skating and college football and basketball.

ESPNEWS
This 24-hour network provides up-to-the-minute details about important games and events. Viewers can catch breaking sports stories every half-hour, plus highlights, analysis, scores of key games, post-game interviews and much more.

Golf Channel
24-hour live and tape-delay coverage of world-class U.S. tournaments and international events, plus instructional programs.
MAY THE NEXT 5 years BE AS SUCCESSFUL AS THE LAST.

RAINBOW congratulates DirecTV
packages range from the four-channel DirecTV Limited Package at $5.99 month to the $47.99 Total Choice Platinum Plan, which includes more than 85 entertainment channels, 25 specialty sports channels and 13 commercial free movie channels. U.S. subscribers spent an average of $46 a month in 1998.

All packages include access to as many as 55 pay-per-view choices daily at $2.99 each and three preview channels. Subscribers can add professional and collegiate sports subscriptions—such as the NFL Sunday Ticket, NBA League Pass or ESPN Full Court—and à la carte programming to their monthly package. And customers who don't receive a significant signal strength from their local channels are eligible to receive ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox and PBSNET signals.

DirecTV has a commanding presence in the multiple-family dwelling unit (MDU) markets, providing single-dish service to apartment buildings, co-ops, homeowners associations, townhouses and condominiums, representing nearly 25 percent of total U.S. households or more than 28 million units nationwide. A single 18-inch dish can serve most multi-unit buildings. MDU residents have access to the same 200 digitally-delivered channels of programming.

To support its network of over 200 MDU system operators, DirecTV formed the Master System Operator (MSO) program so that smaller system operators will have access to technical, administrative and marketing support as well as access to working capital. DirecTV system operators include satellite companies, program providers and wireless and private cable operators, each providing property owners, builders and developers with technical and sales support they need to deliver DirecTV programming to their MDU residents.

And business has grown rapidly in its DirecTV Lodging/Satellite Master Antenna Television (SMATV) business, which offers free-to-guest programming to more than 500,000 rooms in hotels, motels, hospitals, dormitories, nursing homes and office buildings. Six programming packages are available to the SMATV market, including popular cable channels such as CNN, Headline News, TNT, Cartoon Network, USA Network and The Weather Channel. Established in 1996, the SMATV program has a network of more than 200 affiliates. Through a 1995 alliance with On Command Corp., it is the nation's largest provider of pay-per-view programming to hotels including the Hilton, Hyatt, Marriott, and Sheraton chains.

**Commercial Accounts**

DirecTV currently provides commercial programming to more than 35,000 bars and restaurants across the country. The Commercial Choice package features 47 popular channels and Music Choice carries 40 digital quality commercial-free audio channels. And there are a variety of sports subscription services available à la carte. The slightly scaled-down Business Value plan offers 40 video channels and 38 music channels to semi-public viewing accounts such as banks, churches, retail outlets, police stations and libraries. A network of more than 350 dealers sell programming, install systems and provide service to commercial accounts.

To step up its marketing, DirecTV for the first time in its five-year history is getting into the ad game with help from veteran marketer Columbia TriStar Television Distribution (CTTD). Through a multiyear deal, CTTD is DirecTV's exclusive national sales representative, with the first ads debuting March 1 of this year. CTTD has an impressive track record handling all national ad sales for first-run and off-network CTTD products such as "Ricki Lake" and "Seinfeld" and co-owned The Game Show Network and several international networks.

DirecTV service has featured national ads pre-packaged in the networks it carried but had used the time to promote pay-per-view events and other in-house services. Now, national advertisers will be able to buy clusters of specifically targeted ad packages in sports, news, information and entertainment programming.
Scripps Networks Congratulates Eddy Hartenstein and everyone at DIRECTV on your Five-Year Anniversary.
The DirecTV System
How It Works

DirecTV delivers more than 200 channels of popular TV networks, movies, sports and entertainment directly to 18-inch satellite dishes installed at homes and businesses throughout the continental United States. DirecTV offers consumers a viable alternative to cable systems and home video stores through a wide selection of programming packages at various prices.

Broadcaster Center:
The DirecTV Castle Rock Broadcast Center (CRBC) in Castle Rock, Colo., transmits digitally compressed programming to three co-located Hughes-built satellites. CRBC is a 55,000 square-foot facility with eight satellite receiving stations and four 13-meter transmit dishes. Scheduled to be fully operational by the end of this year, the DirecTV Los Angeles Broadcast Center, located in the city’s Marina del Rey section, will be DirecTV’s second state-of-the-art domestic broadcast facility and will be capable of supplying 200 channels of digital entertainment.

Satellites: Positioned 22,300 miles above Earth, the company’s three satellites beam programming and information directly to subscribers’ small satellite dishes. The three birds are approximately five times stronger than traditional satellites and transmit up to eight times as many video signals.

The DirecTV System: The satellite signals are received by the DirecTV system receiving unit, featuring an 18-inch antenna. These dishes can be installed anywhere there is a direct line of sight to the south-on house rooftops and back porches, apartments, condominiums, RVs and boats. The DirecTV system is sold by authorized consumer electronics and satellite retail outlets as well as by select telecommunications companies.
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Stanley S. Hubbard
The Father of American DBS

The Father of American DBS

What a difference a day makes. Then he was laughed at as crazy; now he’s lauded as a pioneer. For Stanley S. Hubbard, the day that made the difference was Dec. 17, 1993 when an Arianespace rocket left its earthly orbit and blasted 22,300 miles into space, ushering in a new industry. Eschewing the scoffing of his peers and the failings of others in electronic media to succeed, Stanley S. Hubbard realized his dream of beaming national TV signals to tiny receive dishes all across the country. Some 70 years after his father, Stanley E. Hubbard, launched Hubbard Broadcasting, son Stanley became the father of American DBS.

One million Hubbard Direct Satellite Systems were sold in its first year on the market, making it the fastest selling new consumer device in the history of retailing. Not quite a decade since that historic launch, total U.S. satellite TV households are estimated in the tens of millions and the satellite and wireless communications industry is fast approaching $70 billion in size. Hubbard’s United States Satellite Broadcasting Services (USSB) would go on to deliver direct broadcast satellite TV to more than 2 million customers before being acquired in January 1999 by Hughes Electronics Corp.

Stanley S. Hubbard is part of a rich family legacy in broadcasting. His father, a radio pioneer at KSTP(AM) Minneapolis, launched the first NBC-TV affiliate, KSTP-TV Minneapolis-St. Paul which also was the first station in the country to broadcast color full time. Following in his father’s footsteps, Stanley S. would launch WTOG-TV Tampa, Fla., the first successful UHF station in an all VHF market. He is credited for inventing satellite news gathering; helping to design the first news gathering van using a Ku dish; and creating Conus, the first local station SNG cooperative. And putting substance to his dreams, he invested over $100 million in the Hughes Communications satellite that launched DBS in the U.S. His two sons Robert and Stanley E. joined him in building Hubbard Broadcasting Inc. into a company with 10 TV and two radio outlets known for their strong community ties and highly competitive news operations.

In honor of their significant achievements in radio, television and direct broadcast satellite technology, the Hubbard family was awarded the Broadcasters’ Foundation’s Golden Mike award for 1997.

“The Hubbard family members are broadcasting pioneers,” says DirecTV president Eddy W. Hartenstein. “They are visionaries who deserve credit for building a successful satellite TV service and for taking a leading role in the development and phenomenal growth of the DBS industry.”
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EDDY HARTENSTEIN

ON FIVE YEARS OF INNOVATION AND LEADERSHIP.
Global From the Start
The Hughes Electronics Corp.

For some companies, “going global” is a relatively recent concept. But when a firm is borne on the dream of a brash, young aviator to circle the globe in flight, going global is nothing new.

Howard Hughes took over the management and ownership of Hughes Tool Co. — an oil field drilling bit manufacturer — following the death of his father in 1924. It was his great interest in aviation that compelled him to form the Hughes Aircraft Division in 1932. An accomplished flyboy, Hughes broke the world speed record over a three-kilometer course in 1935; broke back-to-back records for flying the United States coast to coast in 1936 and 1937; and his 1938 attempt to circumnavigate the globe led to new developments in aeronautic design and construction. Preparing for his round-the-world flight, Hughes assembled several Hughes employees to form a radio department to develop the necessary communications equipment for the flight. Aviator, movie producer, industrialist Howard Hughes set the pace for a company that would continue his legacy of diversification, innovation and accomplishment.

During World War II, the Hughes Aircraft Division developed an antisubmarine buoy-marker radio and an air-sea rescuer walkie talkie, although it was more well known for producing armament and experimental aircraft, among them the giant, wooden flying boat troop carrier known as the Spruce Goose. Following the war, Hughes instituted a program to develop electronics for military applications (including radar) that enabled pilots to detect targets in bad weather and at night; and in 1947, following a contract for exploratory development for a guided missile, the first radar product was introduced. The result was the world’s first radar-guided air-to-air missile known today as the Falcon.

In 1947, the Atomic Energy Commission awarded Hughes a contract to design and build electronic measuring instruments for experiments with high explosives,
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which propelled the company for the first time into large-scale production of electronics. By the 1950s, Hughes engineers and scientists were developing radar-based weapons guided not only by radar but by lasers, wire, optical fibers, video and infrared imaging systems. But Hughes technology was concerned not only with protecting lives through defense, but also with saving them through medicine.

In 1953 the Howard Hughes Medical Institute was created as a charitable, not-for-profit organization to promote medical research. To support this philanthropic endeavor, Hughes Aircraft Co. was formed from the assets of the Aircraft Division of Hughes Tool Co., and all stock in the new company was donated to the institute. From 1953 until its purchase by General Motors Corp. in 1985, the Hughes Aircraft Co. was under the sole ownership of the medical institute.

**A Whole New World**

With the development of the Hughes Syncom and Early Bird satellites in the 1960s came the birth of a whole new industry that would revolutionize worldwide communications. And countless other technical Hughes breakthroughs—from the Surveyor lunar lander to lasers to the liquid crystal display screens in computers—have become a part of the national vernacular.

In the 1990s Hughes continues to set milestones with its acquisition of the General Dynamics missile business in 1992; its purchase of Magnavox Electronics Systems Co. in 1995; the introduction of DirecPC service in 1994 which provides high-speed delivery of digital date to PCs via satellite; the development of the inductive charging system for electric vehicles; and the launch of DirecTV direct-to-home satellite television in 1994.

Poised on the brink of the new millennium, the Hughes Electronics Corp. is a world leader in the design, manufacture and marketing of electronic systems for defense and diverse commercial ventures.

From a drill bit manufacturing business to an aviation giant to a multifaceted company of global proportions, Hughes now comprises Hughes Space and Communications Co., Hughes Network Systems Inc., DirecTV Inc. and PanAmSat Corp. Hughes Electronics Corp. connects the world through manufacturing and development of satellite and wireless digital communications, multimedia content, global bandwidth on demand, direct-to-home entertainment and a host of other new innovative synergies that will continue to change the landscape of the global environment.
CONGRATULATIONS TO DIRECTV ON YOUR 5TH ANNIVERSARY FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT THE NBA
TRINITY BROADCASTING NETWORK (TBN) Serving many denominations, one of America's most watchdog religious networks provides a variety of original programs, including Nashville gospel concerts, health and fitness, talk, children's features and services from some of America's largest churches.

TRIO DRAMAS DOCUMENTARIES FILMS
TRIO The new vision in quality television, showcasing distinctive and award-winning dramas, documentaries and films. Also features wonderful original programming for children and teens.

MOVIES
AMERICAN MOVIE CLASSICS (AMC) The leader in classic Hollywood entertainment, providing commercial-free, uncut classic movies and original programming.

ENCORE ACTION Avoiding gratuitous violence, this exciting service highlights fine action movies and series.

ENCORE EAST High-quality hit movies from the '60s, '70s, '80s and '90s, presented uncut and commercial-free.

ENCORE LOVESTORIES Romantic programming that showcases movies with love themes.

Since its launch merely five year ago, DirecTV has become the fastest growing digital delivery entertainment and information service in the world. What was your vision for the company at its inception?

HARTENSTEIN Our vision hasn’t really changed—we wanted to become the premier entertainment and information distribution platform for consumers across America. We didn’t have a complete or clear vision as to what the world would become. But looking back from where we are now I think we’re all clearly pleased with what we’ve been able to do, none more important than consumers across America who have voted that this is what we want.

What factors in the marketplace have made the kind of growth DirecTV has experienced possible?

HARTENSTEIN We’ve delivered on our promise to consumers for clearer signals, better sound and differentiated programming you can’t get anywhere else. And we’ve done it all with a smile, in a customer service sense, and with a very high perceived value. We keep exceeding their expectations in what we keep bringing.

What have been some of the biggest challenges you’ve faced in growing this company?

HARTENSTEIN To stay focused and abreast of all the technologies and all the desires people have. They want a content-rich data environment, but they don’t want to have to go to another room to pull it off of a...
DirecTV, My, how you’ve grown!

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NEW LINE TELEVISION
ENCORE MYSTERY
"Whodunit" programming featuring suspense, intrigue and skullduggery with movies like "Murder on the Orient Express" and series like "Suspense Theatre."

ENCORE TRUE STORIES
Caters to viewers' interest in reality-based programming with fact-based stories and movies.

ENCORE WAM! Specialized for younger viewers (ages 8-16), this channel provides wholesome family movies and educational programming.

ENCORE WEST
High-quality hit movies from the 1960s, '70s, '80s and '90s, presented uncut and commercial-free.

ENCORE WESTERNs
Includes films and series about the Western Frontier era, such as "The Magnificent Seven" and "The Lone Ranger."

INDEPENDENT FILM CHANNEL (IFC)
Features American independent films not always available in theaters. Program advisors include top filmmakers like Martin Scorsese, Robert Altman and Jodie Foster.

ROMANCE CLASSICS
A 24-hour spotlight on romance featuring classic and contemporary PC. They want that information available through the television set. We're television-centric with a few pushes of the remote control.

How have you combated the sometimes negative image associated with home video services?
HARTENSTEIN We did a lot of market research for the three or four years before we launched the service, and we listened to people in what they wanted in both the content side and feature side. They wanted the ability to exercise control over the television in ways they couldn't before. We have the clocks and the limits to control program ratings and that allow you as a parent to exercise control in what you want being viewed.

One of the early disadvantages raised about DBS services is the lack of access to local channels. But that's about to change soon, isn't it?
HARTENSTEIN With a little bit of luck in the next few weeks there should be a bill signed into law that allows satellite providers such as DirecTV to broadcast local channels. There needs to be provision in that law that will make it practical and feasible. And we will be able to, at least in its initial phase, provide a dozen channels to about half of the U.S. That was the last of the convenience items, the last remaining issue for consumers. The set of products we'll have available by the end of summer will deliver local channels in some 50 million homes and also bring in distant signals, if they're really far away, and [offer] integrated digital off-air set-top boxes at price points significantly different from where we were five years ago.

You have strategic partners from every sector of business, from manufacturing partners such as Thompson Consumer Electronics to programming partners like Encore. You've got retail partners like Circuit City, even partners like Convergus who help manage your customer service. How has this partnership philosophy contributed to the success of DirecTV?
HARTENSTEIN I think it's the cornerstone of what we've done. We realized that this was more than just the next evolution of TV, it's nothing short of a revolution. There were so many aspects to this business, be they consumer, manufacturing, marketing...we couldn't do all of those. We were fortunate to find partners that shared our

Eddy. W. Hartenstein

TITLES: President, DirecTV Inc., a unit of Hughes Electronics Corp., Corporate Senior vice President, Hughes Electronics Board member Consumer Electronics Manufacturing Association

EDUCATION: California State University, Pomona, 1971 and 72-B.S. Aerospace Engineering and Mathematics, Cal Tech, 1974-74 in Applied Physics while a Hughes Aircraft Company Masters Fellow

Hughes Communications, 1981-84—Vice president of Galaxy program, directing the marketing and development of the Galaxy satellite fleet serving the broadcast television and cable programming industries.
Equatorial Communications, 1984-87—President of communications services company, now division of GTE providing nationwide telecommunications and data distribution services for Fortune 100 companies.
Hughes Communications, '97-90—Created and headed the Ku-band services business unit, responsible for acquisition of Satellite Transponder Leasing Corp. and the SES fleet of Ku-band satellites from BM.
DirecTV, 1993-present—Development and operation of DirecTV direct broadcast satellite service and launch of DirecTV services in Latin America and Japan.

OUTLOOK: "We're at the brink of a very exciting time evolutionally in the broadcast paradigm, and there are a whole host of things that I think can be brought to people to enhance not just the visual senses of broadcasting, but to enhance the richness of the information content as well."
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Hollywood films, plus popular TV miniseries of adapted literature and original programming.

STARZ! Four STARZ! premium movie channels provide almost 40 percent of the first-run, top-grossing movies from Hollywood, including films from Touchstone Pictures, Hollywood Pictures and Universal. STARZ! also features quality selections from independent studios and the ENCORE library of over 10,000 titles.

TURNER CLASSIC MOVIES (TCM) 24-hour service with some of the best classic movies culled from vintage RKO, MGM and pre-1950 Warner Bros. film collections, presented uncult and commercial-free.

vision, and they’ve been mutually beneficial and rewarding relationships, not the least of which is our retail partners who are actually selling entertainment and information. “Who’d a thunk” five years ago [that] you could walk into a retailer like Radio Shack and walk out with a little 18-inch dish under your arm and a whole host of services you could set up in a hour or two? It’s been a very interesting trend to follow.

You’ve had a banner six months starting with the acquisition of USSB followed by the Tempo transaction in March, the April acquisition of Primestar, the expected approval of local channel offerings and now a deal with AOL. What’s the impetus behind this phenomenal growth?

Hartenstein The message has gotten out. The broader your base, the more people know about it. Word of mouth really started to kick in, we are at almost 5 million subscribers, plus 2 million or so from Primestar. We are a presence in one out of every 14 homes now, increasing the probability that you’ll bump into other people who have it. As long as they’re as content as the 98 percent of the customers who have us, we’re almost able sell on referrals alone. It becomes more widespread in terms of familiarity.

What are the top priorities for the rest of 1999?

Hartenstein It’s a year of implementation and execution in acquiring new subscribers and merging all the great personnel and systems into one cohesive company. The indicators are positive. We’ve got a terrific group of employees, and we’re up for the challenge.

What are DirectTV’s goals in the international arena?

Hartenstein At the Hughes level, we are partners in Latin America with Spanish and Portuguese language services to over 5 million subscribers since 1996, and we have over 1.4 million in Japan in barely a year. We see promise in both of those markets and hope to do well.

Looking ahead into Y2K and beyond, where does DirectTV go from here?

Hartenstein Our goal is to keep acquiring subscribers, more quality subscribers and give them an unbeatable product. They’re the ones that stick. We want to continue to exceed their expectations.

To Us, You’re The Champion!

Thanks to everyone at DirecTV for your continuing support.

SEG Sports and the Ultimate Fighting Championship
Congratulations DirecTV.
You’ve proven
the sky’s the limit.

Showtime Networks Salutes You!
Growth charts are measured in inches, timelines plotted in years. But to track the activity of DirecTV in this year alone, you’d need a minute-to-minute Times Square ticker. With a month to go before the end of the second quarter, here’s a sampling of key developments in 1999 so far:

January 22—Parent company Hughes Electronics Corp. announces acquisition of USSB and Primestar plus Tempo’s two high-powered satellites and 11 frequencies at 119 degrees west longitude.

February 1—Airs first original programming with exclusive premieres of two features from the Action Adventure Network.

February 4—Announces joint marketing and sales agreement with Brinks Home Security.

February 15—Offers exclusive promotion for bars and restaurants with Comedy Central.

February 16—Columbia TriStar Distribution becomes exclusive national advertising representative.

February 24—Announces new package of New York and Los Angeles broadcast signals for eligible subscribers.

March 4—Launches a national retail and marketing promotion to new subscribers that includes free installation and three months programming.

March 15—Signs marketing and distribution agreement with Wireless Broadcasting Systems of America.

April 1—Receives FCC approval for transfer of USSB-owned frequencies.

April 1—BBC America joins DirecTV lineup.

April 6—Announces record first-quarter growth of 120,000 new subscribers, a 34 percent increase.

April 26—Announces marketing agreement and equity investment in TiVo Inc.

April 27—Announces manufacturing agreement with Philips Electronics to offer Personal TV.

April 28—Reaches agreement with TeleCommunications Inc. to acquire a customer call center.

April 28—Hughes completes acquisition of Primestar.

May 5—Announces plans to offer local broadcast network channels.

May 10—Adds Mitsubishi to family of system manufacturers.

May 11—America Online announces key interactivity partnership.
Congratulations DIRECTV!

You Made Digital “Near Movie-On-Demand”* Pay-Per-View Work!

“All the hits, starting every 1/2 hour, “at the touch of your fingertips.”
DirecTV is the nation's leading digital television entertainment service offering more than 200 available channels of digitally delivered entertainment and informational programming to owners of the DirecTV System, which features an 18-inch satellite dish.

**Headquarters:** DirecTV Inc.
2230 East Imperial Highway
El Segundo, Calif. 90245

**Phone:** 1-800-DIRECTV
(Customer Service) (310) 535-5000
(Corporate Offices) (310) 535-6113

**Web site:** www.directv.com

**Ownership:** Hughes Electronics Corp.

**Executives:**
Eddy W. Hartenstein, president, corporate senior vice president of Hughes Electronics
Larry Chapman, executive vice president

**Founded:** 1990; Launched service in June 1994

**Traded:** As a unit of Hughes Electronics Corp., DirecTV is traded on the NYSE under GMH common stock.

**Digital Transmission:** Three high-power Ku-band satellites featuring 16 120-watt transponders that operate from 101 degrees west longitude. DirecTV also delivers high-definition programming from leased capacity aboard an expansion satellite platform (Galaxy III-R) in the 95 degrees west longitude slot.

**DirecTV System:** DirecTV programming is received by the DirecTV System, which includes an 18-inch satellite dish, digital receiver and remote control. An interactive On-Screen Guide allows customers to scan programming and purchase pay-per-view movies and events with the remote (a continuous land-based phone line connection is required). Later this year DirecTV will offer an integrated DirecTV/ATSC set-top receiver (consisting of a built-in DirecTV System receiver and local digital broadcast receiver) and HDTV sets.

**Programming Packages:** DirecTV packages range from $5.99 to $47.99 a month. All packages offer access to the Direct Ticket pay-per-view channels. The most popular DirecTV programming package, Total Choice, consists of more than 85 digital and audio channels and costs $29.99 a month.

**DirecTV System Brands:** Major consumer electronics brand names that market the system include RCA and ProScan from Thomson Consumer Electronics, Sony, Hitachi Ultravision, Toshiba, Hughes Network Systems and Mitsubishi.

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Everyone should be this successful at 5 years old.

With more than 5 million customers and the fastest selling consumer electronics products in U.S. history, DIRECTV is positively smokin'. We'd like to thank DIRECTV for being such great partners, and offer our congratulations on your incredible first five years.

**partners**
Congratulations in Celebrating Five Years of Excellence

Hats Off to Eddy Hartenstein, DirectTV President, for a Job Well Done!

Giving You A Choice!
Partnering for Success

DirectTV learned the importance of not going it alone. It has made strategic partnerships with a host of companies to improve and expand all areas of its business. Some of them follow:

Programming Partners: DirectTV maintains a programming relationship with more than 200 digital channels and multiplexes, including Encore Media Group, the largest provider of cable and satellite-delivered premium movie networks in the U.S.

Retail partners: DirectTV has established a network of more than 350 commercial dealers who sell programming, install the DirectTV System and/or provide customer service. They include national retailers such as Best Buy, Circuit City, The Good Guys, Sears Brand Central, Sam’s Club, Costco, Phone Mart and Wal-Mart.

Commercial accounts: DirectTV provides commercial programming to Delta Crown Room Clubs as well as more than 300 Host Marriott Service locations in 63 U.S. airports; major sports stadiums such as the Oakland Arena, Jack Kent Cooke Stadium, Atlanta Braves’ Turner Field, and the Pro-Player Stadium, home of the Miami Dolphins and Florida Marlins. National restaurant accounts include more than 3,700 national outlets, including Applebee’s, Chili’s, Red Lobster, Ruby Tuesday’s and T.G.I. Fridays.

Manufacturing partners: Include Hughes Network Systems, Thomson Multimedia (ProScan, RCA), Sony, Hitachi Home Electronics, Mitsubishi Digital Electronics America and Toshiba America Consumer Products; Wink Communications will launch interactive enhanced broadcasting DirectTV Systems under the RCA brand and Philips Electronics will manufacture DirectTV System receivers with TiVo’s time-shifting technology.

MSOs: To further develop and support its network of more than 200 multiple-family dwelling unit (MDU) system operators, DirectTV has formed the Master System Operator (MSO) program. Leading MSOs include Golden Sky Systems, Skyview, Pace Electronics and Diamond Pacific.


Transport partners: WSNNet, 4COM and SMS, the largest distributors of satellite TV to MDU private cable clients.

Marketing partners: Exclusive national advertising partnership with Columbia TriStar Advertiser Sales; TiVo Inc. will market TiVo Personal Television Service and Philips Personal TV receivers.

International Partners: Galaxy Latin America LLC; DirectTV Japan partnership with Hughes and nine Japanese firms.

Internet Access: DirectPC and DirecDuo from Hughes Network Systems

Connected Interactivity: America Online

Telco partners: Bell Atlantic, Southwest Bell, GTE and Cincinnati Bell

Programming partner: Action Avenger Network

Customer Service:

Convergus

Michelle Y. Green, a Maryland-based freelance writer, researched and wrote this advertising supplement.
Your vision is now seen by over 7 million people every day.

Congratulations on five record-setting years from your partners at Campbell-Ewald/West
Dear Eddy,

What a great success story! From the absolute pioneer in the Digital Revolution comes another great milestone:

Your 5th Anniversary!

We’re proud to have been there with you from the very beginning and watch you grow, as we grew with you.

Thank you for your continued faith in STARZ! and the ENCORE THEMATIC MULTIPLEX.

We’ll be right there with you for all of your coming milestones!

From all of us at Encore Media Group to all of you at DIRECTV -- Congratulations!

CHAIRMAN & CEO

Encore Media Group LLC
Macromedia gets more animated

By Richard Tedesco

WhirlGirl and those twisted kids from South Park have a second home online. They'll be in the lineup when Macromedia starts distributing animated features from TV programmers on Shockwave.com next month. The San Francisco-based company that created the popular Shockwave software that enables most Web animations is creating an incubation site for new toons and second sites for Comedy Central's South Park and Showtime's WhirlGirl. "There will be new characters and new brands from providers of traditional content that will be introduced online and spread to other media from there," says Dierdre Polson, Macromedia director of marketing for Shockwave.com. "It's a lot cheaper to try a series online."

Comedy Central, Fox Interactive, Showtime, Marvel.com and Sega of America are among Macromedia's content partners on the deal. Shockwave.com will also cross-link to Warner Bros Online. @Home, Comcast Online and ABC's Xoom.com are among the distribution partners.

In addition to recruiting partners for the project, Macromedia recruited Stephen Fields, formerly senior vice president and general manager of Disney Software, as CEO of Shockwave.com.

Go's $25M campaign

By Richard Tedesco

Disney/ABC kicked off a $25 million advertising campaign to push its online Go Network across the ABC Network and several cable outlets in prime time last week.

The aim is to turn viewers into Go users in a three-month campaign with the spots, which emphasize the Web as a convenient search alternative to traditional information seeking. The tagline, "Before You Go Here, Go Here," is preceded with scenes including an obnoxious car salesman, a lazy store clerk, and an office of empty desks accompanied by an automated phone message.

All but 15% of the time allotted for the seven Go spots created by Silicon Valley-based CKS and produced by Industrial Light & Magic will be in prime time, with some spot buys during May on ABC stations in New York, San Francisco, Chicago and Los Angeles. The spots will also air on ESPN, A&E, The History Channel and E! Entertainment Channel.

The Go Network is an Internet portal that also aggregates online content from Disney, ABC and ESPN Web sites.

Last week ABC gave the spots a go with Cleopatra, the series finale of Home Improvement and season finales of Spin City and NYPD Blue. It will also spike Monday Night Football with the spots before the campaign climaxes in mid-September.

One Go Spot shows an empty office while a phone message plays.

SITE OF THE WEEK
www.cartoonnetwork.com

Cartoon Network Online
Turner Broadcasting System Inc.
Atlanta

Site features: Animated video and audio clips streamed from classic cartoons, including Rocky & Bullwinkle, and Hanna-Barbera's The Flintstones, The Jetsons, Huckleberry Hound and Tom and Jerry; clips from Cartoon Network originals, including Dexter's Laboratory, Johnny Bravo and Space Ghost Coast to Coast; online games area, including Pac-Man-like Brak Bean's Chomper 2000

Site launched: July 1998
Site director: Sam Register, vice president, creative director, Cartoon Network Online
Number of employees: 20
Site design: Funny Garbage, New York
Streaming technology: Windows Media
Traffic generated: 26.7 million page views monthly
Advertising: banner ads from McDonald's, Reebok, Gap Kids
Revenue: N/A
Highlights: Original online cartoon series B. Happy and Pink Donkey and the Fly, with new weekly segments archived; Cartoon Net plans to launch original online animated series on a regular basis.

—Richard Tedesco
The backbone of KGO-TV San Francisco's digital architecture is Tektronix Profile video servers, which connect with SGI servers and Storage-Tek digital tape archives through Fibre Channel networking.

Video Servers Unravel Tape

Computer-based record/playback devices enjoying growing acceptance, uses in TV facilities

By Karen Anderson

Video servers are a powerful example of how computers are changing the landscape of broadcast technology. This equipment, which records, stores and plays back video using computer disks, has in just a few years developed from an unproven, expensive technology to being a standard item on every broadcaster's shopping list. And servers are quickly replacing tape as the medium of choice for everyday broadcast applications such as commercial playout, time delay and news production.

The inherent advantage to video servers is that their storage is nonlinear and digital, allowing users to quickly access material and use it over and over without generational loss of quality. The computer disk drives used to store video also eliminate the mechanical components used in tape machines, parts that frequently need to be replaced due to intensive use. So servers can bring efficiency, improved picture quality and lower operational costs to a television station.

But how have servers come so far so fast? In the simplest terms, like other computers, they have followed Moore's Law—a reference to Intel co-founder Gordon Moore—which says that microchip technology develops so quickly, that the amount of data a chip can store doubles every 18 months. With video servers, this exponential increase in computer-processing power and data storage has been matched by improvements in compression algorithms, which allow more video to be stored on less disk space. These combined forces have resulted in servers that can store hours of high-quality video at a price stations can afford.

Many broadcasters have already replaced mechanical cart machines with entry-level servers for spot-playback. Some stations have even begun to automate programming playback with robust systems that hold hundreds of hours of compressed video. And station groups are now starting to network remote video servers so that stations can access shared material throughout the group.

The Ackerley Group, for example, is restructuring its business model by
linking its operations with SeaChange servers that are controlled by Sundance automation software. Sinclair and Tribune station groups are also working to streamline their operations by using file transfers with their remote servers. Examples like these, experts say, are proof of the potential of video servers when compared to traditional tape-based systems.

"Before they buy tape, everybody now has to ask the question, "Do I really want this tape recorder or should I get a server-based system?" says Al Kovalick, Hewlett-Packard's director of technical strategy. "At the last NAB I think there was more than ample proof that everybody who's serious about video in the business has a server."

That wasn't the case back in 1992, when a handful of companies began offering prototype, short-duration uncompressed disk recorders for post-production. After achieving limited success with these uncompressed recorders, companies began offering the next generation of servers—digital disk recorders with Motion JPEG compression [M-JPEG]. Tektronix was the first, followed shortly by Leitch's ASC.

Initially, broadcasters used the JPEG-compressed disk recorders to cache spots directly from their cart machines for playback. Later, Hewlett-Packard became the first to develop and ship an MPEG-2 compressed system. (KOLD-TV, in Tuscon, Ariz., first went on-air with an HP MPEG-2 server in late 1995.) MPEG-2 compression, and later, DV compression created more storage capacity and allowed broadcasters to begin using servers for long-term storage and program playback.

David Folsom, technology vice president of Raycom Media, is one of many broadcasters looking to convert tape-based spot and programming playback to servers. "We have servers in many of our stations now, but we still have quite a few of the traditional spot players," Folsom says. "We have the ongoing question of story playback for news. Of course as servers become more efficient, they become far more viable."

Servers are also becoming more viable by becoming cheaper, even as their hours of integrated storage increase. The price of video servers now ranges from about $35,000 for a small, single-channel system to upwards of $150,000 for a robust, multichannel system. More powerful servers that can handle multiple station operations with huge amounts of internal storage, however, still cost well over $250,000—but an entry-level playback server cost more than $200,000 in 1995. Data storage companies like Ampex, StorageTek and Excalibur are also offering more competitively priced external storage and archiving products, which are the most expensive components for stations investing in full-blown server architecture.

Just a few years ago the video server market was relatively small. However, it recently exploded with manufacturers looking to cash in on broadcasters moving into digital television. In its April 1999 report, Frost & Sullivan valued the "hardware" video server market—including compressed and uncompressed video servers for broadcast and cable as well as intranet/distance learning—at $422.6 billion for 1998. The report cited the FCC's digital broadcast mandate as the reason for increased demand for video servers.

**Riding the market**

As the server market grows, with more companies trying to get in on the action, Tektronix Profile continues to hold its position at the top, followed closely by Hewlett-Packard's Media Stream and Leitch's ASC line of servers. Broadcast giants Sony and Philips hold a smaller share of the market, but industry experts point to them as strong players because both offer complete broadcast systems. Quantel also takes a "systems" approach with its different applications-based production and on-air servers. SeaChange, which has been a recognized name in the cable market, also has installations in several broadcast television stations. Both Fox and CBS networks are seriously looking at SeaChange's products.

Among the newer companies to the video server market are Pinnacle and Accom, both of which have traditionally focused on editing and post-production equipment. Compression firm Veta Research has built an MPEG-2 server called RapidAccess, based on its broadcast encoders and decoders.

"There are an awful lot of companies
in this business and, of course, many of them didn’t even exist a few years ago,” Folsom adds. “[Some] companies have come out of nowhere and are doing a pretty good business. But you wouldn’t have heard of them two or three years ago, like Pluto.”

In 1995 Pluto was formed to create disk-based replacements for tape machines. But according to the company’s chairman and CEO, Mark Gray, the market is really just beginning. “Although the market for spot servers is still quite good,” he says. “The market is growing rapidly because of the implementation of servers into other parts of the facility.”

Another example of the kind of growth Folsom refers to is that of Hewlett-Packard, a computer giant that's carved out a successful niche in the broadcast marketplace.

But Mike Wolschon, director of marketing for Philips’ video server division, warns that computer-based companies may not find much success in the broadcast server realm, or at least not the success they are used to because the broadcast market is relatively small compared to the computer market.

“The expectations of those big corporations in the computer world are that they have double-digit growth every year and their margins are increasing dramatically,” says Wolschon. “The broadcast spectrum in the entire world is such a small business when you compare it to the computer business. Some people tag the entire broadcast capital spent every year around the world to somewhere between $6 [billion] and $7 billion. [Hewlett-Packard reported $47.1 billion in revenue last year.] You’ve got to look at that and say this is a real small marketplace.”

Hewlett-Packard’s Kovalick admits that the company’s video-communications division, which markets the MediaStream server, is a very small part of HP’s total business. In fact, HP is spinning off its noncomputer and nonconsumer divisions into an independent $8 billion company, and the video communications division will come under the new company’s communications solutions group.

“We’re a little division compared to HP and now we’ll have a lot more significance in a new company,” says Kovalick. The company will be named next month and begin marketing the new brand until it is spun off next year.

Kovalick adds that he is excited about developing the video server line within the new company, as servers are going to be an integral part of repurposing material in the “50,000 channel universe” that will emerge as the line between the Internet and traditional broadcast blurs.

Applications and media convergence drive servers
EMC, a 20-year-old enterprise storage company whose revenue topped $4 billion this year, also feels the broadcast server market is an important one to tap as media segments converge. It has begun marketing its Celerra Media Server, a large-scale system with huge amounts of integrated storage, to the broadcast and cable markets. The high-end multichannel media server is based on its Symmetrix storage system. Celerra’s capacity is robust enough that it can be used as a central server storage system to handle multiple tasks and allow multiple users to access information on the server.

“Broadcasters are facing the challenges of, strategically, ‘What are we going to do with our bandwidth?’” says Doron Kempel, general manager of EMC’s media group. “’Are we going to multicast or are we going to high definition?’ ‘How many inputs and outputs will I need?’ ‘How do I converge the business part of the facilities for billing with post-production with the news environment and with the play-to-air environment?’ ‘How do I stream over the Internet and what do I do about the Internet?’ There is tremendous uncertainty now. As different media converge, it is very important for us to take a leadership role,” says Kempel. “We think that we have the capability. And we think that it is a great market to offer our expertise in.”

HP’s Kovalick believes that new broadcast server manufacturers that focus on applications and solutions will succeed over those that manufacture “steel boxes.” “They can’t squeeze the Sonys, the Panasonics, the Philips and the Tektronixes of the world out of this market just yet,” he says. “The broadcasters all want to feel comfortable that they are making an investment in a company that has a future.”

That sentiment is supported by the Frost & Sullivan report, which con-

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Continues on page 56
IT'S THAT GOOD.

The best way to judge the performance of your digital videotape is if your client is smiling when the production is finished. Make them happy by using Fuji Professional Digital Videocassettes. Our products are known for superior quality, reliability and consistency from tape to tape. And Fuji supplies a tape for every popular digital format. With all the challenges you’re facing from new hardware, new formats, DTV, HDTV and an increasingly competitive business environment, the last thing you need is an unhappy customer.

Fuji Professional Videocassettes.
Maybe there's nothing better.
WHAT IF A SERVER COULD TAKE THE RISK OUT OF GOING DIGITAL?

That's exactly what Tektronix designed its Profile family of video servers to do. Unlike most video servers, Tektronix doesn't limit your use of compression formats. JPEG, MPEG and DVCPRO can all be incorporated into your facility, where you decide they make the most sense. Profile servers also offer an open architecture that allows you to choose from over 100 applications created by 50 of the best developers. So no matter what your vision is for going digital, choosing Tektronix Profile servers is a very safe bet.

To find out more about our risk-free servers and receive an Application Developer Directory, call toll-free 1-800-TEK-VIDEO dept. 9918, or visit www.tektronix.com/Profile/safe

Tektronix®
Serving up video servers

Broadcasting & Cable has compiled the biggest players in the server market as well as some upstarts that show potential—17 companies in all. This chart is by no means intended to be definitive, but instead a starting point for prospective broadcast buyers.

Accom

1490 O'Brien Drive
Menlo Park, CA 94025
(650) 326-3818
www.accom.com

Accom's Abekas 6000 Multiflex DTV is a multichannel playout unit with VTR-type editing capabilities. A hardware control panel lets users do machine-to-machine editing; the finished product can be aired from the server. The Multiflex DTV features user-selectable DVCPRO (25Mb/s) and DVCPRO50 (50Mb/s) storage and can be configured with two, four, six, or eight digital video channels, each with input and output capabilities and associated four-track digital audio. Each unit can handle up to 35 hours of programming at 25 Mb/s in a single chassis, but storage can be increased to more than 105 hours by adding additional disk drives.

Drastic Technologies

12 Drummond St., Unit 3
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
MBV 1Y8
(416) 255-5636
www.drastictech.com

Drastic Technologies markets a product line called VVCR, a digital video disk recorder for the broadcast and video marketplace. The VVCR combines Drastic's technical experience in VTR control with high-bandwidth digital-video and storage subsystems. RS-232/422 serial connections allow the VVCR to be plugged into any standard-edit controller for video and news production and the VVCR can also be used for programming playback, commercial insertion, instant replay and slow motion.

EMC

35 Parkwood Drive
Hopkinton, MA 01748
(508) 435-1000
www.EMC.com

EMC's Celerra Media Server is based on the computer industry's Symmetrix storage system. Celerra uses a network storage director, which consists of dual-control stations and up to 14 data movers, to distribute video assets stored on Symmetrix. The control station handles system resource management and communications, and maintains and monitors all video stream I/O activity. Each data mover features embedded system software for real-time delivery of video and directly connects to one or more Symmetrix systems as well as to one or more video and/or data-delivery networks.

HP

5301 Stevens Creek Blvd.
Santa Clara, CA 95051-7295
(408) 246-4300
www.hp.com/go/broadcast

The HP MediaStream family of products includes a broadcast server, disk recorder and Connect networking software for a variety of on-air applications including spot insertion (stand-alone and/or caching), multichannel broadcasting, network delay and program playback. HP's latest additions are the seven-channel 700 and 16-channel 1600 MPEG-2 servers, which can support HDTV. The 700 offers 18 or 36 hours of integrated RAID storage and the 1600 offers 36 hours of RAID storage with expansion available in 36-hour increments.

Leitch

920 Corporate Lane
Chesapeake, VA 23320-3641
(800) 231-9873
www.leitch.com

This year at NAB, Leitch Technology introduced several new server systems. The VR400 MPEG-2 server provides bi-directional video channels for record and playback, eliminating the need to configure dedicated encoders and decoders. It can be ordered now and is expected to begin shipping this July. Leitch also introduced the VR300 two-, four- and six-channel video servers and the VRN300 six-channel newsroom server. Both models include RAID redundancy and play-to-air control software.
Our Family already has HDTV.

THE SMOOTH TRANSITION TO HDTV

Silicon Graphics' workstations and servers are already HDTV compliant. Whether you decide on 480P, 720P, 1080i, or simply stick with standard resolution, we have you covered. Silicon Graphics workstation-based solutions are at the heart of today's live broadcast graphics for news, sports and special events. Many of our customers are already editing HDTV content. Let our Origin video computing platform solve your media streaming needs, from thousands of MPEG streams to DVCPRO and uncompressed HDTV.

No other open platform has as many media management and distribution applications. To find out more about Silicon Graphics broadcast, cable, and satellite solutions, check out our Web site at www.sgi.com/broadcast.

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Panasonic has introduced the AV-SS500 DVCPRO Video Production Server targeted for sports news production, time-delay and automated program applications. The eight-channel server operates as a multichannel disk recorder/player, records and plays back eight video streams simultaneously, and offers up to 10 hours of internal storage. Panasonic has also introduced DVCPRO News and Program Cache Server, the AJ-DR7000, which is designed as a caching server for on-air playout in larger systems or as the media server for smaller news systems. It has four physical I/O ports, an internal bandwidth equal to seven DVCPRO streams.

Philips is continuing to develop its Media Pool video server, and this year at NAB introduced a new HD version. The HD Media Pool consists of newly manufactured components including the VR-8000HD (a video input/output module), an AS-8000 storage array with either 8 or 16 GB disk drives, and new control software. Since the Media Pool is based on uncompressed architecture, owners can upgrade their existing systems for 1080i and 720p applications. Both standard definition and high-definition program feeds can run simultaneously from the same Media Pool video server.

Pinnacle Systems recently introduced its first video server, the Thunder MCS 4000 multichannel, multiuser production server. It offers four video channels with embedded audio, each capable of playback and recording. It can support native DV and MPEG-2 video compression and also plays back ancillary data. Each of Thunder's video channels has a built-in transition engine that creates cuts, wipes, and dissolves between back-to-back clips, and a built-in keyer that allows the user to record an element over an external background. At 20 Mb/s, Thunder provides about four hours of storage and can be configured to operate at a data rate of up to 50 Mb/s.

Pluto's SPACE disk-based servers are designed for SDTV and HDTV applications. HyperSPACE HD is Pluto's dedicated 1080i HD play-to-air system, providing 28 minutes to more than three hours of HD recording and four hours of SDTV recording. AirSPACE handles multichannel broadcast operations with an upgrade path to HD in AirSPACE HD, which provides up to 8 hours of HD storage. Pluto has just introduced a 720p-compatible version of AirSPACE and HyperSPACE. Working with Panasonic's HDP-510 hi-def encoder/decoder, these products can switch between 720p and 1080i HD and 526 and 625 standard definition images.

SeaChange made its way into the cable market in 1994 with multichannel broadband server products for cable ad insertion. The company now also offers a range of broadcast solutions with its MediaCluster family of products. Developed for networks and large-scale broadcast operations, the fault-tolerant MediaCluster 1200 video server offers 12 disk drives per node in cluster configurations of three, four, or five nodes. The lower-cost 800 series has a scaled-down I/O configuration and offers eight disk drives per node.

Sierra Design Labs offers a line of uncompressed digital disk recorders used mainly for broadcast and video production. Its HDi.5Plus unit records and plays back up to four streams of uncompressed 8- or 10-bit 4:2:2 video. The system offers 10, 30, 60 or 120 minutes of uncompressed HD recording.
Conceived with a vision, the Roswell™ Facility Management System puts you in complete control of your digital future. Designed specifically for multichannel digital TV, the Roswell system provides complete workflow automation; from traffic scheduling to on-air operations.

The Roswell system will manage your metadata and electronic program guides, along with the material, media, and playback resources in your facility. And Roswell tightly integrates with our new Bowser™ Visual Asset Manager to let you see and hear digital material from the convenience of any PC workstation.

To see the benefits of perfect vision, contact your nearest Odetics Broadcast representative today.
SGI offers the Origin 2000 and 200 MPEG-2 production servers that support Fibre Channel and SCSI networking. SGI has developed a high-definition input/output board that allows the Origin 2000 server to generate and accept real-time, uncompressed HDTV in the 1080i, 1080p, and 720p formats. The XT-HD board is designed to reduce the cost of HDTV post-production and will be available by the end of 1999.

Sony offers a range of video servers including the MAV-70, a selectable bit rate DTV-ready MPEG-2 server that supports both SDTV and HDTV. One MAV-70 is configurable with up to 10 baseband inputs and outputs and supports Fibre Channel and Ethernet connections. Multichannel production servers include the MAV-555 MPEG-2 server with VTR-style control panel and compatibility with Sony’s BE linear editing systems. Sony’s NewsBase, a multiuser news production system centered around an MPEG-2 video server, allows for desktop editing and browsing, management and recording of incoming feeds, and playback-to-air.

Tektronix has expanded its Profile line, including the Profile HD full-bandwidth MPEG-2 server, which supports 1080i and 720p formats. The Profile PDR 300 MPEG-2 server offers four to six channels with 10GB disk drive system for 18 (JPEG) or 35 (MPEG) hours of integrated storage. The PDR 400 DVCPRO, which uses DVCPRO compression, offers two to eight channels with up to 18 hours of integrated storage. Both are expandable up to 96 hours with additional disks. Tektronix has also introduced the Profile Video Gateway, a network router that enables remote transfer of video and audio clips.

Quantel has launched several application-based broadcast systems centered around its Clipbox server. The new disk-based SpotRunner commercial insertion system is designed as an automated cart-machine replacement and provides 25 hours of DVCPRO compressed storage. Moving Picturebox for news and sports acts like a still store but also plays out over-the-shoulder video clips. It includes dual video outputs, resizing of images, and clip-to-clip dissolve. In addition, Quantel has launched Cachebox, a server designed for broadcasters and post-production facilities seeking less horsepower than the Clipbox.

Vela has integrated its Argus real-time MPEG-2 encoder and its four-channel decoder with a centralized storage system to form the RapidAccess Version 2 MPEG-2 video server. The new Vela server allows users to record and monitor one video channel while simultaneously playing back four other channels. RapidAccess includes an on-screen media browsing system and media management software that allows the user to build and edit play lists.

All of Vibrint’s news and video production applications, such as NewsEdit, run on the Vibrint MPEG-2 4:2:2 video server. The Windows NT-based server features Vibrint’s multiskipping Video Image Processor (VIP), which allows users to record and play out simultaneously. The MPEG-2 server is designed mainly for the newsroom, but can be used as a stand-alone unit for a number of playback-to-air applications.
YOU WATCH MEN IN SUITS RUN AROUND IN CIRCLES EVERY DAY.

But this time it could be fun.

Buy the Profile PRO Series disk recorder from your Tektronix dealer and you could win a trip to the World Series.

The PRO Series is Tektronix' answer to making the Profile's technology affordable for everyone. Having the world's best disk recorder in your facility for as little as $29,995 is the easiest and most affordable way to go to disk. The PRO Series is a fully functional, right out the box solution. No hidden costs. No extra headaches. Call your Tektronix dealer for a variety of proven Profile applications. Then, just swing for the fences. The PRO Series is available in JPEG and MPEG with analog and digital video I/O built in. Streamlined configuration makes set up easy so you can start working right away, no matter where you are in your transition to digital. For the Tektronix dealer near you call 800-547-8949 and find out how you can score. Who knows, you may even find yourself at the World Series.
Animating Brokaw

‘NBC Nightly News’ upgrades with Quantel Clipbox

By Karen Anderson

To provide a visual backdrop for Tom Brokaw’s “In Depth” segments, NBC Nightly News uses a Quantel Clipbox video server to send pre-produced animations from its editing and graphics suite on the ninth floor of “30 Rock” to a video wall in its third floor studio.

The Quantel video server has been in operation since November 1998 and is also used for playout-to-air for several other Nightly News segments, including the show’s introduction. The Clipbox is controlled from a remote site, Room 3G, using a control panel from Flash Television Control Systems. “By controlling [the video server] with a Flash panel, it emulates a standard tape machine,” says NBC Nightly News director Brett Holey.

Before the Quantel installation, according to Holey, NBC graphic artists would put their digitally created animations on tape and run the tapes from the ninth-floor suite via “sneaker net” to another tape machine for playout to the video wall and to air. “We eliminated a lot of elevator runs,” he says.

In addition to the added convenience, Holey reports an improvement in the quality of the on-air look. “It’s a noticeable difference,” he says.

However, the 601 signal coming out of the server is converted to NTSC before it hits the switcher, which degrades the picture slightly.

“The best case is when we can keep it fully digitally uncompressed before it hits the switcher,” Holey notes. “But the video coming out of it looks fabulous, providing us with more resolution and more information than we can put on-air.”

According to Holey, the fact that Clipbox puts out such a high-resolution signal will help Nightly News eventually upgrade to high-definition production.

In addition to a high-resolution output, the Clipbox provides up to 160 hours of DVCPRO compressed video and 14 simultaneous channels.

NBC’s Clipbox works with a suite of Quantel equipment including the Henry effects and compositing system, and the Editbox nonlinear editing system. In addition, NBC Nightly News uses an Accel Axial editor with several Tektronix Profile video servers and other disk recorders.
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Tektronix offers an HD version of its Profile video server that handles 720p and 1080i.

rate, has a higher compression rate allowing for more efficient storage.

Raycom’s Folsom points out that most manufacturers, like Tektronix, Sony and Pluto, have begun offering their servers in “different flavors” — MPEG-2 and DV — “rather than falling into one area or the other and essentially closing out their possibilities or running in dual paths.”

Serving up news solutions

Broadcasters now are looking for new, creative ways to use video servers and to maximize their potential for production.

As interoperability among different formats increases, manufacturers see another big trend: selling servers to streamline operations in feed rooms and newsrooms, places where material comes into a plant in various formats. Manufacturers say broadcasters are getting serious about using automated server systems for news. “This year at NAB — from all other trade shows we’ve been to — there have been more people who came to our booth looking at what’s available for digital newsroom systems. We believe that these people are starting to budget for these systems in the upcoming fiscal year,” says Leitch Business Program Manager Charlie Bernstein.

In the news environment, some say, servers will handle specialized tasks including acquisition, edit and on-air material. “You wouldn’t want to build a doomsday server, there’s just too many different needs and requirements that make a doomsday server impractical and expensive,” says HP’s Al Kovalick.

“Today you see tape as a means to dub things, to make copies; that’s going to disappear altogether,” he says. “Maybe you’ve got an acquisition server that’s recording six feeds a day of news and syndicated material — that will stay on the server and be moved through a network to edit,” he says. “That will be moved to on-air, all under automation control.”

Pushing the trend of servers for news, Panasonic offers its integrated DVCPRO news automation system, DNA, based on SGI’s Origin 200. KYW-TV in Philadelphia is using DNA with six NewsBYTE nonlinear editors and redundant Origin200 GIGA Channel servers working on a Prisma Fibre Channel network. A Ciprico Fibre-STORE online disk array provides 24 hours of online storage. KYW-TV Director of Broadcast Operations and Engineering Jim Chase says he chose DNA for its ability to simultaneously handle 4X dubbing inputs and outputs and 6X Fibre Channel transfers from edit, while playing out on up to three simultaneous playback channels.

Vibrint also offers specialized auto-

And here’s ... HD!

WTHR-TV’s Pluto servers go live with ‘Tonight Show’

By Karen Anderson

WTHR-TV in Indianapolis, a Dispatch-owned NBC affiliate, has been using Pluto’s HyperSPACE HD for about a month — with mostly favorable results. But the first time the video server was used on-air was during the April 26 HDTV broadcast of the Tonight Show With Jay Leno. It was no small feat.

“We had a couple of glitches early on with it — this is all fairly new,” says WTHR-TV’s Director of Engineering Al Grossniklaus. “We got it in at the last minute and didn’t really have much time to test it.”

In addition to being challenged for time, WTHR-TV also had to use the Pluto server more extensively than planned. HyperSPACE is intended to serve primarily as a time-delay system with Pluto’s SPACE Shift and as a backup for an HD tape machine. But because of problems with WTHR-TV’s tape machine, Pluto made its on-air debut the night of the Tonight Show hi-def broadcast.

The Dispatch station group had purchased the server through Sony to work with new Sony encoder and decoder cards, but the cards weren’t ready to ship in time for the broadcast. So Grossniklaus configured Panasonic codecs, which usually work with WTHR-TV’s D-5 playback machine, to work with the Pluto server.

“As it turns out, we had some audio problems with the Pluto. So we ended up playing the video back from the Pluto and the audio from an HDCAM machine,” Grossniklaus explains. “We synched the two together, and it was OK on the air. But it was patched together on-air to make it work.” Station engineers later realized they had the audio synchronizing signal set incorrectly.

Grossniklaus says situations like this are not uncommon for stations new to HD, including his own, which has been broad-
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mated news systems, NewsEdit and FeedClip, that are designed to manage incoming feeds and on-the-fly news editing and playback and are based on Vibrint’s MPEG-2 server. WMUR-TV Manchester, N.H. and New York City cable news station NY1 are taking advantage of Vibrint’s automated server-based systems to give their small staffs the ability to handle multiple daily newscasts.

Vibrint has also begun working with HP to allow network transfer of MPEG-2 video files from FeedClip and NewsEdit to the MediaStream server. “For years broadcasters have been forced to live with closed, proprietary systems that are impossible to upgrade and limited in terms of interoperability,” says Vibrint Vice President of Marketing Roland Boucher. Boucher believes the Vibrint/HP relationship is one more step toward open systems in the broadcast facility.

Plus, Kovalick says, “There’s no generational loss when you transfer files; there’s no quality check to be done because it’s always perfect. So it just saves time. It’s a process improvement in every way.” (See sidebar, “Networking servers.”)

Sinclair has just agreed to order HP servers for 18 of its stations, and the group plans to make file transfer part of its everyday operations. “They are very big on group dynamics,” Kovalick says. “They are finding ways to do things once rather than 18 times and I think that is one of the great advantages of networked video.”

Sinclair will install HP’s MediaStream 700 MPEG-2 servers at its stations beginning in the third quarter of this year. The stations will use the seven-channel servers for spot insertion and will enhance them later to manage satellite feeds and programming playback.

**Let’s go to the video (server)**

Sports broadcasting is another area where server manufacturers see big opportunity, mainly because of instant replay and slo-mo capabilities of servers. “[A server] gives random access to any clip and with the proper applications and with a scalable server, you can have five different camera angles and choose any one of those camera angles and play it out immediately,” Leitch’s Bernstein says. “If you have the non-linear editor capabilities that we have built into our server, during the course of a sporting event we can build a highlight reel and show it up on the scoreboard or (play it) directly to air.”

Panasonic is targeting its new DVCPRO-based production server, the AV-SS500, for the sports production market.

“You have the ability to control eight channels independently,” says Panasonic Vice President of Product Development Tore Nordahl. “If you are doing a multi-camera shoot at a baseball game, you can have three or four cameras shooting the game and continue recording on four channels. You have four channels available for slo-mo as the action is happening.”

The AV-SS500’s ability to hook up with editing stations for file transfer over 100-base Ethernet allows users to edit packages for playback during the broadcast, Nordahl adds.

As servers take on new roles in news and sports, manufacturers are beginning to add more integrated production functionality. Pinnacle and Accom, for example, offer video servers with integrated effects software and editing capability. Accom’s new Abekas 6000 MultiFlex DTV multichannel server offers VTR-type editing via a hardware control panel, and the finished product is ready to air on the server. Pinnacle’s new Thunder with clip-and-trim and integrated browser offers up to 4 video channels with a built-in transition engine that performs cuts, wipes, and dissolves between back-to-back clips. A built-in keyer allows the Thunder user to record an element over an external background.

**Demand for hi-def servers**

HDTV is also upping the ante for server manufacturers. Pluto has built a strong HD business with the HyperSPACE HD disk recorder, winning customers such as hi-def pioneer Wral-HD, Raleigh, N.C., and CBS’ early digital O&Os. The company has just introduced the AirSPACE HD multichannel server, which offers up to eight hours of HD storage and works with Sony’s HDCAM or Panasonic’s HD D-5 codec.

“We think that there’s another generation or two in standard definition tape-less products. Of course, the big market for us in addition to standard definition is high definition which is going through the same cycle,” says Pluto’s Gray. “We’re selling a lot of high definition servers for high definition spot play, because that’s the only thing they need right now because a local station is going to upconvert their local daytime programming and it’s going to do network pass-through at night. But it does need the ability to play back real high-definition spots locally.
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under automation control." Tektronix offers its multichannel Profile in an HD version to support 1080i and 720p formats using MPEG-2 compression.

HDTV, with its high-bandwidth requirements, makes for expensive servers. In response, Leitch developed an HDTV server package in which its VR300 server feeds 4:2:2 video clips into its Juno upconverter for 1080i or 720p broadcast. The server handles about 2:1 compression on the server and feeds video into the upconverter for HD playout. Leitch’s Bernstein says, “Terrestrial broadcasters are still doing standard def as well as high def and by doing it this way you can provide both signals out of the same equipment.” He adds that uncompressed systems offer less storage than compressed servers do and the storage is more expensive.

HP also offers a cost-effective HD package that gives broadcasters leverage with existing technology. It uses HP’s MediaStream 700 and 1600 servers with two external components: DiviCom’s MediaView MV400 HDTV encoder and JVC’s new DM-D4000 HDTV decoder. Philips is ready for HDTV with its Media Pool server, based on uncompressed storage. According to Philip’s Wolschon, stations can buy the server today with Panasonic’s DV compression and reconfigure it later for full-bandwidth HD as a “future-proof” solution. Philips also offers a mezzanine-compressed model for HDTV production.

Another uncompressed system is Sierra Design Labs’ HD1.5 uncompressed digital disk recorder, which can record and play back up to four streams of uncompressed 8- or 10-bit 4:2:2 video, and offers 10, 30, 60 or 120 minutes of uncompressed HD recording.

VOD servers wait for demand
With technology now ready and tests completed, suppliers look to busy 2000

By Glen Dickson

A potentially huge growth area for video server technology is video on demand (VOD), the instant delivery of pay-per-view movies and other pay-for-play content to cable subscribers. While VOD has been sporadically tested by the cable industry over the past five years, cable operators now appear to be serious about rolling out the service. That’s because MSOs have finished upgrading their plants to launch digital service and are now gradually deploying digital set-tops, giving them the channel capacity and the user interface to support VOD programming.

The falling cost of disk storage and the increasing ability of servers to output multiple streams are also helping to make VOD a viable business scenario. “Server cost is not a factor anymore,” says Ray McDevitt, executive vice president of product development and marketing for DIVA. “There’s been a dramatic reduction in server costs in the last year.”

DIVA markets a turnkey VOD system, including QAM modulation components, and has small VOD installations with Suburban Cable and Adelphia in Pennsylvania; Cablevision in New Jersey; Charter in Georgia; and Chambers in Washington state and California. McDevitt says server costs represent $150 of the $350 cost per VOD stream; the rest covers modulation gear and interface equipment.

Other VOD suppliers include established cable players like SeaChange and SkyConnect, the top two companies in cable ad insertion, and newcomer Concurrent Computer Corporation, which is taking server technology developed for hotels and schools and marketing it for cable VOD. All three expect volume deployments of VOD to commence in 2000.

“The cable operators have chosen to deploy VOD later than digital telephony and IP data services,” says Dan Sheeran, SkyConnect’s executive vice president of product management. “Now that they’ve got those two moving, they’re all focusing on VOD. That’s great for us.”

SkyConnect is being acquired by nCUBE, the leading supplier of VOD servers internationally, and the combined company will be testing VOD servers with a number of MSOs in 1999, says Sheeran.

SeaChange’s VOD system will be tested by Time Warner Cable later this year and commercially deployed at six different MSOs in 1999, says Yvette Gordon, SeaChange’s director of interactive technologies. Cable operators have finished their “big splashy [VOD] trials” and analyzed VOD business models, she says, and are now ready for volume deployment next year.

“Everybody’s happy with the way the encryption works, and the different parts can scale to everyone’s satisfaction,” says Gordon. “Things are going right on schedule.”

Concurrent’s VOD system, developed with Scientific-Atlanta, will be tested by Time Warner this year and its MediaHawk video server has also been selected for use by on-demand program Intertainer.

“Cable companies are ready to take the next step,” says Del Kunert, Concurrent’s vice president of VOD systems. “They want to take advantage of these high-bandwidth, two-way cable plants they’ve put a lot of money into.”
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Tribune's group dynamic

Station group chooses Sony's NewsBase for universal automation

By Karen Anderson

As part of a project that will automate Tribune Broadcasting Group's news and programming operations, the station group is investing more than $5 million in Sony's NewsBase automated newsroom server system.

The move to NewsBase follows a decision two years ago to use Betacam SX as its news acquisition format. NewsBase will enable the station group to streamline production from acquisition to editing and playout-to-air. In addition, Tribune plans to link its NewsBase systems using a wide area network (WAN), so they can share material and "keep manpower efficient," says Tribune Vice President of Engineering and Technology Ira Goldstone.

NewsBase isn't scheduled to begin shipping until this summer, so two Tribune stations, WXMI(TV) in Grand Rapids Mich., and KDAF(TV) in Dallas, have been using its predecessor, NewsCache.

"The NewsCache software is moving the assets from the editors to the hybrid recorders to the server, and the server is playing it back," says Goldstone. "We've been on since Jan. 18 and they've been doing fine."

The Sony agreement allows Tribune to migrate its remaining stations to NewsBase at a rate of four or five stations per year over the next three years. KSWB-TV San Diego will be the next station to go online with NewsBase this summer.

NewsBase's storage capacity ranges from 12 to 96 hours, expandable in increments of 12 hours.

"The system is fully scalable based on being a small station or a large station and the amount of storage," Goldstone says. "So we can select if we want a station with this number of I/Os and this amount of storage and another station with a different number of I/Os and a different amount of storage or one station with ClipEdit, and another station without ClipEdit."

ClipEdit allows journalists to view low-resolution proxies as they write scripts, and lets producers view and edit clips for teases, voiceovers and reporters' packages. It also allows news directors to screen stories before they air. Stories cut on the low-resolution desktop system are available almost instantaneously in high resolution for playout-to-air.

Although many server manufacturers tout the benefits of editing material directly on the server, Tribune has decided to edit all news packages on a hybrid Betacam SX recorder and move the completed material to the server for playout. Tribune will use Sony's DNE-1000 and DNE-700 nonlinear editors in conjunction with NewsBase for "linearlike" editing, directly from tape with no transfer time.

"We wanted a more distributed approach. This way, if there are any server problems the editing keeps on going," Goldstone says. "The fact that there is a copy of the material at the individual editing station means that if the server totally crashes we can still play it out of the editing room. During peak load times, when you are really putting a heavy burden on the server,
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Tribune will use Associated Press’ ENPS news production system in conjunction with NewsBase for news text and wire management. NewsBase and ENPS both support the Media Object Server (MOS) protocol, enabling tight integration of material stored on the video servers with ENPS’ automation features.

“As we network all of our stations together, a key story can be searched across our global enterprise—as with ENPS—and basically pulled from one station to another,” Goldstone says.

In addition, Tribune will use its WAN capacity to build a network based upon Louth’s GMT (Global Media Transfer) platform and the Tektronix Profile server for programming and spot playback.

“Our long-term plan is to have certain stations that are key gateways to take in the programming. And GMT will request from those key gateways, programming that will be moved to the network,” says Goldstone. “If you have a program that is bought by the whole group, like Friends, right now in most station groups each station takes down Friends and they have to record the show. They have to screen the show and they have to enter the data that relates to in-times and out-times for each segment.”

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**Tying it all together, digitally**

*Manufacturers offer TV stations advanced sharing solutions for separate facilities*

By Karen Anderson

Today, video servers are not limited to being used as stand-alone production or play-to-air units. Station groups such as Sinclair and Tribune are beginning to form groupwide server-based systems for sharing and exchanging material. And server manufacturers are making it possible for more station groups to create these systems by offering more advanced wide-area networking (WAN) solutions.

“If you have five stations, the first thing you are going to ask is, ‘How do I do this one time as opposed to five times?’” says Al Kovalick, director of technical strategy for Hewlett-Packard’s video communications division.

Until now, most servers have been equipped with built-in Fibre Channel and SDTI [serial digital transmission interface] capabilities that allow them to be connected locally to other equipment. But they haven’t had WAN connectivity.

That’s beginning to change as server manufacturers such as Hewlett-Packard and Tektronix offer advanced capabilities for networking and accessing material on wide-area-network protocols, including IP and high-speed ATM.

“Broadcast equipment vendors are all starting to build systems that are interconnected. And we are seeing demand start to pick up,” says Leitch’s Business Program Manager Charlie Bernstein.

“Choosing a server,” adds Ray Bal dock, director of product strategy for Tektronix, “is not about, ‘Do you have DVCPRO?’ and ‘How many channels does it have?’ That was the issue three years ago. Applications are driving the decision to use servers today,” says Baldock. He says as customers choose applications, they are now asking, ‘How does a user get access to the material that’s being created?’"

Tektronix has unveiled its Profile VideoGateway, a video router that supports ATM or IP networks for the remote transfer of video and audio clips among geographically separated Profiles. The clips retain their original digital format, so there is no generational loss. Profile VideoGateway features a drag-and-drop interface that lets users move clips between servers with a graphical display that shows the time remaining to transfer the clip. It is sold as an option to Profile and is priced starting at $14,995.

HP has introduced MediaStream Connect and Connect+, servers that support WAN networking of MPEG-2 file content for loss-free transfer. Connect handles transfer rates of up to 8Mb/s and is designed for applications that require near-real-time transfer rates, while Connect+ handles transfer rates of up to 80Mb/s for larger, more time-critical applications. “It’s not a rocket ship, but the beginning of content sharing,” says Kovalick.

He predicts that as networking increases, file transfer will become an integral part of the way broadcasters share and access material. “In the compressed domain you don’t want to have to decode an MPEG-2 file back to video to be able to re-encode it back into MPEG, so there will be a lot more file exchange and a lot more streams of MPEG over SDTI.”

Compared to the traditional method of streaming video, Kovalick says, file transfers are much more efficient and reliable and thus more suitable to the breakneck speed inherent to a news environment. “File transfer has a mechanism built into it to guarantee reliability. That means if a package is dropped, it is requested again.”

Hewlett-Packard’s Connect solutions range from $2,000 to $10,000, depending on capabilities.

Leitch is still developing its WAN solution, but expects to have a product available by September’s International Broadcasting Convention (IBC).

“We’ve all been talking about [WAN connectivity] for quite some time. Technology has had to catch up and it has,” says Bernstein. “Customers have been talking about how do we take these things stored as data in computer-based systems and be able to use it and move it around,” he continues. “Customers are getting more sophisticated.”

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HELP WANTED NEWS

Top north Texas NBC affiliate is seeking a General Assignments Reporter. Applicant should have a college degree, one year’s experience, and a strong work ethic. Send non-returnable VHS tape, cover letter and resume to: Scott Coppenbarger, News Director, KFDX-TV, 4500 Seymour Highway, Wichita Falls, TX 76309. No phone calls. KFDX-TV is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Sports - Are you the hardest working anchor in town? Can you report and produce network quality packages? If so, we want to hear from you. Regional, large market, all-news network seeks anchor/reporter who wants (can handle) more than 3 minutes per night. Send non-returnable Beta, DVC or VHS tape to: Box 01553.

REPORTER: WROC-TV is looking for an experienced reporter, a strong storyteller who can handle depth and live reporting. We want experienced assignment editor. We are Charlotte’s #1 news leader! We need a leader in the newsroom. You must be organized, be able to handle daily contacts and spot news, and plan future assignments. Newsroom computer systems experience a plus. Minimum experience 2 years. Send resume to: Robin Whitmeyer, Senior Executive Producer/News & Sports, WROC-TV, Dept. 95, 1901 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. No phone calls please. EOE/M/F.

Field Producer - San Francisco: KRON-TV, the NBC affiliate in San Francisco Bay Area, has an immediate opening for a Field Producer for our internationally syndicated newsmagazine show, New Media News. This position will be located at our South Bay Bureau in San Jose. Responsibilities include enterprise, researching, and producing stories on technology and the Silicon Valley, maintaining up-to-date knowledge of current local, national, and international news regarding the technology industry, and other duties as required. The ideal candidate will have 5 years previous market experience as a reporter or field producer and the ability to independently enterprise stories, work well under pressure and with other members of the team, and produce visually compelling pieces. We are a drug-free employer that requires pre-employment drug testing and a background investigation. Fax resume and letter to: KRON-TV Human Resources at (415) 561-8142 or e-mail to: jobs@kron.com by June 15, 1999. EOE.

Photojournalist: Two years experience in television news photography. Must be able and willing to be creative even in the most difficult of situations. Previous experience in operating live microwave equipment a plus. Valid Oklahoma Driver’s License required. Send Resume & non-returnable tape to: Personnel, KFOR-TV, P.O. Box 14065, Oklahoma City, OK 73113. EOE. No Phone Calls Please.

HELP WANTED NEWS

News Executive Producer: WSOC-TV is looking for a creative leader who knows News and loves to win. We are a demanding number one shop with very high expectations...if you’re an experienced Senior producer, or are already in the management ranks but looking to grow, then please contact us right away. In addition to directing editorial content of shows, you’ll be responsible for crews, copy editing, and high production values. You must be able to grasp “the big picture” as well as solve little problems quickly and efficiently. If you’re interested send tape and resume to: Vicke Monet, News Director, WSOC-TV, Dept. 95, 1901 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. EOE/M/F.

Executive Producer: WESH-TV, Orlando’s NBC affiliate and Hearst-Argyle Television station, is looking for a creative leader who can help take our newscasts to the next level. Applicant must have a minimum of six years experience in television news gathering and production, with a proven track record of success. Applicant must be a strong storyteller who loves present day news photography. Must be enterprising, aggressive, and an outstanding communicator. We are looking for a creative leader who knows News and is an aggressive, enterprising, creative news photographer who works well with producers, anchors and reporters to produce effective and visually compelling newscasts, Will share administrative responsibility for day-to-day newsroom operation with Assistant News Director. Should have experience and skills in all areas of television news gathering and presentation. A college degree is required. Send resume to Mr. Russ Kilgore, News Director, WESH-TV, P.O. Box 547697, Orlando, FL 32854.

Central Texas NBC Affiliate needs a weekend Sports Anchor/Reporter. Minimum 2 years on-air experience required. Send resume and non-returnable tape to: Box 01554. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Producer, Videojournalists: Bay News 9, Tampa Bay’s 24-hour cable news channel, has an opening for experienced videojournalists. Producers need at least 3 years experience producing television news. Videojournalists are that rare breed of one-person band who are great writers, reporters and shooters. As part of Turner-Wamer Communications, we offer a competitive salary and compensation package. Please send your resume and letter to: Human Resources, Bay News 9, 7901 66th Street N. Pinellas Park, FL 33781. EOE.

News Photographer: WTVD-TV, the ABC owned station has two (2) openings for experienced news photographers. We are looking for creative, visual storytellers. Successful candidate must be able to cover a story with a reporter and alone. The ability to handle a high story count is necessary. Experience operating a live truck a plus. If you are a team player, rush your resume and tape (no music pieces) to: Ted Holtzclaw, News Operations Manager, WTVD-TV, 411 Liberty Street, Durham, NC 27701. EOE.

Producer: The #1 station in the 37th market is looking for a producer to join our award winning staff. We have all the equipment needed to help you put together a creative and energetic product. You're the person for the job if you have at least two years producing experience, you're in touch with your audience and you have an innovative approach to presenting news. Send your resume, references and tape of today's production to: WTTG-TV, 3125 King Street, Dept. 95, Washington, DC 20037. EOE.

HELP WANTED NEWS

Bureau Reporter: WSOC-TV is looking for a multi-talented storyteller to run one of our bureaus. This person is responsible for making contacts and generating story ideas from this area of our market. This person should be able to shoot & edit as well as deliver on-camera. If you can do the job, please contact: Robin Whitmeyer, Senior Executive Producer News & Sports, WROC-TV, Dept. 95, WSOC-TV, 1901 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. No phone calls please. EOE/M/F.

Meteorologist, Central Texas NBC Affiliate is looking for a Meteorologist to anchor morning and noon newscast. Minimum of one year on-air experience. Applications accepted until June 10, 1999. Send tape and resume to: KCEN-TV Personnel Dept. 24, P.O. Box 6103, Temple, TX 76503. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Anchor/Reporter, KCNC-TV, the CBS O&O in Denver is looking for an Anchor/Reporter to join our award-winning staff of talented journalists. This is a great station in a great news market. We're looking for an anchor who is a solid journalist, strong writer, great live reporter, good copy editor and an outstanding communicator. We need someone strong at breaking news and good at enterprise stories. This person should also be a great leader who can help us execute the mission of the station. If this is you - and you're ready for your best move yet, please send a tape and resume to Angie Kucharski, News Director, KCNC-TV, 1044 Lincoln St., Denver, CO 80203. EOE/M/F.

Assignment Editor: Experience required. WSOC-TV is looking for an aggressive and experienced assignment editor. We are Charlotte’s news leader! We need a leader in the newsroom. You must be organized, be able to handle daily contacts and spot news, and plan future assignments. Newsroom computer systems experience a plus. Minimum experience 2 years. Send resume to: Robin Whitmeyer, Senior Executive Producer newsOperations Manager, WTVD-TV, Dept. 95, 1901 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. No phone calls please. EOE/M/F.

Executive Producer - Dayside/Executive Producer - Nightside: KCNC-TV, the CBS O&O in Denver is looking for both a dayside and nightside executive producer. This is one of the greatest news markets and the greatest newscasts in the world. We have the team and the tools, now all we need is you. We have an award-winning staff of talented journalists. We’re looking for energetic and dynamic leaders who can make great television every day. Successful candidates are strong writers with compelling production skills and a passion for Innovation. They are also good strategists who are creative, focused and experienced in tough day-to-day decision-making. If this sounds like you - and you are looking for the best job in the business - please send a tape and resume to: Angie Kucharski, News Director, KCNC-TV, 1044 Lincoln St., Denver, CO 80203. EOE/M/F.

Morning Anchor: WROC-TV is seeking a morning anchor. If you're an enterprising news professional with a natural conversational style, we want you now. You must write well, and work as a team with our weather anchor. Full-time anchor experience is a must. Join a growing, committed news organization. We can give you all the tools needed to succeed. Send tape and resume to: Bob Kirk, News Director, WROC-TV, 201 Humboldt Street, Rochester, NY 14610. EOE.

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www.americanradiohistory.com
HELP WANTED NEWS

News Director: FOX 47 in Rochester MN is building a start-up news operation. Looking for non-traditional, smart thinking News Manager with a vision to set FOX 47 above the competition... ability to coach, motivate and “Foxify” a must. No phone calls please. Send resumes to: John J. Ganahl, General Manager, FOX 47, KXLT-TV, 6301 Bandel Road NW Suite 47, Rochester, MN 55901.

Anchor, KTVE REGION 10, the NBC affiliate in Monroe/El Dorado, has an immediate opening for an anchor position Monday through Friday. This is an outstanding opportunity to play a key role in continuing a station with growing news ratings. Duties include co-anchoring 5pm, 6pm, and 10pm. You will also produce the 6pm newscast. The ideal candidate has anchor experience. Minorities are encouraged to apply. KTVE is an EOE employer. Send resume and Non-Returnable VHS tape to VP/General Manager, KTVE REGION 10, 2909 Kilpatrick Blvd., Monroe, LA 71201.

Anchor/Reporter: WSOCTV is looking for a weekend morning anchor who wants to grow with the number one station in Charlotte. We’re looking for an energetic player who enjoys the street as much as the anchor desk. Previous full time anchoring experience. No beginners. Send tape and resume to: Vicki Montet, News Director, WSOCTV, 1901 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. EOE M/F.

6P/11P Co-Anchor. Top 100 market affiliate in the Southeast needs a leader as our next 6/11pm co-anchor. You’ll need to prove your anchoring, reporting, and live ability on tape. The right candidate will compliment our strong male co-anchor. At least three years of experience required. Send your tape and resume to Bruce Barkley, News Director, WOLO-TV 25, 5807 Shakespeare Road, Columbia, SC, 29223.

Meteorologist. Immediate opening for high-energy meteorologist who can deliver a clear, concise and interesting forecast. Knowledge of WSI Weatherproducer, Barons radar and AWS systems is helpful. Three years on-camera television experience is required. Send tape and resume to Jennifer Rigby, News Director, WPXI, 11 TV Hill, Pittsburgh, PA 15214. No phone calls. WPXI is an equal opportunity employer.

Meteorologist & Weather Producers. Join Atlanta based team to produce innovative weather programming for delivery into Europe. Use the latest systems to produce the next generation of weather programming. Previous forecasting or graphics experience required and knowledge of European geography, climate and culture a plus. Rush Qualifications to Box 01555. EOE.

Assignment Manager: WROC-TV is looking for assignment manager, someone with great ideas and organizational skills. Responsibilities include coordinating daily news coverage, developing contacts and sources and organizing two editorial meetings each day. Good people skills and the ability to function well under pressure is a must. Send resume and cover letter to Bob Kirk, News Director, WROC-TV, 201 Humboldt St., Rochester, NY 14610. EOE.

HELP WANTED PRODUCTION

A Tradition of Integrity. A Record of Excellence.

USAA is a worldwide insurance and diversified financial services association. For more than 75 years, USAA has earned a reputation for superior products and services, exceptional customer service and quality employee work life and benefits including flexible work hours, 401(k), tuition reimbursement, business casual dress and comprehensive life and health benefits. Headquartered in San Antonio with offices throughout the United States and Europe, this Fortune 500 corporation services over three million members. In the most current editions of Fortune and Working Mother magazines, USAA was chosen as one of the "100 Best Companies to Work For."

Video Editor
[Reference #90-0500-003/JS - 03603]

Currently seeking a Video Editor with high-end expertise and a minimum of five years experience in television post-production editing on various platforms. Candidate must have advanced working knowledge of post-production techniques, plus an excellent mastery of on-line linear and non-linear editing. Experience on Stratosphere, Softimage DS, and CMX Aegis systems preferred. Duties and responsibilities include working with producers to determine and execute creative solutions for the editing and post-production of commercials, corporate videos, promos, PSAs and presentations. Exceptional communication skills and a powerful visual sense with background in art or design are preferred.

We seek an editor who works well independently or in a collaborative team environment while maintaining a positive attitude under pressure. Must be willing to work overtime as needed. Editing experts who are interested in this position and our first class work environment, should send their resume to:

USAA Employment Office
9800 Fredericksburg Road
San Antonio, TX 78288
FAX: (210) 498-1485 and (210) 498-8974
E-mail: jobs@usaa.com and
employment@usaa.com
Demo tape will be required upon request.

Position located in San Antonio.
Relocation assistance will be provided.

Please indicate reference number and position of interest. Resumes only.
Visit our website at www.usaa.com for more information on employment opportunities.

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OR YUKI ATSUMI AT (212)337-6960.

www.americanradiohistory.com
HELP WANTED PUBLIC RELATIONS

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
PUBLICITY & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Canal Fox and Fox Kids Latin America is seeking an Associate Director to be responsible for creating and implementing strategic public relations campaigns in support of two pan-regional entertainment channels in Latin America. Will work with in-house staff and local press agencies to develop relationships with key trade and consumer press throughout Latin America, Brazil and the U.S.; create and disseminate all press releases, promotional materials, weekly and monthly programming cable affiliate mailers; and work closely with all department heads to devise PR strategies for all areas of the company. Additionally responsible for all agency and in-house PR staff oversight, yearly budgets and financial reporting, special events and press conferences.

The successful candidate will have a college degree, be fluent in Spanish and English, and have 3-5 years’ experience in the public relations field, preferably in international television or an entertainment-oriented agency. Excellent oral and written presentation skills are a must. Knowledge of the Latin television market and a strong background in the promotion of film and television properties is also desirable.

We offer a competitive salary and a great benefits package. For consideration, please fax resume with salary requirements and references to: Human Resources Manager, Fax (310) 447-7391. Only resumes with references and salary requirements will be considered. Equal Opportunity Employer.

HELP WANTED PUBLIC RELATIONS

HELP WANTED RESEARCH

Research Director - New Allbritton ABC affiliate in Jacksonville, Florida is looking for an experienced Research Director. This position requires understanding of the broadcast sales process and must be able to maximize the tools of Scarborough, Metters, TVSCAN, and Monitor Plus. Must also have strong computer skills to develop and execute creative sales presentations. Send resume and cover letter to: Human Resources Director, ABC25 WJXX, 7025 A.C. Skinner Pkwy., Jacksonville, FL 32256. Fax (904) 332-2527. EOE.

HELP WANTED PROMOTION

Promotion Producer. We are searching for a talented writer and editor to produce daily news topicals for a top-notch national television network. A must; background in Latin American television. We prefer a solid background in news writing, the Latin television market, Spanish, and the ability to stretch creatively by producing some image promotion and sweeps promotion. A minimum of two years experience in a top 50 market is desired. Please send resume to WMC, 1960 Union Avenue, Memphis, TN 38110.

Asst. Director of Creative Services WPVI-TV, an ABC owned station is looking for a top-notch assistant director of creative services. Responsibilities include overseeing on-air promotion, writing and producing, and organizing special events. Must be fast, creative, detail-oriented, and a true team player. A great opportunity at Philadelphia’s #1 station. Three years experience writing news promotion a must; experience using an Avid and digital on-line edit suite a plus. Send letter, resume and non-returnable VHS or broadcast beta tape (no calls/faxes) to Caroline Welch, Director of Creative Services, WPVI-TV, Suite 400, 4100 City Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19131. EOE.

HELP WANTED FINANCIAL & ACCOUNTING

FOX Television Stations, Inc. WGHP/FOX 8, Greensboro, North Carolina. WGHP/FOX 8 has an immediate opening for a Vice President of Finance. Full benefits package available. Essential functions of the position include management of all station accounting personnel and operations, preparation and analysis of station financial results, A/P, A/R, credit, payroll, financial analysis and tax packages; preparation of annual financial plan; execution of company policies and procedures; supervising station information systems personnel; management of station's facilities; participation as a member of the station management team. Bachelor's Degree in Accounting/Finance, Business or related field or equivalent. Five to seven years finance accounting experience in Broadcasting. Thorough background and knowledge of U.S. GAAP, all facets of general ledger accounting, cash flow management, profit and loss statements, fixed asset maintenance, and budgeting. Proven ability to create, analyze, and interpret a variety of financial reports. Excellent computer skills in Excel and mainframe input. Strong leadership skills with the ability to project a professional image over the phone and in person with co-workers, corporate personnel and the public while working under pressure in a fast-paced, team oriented environment. Proven record of dependability, ability to consistently meet deadlines, and ability to work a variety of schedules to meet company needs. CPA and/or MFA a plus. Prefer applicants that are familiar with JD Edwards software and Enterprise traffic systems. Applicants with prior experience on a department head level are also preferred. EOE. Send resume to Human Resources Department/ WGHP/FOX 8 Television, 2005 Francis Street, High Point, NC 27263 or fax to 336-821-1265.

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To place your classified ad in Broadcasting & Cable, call Brent Newmoyer (212) 337-6962 or Yuki Atsumo (212) 337-6960

www.americanradiohistory.com
HELP WANTED PRODUCTION

VIDEO PRODUCTION DIRECTOR/EDITOR

Time Warner Cable in Bakersfield, CA is seeking an enthusiastic and self-motivated producer director who can "do-it-all"—write a creative script, light a remote location, shoot, and edit (linear and nonlinear). Must be experienced in commercial production, multicamera directing, graphic design and layout, 3D animation and be a seasoned "videographer-editor". Must be experienced in all areas of video production and post-production. Requires excellent communication and customer service skills and the ability to troubleshoot is a must. A B.A. degree in television/film is preferred and system engineering/technical experience is helpful. Bilingual skills are a plus.

TWC has a Statosphere G3 nonlinear editor with after FX photoshop and logomotion. Digital Betacam on-line suite, 30x35 ft. studio, 5-camera full remote production van. Lightwave 3D graphics workstation.

If interested, please send resume, salary history and your production reel to: Human Resources Dept., Time Warner Cable, 3600 N. Sillect Ave., Bakersfield, CA 93308.

FAX: 661-859-1703.

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL OPERATIONS

Reports to VP of Engineering for Turner Studios. Responsible for technical readiness of Turner Studios. Must have proven engineering management skills and ability to consolidate varied Turner Studios Engineering departments and activities. Ability to manage an overview of Turner Studios Engineering global needs, and present strategic and unified solutions. Must have the ability to create engineering project budgets and timelines, and track related accounting details. Experience in the television systems design/instillation, and television systems engineering/maintenance a must.

Minimum of five years experience at network level television engineering or post/production engineering, with a minimum of a two-year associate degree in electronic technology or equivalent. Must be a resourceful self-starter with ability to make decisions. Must have ability to find creative solutions to television problems. Must possess good organizational skills and be capable of reviewing and supervising management-level engineers.

Please send all contact information to:

Kevin B. Shorter
Vice President of Engineering
Turner Studios
1050 Techwood Drive NW
Atlanta, GA 30318

FOR DAILY CLASSIFIED UPDATES...

VISIT BROADCASTING & CABLE ONLINE

www.broadcastingcable.com
ALLIED FIELDS
HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

Multimedia Engineer: Award-winning marketing-oriented university-wide department seeks an individual who will be responsible for the design, maintenance and technical support for the department's media production and computer facilities and the headend of the RUNet 2000 Video Cable Network. Will ensure that the production facilities and the CATV system meet appropriate FCC technical standards. Supervises maintenance technicians. Oversees technical setup. Maintenance and repair studio facilities, remote production facilities and computer systems; provides operations support during production. Requires a bachelor's degree in electrical, electronic, or computer engineering or equivalent experience. Extensive experience in most of the following: installation, testing and maintenance of a large video production facility; optical and microwave transmission and satellite uplink and downlink systems; troubleshooting Macintosh and PC computer hardware, software and network problems; digital video and audio production; recording and distribution system testing, maintenance and operations requirements of a CATV headend; and digital audio and video compression and streaming video with TCP/IP. Requires an FCC general class license with microwave endorsement and a valid driver's license. This position offers an extensive benefits package which includes tuition remission for employees and their children. Please state salary requirements and forward resume to: PO Box 496, New Brunswick, NJ 08903-0496. Rutgers is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Employment eligibility verification required. To learn more about Rutgers University and employment opportunities visit our website at: http://uhr.rutgers.edu. Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

HELP WANTED SALES

Account Executive: New York based strategic communications & marketing firm seeks an experienced account executive with a minimum of two years experience. Applicants must be motivated, persistent, organized and must be able to develop new business. Great company with many benefits. Salary plus bonus. Fax resumes to: Scott at 212-220-8833.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES


WANTED TO BUY EQUIPMENT

Used videotape: Cash for 3/4" SP, M2-90's, Betacam SP's. Call Carpel Video 301-694-3500.

FOR SALE EQUIPMENT

STOCK ANSWERS.

For video duplication, demos, audition reels, work tapes, our recycled tapes are technically up to any task and downright bargains. All formats, fully guaranteed. To order call: (800)238-4300.

FOR SALE STATIONS

Central Florida: Attractive fulltime AM in rapidly growing area, close to major tourist attractions. Includes real estate. Mayo Communications, 813-971-2061.

For Sale, 6000 watt fm with 50,000 watt upgrade on Florida Gulf coast. $425,000 cash. Contact The Connelly Co. (813)-991-9494.

BROADCASTING & CABLE'S CLASSIFIED RATES

All orders to place classified ads & all correspondence pertaining to this section should be sent to: BROADCASTING & CABLE, Classified Department, 245 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011. For information call Brent Newmoyer at (212) 337-6962 or Yukari Atsumi at (212) 337-6960. Payable in advance. Check, money order or credit card (Visa, Mastercard or American Express). Full and correct payment must be in writing by either letter or Fax (212) 206-8227. If payment is made by credit card, indicate card number, expiration date and daytime phone number.

Deadline is Monday at 5:00pm Eastern Time for the following Monday's issue. Earlier deadlines apply for issues published during a week containing a legal holiday. A special notice announcing the earlier deadline will be published. Orders, changes, and/or cancellations must be submitted in writing: NO TELEPHONE ORDERS, CHANGES, AND/OR CANCELLATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

When placing an ad, indicate the EXACT category desired: Television, Radio, Cable or Allied Fields; Help Wanted or Situations Wanted, Management, Sales, News, etc. If this information is omitted, we will determine the appropriate category according to the copy. NO make goods will run if all information is not included. No personal ads.

The publisher reserves the right for errors in printing due to illegible copy—all copy must be clearly typed or printed. Any and all errors must be reported to the Classified Advertising Department within 7 days of publication date. NO credits or make goods will be made on errors which do not materially affect the advertisement. Publisher reserves the right to alter classified copy to conform with the provisions of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. Publisher reserves the right to abbreviate, alter or reject any copy.

Rates: Classified listings (non-display). Per issue: Help Wanted: $2.50 per word, $50 weekly minimum. Situations Wanted: 1 35¢ per word, $27 weekly minimum. Optional formats: Bold Type: $2.90 per word, Screened Background: $3.00, Expanded Type: $3.70 Bold, Screened, Expanded Type: $4.20 per word. All other classifications: $2.50 per word, $50 weekly minimum.

Word count: Count each abbreviation, initial, single figure or group of figures or letters as one word each. Symbols such as 35mm, COD, PO etc., count as one word each. A phone number with area code and the zip code count as one word each.

Rates: Classified display (minimum 1 inch, upward in half inch increments). Per issue: Help Wanted: $218 per inch. Situations Wanted: $109 per inch. Public Notice & Business Opportunities advertising require display space. Agency commission only on display space (when camera-ready art is provided). Frequency rates available.

Color Classified Rates:
Online Rates: $50 additional to cost of ad in magazine.

Blind Box Service: (In addition to basic advertising costs) Situations Wanted: No charge. All other classifications: $35 per issue. The charge for the blind box service applies to advertisers running listings and display ads. Each advertisement must have a separate box number. BROADCASTING & CABLE will forward tapes, but will not forward transcripts, portfolios, writing samples, or other oversized materials; such are returned to sender. Do not use folders, binders or the like. Replies to ads with Blind Box numbers should be addressed to: Bdx (number), c/o Broadcasting & Cable, 245 W. 17th Street, New York, NY 10011.

Confidential Service. To protect your identity seal your reply in an envelope addressed to the box number. In a separate note list the companies and subsidiaries you do not want your reply to reach. Then, enclose both in a second envelope addressed to CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE, Broadcasting & Cable Magazine at the address above.

FOR SALE STATIONS

Mid-Atlantic AM/FM combo
- Solid revenue base, $1.0 million
- Positive cash flow, $200,000
- Asking $2.1 million
- Servicing attractive and growing area
- Ideal for owner/operator

Fax expression of interest to:
(410) 740-7222

For Sale: C2FM West Texas rated market $895,000. Contact John Saunders at (713) 789-4222.

For Sale: Low Power TV station on Florida's Gulf Coast, Ft. Myers, FL. $200,000 includes all new equipment. Must Sell (954) 340-3110 radio@crn.com

INTERNET SERVICES

Parrot Media Network (www.parrotmedia.com) offers online databases of over 70,000 media executives with extensive up-to-date info on thousands of media outlets. U.S. and International TV Stations, Networks, Groups, Reps, Cable Systems, MSOs, Cable Networks, Satellite Operators, Radio, Press/Publicity, Newspapers, Advertising Agencies, Movie Chains and Movie Theatres. $49.95/month. Call for FREE one day password. All information also available in directory and computer disk formats. 1-800-PARROT

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DATEBOOK

MAJOR MEETINGS

June 10-15—21st Montreux International Television Symposium and Technical Exhibition, Montreux Palace, Switzerland. Contact: (800) 348-7238.


Dec. 14-17—The Western Show conference and exhibition presented by the California Cable Television Association. Los Angeles Convention Center. Contact: (510) 428-2225.


THIS WEEK

May 31-June 4—Harris/PBS DTV Express DTV seminar series. Sacramento, Calif. Contact: (888) SEE-DTVE.

June 4—AWRT Women in Television News panel with Dr. Judith Mariane. KTLA, Los Angeles. Contact: Addie Bua (323) 964-8203.


June 15-21—21st Montreux International Television Symposium and Technical Exhibition, Montreux Palace, Switzerland. Contact: (800) 348-7238.


June 12—Fourth Annual National Association of Broadcasters/Nevada Broadcasters Association Congressional Breakfast, Desert Inn, Las Vegas. Contact: Ryan Sterling, (702) 794-4994.

June 12—Fourth Annual Nevada Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame Dinner Dance, Desert Inn, Las Vegas. Contact: Ryan Sterling, (702) 794-4994.


June 16—18th Annual Accolades Breakfast Women in Cable and Telecommunications, Sheraton Hilton and Towers Hotel, Chicago. Contact: Jim Flanagan, (312) 634-2430.


JUNE

June 20-21—International Conference on Consumer Electronics. Los Angeles Convention Center, Los Angeles. Contact: (815) 455-9590.


June 27-29—38th annual Executive Conference New York State Broadcasters Association. Sagamore Resort Hotel, Lake George, N.Y. Contact: Mary Anne Jacon, (518) 456-8888.


JULY


July 10-16—Management development seminar presented by the National Association of Broadcasters. Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill. Contact: Jack Potker, (202) 775-2659.


July 18-21—CTAM Marketing Summit. San Francisco Marriott Hotel, San Francisco. Contact: (703) 549-4200.


July 20—Women in Cable and Telecommunications Senior Women’s Reception, Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco. Contact: Jim Flanagan, (312) 634-4230.


AUGUST

Aug. 4-7—Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication/Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication 82nd annual convention, Morial Convention Center, New Orleans. Contact: (800) 777-2005.

—Compiled by Nolan Marchand (nmarchand@cahners.com)

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$40,000,000.

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202-478-3737

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941-514-3375

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415-391-1877

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941-929-0445

RADIO and TELEVISION BROKERAGE * APPRAISALS

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TVS


Price: $185 million ("In Brief," May 24)
Buyer: Grapevine Communications, Atlanta, Ga. (Wendell Reilly, chairman); owns seven TVS; is buying WAKF-TV Huntsville, Ala. (see item, below)
Seller: GOCOM Communications LLC, Charlotte, N.C. (Richard L. Gorman, president); no other broadcast interests. Gorman will be CEO of Grapevine

Facilities: KNV: ch. 24, 5,000 kw, ant. 1,849 ft.; WGA: ch. 24, 1,290 kw, ant. 800 ft.; KTV: ch. 10, 316 kw, ant. 2,027 ft.; KSPR: ch. 33, 5,010 kw, ant. 1,995 ft.; WXKZ: ch. 8, 316 kw, ant. 817 ft.; WYDO: ch. 14, 656.1 kw, ant. 686 ft.; WKBN-TV: ch. 27, 871 kw, ant. 1,430 ft.; KMID: ch. 2, 100 kw, ant. 1,050 ft.; WXKZ-TV: ch. 35, 2,000 kw, ant. 987 ft.
Affiliation: KNV: NBC; WGA: Fox; KTV: NBC; KSPR: ABC; WXKZ: Fox; WYDO: Fox; WKBN-TV: CBS; KMID: ABC

WAAF-TV Huntsville, Ala.
Price: $52 million ("In Brief," May 24)
Buyer: Grapevine Communications (see item, above)
Seller: Smith Broadcasting Inc., Huntsville (siblings M.D. Smith IV and Anita Smith Johnson, owners); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: Ch. 31, 1,255 kw, ant. 1,790 ft.
Affiliation: ABC
Broker: Richard A. Foreman Associates Inc.

WMHQ(TV) Schenectady/Albany, N.Y.
Price: $18.5 million (Sinclair Broadcast Group Inc. offered $23 million for station last June)
Buyer: Tribune Broadcasting Co., Chicago (Dennis FitzSimons, president); owns 17 TVS, two AMs and two FMs
Seller: WMHT Educational Telecommunications, Schenectady (Dunn Rogosin, president); owns wmht-fm Schenectady/Albany

Facilities: Ch. 45, 2,950 kw, ant. 1,014 ft.

PROPOSED STATION TRADES

By dollar volume and number of sales; does not include mergers or acquisitions involving substantial non-station assets

THIS WEEK

TVs = $272,200,000 = 4
Combos = $13,900,000 = 2
FM = $15,500,000 = 2
AMs = $180,000
Total = $301,600,000 = 8

SO FAR IN 1999

TVs = $1,693,919,005 = 39
Combos = $767,635,030 = 65
FM = $606,055,663 = 111
AMs = $98,304,112 = 77
Total = $2,355,913,810 = 292

Affiliation: PBS, to be WB

KTBV-TV Abilene/Sweetwater, Texas
Price: $16.7 million
Buyer: Nexstar Broadcasting Group LLC, Clarksville, Pa. (Perry Sook, president/2.5% owner; ABRY Broadcast Partners II L.P., 78.1% owner [Royce Yudkoff, owner]); owns/is buying eight AMs and 13 FMs
Seller: KJJI Broadcasting LLC, Newport, R.I. (Joseph Gallagher, president); owns WRET(AM) Brockton/Boston

Facilities: 97.7 MHz, 3 kw, ant. 300 ft.
Format: C&W

Swap of KLVA(FM) Casa Grande/Phoenix for KDDJ(FM) Globe/Phoenix, Ariz.

Value: More than $5.5 million (being paid by owner of KLVA)

Swapper: KLVA: Educational Media Foundation, Sacramento, Calif. (K. Richard Jenkins, president); owns two AMs and 14 FMs
Swapper: KDDJ: Big City Radio Inc., Hawthorne, N.Y. (Michael Kakoyiannis, president); owns one AM and 13 FMs; is buying KBZ(FM) Arizona City/Phoenix, KEDJ(FM) Sun City/Phoenix and KMFL-FM Wickenburg/Phoenix, Ariz. ("Changing Hands," May 24)

Facilities: KLVA: 105.5 MHz, 1.9 kw, ant. 362 ft.; KDDJ: 100.3 MHz, 90 kw, ant. 2,047 ft.
Formats: KLVA: contemporary Christian; KDDJ: alternative

---Compiled by Alisa Holmes
Moving goods—real to reel

A
fter Steve Zales completed his business management studies at Northwestern University, he was headed for the relatively staid realm of consumer goods—a long way from new media.

Now Zales, 40, is senior vice president and general manager of ESPN Internet Ventures, the highest-profile sports operation on the Web with the successful launch of one of its arch-companions also on his résumé. But that was two years ago, a virtual eternity in the hyperspeed world of the Web business.

The improbable arc of Zales’ career commenced with a sequence of product management positions handling various soap products over the course of three years for Lever Brothers. Then Eric Kessler, who now heads marketing at HBO, recruited Zales to work for him at HBO Video, and Zales knew he was at a crossroad. “I was really torn when he called me and offered me the job,” Zales recalls. “I thought I’d work at package goods for most of my career and then start my own business.”

He made the move to join his former colleague at HBO Home Video as marketing manager for self-through programming in video, putting him on a track that would ultimately take him a long way from traditional product marketing.

There were striking similarities initially between selling video and selling soap—although the pacing of the business was accelerated. “It was not different in the tactics we were using, but it was very different in the speed with which we introduced products,” Zales says.

While at HBO, he helped launch Sports Illustrated’s retail home video business, and six months after arriving he took on the added responsibility of business development. The power of SI’s position in the marketplace meant that just about anything it introduced would immediately get legs in the marketplace. That was certainly true of the SI Swim Suit Video, which was introduced while Zales was at HBO.

Continuing to promote that line was one of the things he enjoyed in his new role, even if the 5-foot-7-inch executive felt a bit vertically challenged when interacting directly with the swimsuit issue’s subjects. “Having the experience of standing next to the models and talking to them at the swimsuit party was always interesting,” he notes.

So was the unending parade of product concepts he fielded in business development.

Moving toward the online environment, Zales pushed for SI to get into CD-ROM licensing, with a few titles bearing fruit, including an Olympics title, a “Year In Sports” title and a trivia game. “The revenue coming in from that was decent, but we didn’t know the potential of the CD-ROM marketplace,” he recalls.

Just about that time in 1995, CompuServe and Prodigy were gaining momentum and America Online was just starting to make its presence felt. Zales saw an opportunity and engineered an alliance with CompuServe for SI to become its sports news provider. That deal proved lucrative enough for SI to generate its own momentum to create Sports Illustrated Online in early 1996.

But Zales had misgivings about SI’s capacity to maintain that sort of presence on the Internet on its own. So he initiated conversations with “pretty much everybody in the business” to find a suitable partner. That dovetailed with Time Warner’s talks in moving toward an alliance with Turner Broadcasting. And ultimately, Zales recounts, CNN’s cachet as a recognized news brand in the business of cranking out content on a 24-hour basis made the CNN/SI union a strong fit.

So from his beginnings in home video seven years earlier, Zales rose to the post of vice president and general manager of CNN/SI Interactive in January 1997. The online service launched in July that year, with Zales in the enviable position of overseeing a start-up for a well-heeled parent company with plenty of resources to support it. “It’s really like having the best of both worlds,” he recalls.

But the best was yet to come, with a phone call from Jake Winebaum, head of Buena Vista Online, offering Zales the top job with the top dog in the online sports sweepstakes. He had to overcome his attachment to the Web entity he had helped to spawn at CNN/SI, but in the end it was basically a no-brainer.

Zales sees his primary job as growing content and audience as ESPN.com moves toward launching a broadband service in the next six to 12 months. He foresees ESPN.com eventually being part of a premium tier of broadband services.

“It’s light years away from selling soap.”

—Richard Tedesco

WE didn’t know the potential of the CD-ROM marketplace.”

Steven Cahn Zales
**FATES & FORTUNES**

**BROADCAST TV**

**David Converse**, director, engineering, KABC-TV Los Angeles, named VP and director of engineering, ABC Owned Television Stations. Times Mirror Co., Baltimore, joins Lee Enterprises, Davenport, Iowa, as chief operating officer. Appointments, NBC Television Stations Department, New York: **Peter Morley**, research analyst, Blair Television, New York, joins in same capacity; **Brian Bonder**, research analyst, HRP, New York, joins in same capacity. **Rich O'Dell**, program director, WKYC-TV Cleveland, joins WLTX-TV Columbia, S.C., as president and general manager. **Alison Horn**, director, marketing services, KOST-FM/KACE-FM Los Angeles, joins KTLA-TV there as sales marketing manager. **John Dalrymple**, general sales manager, KLAS-TV Las Vegas, joins KTNV-TV there in same capacity. **Pat Weaver**, account executive, KNXV-TV Phoenix, named local sales manager. **Tim Reynolds**, director of research, marketing and new media, WPRI-TV/WNAC-TV Providence, joins WSB-TV Hartford, Conn., as director of marketing.

**PROGRAMMING**


**JOURNALISM**


**RADIO**


**CABLE**

**Ann Sarnoff**, executive VP, consumer products and development, Nickelodeon, New York, joins VH1 there as executive VP, business strategy and program enterprises. Appointments, HBO, New York and Los Angeles: **Nancy Geller**, VP, original programming, named senior VP. She is based in New York. **Anne Thomopoulos**, VP, original programming, named senior VP. She is based in Los Angeles. **Jay Mulvaney**, VP, program development, Nickelodeon, New York, joins Discovery Kids, Bethesda, Md., as VP, programming and production. He will continue to be based in New York. Appointments, TV Guide Channel,
Wrestling with hypocrisy

EDITOR: Well, it looks like WWF’s Vince McMahon’s fans truly got a “hard-core” night last Sunday. Some real violence and injury mixed in with all the regular fun. What made this utter unnecessary tragedy even worse was that after Owen Hart’s graphic death (in front of thousands of kids), the wrestling show continued on as planned. There were even an estimated 650 fans who bought advance tickets for the next time WWF came to town. Maybe McMahon can base an entire special around this death with repeated slow-motion replays. Since it is “just entertainment” and someone would be willing to buy, why wouldn’t he offer it?

When is this wrestling crap going to end? USA Network and TNT have long sold their souls to the devil. Now UPN is scheduling a wrestling night, The Tonight Show debases itself with wrestler bits. FX network is now scheduling “Tough Man” fights, TNN has “Roller Jams” and is allegedly planning on adding a wrestling show and Columbia Television is planning on a syndicated combat show. So much for original creative thought from program execs.

Odd to see violence-marketed-to-children as a national concern, and this junk still continuing. Too bad those in charge have no principle more lofty than greed.—GD Roberts, free-lance producer, Nashville, Tenn.

Don’t blame media for violence

EDITOR: As a teacher and researcher of children’s media and a keen observer of American society, it is rather depressing to see another round of trying to pin blame on fictional violence (in films, video games and music lyrics) for public violence.

In the past, such attention has been referred to as “a ritualistic dance,” with participants circling in an incoherent pattern that gets us nowhere. Viewing the ritual from this distance, the real answer—and most likely culprit—seems blatantly clear. It has very little to do with violence on the screen; it has a lot to do with the free and unquenched access to guns in American society. But I don’t hold out much hope for new ways of thinking or innovative ideas from the “expert witnesses” called up by U.S. politicians to solve the “problem” of media violence. They too are asking the wrong questions.—Dr. Geoff Lealond, head, Department of Screen & Media Studies, University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand.
Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) last week gave a boost to Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John McCain’s (R-Ariz.) bid to help minorities get into the telecommunications industry. Sen. McCain, working with FCC Commissioner Michael Powell, is drafting legislation modeled on the now-defunct minority tax-credit program that allowed broadcasters to defer capital gains if they sold stations to minority buyers. In addition to broadcasters, McCain’s plan would include tax breaks for Internet and other companies, and would offer incentives for minority training programs. Lott praised Powell for suggesting the plan to Sen. McCain and pledged to work with the Commerce Committee chair-
panic TV and radio stations, first asked the FCC to approve the idea in April. Entravision said the plan is timely because new deadlines are expected to force many construction permit holders to relinquish their licenses. The Rainbow PUSH Coalition, the Minority Media and Telecommunications Council and the League of United Latin American Citizens, however, asked for tougher qualification requirements than Entravision proposed. The organizations urged that minority buyers hold a 51% voting stake in the purchased properties in addition to the 20% equity interest suggested by Entravision. In addition, the groups urged the FCC to reject Entravision’s proposal to allow any company to be a qualified buyer if it planned to provide minority or foreign-language programming during 80% of a station’s operating time.

New NBC Entertainment President Garth Ancier is restructuring the programming department, dividing duties along development and production tracks. Karey Burke, senior VP, prime time series, has been named executive VP, comedy programs, responsible for development and production of all the network’s comedies. Ted Frank, VP, prime time series, has been named senior VP, current series, and is expected to report both to Burke and a head of drama programs yet to be announced. Helping Burke on the comedy development side will be Shelley McCrory, formerly a VP, prime time series, who becomes senior VP, comedy development. On the drama side, JoAnn Alfano will join the entertainment division as senior VP, drama development. She had been VP, prime time series, at NBC Studios. Working with Alfano will be Christopher Conti, VP, drama development. He had been director, prime time series.

Scratch Post-Newsweek Stations president Bill Ryan off the list of candidates in the running to replace Jonathan Klein as head of the CBS TV stations group. Sources say Ryan has told contenders he turned down a job offer. Sources at CBS say it never got as far as a formal offer, although others said there was interest on the network’s part. At deadline, Ryan couldn’t be reached for comment. Another who has Karimzadeh’s confidence is Bill Apfelbaum, founder of CBS-owned billboard company Transit Displays Inc. Late last year Karimzadeh gave Apfelbaum an unofficial but key role in overseeing the network’s sales operations, and CBS executives say Apfelbaum could be a factor in filling the stations group’s leadership.

The 26th annual Daytime Emmy’s easily won the night’s ratings race, notching a 10.4 rating/19 share and a 4.5/15 in adults 18-49, according to Nielsen. That’s a 1% increase in homes over last year’s telecast on NBC and a 10% drop in adults 18-49. The awards did, however, win the night, beating NBC’s Providence and ABC’s 20/20. Top award winners include General Hospital for best drama series, Win Ben Stein’s Money for best game/audience participation show and The Rosie O’Donnell Show for best talk show.

A company that makes diet pills is suing Boston TV station WCVB-TV over a consumer story that questioned the pills safety and revealed from court records that the firm’s founder had served time for drug dealing. Metabolife charges the station, owner Hearst-Arepy, reporter Susan Wornick, and expert source Dr. George Blackwell with trade libel, slander and defamation. News director Candy Altman says the station stands behind its story, which was previously attacked by Metabolife in a full-page ad in The Boston Globe. Blackburn, the suit says, attacked Metabolife’s product while on the payroll of a competitor. Blackburn’s attorney says the doctor does not endorse products. The safety of ephedra-based diet supplements was also the subject of a report from kgrv(vf) in San Diego last week, where Metabolife is based.

DMX struck a deal last week to be distributed as part of the Lycos Radio Network. The 100-channel digital music service, a unit of TCI Music, gains additional online distribution from Lycos’ network, which will be promoted on the DMY Web site. TCI Music, soon to be renamed Liberty Digital, was recently acquired by MTV Networks.

NAB, Salvation Army provide disaster aid

Commissioner Robert Watson, national commander of The Salvation Army, holds a disaster preparedness guide that the NAB recently sent to all of its radio and TV stations. He announced Thursday at the National Press Club a partnership with the NAB to help communities in times of disaster.

In Brief
Golden age? It’s now

We’ve been planning to write this editorial for a while, prompted by periodic hits on TV content. Now that those hits have become a drumbeat in Washington, it seems the opportune time to point out what should be obvious to anyone with a remote control and without an agenda: TV (traditional broadcast, cable, satellite) has never been this eclectic, this inclusive, this good and this bad. The TV dinner of the ‘50s has been replaced by a smorgasbord. Documentaries, music, drama, comedy, information, all the news that’s fit to air. Junk? Sure, that too, in abundance.

For curmudgeons who huffrump that the golden age was Marty and The Miracle Worker, not to worry. Then is now. Almost everything that was ever on TV is either back on some channel somewhere or eventually will be, jazzed up with a new, hip promotion to attract fresh eyeballs. There is room for everyone. High brow, low brow, middle brow. Too violent? Don’t watch it. Too sexy? Click. Offensive? See the power button. Use it. Pax TV, PBS, Discovery, MTV, NBC, AMC. Take your pick or move on to the next menu of dozens (hundreds?) more. A 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week schedule can be created without a punch, exposed posterior or swear word. Or some of us can watch Moll Flanders, a wonderfully bawdy roll in the electronic hay from our friends at Masterpiece Theater (expect to see this one during pledge week, if you know what we mean). What about the kids? Parent them. Watch TV with them when you can. Set limits when you can’t. And if they occasionally see something you wish they hadn’t. Guess what, they are better off than if you leave a legacy of censorship with their names on it.

We can watch all these shows, make all these choices. But maybe not for long if the Joe Lieberman of the world get their way. They shouldn’t, but we’re not sure enough of that outcome to give the issue a rest and hope for the best. Unhappy that the ratings system did not succeed in its real mission, which was to chill rather than label content, the Senator from Connecticut last week suggested that it may be time for the FCC to scrutinize programming at TV stations’ license-renewal time. If so, then it is also time to wave bye-bye to the buffet and hello to GI rations.

Rides of passage

Ride-alongs—reporters accompanying police on raids—has long been a journalistic rite of passage. They’ve helped young reporters develop their observational and interviewing skills, as well as the ability to work under great pressure, and, not incidentally, they’ve produced some great stories. But the practice was hurt, perhaps fatally, by a U.S. Supreme Court decision last week, which exposes police who bring journalists with them to court-ordered damages from suspects. This will surely discourage police cooperation in ride-alongs.

The court says the practice violates the privacy of suspects. Perhaps, although we question whether anyone named in a warrant and about to have his person or possessions roused by police has a reasonable expectation of privacy. But we were especially disturbed that the court failed to recognize any value in the reporting. Some broadcast journalists disfavor the ride-along because, they say, it accentuates crime as a fixture of television news and is often used by police to gain and manage publicity. But ride-alongs reveal the positives and negatives of police work, providing valuable information to viewers. And the presence of reporters likely keeps police from overzealousness, even as it demonstrates the real risks the cops face every day. Setup or not, the ride-along also provided police and journalists with a rare opportunity to put aside the traditional adversary relationship, build trust and educate the public.

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Circulation Inquiries
Broadcasting & Cable: 800-554-5729
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