

Spike  
President  
To Exit?  
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**Remembering Johnny**

On May 22, 1992, the King of Late Night bid a tearful farewell. A look at a legendary broadcast. **Page 25**

There are contenders to Carson's throne, but no heirs. Why there will never be another Johnny. **Page 38**



"If you've got a satellite truck in front of a school for three days...where do you think the bombers are going to go?"

—ABC NEWS' DAVID WRIGHT, ON COVERING POLLS IN IRAQ

JANUARY 31, 2005

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**NATPE REVIVAL**



**Happy Days**

After some lean years, NATPE rebounded with bigger crowds. Four shows, among them Martha Stewart's, were greenlighted. But offerings from Suze Orman and Robin Quivers have way to go.

And Fox offers TV on cellphones. **Page 22, 24**

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**DOLBY**



B&C WEEK

Where to be and what to watch...

Monday, Jan. 31

Given all the dirty laundry that those scrappin' Michaels, Eisner & Ovitz, were flapping in a Delaware courthouse until recently, no doubt Disney would welcome the chance to announce some positive news, right? Like, perhaps, today's quarterly earnings report, the first to include a full three months from the company's revived ABC network? Er, nope. Big programming means big spending, so ABC's earnings are expected to drop. And the network's O&O stations are likely to clock in with an anemic 2% growth. Tonight: **David Letterman** returns with his first new *Late Show* (CBS, 11:30 p.m. ET) since Johnny Carson's death. Letterman's likely to address the passing of the King of Late Night (and occasional *Late Show* monologue contributor), and those rare moments when Dave speaks from the heart are not to be missed.



David Letterman

Day one, NBC's Fan February. Weeks ago, the network announced a contest to "reward loyal viewers" of the soaps *Days of Our Lives* and *Pasions*. The challenge: Fans could "submit their names in hope of hearing them broadcast or seeing them displayed on screen." Watching soaps for a month on the off chance that your name, out of thousands, might be uttered—or "displayed"—on television? Totally worth it! Meanwhile, *The Next Great Rock Star*, the working title for a new **Mark Burnett** reality project, holds auditions today at the fabled **First Avenue** club in **Minneapolis** (part of a 10-city audition tour). The winner's reward? A job as the new lead singer for **INXS**. Since the position used to be held by Michael Hutchence, who committed suicide in 1997, the idea's a tad macabre. But kudos to Burnett



Days' Heather Lindell

Tuesday, Feb. 1

While the 2005 NATPE was livelier than it has been for the past several years—Oprah's appearance, her first at the event in a decade, was but one sign—it was still a far cry from the halcyon days of syndication, before government rules changed and gutsy independents like King World were absorbed into mega-media concerns. Now few really innovative independent projects get launched.



Mark Burnett

And too many mediocre ideas get greenlighted—at a cost of millions—because the same companies that produce the shows distribute them and own many of the stations in the major cities where they run. Which raises the question: Would the corporate will exist today to fight for someone who was as much of an anomaly as Oprah was in 1986, when she made her national debut? The morning of the King World party, another industry pioneer, Ted Turner, gave the NATPE keynote address. He damned Fox News Channel as the unofficial White House party organ. Then, in typical Turner fashion, he ramped up the invective to the headline-grabbing level, comparing the popularity of Rupert Murdoch's news machine to that of Hitler in the 1930s. Unfortunately, Turner's over-the-top Fox-bashing obscured his real message: that rampant media consolidation has gone way too far and is stifling everything from innovation to dissent. The night before, I'd run into Turner at a cocktail party and got a preview of the morning's coming attractions. He was happy to talk about everything from his chain of eateries, Ted's Montana Grill, to the evils of media empires, including Time Warner, where he was once vice-chairman. "Nobody in the business creates networks anymore. They just buy 'em from one another," he told me. "There's no room for someone starting out, looking to do something different." During the conversation, Turner even gave a backhanded compliment to Murdoch, bemoaning a climate that leaves little room for "the next generation" of Ruperts or Teds to emerge. I left Las Vegas wondering if those were simply the bitter views of a visionary who created so much and then got merged all the way to the sidelines? Or was he spot-on? When the wannabe Ted, Oprah and Rupert entrepreneurs at NATPE quizzed him about the opportunities he sees in the industry, Turner replied: Try the restaurant business; otherwise, get used to being small, unhappy cogs in a humongous media machine. ■

# No New Kings

By J. Max Robins

In Las Vegas last week, amid the annual industry bazaar known as NATPE, King World threw a top-shelf, seven-course dinner at the Four Seasons Hotel for a few hundred of the company's nearest and dearest. "It's like a billionaire's Bar Mitzvah party," says an agent pal of mine. "But it's one where you don't have to write a check."

Back in 1989, at a NATPE in Houston, I watched the brothers who then ran the company, Michael and Roger King, serenade their biggest star, Oprah Winfrey, with "My Girl." The Temptations were singing backup. That's the sort of touch that has earned King World a well-deserved reputation at National Association of Television Program Executives conventions for lavish events that scream, "We're in show biz!"

This time, the entertainment is suitably platinum-plated, with Michael McDonald and Hall & Oates performing. But the real star, once again, is Oprah—who's even more radiant than she was 16 years ago in Houston. On stage with her, in a tastefully understated candy-apple red blazer and black shirt, is Roger King (brother Michael's role in the company faded when King World was acquired by CBS in 1999). Oprah talks with relaxed fondness of the support she had from Roger in her early days in syndication, when the legendary salesman was on the road selling her show. "People in Idaho said they'd rather see a potato in a chair than a black woman," Winfrey says. But King told her it was "a minor problem" and he'd address it, along with innumerable other obstacles. And he did.

And too many mediocre ideas get greenlighted—at a cost of millions—because the same companies that produce the shows distribute them and own many of the stations in the major cities where they run. Which raises the question: Would the corporate will exist today to fight for someone who was as much of an anomaly as Oprah?

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THE ROBINS REPORT

Would the corporate will exist today to fight for someone who was as much of an anomaly as Oprah?



Roger King and Oprah Winfrey

for doing a rock-'n'-roll variation on *American Idol* and giving Fox a taste of its own Xerox toner.

Wednesday, Feb. 2

Hats off to the Louisiana Cable & Telecommunications Association. The LCTA—going by the moniker Krewe of Cable—holds its annual trade show and convention, starting today, at the Ritz-Carlton hotel in New Orleans just in time for Mardi Gras. Keynote speaker: Cox Communications COO **Patrick Esser**. Title of speech: "It's the bundle, baby!" Conveniently, the phrase will work equally well when shouted from the Krewe's private balcony on Bourbon Street.



Patrick Esser

Thursday, Feb. 3

The Department of Education and PBS hold a two-day seminar on the relationship between the media and literacy education, starting today in Baltimore. Guests for the invitation-only gathering include reps from Sesame Workshop, Jim Henson Co. and Nickelodeon. We've heard that Elmo and Squidward are going to invite attendees to a special event the two are planning at a Unitarian church this spring in Vermont, but their representatives flatly deny it.



Sesame Street's Elmo

Friday, Feb. 4

Warning to ad-skipping TiVo users: Your machine might explode from technobewilderment if you try to use it for CBS's *The Greatest Commercials: Super Bowl vs. the World*. (8 p.m. ET). Just sit back and watch the show the old-fashioned, real-time way, enjoying classics like the Coke ad with **Mean Joe Green** and devilishly inventive stuff from overseas. And then weep in your nachos over the spots that actually pay for Friday-night-TV time.



Mean Joe Green

—Mark Lasswell

E-mail info for B&C Week to [b&cweek@reedbusiness.com](mailto:b&cweek@reedbusiness.com)



**FAST TRACK**

## Bush to Parents: 'Turn Off Indecency'

Calling himself a free-speech advocate, President George W. Bush says parents, not government, are the "first line of responsibility when it comes to protecting children from indecent TV programming."

Speaking in an exclusive interview with C-SPAN's Brian Lamb scheduled for airing Sunday night, Bush says, "They put an off button on the TV for a reason. Turn it off."

But Bush did say there is a role for regulators. The government can, "at times, not censor but call to account programming that gets over the line." The president says, when he interviews a new FCC chairman, he will ask where the candidate thinks that line is. Later, though, he clarifies that this is not a litmus test.

But don't look for a lighter hand on indecency from a new



President Bush is interviewed by Brian Lamb on C-SPAN.

chairman. Bush adds that outgoing Chairman Michael Powell did a good job of balancing free-speech rights and the need to protect kids. Asked for his take on legislation to increase fines, Bush quips, "They're going to collect a lot of money when some of these TV shows are still on."

## Marmet Is Out at TLC



Roger Marmet

The Learning Channel SVP/GM Roger Marmet is apparently paying the price for the collapse of the network's ratings.

T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

JANUARY 31, 2005 VOLUME 135 NUMBER 5



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B&C Broadcasting & Cable (ISSN 1068-6827) (USPS 0266-0000) (GST #123397457) is published weekly, except at year's end when two issues are combined, by Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc., 360 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010-1710. Broadcasting & Cable © 2005 by Reed Elsevier Inc., 275 Washington St., Newton, MA 02158-1630. All rights reserved. Periodicals postage: paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Canada Post IPM Product (Canada Distribution) Sales Agreement No. 0607533. Postmaster, please send address changes to: Broadcasting & Cable, P.O. Box 15157, North Hollywood, CA 91615-5157. Subscription rates: USA \$189, Canada \$249 (includes GST), Foreign Air \$360. A reasonable fee shall be assessed to cover handling costs in cancellation of a subscription. Back issues: except for special issues where price changes are indicated, single copies are \$7.95 U.S., \$10 foreign. Please address all subscription mail to: Broadcasting & Cable, P.O. Box 15157, North Hollywood, CA 91615-5157 or call 1-800-554-5729. Outside the U.S. call 1-818-487-4552. Microfilm of Broadcasting & Cable is available from University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106 (800-521-0600). Broadcasting & Cable was founded in 1931 as Broadcasting: The News Magazine of the Fifth Estate. It was named Broadcasting & Cable in 1993. Broadcasting & Cable® is a registered trademark of Reed Publishing (Nederland) B.V., used under license.

Sources say he resigned Jan. 27, taking the hit for the abrupt fade of TLC's cornerstone hit, *Trading Spaces*. It was Marmet who scheduled the home-makeover show and exploited it mightily when it started regularly drawing quintuple TLC's average rating.

But TLC relied too heavily on the whole makeover genre, then had nothing as strong when it abruptly went stale. TLC ran *Trading Spaces* 10 or more times a week and spawned half a dozen imitators. The show slid from a 4.0 average Nielsen household rating to a 1.5.

Host Paige Davis was also dropped last week.

In other moves, TLC parent Discovery Communications handed out pink slips to two dozen staffers and eliminated another dozen positions. The company noted that it expects to add around 300 jobs in other areas of the company this year.

## Food for Thought

Major advertising trade groups and food marketers have teamed up to fend off restrictions on marketing snack food to kids.

As scientists and doctors debate whether TV ads are contributing to rising obesity rates in children, the Alliance for American Advertising aims to be the industry's counter to activists' claims that TV spots selling Pop-Tarts and Cap'n Crunch are making kids fat.

"We have to become more proactive because there is continual criticism of advertising related



Is the ad fattening?

to childhood obesity," said Wally Snyder, president of the American Advertising Federation, one of the new group's seven members.

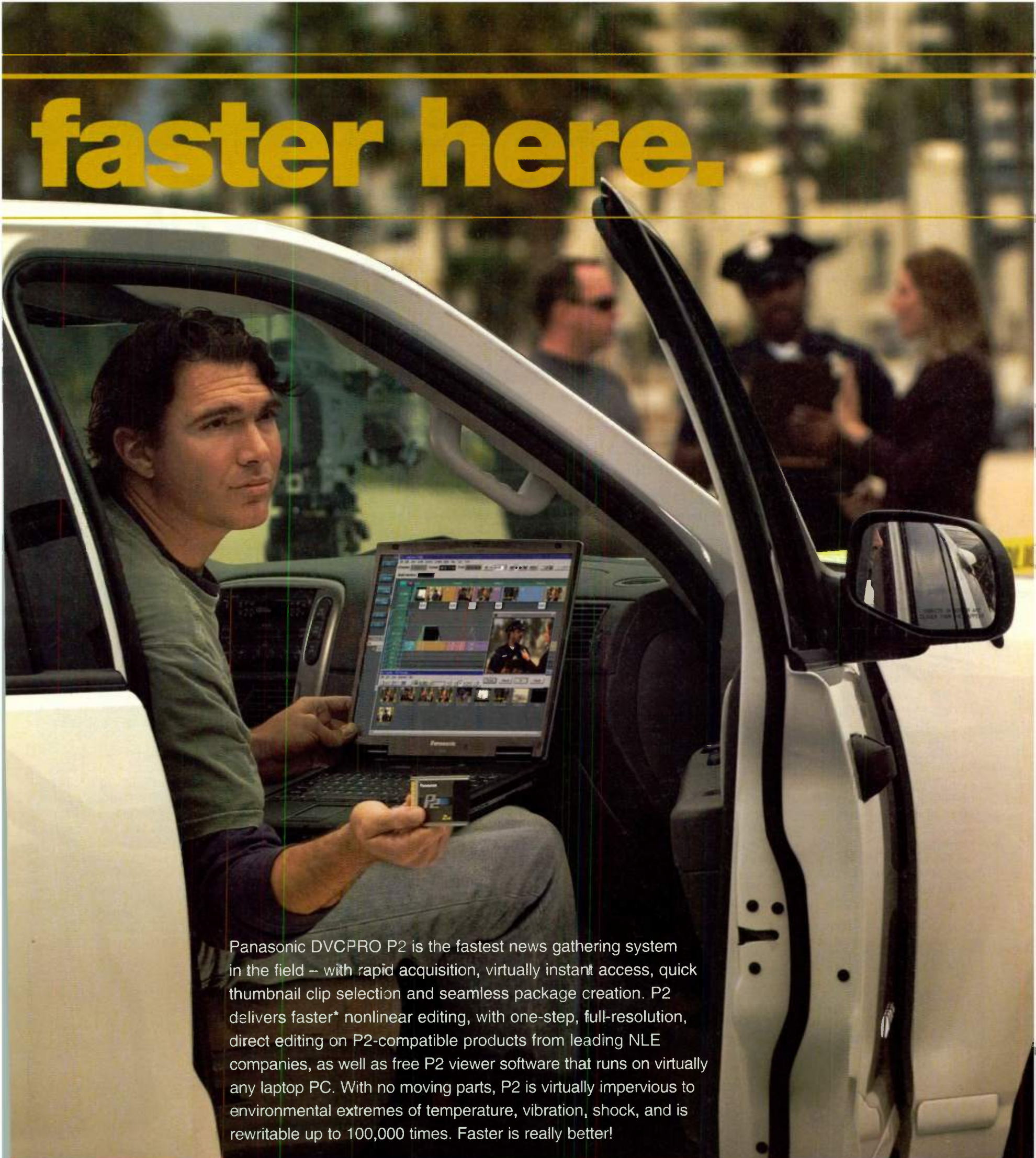
In addition to arguing against restrictions, the group will publicize food makers' efforts to make children's food healthier. Other members are General Mills, Kellogg, Kraft Foods, the American Association of Advertising Agencies, the Association of National Advertisers and the Grocery Manufacturers of America.

## Ferree Free From FCC

Following his boss's lead, FCC Media Bureau Chief Ken Ferree says he plans to quit his post in early March. His announcement



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World Radio History



# MTV Networks Ponders Spike Fix

**A** network executive with a 57% ratings surge should be gloating, right? But not **Spike TV** chief **Albie Hecht**; he's in danger of losing his job.

MTV Networks Chairman **Judy McGrath** is close to moving Hecht out as president of the self-proclaimed "first network for men," which is struggling to pull a strong enough male demo. **Comedy Central** President **Doug Herzog** likely will be given more say over the network's programming and marketing. It's not clear, however, if Spike would move out of its current home, the **Nickelodeon** group, and into Herzog's Comedy camp. Another counterintuitive element in the story: Herzog might be taking a bigger hand in Spike, but that doesn't signal a reduction of Nickelodeon Group chief **Herb Scannell's** power. Scannell's turf is only getting bigger. MTVN insiders say Scannell will be assuming a greater corporate role, taking over some of the operations and finance du-



MTV Networks Chairman  
Judy McGrath



Spike TV President Albie Hecht



Brooke Gladstone,  
co-host of *On the Media*

ties of ex-MTVN President **Mark Rosenthal**, who left last year.

What's the problem with Spike? The network's growth is coming from the wrong kind of viewers: women. Re-launching Spike in 2003, Hecht's mission was to draw younger male viewers. It worked, to a point. That first year, women accounted for just 32% of the network's prime time viewers, making Spike the most male-skewing network in television. But nightly runs of *CSI* starting last year have pushed the female audience to 42%.

That would be fine if Spike were also drawing more of its targeted demo. But Spike's ratings among men 18-34 increased a mere 4% in the fourth quarter of 2004. (It's doing better among 18-49s, up 15%.)

The bigger problem may

be that Spike hasn't developed other programming that works particularly well. The network's one homegrown hit, reality show *Joe Schmo*, tanked in its second season. The best-performing new show is *The Ultimate Fighter*, a bar brawl in a boxing ring—a guaranteed turnoff to many advertisers.

Branding and "superserving" specific demos is a religion at MTVN, but Spike has been a chronic problem. It came to **Viacom** as **TNN: The Nashville Network** when Viacom took over **CBS** in 2000. It was subsequently rebranded as **The New TNN**, and then **The National Network**. Turning it into Spike initially seemed like a marketing masterstroke, since its audience was already heavily male. But now Spike seems stalled.

"Albie's done a fantastic job in advancing Spike this year," says an MTVN spokeswoman. But she

won't comment "on rumors that are spread by unnamed sources."

Hecht's ousting from the network wouldn't necessarily mean an exit from the company. He likely would get to stay on as a production executive. After all, **Diane Rubino**, his predecessor at Spike (then **The National Network**), is still at MTV Networks, working on program acquisitions. One of her last moves before getting pushed out of Spike: buying *CSI*.

## 'On the Media' On the Move?

*On the Media* is a staple of **National Public Radio**, but **PBS**—anxious for content to fill its digital sub-channels—would like to see the show jump into another medium as well. On public television, the media-news

and analysis show could reach an even wider audience of journalism junkies.

Discussions are still "really early," says **Dean Cappello**, executive producer of the show, which is produced by **WNYC New York**. But according to one source, **PBS** is already in discussions about funding with the **John S. and James L. Knight Foundation** in Florida.

Producing a one-hour TV pilot would cost \$500,000. Cappello finds the number daunting ("That's half a year's budget for the radio program"), but the goal is to get a pilot on-air in about six months, then raise money to launch the show within a year to 18 months.

Yet to be determined: whether the TV version of *On the Media* would run exclusively on a public-affairs digital channel **PBS** is tentatively calling **Public Square**, or whether it would also air on the main **PBS** network.

Also unresolved: the roles of radio hosts **Bob Garfield** and **Brooke Gladstone**. "Until we go through the pilot process," Cappello says, "we're not really sure how what they do on the radio show will translate to television and what kind of camera presence we need."

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# Early-Morning Drama

NBC's *Today* show slips, ABC's *GMA* gains

All eyes are on the news of the evening news these days: CBS' controversial report, Brokaw's retirement and Jennings' attempt to exploit the disarray. But, for those of us who love numbers, the real money is in the morning.

Matt and Katie, Diane and Charlie, and the five anchors at CBS are the guardians of one of the great money machines in television: Not only is the network morning-news game a \$1 billion business, but it's a vastly more profitable one than high-cost prime time shows can ever hope to be. The producers cranking out prime time shows risk billions of dollars and make their networks a few hundred million dollars—if they're lucky. The bleary-eyed morning-show executives give their masters about as much profit by spending just a few hundred million.

Now the lead horses in the race are changing. NBC's long-dominant *Today* show is slipping, while ABC's rival *Good Morning America* is closing in. CBS' *The Early Show* remains a distant third, but it's growing the fastest, and its growth is at the expense of NBC. *The Early Show* has dramatically improved since senior executive producer Mike Bass was recruited to overhaul it two years ago. Bass is stealing enough viewers from *Today* to make life easier for *GMA*.

Ben Sherwood, the onetime NBC News producer who took over *GMA*

among high-income viewers since its prime time audience began slipping. Likewise, Touchet argues that *Today* is well ahead in viewers earning \$75,000 or more. That lets *Today* charge a premium for ad spots, he says, adding, "That's the thing that NBC Universal Chairman Bob Wright and NBC Universal President Jeff Zucker care most about: the sales number."

Still, anxiety is growing that *Today* might need a rescue of its own. The show is down 5% in both total audience and the key adult 25-54 demo. *GMA*,

was able to squeeze out of its remaining \$5.5 billion in ad sales, the bulk of which came from prime time.

That is an important financial cushion for NBC at a time when its prime time schedule is in trouble. Its Thursday-night lineup is shaky in the ratings, and virtually none of the new fall shows are likely to help. *Today's* No. 1 status allows it to command an

\$80 million annual premium over the price it could demand as No. 2 with the same audience.

Randy Falco, president of NBC Universal Television Networks Group, won't detail morning-news financials, but he acknowledges the importance of *Today's* strength to the network, delivering year-in and year-out. "Prime time schedules come and go," he observes, "but the *Today* show and *The Tonight Show* are always there."

According to Nielsen Monitor-Plus ad-tracking data through October 2004, *Today* captures about 55% of the ad dollars spent on morning news, partly because it's a three-hour show, while its rivals run only two hours. *GMA* gets approximately one-third of that revenue, CBS about 15% (*The Early Show's* sales are diminished in part because CBS affiliates can locally program and sell 15-minute chunks of the program).

One wild card in the game is Katie Couric. Does she want a shot at TV news' big stage, the evening anchor desk? As initially reported by *B&C* in December, CBS has approached Couric about replacing *CBS Evening News* anchor Dan Rather. As a Hollywood guy, CBS President and CEO Les Moonves considers this a casting decision; he wants a star.

Couric is a star, but she's a star with a contract and a big stage of her own. That stage, of course, requires a 4 a.m. wakeup time. Her contract runs another 18 months, but Moonves would be willing to wait if he thought she were available.

This is not a topic that Touchet likes to ponder. "I love Katie. She's brilliant. She can do anything she wants. I hope she decides to do it here." ■

E-mail comments to [jhiggins@reedbusiness.com](mailto:jhiggins@reedbusiness.com)

## MONEY TALKS By John M. Higgins



Katie Couric and Matt Lauer host a \$500 million show.

meanwhile, is up 3% in total viewers and 1% in the demo. A year ago, *Today* led *GMA* by 1.2 million viewers. This season, the gap has narrowed to 700,000.

*GMA* does occasionally top *Today*; for example, it beat its NBC rival by

**"Little by little, day by day, we're making strides."**

BEN SHERWOOD, *GOOD MORNING AMERICA*

in April, insists there are "two parallel tracks: NBC is struggling, and *GMA* is getting stronger."

Morning-news audiences tend to shift gradually, a few percentage points per year, he points out: "Little by little, day by day, we're making strides. This is a marathon competition—260 shows a year spread out over many, many years."

*Today* producer Tom Touchet professes no concern. NBC's ad-sales reps have started promoting ratings

400,000 viewers one recent Monday. It doesn't hurt that ABC's prime time schedule is suddenly resurgent, but *GMA's* growth well predated both ABC's broader turnaround and NBC's simultaneous prime time slump.

At stake is one of the biggest money-makers in television. *Today* generated \$500 million in sales last year, 10% of parent NBC's total. But industry executives say it generates nearly \$300 million in profits, a 60% margin. That is about the same amount of profit NBC

### THE B&C

WEEK OF JANUARY 21-27

#### THE B&C 10

WEEK YTD



#### BROADCAST TV GROUPS

WEEK YTD



#### CABLE OPERATORS

WEEK YTD



#### RADIO

WEEK YTD



	CLOSE	WEEK	YTD
Dow Jones	10467.40	0.0%	-2.9%
Nasdaq	2047.15	0.1%	-5.9%

#### THE B&C 10

CLOSE WEEK YTD

Cablevision	\$28.04	10.0%	12.6%
Clear Channel	\$32.09	1.3%	-4.2%
Comcast Corp.	\$32.49	0.1%	-1.1%
Disney	\$28.30	-0.8%	1.8%
EchoStar	\$30.07	-6.0%	-9.6%
Fox Ent.	33.70	2.2%	7.8%
Hearst-Argyle	\$25.44	0.6%	-3.6%
Time Warner	\$17.99	-3.2%	-7.5%
Tribune	\$39.01	-4.2%	-7.4%
Viacom	\$37.77	-2.3%	1.9%

#### GOOD WEEK

Sirius	\$6.36	14.8%	-16.5%
Cablevision	\$28.04	10.0%	12.6%
LIN TV	\$18.88	6.2%	-1.2%
Insight	\$10.04	6.0%	8.3%
Spanish Bcstg.	10.41	3.6%	-1.4%

#### BAD WEEK

Granite	\$0.36	-20.0%	-12.2%
Knology Inc.	\$2.34	-8.9%	-40.0%
Meredith Corp.	\$47.43	-7.7%	-12.5%
Paxson	\$1.67	-6.2%	21.0%
EchoStar	\$30.07	-6.0%	-9.6%

### CABLEVISION ZOOMS

**+17%**

Chuck Dolan may not like the shutdown and sale of his pet project, DBS startup Voom, but he's richer as a result. Investors hated the venture and love that Cablevision founder Dolan's son, CEO Jim, pushed to end it. The rally continued last week, and Cablevision's stock is up 17% since the Voom decision came down.





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KCBD-TV, Lubbock, TX  
KFOX-TV, El Paso, TX  
KFTV-TV, Fresno, CA  
KIRO-TV, Seattle, WA  
KTNV-TV, Las Vegas, NV  
KTRE-TV, Lufkin, TX  
KTVI-TV, St. Louis, MO  
KTVU-TV, Oakland, CA  
KXLN-TV, Houston, TX  
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WNYW-TV, New York, NY  
WPXI-TV, Pittsburgh, PA  
WBNS-TV, Columbus, OH  
WDEF-TV, Chattanooga, TN  
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# Award Winners Talk Tartikoff

**A**ttendees took time out from the NATPE convention in Las Vegas to honor Brandon Tartikoff and recognize three programming giants. The Tartikoff Legacy Awards—sponsored by the National Association of Television Program Executives, *B&C*, *Multichannel News* and *Variety*—were given out Jan. 25. It was a ceremony that was emotional, heartfelt and funny.

The honorees—Carole Black, the departing CEO of Lifetime Television; Jim Burrows, the director who has been associated with so many of TV's best sitcoms; and Dick Wolf, who started a stampede toward prime time crime dramas with his *Law & Order* franchise—were presented dish-shaped awards. When Burrows, who had a deep friendship with Tartikoff, got his award, he instructed NATPE President Rick Feldman to tilt it upward, satellite-style, "so maybe Brandon can hear."

Tartikoff, the legendary NBC program chief through the '80s, when he took the network from nowhere to knock-out, left NBC in 1991 and died in 1997 of Hodgkin's disease.



At the Tartikoff Legacy Awards (left to right): NATPE board members Steve Davis and John Weiser, NATPE chief Rick Feldman, and honorees Dick Wolf, Carole Black and James Burrows.

Wolf, Burrows and Black talked about the faith Tartikoff always expressed in what they were producing. "He was the last programmer who solely worked by his gut," Wolf said, recalling an early episode of *Law & Order* that aired without any commercials sold. Tartikoff didn't seem to care. "When he believed in you, you really had to screw up for him not to believe in you," Wolf said.

Wolf later added that he regretted that Tartikoff had died shortly before *L&O* won its first Emmy, after six years of being nominated. After each loss, he said, Tartikoff called to say, "Maybe next year."

Black remembered her times with Tartikoff when she worked in marketing for Disney, which had lots of shows on NBC at the time. No matter what funk she might have been in, she recalled, Tartikoff's boundless spirit always picked her up: "He obviously was having fun. He just enjoyed it."

She also spoke of Burrows, who directed many episodes of some of the TV's most venerated comedies (and *Will & Grace* today): "Jim Burrows, you are the only person who ever made me stay home on Saturday night—to watch the *Mary Tyler Moore Show*."

Earlier, Kevin Reilly, who is now president of NBC Entertainment—the title Tartikoff held—called Tartikoff "an enormous influence on my life." And then he joked, "Not a week goes by I don't think about him—and that he didn't warn me about this job."

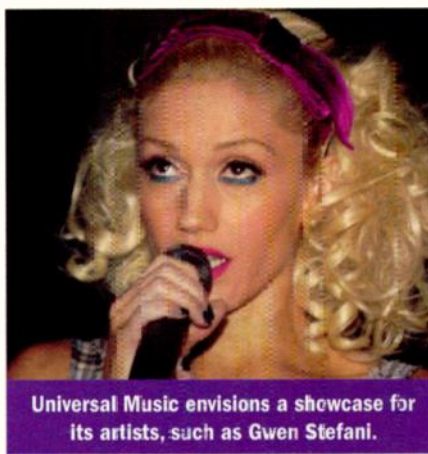
NATPE's Feldman said the award not only honors TV's great talents but teaches a new crop of TV executives about the spirit of the late programming exec. Earlier, *B&C* Group Publisher Chuck Bolkcom praised Feldman as possessing the qualities Tartikoff was known for: a passion to succeed, a commitment to excellence, and a deep creative streak.

Lilly Tartikoff, Brandon's widow, talked about her husband fondly and said she knew he would have liked to be at NATPE looking at new shows. But, she allowed, "basically, I think he just liked to schmooze with you guys." ■

## Stop the Music

**EchoStar balks at new channel; Universal Music sues**

By John M. Higgins



Universal Music envisions a showcase for its artists, such as Gwen Stefani.

**U**niversal Music has filed a suit in federal court charging that DBS company EchoStar breached an agreement to carry its startup international-music channel, delaying its launch. The network was scheduled to debut Jan. 22, but Universal delayed it when EchoStar balked. Universal parent Vivendi is seeking an unspecified amount of cash but, most important, wants to force the company to put the channel on the air.

EchoStar's Dish Network was a linchpin of the record company's plans to create the channel, tied to a \$1.5 billion investment that Vivendi made in 2001. France-based Vivendi took a \$500 million bath on that investment and is finding that its frustration over EchoStar hasn't ended.

The channel is aimed at fulfilling the dream of many record-company executives: an MTV-like success of their own to showcase their artists. Labels wouldn't have to fight the programming committees at MTV. And they wouldn't be competing for scarce airtime as MTV devotes fewer hours to music videos and more to episodes of *Road Rules* and *Pimp My Ride*.

U.S. record companies have tried to start similar channels over the years but have been thwarted in part by antitrust issues and by worries that labels would keep the best videos for their own channels or, at least, delay their release to MTV, VH1 or BET.

In the suit, Vivendi describes the channel as music "with a more international flavor." The channel would blend U.S., Latin, British and other international artists, with hour-long blocks by music genre.

Universal Music hired MTV vet Andy Schuon to run the channel—referred to blandly in the suit as IMF, for international music feed. Schuon was once the head of music programming for MTV and considered a music-industry powerbroker.

Court documents show that the company was rushing headlong to get the channel on-air by Jan. 22. That was the expiration date of the French company's three-year window to get as many as five precious channel slots that would reach Dish Network's 10.5 million subscribers.

### SPRING LAUNCH

It would have been a channel started on a shoestring. Vivendi asserts that, as recently as Jan. 3, its executives expected to be on the air on Jan. 22. But the company said last week that programming plans aren't finalized, no one has yet been hired for the crucial position of shopping the service to cable operators, and a lot of staff needs to be hired.

"We're still building," a Universal Music spokesman said. "We're still producing programming." The company expects to launch sometime in the spring.

Neither Schuon nor EchoStar would comment.

Vivendi thought it had secured channel slots when it bought 10% of EchoStar in 2001.

That \$1.5 billion investment came when the French company's then-CEO Jean Marie Messier was still in the throes of

**Universal Music parent Vivendi thought it had secured channel slots when it bought 10% of EchoStar in 2001.**

a media-buying frenzy, dumping billions into companies like USA Network, Universal Studios and French pay movie network Canal Plus.

The investment gave Vivendi the rights to launch up to five channels. Plans included an action/suspense channel, videogame channel, movie channel and "generation/music channel." Vivendi would be able to charge 10¢ per month for each.

Vivendi soon found itself gripped by a financial scandal and started selling assets. The company sold the stake back to EchoStar in December 2001, for just \$1 billion, booking a \$500 million loss.

Vivendi sold the Universal TV and movie operations to NBC last year but kept Universal's record company and the carriage rights. Last September, the company notified EchoStar that it intended to launch three channels, all of them music-related services.

EchoStar's top programming negotiator, Executive Vice President Michael Schwimmer, said the company wasn't obligated to carry the channel. The lawsuit does not detail precisely why EchoStar refused. ■



**RATINGS 1/10-16/05**

Nielsen Media Research

**Top 25 Shows**

ADULTS 18-49

PROGRAM	AA	GAA
1 Everybody Loves Raymond	4.2	5.3
2 Friends	4.1	5.3
2 Seinfeld	4.1	5.0
4 Seinfeld (wknd)	4.0	5.0
5 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	3.6	4.2
6 Oprah Winfrey Show	2.8	2.9
7 Wheel of Fortune	2.6	NA
8 Entertainment Tonight	2.5	2.5
9 Jeopardy!	2.3	NA
10 Everybody Loves Raymond (wknd)	2.2	2.3
10 That '70s Show	2.2	2.6
12 Malcolm in the Middle	2.1	2.5
13 Will & Grace	2.0	2.4
14 Dr. Phil	1.9	1.9
14 Home Improvement	1.9	2.3
14 Judge Judy	1.9	2.9
14 King of Queens	1.9	2.4
14 King of the Hill	1.9	2.3
19 Cops	1.7	2.0
20 Maury	1.6	1.8
20 That '70s Show (wknd)	1.6	1.8
22 Inside Edition	1.5	1.5
22 King of Queens (wknd)	1.5	1.9
24 Access Hollywood	1.4	1.4
25 Entertainment Tonight (wknd)	1.3	1.3
25 Frasier	1.3	1.5
25 Judge Joe Brown	1.3	1.6
25 Just Shoot Me (wknd)	1.3	1.5
25 Live With Regis and Kelly	1.3	NA
25 Stargate SG-1	1.3	1.3

**Top Off-Net Dramas**

ADULTS 18-49

PROGRAM	AA	GAA
1 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	3.6	4.2
2 ER	1.2	1.4
2 The Practice	1.2	1.3
4 Buffy the Vampire Slayer	0.8	0.9
5 Angel	0.7	0.8

According to Nielsen Media Research Syndication Service Ranking Report Jan. 10-16, 2005  
 AA = Average Audience Rating; GAA = Gross Average Audience  
 One Nielsen rating point = 1,096,000 households, which represents 1% of the 109.6 million U.S. TV Households  
 NA = not available

# 'Access' to Red Carpet

Expect Grammy, Oscar surprises **By Paige Albinak**

**N**BC Universal's *Access Hollywood* is dancing to a new beat. This year, in addition to its usual coverage, *Access Hollywood* is producing two pre- and post-Grammy shows for Fuse, Rainbow Media's cable music channel.

"When it comes to music shows, we cover them better than anybody, and have for years," says Rob Silverstein, executive producer of *Access Hollywood*. "It's a strategy. We needed a playing field we could dominate, and that's what we've done."

To set itself apart from the competition, *Access Hollywood* works hard to land big music scoops. During February sweeps, host Billy Bush will air the first televised interview with Britney Spears' new husband, former back-up dancer Kevin Federline. Leading into the Grammys, *Access* will spend quality time with hot hip-hopper Usher and this year's most-nominated singer, Kanye West.

But much of next month will be spent gearing up for the Academy Awards, airing Feb. 27 on ABC. The Oscars deliver a ratings juggernaut for the entertainment magazines.

The nominations were released last week, launching the official media blitz en route to the Oscars. *Access*'s Bush and weekend co-anchor Shaun Robinson will host the network's pre-Oscar coverage, though they are not affiliated with ABC. Behind the scenes, Silverstein has shifted what he calls his Access Surprise Team into full gear.

"Right now, they are searching for people and topics that we can bring with us into the winners' room," Silverstein says. "It's all surprises, stuff that nobody else has."

And *Access* goes to extraordinary lengths to grab an exclusive. At the Golden Globes, *Access* surprised Best Actress winner Hillary Swank with a satellite feed of the crew at Gleason's Gym in Brooklyn, where she trained for *Million Dollar Baby*. Jamie Foxx, named Best Actor for *Ray*, was confronted by a feed of his friends and family in hometown Terrell, Texas, where he used to play piano. Foxx, audiences learned, was imitating Ray Charles even then. *Access* promises to take its Oscar coverage up a notch. "We are going to bring some of these people with us and surprise Foxx," Silverstein says.

Over the past five years, most entertainment magazines have averaged double-digit increases over their season averages for their next-day Oscar coverage.

Paramount's *Entertainment Tonight* averages a 19% bump come Oscar time, while *Access Hollywood* jumps 10%. King World's *Inside Edition* typically gets a 17% boost, and Warner Bros.' *Extra!* rises 11%.

Last year, every magazine show enjoyed its biggest increase in five years. *ET* saw a staggering 43% rise over its season average to 7.6; *Inside Edition* rose 20% to 4.2; *Access Hollywood* was up 29% to 3.6; and *Extra!* soared 36% to 3.4. For them, Oscar time is pure gold. ■



Nancy O'Dell is co-host of *Access Hollywood*.

**IN FOCUS**

**STAR, FARSCAPE SCORE**

Sci-fi favorites are landing broadcast syndication deals. Paramount has cleared



**Star Trek: Enterprise's Scott Bakula**

off-UPN one-hour drama *Star Trek: Enterprise* in more than 90% of the country for a fall syndicated launch. The series is cleared in 49 of the top 50 markets. Station groups committing one or more stations to the show include Viacom, NBC Universal and Clear Channel.

In another deal, Fox Television Stations is slotting syndicated runs of Sci Fi Channel's original drama *Farscape* in eight of the top 10 markets. *Farscape*, one of Sci Fi's best-rated originals, is distributed by Debmart Studios and Mercury Entertainment. *Farscape* has reached 50% clearance in broadcast syndication for fall 2005.

**MILLIONAIRE UPGRADED**

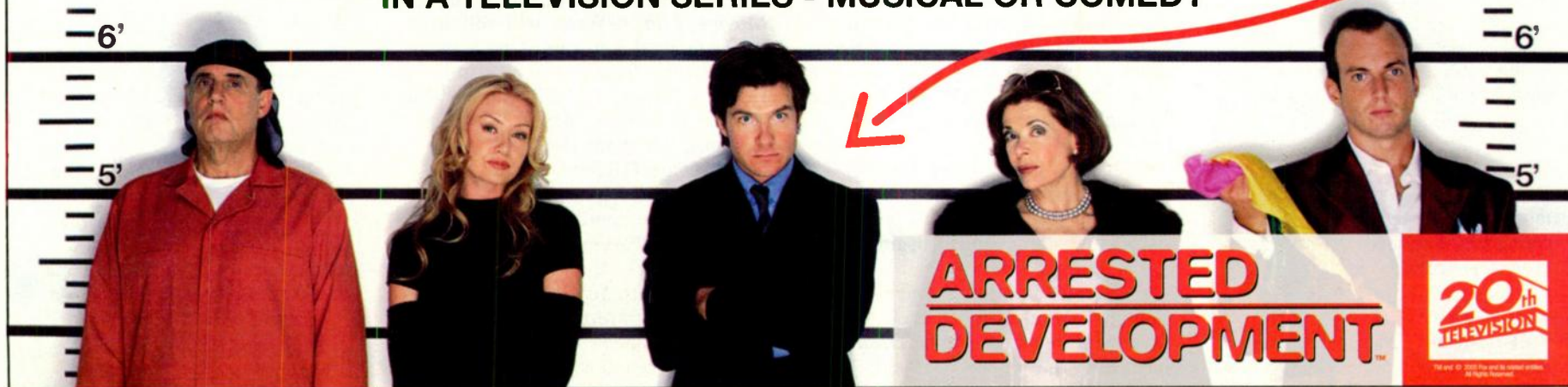
Buena Vista Television's *Who Wants To Be a Millionaire* has been upgraded in two markets. By fall 2006, the show will return to access on Jefferson-Pilot's WBTV Charlotte, N.C., replacing King World's *Everybody Loves Raymond*. Currently, WBTV double-runs *Millionaire* at 10 and 10:30 a.m. Also, *Millionaire* will move from a double run at 11 and 11:30 a.m. in West Palm Beach, Fla., to an access airing on Freedom's WPEC. Next fall, *Millionaire* will replace Warner Bros.' off-net staple *Friends*.

**DANZA RENEWED**

Buena Vista Television's syndicated talker *The Tony Danza Show* has gotten second-season renewals on WDIV Detroit and WISH Indianapolis. WIVB Buffalo, N.Y., WAND Champaign, Ill., and WEEK Peoria, Ill., will also air the show. That brings clearances to more than 70% of the country.

# CONGRATULATIONS JASON BATEMAN!

GOLDEN GLOBE WINNER FOR BEST PERFORMANCE BY AN ACTOR IN A TELEVISION SERIES - MUSICAL OR COMEDY





## STATION TO STATION

Jacksonville TV  
Preps for Big Game

By Allison Romano

When Jacksonville, Fla., hosts its first Super Bowl, Fox affiliate WAWS and sister CBS station WTEV will kick off the big-game bonanza with themed specials, extended newscasts and local entertainment.

In this midsize market, the Feb. 6 extravaganza can bring in about \$1 million in added revenue. Susan Adams Loyd, VP/GM of the Clear Channel stations, won't detail her station's forecasts but says it will be "the single largest event" in Jacksonville TV history.

With Fox Broadcasting carrying the Super Bowl nationally, WAWS is taking the lead locally. Its "Super Bowl Central" package means super-sizing its weekend

newscasts, delivering 6½ hours of news on Feb. 5 and two hours on Super Bowl Sunday. On weeknights leading up to the game, WTEV will add an extra 5 p.m. newscast.



WAWA's  
Beverly Brooks

The stations are also airing three locally produced entertainment specials. *Super Tailgate Party*, airing on WTEV Feb. 4 and 5, will feature two popular Jacksonville chefs and WTEV anchor Paul Folger cooking tailgate treats.

*Behind the Scenes With Fox Sports* on WAWS will show viewers how the big game comes together Feb. 3 and 5. *The Super Bowl Buzz*, hosted by WAWS entertainment reporter Leslie Coursey, will air live Feb. 4 with the latest on weekend festivities.

During the Super Bowl, local stations get about 12 spots and several more in adjacent pre- and post-game coverage. Loyd says WAWS has sold out its in-game ads, with regular advertisers, such as automakers, buying about 80% of the spots. In addition, WAWS and WTEV are signing up sponsors for their special events.

With so many eyes on Jacksonville, WAWS is using the Super Bowl attention to spotlight its revitalized investigative team. It is dedicating more resources to in-depth crime and health stories. Loyd also recruited Celine McArthur, who worked at WAWS before going to KVUE Austin, Texas, to return as an investigative reporter.

## Cable's Playbook

Sports, other networks get in on the buzz By Anne Becker

**F**ox is stuffing its Feb. 6 broadcast day with Super Bowl-related programming, beginning at 10 a.m., eight hours before the kickoff. The network's not the only one going big on the Super Bowl; ESPN and other TV sports venues are piggybacking on excitement over the game. But the majority of broadcast and cable networks are either hunkering down with reruns or trolling for viewers with counter-programming stunts.

ESPN, not surprisingly, is pulling out the stops during Super Bowl week, from ESPNNEWS' coverage of team press conferences to ESPN Classic's replaying of highlights from Super Bowls past. On the ESPN mothership, game day means a three-hour *Sunday NFL Countdown* at 11 a.m. and *NFL PrimeTime* and *SportsCenter* after the game at 10:30 and 11 p.m.

The league-owned NFL Network has dubbed its weeklong binge of more than 100 hours of Super Bowl-related programming "Everything but the Game."

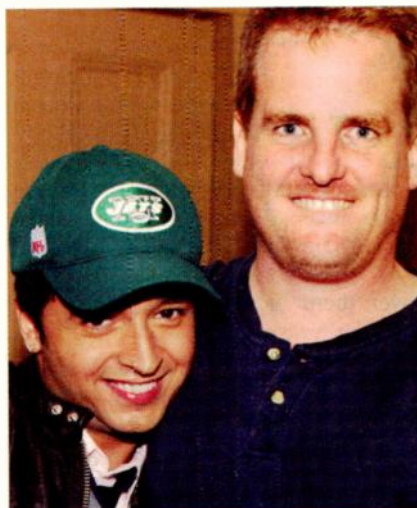
"If you're a football fan, it's pretty much nirvana, or insanity, depending on your viewpoint," says Dan Margulis, director of programming for the network. (Insanity or nirvana? NFL Network is pairing with Comcast to pipe the channel into more than 13,000 guest rooms in 49 hotels and five ships.)

One happy cable channel: Comcast SportsNet in Philly. The regional sports network will cover the Eagles with playoff specials, live press conferences, player interviews and reports from the road. And Comcast regional sports networks across the country are picking up the feed—for instance, *Daily News Live* (a roundtable with sportswriters from the *Philadelphia Daily News*, coming live from Jacksonville, Fla., with national sports figures and writers joining in during Super Bowl week) will air in markets such as Dallas, Atlanta and Detroit, reaching more than 18 million total viewers.

Sports networks aren't the only cable outlets with big plans for game day. Other cable networks are planning a blitz of programming stunts and marathons aimed at snaring folks who just aren't that into football. Some of the highlights:

■ **Spike:** *Swimsuit Bowl*. The network for guys will air three one-hour *Sports Illustrated* specials featuring jet-setting babes in bathing attire, beginning at 2 p.m. ET.

■ **Food Network:** *Supper Bowl*. Southern comfort-food chef (and a fave with females) Paula Deen will have the run of the network from



The Fab Five's Jai Rodriguez (left) will redo football fan Brian Mortensen on *Queer Eye*.

2:30 p.m. until 9, with seven back-to-back episodes of half-hour *Paula's Home Cooking*, followed by *Paula's Southern BBQ* at 6 p.m., *Paula Deen's Wedding* at 7 and *Emeril Live* with Paula as the guest at 8.

■ **Animal Planet:** *Puppy Bowl*. The network is relying on the irresistibility of a wagging tail and meltingly warm eyes with the premiere of this three-hour special on cuddly pups at 3 p.m. Then they doggedly show it again at 6, 9 and midnight.

■ **Bravo:** After a successful *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* marathon during last year's game, the network's trying it again. From 2 to 9 p.m., fab-five fans can watch episodes from the current season that have aired to date, including a makeover of a Jets fan who proposed to his fiancée at halftime.

■ **Lifetime:** The network for women knows its demo, presenting a marathon of made-for-TV movies (acquired and original) that will run from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., featuring *Lies He Told* (11 a.m.), the *Jackie Bouvier Kennedy Onassis* miniseries (1 p.m.), *Widow on the Hill* (5 p.m.), *Another Woman's Husband* (7 p.m.) and *The Three Lives of Karen* (9 p.m.).

■ **TBS:** A block of chick flicks, *Movies Women Want*, will roll from 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 a.m.. Among them: *Fried Green Tomatoes* (9:30 a.m.), *As Good As It Gets* (12:30 p.m.), *What Women Want* (3:30 p.m.), *Serendipity* (6 p.m.), *American President* (8 p.m.) and *Stepmom* (10:30 p.m.).

■ **E!** The celeb-centric network has planned a 10-hour stunt (10 a.m. to 8 p.m.) called *Fashion Frenzy*, consisting of back-to-back offerings of countdown shows *101 Most Sensational Crimes of Fashion* and *101 Most Starlicious Makeovers*, which adds up to 202 excuses for fashionistas not to watch football. ■

New NBC Affiliate:  
KHJ Pago Pago

NBC is heading to the South Pacific. The network's newest and most exotic affiliate, KHJ in Pago Pago, American Samoa, signs on May 1. It is the only commercial TV station on the remote tropical island and the first affiliate for any American network.

A 20-mile-long strip located about 500 miles from Tahiti, American Samoa is a U.S. territory with 60,000 residents. Nielsen won't measure ratings, but if it did, American Samoa would be the No. 191 market out of 211. The island is so remote, the closest U.S. TV market is Honolulu, a five-hour flight away.

American Samoa viewers have little access to American TV. The U.S. government owns a station, and local cable companies offer international channels, like CNN International and MTV Asia, rather than the American versions. Satellite isn't an option, either. U.S. DBS companies DirecTV and EchoStar's Dish Network don't reach the region.

Still, the island's residents "are Americans. They eat McDonald's and drive Fords," says Larry Fuss, president of South Seas Broadcasting, which owns the TV station and two local radio outlets: KKHJ(FM) and WVUV(AM). His company has been trying to bring American TV here for several years.

After waiting for the Federal Communications Commission to grant a new permit, it bought an existing one from religious programmer Trinity Broadcasting.

Fuss says he contacted all the networks but only NBC expressed interest. The station will pay NBC a small reverse-compensation

**"Residents are American. They eat McDonald's and drive Fords."**  
LARRY FUSS, SOUTH SEAS BROADCASTING

fee, under \$100,000, to carry its programming. KHJ also plans to buy some syndicated talk and game shows.

KHJ will offer local news and share news and ad-sales staff with its sister radio stations. Since American Samoa is six hours behind Eastern Time, KHJ plans to run most NBC programs on a six-hour tape delay.

Send station news to [aromano@reedbusiness.com](mailto:aromano@reedbusiness.com)



AT A GLANCE

The Market

DMA rank	58
Population	1,736,000
TV homes	528,000
Income per capita	\$12,043
TV revenue rank	52
TV revenue	\$107,500,000

Commercial TV Stations

Rank*	Ch.	Affil.	Owner
1	KFSN	30 ABC	Disney
2	KFTV	21 Uni.	Univision
3	KSEE	24 NBC	Granite
3	KMPH	26 Fox	Pappas
5	KGPE	51 CBS	Clear Channel

\*November 2004, total households, sign-on to sign-off

Cable/DBS

Cable subscribers (HH)	258,720
Major cable operator	Comcast
Cable penetration	49%
ADS subscribers (HH)**	126,720
ADS penetration	24%
DBS carriage of local TV?	Yes

\*\*Alternative Delivery Systems, includes DBS and other non-cable services, according to Nielsen Media Research

What's No. 1

Syndicated Show	Rating/Share***
The Oprah Winfrey Show (KFSN)	10.0/25
Network Show	
CSI (KGPE)	17.0/26
Evening Newscast	
KFSN	10.0/21
Late Newscast	
KFSN	4/19

\*\*\*November 2004, total households

SOURCES: Nielsen Media Research, BIA Research

# The Comfort Zone

Fresno market sees revenue, population rise **By Allison Romano**



KFSN evening anchors Warren Armstrong and Graciela Moreno

The Fresno, Calif., TV market enjoys a diverse and growing populace, yet the city retains a small-town feel. A mild climate and low cost of living attract residents to the 58th-largest TV market. "Agriculture is the backbone here," says KFSN President/GM Eric Lerner, but new businesses are gaining ground. Local broadcasters are eager to cash in on the expansion.

TV stations expect to see \$107 million in revenue this year, up slightly from \$105 million in 2004, according to BIA Research. The ad market will likely post a modest uptick over last year; station

executives predict low-single-digit percent gains.

ABC O&O station KFSN is the heavyweight in news and overall ratings, commanding a healthy lead over its English- and Spanish-language rivals. Thanks to its Disney ownership, KFSN gets a big-market boost. The station regularly collaborates with sister stations KABC Los Angeles and KGO San Francisco; on big stories, such as the Scott Peterson trial, the three share resources and reporting. They also operate a joint Sacramento bureau. "It gives us a huge advantage," says Lerner.

In the past year, KFSN added newscasts weekdays at 6:30 p.m. and on weekend mornings. Univision-owned KFTV is the second-highest-rated station in the market, and it programs local news. Rival Telemundo station KNSO may add news as well.

KFSN's closest English-language competitor is Granite Broadcasting-owned NBC affiliate KSEE. Station President/GM Todd McWilliams says KSEE needs to be scrappy in order to compete. "They have a lot of toys," he notes. "We need to be smarter with our resources." One important move was recruiting former KFSN and KABC veteran Mike Espinoza as news director. McWilliams says KSEE relentlessly examines every part of its news—from graphics to packaging—to chip away at KFSN's dominance.

Clear Channel owns the CBS affiliate KGPE, ranked third. Pappas Telecasting operates the Fox affiliate KMPH and WB station KFRE.

Fresno's population is expected to grow 1.7% through 2008, more than twice the national average. Another sign of the region's increased visibility: The University of California system is opening a campus in nearby Merced.

Getting cable is a challenge here. The mountains render Fresno geographically isolated, so wiring is difficult. Penetration is lower than in other top-75 markets—around 49%. Comcast is the major cable operator, but DBS satellite is a popular alternative, with 24% of homes subscribing.

"Outsiders see Fresno as a great place to live," says McWilliams. "Every fourth house has a family relocated from L.A. or San Francisco." ■

NEXT: PITTSBURGH

THE DEMOS

Fresno, Calif., is an agriculture-based community with a diverse population. Of the market's nearly 2 million residents, 42% are of Hispanic origin. The mild climate encourages outdoor activities like gardening, camping and fishing.

WHO	SHARE OF POPULATION	INDEX*
18-34	36%	116
18-49	66%	107
25-54	58%	100
35+	64%	93
Married	57%	103
Never married	25%	99
College grad	15%	60
White	87%	105
Black	7%	58
Hispanic origin	42%	316
Asian	3%	127
\$100K+ HH	9%	56
\$50K+ HH	33%	67
Below \$50K HH	67%	131



BY THE NUMBERS\*\*

Camping	23%	125
Fishing	20%	96
Gardening	51%	109
New stereo equipment	23%	121
Domestic, used car	56%	149

\*Index is a measurement of consumer likelihood. An index of 100 indicates that the market is on par with the average of the 75 local markets.

\*\*Activities engaged in past 12 months

SOURCE: Scarborough Release 1 2004 75 Markets Report (February '03-March '04)

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www.sonypicturestelevision.com



Source: NSI WRAP Overnights, 1/17-1/21/05 HH rating M-F 2PM #1 program = 6AM-6PM Year ago = Jan '04 TP



**W**hen it comes to advertising, no other TV event generates the sticker shock of a Super Bowl commercial. At \$2.4 million per 30-second spot, Fox is charging its advertisers the equivalent of \$80,000 per second of airtime on Super Sunday, the most expensive commercial inventory ever sold.

But as pricey as that seems, advertisers have once again lined up to buy more than 60 of the 30-second ad units available in this year's game, begging the question: Is it worth it?

The answer, according to Madison Avenue, is an emphatic "Yes!" The real value of a Super Bowl ad buy, they say, cannot be measured by simple media-buying metrics, such as cost per thousand (CPM) or audience reach, but must also include a host of other factors that generate corporate esteem, employee morale, trade support, public relations and, of course, plenty of water-cooler talk.

Depending on the spot, a Super Bowl ad can generate twice the marketing value from the buzz surrounding the Super Bowl as commercial time during the game itself. In other words, a Super Bowl spot that sells for \$2.4 million may be worth as much as \$7.2 million when all the ancillary PR, media exposure and word of mouth are considered.

That may come as good news to advertisers, because the out-of-pocket cost of Super Bowl ads has been escalating much faster than the average rate of TV-advertising inflation—testament to the underlying value of the event to advertisers. Since 1967, when NBC charged a mere \$37,500 per 30-second spot in Super Bowl I, the average cost of an ad in the Big Game has soared more than 6,000%—12 times the rate of the average network prime time's inflation in ad cost between 1967 and 2004 (see table Ad Rates Soar, page 16).

#### RATIONALIZING THE COST

Still, the Big Game delivers better ratings than the average prime time show has over the same period. As a result, the actual CPM of a Super Bowl ad has grown only 1.5 times the rate of the average prime time commercial.

"I would make an argument that the CPM on the Super Bowl, as high as it is, is a better deal because you know what you're getting when you buy it," says Ray Warren, managing director of OMD, New York, the biggest media buyer of Super Bowl ad time. "I have a lot more certainty that the people I need to reach are watching the Super Bowl, than a lot of low-rated spots on Oxygen."

Says Tim Spengler, executive vice president/director of national broadcast at media-buying giant Initiative Media, New York, "It's a big number, but it's a big event. Nothing else on television is even a close second."

# Big Ticket

Why a commercial during the Super Bowl is worth an unprecedented \$80,000 a second **By Joe Mandese**



Visitors to job-search Web site CareerBuilder.com can preview the spots it will run during the Super Bowl.

Despite its unparalleled audience reach, though, even true believers say a Super Bowl ad buy is difficult to justify purely on a CPM basis. To rationalize its hefty out-of-pocket cost, Spengler says, it has to be part of a

and that, when lower-priced dayparts, cable and syndication alternatives are factored in, a Super Bowl ad buy simply cannot be reconciled on the basis of its audience reach.

To illustrate this, B&C asked Chicago-

**"There's about 10 million people in America who are going to watch the Super Bowl just because of the ads."**

**CHARLES TOMKOVICK,  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE**

"bigger plan" that can benefit from the buzz and attention that can be generated only by ads running during the game. Other media buyers agree, noting that a Super Bowl CPM is still three times that of network prime time

based media agency Starcom to see how it could beat a Super Bowl ad buy using a TV-reach "optimizer"—essentially a software tool that uses Nielsen data to identify the most efficient schedule of shows for an audience an advertiser

seeks. The analysis by the system, called Tardiis, used the \$2.302 million average rate CBS charged for a 30-second ad unit in last year's Super Bowl to build a schedule of ads running in the other broadcast networks, on cable and in syndication opposite the Super Bowl to see just how good the Super Bowl stacks up on a pure audience-cost basis.

#### BEAT THE BOWL

The agency found that, while CBS' broadcast of the Super Bowl reached 29.5% of adults 18-49, a \$2.3 million schedule of ads on competing networks could deliver 47.3% of adults 18-49, 60% more reach than an ad during the Super Bowl. But to do that, the optimized schedule would require an advertiser to buy ads on 381 different TV programs, mostly on cable networks (see table More Bang for the Buck, page 16).

"Essentially, this says you can beat the Super Bowl most definitely," says Richard Fielding, vice president and director of the Insights & Analytics Group at Starcom. "But you have to buy hundreds of spots across a wide range of broadcast and cable networks to do it. At that point, it becomes a question of the quality of the reach and the quality of the exposure you are getting."

Moreover, he says, such a buy would be impractical to execute because, unlike an optimizer using year-old data, media planners don't actually know what audiences the shows they plan to buy will deliver in the future. They have to guess, says Fielding.

"If you go to a planner and say, 'Okay, here's a \$2.4 million budget. Go and beat the Super Bowl,' they can probably do it, but it wouldn't be as efficient as with an optimizer," he says. Starcom's optimized ad schedule generated nearly twice the reach among adult women. The Super Bowl was most efficient among adult men, but the optimizer still beat the reach among men by 40%.

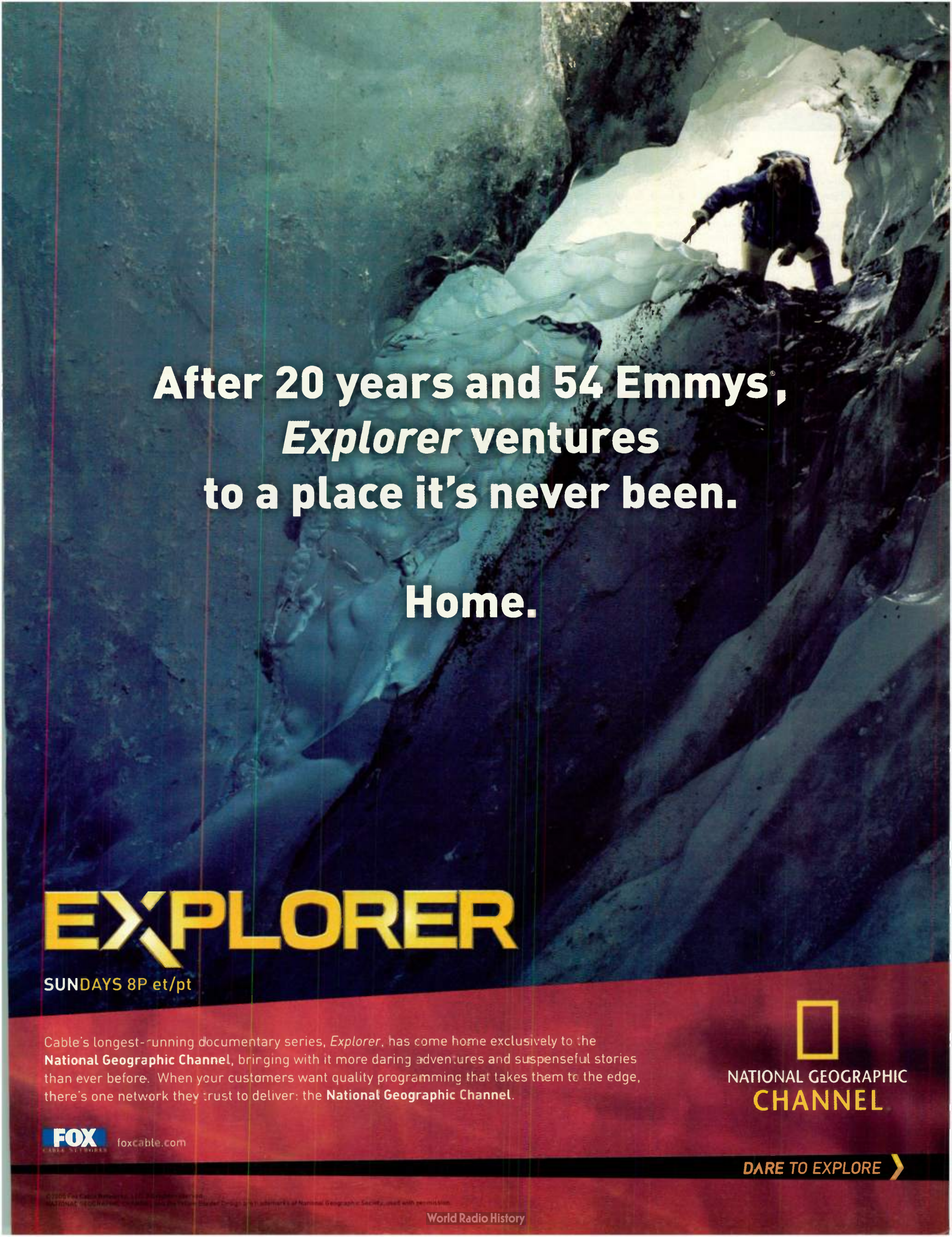
#### "ENGAGED" VIEWERS

Moreover, Fielding cites research showing that Super Bowl viewers are more likely to pay attention to a commercial and are far less likely to turn the channel or leave the room when the commercial breaks come on. These "engaged" TV viewers are the main targets of Super Bowl advertisers and agencies. According to Starcom's research, 45% of the audience of a Super Bowl "pay attention" to the ads versus only 17% for the average TV program. Even big events like the Olympics (21%), the Academy Awards (14%) and the *Seinfeld* finale (36%) pale in comparison.

Fielding says the Super Bowl boosts the "effective" reach of an ad roughly three times over that of a regular TV commercial because three times as many viewers are likely to pay attention

*Continued on page 16*





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**World Radio History**



**Big Ticket**

*Continued from page 14*

to the Super Bowl spot. "It's much more of a movie-theater environment. People are engaged as much by the ads as by the event," says Initiative's Spengler, adding that Super Bowl viewers tend to watch in a group of people, which increases the commercial effectiveness as people discuss the ads.

"There's about 10 million people in America who are going to watch the Super Bowl just because of the ads," estimates Charles Tomkovick, a professor of management and marketing at University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, who has been studying Super Bowl advertising by movie companies for five years.

**SUPER SELLER**

His conclusion: "Super Bowl ads sell." Specifically, his research found that movies advertised in the Super Bowl generated twice as much first-weekend, first-week and total U.S. box-office revenue than non-Super Bowl-promoted movies. The effect is so powerful, that it even works for summer movie releases that advertise in the Super Bowl six months before they premiere.

Tomkovick chose the movie category, he says, because it is the "cleanest way of looking at the effect of a Super Bowl ad, because there is no product prior to the Super Bowl." While sales-effectiveness data is harder to find for other Super Bowl categories, he believes the effect is similar: "What is the residual effect of a Super Bowl ad? It's hard to say precisely, but it is a mass multiple. Something on the order of 1.5 to 2.0 times the value of the commercial time."

Initiative found that, during last year's Super Bowl, the average rating for Super Bowl commercials was only about 3% less than that for the game, indicating that there was relatively little channel-switching during commercial breaks. A few commercials, including ones for H&R Block, Microsoft and Anheuser-Busch, actually generated marginally higher ratings than the game itself.

**SPOTS LIVE ON**

But the most striking element about the drawing power of Super Bowl ads is that they generate audiences before and after the game. Advertisers routinely release preview copies of new Super Bowl ads on their Web sites, as CareerBuilder.com is doing with the two spots it will be running this year. And the NFL Network, a digital cable and satellite channel, plans to run a 30-minute prime time special following the game,

rebroadcasting all of the ads and will repeat that program on the Monday following Super Sunday. The ads will also live on for anyone interested in seeing them rebroadcast online via scores of Web sites, as well as blogs issuing run-

likely to deliver additional reach and frequency even days after the game's last whistle," says Lee Smith, president of InsightExpress, whose research estimated that 25% of last year's Super Bowl viewers were likely to visit a Web

show during the Super Bowl is now running a close second to the commercials as the most compelling content for viewers. The actual contest on the field continues to be the secondary event," says TiVo President Marty Yudkovitz.



This year's spot for Lay's potato chips stars M.C. Hammer and was directed by Spike Lee.

ning commentary on the ads themselves. About 25% of Super Bowl viewers were likely to visit a Web site to view a Super Bowl ad, according to research conducted last year by InsightExpress, a market-research firm based in Stamford, Conn. Indeed, one company, New York-based VMS, is offering this year's Super Bowl spots delivered "on your desktop Sunday night" for \$749.

"Effective Super Bowl ads are

site to view a Super Bowl ad.

Super Bowl ads continue to live on TV viewers' hard drives, too. Research conducted during last year's Super Bowl by TiVo found extraordinary recording, playback and pausing of Super Bowl spots. Although TiVo did not break out the specific activity of the commercial-recording, it said the Super Bowl spots were the major reason for TiVo activity during the game. "In fact, the halftime

**DAY-AFTER BUZZ**

A major factor driving this commercial replay is the buzz surrounding the ads themselves. According to InsightExpress research, 28% of viewers who replay a Super Bowl spot on the Web said they do so because they "wanted to see what everyone was talking about."

There is so much buzz that some experts believe marketers may be focusing on the wrong part of the media event: the audience they're generating off-air, where a brand's reputation can be made or destroyed depending on the day-after buzz.

"The vast majority of Super Bowl advertisers fail to take advantage of this," says Pete Blackshaw, chief marketing and customer satisfaction officer at Intelliseek, a company that specializes in measuring the buzz generated by marketers. According to its research, consumers already have high expectations for Super Bowl spots, particularly for such mainstay advertisers as Budweiser, Pepsi, McDonald's and Visa. To measure the talk those ads generate after the game, Blackshaw says, Intelliseek has created a panel of blogs that regularly discuss advertising.

**"VIRAL" MARKETING**

It is just such "viral" marketing that Richard Castellini, vice president, consumer marketing, at CareerBuilder.com, is banking on. In fact, you might say his job depends on it. It was Castellini who persuaded CEO Matt Ferguson to plunk down nearly \$5 million to air two 30-second spots in this year's game, as part of a \$200 million effort to position the company as the leading job-search site in the business.

While the Super Bowl's high ratings were a big part of his decision, Castellini says, the deciding factor behind the buy was all the ancillary exposure and intangibles like corporate esteem and employee morale.

"Certainly, when you look at doing a Super Bowl buy, you have to be willing to spend the money for the TV audience in its own right, but knowing there's going to be all these other benefits is a big part of it," he says, noting the enthusiasm internally from his employees and sales force. "Externally," he says, "it's a great way to tell our story to the world." ■

**SUPER BOWL AD RATES HAVE SOARED...**

Prices for spots in the game have grown far faster than those for network prime time

	SUPER BOWL			NETWORK PRIME TIME		
	COST PER :30	HHS (000)	HH CPM	COST PER :30	HHS	HH CPM
2004	\$2,302,200	44,908	\$51.26	\$120,500	6,070	\$19.85
1994	\$900,000	42,860	\$21.00	\$97,200	12,710	\$7.64
1984	\$368,200	38,880	\$9.47	\$107,500	14,530	\$7.39
1974	\$103,500	27,540	\$3.76	\$30,400	13,380	\$2.27
1967	\$37,500	10,160	\$3.69	\$20,400	10,007	\$2.04

HH = Households; CPM = Cost per thousand

SOURCE: Nielsen Media Research, Television Bureau of Advertising. Prime time costs and audience delivery based on Nielsen estimates for February of each year.

**BUT STILL MAY OFFER THE BIGGEST BANG FOR THE BUCK**

Optimizer software determined that advertisers could get better reach for the price of a Super Bowl buy, but it would be impractical, requiring purchases on more than 300 networks

DEMO	SUPER BOWL			OPTIMIZED			IMPROVED REACH
	% REACH	NO. OF SPOTS	COST	% REACH	NO. OF SPOTS	COST	
Adults 18-49	29.52	1	2,302,000	47.25	381	2,299,800	+60%
Adults 25-54	32.48	1	2,302,000	52.19	368	2,292,000	+61%
Females 18-49	25.92	1	2,302,000	48.61	332	2,302,200	+88%
Females 25-54	28.66	1	2,302,000	54.17	341	2,294,800	+89%
Males 18-49	33.17	1	2,302,000	46.57	368	2,298,600	+40%
Males 25-54	36.44	1	2,302,000	50.97	381	2,295,000	+40%

SOURCE: SMG Tardis/Nielsen NTI, 2004 Super Bowl



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A LIFESTYLE IT'S A LIFESTYLE IT'S A LIFES



# Polishing the Super Bowl

An inside look at the technology behind the spectacle **By Ken Kerschbaumer**

**G**iven the annual avalanche of Super Bowl hype, it's surprising to find out that the game is not the biggest sports event of the year for TV-production-truck companies. "Actually, the NBA championships and NASCAR are larger in terms of overall facilities," says George Hoover, senior VP of engineering at NEP Supershooters. That's a scary thought, given the massive amount of gear heading to Jacksonville, Fla. NEP is sending 13 units—and 40 employees to keep the hardware running smoothly—for clients including Fox, HBO and NFL Films. It will also roll out more than 175,000 feet of triax cable.

The three NEP trucks Fox will be using for its high-def broadcast are as good a place as any to find the state of the art in sports-production facilities. Fox Sports won't divulge precisely what equipment will be in use on game day. "It's hard to verbalize something this flexible and fluid," says Jeff Court, Fox Sports vice president of field operations. But here's a list of most of the gear Fox will have in its arsenal as it tries to score in front of what's usually the year's biggest TV audience.

## SS18 HD PRODUCTION VEHICLE

Think of the trucks as a broadcast center in the parking lot, with each truck serving as a separate control room. The SS18, 53 feet long when fully extended, will be home to the main crew for the game. It's also the truck that Fox Sports has used for its A-game all season long, so those working in it will be in familiar surroundings—an important way to reduce game-day stress.

### CAMERAS/LENSES

[available to all trucks]

34 Thomson LDK-6000 WorldCam cameras (26 will be manned during the game with eight manned for pre-game and post game)

CableCam package

6 LDK-6200 WorldCam Super Slo-Mo cameras

14 TurfCams

35 Canon lenses will be used, a mix of 86-times,

100-times, 21x7.8 lenses, and 11x4.7 wide-angle lenses

30+ Vinten Vector pan-and-tilt heads with Matthews tripods

### PRODUCTION

Grass Valley Kalypto duo switcher with 3.5 mix effects

Pesa Cheetah 144x144 HD/SDI video router

Abekas Dveous dual twin HD DVE with CPL control

More than 125 headsets from manufacturers

including Sennheiser and Beyerdynamic and custom-made ones brought by production personnel

### RECORDING

2 Panasonic AJHD-3700 D5 VTRs

1 Panasonic DVC Pro 100 HD deck

1 EVS Spot Box 4-channel unit

1 Sony Digital Betacam DVW-500 VTR

5 EVS Live Slo-Motion systems (a total of 18 replay devices, a mix of EVS and Panasonic D5 and DVC

Pro 100 decks will be on hand for all three trucks)

2 Sport Net Hubs for EVS LSM and Shot Box controllers

4 Lance Slo-Mo controllers

### AUDIO

Calrec Q2 audio console

Fox Sports Dolby gear

Pesa 32x32 monitoring router

Pesa 144x144 analog audio router

Dolby E encoder and decoder

All told, more than 45 WorldCam cameras will be available. Why the WorldCam? For one, it handles all HD formats without the need to convert (and compromise) signals. That means 720p output and 27 million pixels of resolution.

This is the big new wrinkle, the first time HD super-slow-motion technology has been available for a Super Bowl broadcast. They'll make even a scrambling Donovan McNabb look like he's stuck in mud.

The vast majority of lenses will be of the 86x variety, but a number of 100x will be on hand to get those tight shots of nostril hairs.

When it comes to graphic playback, nothing helps like this unit. Preload in the graphics and call them up with the push of a button—no more rolling tape.

Tektronix 764 audio scope

Tannoy monitor speakers

5 Rane audio delays

Custom microphone package with more than 65 mics, including Sennheiser, Electrovoice and DPA microphones

### GRAPHICS

Chyron LEX system

### MONITORS

70+ monitors, a mix of Sony, Ikegami, Pioneer and Panasonic

### COMMUNICATIONS

Telex ADAM matrix intercom

6 RTS SPK-300 Biscuit speaker stations

### SUPPORT GEAR

2 Teranex Xantus converters

20 Sony upconverters

6 Thomson GVG HD/SD frame synchronizers

14 Thomson GVG SD downconverters

4 For.A DCC-700 color correctors

4 Sony HD HK-SP313 color correctors



The SS18 will be staffed by the main crew and handle game coverage.



## SUPERSHOOTER 24

This unit handles many of the replay functions. The 53-foot truck (when fully extended) has the largest control room of any production truck and is usually used by CBS for its standard NFL coverage. The truck's usual complement of EVS instant-replay servers will be expanded to handle the extra cameras.

### PRODUCTION

Sony MVS-8000 3.5 mix-effect switcher with 8 internal DVEs  
1 Abekas DVEous dual twin HD DVE  
Thomson Trinix 160x160 HD/SDI video router  
Thomson Trinix 160x256 monitor router in production unit

### RECORDING

4 Sony HDW-500 HD camera VTRs  
2 Sony Digital Betacam DVW-500 VTRs  
2 EVS four-channel Spot Box systems  
5 EVS Live Slo-Motion system (a total of 18 replay devices will be used, a mix of EVS and Panasonic D5 and DVCPRO 100 decks)  
Sport Net Hub for EVS LSM and Spot Box controllers

### AUDIO

Calrec Alpha digital audio console  
Thomson Concerto 128x128 analog stereo audio router  
Thomson Concerto 128x128 AES audio router  
Dolby E multichannel encoder and decoder  
Dolby Pro Logic Surround encoder and decoder  
Dolby AC3 encoder and decoder  
2 360 Systems DigiCart II units with 150-MB Bernoulli  
D&K digital audio scope  
Genelec monitor speakers  
Studio Technologies stereo synthesizers  
Custom microphone package

### GRAPHICS

2 Pinnacle FX Deko character generators



The SS24 has the largest control room of any production truck.

This switcher, along with Thomson's Kalypso unit, is dominating the HD-truck market. With more than three mix effects, it gives the director plenty of flexibility in bringing different shots together.

Over the past few years, this replay system from EVS has become the standard. EVS quizzed operators about what they wanted in a system and then designed it. The fact that it records to a server means instant access to clips.

The Dolby gear will be relied on heavily by Fox. It'll be responsible for getting eight channels of audio back to Fox Los Angeles: six channels for the 5.1 Surround Sound broadcast and two with just ambient noise for international broadcasters.

With more than 400 people involved, communications and intercoms will be crucial. Telex gear is good enough for coaches on the sidelines, so it's good enough for the broadcasters.

### MONITORS

Mix of 70 monitors of various sizes and makes

### COMMUNICATIONS

Telex ADAM matrix intercom, 180 square matrix  
4 TIF-951 telephone interfaces  
3 Gentner QKTs  
3 Telos One interfaces  
12 RTS IFB beltpacks  
24 RTS BP-325 dual listen beltpacks  
8 RTS SPK-300 Biscuit speaker stations  
6 Daltec Talent talkback boxes  
12 Motorola walkie-talkies with base station

### SUPPORT GEAR

2 Teranex Xantus standards converters  
13 Evertz upconverters  
18 Sony upconverters  
12 GVG HD frame synchronizers  
4 Sony HD color correctors/cross-converters  
18 GVG/Teranex downconverters  
2 Leitch DPS-575 SDI frame synchronizers

## SUPERSHOOTER 20

The pre-game and post-game activities are a production unto themselves—and Supershooter 20 will be home base for the production crew.

### PRODUCTION

Pesa Tiger 144x224 HD VAA routing switcher  
Grass Valley Kalypso HD switcher  
Abekas DVEous dual twin HD DVE  
8 Wohler pre-listen stations

### RECORDING

2 Sony Digital Betacam DVW-500 VTRs  
4 Panasonic AJHD-3700 D5 VTRs  
4 Panasonic DVC Pro HD decks  
2 Panasonic AJ-HD1700 VTRs  
1 Tektronix Profile HP-XP disc recorder four-channel JPEG  
6 EVS Live Slo-Motion systems  
4 Lance Slo-Mo controllers  
1 Lance TDC-100 TD controller

### AUDIO

Calrec Q2 audio console  
Pesa Cougar 32x32 audio router  
2 ATI 8x2 mixer preamps  
2 360 Systems DigiCart II units with 150-MB Bernoulli

1 Denon CD player  
48 Ward Beck mono audio distribution amplifiers  
1 Tektronix 760 audio scope  
Tannoy monitor speakers  
3 Rane AVA-22 audio delays  
2 Studio Technologies stereo synthesizer  
1 Sony V77 audio processor  
4 DBX 160 limiters  
1 DBX 1046 quad limiters  
1 DBX 900 frame  
6 RTS 14-line amplifiers  
4 Shure FP-22 headphone amplifiers  
2 Shure M-267 mixers  
6 Fostex powered speakers



### GRAPHICS

2 Chyron Duet character generators, SD with Evertz upconverter  
1 Chyron Aprisa Clip Store with Evertz upconverter

### MONITORS

Approximately 70+ monitors, various sizes and makes

### COMMUNICATIONS

Telex ADAM matrix intercom  
2 TIF-951 telephone interfaces  
22 RTS IFB beltpacks  
48 RTS BP-325 dual listen beltpacks  
6 RTS SPK-300 Biscuit speaker stations  
5 Daltec Talent talkback boxes

### SUPPORT GEAR

3 Teranex Xantus standards converters  
13 Evertz upconverters  
5 Sony upconverters  
6 Leitch Digibuss NTSC-to-SDI frame synchronizers  
7 Leitch Digibuss SDI-to-NTSC master encoders  
14 GVG 8900 NTSC-to-SDI frame synchronizers  
8 GVG 8900 SDI-to-SDI frame synchronizers  
12 GVG 8900 series SDI-to-NTSC encoders  
6 Thomson GVG HD/SD frame synchronizers  
5 Sony HD color correctors  
6 For.A DCC-700 color correctors  
4 Sony HD HK-SP313 color correctors



# Rolling the Dice at NATPE

Playing the angles, Vegas-style **By Jim Finkle and Allison Romano**

**N**ATPE lives! Industry consolidation, technological advances, bad programs and a worse economy nearly killed the syndicated-programming fair a couple of years ago, but last week in Las Vegas, there was something that sounded almost like buzz again.

"NATPE is back," says John Weiser, the convention's co-chairman and distribution president for Sony Pictures Television. Attendees throughout the day would exit the Mandalay Bay convention center, surprised that the floor seemed to be shoulder to shoulder with attendees. Cable product is being shopped to international outlets (it used to be the other way around) and now U.S. reality-television producers are both buyers and sellers on the world market. Example: NBC Universal has sold *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* reruns in 120 countries, and a dozen foreign TV outlets make their own.

NATPE organizers aren't giving a final count until next week, but it's sure to beat last year's 7,000 attendees, perhaps by 1,000. (As recently as 2001, NATPE added up over 20,000 attendees.)

And yet a lot didn't happen. Sony Pictures Television left NATPE without a launch group for Howard Stern sidekick Robin Quivers' talk show, but Weiser says there is plenty of interest and that two large station groups are tempted. Fox, UPN and WB stations are primarily targets, he says, and, in more than a dozen markets, stations are playing with the idea of pairing Quivers with *Maury* as a lead-out.

Sony did close deals for off-Oxygen reality show *Girls Behaving Badly*. The show, a weekend barter deal, is cleared in nine of the top 10 markets and on the WB 100+ station group.

Also waiting for take-off is financial talker Suze Orman—who spent NATPE explaining that she's about how money intersects with lifestyles, not giving advice on 401(k) plans, dammit! Twentieth Television President Bob Cook seems determined to keep selling the show rather than fold the tent. Fox Stations didn't pick up Orman, raising some eyebrows, but News Corp. Deputy COO and stations Chairman Lachlan Murdoch said his stations "have a responsibility to take the show we think will work best."

#### WHAT TO DO AND WHERE TO DO IT

So some shows were left hanging. That's not so unusual. Syndicators close many of their sales either before NATPE, so the new show comes to the show with momentum. Or sales come after, when station-group brass compare notes and make their choices.

Still several current shows were on the bubble list—neither canned or renewed. Those include Sony's *Life & Style* and *Pat Croce: Movin' In*, Twentieth's *Texas Justice* and *Good Day Live*, Warner Bros.' *The Larry Elder Show*, and NBC Universal's *The Jane Pauley Show*. Decisions about those could force decisions about some other shows, too.

The *Pauley* indecision may be keeping stations groups that signed two-year contracts for it from knowing what to do, or where to do it. NBC Universal Television Distribution Executive Vice President Frederick Huntsberry said he wasn't sure *Pauley* would be back but cited recent audience growth and indicated that there will be no decision until after the February sweeps.

One show that did seem to pop to life on the NATPE floor was *Home Team*, a kind of lite version of *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, hosted by Troy McClain (whose previous claim to near fame was as the sweet, street-smart contestant on the first edition of *The Apprentice*). Big crowds may have been more interested in McClain than in the show, but NATPE today is not the place you'll see a lot of major talent wandering around. One exception was Tyra Banks, who packed the Warner Bros. suite on Monday and Tuesday.

#### SOME GREEN LIGHTS

Four of six major new first-run strips emerged from NATPE with early green lights: *A Current Affair* (Twentieth, clearance in 45% of the country), *Judge Alex* (Twentieth, 73%), *The Martha Stewart Show* (NBC Universal, 70%) and *The Tyra Banks Show* (Warner Bros., 70%).

Banks can thank the Fox Television Stations Group, which stepped up as a launch group, clearing the talker in 19 of its 25 markets. Her show may be a particularly good fit for Fox-owned UPN stations.

Last year, five programs were greenlighted by the end of NATPE: *The Jane Pauley Show* (95%), *The Insider* (90%), *Home Delivery* (70%), *Ambush Makeover* (70%), *The Tony Danza Show* (over 50%). A typical year of hits and misses.

For some, NATPE creates little anxiety. Going into NATPE, King World had cleared *The Oprah Winfrey Show* in 93% of the country through 2011 and *Dr. Phil* in 85% through 2009. Nice work if you can get it. ■



Tyra Banks

# Nexstar's Next Buy

Station group shops for syndicated fare

By Allison Romano



Nexstar executives Tim Busch (left) and Brian Jones

**L**ike two personal shoppers for the Nexstar station group, Tim Busch and Brian Jones cruised the National Association of Television Programming Executives conference in Las Vegas last week with a specific grocery list. As SVPs for Nexstar Broadcasting, the duo buys programming for 46 TV stations the group owns or operates, mainly in small and midsize markets.

Busch and Jones help fill the syndicated hours for stations in places like Abilene, Texas, and Joplin-Pittsburg, a hyphenated market on the Kansas-Missouri border. Such programmers constitute a large, though nearly invisible part of the NATPE scene. Major owned-and-operated units such as Viacom and Fox can catapult or torpedo a syndicated show into existence.

Nexstar ranks 25th on *B&C's* 2004 station-group list and boasts revenues of around \$200 million. But it doesn't make headlines with acquisitions. Its stations cover just 4.9% of the country, a mix of NBC, ABC, CBS, Fox and UPN affiliates. Yet Nexstar's portfolio means it is a potential buyer for nearly every show on the market.

This year, Busch and Jones hit NATPE with a two-pronged offensive: "education and implementation," Jones says. Translation: Close deals and nurture new business.

#### LOCK UP HITS

Nexstar, led by CEO Perry Sook, eschews group-wide buys. Instead, in the weeks leading up to NATPE, station GMs pinpoint for Busch and Jones what they needed and how much they want to spend. Each station has specific needs for their market. In Champaign, Ill., the top priority was renewing *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*. The Scranton, Pa., station was eager to add *Judge Judy*.

But like shoppers at a supermarket, Busch and Jones need to load up on staples, too.

They were determined to renew established product from Viacom's King World and Paramount, so they quickly locked up *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *Inside Edition*, *Wheel of Fortune* and *Jeopardy!* through the end of the decade. (They also lost a couple deals. In Little Rock, Ark., and Scranton, rivals poached *Ellen* by offering late-afternoon time slots and more money.)

These renewals were no-brainers, explained Busch.

Continued on page 24

#### BIG DEALS

Sales of major syndicators' new first-run shows at NATPE

	COMPANY	CLEARANCE	BUYER
<i>The Martha Stewart Show</i>	NBC Universal	70%	NBC O&Os
<i>The Tyra Banks Show</i>	Warner Bros.	70%	19 of 25 Fox markets
<i>Judge Alex</i>	Twentieth	73%	All Fox O&Os
<i>Suze Orman</i>	Twentieth	0	No deals announced
<i>A Current Affair</i>	Twentieth	45%	All Fox O&Os
<i>Robin Quivers</i>	Sony	0	No deals announced



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# He Said, She Said

Barbs, blasts and broadsides from NATPE By Allison Romano and Jim Finkle

**T**ed Turner says he has written his epitaph: "I have nothing more to say." But judging by his remarks at NATPE last week, he won't go quietly into his long, long good night. He made headlines worldwide when he compared the popularity of Fox News to Adolf Hitler's. Reminded that Fox now leads in ratings, Turner noted, well, yeah, maybe so, but Hitler got the most votes when he was elected to run Germany prior to WWII. Turner also charged that Fox is a propaganda tool for the Bush Administration.

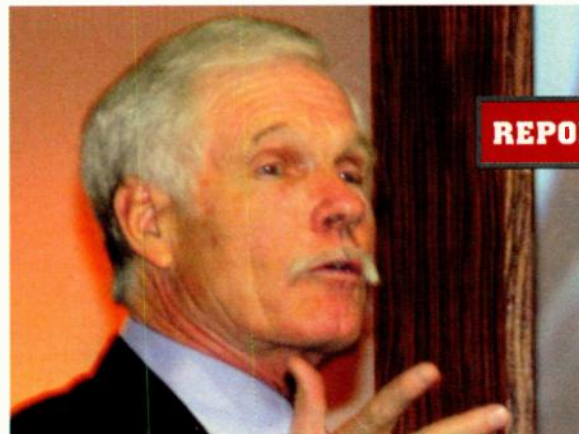
"There's nothing wrong with that, he added. "It's certainly legal. But it does pose problems for our democracy—particularly when the news is dumbed down," leaving voters without critical information on politics and world events and "overloaded with fluff," he said. (For reader reaction, see Open Mike, page 36.)

Turner railed against big media: "Consolidation has made it almost impossible for an independent. It's virtually impossible to start a cable network." And he ragged on former Time Warner Chairman Gerald Levin, who pushed Turner out of the way. Taking the long view, Turner said the world endured "50 years of despotic Communism" and so Levin wasn't *that* bad. "I wish him well," he said, adding, very quietly, "Sort of."

**BUT HE APPEARED FOR FREE:** Another voluble executive, Mediacom Chairman Jon Mandel did not disappoint. When asked by CNBC anchor Maria Bartiromo how marketers can build buzz for a new product, he quipped, "Like the federal government, you pay people," a not-so-subtle jab at commentator Armstrong Williams' shilling for the Department of Education.

**CALL HER SHECKY OPRAH:** One of the convention's highlights was an appearance by a glowing Oprah

Winfrey at King World's private dinner. In a monologue about King World chief Roger King, Winfrey had guests rolling in the aisles especially when she imitated his gruff, booming voice. She praised King, too, but, bottom line, she said, "he can't produce." Example: Once, early on, he told her to do a whole show



After Ted Turner blasted Fox News, a Fox spokesman quipped that Turner "lost his ratings, his network and now his mind."

about the weather. Dutifully, she obeyed, and the show bombed. He left her alone after that.

**FUNNY, THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE TOLD US, TOO:** Tyra Banks, clad in a killer brown suit, plunging black tank top and sky-high heels, told a NATPE press conference she may look like a natural on the runway but chose modeling only "because I was 5 foot 10 and people told me I should." Where she really feels comfortable—OK, here comes the plug—is on the small screen. On TV, the stunner says, "I felt like a true human being."

**BUT THEY HAVE GREAT LIBRARIES:** On a NATPE panel, Dennis Swanson, the executive vice president and COO of CBS/Viacom, recalled the days before cable and other competition for ad dollars in the 1970s: "You just answered the phone and took the orders and then went out golfing. My gosh, that was fun." Reflecting on it a few moments later, he added that broadcast television was so easy then that, today, "some of the dumbest people in the world are billionaires."

## REPORTERS' NOTEBOOK

### AND NOW "MOBISODES":

One day before the official opening of NATPE, the futurists out there hosted their

own special cellphone-themed day. News Corp. made headlines announcing a cluster of programs made specifically for mobile phones. Its first-generation content will work only on certain Verizon phone models, sending 1-minute "mobisodes" of *24* starting next month. (They're only a minute long because that's about as much bandwidth as a cellphone can handle, and yes, Fox has a copyright on the word "mobisode.")

Two more are in the works: *Love & Hate* and *Sunset Hotel*. If those click, says Daniel E. Tibbets, Twentieth Television VP of production, these projects may end up as full-fledged series. (A mobisode script is about two pages long.) News Corp. has been showing *24* in the UK this month, charging cell customers about £10 for the whole series, but Fox says Verizon hasn't priced it yet. Anyway, panelists agreed, soon when "actors just phone it in," that will be a good thing.

The likely next big advance: Alex Bloom, a Verizon Wireless executive, also told the conference the company can't wait to offer a "video tone": a scene and a phrase from a favorite movie or TV show that becomes the "ring" every time a consumer gets a call. ■

## Nexstar's Next Play

*Continued from page 22*

They're all established hits. He points out that Nexstar would rather commit long-term to proven hits, instead of gambling on newer fare, even if it is cheaper.

Busch has also been burned by too many one-season shows. "I can give you 10 shows that were down and out in a year," he says, ticking off hopefuls from Caroline Rhea to Roseanne Barr. "We're better off investing in the few things that make money. Flashes-in-the-pan don't make anybody money."

### TOUGH NEGOTIATIONS

Failures give syndicators like Viacom some leverage. They have lots of established product, and bundling it can make it attractive to group buyers. Nexstar's King World deal covered nine shows, from *Oprah* to *CSI*, and TV cooking segments like the popular *Mr. Food*.

At Paramount, Nexstar's negotiations

got heated. The two sides went back and forth for 5½ hours and took two breaks before hammering out renewal terms for product like *Montel* and *Entertainment Tonight*. Other shows, like *The Insider*, were discussed.

"What other option do we have with this kind of draw?" Busch asks. "The best stations have consistency."

Still, Busch and Jones were determined to see and hear every pitch.

They hit the hotel suites in the Mandalay Bay complex and met with Buena Vista, Twentieth Television, Sony and Warner Bros. They were impressed by Tyra Banks' smooth delivery and pilot. Banks could fit on a few Nexstar UPN stations. At Sony Pictures Television, Robin Quivers was sharp and witty, but the men reserved judgment. At Twentieth, they watched the presentation for Suze Orman's chatfest with measured interest.

"Orman has great credibility," Jones says, "but I don't know if she'll launch." (Nexstar has yet to commit to

any of the shows.)

*A Current Affair*, cleared by the Fox station group, also piqued their interest. At Sony, they were surprised to discover Oxygen's raucous reality show *Girls Behaving Badly*.

**"We're better off investing in the few things that make money."**

TIM BUSCH, NEXSTAR

"It was hilarious. We told them to take it to our markets," Busch says. But it's a weekend, all-barter show, and they usually let their stations determine those deals for themselves.

### A SECOND LOOK AT MARTHA

Their most anticipated meeting came at NBC Universal. Last January, like many

others, Busch and Jones were thrilled by *The Jane Pauley Show* pitch and gave the show strong support, clearing it in nine markets. Now some Nexstar stations have downgraded *Pauley* to afternoons, leaving the critical 10 a.m. slot open. It is unclear how NBC will try to jockey *Pauley's* two-year deals. In the meantime, NBC Universal was pushing the unnamed Martha Stewart project. Jones was wary.

After all, Nexstar pulled Stewart's old show off several stations after she was indicted. Now the show host would be an ex-con. But a day later, after their NBC Universal meeting, he was coming around.

"I'm intrigued by the horsepower of [executive producer] Mark Burnett, [Omnimedia executive] Susan Lyne and Martha," Jones says.

His other half, however, took a more cautious approach. "Martha has a track record, and she has high recognition, but what about her likeability?" Busch wonders. "We'll just have to see." ■



# That Rainy Day Is Here

**B&C bids farewell to Johnny Carson**

By Deborah Starr Seibel  
and John Eggerton

**R**aina Bowsler, of Monte Vista, Colo., had been standing in line for more than 24 hours. It was Thursday, May 21, 1992, the second-to-last night of Johnny Carson's nearly 30-year reign on *The Tonight Show*, and his last night in front of a regular studio audience.

Bowsler was at NBC's sprawling Burbank entrance with a crowd that stretched around the block, hoping to grab one of the night's 465 coveted seats.

Someone produced an oversized roll of white paper and let it roll down the sidewalk, where person after person stepped out of line, briefly, to sign it. They could only hope that the man who had helped them fall asleep with a smile for so many years would read it.

"Johnny," wrote Bowsler, "I've been waiting 17 years to say hello, and now I'm saying goodbye. It was worth the 31 hours in line to wish you well."

The competition put a wide array of shows up against Carson over his three-decade reign on *The Tonight Show*: movies, urbane talk (Dick Cavett), not-so-urbane talk (Joey Bishop), songs and variegated jacket linings (Merv Griffin), *Arsenio* and *Nightline*. They came, they entertained—but they failed to conquer.

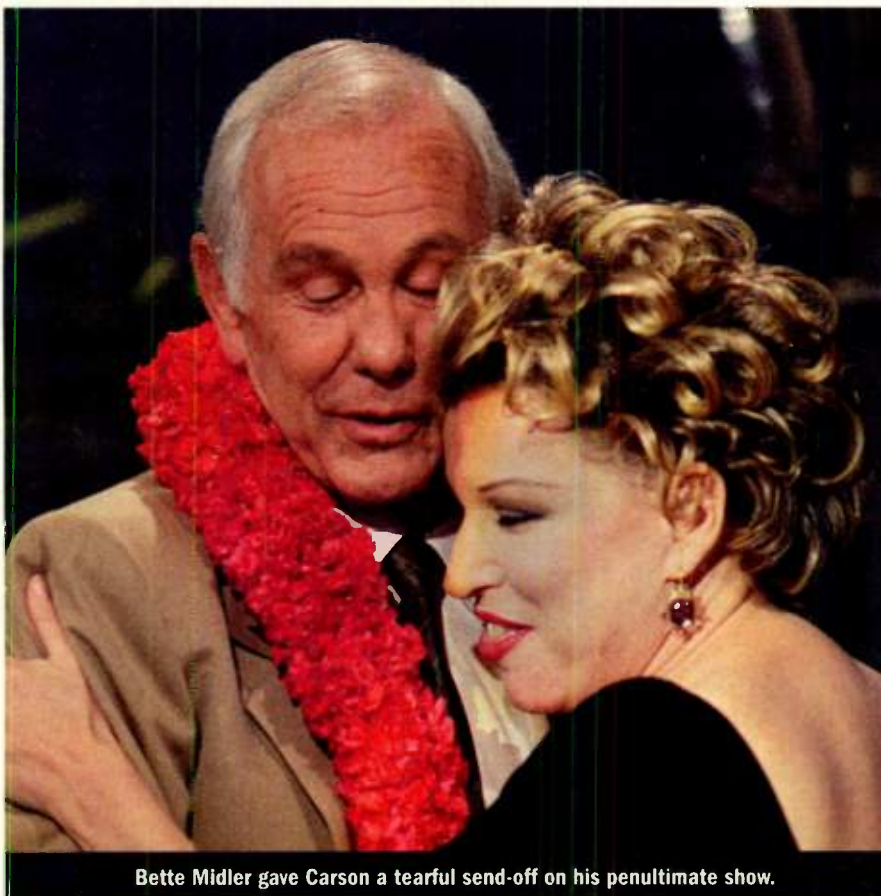
Where *Tonight's* original host, Steve Allen, was a frenetic one-man band, with talents to match or better any guest, and his successor, Jack Parr, was a brilliant, sophisticated center-of-attention, Carson was a master at commanding left-of-center stage. He expertly asserted a comfortable, likeable presence while leaving the spotlight trained on his guests. They—and his audience—loved him for it, and the show became the first stop for any star with a new movie, TV role or record to promote (or, in the case of particular Carson favorite Jimmy Stewart, a poem to read).

Carson came to dominate late night as no one had ruled a time period in TV history and no one has since. If Milton Berle had been TV's Mr. Tuesday Night, Carson became Mr. Every Weeknight. When he announced his retirement, even his closest colleagues couldn't believe he was really ready to throw in the towel. "We all knew it was coming," said music director Doc Severinsen on that warm May day in 1992. "But it still comes as a shock."

#### STANDUP GUY

The laid-back Midwesterner loved show business and its stars, displaying an engaging deference to those who were arguably his entertainment equals, just in another genre. Comics were clearly Carson's favorite guests. He could relate to the pressure of having to command a stage and win over a crowd since, in his own standup days, he had performed on the Ed Sullivan, Steve Allen and Garry Moore shows. On his own show, Carson could literally make—or break—a comic's career. The true sign that a comedian had impressed Carson was when he extended the esteemed invitation to sit down after a standup routine: TV bookings and offers followed almost instantly.

Jerry Seinfeld once said his appearance on *Tonight* was the turning point of his comedy career. Ray Romano also said Carson made him; Joan Rivers feels the same way. Comics across the land were echoing that sentiment last week—and paying tribute. Said Conan O'Brien: "Anyone who does this for living is trying in vain to be Johnny Carson. To me, he'll always be the face, the voice and the spirit of late-night television."



Bette Midler gave Carson a tearful send-off on his penultimate show.

**"I've been waiting 17 years to say hello, and now I'm saying goodbye. It was worth the 31 hours in line to wish you well."**

RAINA BOWSLER, FAN

Add to this Jerry Stiller's observation that, when Carson moved the show from New York to the West Coast in 1972, several actors decided they had to follow, knowing that where Carson went was where the action was.

After his retirement, Carson nearly disappeared from public view, though not from private friendship and expansive personal charity. A long-time smoker, he died Jan. 16 from complications after a protracted battle with emphysema. But even in death, his timing was impeccable. He somehow managed not to steal the limelight from the Golden Globes, the inauguration and the Academy Award nominations.

#### STANDING OVATION

Peter Lassally, an executive producer on Carson's show who now works with Letterman, told TV critics two weeks ago that Carson was doing "just fine" and watching the late-night shows over East Coast feeds from his California home (while occasionally feeding jokes to David Letterman).

Like many comics, Letterman saw his career take off when he became a regular on *The Tonight Show*. He eventually got the slot following Carson's and was widely expected to succeed him; NBC's choice of Jay Leno, another frequent guest host, sent Letterman packing to CBS.

On the night before Carson's final sign-off, the audience wasn't nearly ready to say goodbye. "I just wanted to be here to give him the standing ovation he deserves," said Jim Chrisoulis, of San Jose, Calif.

Inside the familiar NBC studio with the peacock-colored curtains, the atmosphere was electric. When Ed McMahon cranked it up one more time to call out his signature, "Heeeeere's Johnny!" the audience leapt to its feet. The applause and the "bravos" simply would not stop. One minute. Two minutes. More. There were tears in Carson's eyes. Every time he tried to get the audience to stop, they howled even louder. For once, Carson seemed at a loss, knowing there was nothing he could do but bask in the adoration.

When the director cut to commercial break, Carson stayed in front of the audience. "You just did that so you wouldn't have to listen to the monologue," he joked. "I tell you, I can't take too much more of this."

#### THREE-HANKY SHOW

But there was a lot more. Robin Williams presented the King of Late Night with a custom-made rocking chair. Bette Midler and Carson sang an off-the-cuff duet, "Here's That Rainy Day." The song ends, "Funny, but that rainy day is here." Certainly, the waterworks were. Midler said later that she didn't know how she had kept from weeping that night.

During another commercial break, Carson looked out at the audience and said, "You people are seeing one helluva show tonight." The audience agreed, launching into yet another ovation.

But when Midler closed the show singing "One for the Road," the audience's sniffles were almost as loud as her voice.

Kleenex appeared everywhere. When Carson took his final bow and the lights finally dimmed, the audience wouldn't stop clapping. They didn't want to stop, long after he had left the stage. ■



came only days after agency Chairman Michael Powell said he will quit in March as well. Other Powell appointees are leaving the agency, too, including General Counsel John Rogovin, who resigned in mid January. Both Ferree and Rogovin had ties to Powell before they joined the FCC.

## PBS Pulls Father-less 'Buster'

PBS has decided not to distribute a scheduled Feb. 2 airing—and March 23 re-airing—of a now-controversial episode of new kids show, *Postcards From Buster*.

But show producer WGBH Boston, which was "disappointed" in the PBS decision, defends the show and says it will air the program March 23 and make it available to other stations.

The episode in question, which mixes animation and live action, features animated rabbit Buster's visit to Vermont for some maple-syrup collecting and a visit with a family both of whose parents are women. The second part of the plotline generated some complaints, including a letter Tuesday night from Department of Education Secretary Margaret Spellings.

So, was it administration pressure



No sensitive topics for Buster

that prompted the decision? A PBS spokeswoman says no. Although Spellings' concerns about whether this was the right venue to introduce this sensitive topic "dovetailed" with those of PBS, the spokeswoman says, the decision was made and stations informed before PBS President Pat Mitchell received the Spellings letter.

## HBO Close To 'Sopranos' Sale

Home Box Office was on the cusp at press time of completing its mega-bucks auction for cable rights to its hit *The Sopranos*. TNT and A&E were dueling in the final rounds at the end of the week, having beaten out Spike, USA and FX. HBO had been seeking \$1.8 million per episode, but industry executives say it could go even higher, to \$2.1 million,

# Feds Won't Ask Court To Uphold Deregulation

Media companies won't have the backing of the Bush Administration or the FCC when they ask the Supreme Court to permit more media-ownership deregulation this week.

Justice Department and FCC lawyers confirmed last week they won't ask the high court to preserve loosened broadcast-ownership rules enacted in 2003. The FCC's sweeping deregulation was thrown out by the federal appeals court in Philadelphia in June. Monday, Jan. 31 is last day for appealing the decision. The lower court said the FCC failed to adequately justify the loosened limits on TV, radio and cross-industry ownership.

The National Association of Broadcasters, Tribune, Media General, Viacom and other industry players are expected to file appeals of their own. The support of government lawyers would have greatly bolstered their arguments.

Administration lawyers didn't explain their reasons, but an FCC source says both the Solicitor General and FCC lawyers agreed the case was weak because no constitutional questions are at stake.

Unless the high court overturns the lower-court order to rewrite the broadcast-ownership rules, the next FCC chairman will be forced to overhaul every rule governing local-TV ownership and crossownership. Because of political backlash against the FCC's attempted changes, the next version of the rules will presumably be much more restrictive than the one passed two summers ago.

The NAB and its TV-station-group members are desperate to resurrect FCC rule changes that would have permitted ownership of two TV stations in most markets and up to three in a handful of the largest cities. Tribune and Media General are fighting for the right to pair TV stations with a newspaper in the same town. Viacom wants to operate TV- and radio-station combos in more markets.

Opponents of media consolidation are overjoyed that the federal government isn't pursuing the case. "The victory today is a step in a long road towards building a media that truly responds to the needs of citizens," says Common Cause President Chellie Pingree.

past the record-breaking \$1.9 million price Spike paid for CBS powerhouse *CSI*.

The pay network is offering 78 episodes of the Mafia drama for availability in fall 2006.

Although the versions that aired on HBO were loaded with colorful language, nudity and graphic violence, the network is offering edited versions to meet the tighter standards of basic-cable channels.

## FCC Rejects Smut Complaints

The FCC tossed out 36 indecency complaints filed by the Parents Television Council against prime time network programming that aired between Oct. 29, 2001, and Feb. 11,



The Simpsons evades the FCC.

2004. The shows included some of TV's most popular and longest-running shows, including *The Simpsons*, *Will & Grace*, *Friends*, *Dawson's Creek*, *NYPD Blue* and *Gilmore Girls*. All the broadcast networks were included, except CBS, whose complaints were expunged by the FCC late last year as part of a consent decree. PTC complained because dialog during episodes in question included words like "dick," "vaginal," "hell," "orgasm" and "penis." Others featured sexual innuendo or implied sexual activity. The FCC ruled that the dialog and activity described in the complaints were too fleeting or insufficiently graphic to warrant a fine.

## Broadcast-Decency Bills Return

Rep. Fred Upton (R-Mich.) and Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.) reintroduced their respective indecency bills last week. Both are an attempt to try again to give the FCC more firepower in the fight against sex and rough language. The Upton bill boosts fines to a maximum \$500,000 per incident. It also targets performers by making

them liable for a fine for a first offense and upping that maximum fine from \$11,000 to \$500,000.

The Brownback bill increases the FCC fine for indecency from \$32,500 to \$325,000 per incident, up to a maximum of \$3 million per incident.

Brownback and Upton introduced similar bills in the previous Congress, but they got loaded down with deal-breakers in committee, including targeting violence and media consolidation's effect on content.

## P&G's Biggest Buy Yet

While mergers are usually bad news for media outlets' ad budgets, Procter & Gamble's \$57 billion acquisition of Gillette Co. makes it the world's biggest marketer, adding Gillette's \$1 billion of ad spending to its already huge \$5.5 billion coffers.

Madison Avenue firms say there's little brand overlap. There are, however, implications for a swath of ad agencies. Gillette's media buys rely heavily on high-end sports and male-oriented programming viewed by consumers who favor its shaving products and brands. P&G, however, is a packaged-goods-marketing organization known as an advertising penny-pincher and for its media-planning efficiency.

Even without the Gillette acquisition, P&G is revamping its marketing to find better ways to reach consumers. P&G is pushing its media agencies to adopt a sophisticated consumer-centric approach to "communications planning" that engages customers in new ways.

The likely beneficiaries are P&G shops, including Publicis Group, WPP Group and Grey Global, with Publicis' Starcom MediaVest Group and Carat Interactive—the two share P&G communications planning—most likely to assume media buying for Gillette. The likely loser? Omnicom Group, whose agencies have handled Gillette's business for decades.



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# Life After Johnny

Late-night smart alecks abound where once a kind icon ruled

**T**here will never be another Johnny Carson. That irrefutable fact has made last week's TV memorials of this late-night king almost unbearably poignant.

It wasn't so much that we were shocked by his death—rumors of his failing health had been circulating for weeks—as we were rocked by a teary wave of nostalgia for the Carson era and all that this classiest of late-night talk-show hosts represented. As TV, radio and print sources heaped many deserving hosannas upon Carson's life and career, what became increasingly clear is that we had been missing this man's presence in our lives for a very long time.

We now live in a world of Dave or Jay—and maybe Jon. To be generous, let's even throw Conan into the mix. After all, he will eventually inherit the *Tonight Show* throne (unless Jay balks and is carried chin-first out of Burbank, kicking and screaming). Late-night TV has mutated into an awfully crowded arena—just one more ugly and bloodied battleground in the complicated and contentious TV universe we inhabit. There really isn't room in this sphere for a gentleman, which is one reason there will never be another Johnny Carson.

Watching the endless, and endlessly enjoyable, loop of clips from the Carson *Tonight Show* era—Carnac! Aunt Blabby! Ed Ames and that hatchet! The monkeys! Little Joey “I watched you while I was vomiting” Lawrence! That darling old potato-chip lady! Those frisky animals brought on stage by Joan Embry! His playful banter with loyal sidekick Ed McMahon!—we are thrust back to a simpler, more contented TV time. The choices may have been fewer, but the quality then was greater.

We miss Johnny, to be sure, but what we also miss is that feeling of shared experience, of the nightly ritual in which we imagined everyone we knew, young and old, was curling up before lights-out to hear what this affable, witty, laid-back yet upright guy had to say about the buffoons, hypocrites and scoundrels of the day. With the sort of exquisite timing that could turn a dud into a gem (and if it stayed a dud, it was often even funnier), Carson made his monologue an art form as much as a cultural barometer. He had bite, but it was cushioned with a graceful delivery that somehow never felt mean. Which is why, in this age of snarky irony and cruel cynicism, there will never be another Johnny Carson.

Our choices today include the shrill, giggly populism of Jay Leno (whose *Tonight Show* tribute to Carson last Monday was uncharacteristically dignified); the dour but unpredictable iconoclasm of David Letterman (to whom we recently learned Carson occasionally fed jokes over the last year); the droll insincerity of Jon Stewart's mock newscast and the hyper-surrealism of Conan O'Brien. (Oh, yeah. There is also the frat-boy torpor of Jimmy Kimmel, which only goes to show how deeply the real estate has been devalued.)

Perhaps the nicest guy in the field today is also the newest: Scot actor/comic Craig Ferguson, who has quietly taken up shop in CBS' post-Letterman slot as host of the *Late Late Show*, replacing the unbearably smug Craig Kilborn.

What distinguished Carson at the *Tonight* desk was the profound comfort level we felt in his presence. He kept his cool, even during the most turbulent decades of the last century, but was never too hip for the room.

Was he jaded? Hardly. Carson made room on his couch for the biggest legends of Hollywood, Broadway and Vegas, but we also witnessed his genuine delight in the birth of many a major career. This extensive list includes Roseanne Barr, Jerry Seinfeld, Drew Carey, Steve Martin and Ellen DeGeneres, whose loopy and lovably playful daytime hit is the closest thing we now have to a Carson-style, feel-good chatfest.

Carson made it all look easy—and his guests were allowed to shine. Appearing with him was not a competition but a privilege; sitting on the

couch next to him was a coronation. In today's disposable *Last Comic Standing* culture, the road to success is paved with edge and attitude. Johnny Carson, in contrast, embraced class and charm.

To look back on the Carson *Tonight* era is to savor some of the last vestiges of a faded show-biz tradition that reaches back to vaudeville and slapstick. His long *Tonight Show* run culminated in a classic next-to-last show featuring the manic Robin Williams and the electrifying Bette Midler. Her final serenade to the man behind the desk remains one of TV's all-time greatest tearjerkers.

Reason enough to weep: The *Tonight* of Carson's time has pretty much gone the way of the variety show. There truly will never be another Johnny Carson.

And that is a crying shame. ■

**MATT ROUSH**



Carson was late-night television's last gentleman.

**In today's disposable 'Last Comic Standing' culture, the road to success is paved with edge and attitude, not class and charm.**

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