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The Kevin Martin Factor

New FCC chief's mission to clean up prime time could hit the networks hard. **Page 11**



\$6
Billion

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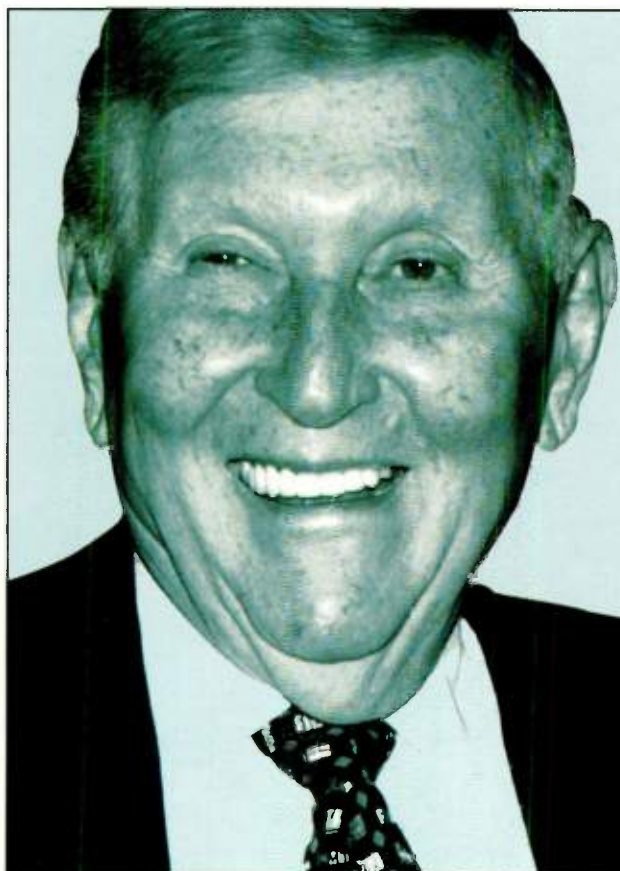


Scene from Here! Family

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Double Your Pleasure

Why does Viacom Chairman Sumner Redstone want to break apart the company he spent a decade putting together? **By John Higgins**

Under Sumner Redstone's split scenario, one company would look like Viacom from back in the day: MTV Networks, Showtime and Paramount studio, run by Viacom Co-President Tom Freston. The other half, with Co-President Les Moonves at the helm, would house CBS, UPN, a host of TV stations, syndication, and the troubled Infinity radio and billboard units. To Redstone, this is more than a ploy to goose Viacom's weak stock. It's a whole new strategic direction. See page 18

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■ **Money Talks: Behind Liberty's Decision to Spinoff Discovery Page 8**



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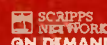
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B&C WEEK

Where to be and what to watch...
Monday, March 21

Jane Pauley's syndicated talk show may have been terminated by NBC Uni, demonstrating how hard it is to get traction with new syndicated product, but that won't dampen the Syndicated Network Television Association's spirits today. They're going to Oprahland! It's "Syndication Day" in Chicago, sandwiched between

SNTA stops in New York earlier this month and Los Angeles on Thursday. Syndicators will just keep on accentuating the positive—like perennial ray of ratings sunshine Ms.



Jane Pauley

Winfrey—for the benefit of advertisers and media buyers gathered at the Ritz-Carlton hotel. The syndicated ad sales market is a \$3.9 billion business, so the feedbacks for the breakfast presentation should be memorable. Attention, toddlers and their caregivers:

On *Dora the Explorer* (Nickelodeon, 1:30 p.m. ET) the wee

señorita gets a sibling, making her Big Sister *Dora*. And possibly sending her sidekick, Boots, into simian depression. *Kitsch alert: Las Vegas Garden of Love* premieres on ABC Family (10 p.m. ET). It's a reality show, according to the network, about a "dynamic"



Dora the Explorer

family that operates a Vegas wedding chapel. Not to be confused with *Hitched*, a drama Fox is developing about a brother and sister who own a Vegas wedding chapel, or *Married in Vegas*, a series A&E is producing about ... ah, forget it.



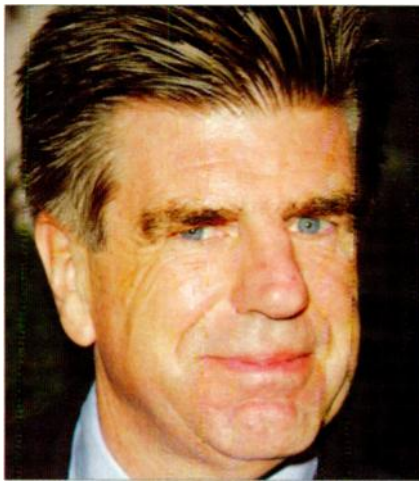
Garden of Love's Johnny

Tuesday, March 22

The Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association holds its first Media Law Forum in Washington today—oops, scratch that. Registration was a tad light, so the SBCA cancelled. That's the trouble with a business dominated by just two major players, EchoStar and DirecTV: A couple of people have to shampoo their hair or walk the dog and sud-

A World of His Own

By J. Max Robins



Viacom Co-President and Co-COO Tom Freston

Back in 1996, I was having lunch with Tom Freston. Paramount was about to release the movie *Beavis and Butt-Head Do America*, and Freston talked frankly about MTV's often strained relationship with the studio.

"So because we're all part of the same corporate family, we of course make the *Beavis and Butt-Head* movie with Paramount," said Freston. "Then when it's released, we'll promote the hell out of it on MTV, and we'll all make a lot of money. But we just as well could have done the movie with another partner and still made a lot of money. Who knows? Maybe some other studio would have been a better creative fit, and we would eventually end up making even more money."

Viacom Chairman Sumner Redstone had acquired Paramount two years earlier, in 1994, and the relationship between the studio and Freston's MTV fiefdom (Nickelodeon, VH1, etc.) never got much easier over the course of a decade. Too often, Freston's cost-efficient, rapidly growing networks had to pay for the sins of their corporate brethren. He wanted a development budget to match his performance, not be weighed down by a bad year at Paramount.

Freston has never liked the word "synergy" or had much faith in the corporate mantra that bigger is better. That's why when Redstone announced he wanted to split Viacom in two (see page 18), I thought about that lunch nine years ago and knew that, if the idea didn't originate at least in part with Freston, it certainly had his hearty blessing. He hasn't

spoken much in public since the split announcement, but as far back as 1994, in this magazine, Freston made his feelings clear: "Synergy is an awful word. It's hard to pull off in a company that has creative products, because they're not going to work with somebody just because they're in the same company." Paramount had been in the Viacom fold for two months at this point.

When we broke bread way back when, Freston had some career advice for me. "Hey Max, if you ever decide to write a book," he said. "Why don't you do one called *Synergy, Sminergy!*"

Of course, these days Freston's domain as co-COO of Viacom includes the film division of Paramount. In an interview last June, after the abrupt departure of COO Mel Karmazin resulted in his and Les Moonves' promotion to co-COO status, Freston seemed to relish finally having the studio reins after years of collaboration. "We've made 27 movies with Paramount," he told *B&C*. "Making a movie with Paramount versus having Paramount report to you is different."

Not all of Paramount reports to him; the syndication operation is Moonves' responsibility. That arrangement is expected to remain in place even if Redstone's split of the company goes forward.

As *B&C* Business Editor John Higgins notes on page 18 in his analysis of Redstone's plan, Freston would emerge with the growth part of the empire, including the various networks he has been pushing worldwide. Meanwhile, Moonves would be left with

the old industries, from broadcast networks to radio to billboards, which may still throw off cash but have relatively small room for growth.

At that memorable '96 meal, Freston dismissed talk circulating at the time that he was on a shortlist to run a broadcast network. "Why would I want to do that and get strapped into an economic model where I'm spending \$1 million or more an hour on programming," he said. "I'd rather be some place where it costs me about \$40,000 or less an hour instead."

And these days, the Viacom co-COO would obviously rather rule a place where his fortunes are tied to the things he can control. ■

E-mail your comments to bcrobins@reedbusiness.com

THE ROBINS REPORT

Freston has never liked the word "synergy" or had much faith in the corporate mantra that bigger is better.

denly you're looking at an empty room.

Wednesday, March 23

Guess who's being described: "Superstar. Mother. Daughter. Lover. Artist. Cook. She's many things that will surprise you—but she's definitely no angel." (A) Martha Stewart (B) Condoleezza Rice (C) Elton John (D) Dora the Explorer circa 2035. You're right! It's (E) Farrah Fawcett, the sometimes wobbly star of *Chasing Farrah*, a six-part reality series premiering tonight on TV Land (10 p.m. ET). If they ever catch her, here's a suggestion: Demand to know whether or not Ms. Fawcett is in fact Anna Nicole Smith's mom. They're so much alike—so, you know, Texan.

Thursday, March 24



Officer Steve Carell

Good news for apprehensive fans of *The Office*: The Americanized version debuting tonight (NBC, 9:30 p.m. ET) is not the gutted, unfunny simulation of Ricky Gervais's towering achievement that you feared. NBC likely will get critical huzzahs for daring to air such a smart interpretation of the beloved yet wince-inducing British mockumentary about life in cubicle hell. But the jury's out on whether a sizeable audience will embrace such spiky fare. NBC's taking its best shot, giving *The Office* a "preview" airing with *The Apprentice* as its lead-in, before moving the show to Tuesdays.

Friday, March 25

Ving Rhames buffs his dome, unwraps a lollipop and rolls out as Lieutenant Theo Kojak tonight on USA Network original series *Kojak* (9 p.m. ET). In bit of corporate synergissimo, NBC Uni—which owns USA and the original Kojak series but not *B&C*, we swear, despite the



Ving Rhames

NBC-heavy tenor of this week's column—is this week releasing the DVD *Kojak: Season One*, with Telly Savalas as Lt. K. Still love ya, Telly. But Manhattan in the 1970s? Not so much.



Telly Savalas

—Mark Lasswell

E-mail info for *B&C Week* to bcweek@reedbusiness.com



FAST TRACK

Bush: Our News Packages Legal, Based on Fact

President George W. Bush said Wednesday that the administration will continue to use packaged video news releases (VNRs) and it is up to stations to inform their viewers where they came from if they choose to.

Bush cited a **Justice Department** opinion from last July, which held that such VNRs are not "covert propaganda." That opinion conflicts with one from the **Government Accountability Office** that said they were, but Justice is the administration's controlling legal authority.

The administration has been criticized for VNRs on health care and drug policy, among others, that feature actors posing as reporters and, without disclaimers, can be mistaken for news stories. Bush said it is up to local stations to make those disclosures.

"Justice says that these pieces are in the law if based on facts not advocacy," said the president. "Stations, if there is a deep concern, ought to tell viewers what they are watching."

In a letter sent to **Health and Human Services** last week, Rep. **George Miller** and others asked HHS for copies of its video news releases, contracts and the stations that aired the VNRs following the GAO advisory that they constitute "covert propaganda."

An HHS spokesman said the department would get back to Congress "in due time," but the answer will be the same as the president's: that Justice, HHS' controlling legal authority, has concluded that the VNRs aren't covert propaganda.—J.E.

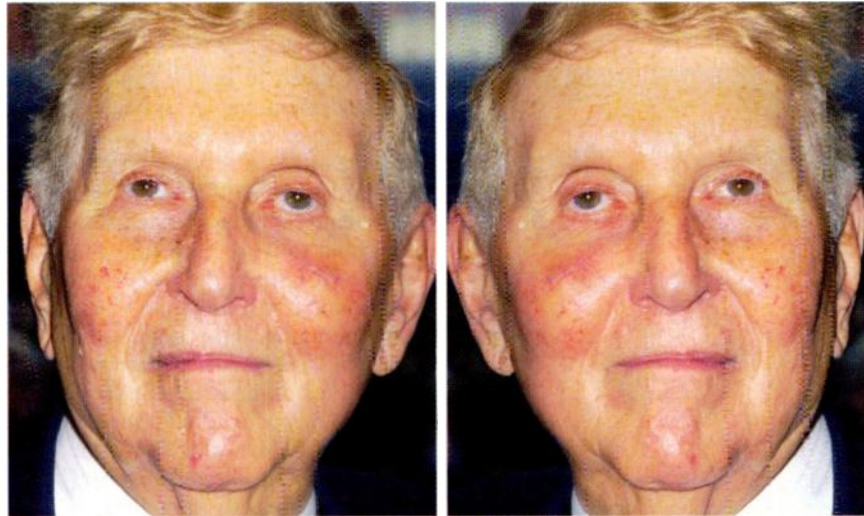
Burger King: OK, Have It Your Way

With increasing pressure on food marketers to emphasize healthy over hefty, fast-food giant **Burger King Corp.** has agreed to modify its kids'-meal TV ads to show "the range of food options available," rather than a single, king-sized choice.

That decision was prompted by the children's-advertising review unit of the **Council of Better Business Bureaus**, which took issue with "Chomp Chomp Chomp

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

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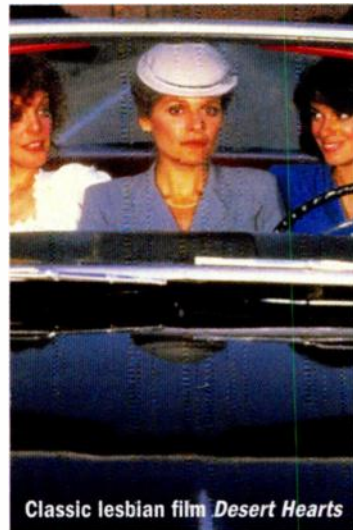
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Classic lesbian film *Desert Hearts*

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and Away," a commercial it said could confuse kids about entrées and side orders.

The ad showed a double cheeseburger in the shot of a kids' meal, rather than the single cheeseburger, hamburger and chicken tenders. That apparently violates rule No. 6, which says that "what is included and excluded in the initial purchase should be clearly established."

Burger King said that, in the future, kids'-meal TV ads will show the range of options—including the aforementioned foods, plus apple-sauce, milk and apple juice—and, "if applicable," will specifically highlight lower-calorie foods. It also agreed to modify the kids'-meal section of its Web site.—J.E.

A&E's Davatzes Out, Raven In

Nick Davatzes will retire as president and CEO of **A&E Television Networks** effective April 1. **Abbe Raven**, currently president of A&E Network, will succeed the 21-year A&E veteran.

Davatzes, whose announcement coincided with a birthday he celebrated last week, will transition to retirement and a new title as CEO emeritus, remaining an adviser from AETN's **Stamford, Conn.**, offices. Raven, president of A&E Network since September 2004, will become the company's second president and CEO.

During Davatzes' reign, AETN has grown from a single cable channel—flagship A&E Network—to an international, multi-faceted company with eight other businesses spanning TV programming, home video, CDs and Web sites.

Combined, AETN channels reach 230 million TV households in more than 130 countries.

This year, AETN reached Davatzes' professed goal of becoming a "billion-dollar company."



Abbe Raven

Raven, who celebrated her 23rd anniversary with the company last week, served at A&E Network since its launch in 1984, holding various executive responsibilities before taking over as president.

Under her watch, A&E has seen steady ratings growth with younger demos—up almost 90% in prime with 18- to 49-year-olds since she rejoined the network in 2002 from a stint as EVP/GM of sister network **History Channel**.—A.B.

Continued on page 20

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NEW YORK POST

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Malone's Shrink Rap

Discovery spinoff is all about Liberty CEO's contraction

Look at everything John Malone does these days through this prism: He's a seller of U.S. assets, not a buyer.

If you keep that idea in mind, it's a lot easier to understand last week's complicated deal to spin Liberty's \$6 billion stake in Discovery Communications Inc. off to Liberty's shareholders. Malone is not just making Discovery a little easier for someone else to buy. He's making Liberty Media itself more digestible, more alluring to a buyer.

The move is related to Malone's recent moves to acquire control of a larger stake in Rupert Murdoch's closely held News Corp.; Malone is already the biggest outside shareholder. The knee-jerk reaction of many Wall Streeters was that he wanted to mount a takeover. In fact, Malone wants Murdoch's full attention, prodding him into making an offer for some or all of Liberty Media's assets.

COMPLEX DEALS

Malone is openly fond of complicated deals, but even by Malone's standards, his Discovery plan is convoluted. Malone proposes spinning Liberty's 50% stake in Discovery off to Liberty shareholders. A new company, Discovery Holdings, would trade like any other stock even though Discovery itself would remain a private company.

Because the new company needs to have some sort of actual operating

company inside to keep the deal from triggering any taxes, Malone is tossing his \$300 million Ascent Media hotel pay-per-view and TV-production unit into the deal.

Discovery's other two major shareholders—Cox Enterprises and Advance Newhouse—are being invited to contribute their shares. There's a few good reasons it's highly unlikely they will do so (more on that later), but Malone says he'll move forward without Cox and Newhouse.

Since SEC filings show that they have right of first refusal on "any proposed transfer" of Liberty's Discovery shares, it will be interesting to see if



John Malone is moving to increase control of his stake in News Corp.

MONEY TALKS By John M. Higgins

Cox or Newhouse not only passes on Malone's invitation but actually tries to thwart his plan.

Discovery founder John Hendricks told executives last week that going public would put the company more in control of its own destiny. As a public company, Discovery wouldn't be quite as beholden to the financial needs of

its three large owners. Also, the public stock becomes a currency that Discovery can use to buy other networks.

But the odd structure of Malone's proposal doesn't call for Discovery itself to really go public. His new company would be sort of a mutual fund, with Liberty's 50% in Discovery as its primary holding. Under terms of the deal, each shareholder would receive 0.5 Discovery Holdings share for every Liberty share. The stock of the new Discovery Holdings could zoom.

That would change if Cox and Newhouse threw in their shares, but it's hard to see why they would rush to join in. First, if they wanted Discovery to go public, it would already be public. Investment bankers have been pounding down the Discovery partners' doors for years, begging for an IPO assignment. Hendricks has lobbied as well. Cox and Newhouse don't need a Malone shell company to do that.

Why stay private? Cox Communications President Jim Robbins and Ad-

vance Newhouse President Robert Miron have always said they didn't want to give away the upside. Discovery doesn't need to raise capital. So if they think Discovery is going to continue growing, they wouldn't want to share that growth with clients of Charles Schwab.

SURRENDER CONTROL

And it certainly seems that Robbins and Miron would be surrendering control. Right now, any Discovery partner has veto power over major decisions. But as controlling shareholder of Liberty, Malone would also be controlling shareholder of Discovery Holdings. Would Robbins and Miron give up that control to get some liquidity?

Last year, Robbins looked like a possible seller, but that's not likely. When Cox Enterprises took cable operator Cox Communications private in November, the larger company took on \$8 billion in new debt. And executives at the conservative, family-owned newspaper company are notoriously debt-averse. Cox disclosed just last week that it plans to sell almost \$3 billion worth of cable systems, all in its Mid-America division. Rolling a publicly traded Discovery into a derivative security would also let Cox pare \$3 billion in debt.

Look for Liberty to shrink even further. Right now, Liberty Media is valued about \$37 billion. That's too big for most potential buyers. Shedding Discovery is a start. Liberty's QVC unit is another candidate for a spinoff, with a value of about \$15 billion. Another step could be reorganizing its \$3 billion stake in Barry Diller's Interactive Corp. At that point, half the remaining value in Liberty would be the News Corp. stake.

If executed, the deals could shrink Liberty down to a manageable bite—just the right size and flavor for Rupert Murdoch. ■

E-mail comments to
jhiggins@reedbusiness.com

The deals could shrink Liberty down to a manageable bite—just the right size and flavor for Rupert Murdoch.

A History of Discovery

1982-85: John Hendricks raises \$5 million in seed money for launch of Cable Educational Network, helped by Allen & Co. and other investors.

JUNE 1985: Discovery Communications Inc. launches Discovery Channel with 156,000 subscribers (now in 89.6 million households).

JUNE 1986: Consortium of cable operators Newhouse, Cox, United Cable and John Malone's Tele-Communications Inc. (TCI) purchases 40% of the company; later, it buys another 16%.

FEBRUARY 1987: Discovery Channel airs *Russia: Live From the Inside*, 66 hours live from the Soviet Union.

APRIL 1989: Discovery launches Discovery Channel in the UK, creating Discovery Networks International division.

SEPTEMBER 1989: Discovery Channel airs

its first original program, *Ivory Wars*.

MAY 1991: Discovery acquires The Learning Channel (TLC) for more than \$32 million.

APRIL 1992: Discovery Channel airs \$1.5 million documentary *In the Company of Whales*, filmed in 15 countries and several oceans.

JUNE 1992: TLC-seller Data Broadcasting files class-action complaint against TCI and Discovery alleging "anti-competitive use of monopoly power" and "malicious, knowing, willful and conscious disregard for the legal rights of Data Broadcasting" because Lifetime Television had signed a letter of intent to purchase TLC for \$39 million before Discovery bought it.

JUNE 1996: Discovery acquires The Nature Co.'s 114 stores, which launches Discovery Commerce.

JUNE 1996: Discovery launches Animal Planet.

OCTOBER 1996: Discovery launches a suite of digital networks: Discovery Science Channel (now The Science Channel, 37.2 million households), Discovery Civilization Channel (now Discovery Times Channel, 35.5 million), Discovery Home & Leisure Channel (now Discovery Home Channel) and Discovery Kids Channel.

DECEMBER 1997: Discovery acquires 70% of Travel Channel (100% in February 1999, currently 79.4 million households).

MARCH 1998: Discovery forms global joint venture with BBC.

JUNE 1998: Discovery launches digital Discovery en Español.

JULY 1998: Discovery launches digital Discovery Wings Channel (now Military Channel)

AUGUST 1999: Discovery launches Discovery Health Channel.

APRIL 2002: Discovery and New York

Times Co. form joint venture to launch Discovery Times Channel.

JUNE 2002: Discovery launches Discovery HD Theater, one of the first 24-hour high-definition channels.

OCTOBER 2002: Discovery Kids and NBC partner in creating three-hour Saturday block "Discovery Kids on NBC."

SEPTEMBER 2003: Discovery acquires United Learning, positioning Discovery as a leader of video-based learning.

DECEMBER 2003: Discovery launches FitTV (formerly The Health Network).

MARCH 2004: Discovery creates Discovery Education division to provide core-curriculum Web videos to 50,000 subscribing schools.

OCTOBER 2004: Discovery launches international Discovery Lifestyle Networks portfolio.

JUNE 17, 2005: Twentieth anniversary of Discovery Channel.

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FCC

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Advanced Micro Devices
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Recipient (TV)**



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TV Transmission
Antenna Group, Inc.

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Will Comcast Save TiVo?

Deal opens new revenue streams, expands operations **By Ken Kerschbaumer**

TiVo Inc. says the agreement it made with Comcast last week will be the first of many it signs with the nation's largest cable operators. While company execs won't detail ongoing talks, TiVo got a shot of adrenaline when it signed with Comcast to make TiVo's DVR service available to its 21.5 million subscribers in 2006.

The announcement sent TiVo stock soaring 75% on March 15 and infused the struggling company with confidence after a bumpy year. "This puts us in a real position of leadership for discussion with other cable companies," says Dave Courtney, TiVo CFO/EVP, worldwide operations and administration.

For TiVo, the deal creates three new revenue streams: payment fees for DVR service, upfront fees for ongoing engineering services and recurring per-subscriber monthly fees that will scale as penetration grows.

Comcast, in turn, expands its DVR stable. The TiVo service will be available as a higher-priced alternative to the basic DVR functionality the cable operator currently offers on Motorola DVR set-tops. The TiVo software will also reside on the Motorola boxes. This helps TiVo's interactive ad service, which Comcast is adding to its boxes.

Comcast will put TiVo software through the typical trial paces, pushing its deployment to mid to late 2006. By early 2007, TiVo's current deal with DirecTV ends. TiVo has about 3 million subscribers—more than 2 million of which are a result of the DirecTV deal. It is unclear if DirecTV will force its subscribers to adopt its own service or let them keep TiVo.

EXIT HARDWARE BUSINESS

TiVo's alliance with Comcast is a step toward getting out of the hardware business. Typically, TiVo customers have to buy the DVR in order to subscribe to the service. The set-top box costs in the neighborhood of \$200 and up.

Comcast, however, is already deploying DVR hardware from Motorola. That gives TiVo's software a natural home; Comcast subscribers will not have to purchase a TiVo set-top box. Comcast currently charges \$9.95 for its DVR service, and the TiVo version will run a few dollars more.

"Being in the hardware business has never been part of our strategy," says Courtney. "We don't make money on the hardware; it's a break-even business. If we can get other manufacturers to distribute versions of DVR devices compatible with our software, we can reduce our hardware position."

Paul Alfieri, Motorola PR manager for the

connected-home business, says the deal illustrates that partnerships like this are possible and can "still leverage the existing deployed platform. It's good for Motorola and the [cable] industry."

For now, TiVo is focused on enhancing profitability by controlling subscription-acquisition costs and managing growth, says Courtney. Resources are properly split among developing stand-alone products and joint developments with companies like Comcast.

THINGS TO COME

While the deal does nothing near-term to enhance that goal, it does end a string of bad news for TiVo. At CES, DirecTV announced the end of its relationship with the Alviso, Calif.-based manufacturer. That loss was punctuated by TiVo CEO Mike Ramsey's saying he will step down once a successor is found, and President Marty Yudkovitz left his post Jan. 31.

"This is a fantastic lifeline for TiVo," says Adi Kishore, Yankee Group media and entertainment strategies analyst. "It's not only that Comcast is the biggest MSO but that it is becoming the definer of cable-technology development." And the deal could be a harbinger of things

to come.

But Alan Bezoza, Friedman Billings Ramsey's SVP, broadband cable research, has reservations about the union: "This gives TiVo some market momentum, but, ultimately, the stock is overvalued if it stays around \$6. The company still faces a lot of difficulty."

From Comcast's perspective, the deal beefs up the MSO's existing technical capabilities and product offerings. TiVo's interface, search features, wish-list function and ability to program from a remote location are just some of the features Comcast expects its subscribers to find attractive.

"You can always find someone who hates the other DVR guides, but TiVo's interface is popular across the board because it's easy to use and intuitive," Kishore says. "It's done a good job of identifying the right mix of functionality and simplicity, and they do a good job of adding functionality."

Bezoza, however, doesn't see how Comcast benefits. It already has a DVR programming guide with 90% of the TiVo feature set. A more advanced DVR option might be nice, but he questions how many subscribers will want to pay the additional surcharge. He expects the new deal to give TiVo only \$1 per subscriber.

Courtney, however, is sold.

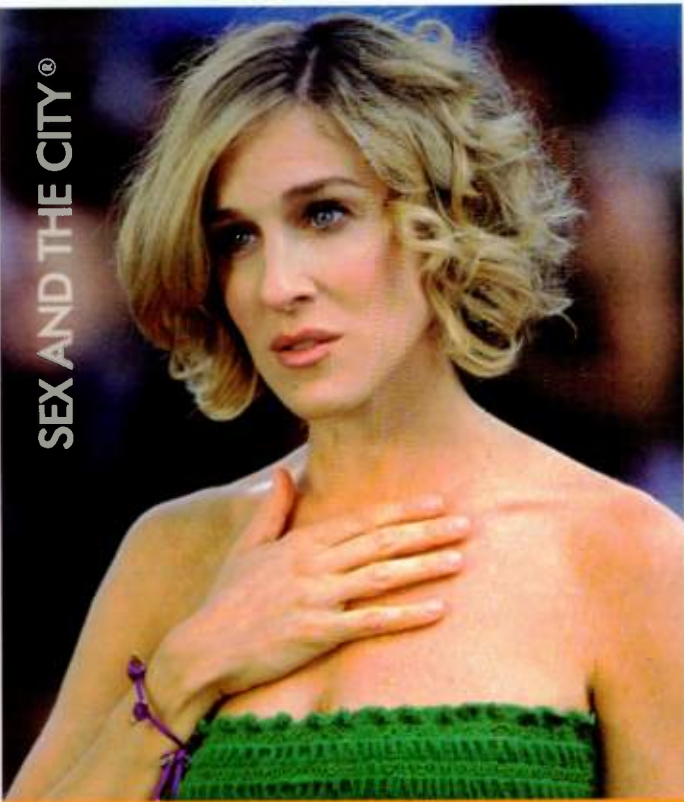
"Any particular dollar figure is nothing but speculation. This deal is a tremendous opportunity for both of us," he says, "and we've found the No. 1 MSO, which gives us tremendous volume." ■

"This is a fantastic lifeline for TiVo."

**ADI KISHORE,
YANKEE GROUP**



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THAT REACHES DEEPER

You want broad reach against your demo. Imagine the effective reach when you also connect with people. TBS does both.



very funny

Kevin Martin's Challenge

New FCC chairman could pose problem for Big Media **By Bill McConnell**

When people meet Kevin Martin, the first thing they notice is a boyish face that appears much younger than his 38 years. But the youthful looks belie an ambition that has driven him from Harvard Law School to presidential aide and, now, to his latest job as chairman of the FCC.

At the FCC, where he has been a commissioner for four years, Martin staunchly defended local broadcasters' demands for more say over their contracts with the major networks and for expanded cable-carriage rights in the digital world. Now that President Bush has picked him as the next FCC chairman, Martin has the power to make sure those pleas aren't pushed aside as they have been by predecessor Michael Powell.

Martin was widely regarded as the president's choice. He also was the favorite of Bush's social-conservative allies because of his strong support for Washington's attack on broadcast indecency. He takes over as the FCC and Congress are midstream in a number of major proceedings that will impact the TV business. Topping Martin's television agenda will be continuing the FCC's campaign to punish broadcasters that violate indecency restrictions, completing the digital-television transition, and settling allegations that the networks have abused their market leverage over affiliated stations.

The commissioner-turned-chief must steer the FCC's upcoming review of broadcast-ownership rules and will likely be charged with implementing a major rewrite of telecommunications laws that Congress is expected to pass sometime in 2006. Martin favored broad deregulation of broadcast-ownership limits in 2003, and the rule relaxation he supported was overruled by federal judges last summer.

Martin favors letting owners control two or three stations in more markets, eliminating the ban on crossownership of stations and newspapers in the same town. That deregulation is most sought by network affiliates and independent station owners. For his plan to survive inevitable court challenges, Martin and the FCC staff intend to dig up the economic data to convince federal judges that consumers' viewing and listening choices or their access to news and other important information won't be harmfully diminished by placing more media outlets in fewer hands.

WORRISOME CHOICE

Jonathan Rintels of the Center for Creative Voices in Media said Martin's support for indecency regulation coupled with his willingness to allow more media consolidation made him a worrisome choice for public advocates.

"Mr. Martin's support of increasing media concentration and consolidation, as well as his support for expanded government regulation of program content that some find objectionable, are cause for concern not only to creative artists but, more importantly, to the American public."

Martin, a North Carolina native, is perceived as a strong supporter of local broadcasters and large TV-station groups in the conflicts with the big networks and cable operators.

"Kevin Martin is the right person at the right time to lead the FCC," says Eddie Fritts, president of the National Association of Broadcasters.

FAMILY VIEWING HOUR

Martin's biggest challenge in dealing with the industry will be to continue good relations even as he tries to make good on calls for bigger fines against inappropriate programming. Martin has called repeatedly on broadcasters to voluntarily reestablish a time slot dedicated to family-friendly shows.

"Parents often complain that there is not enough broadcast programming that is suited for family viewing," Martin said late last year when the FCC set kids-programming rules for digital TV. "This is why I have long advocated a return of the Family Viewing Hour."

Martin's determination to clean up prime time will likely hit the networks hardest. Not only does he want them to carve out a family-viewing block, but he favors giving network affiliates' more power to reject network reality shows and other fare that station managers decide are inappropriate for their communities. Martin harshly criticized Powell for refusing to rule on the affiliates' four-year-old petition seeking clearer authority to shun TV series and individual episodes that they believe their viewers would find offensive.

Even though affiliates groups' latest contracts with the networks appear to have resolved differences for now, the affiliates still want the FCC to weigh in should the fights flare up in the future. Martin agrees, noting that the FCC proposed to fine affiliates that aired a Fox *Married by America* episode featuring strippers at bachelor and bachelorette parties.

A potential fight is also brewing between cable operators and Martin. When the FCC voted down broadcasters' request for guaranteed cable carriage of the new channels that going digital allows each station to add, Martin was the lone dissent favoring "must-carry" for broadcasters.

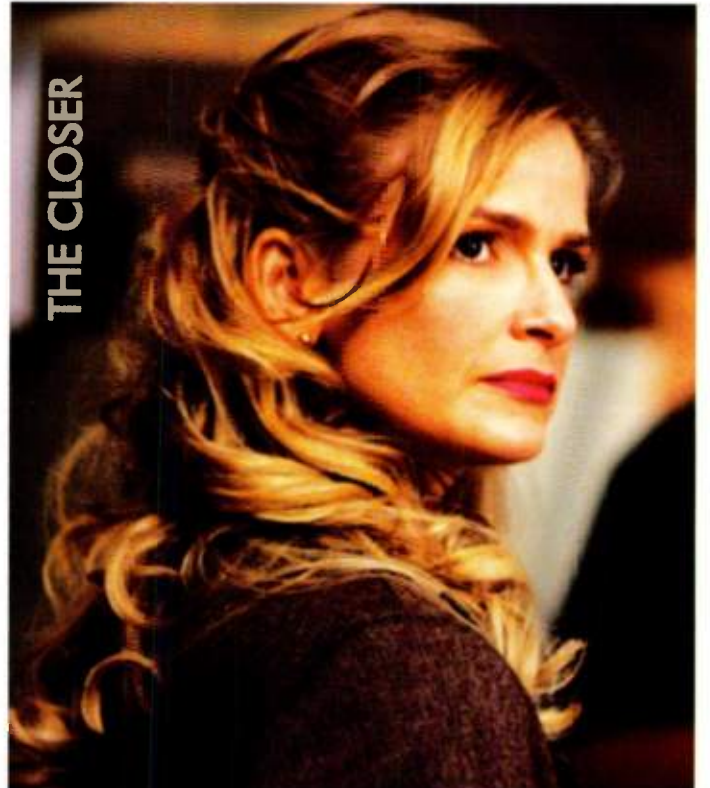
Powell's departure and Martin's elevation leaves a seat open. Among the top contenders: former Texas utility regulator Rebecca Klein, National Telecommunications and Information Administration chief Michael Gallagher and Earl Comstock, former aide to Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Ted Stevens. ■



FCC Chairman Kevin Martin

Martin's determination to clean up prime time will likely hit the networks hardest.

THE CLOSER



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Millions will confess total captivation.

KYRA SEDGWICK

THE CLOSER

A new original series premiering June 2005.

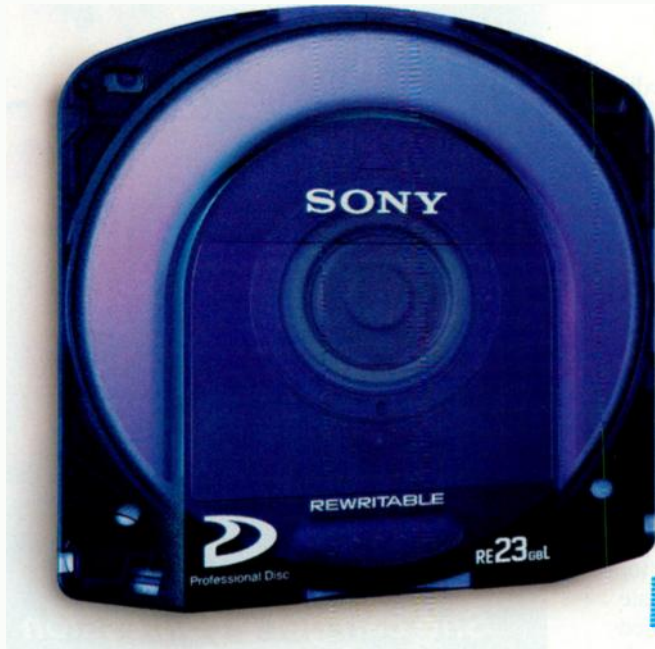
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WASHINGTON WATCH

FCC Throws In Towel On NFL Promo

After a review by FCC referees, ABC's *Monday Night Football* won't lose yardage for its *Desperate Housewives* promo featuring Nicolette Sheridan's purportedly nude embrace of Philadelphia Eagle Terrell Owens.

The suggestive spot, which featured Sheridan dropping a towel and jumping into Owen's arms, was not "sufficiently explicit or graphic" to be ruled indecent, the FCC said.

Looking to get more promotional bang for its new hit, ABC put *Desperate Housewives* star Sheridan in a provocative Nov. 15 *MNF* opening where, clad only in a towel, she attempts to seduce Owens.

Owens protests that he is ready for some football until the lovely lady drops her towel and throws herself at him—discreetly filmed but the meaning is clear—and Owens decides the gridiron will have to wait.

The spot aired in the midst of the FCC's crackdown on broadcast indecency, and the NFL quickly declared the ad "inappropriate and unsuitable for our *Monday Night Football* audience." ABC, which is trying to renegotiate its NFL Monday- and Sunday-night rights, quickly apologized.

Barton: DTV Bill Will Pass With Subsidies

House Commerce Committee Chairman Joe Barton predicts the House will approve digital-TV legislation by early summer. He has revealed few details of the bill, which is still being drafted, but has explained how he would set up a government subsidy to help low-income folks keep analog sets working in the all-digital world.

Families living at 150%-200% of the federal poverty line would be eligible for rebates on \$50 converter boxes they have to buy if they don't subscribe to cable or satellite. After buying a box at a retail store, eligible consumers would send a rebate coupon to the Treasury, which would verify the consumers' low-income status and mail them a check. Barton estimated that no more than 10 million households would be eligible and the program would cost less than \$500 million.

Good News for Whistleblowers

GOP leader Pence backs federal shield laws **By Bill McConnell**

Rep. Mike Pence (R-Ind.) is a rare commodity in Washington. He is an evangelical Christian and an up-and-comer among GOP leaders. But he is also championing a critical cause of journalists at a time when the media's conservative allies are as scarce as a Baptist preacher at a pro-gay-marriage rally.

Pence is the chief House sponsor of legislation that would allow reporters to protect the identities of whistleblowers and other sources who help them to uncover government waste and corporate malfeasance and shed light on criminal investigations. If enacted, the law would cover cases brought by federal investigators. For protection against state and local investigators, reporters would still need a safeguard in state shield laws, of which 31 are already in place. Proponents hope passage of a federal law would make it easier to enact shields in the remaining 19 states.

Until Pence took up the cause, journalism organizations expected an uphill, half-decade fight to win a federal shield law. His support will help garner more conservative backing for the idea and help persuade the White House, which is relying on the Indianan to help promote its Social Security privatization plan among skeptical Republican lawmakers.

First elected to Congress in 2000, Pence is a former GOP deputy whip and is currently chairman of the House Republican Study Committee, the panel charged with setting GOP legislative priorities in the House. He is also a former broadcaster: He hosted conservative talker *The Mike Pence Show* on 18 radio stations from 1992 to 1999, as well as a TV version on UPN stations for four years.

PASSAGE POSSIBLE

Pence even persuaded fellow Indianan Richard Lugar to sponsor his bill on the other side of Capitol Hill. Now media lobbyists say passage is possible before the current congressional session ends next year.

"There's no question that getting GOP support has improved chances for passage," says Barbara Cochran, president of the Radio-Television News Directors Association. "Everybody in the business got excited when

Pence decided to take this on."

The fight for a federal shield law is gaining steam among journalists and friendly lawmakers like Pence at a time when more federal judges and prosecutors are using the threat of jail time to muscle confidential information from TV and print journalists.

"When reporters start going to jail, it will elevate this issue," says Paul Boyle, lobbyist for the Newspaper Association of America, which is spearheading the news business's legislative campaign.

REPORTERS THREATENED

Jim Taricani, an Emmy Award-winning reporter for WJAR Providence, R.I., is under home detention for refusing to reveal who leaked a videotape of top city officials taking a bribe from an FBI informant. *The New York Times* star reporter Judith Miller and *Time* magazine veteran Matthew Cooper are under threat of being jailed for refusing to reveal whether they

were contacted by a member of the Bush administration trying to blow the cover of CIA operative Valerie Plame in order to discredit her husband, a State Department official critical of White House policy in Iraq.

In the past year, 12 reporters were threatened with jail time for refusing to reveal confidential sources.

"Without the promise of confidentiality, many important conduits of information about government activity would be shut down,"

Pence said when he introduced his legislation last month. "Compelling reporters to testify and, in particular, compelling them to reveal the identity of their confidential sources is a detriment to the public interest."

Democratic co-sponsors of the legislation are Rep. Rick Boucher of Virginia and Sen. Christopher Dodd of Connecticut.

Boyle predicts both Judiciary Committees will hold hearings on the legislation in late summer or early fall.

Despite the industry's surprise at Pence's help, there is nothing strange about the congressman's endorsement of a shield law, says Skip Brown, a spokesman for the lawmaker.

"He believes Americans have a right to know what's going on in their government," Brown says. "Conservatives have an obligation to preserve all 10 amendments in the Bill of Rights. They can't pick and choose." ■



"Compelling reporters to testify ... is a detriment to the public interest."

REP. MIKE PENCE (R-IND.)

The subsidy would be paid from the \$4 billion-plus the government expects from auctioning reclaimed analog TV channels.

Stevens Wavers On Cable Indecency

As his colleagues took aim at what they see as over-the-top cable fare, Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) began backing off from his vow to crack down on cable.

He still wants to level the playing field for broadcasters and cable, which enjoys court-ordered free-speech exemptions. But he told reporters he doesn't think a bill

Congress is still awaiting a report from the FCC on TV violence that was opened last July.

just introduced by other lawmakers could pass court muster.

Instead, he thinks the cable industry will create a system like the Motion Picture Association of America ratings system, combined with some form of voluntary tiers that will allow customers to buy family-friendly programming without the edgy channels.

Sens. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.) and Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas) have introduced legislation that would extend the 6 a.m.-10 p.m. ban on broadcast indecency to cover gratuitous violence. Both are members of the Stevens-led Judiciary Committee.

Their bill would also give the FCC flexibility to exempt pay services, such as HBO.

Congress is still awaiting a report from the FCC on TV violence that was opened last July.

The Rockefeller-Hutchison bill would also boost fines for indecency, double the number of required hours of educational children's programming per week from three to six and require 30-second, on-screen warnings every 30 minutes during violent or indecent programming.

Another Judiciary Committee member is angling to eliminate cable X-rated movies. Noting that more than half of all cable and satellite pay-TV movies are porn, Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.) called on the Justice Department to step up obscenity prosecutions. Federal investigators can start with Adelphia, EchoStar and DirecTV, he added.

RATINGS 2/28-3/6/05

Nielsen Media Research

Top 25 Shows

HOUSEHOLDS

PROGRAM	AA	GAA
1 Wheel of Fortune	9.9	NA
2 Oprah Winfrey Show	8.7	8.9
3 Jeopardy!	8.4	NA
4 Everybody Loves Raymond	7.2	8.2
5 Seinfeld	6.5	8.0
6 Dr. Phil	5.9	5.9
6 Entertainment Tonight	5.9	6.1
8 Friends	5.8	7.4
9 Seinfeld (wknd)	5.7	7.0
10 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	5.4	6.2
11 Judge Judy	5.2	8.2
12 Wheel of Fortune (wknd)	4.5	NA
13 Live With Regis and Kelly	3.9	NA
14 Entertainment Tonight (wknd)	3.8	3.9
15 Everybody Loves Raymond (wknd)	3.7	3.9
15 Inside Edition	3.7	3.8
15 Judge Joe Brown	3.7	5.4
18 Malcolm in the Middle	3.5	4.3
18 Who Wants To Be a Millionaire	3.5	4.0
20 King of the Hill	3.2	3.9
20 Maury	3.2	3.6
20 That '70s Show	3.2	3.9
23 Cops	3.0	3.7
23 Divorce Court	3.0	4.1
23 People's Court	3.0	3.1
23 The Insider	3.0	3.0
23 Will & Grace	3.0	3.7

Top Off-Net Dramas

HOUSEHOLDS

PROGRAM	AA	GAA
1 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	5.4	6.2
2 The West Wing	2.2	2.6
3 The Practice	2.0	2.2
4 ER	1.6	1.8
5 The X-Files	1.5	1.6

According to Nielsen Media Research Syndication Service Ranking Report Feb. 28-March 6, 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

Who Can Replace 'Jane'?

'Martha' waits in the wings **By Jim Finkle**

The recent cancellation of *The Jane Pauley Show* leaves 222 stations with an hour to fill next season. Few are sweating the loss. Although NBC Universal had sold it for two full seasons, the low-rated freshman program had failed to catch on.

This season, it averaged a 0.7 rating among women 18-49 through March 6, ranking 122nd among 187 syndicated shows tracked by Nielsen.

Pauley's loss is *Martha's* gain. *The Martha Stewart Show*, a one-hour daily strip NBC Universal is producing with Stewart and Mark Burnett, was announced in December. And not surprisingly, "For the majority of stations, *Martha Stewart* is likely to be the replacement for *Jane Pauley*," says Bill Carroll, VP/director of programming for Katz TV.

For example, Hearst-Argyle Television's WESH Orlando, Fla., is moving *The Martha Stewart Show* into Pauley's current slot at 11 a.m. Pauley started out

at 4 p.m. on WESH, where she was up against *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. Now *The Ellen DeGeneres Show* is up against Winfrey in that time slot, and "Ellen is competing strongly in the period," says GM William Bauman.

WESH is one of 11 Hearst-Argyle stations that air *Jane Pauley*. A likely replacement at the other 10 is either *Ellen* or *Starting Over*, both of which have done well for the group, says VP of Programming Emerson Coleman. That is provided *Starting Over* returns. NBC Universal spokesman Joe Schlosser says the reality strip is likely to be renewed for a third season, but it's not a done deal.

The 14 NBC-owned stations that carry *Pauley* haven't decided what they'll run in its place, says group spokeswoman Liz Fischer. *Martha Stewart* seems to be a likely candidate, but NBC says no decision has been made.

There are more than five months to go before the start of next season, and stations have options. They can choose to double-run strong syndicated shows or go with off-net material, such as *The Nanny* and *Mad About You*, which Sony is selling for next season. There is also a chance *The Robin Quivers Show* or another new first-run program could be cleared at the last minute.

"This has been a very strange year in terms of launches," says Carroll. "There is the possibility something new may surface between now and September."

Stations have become even more conservative, and with good reason, Carroll says. "Daytime unfortunately for stations doesn't generate substantial income. So they have to be very specific in the way they approach how they're going to program these time periods." ■



Jane Pauley Show was No. 122 out of 187.

IN FOCUS



Girls Behaving Badly

GIRLS BLANKETS THE U.S.

Sony Pictures Television has cleared an off-net version of *Girls Behaving Badly*, a half-hour hidden-camera comedy that runs on Oxygen, in 95% of the country. The syndicator is selling 70 episodes of the comedy/reality series, which is hosted by Chelsea Handler, Melissa Howard, Shondrella and Kira Soltanovich.

HIP HOP'S POKER FACE

Heritage Media Group has sold its new syndicated weekly poker show, *Hip Hop Hold 'Em*, in seven of the top 10 markets. According to the company, clearances include Tribune stations WPIX New York, KTLA Los Angeles, WPHL Philadelphia, KDAF Dallas and WNOL New Orleans. The show, from Heritage and TWI—the TV-production arm of sports-management powerhouse IMG—takes the poker game Texas Hold 'Em and transplants it to the world of hip-hop, with celebrities hosting games in their homes for friends, including athletes (IMG represents several), musicians and actors.

"It's a given that poker works on TV," says Dave Bulhack, SVP of distribution, TWI. "*Hip Hop Hold 'Em* will bring in that predisposed poker viewer, plus the hard-to-reach but desirable younger audience drawn to the entertainment and lifestyle elements of the show."

WPIX has yet to determine when it will run the show.

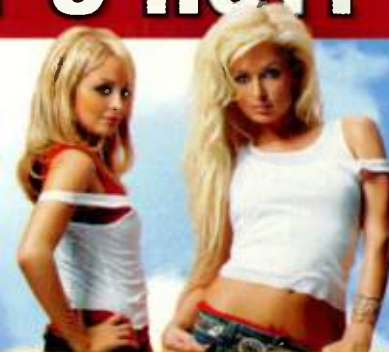
"We have some interesting pairing options," says Julie O'Neil, the station's programming director. "Would it go best with *Soul Train* or *South Park*?"

TWI worldwide also produces and distributes the reality series *I'd Do Anything* on ESPN.

HIGHEST RATED EPISODE EVER!... THAT'S HOT!

Wed, 930-10pm, Rtg.

FOX	SIMPLE LIFE 3	HH	W18 34	W18 49	M18 34	M18 49
		8.3	8.1	7.7	5.1	4.9
ABC	ALIAS (0)	6.5	4.2	5.1	2.6	3.3
CBS	YES, DEAR (0)	6.0	3.3	4.0	1.8	2.3
NBC	WEST WING (0)	7.2	2.6	3.8	1.9	2.9
WB	JACK & BOBBY (R)	1.0	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.5
UPN	KEVIN HILL (R)	1.7	1.4	1.1	0.5	0.6



PERCENTAGE ADVANTAGE OVER CLOSEST COMPETITOR (ALIAS)

28% 93% 51% 96% 48%

the **simple life:**

INTERNS

TV'S SIMPLE SITCOM



Source: NTL Galaxy Explorer, 3/9/05, 9:30-10pm to data. PR where available. Highest rated episode of The Simple Life series in W18-49 (12/2/03-3/9/05). Rating Subject to qualifications available upon request.



STATION TO STATION

Closed-Captions Translate News Into Spanish

By Allison Romano

Hello, or should we say *hola!* Fourteen stations are broadcasting local news with Spanish translations over the closed-captioning system. The service is provided by Translate TV, a two-year old Ohio company that uses customized technology to translate a station's newscast in real time and pump out translations. Most televisions have such capabilities; stations provide English captioning on one of two closed-captioning channels.

Translate TV taps into the second, referred to as CC2.

WLS Chicago is the latest participant, beginning in early March. "This is a

wonderful way to reach people who prefer to receive their news in Spanish," says WLS President/GM Emily Barr. Nielsen Media Research does not monitor closed-captioning usage, so it is tough for stations to measure audience.

Still, local broadcasters are anxious to snare more Spanish-speaking and bilingual viewers, since Hispanics are the fastest-growing ethnic group in the U.S.—projected to account for nearly 18% of the total population by 2020, up from 12.5% in 2000. The dominant players to date: Spanish-language broadcasters Univision and Telemundo. In many large markets, their affiliates also offer news. When NBC bought Telemundo for \$2 billion, it acquired 14 Telemundo stations.

Now NBC is starting an independent Spanish-language station Mi San Diego TV 43 in San Diego. In a few other markets, broadcasters use the Secondary Audio Programming (SAP) feed to provide audio translations of their news.

Translate TV's service offers an English-language station a cost-effective way to connect with Spanish speakers. For \$100 a day, the company translates a station's local news, weather and sports. Translate TV installs a computer at the station, which handles the captioning.



The Tonight Show With Jay Leno is closed-captioned.

The Iger Sanction

Disney's next CEO faces major challenges **By Allison Romano**



Disney's Bob Iger

Now that Iger is CEO-to-be of Disney Co., he will need to mature businesses across the Magic Kingdom, once he takes over from outgoing chief Michael Eisner next year.

At the top of his to-do list: Negotiate a new deal with animation star Pixar Studios. Disney and Pixar's co-production pact expires after *Cars* is released this summer. Iger must also manage the impending split with Miramax founders Harvey and Bob Weinstein, who are leaving their film division. Growth is stalled at theme parks, too.

"He needs to restore the company's creative engine," says Fulcrum Global Partners analyst Rich Greenfield.

One area Iger can mine for growth is the TV holdings. Iger knows that business intimately. Former chairman of ABC Group, he started his career as a studio supervisor for ABC in 1974; 20 years later, he was running the network.

Last spring, he overhauled ABC's management ranks, elevating cable maven Anne Sweeney to head both ABC and Disney's cable network and former Touchstone TV President Steve McPherson to head ABC Entertainment. In the process, he dismissed former entertainment chief Susan Lyne and Lloyd Braun, ex-chairman of ABC Entertainment TV Group.

Looking ahead, here are five challenges Iger faces in the TV arena:

NFL's Peyton Manning



NFL NEGOTIATIONS

ABC's *Monday Night Football* deal expires after the 2005-06 season, as does ESPN's *Sunday Night Football* package. CBS and Fox have already renewed, but Disney is holding out. ABC gets a big ratings boost from *MNF* but has trouble capitalizing on football's big male audience. Plus, *MNF*'s expected multibillion-dollar price

tag is steep. Complicating matters, NBC Universal is interested again. ESPN cannot afford to lose the NFL, its marquee property and cable's highest-rated show. One possible scenario: ABC and ESPN could swap football packages.

DH's Eva Longoria



KEEP ABC GROWING

Desperate Housewives and *Lost* made ABC cool again. Iger, a reputed micromanager, will have to trust Sweeney and McPherson to develop more hit shows and to cleverly market and schedule them.

But ABC's performance—up 14.7% in 18-49s through February compared with last season—isn't all positive. Its sitcoms are struggling, and the network doesn't have a winner on lucrative Thursday night.

Alias's Mia Maestro



SATISFY STATIONS

The trouble with ABC's freshman phenoms is they are not 10 p.m. ET shows. Local stations rely on the last hour of prime time to deliver big audiences into late news, a local broadcaster's top money maker. When NBC was hot, 10 p.m. stars *Law & Order* and *ER* boosted local news. ABC stations are starved for a similar assist.

NBA's Penny Hardaway



ESPN'S AFFILIATE TAB

The sports network is cable and satellite operators' biggest channel expense, wrestling about \$2 a sub for the main channel. ESPN's rates climbed 20% in recent years but will slow to 7% beginning this year. ESPN needs revenue generators to make up the loss and help foot the billions the network is paying in sports-rights fees.

Raven's Raven Simone



CABLE ACES

Disney Channel, a cable starlet two years ago, is struggling to replace its tween sensation *Lizzie McGuire* and score new animated hits. A star character can provide a big opportunity for the theme parks, merchandising arm and even the recording division, the way *That's So Raven* has done.

And Disney still needs to make good on its inflated \$5.2 billion purchase of ABC Family in 2001. Historically, the network has been ratings/programming challenged. But adding *Gilmore Girls* and *7th Heaven* reruns is helping, as is a new exec team. ■

Besides WLS, ABC O&O stations WABC New York and KTRK Houston use the service, as do affiliates WCVB Boston and WTNH New Haven, Conn. Six NBC stations have signed on: KXAN Austin, Texas; KOAA Colorado Springs, Colo.; WTHR Indianapolis; KVBC Las Vegas; WOOD Grand Rapids, Mich.; WRC Washington. And two CBS stations: WFOR Miami and WBNS Columbus, Ohio.

An independent station in Puerto Rico uses the service to provide English captions for its Spanish-language broadcasts.

Translate TV will work with multiple stations in a market, although the first in a market receives an exclusive period of about three months. A hallmark of the service is that it learns the local language. Before it begins on-air translations, staffers study 15 hours of tape, noting market and station specifics. "We need to customize the dictionary for each station," explains President/CEO Joel Rudich. In New York, for example, the computer learns that the Clear View Expressway is a proper name. "Clear View" should not be translated into Spanish. Translate TV has patents pending on its technology.

Stations see captioning as more than a public service; it can also be

"We realize how important it is to reach our non-English-speaking audience."

DAVE DAVIS, WABC

a revenue driver. Local broadcasters are selling sponsorships to fund the effort. In return, the sponsor usually receives promotions announcing its involvement. In Boston, WCVB works with Hummer, and WLS signed up Chicago flooring company Luna Carpets.

National programming is also affected. MSNBC provides Spanish-language captions through Translate TV, as does *The Tonight Show With Jay Leno*. In New York, *Live With Regis and Kelly* is available on WABC with Spanish captions, and Translate TV is in talks with the show's distributor, Buena Vista, about a wider deal.

In New York, 617,000 viewers, 10% of the market audience, live in Spanish-dominant households. Says WABC GM Dave Davis, "We realize how important it is to reach a significant portion of our non-English-speaking audience."

Send station news to aromano@reedbusiness.com



3/21/05



MARKET EYE

AT A GLANCE

The Market

DMA rank	24
Population	2,864,000
TV homes	1,087,000
Income per capita	\$18,094
TV revenue rank	31
TV revenue	\$178,800,000

Commercial TV Stations

Rank*	Ch.	Affil.	Owner
1	KGW	8 NBC	Belo
2	KATU	2 ABC	Fisher Comm.
3	KOIN	6 CBS	Emmis
4	KPTV	12 Fox	Meredith
5	KPDJ	49 UPN	Meredith
6	KWBP	32 WB	Tribune

*February 2005, sign-on to sign-off

Cable/DBS

Cable subs	641,330
Major cable operator	Comcast
Cable penetration	59%
ADS subs**	20%
ADS penetration	217,400
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 (KGW)	7.6/19
Network Show	
CSI (KOIN)	22.5/34
Evening Newscast	
KGW	9.1/20
Late Newscast	
KGW	8.4/21

***February 2005, total households

SOURCES: Nielsen Media Research, BIA Research

Portland Is Primed

KGW has strong news lead, but rivals make inroads

By Allison Romano

Portland, Ore., may be famous for its laid-back lifestyle, but the country's 24th-largest TV market is diverse in its tastes. Adidas USA and Nike are based in the area, as are several high-tech firms. "The region is like two states in one," says Teresa Burgess, VP/GM for Meredith Broadcasting's Fox affiliate KPTV. "Metro Portland is affluent, liberal and educated; other parts of the state are rural and conservative." Together, they make for a colorful local TV scene.

Belo Corp.'s NBC affiliate KGW reigns as the market's dominant station, winning sign-on to sign-off ratings for 21 straight ratings periods. In the recent February sweeps, KGW won noon, 5 p.m., 6 p.m. and late news. The only newscast left to conquer is early morning, where the station is locked in a tight race with KPTV.

KGW's entertainment programming helps keep its news ratings high. In the afternoon, Oprah leads into early newscasts. In prime time, the NBC lineup delivers big ratings into 11 p.m. news, despite the network's stumbles this season.

"Portland out-delivers the national averages" for NBC stations, says President/GM Paul Fry, helping KGW weather NBC's prime time slump. Plus, Fry says, his late news has maintained its lead-in ratings.

But his rivals are chipping away. Emmis Communications' CBS affiliate KOIN is mounting a tough offensive in prime and late news. "Strong CBS shows perform exceedingly well here," says VP/GM David Lippoff. It placed second at 11 p.m. in February. KOIN typically ranks No. 1 or No. 2 among CBS stations with its Survivor ratings, and CSI is the market's most-watched show.

KOIN's challenge, Lippoff says, is to convert more prime time viewers to its late news. KPTV's 10 p.m. news pulls in third-place late-news marks, and Fisher Communications' ABC affiliate KATU ranks fourth. Meredith owns the market's only duopoly: KPTV and UPN station KPDJ. Comcast Cable is the market's largest cable operator.

Portland stations took in an estimated \$178 million in gross revenue last year, up from \$162 million in 2003, according to BIA Financial. Stations grabbed some political-ad money last year, which will temper ad growth this year. Station execs expect their ad business to grow in the low single digits.

One marketing challenge for TV stations: its residents' outdoor lifestyle. Says KOIN's Lippoff: "Even when it rains, people do not like to stay inside." ■



KGW anchors Joe Donlon and Tracy Barry

Dual Identity

Meredith Broadcasting, owner of Portland, Ore.'s sole duopoly, wants to carve distinct identities for its two stations, since its Fox and UPN affiliates share a common past.

In 2002, Meredith gained control of the local UPN station in a swap with Fox Television Stations Group, trading two Fox affiliates in Florida. Meredith already owned the Fox affiliate in Portland.

KPTV, then a UPN station, had a long history as a vibrant station with strong news and local programming. Seeking to strengthen its Fox station, Meredith engineered its own trade: It converted KPTV to Fox and made KPDJ the UPN affiliate. As a result, the Fox station offered local news for the first time—aided by KPTV's legacy.

"A lot of Fox stations live and die by their lead-ins," says VP/GM Teresa Burgess. "We have more automatic tune-in at 10 p.m. since some people have been watching for years." Still, building KPDJ's image is a challenge. To help drive viewership, young people cruise Portland in a Scion car plastered with the station's logo.—A.R.

THE DEMOS

WHO	SHARE OF POPULATION	INDEX*
White	92%	111
Black	3%	22
Asian	2%	91
Hispanic Origin	7%	54

*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.

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

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+38% OVER YEAR AGO!

Source: NSI WRAP Overnights, 3/7-3/11/05, HH Rating M-F 9-30PM
Week to Week = w/o 2/28/05 Year ago = March '04 Sweep: 1/2 HR TP

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In a King Solomon-like answer to critics that Viacom has become too big to grow, Chairman Sumner Redstone has proposed cleaving it in half.

On the surface, the move would appear to reverse the last decade of deal-making—including the CBS and Infinity acquisitions—that built up his entertainment portfolio. But Redstone hardly sees the split-up as a reversal in strategy. To him, it’s just another deal.

“The world changes,” he says. “I think what we’re doing is making an intelligent adjustment to a changed world.”

Viacom would split into two companies, one largely composed of the businesses that came along with CBS—the top-ranked broadcast network, TV stations, syndication, and ailing Infinity radio—and the outdoor advertising division. These businesses would be run by

whose radio business has been slammed by a weak ad market, would no longer be a drag on Viacom’s stock.

Redstone says that, today, MTV is locked up in a company that trades at around eight times annual cash flow, a relatively low valuation. “Separated, I believe, it will have multiple of 16. That alone is enormous change.”

Even in an era of mega-mergers, there is a suspicion that media conglomerates have grown too gargantuan for their own good. The strength of rapidly growing businesses like cable networks and DVDs is overwhelmed by slower divisions like radio and TV stations.

Bank of America media analyst Doug Shapiro has armed deal critics with harsh analyses of past acquisitions. He notes that growth in media giants like Viacom, Disney and Time Warner has slowed for several

Double You

VIACOM CHAIRMAN REDSTONE EXPLAINS HIS PLAN TO SPLIT



From left: Les Moonves, Sumner Redstone, Tom Freston

CBS Chairman and Viacom Co-President Les Moonves.

The other company would be composed primarily of Viacom’s pre-2000 assets—its cable networks and Paramount movie studio—run by Viacom’s other Co-President and ex-MTVN chairman Tom Freston.

The goal: set fast-growing MTV Networks free from its slower siblings. Such a deal, analysts say, would allow MTV to get a bump in share price and perhaps grow bigger by acquisition. A stand-alone CBS Infinity,

reasons but the underlying truth is that “many have simply become too big and have consequently diversified away their growth.”

Other media executives seem to agree. Just last week, John Malone’s Liberty Media Corp. declared it will spin off to shareholders its 50%, \$6 billion stake in Discovery Communications (see page 8). Barry Diller’s Interactive Corp. is separating Home Shopping Network from its core Internet travel businesses.

Merrill Lynch media analyst Jessica Reif Cohen says Big Media executives are jealously eyeing the strong recent performance of pure-play entities like Pixar and DreamWorks Animation. That “has contrasted sharply with the general malaise that has hung over the large media conglomerates for the last several years.”

Tired of watching big media takeovers fizzle, big investors have been lobbying media giants to abandon their strategy of growing through acquisitions. They



MTV's *The Nick Lachey Project*



Showtime's *Fat Actress*



CBS' *60 Minutes*



UPN's *America's Next Top Model*

FRESTON INC.

DIVISION	2005E SALES (MILLION)	CHANGE VS. '04	2005E CASH FLOW (MILLION)	CHANGE VS. '04
MTVN	\$5,471	+9%	\$2,443	+10%
Paramount Films	\$2,547	+6%	\$340	+25%
Showtime	\$1,205	+6%	\$275	+6%
Simon & Schuster	\$796	+5%	\$64	+5%
Theaters/New Media	\$512	+5%	\$26	+5%
BET	\$497	+12%	\$311	+7%
Paramount Theme Parks	\$429	+5%	\$48	+5%
Total Freston Inc.	\$11,456	+7%	\$3,507	+14%

SOURCE: Morgan Stanley's Richard Bilotti, Bank of America's Doug Shapiro, B&C research

MOONVES CORP.

DIVISION	2005E SALES (MILLION)	CHANGE VS. '04	2005E CASH FLOW (MILLION)	CHANGE VS. '04
CBS Network	\$4,375	+3%	\$433	+27%
Paramount TV/King World	\$2,146	-2%	\$674	-8%
Infinity Radio	\$2,130	+2%	\$940	-1%
Infinity Outdoor	\$1,989	+6%	\$497	+9%
CBS Stations	\$1,288	-2%	\$532	-2%
Paramount Stations	\$543	+2%	\$178	+4%
UPN	\$253	+11%	-\$60	NA
Total Moonves Corp.	\$12,724	+1%	\$3,194	+3%

NA = UPN lost an estimated \$80 million in 2004 and is expected to lose \$60 million in 2005. SOURCE: Morgan Stanley's Richard Bilotti, Bank of America's Doug Shapiro, B&C research

contend that media stocks will be higher if conglomerates instead spent their money paying dividends or buying back shares. After spending \$3 billion supporting his stock price by buying back shares, the Viacom chairman is taking a bold step.

Still, Redstone is a little annoyed by the outcry against the conglomerates, since the same crowd cheered the big companies on when the deals were cut. He recalls that investors pushed America Online shares stock up toward \$100 per share after it agreed to buy Time Warner. Viacom cracked \$70 on news of the CBS deal. "The same people who drove you way up criticize you and say you shouldn't have done it," he says.

He denies that Viacom or media companies in general are simply too swollen to move. "It depends on

deal—estimates that Freston's operations will generate more than \$11 billion in revenue this year and \$3.5 billion in operating cash flow, growing those profits at a fast 14%.

Moonves would get the CBS network and stations, Paramount Television, and King World production and syndication units. But he would also get Viacom's problem children: the Infinity radio and billboard divisions, whose growth has been terrible even though they are profitable. Moonves' unit should generate more revenue than Freston's this year, more than \$12 billion, and around the same amount of cash flow. But the CBS Infinity properties' growth rate is just 3% this year, and network TV is a fickle business.

Freston's division is worth around \$45 billion, while

Right now, Viacom's low trading value of eight to nine times cash flow makes it a weak currency for buying assets worth 15 to 18 times cash flow. But a successful MTV Paramount stock could chase companies like Discovery or Rainbow Programming as they come onto the market.

CBS plans to saddle CBS Infinity with more debt, while its free cash flow goes to pay dividends and buy back stock, meeting Wall Street's latest clamoring for "returning capital to shareholders."

Last summer, Shapiro published a sobering study concluding that top media firms, like Viacom and Comcast Communications, would be far better off if they had never engaged in some of the biggest deals of the past decade. In it, he concluded that, if Viacom had never acquired CBS, Blockbuster or even Paramount, its shares would be trading at around \$77, double its price today.

Shapiro unwinds Viacom's original operations from its string of multibillion-dollar acquisitions, from Paramount and Blockbuster in the 1990s to CBS. The primary asset of a smaller Viacom would be MTV Networks, which has been a huge growth engine. Sure, Viacom would have less revenue and operating cash flow. But it also wouldn't have issued 1.8 billion shares in deals that diluted existing shareholders.

Redstone maintains that "we've always been careful about the deals we do, and you know that." He notes that he passed on deals for USA Network and Telemundo because the prices were too rich.

Fulcrum Global media analyst Richard Greenfield takes a darker view of Viacom's track record with deals. In the past three years, the conglomerate has taken more than \$20 billion in write-offs against fiddled acquisitions: \$10.9 billion against Infinity Radio, \$7.1 billion against Infinity Outdoor and \$2.8 billion against Blockbuster Entertainment.

"Whether they thought they paid a fair price at the time or not, the bottom-line impact is that Viacom overpaid for these assets," Greenfield says, adding, "The lesson learned by management is hopefully that Viacom should not be making major acquisitions in the next 12-24 months."

Of course, no Viacom shareholder has taken a greater hit from the stock slide than Redstone, who owns \$7.5 billion worth of the company's shares. Asked directly if he thinks he would be better off financially if he had never done the CBS deal, he ducks the question. But he does declare that he doesn't regret buying the broadcaster: "If I had it to do over again, I would do it." ■

Pleasure

AN EMPIRE BY JOHN HIGGINS

the situation. We're not Time Warner," Redstone says, referring to the disastrous merger between AOL and Time Warner. "It depends on the company. It depends on the assets. It depends on the strategic direction of the company."

The split-up contrasts sharply with comments Redstone made just three weeks ago. During Viacom's quarterly earnings conference call, he declared, "From top to bottom, Viacom is moving in one direction. We know where we want to go, and we know how to get there."

Under the new plan, Freston would run Viacom's fastest-growing assets, including MTV Networks and BET. He would keep responsibility for ailing Paramount, which is on the rebound from Viacom's past management missteps. He would also get the slowly growing Showtime Networks.

A February analysis by Morgan Stanley—whose investment bankers are now representing Viacom in the

Moonves' could be worth about \$30 billion. Neither men was talking publicly last week, but neither has much to be unhappy about. Freston gets the strongest assets and gets to run the show. Moonves gets the old CBS back and eliminates the risk of losing a fight with Freston over who will succeed the 81-year-old Redstone as Viacom CEO.

Redstone says the plan is far more than a grab for a short-term pop in Viacom's stock (which jumped 11% on the news before settling back to a 6% gain). "There's been so much emphasis on this moving the price of the stock," he says. "As much as I care about investors, I wouldn't have done this if I didn't think it was a strategic move."

What is that strategy? MTV Paramount will have relatively less debt, so Freston has financial flexibility to invest in its existing businesses. And he gets to acquire tightly fitting businesses, notably cable networks.

Fast Track
Continued from page 4

Ross Out at 'Primetime Live'

Primetime Live executive producer Shelly Ross is stepping down, replaced by 20/20 EP David Sloan, for the time being. After just a year in the job, Ross got squeezed out at the fading newsmagazine but will stay with the network for now. She will develop and produce new shows for all divisions of ABC, according to the company, likely working off the balance of her multi-year contract.

Too much friction with Charles Gibson helped push Ross out of *Good Morning America* last spring, despite leading a revival of the morning show. At *Primetime Live*, she had the misfortune of facing off against CBS' powerhouse Thursday-night lineup, and viewership plunged.

In its most recent outing, *Primetime Live* was a distant third in its time period at a 2.1 rating/6 share in the key 18-49 demo, but it was still the network's top-rated timed period of the night.—J.M.H.

King Still Reigns at CNN

Larry King will continue his CNN gab-fest through 2009 under an extended contract worth \$7 million per year, representatives from the network confirmed last week.

King, who marks his 20th year with CNN June 1, posts the network's highest ratings with his nightly talk show, *Larry King Live*, which airs from 9 to 10 p.m. ET.

In March, the show has averaged 1.4 million total viewers a night and in February averaged 1.2 million.

Nancy Grace, who sometimes stands in for King and whose own eponymous program recently debuted on sister net *Headline News*, was rumored to be replacing King, although a network executive said that no plans were in place to groom a successor.—A.B.

Mixed Bag for Syndie Sweeps

The results of the February sweeps (Feb. 3-March 2) were a mixed bag, with most rookies demonstrating improvement.

The Insider was the newcomer champ going away, with a 2.9 national household rating, up 21% over its September debut. It was the third-highest-rated magazine show after *Entertainment Tonight* and *Inside Edition*.

The recently canceled *Jane Pauley Show* was second in the freshman race with a 1.6 average, which remained unchanged from its premiere.

Groups Pay \$229M For TV Ads

Corporations and advocacy groups spent \$229 million on TV ads on national broadcast and TV networks, as well as on Washington, D.C., stations, in efforts to influence legislation during the last Congress, according to a new study released last week by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg Public Policy Center.

The figure for TV spending was up 459% from the 2001-02 Congress.

Including print ads, Annenberg found that total spending on issue advertising increased 285% to \$404 million over the two congressional terms.

The Annenberg study tallied 67,653 ads sponsored by 914 companies, organizations and coalitions carried on the Washington metro area's TV stations, national TV networks and in the *Washington Post*, *Washington Times*, the Washington edition of the *New York Times* and specialty publications targeting lawmakers and staff on Capitol Hill.

Business interests purchased an estimated \$320 million worth of the ads, while consumer-advocacy groups purchased \$58 million worth.

One troubling result of the study, says Annenberg researcher Gordon McDonald, was lopsided spending on a particular side of many issues. Of the 52 specific issues examined, half had all the spending advocating a single side of the debate. Only three issues—6%—had competitive spending.

The report also identified \$18.5 million worth of issue ads sponsored by organizations with ambiguous or misleading names that made it difficult for the audience to know the sponsors' interest in an issue.

For instance, *Americans for Balanced Energy Choices*, a coalition of mining companies, coal transporters and suppliers of coal-produced electricity, spent \$9.1 million on environmental policy ads. *Voices for Choices*, a coalition of telecom companies opposing local-telephone deregulation, spent \$2.7 million.—B.M.

FAST TRACK



Larry King



The Insider's Pat O'Brien



The Wire

The Tony Danza Show, which like *Insider* has been renewed, averaged a 1.3, up 8%. *Ambush Makeover* at a 1.1, was up 22%. *The Larry Elder Show*, at a 1.0, was up 25%. *Pat Croce: Moving In*, with a 0.7, was up 17% and *Life & Style* with a 0.6, was up 20%.—J.E.

MTV Ups Scannell, Roedy

MTV Networks has promoted senior executives Herb Scannell and Bill Roedy. Scannell was named vice chairman, MTV Networks, and president, Nickelodeon Networks, while Roedy was named vice chairman, MTV Networks, and president, MTV Networks International.

Scannell, who currently manages Nickelodeon, *Nick at Nite*, *TV Land*, *Noggin/The N* and *Spike TV*, will now oversee development of new MTV Networks channels and multimedia ventures targeting niche audiences. He will also manage MTV Networks' corporate functions.

Roedy, who currently oversees MTV Networks' international operations and global public affairs, will now oversee the division's multimedia investments.

Based in New York and London, respectively, Scannell and Roedy will continue to report to MTV Networks Chairman and CEO Judy McGrath.—A.B.

'Office' Gets Web Space

NBC previewed its new series *The Office* on social-networking site MySpace.com on March 16, one week before the series' television debut.

The show's Webcast was NBC's first online premiere of a complete episode of a show. A trimmed "webisode" version of the premiere was made available to MySpace's 11 million users on March 17. *The Office*, a mockumentary of the modern workplace, is adapted from the British cult hit, which aired for two seasons on the BBC beginning September 2001. NBC will air the

premiere episode, "Diversity Day," in a broadcast-TV preview March 24 at 9:30 p.m. and repeat the episode in its normal time slot March 29 at 9:30.—A.B.

Wire Re-Upped

HBO renewed *The Wire* for a 12-episode fourth season to debut in 2006. The show resolved key plot issues in its third season last December, prompting months of speculation about whether it would return. Although non-ad-supported HBO does not measure its shows' success through Nielsen numbers, the critically acclaimed drama struggled in the ratings last season, premiering to an average 1.8 million viewers and losing viewers in subsequent episodes.—A.B.

Ferree Named COO of CPB

Ken Ferree, who recently stepped down as Media Bureau chief of the Federal Communications Commission under departing Chairman Michael Powell, has landed at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting as chief operating officer.

He succeeds Kathleen Cox, who became president and CEO in July 2004, replacing Robert Coonrod. Also joining CPB is a veteran public-affairs executive Nancy Risque Rohrbach as SVP, corporate and public affairs.

While at the FCC, Ferree backed a plan that would have allowed the government to reclaim analog spectrum earlier than the current DTV switch deadline.

Risque Rohrbach is a former Assistant Secretary of Labor under President George W. Bush and assistant to the president and staff member of the Office of Legislative Affairs under President Ronald Reagan. Most recently, she has been the director of National Museum of Women in the Arts.—J.E.

Corrections

ABC News Washington correspondent Jake Tapper and *Good Morning America* weekend anchor Bill Weir were misidentified in The Robins Report (3/14, page 3).

A report in Syndication (3/7, page 13) provided a one-day ratings snapshot on *The Tony Danza Show*. It should have included the show's February sweeps performance in those markets. In last month's sweeps, the show averaged a 1.3 national household rating, up 8% from its debut week last September.



**DON'T ASK WHAT THEY SAID.
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GENERAL SESSIONS

From Baud Band to Broadband Sunday, April 3, 1:00 - 2:15 pm

Paul Allen • Chairman, Vulcan, Inc.
Bing Gordon • Executive Vice President & Chief Creative Officer,
Electronic Arts, Inc.
Tom Rutledge • Chief Operating Officer, Cablevision Systems, Inc.
Jerry Yang • Co-Founder & Chief Yahoo, Yahoo! Inc.

Attack of the Empowered Consumer: Understanding New Media Markets Monday, April 4, 9:30 - 10:45 am

John Chambers • President & CEO, Cisco Systems, Inc.
Bob Iger • President & COO, The Walt Disney Company
Jon Miller • Chairman & CEO, AOL, Inc.
Larry Page • Co-Founder & President, Google
Brian Roberts • Chairman & CEO, Comcast Corporation

Good Things Come in Small Packets: How IP Is Changing Communications Tuesday, April 5, 9:30 - 10:45 am

Glenn Britt • Chairman & CEO, Time Warner Cable
Rob Glaser • Chairman & CEO, RealNetworks, Inc.
Len Lauer • President & COO, Sprint Corporation
Jim Robbins • President & CEO, Cox Communications, Inc.

Hollywood Squires: Entertainment & the New Rules Tuesday, April 5, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Jeff Bewkes • Chairman, Entertainment & Network Group,
Time Warner Inc.
Peter Chernin • President & COO • News Corporation
Jeffrey Katzenberg • Film Producer & Co-Founder, DreamWorks SKG
Bob Wright • Chairman & CEO, NBC Universal

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Local Cable Ad Sales With a Personal Touch

St. Joseph, Mo., operator depends on tight hometown bonds in the Show Me State



SJC's Nancy Black doesn't have much hard data to give advertisers, but she knows the community inside and out.

cal cable ad realities in a small market.

I understand St. Joseph's economy is still fairly stagnant. How does that translate in the cable business?

We had been consistently growing until the past couple of years, and then it leveled out. We've lost about 1,000 subscribers in the past two to three years. Part of it is due to satellite, and we've also had some pretty big unemployment prob-

lems—prompting many people to move out of town.

Right now, we have the highest unemployment rate in the state of Missouri. Quaker Oats was one of our pillar employers, and they've closed. Their Aunt Jemima brand originated here. Stetson Hats and Mead Products also closed their area manufacturing facilities within the last few months.

That's got to create a sales challenge.

We're trying to be as creative as we can in coming up with targeted packages for our advertisers. We are not raising our rates very much at all. In 2003, we had a tough year. Last year, we had a good year, even without political [ads]. We're showing an increase so far this year. In January, we were up 11% over the year before.

What's your primary competition?

Broadcast. We have one ABC affiliate in town, and they're our stiffest competition.

We also have some spill-in from network affiliates in the Kansas City market. We don't spend a lot of time positioning against them. We just really go out and tell our story. We have advertisers who've been with us for years. We're one of the few mediums where a small advertiser can afford to be. The broadcasters, however, have been cutting their rates over the past couple of years and going after some of our clients.

Have your ad sales efforts benefited from any public-affairs initiatives?

We took on a project to run a campaign to save a small community lake just south of town to raise funds to dredge it. Recently, we received a \$15,000 contract from an advertiser because of what we did to help that project.



A picturesque shopping area in St. Joseph

"We're one of the few mediums where a small advertiser can afford to be."

NANCY BLACK,
ST. JOSEPH CABLEVISION

Are there advertising categories that have been bright spots for you?

Furniture stores have done well. And we've received substantial business from a large furniture company in Kansas City. Having the large furniture operation on board, in fact, is an incentive for the smaller stores [in St. Joseph] to continue advertising.

We're optimistic about the future. A new shopping development will be bringing in Kohl's, Target, Sam's Club and Home Depot. That's not going to help us a lot, because those chain stores mostly buy network television. But it's helping the attitude of the community at a time when things seemed to be looking bleak.

What ad sales advantages come from being an independently owned-and-operated system?

One advantage is that I can get on the phone and call the owner and say, "I really need to talk to you." We feel like our control is right here.

We don't have the big money to spend on national promo spots like Time Warner does. Everything here has a local feel. And we like to know the people we're doing business with. Everybody in town knows who owns the cable system.

Being part of this community—what we make stays here, we employ the people who live here—helps make our sales pitch stronger. ■

B&C and Multichannel News produce a twice-monthly newsletter on local cable ad sales in communities big and small. For a free subscription, e-mail cablenewsletters@reedbusiness.com.

Geography Lesson

Web systems let Comcast, Cox zero in on neighborhoods

Comcast Spotlight—the ad-sales division of the nation's largest cable operator—recently completed the system-wide deployment of a Web-based market-profiling and -reporting system developed by Southern California-based SRC.

The new tool is designed to give field sales teams and advertisers in Comcast's more than 70 markets faster and more comprehensive access to zone-specific marketing information. Cox Media will roll out the SRC system in May.

For Comcast, SRC integrates data from sources including Polk, InfoUSA,

Experian/AGS Demographics, Audit Bureau of Circulations, MOSAIC segmentation and National Cable Communications' CableTrack into a central server that SRC hosts and maintains. SRC's software then provides market-intelligence reporting and mapping for specified zones.

By generating color-coded maps, SRC can pinpoint for a cable company exactly where the greatest concentration of desired consumers is, broken down by such factors as age, income, usage and lifestyle. Then, Comcast and Cox, both of which offer zoned local advertising, can show clients exactly where their spots belong.

Comcast has charted data through computers for a while, but the SRC system is the first time the process has become Web-based and easily accessible by the members of the company's sales force nationwide. "We've fully deployed the application, and it's in every one of our markets," says Comcast Spotlight SVP/Managing Director of Sales Hank Oster.

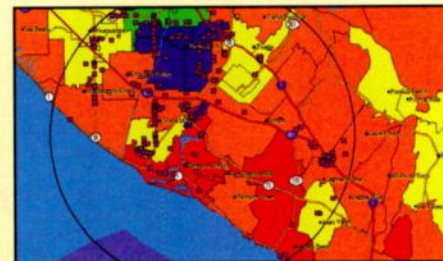
Before adopting SRC, Comcast Spotlight used a stand-alone desktop demographic profiling system installed in 10 regional offices. The regional offices, in turn, were responsible for producing requested reports for local ad salespeople across multiple Comcast markets—a cumbersome task.

"Comcast has 3,200 salespeople they needed to enable, and they couldn't do that with a desktop power-user tool,"

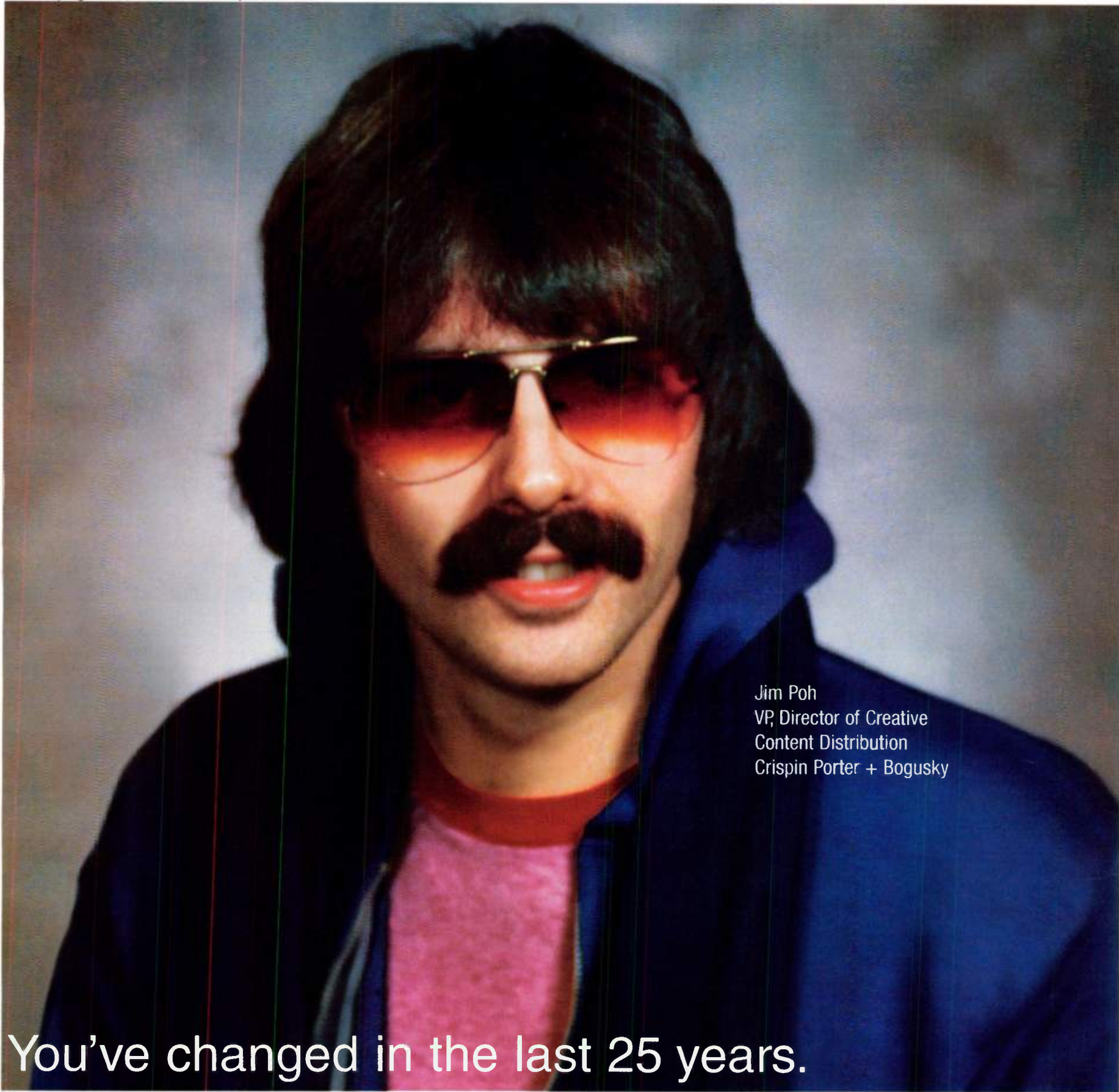
says Olivia Duane-Adams, SRC co-founder and EVP of marketing.

Nicole Buie, Cox Media director of research and sales development, thinks the new SRC tool will give Cox an advantage.

"For local clients, having mapping functionality really differentiates us from broadcast and helps clients understand why cable should be the foundations of their buys."—S.R.



How SRC color-codes the L.A. market



Jim Poh
VP, Director of Creative
Content Distribution
Crispin Porter + Bogusky

You've changed in the last 25 years.

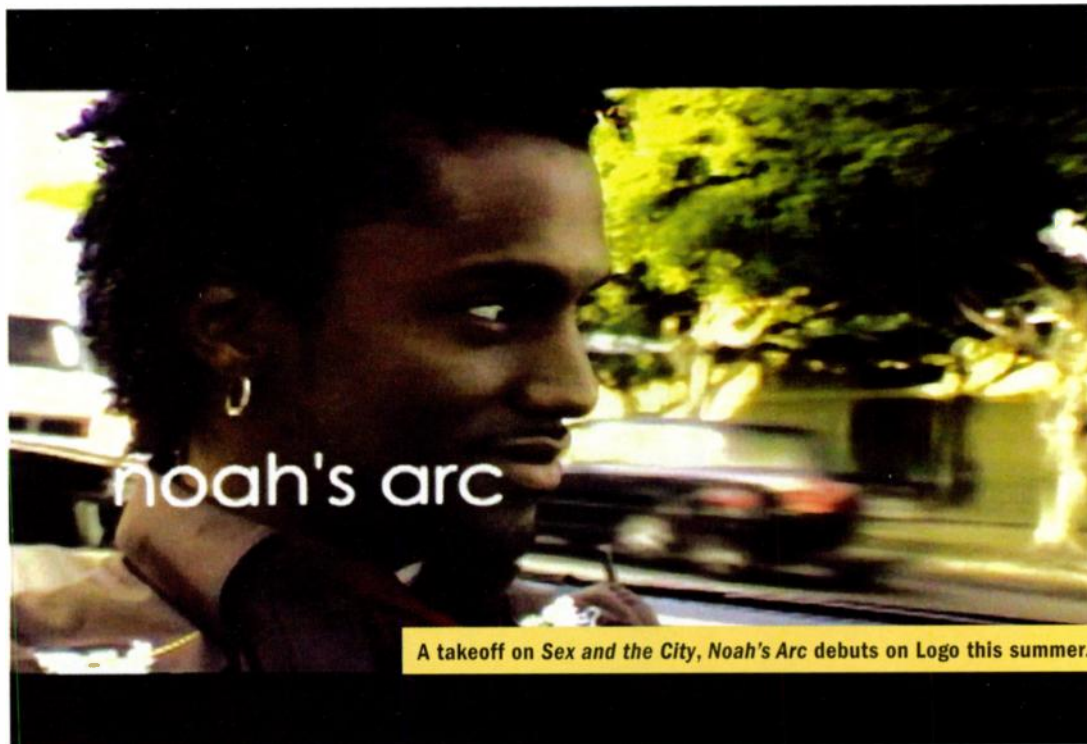
So has spot cable.

Like you, spot cable has grown up. It's matured. Developed. And become a serious alternative to broadcast. But that's not the end of the story. Because Comcast Spotlight is continuously improving spot cable. With products like Adtag™ and Adcopy™ that help you better target your audience. And with new technologies, like VOD, that are creating exciting opportunities for advertisers. For more information, call 866.871.8601. You'll be amazed at how much spot cable has grown.

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SPECIAL REPORT



Out of the Closet and All Over TV

Channels appealing to gays and lesbians court advertisers and cable systems

BY JIM FINKLE

Two years ago, Patrik-Ian Polk set out to produce *Noah's Arc*, a takeoff on *Sex and the City* written from his perspective as a gay African-American living in Los Angeles. He figured the project's chances of being picked up by a TV network were slim, so he put a few clips up on the Web and took orders for DVDs he planned to burn himself.

Polk did not anticipate what has become a sudden spike in demand for shows about gays and lesbians. Viacom's MTV Networks bought *Noah's Arc* and plans to run it this summer as the first scripted series on its new gay channel, Logo, which will launch June 30 in some 10 million cable households on the digital-basic tier. "I had no idea it would take off and travel so far in such a short period of time," Polk says on the Web site where he won't have to park *Noah's Arc* after all.

With gay-oriented programming at unprecedented levels on television—who would have been bold enough five years ago to predict that TV would soon have two popular shows with the Q-word in the title, *Queer as Folk* and *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*?—some programmers are betting that the time is ripe for channels specifically targeting gay audiences.

Logo, the product of three years of internal discussions at Viacom, will be the first advertiser-supported network targeting gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders. It joins another gay-television distributor, the closely held pay service Here!, which is available on cable and satellite and says it can be seen in 25 million homes.

The big question is whether these two networks can offer programming entertaining and informative enough to draw the sort of sizeable audiences that

would encourage skeptical satellite and cable operators to keep dedicating precious bandwidth to gay-targeted content. Logo bears the added burden of trying to please advertisers, while Here! faces the challenge of retaining customers with a pay model that even HBO labors to make succeed.

"It's long overdue from a community's perspective. But from an advertising and marketing perspective, it's probably coming at the right time," says Mark Wilson, a VP with Prime Access, an advertising agency that has helped AT&T, Ford and other Fortune 500 companies develop strategies for targeting gay and lesbian consumers. "There's now a critical mass of advertisers who are looking at this market who recognize the viability of it."

Many companies still shy away from including gay couples and families in na-

tional advertising campaigns, although including other minority populations—blacks, Hispanics, Asians—has become fairly common. Marketers are more comfortable targeting gays through ads in community newspapers, national publications such as *Out* magazine, and Web sites like gay.com.

Twenty years ago, some companies pulled ads from an NBC movie about AIDS, *An Early Frost*, in response to pressure from conservative groups. Fast-forward to 2005: MTV expects advertisers to embrace Logo as they try to deepen their relationship with gays and lesbians, a group that market-research firm Harris Interactive/Witeck-Combs estimates had some \$585 billion in disposable income last year. Half a trillion dollars in buying power gets the attention of businesses searching for untapped markets.

That is where niche channels like Logo come in, says network President Brian Graden, who is also president of entertainment for MTV Networks Music Group. "Entertainment is still really owned by television. It's for the mass audience and also for the target audiences."

He declines to discuss how Logo's ad sales are going or discuss what financial arrangements MTV is making with cable companies and satellite operators that agree to carry the channel.

The only specifics announced to date are that Subaru, Paramount Pictures and Internet travel agent Orbitz.com are Logo's three "premier" sponsors—a classification that means they signed on first and qualify for early-bid advertising discounts. The network also says it has signed ad deals with companies in financial services, fashion and the

travel industry, although it declines to identify them.

Subaru is a pioneer in gay marketing. The company started aggressively courting gay consumers in the mid 1990s, when the automaker's marketing research indicated that gays—in addition to teachers, skiers, engineers and health-care professionals—were particularly receptive to the company's new policy of offering all-wheel drive on every Subaru vehicle, according to Tim Bennett, director of advertising for Subaru of America Inc.

Having decided to target gay consumers a decade

Continued on page 26



MTV's Brian Graden oversees Logo.

"It's long overdue from a community's perspective. But from an advertising and marketing perspective, it's probably coming at the right time." Mark Wilson, Prime Access



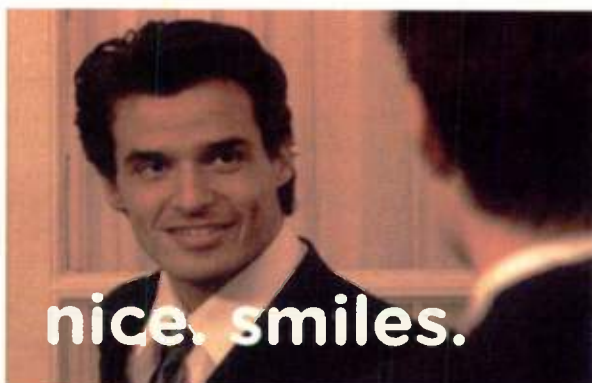
real. lives.



moving. stories.



fresh. faces.



nice. smiles.



leading. ladies.



happy. people.



proud. people.



June 30th. The latest channel from MTV Networks arrives. Award winning films and documentaries. Your favorite stars. Thoughtful, breakthrough original series and events. Quality entertainment programming for Gay America.



World Radio History



at. last.



Out of the Closet and all Over TV

Continued from page 24

ago, Subaru was a natural sponsor for Logo programming. But Bennett doesn't expect many other automakers to "be brave enough" to advertise on Logo, at least until it has a track record with audiences.

Given that advertisers relentlessly slice and dice demographics in an effort to find consumer characteristics they can appeal to with targeted commercials, it's not surprising that some advertisers think tailoring their messages according to sexual identity will pay off. After all, a fortune has been spent on ads specifically appealing to the sexuality of straight consumers (hundreds of millions from the beer industry alone). Now companies are just expanding the strategy to court groups with other sexual orientations.

"The worst thing you can do is to be irrelevant," says Wilson, whose firm advised AT&T in 1994 on its first major direct-mail campaign targeted at gays. "You can be entertaining and on message, but if you're not relevant, you're not going to get noticed."

Groups that have long been ignored

SPECIAL REPORT



Here! Family is aimed at gay parents and their children.

by advertisers are more likely to respond to targeted campaigns because they have the added weight of making those people feel valued by the automaker, vodka distributor or underwear manufacturer that is taking the time to speak to them. Large numbers of gay consumers have long had an affinity for brands like Absolut and Calvin Klein, in addition to Subaru, which were among the first to target that community.

The Here! network has sidestepped the entire matter of advertising support, deciding to market its films, documentaries and TV series directly to viewers. Cable and satellite operators make a commission every time one of their customers orders a Here! program or signs up for a monthly viewing plan. It can be a lucrative arrangement for the opera-

"It's not about gay or not gay. It's that cable systems don't want any more linear channels."
Paul Colichman, Here! TV

SPENDING MUSCLE		
Gays and lesbians had a half trillion dollars in disposable income in 2004		
GROUP	POPULATION (MILLION)	BUYING POWER (BILLION)
Entire U.S.	292	\$8,600
Whites	217	\$7,000
Blacks	37	\$723
Hispanics	41	\$686
GLBT*	15	\$585
Asians	12	\$363

*GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender) reflects the 6%-7% of Americans age 18+ who identify themselves as GLBT, according to Harris Interactive/Witeck-Combs.

SOURCES: Harris Interactive/Witeck-Combs, Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia.

tors: Typically, they receive 70¢-90¢ on the dollar for VOD orders that don't involve major Hollywood movies.

Here! CEO Paul Colichman says his service is gaining critical mass and should be available in 30 million cable and satellite homes by year's end. The channel is one of only a handful of startup programmers that have focused on building out video-on-demand (VOD) and subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) services at their launch, figuring that cable operators would be attracted to a format that many experts believe could be the future of pay TV. Here! also offers a traditional "linear-channel" service that's available on DirecTV, which doesn't yet offer VOD, and some cable systems.

"It's not about gay or not gay," says Colichman. "It's that cable systems don't want any more linear channels."

The foray into cable and satellite is one of many ventures by Here!, which Colichman wants to build into a large media company focused on gay content. Colichman, who owns a stake in Here! and is personally involved in the production of all its original content, won't identify the company's key shareholders or the amounts they have invested. He does say that Here! has spent more than \$50 million developing exclusive content. (See box on page 27.)

Also bidding to join the race to attract gay viewers: Q Television, a tiny publicly held company whose shares are trading for less than a penny. The service is available only on RCN Cable systems, which combined have only about 400,000 subscribers. The channel will not become a credible competitor until it gets its finances in order and is able to persuade a major cable company or satellite operator to pick up its service.

The difficulty of that task would seem to have more to do with Q's stability than with operators' resistance to courting a gay audience. In Southern California, for instance, Adelphia cable has long been a sponsor of such events as fundraisers by AIDS groups, a Gay Life Expo Pride and West Hollywood Pride. The outreach is similar to other efforts that Adelphia makes to connect with the area's large Hispanic and Korean communities.

"We absolutely live in a melting pot," says Adelphia Regional Sales and Marketing VP Mariann Belmonte. "It's a patchwork quilt of many different groups. We recognize the differences." Those differences sometimes lead to complaints. "There's always concern when we add ethnic programming. We have customers saying, 'There's all these channels, but I can't understand them,'" she says. "If you put Logo in that container, I'm sure that some folks will feel that way, too."

Others, of course, likely will feel that a long arc that began in 1971 when *All in the Family* dared to broach the subject of homosexuality has finally reached some sort of completion. ■

What Is Gay TV?



Queer Eye's Jai Rodriguez

With the success of *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, the phrase "gay sensibility" has been working overtime in the entertainment business. But what does it really mean?

A television program such as *Nip/Tuck* might have a gay sensibility even if it isn't primarily focused on gay themes and characters, says openly gay writer, director and producer Randy Barbato. But a show such as FX's *The Shield*,



Nip/Tuck's duo

which features a main character who struggles with his sexual identity, doesn't necessarily have a gay sensibility, he adds.

World of Wonder Productions, the company Barbato runs with business partner Fenton Bailey, often produces projects that focus on gay topics (the documentary *Gay Republicans*, for instance) or have a gay sensibility without a gay subject matter (two films about Tammy Faye Bakker).



Tammy Faye Bakker

But Barbato says that even he finds the sensibility question difficult to define. "It's like that Supreme Court ruling on pornography: I know it when I see it."



Paul Lynde

These days it is much more likely to be seen—and acknowledged—than in the past—as in the 1970s, when Paul Lynde could camp up *Hollywood Squares* without anyone ever quite approaching the subject directly.

"What used to essentially be the secret and subtext is now the subject and the text," says Linda Voorhees, a professor at UCLA's School of Theater, Film and Television.

For further deconstruction, see below.

GAY	NOT GAY
Text or subtext or no text? This whole gay-sensibility thing can be very confusing. Here is a roadmap to help sort out programming across the years.	
Joan Collins Dynasty	Dallas
Nip/Tuck	ER Noah Wyle
Star Trek	Lost
Lynette Scavo Desperate Housewives	Law & Order
The Swan	Extreme Makeover Home Edition: How'd They Do That? Ty Pennington
American Idol	Cheers Ted Danson
Matt LeBlanc Frasier	Everybody Loves Raymond
Friends	The Apprentice
America's Next Top Model Tyra Banks	

TWO PLAYERS

LOGO

Launch: June 30, 2005

Investor: Viacom

Business Model: Advertiser-supported channel for basic digital cable; formulating plan to expand into video-on-demand

Distribution: At launch, will be in some 10 million cable homes with digital-basic service, including Adelphia, RCN and Time Warner Cable. MTV is in final negotiations with Comcast and is also in talks with DirecTV and Dish.



Gay Wedding's
Scott Thompson

Programming Highlights:

- **Noah's Arc:** Logo's first scripted series: a comedy/drama that looks like *Sex and the City*, except that it's about four gay African-American men in West Hollywood: struggling screenwriter Noah, counselor Alex; clothing-store owner Ricky and college professor Chance.
- **My Fabulous Gay Wedding:** Actor/comedian Scott Thompson and wedding planner extraordinaire Fern Cohen help gay and lesbian couples plan the wedding of their dreams.
- **Documentaries:** Include *Beautiful Daughters* (about a transgender production of *The Vagina Monologues*), *Gay Fraternities and Sororities*, *Gay Republicans*, *Gay Rodeo*, *Gay Rugby* and *In the Name of Allah* (what it's like to be gay or lesbian in the conservative Muslim world).
- **Cruise:** A reality series from Bunim-Murray (producer of *The Real World* and *The Simple Life*) with stories that play out over the course of a seven-day cruise. The happy couple celebrating 20 years together, the newly out man from Iowa traveling with his mom, and lesbians looking for love all set sail together.

HERE!

Launch: 2000

Investors: Undisclosed

Business Model: Pay-per view VOD, pay-per-month SVOD and premium channel (Cablevision charges \$7 for a month of Here! SVOD; Dish Network charges \$4 per movie; DirecTV charges \$10 per month or \$6 for 3 hours).

Distribution: Company claims 25 million satellite and cable homes, including DirecTV, Dish, Adelphia, Cablevision.

Programming Highlights:

- **Here! Family:** Covers topics of interest to gay parents and their children. Hosted by Michelle Darné, former publisher of defunct *And Baby* magazine for gay parents, which folded last year after a three-year run.
- **Dante's Cove:** Soap about a group of young gay men and lesbians living in a peaceful beachside community with a supernatural past that comes alive to haunt them.
- **The Complex:** Five sexy, single lesbians live in a courtyard apartment setting that sounds a lot like *Melrose Place*. The network says the women are "coy, catty, hilarious and flawed."
- **Third Man Out:** A series starring Chad Allen (of *Dr. Quinn Medicine Woman*) about Donald Strachey, the tough, streetwise and gay detective featured in the mystery-novel series by Richard Stevenson.



Gregory Michael
and William Gregory Lee
of *Dante's Cove*

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World Radio History

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Queer Eye's brand extends to more than 100 countries.

Queer Eye Guru Meditates

The creator of Bravo's powerhouse isn't rushing to find a follow-up to his breakthrough hit **By Deborah Starr Seibel**

Meeting David Collins in the reception area of Scout Productions in Los Angeles, a visitor could get the impression that the creator of Bravo's *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* is in a mad scramble to find a follow-up to his groundbreaking hit. He races up the long, steep staircase to his second-floor office, taking the steps two at a time.

As he bounds upward, Collins' lean torso and signature bald pate make the 37-year-old appear positively aerodynamic. "Come on up! How're you doing? Sorry for all the craziness. Would you like something to drink?"

Unwinded, not stopping for breath, Collins seems unlikely to sit still for an interview for more than a couple of minutes before returning to the pressing business of trying to capitalize on his moment of programming glory. But despite his convincing impersonation of a human pogo stick, Collins is in fact biding his time.

"There's this big pressure to rush out with something new," he says. "Hurry! Step right up! See what's next in reality television!" Collins says he fell victim to the circus-barker routine for a time, eyeing the growing empire of Mark Burnett (*Survivor*, *The Apprentice*, *The Contender*) and wondering how he and his producing partners, Michael Williams and David Metzler, could follow *Queer Eye's* remarkable slam dunk with both gay and straight audiences after its debut in the summer of 2003 (an Emmy for Outstanding Reality Program followed in 2004).

"STAY FOCUSED"

"But then we got some really good advice from our agents at Endeavor, Rick Rosen and Greg Horangic," he says. "They said, 'When Mark Burnett started *Survivor*, he didn't rush right out with something else immediately.' So we've decided to stay focused."

Focus, in this case, means finishing up the massive order for *QE's* second season—38 episodes—and starting 27 more for season three, which begins airing in June. Viewership has cooled to about 1 million from the audience of 1.6 million for its premiere, but *QE* remains a powerhouse for Bravo.

There is also an order for 13 episodes of the franchise's inevitably less revolutionary (and less watched) spinoff, *Queer Eye for the Straight Girl*. In addition, Collins takes a supervisory role in the red-hot franchising and marketing of the *QE* brand to more than 100 countries. An additional 15 nations, not content with taking fashion, grooming and interior-design tips from homosexual Americans, have created their own teams of five gay "superheroes" under Collins' guidance.

"What we want to do now," he says, "is work quietly on development."

He's contemplating test-driving pilots in overseas markets. And he's exploring the possibility of striking deals with advertisers to co-sponsor a show from the pilot stage onward "so we take the pressure off the networks in trying something new."

But beyond offering those tidbits, Collins is mum on the subject of his next projects. Reality-show producers often try to keep their operations hush-hush, but avoiding attracting attention will be difficult for Collins, whose face has been plastered across the television airwaves in American Express ("Do you know me?") Small Business Network commercials. And trying to out-do *QE* will be a daunting challenge, given that the show's status as a "make-better" program, which utilizes gay men helping clueless straight men, has had a seismic cultural impact.

Despite its arrival on TV as a decidedly radical production (putting the word "queer" in the title for starters), *QE* originated on more prosaic grounds.

"This show was born out of our friendship," says Metzler. "David being the gay guy and me being the straight guy. At the beginning of every audition, David would say, 'Gay guys, straight guys, they may do things a little bit differently in the bedroom, but in the end, they're just guys. So why is there an issue?'" And if there were an "issue," they reasoned, it could be quickly vanquished. "It's the old idea of 'show,

got on my bicycle and rode through the neighborhood telling everyone. My parents got a phone call from a neighbor, saying, 'David is telling everyone you're getting a divorce.' I was broadcasting it."

LIFE LESSONS

But it was in his sophomore year in high school, when he was 15, that the wheels really came off. Collins—class president, football player, choir member and after-school assistant to the principal—played hooky with some friends to go to the Cincinnati Zoo. There they were caught, truant and smoking pot, and Collins was suspended for one week and barred from all extracurricular activities.

His response?

He ran away from home for three solid months and got odd jobs in New York City, a far cry from bucolic Ohio. "I found out," he says, "that the world is bigger and that there is a price for everything."

Safely back home, Collins graduated as senior-class president, enrolled in Ohio University and fell in love with campus radio. After graduation in 1989 (with a B.S. in film and television), he showed up at the Cincinnati Film Commission looking for a job.

It just happened to be the day that Jodie Foster, in town to scout locations for *Little Man Tate*, was stranded at the airport. Collins volunteered to pick her up, made himself useful and was rewarded with his first screen credit: Special Projects Coordinator.

He also met his life partner of 15 years, Michael Williams, on the set. Five years later, after working on a string of feature films, he and Williams launched their own location-scouting company, which would lead to independent films and TV shows, including ABC Family's *Knock First*, a teen room-makeover show, and an Academy Award for Williams' producing role on the 2004 documentary feature *Fog of War*.

"David energizes everyone," says Bravo SVP of Programming and Production Frances Berwick. One of *QE's* breakout stars, fashion guru Carson Kressley, remembers first encountering Collins at a casting agency in New York.

"I walked into a rickety building in Chelsea" for an audition, Kressley says, and spotted the man who would soon be his boss. "And I thought, wow, who's this little firepot? He is a very tightly wound, passionate person."

And a person who doesn't have to worry about knocking himself out just trying to get the attention of the sort of skeptical television executives who once squirmed through his pitch for a show about "queer" lifestyle gurus.

"We definitely paid our dues and have solid creative behind the company," he says. "Sexuality doesn't really play a role. Confidence plays a role." ■

"We definitely paid our dues and have solid creative behind the company. Sexuality doesn't really play a role. Confidence plays a role."



QE creator David Collins

don't tell," says Metzler. "If you just show people how great these guys are and how good their work is, they'll figure out the rest by themselves."

Although the show has built bridges across a sexual divide, Collins did not approach it with an activist agenda. He came out in college, "but, for me," he says, "it was never a political thing."

The eldest of three boys, Collins grew up outside Cincinnati, where the suburbs meet farm country. His highest aspiration was to excel within the Future Farmers of America and become a veterinarian. But with his drive and dramatic bent, the lure of the FFA couldn't keep him down on the farm.

"I have always been overzealous in everything," he says. "When I was little and my parents told me that they were getting divorced"—his father is a salesman, his mother a seminar and conference coordinator—"I

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World Radio History

Thanks to RCN for its loyalty to the gay and lesbian community.

The Fritts Years

After an awesome 23-year run, NAB chief Eddie Fritts is about to step down. His record is awesome—but not flawless. He helped the industry shed onerous rules limiting the size and power of radio- and TV-station owners. At the end, however, he couldn't repair fissures that have divided broadcasters in fundamental ways. **By Bill McConnell**



aking the stage at the National Association of Broadcasters convention in 1983, Sen. Bob Packwood delivered a broadside to the Las Vegas crowd.

NAB had no clout in Washington, he taunted broadcasters. For that matter, the country's largest trade group "couldn't lobby its way out of a paper bag."

The blunt assessment from the chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee was an embarrassment to Eddie Fritts, the new NAB president presiding over his first annual industry confab.

The dig cut particularly deep because Fritts knew it was true.

In fact, NAB at that moment was in the middle of a futile lobbying fight with its main regulator, the FCC. The agency was preparing to add nearly 1,000 new stations to the AM and FM dials, unleashing a flood of competition to NAB members that would prove their fears of destroyed profits at many stations and would sour banks and Wall Street on the radio industry for more than a decade.

Despite the pending threat, NAB was powerless to stop the FCC.

Packwood's convention speech was a wake-up call for Fritts, who was in the process of selling his small chain of Mississippi radio stations—up to that point his only livelihood—in order to focus on his new job. "I sat there in the audience thinking, 'Holy cow, what is this all about?'" But I also took Packwood's comment as a personal challenge."

Stanley Hubbard, president of Hubbard Broadcasting, recalls NAB's disarray at the time, and his assessment was much like Packwood's. "It was just a joke, totally ineffective ... it was worthless," he says. "Eddie straightened it out."

Now, after 23 years running NAB, the 64-year-old Fritts is stepping down. Although his contract doesn't run out until 2006, he has asked the NAB board to hire a search firm to choose his successor. A clause in Fritts' contract would obligate him to step down as early as this fall if a new president is hired, and in a recent interview, he predicted that he'll



Just as Eddie Fritts took over, then-Sen. Bob Packwood (right above, with Fritts) ridiculed the NAB, saying the organization "couldn't lobby its way out of a paper bag."

be running the trade group for just "another six months." He will work as an NAB consultant through 2008.

More than two decades after building the NAB into an organization known for its clout, Fritts' departure comes as NAB is increasingly riven by divisions within its ranks.

A FAMILY DIVIDED

The networks themselves are no longer members of NAB. One by one, NBC, CBS, Fox and ABC have quit. In large part, this happened because leaders of TV-station groups, including Citadel Communications CEO and NAB Joint TV/Radio board Chairman Phil Lombardo, wanted NAB to take a harder line to win government protections from what they say have been contract abuses by the networks. They also wanted the FCC to limit the number of stations a network may own.

Fritts, always preferring unity with the networks, endured a public outburst by Lombardo at last year's NAB convention over the issue, and the situation played a role in his decision to retire ahead of schedule.

Despite the abrupt end to Fritts' tenure, Scripps Howard Broadcasting President Bill Peterson thinks the timing might be fortuitous. "Eddie has done a wonderful job," Peterson says. "But there may be a chance to get someone who will be attuned to technology and the changes our industry is going through. It may be a good time to go though the choices."

Several of Fritts' trade-group rivals, who also marvel at the job he has done keeping the fractious industry together, caution that NAB could find itself in a shambles again if the group doesn't restore the unity Fritts built in his early tenure.



Though he had critics, few deny that Eddie Fritts rebuilt NAB into a lobbying powerhouse.

Even before he took over the group in 1982, Fritts began piecing together how NAB had lost its once formidable muscle in Washington.

As a member of the group's radio board, he had already made his first stop for advice among the Mississippi congressional delegation. His state's senior senator, John Stennis, knew little about broadcasting and even less about the FCC. What Stennis knew better than nearly anyone, however, was Washington and how it worked.

MAKING NAB A POWER

Fritts patiently and persistently explained how heavily regulated broadcasters were—including tight limits on the number of stations one company can own—and the troubles with the FCC's plan to add more stations to the dial.

After listening quietly, Stennis looked up and asked rhetorically, in a slow country drawl, "Do you boys really get your rules and regulations from the FCC?" His advice was simple: "Well then, you ought to be talking to us a lot."

In talks with other lawmakers, Fritts began to understand that NAB had failed to adapt to a key transformation in Washington ushered in by President Reagan's

Continued on page 34

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Eddie Fritts

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thank you for more than 20
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WPIX-TV, New York • KTLA-TV, Los Angeles • WGN-TV, Chicago • WPHL-TV, Philadelphia • WLVI-TV, Boston • KDAF-TV, Dallas
WBDC-TV, Washington, DC • WATL-TV, Atlanta • KHWB-TV, Houston • KCPO-TV & KTWB-TV, Seattle • WBZL-TV, Miami
KWGN-TV, Denver • KTXL-TV, Sacramento • KPLR-TV, St. Louis • KWBP-TV, Portland • WXIN-TV & WTTV-TV, Indianapolis
KSWB-TV, San Diego • WTIC-TV & WTXN-TV, Hartford • WXMI-TV, Grand Rapids • WPMT-TV, Harrisburg
WGNO-TV & WNOL-TV, New Orleans • WEWB-TV, Albany • WGN-AM, Chicago • Tribune Entertainment • Superstation WGN

The Fritts Years

Continued from page 32

election and the Republican party's resurgence on Capitol Hill. Because of the GOP takeover of the Senate, once all-powerful Democratic committee chairmen no longer ruled with iron fists. Rank-and-file lawmakers were gaining much more power to push their personal agendas.

A few years earlier, NAB, or any other lobby group, needed to get tight with only three or four chairmen and their few allies in order to win legislative favors.

NAB's previous leadership had failed to recognize the shift. "The whole nature of the town was being dramatically changed," Fritts says. "It seemed to me the kind of reception we got from the Mississippi delegation could be replicated in the halls of Congress many times over" through members' outreach to their local members of Congress.

NAB organized one of the first legal political action committees and set about growing its meager budget into a campaign war chest that would help friendly lawmakers fund reelection bids and systematically build the 50 state broadcast associations into grassroots lobbying machines.

"Every election, you have 50 or so new members in every Congress. You have to do more education of members on your industry. You have to make sure local broadcasters go see them, introduce them to the staffs, show them around stations and talk about what broadcasters do," Fritts says.

"I preached that gospel for 23 years," he adds, "and I think we were very efficient and have our credibility and have been very effective."

LOBBYING PAID OFF

Derided by some as little more than a country businessman—in appearance, Fritts does not fit the image of a Washington power broker—he quickly figured out how to make his strategy work in Washington.

Fritts was "cut from the same cloth" as the politicians he was lobbying, says Gordon Hastings, president of the Broadcasters' Foundation. "He had been to Rotary Club meetings. He had been to the Kiwanis meetings. Eddie understands how to make a local United Way campaign work.

"Eddie Fritts," Hastings continues, "understood how to ring the bell of every single member of the United

"Eddie Fritts understood how to ring the bell of every single member of the United States Senate and every single member of the House of Representatives."

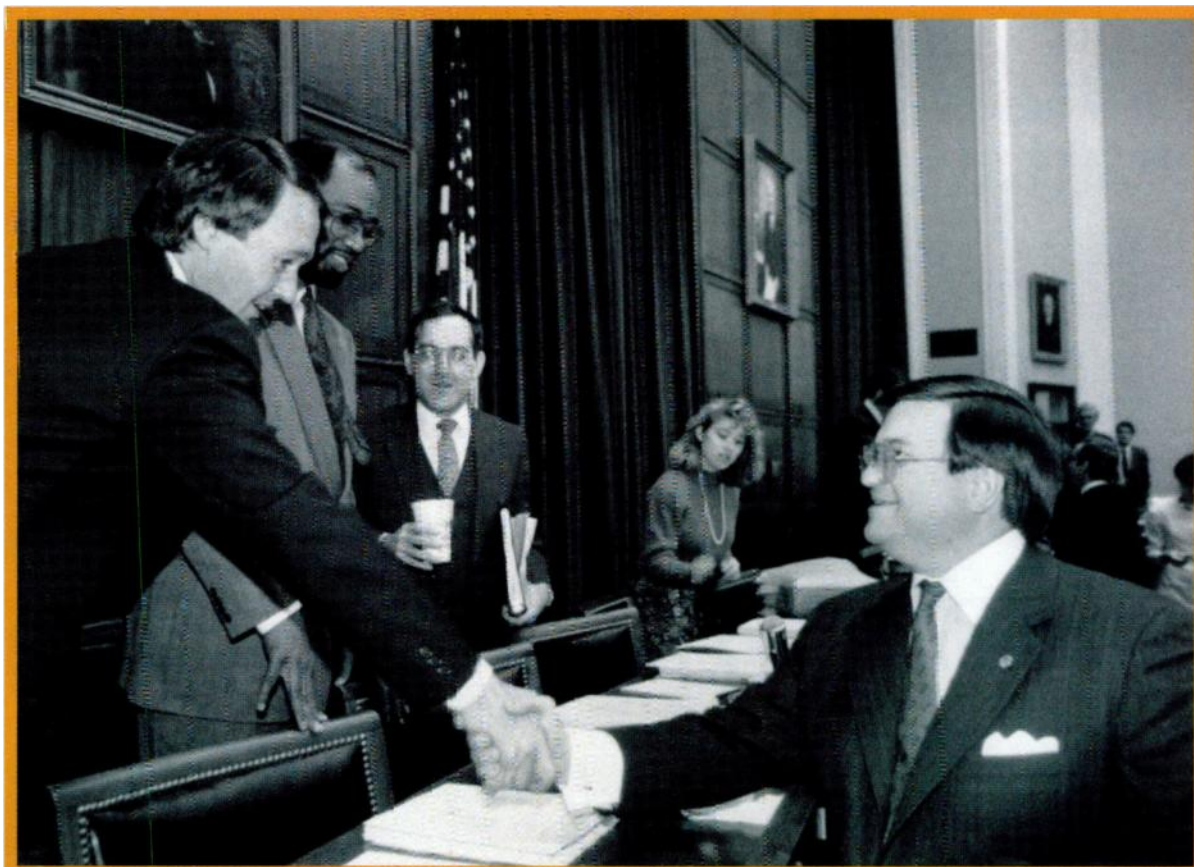
GORDON HASTINGS, BROADCASTERS' FOUNDATION

States Senate and every single member of the House of Representatives."

Fritts taught broadcasters that they could be powerful political forces in their own community. They had "the ultimate lobbying presence, because the lobbying was done right in the legislator's home constituency," Hastings explains. "The smaller the market, the greater the importance of that direct connection."

Says Russ Withers, president of Withers Broadcasting Co. and a member of the NAB executive committee, "Nobody could compete against rolling out all the radio and TV people in all of the states. He had them organized and focused, first by letter and telephone and now by e-mail and fax."

But at first, to transform NAB, Fritts needed money, and lots of it. So he began transforming the annual NAB Convention from a narrowly focused industry



Fritts could shake hands with Rep. Ed Markey (D-Mass.), but Markey was often an adversary.

meeting where broadcasters batted around common concerns into a hardware show for all facets of broadcast-station and electronic-communications production equipment. (See story, page 36.)

Enormous profits from exhibitors' fees allowed NAB to build its cash reserves from a paltry \$1.5 million in 1983 to \$81 million today. The money helps fund NAB's Television and Radio Political Action Committee (TARPAC), which donated \$883,000 to federal candidates in the 2004 election cycle and has \$354,513 in cash on hand.

Fritts' efforts to build TARPAC, along with his grassroots lobbying, soon paid off. The regulatory funk that had stuck to the industry soon began to wash off.

In 1984, at congressional urging, the FCC dropped

license renewal.

The legislative success had a hugely positive impact on NAB's membership levels as well.

More station owners began to see the payoff of a strong presence in Washington and began pushing the group's roster to record levels. Four years after Fritts took the helm, TV membership reached a record high of just over 940 stations. The National Radio Broadcasters Association, a trade group for FM stations, was persuaded to become part of NAB, and radio membership soared to more than 5,000.

Fritts strengthened his congressional team by hiring Coca-Cola Bottling lobbyist Jim May to run the Capitol Hill lobbying shop in 1988.

"My 15 years at NAB were some of the happiest and most productive of my career," says May, now president of the Air Transport Association, the airlines' trade group. "As a boss, he was a guy who gave you latitude to get the job done as you saw fit. But Eddie was always an active participant from start to finish in any lobbying effort."

Gary Chapman, chairman and CEO of LIN Television, believes Fritts' best years may have been the early 1990s. At that time, member TV networks differed with owners of independent stations over the seemingly conflicting goals of whether to demand that cable carry every TV station for free or whether to pursue an alternative that would let stations negotiate with cable to receive payment for carriage of their stations.

Negotiated carriage would have benefited network stations and big affiliates because they had more leverage over cable. Independent stations and smaller broadcast groups, with their staple of syndicated shows and paid programming—and less clout—would have had little sway to demand cable carriage.

In January 1991, NAB's TV board met at the Ritz Carlton in Naples, Fla., for eight contentious hours of debate. At Chapman's suggestion, the board voted

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a requirement that broadcasters meet with local community leaders to ascertain their markets' programming needs.

Significantly, the FCC also lifted restrictions limiting station-group owners to seven radio and seven TV outlets nationwide and embarked on a steady ownership deregulation drive that culminated with the 1996 Telecommunications Act.

WHEN BROADCASTERS RULED

Throughout the 1980s, other regulations hated by broadcasters fell, including the Fairness Doctrine, which required stations to air programs on controversial subjects and include contrasting points of view.

Congress also lengthened the term for a broadcast license from three to eight years and, in all but the most egregious cases of neglecting local community needs, granted each owner virtual certainty of winning

Congratulations, Eddie.



Your friends at CBS Television salute you for your service to and accomplishments on behalf of America's free, over-the-air broadcasters.



The Fritts Years

Continued from page 34

to go for broke and fight for both options. A victory would let each station choose whether to demand must-carry or negotiate a carriage deal with its local cable operator.

NAB's legislative campaign was brutally effective. "We had everyone from the networks to the smallest stations," Chapman says. "They were all working their congressmen and senators back home. We did it state by state, congressman by congressman. When you get every TV company working for a single cause, it's a very powerful thing."

Congress passed the Cable Act of 1992, giving TV stations the option of either demanding mandatory cable carriage or taking their chances at receiving compensation. To top off the battle, NAB was forced to battle for a Senate override of President George H.W. Bush's veto—the only veto of the elder Bush's presidency. Says Chapman of the one-vote override: "It was the height of our success in dealing with Congress."

GOOD TIMES TO TOUGH LOSSES

NAB continued to rack up Washington victories, but going forward, the wins usually required broadcasters to compromise their agenda to some degree.

In 1996, Congress eliminated caps on national radio station ownership. But a vote to raise the cap on the national TV-audience reach to 35% of television households didn't go far enough for the networks; they wanted to own even more stations and raise the cap to 50%.

It was high enough for network affiliates. They feared that expansion would give the networks too



Fritts shares a laugh with Larry King (center) and then-New York Gov. Marc Cuomo at the 1984 Democratic Convention.

much leverage and all them to dictate affiliation contract terms. (Eventually, Congress set the cap at 39%, just enough to keep any of the networks from having to divest any stations.)

The deregulation moves that were begun in 1996 eventually backfired on the industry. The waves of consolidation, including creation of the 1,200-station Clear Channel radio group, sparked a backlash against broadcast owners and other big-media companies that continues today and has even been woven into debates over indecency complaints. (Because

some broadcast groups are so big, critics say, they sneer at FCC fines.)

But in the '90s, consolidation seemed to be a part of the broader media revolution that included the still-novel Internet. Against that backdrop, broadcasters in 1997 were "loaned" a second channel to inaugurate digital service, a grant then-FCC Chairman Reed Hundt and other critics derided as a "\$70 billion giveaway" because it was generally conceded that broadcasters would never give the "original" channel back.

NAB also won what eventually may be seen as an illusory victory in 2000, by persuading Congress to drastically scale back the FCC's plan to establish a noncommercial low-power FM radio service.

GRASSROOTS GROUPS GALVANIZE

Although broadcasters hailed the vote as a defensive win that protected their existing stations from new interference, the lobbying battle did something else: That move, along with Clear Channel's growth, spurred the development of anti-big-media grassroots organizations like Free Press and Code Pink to stall the FCC's 2003 broadcast-ownership proceedings. Resolution of several issues desperately sought by NAB members now may not be settled until a Supreme Court review. There is also a good chance the FCC will expand the number of low-power radio stations.

Andrew Schwartzman, president of Media Access Project—an activist group that has fought for decades to impose public-interest obligations on broadcasters—concedes that NAB has few rivals for lobbying success. He predicts, however, that NAB's hard-line

Continued on page 38

Bigger Is Much Better

NAB nest egg grew as Fritts supersized the annual convention **By Kim McAvoy**



ne of the most tangible legacies of Eddie Fritts will be on display next month in Las Vegas, when 100,000 people from around the world will gather for the NAB's annual convention, now accurately billed as the World's Largest Electronic Media Show.

The convention draws more than five times as many people and three times as many exhibitors as it did when Fritts arrived at the NAB 23 years ago. Perhaps most important, it has become the financial engine of NAB, throwing off \$15 million to \$20 million in net profit each year. That money keeps dues low and the gears of NAB's lobbying operation well greased.

The convention itself has become a lobbying tool. Over the years, Fritts has brought scores of lawmakers, Hill staffers and FCC officials to Las Vegas to meet with media moguls and industry executives to see firsthand the vast and alluring technological future of television and radio.

And the officials were duly impressed, says John Abel, whom Fritts hired in 1983 to grow the convention. "They'd see this big show and think, 'Don't mess with these guys. They've got a lot of money.'" (Abel left NAB in 1995 and is currently SVP of membership, marketing and business development at the United States Telecom Association.)

Now the NAB Show is, as the billing says, home to electronic media in all its forms. Everybody with

hardware or software that creates, captures, manipulates, stores or transmits video or audio is on the sprawling exhibit floor of the Las Vegas Convention Center—or ought to be. Buyers include broadcasters, cable operators and networks, news outlets, corporate video producers, and production houses.

In fact, cable fueled much of the NAB convention's growth in the 1980s. But the show took its big leap forward in 1992 with the establishment of Multimedia World, a show-within-a-show that embraced the convergence of computers, along with video and audio. "Silicon Valley types started coming," Abel says.

If much was gained by expanding the show, something was lost as well. Broadcasters represent only a fraction of attendees. The clubby atmosphere of the 1970s and early 1980s has disappeared. Most station executives have stopped going, even though the NAB works hard to put together a compelling conference for them.

But Fritts made sure convention planners knew the organization's priorities. "Whenever a decision came down to politics or business, Eddie came down on the side of business," says Abel. "If it meant good business for the NAB, he would wade through the politics."



The NAB Show: Up to \$20 million in annual profit.

The NAB is an international attraction. Last year, more than 22,000 came from overseas. "The international component is all gravy," Abel says, but, for some of the exhibitors, it is also milk and honey.

"I remember an exhibitor complaining about traffic one year," Abel recalls. "But by the end of the show, they had made a \$90 million sale to a Mexican broadcaster." ■



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Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

March 4, 2005

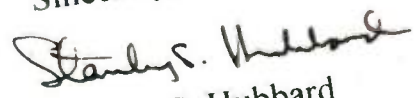
Mr. Edward O. Fritts
President and CEO
National Assn. of Broadcasters
1771 N Street NW
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Eddie:

I remember well the condition of the NAB when you took over. You, together with great chairmen such as Wally Jorgensen, did a wonderful job in turning the NAB into perhaps the most effective organization in Washington. You have demonstrated time and again the importance of radio and TV working together so that the NAB could achieve its goals.

Eddie, my family and all of us at Hubbard Broadcasting thank you for all you have done for this great industry of public service during your tenure. We will miss you. Best wishes from all your friends at Hubbard Broadcasting.

Sincerely,


Stanley S. Hubbard



The Fritts Years

Continued from page 36

stances will ultimately prove short-sighted, as new broadband technologies eat stations' audiences beyond the losses already inflicted by cable.

Unless broadcasters accept public-interest obligations, Schwartzman says, rivals will eventually persuade Congress to strip stations of the nearly exclusive reign over broadcast-channel bands they have enjoyed since the 1930s.

Instead, NAB should be bold enough to embrace low-power radio stations as an example of the free, noncommercial, public-service programming broadcasters can offer better than anyone else.

"The most telling example of what has been wrong with NAB is the fact that its press release about Eddie's departure brags about his role blunting low-power radio," Schwartzman says. "This service should be embraced as the farm team for the next generation of broadcasting, not fought off as an infidel."

Despite harsh words for NAB's strategy, Schwartzman praises Fritts for his "constant commitment to civility and willingness to try settling our differences."

Gary Shapiro, president of the Consumer Electronics Association, whose group has lost high-profile battles with broadcasters over FCC rules requiring nearly all TV sets to include tuners that receive stations' DTV signals and requiring DTV equipment to incorporate anti-copying safeguards, says NAB used its lobbying prowess for the "wrong issues."

NAB, which only recently began speaking out against Washington's effort to crack down on indecency, was a year too late voicing opposition publicly, Shapiro says. He also laments that little became of an NAB/CEA plan to promote digital television to consumers.

"NAB has never made an effort to market DTV to the public," Shapiro says. "Their whole strategy is asking the government to regulate some other industry, such as requiring digital must-carry on cable or DTV tuners on CEA members." He complains that NAB's offer to jointly market DTV amounted to nothing more than offering free airtime for promotional spots.

Some within NAB agree Fritts focused too much on Washington and too little on promoting DTV as a business. TV-station owners are on track to spend \$16 billion building out digital studios and towers, and there is no sign the switch to DTV will generate any extra profit to cover the expense. As a consequence, their profits are stagnant. "Eddie and NAB never provided any real business leadership," laments one longtime NAB member.

On the radio side of the industry, members complain that NAB allowed Congress to stifle stations' Internet streaming with stiff royalties that Web traffic doesn't justify. Local competition from satellite radio also sneaked up on NAB in the form of weather and traffic channels that, although distributed nationally, are targeted to specific markets.

HE DID IT HIS WAY

Fritts accepts little of the criticism—especially for the rise of satellite radio. Thanks to the consolidation permitted by the 1996 deregulation, the radio industry is poised to compete effectively with new technologies that have naturally developed, he says. Before 1996, fewer broadcast companies were publicly traded or had access to Wall Street capital. Few markets had Spanish-language stations, and fewer still served Korean-speaking and other immigrant populations.

"Consolidation allowed broadcasters to do that," Fritts says.

He also dismisses suggestions that NAB has dropped the ball on DTV and disputes Shapiro's claim that NAB wouldn't put up cash to promote digital TV.

"He's as full of [stuffing] as a Christmas turkey," says Fritts, using another word. "We put up \$1 million cash money, in addition to on-air spots. Gary was all fired up until we said you've got to put in some money too. Then he decided he didn't like the logo and wouldn't participate."

"Plus," Fritts adds, "we are promoting DTV in markets where broadcasters have tested their markets to find out what consumers want."

He believes that broadcasters and NAB are poised to compete in the digital age, because their spectrum is as robust as any portion of the airwaves and a good chunk of their product is going to be free. "The consumer market is going to fragment into a mindset of 'I want what I want when I want it,' and I submit broadcasters will find a way to package that content in new and different ways."

As radio goes digital, it too will be well-positioned to compete in terms of sound quality with satellite radio. To meet the threat of the satellite service's commercial-free channels, Fritts notes that big broadcasters like Clear Channel are "retrenching" to cut down ad time and constantly re-evaluating their playlists to ensure that they are offering a competitive product.

"Broadcasting has a great future. I'm confident and excited about it."

With \$81 million in the bank, there is plenty to promote digital TV, as well as to wage political campaigns when Congress begins re-writing telecom laws in the next few months. On NAB's agenda will be winning cable-carriage rights for the extra programming channels that going digital allows them to add, pursuing deregulation of local-ownership limits and setting a hard deadline for turning off old analog TV channels.

As for NAB, Fritts admits he is disappointed the networks are no longer members. (In his view, their self-imposed exile is temporary, and he still refers to them as "members.")

NOW WHAT?

"I'm frustrated there's fragmentation in our membership," Fritts says. "One of the challenges for my successor will be to further unify the industry. I've found we're at our best when we speak with one voice."

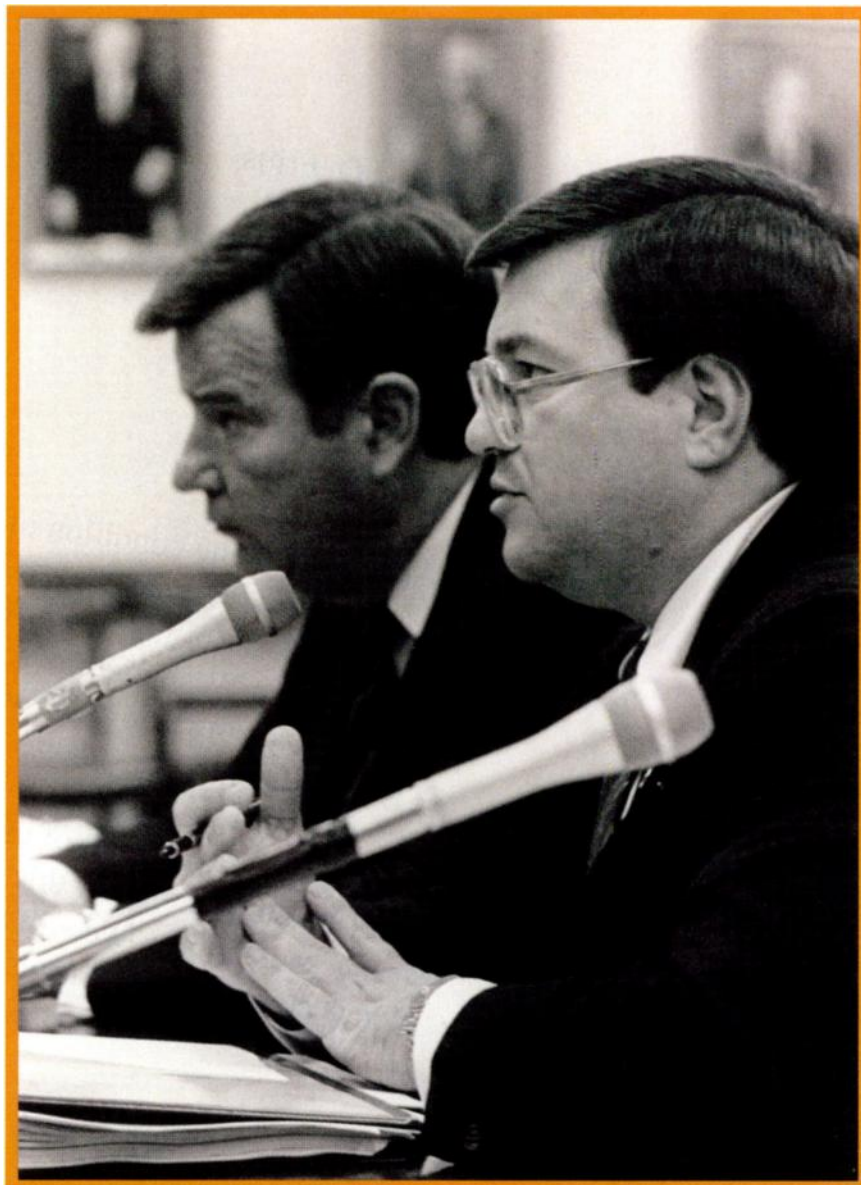
Other NAB critics aren't so sanguine about the direction the organization seems to be taking; Fritts'

pending departure is one in a long line of bad signs, they say.

Democratic FCC Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein laments the NAB board's decision to reject public-service-programming obligations in return for an FCC mandate that would have required cable operators to carry most of their new digital channels. Adelstein says Fritts supported that solution.

"They should listen to good advice from good people like Eddie," Adelstein says. Fritts "recognizes the importance of public interest for the long-term health of the broadcasting industry."

Decker Anstrom, former president of the National



Fritts defended broadcasters on Capitol Hill, here with Clear Channel's Lowry Mays.

Cable & Telecommunications Association and a veteran of the cable industry's fight against expanded carriage obligations, agrees. "If his members continued to listen to him, they'd be in a better position than they are now."

As he is on his way out, however, Fritts isn't taking shots at his board. "I'm grateful that the various boards have let me stay as long as I have," he says. "I've been asked, 'How do you keep a board of 60 people happy?' My answer: by keeping 31 of them happy."


"Recently, someone told me I arrived here on my own terms and I'm leaving on my own terms," Fritts says. "I'm very comfortable with that." ■

Additional reporting by Kim McAvoy

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How To Win Friends And Influence People

Fritts did it the old-fashioned way: Wanna go fishing?

E

ddie Fritts had already been a broadcaster for 20 years when he was hired to be president and CEO of

NAB in 1982.

And although he had built an eight-station group serving small towns in Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas, Fritts had spent virtually no time on the air. He wasn't a program director either; he hired others to take care of on-air jobs.

Fritts was, however, a tenacious salesman, and he expected his ad staffs to follow his example. Rather than make general managers waste

time coming to his office in Indiana to deliver sales reports, he drove himself from station to station in a camper outfitted as an office.

He would help advertisers orchestrate outrageous promotions, too. Once he flew over a new shopping center and dropped numbered Ping-Pong balls so shoppers could use them in a store promotion.

Another time, he helped a local car dealer pull off an outdoor promotion complete with a National Guard tank.

Later, Fritts parlayed the same knack for promotion to his own benefit when he campaigned for the presidency of NAB and then brought his

show to Washington.

On the eve of the Aug. 9, 1982, vote in Chicago to pick the group's next leader, Fritts

persuaded the hotel staff to notify him when each of the voting-board members checked in. Moments after entering

their rooms, each got a call from Fritts making his case one last time.

Fritts was elected on the first ballot by a 24-20 margin, defeating Donald Thurston, president of Berkshire Broadcasting Co. in North Adams, Mass. Thurston had been recommended for the job the previous week by an NAB search committee—a committee Fritts himself led before resigning only weeks before the vote. (Thurston had also been endorsed by B&C.)



Fritts with Preston Padden at a Washington hearing, in the days when Padden represented independent stations

END OF AN ERA?

Upon arrival in Washington, Fritts quickly built personal relationships with as many

We salute...



Edward Fritts
President & CEO, NAB

for his
outstanding
contributions
to the industry.

from your friends at
NBCU TV Stations



policymakers as possible. Golf games, lunch at favored lobbyist haunt Sam & Harry's, and hunting and fishing trips were all opportunities to make friends in high places and ensure that calls were returned promptly when business needed to be done.

Robert Sachs, who recently stepped down after five years as president of the National Cable and Telecommunications Association, sees Fritts' departure, coupled with the retirement of legendary Jack Valenti as head of the Motion Picture Association of America, as the end of an era.

"Running trade associations were once career jobs," Sachs says, "but now, because of the diminished role of seniority in Congress, public-policy decisions are less likely to be based on close relationships with key lawmakers and instead are being made on the merits."

Preston Padden, lobbyist for Disney/ABC, isn't so sure. He thinks there will always be a role for the Fritts style of personal politics. "When I started in this line of work, Jack Valenti told me never to forget that everybody likes to have their backside kissed. It's as effective today as it ever was."

Eddie Fritts is from the old school, imbued with that Southern sense of hospitality. One of Fritts' closest ties during the years in Washington has been to fellow University of Mississippi graduate Trent Lott, who eventually rose to become Senate Majority Leader and helped make sure that broadcasters' legislative agenda always had a fighting chance.

"Eddie never missed a trick," says Russ Withers, president of Withers Broadcasting. In early March, leaders of the state broadcasting associations were in Washington. When Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Ted Stevens spoke, Withers took note that Fritts had made sure the delegates from Stevens' home state of Alaska were in the front row. When House Commerce Committee Chairman Joe Barton joined the conference for lunch, he found it filled with fellow Texans.

Fritts also regaled the state-conference attendees with a tale of a Florida Keys fishing trip with Stevens. The new

Commerce chairman is also president pro tem of the Senate, a title placing him third in the line of succession should tragedy befall the President. His proximity to the highest office in the land requires him to be accompanied by government security when in public or traveling.

During one of their outings, Fritts recalled, a "cantankerous" guide wasn't much concerned with Stevens' position and resented being shadowed by two chase boats loaded with well-armed men.

After the guide shouted at them to clear away, one guard yelled back, "We can't do that! We have to be close enough to shoot you!"

"That put a whole new light on fishing," Fritts told the crowd. They were delighted.

DEALING WITH THE FCC

Andrew Barrett, former FCC commissioner, was an Illinois public-utilities commissioner when his name first surfaced as candidate for an open FCC seat.

Before he was formally nominated, Barrett traveled to Las Vegas for a telephone-industry convention—coincidentally, at the same time as NAB's Vegas convention. Fritts had a meeting arranged.

Fritts and Barrett became close friends during his term at the FCC, partly based on bad habits. On more than one occasion, he and Fritts would end up in a bar drinking Tattling champagne. "I'd buy. He'd buy. I'd buy. He'd buy," Barrett recalls.

And at the time, the FCC and NAB headquarters were a few blocks apart, so the two would often drop in on each other. Part of their motivation: their cigarette habits.

"We had the last two smoking offices in the District of Columbia," Barrett says.

He still gets together with Fritts, whom he fondly calls "a charmer who can sell manure at a dollar a pound."

Fritts can come across in the trade press as a hard-nosed negotiator, but Susquehanna Media President David Kennedy was surprised when he joined the NAB board eight years ago.

"I found him to be incredibly thoughtful and considerate," says Kennedy. "He was a seeker of resolution rather than an absolute my-way-or-



Fishing partner: Sen. Stevens

the-highway kind of guy."

Former NAB radio board member Bill O'Shaughnessy, who has been a Fritts critic, acknowledges, "Deep down, he is a good guy."

But he is crafty, no doubt about it. In one celebrated

incident, Fritts found a way to turn FCC criticism into a promotion for the industry.

After then-FCC Chairman Reed Hundt demanded to know what broadcasters were doing in return for receiving their digital channels free of charge, Fritts commissioned a 1997 "census" to tally the value of telethons, free air-time for political candidates, food drives and other public outreach.

By NAB's calculation, the value of all that public service was \$6.9 billion.

"We got Reed Hundt his answer," Fritts says. "He didn't like it. He pooh-poohed it. But he couldn't challenge it, because it was unassailable."

No matter that Hundt and others derided the estimate, Fritts decided to total the number yearly and award the most deserving stations at an annual Service to America Summit.

Today, the event is a glitzy celebration held only a few blocks from the White House. Of course, politicians are invited, so they can see firsthand how broadcasters serve their communities.

In 2004, the NAB's number had risen to \$9.9 billion.

"I'm grateful to Reed Hundt for asking the question," Fritts says now. "Had he not asked, we probably never would have done the census."—B.M.

For your years of
**DEDICATED
SERVICE**

THANKS.



Eddie Fritts

Best wishes for the future.

The New York Times
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BROADCAST MEDIA GROUP



BBC Sees Potential in Downloads

New revenue streams: TV shows via PCs

By Ken Kerschbaumer

BBC's *Little Britain*, created by Matt Lucas (left) and David Williams, may get new play on broadband.

Later this year, BBC Broadcast will launch a service that will allow PC users to download seven days' worth of television shows. Price, however, has yet to be determined.

The project, called IMP, for Interactive Media Player, makes downloading possible via online broadband connection. Plus, users can program it to record future programs automatically.

"We've heard from a number of commercial broadcasters in the UK and Europe that they are keen on unlocking new revenue streams from content already broadcast," says John Pink, director of sales and marketing for BBC Broadcast, which is investigating commercial insertion for its ad-based clients, such as UK-based commercial networks. (BBC Broadcast, a subsidiary of the British Broadcasting Corp., handles TV playout and other technical services for the BBC and other UK broadcasters.)

And the online market is growing. Online analyst firm eMarketer estimates that advertisers will spend more than \$1 billion on online rich media (non-static spots vs. ad banners), a 35% increase over 2004.

New revenue models include pay-per-play, subscriptions and targeted advertising. The viewer could be required to fill out a short questionnaire providing some general household data, so commercials could be tailored to meet a specific demographic.

BUILD LOYALTY

Typically, content distributors and owners dislike having TV content available via broadband, fearing stolen content, falling ratings and the "Napsterization" of TV. The BBC, however, sees it differently. By making content available on-

line, the network believes, it can serve viewers better and build loyalty.

"One of the challenges is, we're making the last week of content available for nine BBC channels," says Pink. "That's a lot of program material." The first part of the BBC trial involved 1,000 users who could download and store TV content on computers. The current phase involves improving the user interface, search function and how viewers will use the product.

SECURE DELIVERY SYSTEMS

"We're looking hard at media planning and inserting promos and ads," says Pink. "The information we gather lets us see trends that otherwise wouldn't be seen."

But to ensure success in a broadband environment, the delivery mechanism must be secure enough to prevent copying and illegal distribution. BBC Broadcast, which currently uses Microsoft's Windows Media 9 format, says its system is difficult to hack.

Content downloaded onto a computer cannot be accessed unless the viewer gets a unique ID key from the BBC. Once the content is unlocked, the viewer gets a week's worth of unlimited BBC shows. But those keys, and the digital rights, can be changed.

"You're always going to have some people who will pirate media," says Pink. "But if you make it easy for the consumer—that they can pay a few cents and get the content easily—who would go to great lengths to steal it?"

A unique aspect of the system is that the BBC will rely on peer-to-peer file-sharing to offload some of the traffic. As users copy the original file onto their computers, each computer then acts as a server host.

"It takes the load off the supplier to provide the proper amount of bandwidth," says Adam Hume, BBC Broadcast head of digital publishing and a futurologist.

"It's an effective way to reduce the infrastructure costs as each consumer becomes another distribution node."

Although the peer-to-peer approach can help cut server needs, Hilmi Ozguc, CEO of Maven Networks, a company whose download-delivery system is used by A&E Television Networks and National Geographic Channel, sees some flaws. "It will be a turnoff to consumers once they realize their computer is being used as a server to help organizations deliver content," Ozguc says. "And there is currently a negative association with peer-to-peer networking." For many consumers, peer-to-peer means stealing content, not sharing it legally.

However, Bob Greene, Starz Entertainment SVP, advanced services, sees some potential in the model; both Starz and Hollywood studios are investigating the technology.

PEER-TO-PEER UPSIDE

"Peer-to-peer gets a bad rap because the business model it's associated with involves stealing," he says. "But in the right environment, it can be a great experience for the consumer and the content holder." Starz Entertainment recently doubled the number of movies available on its PC-based movie service to 300. The service, called Starz! Ticket on Real Movies, costs \$12.95 a month for unlimited downloads. Starz relies on Real Network's Helix digital-rights-management (DRM) system.

With the BBC system, even if users download content from another person's computer, they still need to go back to the BBC for the key. Hume says that, with a 2-Mbps connection, it takes him a little less than 30 minutes to download a 30-minute program.



"We're making the last week of content available for nine BBC channels."

JOHN PINK,
BBC BROADCAST

Making content available 24/7 is close to Hume's heart.

He is chairman of the TV Anytime standards body, a global association of organizations working to create standards that enable content distributors to efficiently take advantage of consumer-based storage devices, such as PC servers and DVRs. Microsoft, NDS, BSKyB and Disney are all members. TV Anytime is currently working on

next-generation standards that will allow content to be published to different services, such as broadband and mobile devices. It's akin to XML for video.

"The big challenge is that TV Anytime is a chicken-and egg situation," says Hume. "It only works if you buy in across the whole value chain, from content providers to distributors. Some in the industry are reluctant to make DVRs fly because of current business models. But those models won't carry on forever." One business primed to take advantage of the BBC Broadcast model is VOD.

Today, download services like Starz or the BBC depend on PC users. Current broadband service is available only to PC users, but that could change. Increasingly, cable set-top boxes have Ethernet ports on the back, allowing them to receive broadband signals. Once the port is activated, broadband service could be available to TV users. For movie studios and other content owners, that means VOD content can reach the consumer's TV without relying on the cable operator.

Greene says that capability could be unlocked within the next 12-24 months, although some hurdles remain. First, a simple user interface needs to be put in place so users can access broadband content as easily as they access VOD or subscription VOD services. Second, the DRM needs to be incorporated into the set-top box.

"Just because you can access the Internet doesn't mean you can handle DRM," says Green. "It will be easier to get content onto portable media players [PMPs] than on the set-top box." Getting content on PMPs, however, is a much smaller market opportunity than reaching hundreds of millions of TV viewers.

TV/INTERNET CONVERGENCE

"We're on the verge of the TV and Internet convergence becoming real and viable," says Ozguc, citing consumer appeal of the personal video recorder (PVR) and TiVo. Reaching consumers isn't the only way to capitalize

on downloading; there is also an industry component. A&E Television Networks uses a Maven Networks system to deliver full-length video screeners via the Internet instead of shipping thousands of preview screener videotapes to international affiliates

and programming clients. It makes the screener process cheaper—and faster.

"Their customers and affiliates have access to screeners and can watch them in full-screen, DVD quality," says Ozguc. "That's the only thing that is certain about these services: Whatever the product, it needs to match the experience of watching the content on a TV set. That's why downloading and playing it off the disk is the only way to go." ■



National Show Exhibitors Pitch Home Market

Cable, telco operators target voice, video and data opportunities **By Ken Kerschbaumer**

Digital video recorders (DVRs) and home-networking technologies will top the agendas of technology companies at the National Cable and Telecommunications Association's (NCTA) national show, which kicks off April 4 in San Francisco. The potential revenue from the DVR marketplace alone is approximately \$100 million a year, per industry estimates.

Consumer appeal is one reason Motorola, for example, has shifted part of its emphasis from set-top boxes to whole-home mobility, tying video, voice and data services closely together. "We want to give consumers anytime, anywhere access to any information across any network," says Paul Alfieri, manager, public relations, for Motorola-connected home business. "It spans deep into broadband and wireless and will even involve electronics embedded in cars."

At the show, Motorola will demonstrate how to move video from a cable headend to a cellular phone, along with new services like home and small-business monitoring. Customers can install cameras and sensors to detect problems such as flooding, then have alerts sent via video mail or text messages to cell-phones. "It's really about bridging cellular with wireless," says Alfieri.

SET-TOP EVOLUTION

Of course, set-top boxes are still on the agenda. Those with DVR capability will get the lion's share of attention from attendees. Alfieri says Motorola has shipped 1.1 million DVR-equipped set-top boxes so far, although it lags behind Scientific-Atlanta when it comes to DVR deployments. (Last quarter, Scientific-Atlanta shipped about 450,000 DVR set-tops for a total of 2.3 million to date.)

Dave Davies, Scientific-Atlanta VP of strategy and product marketing, subscriber networks, says the DVR is changing the way consumers watch TV and their level of satisfaction with the cable operator. Cable customers value the ability to easily record and save programs.



Motorola's DVR set-top box

The technological capabilities of the boxes are rapidly evolving to enhance that satisfaction. Scientific-Atlanta will head to NCTA with DVRs outfitted with DVD burners and recorders that can share content with up to four other set-top boxes in a home. Davies says the multi-room capabilities use the existing coaxial cable wiring in a home to transport stored video to the client set-tops. Motorola has a similar multi-room networking feature.

The key is to make the interface simple. The DVD-burning functionality,

advantage for Digeo, according to COO Bert Kolde.

Even with the proper hardware and software in place, there is one more potential stumbling block: the user

[NCTA PREVIEW: Video]

interface. "Basically, it comes down to convenience," says Mark Pascarella, president of Gotuit Media. "If the viewer can't easily find what they want on cable, they'll turn to another source."

Gotuit heads to NCTA with a product lineup Pascarella believes meets those needs. "It's a new way to view video content," he says. "It gives instant access to

access network might be designed to handle Saturday-night peak bandwidth demands associated with VOD services," says Matarese. "But those bandwidth resources might be reallocated to commercial data and VoIP services during the day or switched to broadcast video services during prime time on weeknights."

In addition, Xtend Networks will offer technology that turns a typical 860-MHz cable plant into one with 3 GHz of capacity. The company will demo the cable industry's only telecom-quality T1-over-coaxial-cable solution, which can deliver up to 40 Mbps downstream and 30 Mbps upstream to every home—enough bandwidth to accommodate advanced TV, voice and data services.

"An advantage for cable is its ability to significantly add bandwidth to its existing plant, so operators can provide the capacity—both upstream and downstream—to meet or exceed [residential and commercial] customer expectations," says Bill Keating, CEO of Xtend Networks.

Other companies also will be showing off their wares.

Microsoft's Foundation Edition (FE) guide will be at the NCTA show, but no future improvements will be made public until the CTAM conference held in Philadelphia at the end of July. In fact, Microsoft's presence on the NCTA show floor will be relegated to an executive suite; the company is focusing on the deployment of 5 million FE licenses for Comcast. The company will, however, be available to discuss IPTV-based services and its recent deal with Alcatel to provide a comprehensive IPTV system.

Pioneer is throwing all its efforts into upgrades to Passport Echo, which supports the Motorola 6412 dual-tuner DVR. Look for an auto-prompt that can extend recording times for live sporting events, Spanish-language support, and quick menus so operators can tie service offerings to remote keys, like the A, B or C item, in order to drive buy rates.

"As the demand for personalized services increases, the design and implementation of the guide and related applications becomes more and more important," says Neil Jones, SVP, Pioneer Digital Technologies. "Additionally, alternative methods of getting to the content are being developed by PDT to meet those demands. To be most effective, traditional methods and alternative methods must be related and seamless to the user." ■



Mark Pascarella, Gotuit Media president, has a new product to speed up access to video content.

coupled with a DVR set-top box, quickly moves cable set-top box manufacturers into the Media Center PC market. "It feels a lot like a PC and bridges the boundary of the consumer-electronics space," says Davies. Viewers will be able to build DVD libraries, giving them "the level of control they want."

But when it comes to Media Center PC-like devices, no company on the NCTA show floor will be better represented than Digeo. Manufacturer of the Moxi Media Center, Digeo believes 2005 will be to Media Center PCs what 2004 was to the DVR.

Digeo's multi-TV proposition centers on functionality and price. The Moxi Mate, which connects secondary sets to the main Digeo box, costs \$79 each, much less than additional Motorola or Scientific-Atlanta digital set-top boxes, which are typically around \$180—a big

the content, which translates to increased viewing efficiency. Viewers spend less time slogging through content."

BANDWIDTH CHALLENGE

One challenge all vendors will address is bandwidth efficiency, particularly the need to pack the video portion of services into less space. "Cable systems must operate transport networks with a quality of service that maximizes service availability [for subscribers], while using bandwidth as efficiently as possible," says C-COR CTO Joe Matarese.

One option will be on display at C-COR's booth. The company's Policy Service Manager allows operators to control bandwidth use and service quality from the point where voice, video or data enters the transport network through the access network to the set-top box or cable modem. "For example, the transport and



Scientific-Atlanta's Dave Davies



DEALS

TVS

KBLR(TV) PARADISE AND K14MA PAHRUMP, NEV.

PRICE: \$32.1 million
BUYER: NBC/GE (Jay Ireland, president, TV stations)
SELLER: Summit Media LP (Scott Gentry, GM)
FACILITIES: KBLR: Ch. 39, 1,320 kW, ant. 1,171 ft.; K14MA: Ch. 14, 10 kW
AFFILIATION: KBLR: Telemundo
BROKER: Tucker, Midis & Associates

COMBOS

WXRX(FM) BELVIDERE (ROCKFORD), WFRL(AM) AND WFPS(FM) FREEPORT, WNTA(AM) ROCKFORD, WGFB(FM) ROCKTON AND WYHY(FM) WINNEBAGO (ROCKFORD), ILL.

PRICE: \$27 million
BUYER: Maverick Media LLC (Gary Rozynek, president/COO); owns 15 other stations, none in this market
SELLER: RadioWorks Inc. (Robert Rhea Jr., president)
FACILITIES: WXRX(FM): 104.9 MHz, 4 kW, ant. 400 ft.; WFRL(AM): 1570 kHz, 5 kW day/500 W night; WFPS(FM): 92.1 MHz, 4 kW, ant. 423 ft.; WNTA(AM): 1330 kHz, 1 kW day/91 W night; WGFB(FM): 103.1 MHz, 1 kW, ant. 525 ft.; WYHY(FM): 95.3 MHz, 1 kW, ant. 512 ft.
FORMAT: WXRX(FM): Rock; WFRL(AM): Adult Standard; WFPS(FM): Country; WNTA(AM): News/Talk/Oldies; WGFB(FM): AC; WYHY(FM): Classic Hits
BROKER: Doug Ferber of Star Media Group Inc. and Dan Duman of York Street Partners

WBUS(FM) BOALSBERG (STATE COLLEGE) AND WRSC(AM) STATE COLLEGE, PA.

PRICE: \$2.65 million
BUYER: Forever Broadcasting Inc. (Carol Logan, president); owns 32 other stations, including WMAJ(AM), WBHV(FM), WLTS(FM) and WOWY(FM) State College
SELLER: 2510 Licenses LLC (Nicholas A. Galli, managing member)
FACILITIES: WBUS(FM): 93.7 MHz, 330 W, ant. 1,362 ft.; WRSC(AM): 1390 kHz, 2 kW

day/1 kW night
FORMAT: WBUS(FM): Classic Rock; WRSC(AM): News/Talk/Sports

WSPO(AM) JOHNSTOWN, WUZI(FM) PORTAGE AND WUZY(FM) SOMERSET (JOHNSTOWN), PA.

PRICE: \$2.5 million
BUYER: 2510 Licenses LLC (Nicholas A. Galli, managing member); owns five other stations, including WYSN(AM) and WCCL(FM) Johnstown
SELLER: Forever Broadcasting Inc. (Carol Logan, president)
FACILITIES: WSPO(AM): 1490 kHz, 1 kW; WUZI(FM): 105.7 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 322 ft.; WUZY(FM): 97.7 MHz, 4 kW, ant. 430 ft.
FORMAT: WSPO(AM): News/Talk/Sports; WUZI(AM): Classic Hits; WUZY(FM): Classic Hits

WBRN(AM) AND WBRN(FM) BIG RAPIDS, MICH.

PRICE: \$850,000
BUYER: Mentor Partners Inc. (Jeffrey Scarpelli, president/director); owns one other station, WYBR(FM) Big Rapids
SELLER: RH Communications Inc. (Robert Hampson, president)
FACILITIES: WBRN(AM): 1460 kHz, 5 kW day/3 kW night; WBRN(FM): 100.9 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 318 ft.
FORMAT: WBRN(AM): News/Talk/Sports; WBRN(FM): Classic Rock

FMS

KFLX(FM) KACHINA VILLAGE, KSED(FM) SEDONA AND KWMX(FM) WILLIAMS (FLAGSTAFF-PRESCOTT), ARIZ.

PRICE: \$5.03 million
BUYER: Grenax Broadcasting LLC (Greg Dinetz, president); owns one other station, not in this market
SELLER: Red Rock Communications Limited (Thomas S. Rockler, president)
FACILITIES: KFLX(FM): 105.1 MHz, 5 kW, ant. 1,457 ft.; KSED(FM): 107.5 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 1,463 ft.; KWMX(FM): 96.7 MHz, 11 kW, ant. 1,066 ft.
FORMAT: KFLX(FM): Rock; KSED(FM): Country; KWMX(FM): Oldies
BROKER: The Exline Co.

WDNB(FM) JEFFERSONVILLE, N.Y.; WYCY(FM) HAWLEY, WPSN(AM) AND WDNH(FM) HONESDALE, PA.;

PRICE: \$4 million
BUYER: Bold Gold Media Group Inc. (Vince Benedetto, president/secretary/treasurer); owns no other stations
SELLER: De Wit Media Group (Robert H. Mermell, president)
FACILITIES: WDNB(FM): 102.1 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 253 ft.; WYCY(FM): 105.3 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 479 ft.; WPSN(AM): 1590 kHz, 3 kW; WDNH(FM): 95.3 MHz, 2 kW, ant. 456 ft.
FORMAT: WDNB(FM): News; WYCY(FM): Classic Hits; WPSN(AM): Variety; WDNH(FM): AC

WWSY(FM) SEELYVILLE AND WMGI(FM) TERRE HAUTE, IND.

PRICE: \$3.39 million
BUYER: Midwest Communications Inc. (Duke E. Wright, president); owns 36 other stations, none in this market
SELLER: Bright Tower Communications (Bob Swanson, GM)
FACILITIES: WWSY(FM): 95.9 MHz, 4 kW, ant. 397 ft.; WMGI(FM): 100.7 MHz, 50 kW, ant. 499 ft.
FORMAT: WWSY(FM): Hot AC; WMGI(FM): CHR
BROKER: Greg Guy of Patrick Communications

WGLU(FM) EBENSBURG AND WQKK(FM) JOHNSTOWN, PA.

PRICE: \$2.73 million
BUYER: Forever Broadcasting Inc. (Carol Logan, president); owns 32 other stations, including WNTJ(AM), WNTW(AM), WKYE(FM) and WMTZ(FM) Johnstown
SELLER: 2510 Licenses LLC (Nicholas A. Galli, managing member)
FACILITIES: WGLU(FM): 99.1 MHz, 50 kW, ant. 499 ft.; WQKK(FM): 92.1 MHz, 580 W, ant. 1,043 ft.
FORMAT: WGLU(FM): CHR; WQKK(FM): Rock

WIRP(FM) PENNSUCO (MIAMI-FT. LAUDERDALE-HOLLYWOOD), FLA.

PRICE: \$1.69 million
BUYER: Genesis Broadcasting Network Corp. (Edwin Lemuel

Ortiz, president); owns one other station, not in this market
SELLER: Centro Internacional Apostolico Inc. (Vincent Valedon, president)
FACILITIES: 88.3 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 282 ft.
FORMAT: Spanish/Christian

WHIR(FM) DANVILLE, KY.

PRICE: \$1 million
BUYER: Educational Media Foundation (Richard Jenkins, president); owns 121 other

day/3 kW night
FORMAT: WGUL(AM): AC; WLSS(AM): News/Talk

WAMG(AM) DEDHAM AND WLLH(AM) LOWELL (BOSTON), MASS.

PRICE: \$9 million
BUYER: WallerSutton 2000 LP; owns no other stations
SELLER: Mega Communications Inc. (Adam Lindemann, chairman/president/CEO)
FACILITIES: WAMG(AM): 890

STATION SALES SCORECARD

	2005 (YTD)*		2004 (YTD)	
	NUMBER	VALUE (000)	NUMBER	VALUE (000)
Television	9	\$143,550	66	\$896,723
Radio	205	\$478,437	847	\$1,838,393

SOURCE: BIA Financial Networks *As of 3/16/05

stations, none in this market
SELLER: Baldwin Broadcasting (Vernon Baldwin, president)
FACILITIES: 107.1 MHz, 5 kW, ant. 157 ft.
FORMAT: Country

KURY(AM) AND KURY(FM) BROOKINGS, ORE.

PRICE: \$775,000
BUYER: Eureka Broadcasting Co. (Hugo Papstein, president); owns three other stations, none in this market
SELLER: KURY Radio Inc. (Vern Garvin, owner)
FACILITIES: KURY(AM): 910 kHz, 1 kW day/37 W night; KURY(FM): 95.3 MHz, 9 kW, ant. 1,165 ft.
FORMAT: KURY(AM): Nostalgia; KURY(FM): MOR/AC

AMS

WGUL(AM) DUNEDIN (TAMPA-ST. PETERSBURG-CLEARWATER) AND WLSS(AM) SARASOTA (SARASOTA-BRADENTON), FLA.

PRICE: \$9.5 million
BUYER: Salem Communications Corp. (Edward G. Atsinger III, president/CEO); owns 104 other stations, including WTBN(AM) and WTWD(AM) Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater
SELLER: WGUL FM Inc. (Carl Marcocci, CEO/chairman)
FACILITIES: WGUL(AM): 860 kHz, 5 kW day/2 kW night; WLSS(AM): 930 kHz, 5 kW

kHz, 25 kW day/3 kW night; WLLH(AM): 1400 kHz, 1 kW
FORMAT: WAMG(AM): Spanish/Tropical/Variety; WLLH(AM): Spanish/Tropical/Variety
BROKER: Kalil and Co. Inc.

WPBS(AM) CONYERS (ATLANTA), GA.

PRICE: \$2.25 million
BUYER: Pacific Star Broadcasting Inc. (Charlie S. Kim, president); owns no other stations
SELLER: Christ In You The Hope of Glory Church Inc. (Franklin D. Walden Sr., president)
FACILITIES: 1040 kHz, 12 kW
FORMAT: Christian
BROKER: John Pierce of John Pierce and Co.

WSRF(AM) FORT LAUDERDALE (MIAMI-FT. LAUDERDALE-HOLLYWOOD), FLA.

PRICE: \$1.75 million
BUYER: Alliance Broadcasting Network Inc. (Emmanuel Cherubin, president); owns one other station, WAVS(AM) Miami-Ft. Lauderdale-Hollywood
SELLER: Inner City Broadcasting Corp. (Pierre Sutton, CEO)
FACILITIES: 1580 kHz, 10 kW day/5 kW night
FORMAT: Ethnic
BROKER: Frank Boyle of Frank Boyle and Co LLC

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY:
 BIA Financial Networks' Media Access Pro.
 Chantilly, Va., www.bia.com



Broadcasting & Cable's

Technology Leadership Awards

8th Annual



For the 8th consecutive year at NAB 2005, *Broadcasting & Cable* pays tribute to technology leaders who have displayed innovation, execution and achievement. In the April 18th issue, the editors of *B&C* will take a look at these 5 technology visionaries and the accomplishments that have made them the 2005 Technology Leadership Awards recipients.

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East Coast Operations
CBS

DAVE FOLSOM

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Technology
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THE BUSINESS OF TELEVISION



BROADCASTING & CABLE

Eck Helps NBC Run Smoothly

Technical-ops president meshes network with GE **By John Higgins**

It isn't every corporate chief who counts a kids-show host as a professional influence. But Uncle Al can take some credit for NBC Universal Executive John Eck's love of television. Growing up in Cincinnati, Eck was entranced by TV, particularly a local offering from Uncle Al, the star of WCPO's long-running children's show. Eck was also a big fan of a local morning talk show on WLTW.

"Some kids want to be firemen, some an astronaut. I wanted to run a TV station," says Eck, now the president of technical operations and integration for NBC Universal. "I thought it was cool." And though he has never run a station, he is responsible for the technical operations and facilities of all of NBC's networks and stations nationwide. For years, that meant he was calling the shots for TV studios, equipment and real estate.

When NBC took over Vivendi Universal's U.S. media operations, NBC Chairman Bob Wright expanded Eck's duties, putting him in charge of integrating the company's movie studios, cable networks and theme parks into NBC. That meant meshing everything from office space to financial systems, ensuring Universal's properties fit smoothly with NBC parent General Electric.

LONG-TERM FIREPOWER

Eck sees the deal as transforming NBC's future, with Universal's movie and TV studios and cable networks USA Network and Sci Fi Channel, giving the corporation long-term firepower. Aware of how gigantic cable and DBS companies like Comcast and DirecTV had become, NBC deemed it unwise to "go it alone" as a broadcaster and cluster of smaller cable networks.

"We weren't sure we could be the prettiest girl at the dance," Eck says. That is, NBC didn't know if it could be a programmer every distributor would always want. "We made a decision: We were going to be long in content distribution that was plentiful and cheap."

Despite his senior operations posts, Eck did not rise through the traditional TV ranks. A finance guy, he hopped around several divisions of GE before joining NBC in 1993. "At GE, you're trained with an operational view toward things; you're there to support operations."

And Eck knows something about bottom-line realities. His father was a factory worker for a fastener company who eventually became a manufacturers' rep—a traveling salesman peddling screws, nuts and bolts to manufacturers in the Midwest. "He was a great role

model," Eck says.

But rather than work independently, Eck majored in business at Indiana University, a path that pointed him toward corporate America.

"I figured I'd either work in banking or a big company someday. I was the antithesis of my father, who sort of worked on his own."

GE was recruiting on campus and

FIFTH ESTATER



JOHN ECK

President of Technical Operations and Integration, NBC Universal

B. Oct. 19, 1959, Cincinnati

EDUCATION

B.A., business, Indiana University, 1982

EMPLOYMENT

Finance analyst, GE Ceramics, Inc., Cleveland, 1982-84; specialist, financial analyst, engineering, GE Corporate Financial, Fairfield, Conn., 1984-85; financial education and training specialist, GE Aircraft Engines, Lynn, Mass., 1985-98; analyst, operations analysis, GE Power Generation, Norcross, Ga., 1987-88; manager, financial analysis and administration, GE Capital, London, 1988-90; director, European financial services, NBC, New York, 1990-93; VP, financial planning and analysis, 1993-95; CFO, international and business development, 1995-97; SVP, chief quality officer, 1997-98; president, broadcast and network operations, NBC Universal, 1998-2003; current position since May 2004

PERSONAL

Married; two children

tapped Eck in 1982 to join its finance staff in Cleveland, where the company

cranked out consumer and industrial light bulbs.

"I'm a big sap; I bought into the big GE thing: great company, Thomas

Edison, the light bulb. I thought that was cool from a historical perspective."

He spent two years in the company's vaunted training program, where they hammer in "The GE Way," the company's methodical approach to financial analysis, no matter how disparate its businesses. After another year in lighting, Eck went on an eight-year trek of GE's operations, from HQ in Connecticut to aircraft engines in Massachusetts, electric generators in Georgia to financial services in London.

FREQUENT MOVEMENT

Frequent relocations were stressful, but a necessary part of his career ascent. The major alternative would have been joining the corporate audit staff, where his family would have stayed in one place but Eck would have been on the road "virtually 100% of the time." Instead, he chose to move every few years.

"The downside is, you're away from family and never become a permanent part of the community. After a year, you think about the next position." The upside: two years in London including weekend jaunts with his wife (his high school sweetheart) and young children to Europe.

The job locations varied, but his job description did not. The finance department crunches all available cost, revenue and market data to set budgets and estimate future performance and needs. "It's supportive of business decisions with financial analysis," Eck says. "The emphasis is to help make the smartest business decisions the company can make."

That may sound dull, but the stakes can be high. At the company's aircraft-engine division, for example, Eck was a financial analyst charged with assessing which factories should be shut down, resulting in substantial job cuts, which was "gut wrenching." But at the company's power-systems unit, he helped a regional manager justify keeping his unit open despite a slump in the market. That saved workers' jobs.

As the NBC Universal deal approaches its one-year anniversary, the integration part of Eck's job is nearly over. And he'll drop that part of this title, too. His duties seem likely to expand, but it isn't likely station management is in his future. Still, he feels wistful. "The guys who run our TV stations, they're like the junior mayor if not the mayor. They have thriving enterprises." ■

FATES AND FORTUNES

BROADCAST TV

ANDY ALFORD, station manager/general sales manager, WGCL Atlanta, promoted to VP/GM.

HOWARD MURPHY, controller, KSTW Seattle, joins WWJ and WKBD Detroit as controller.

CHRIS MCDONNELL, general sales manager, WSNS Chicago (Telemundo) joins KNSD San Diego as VP, sales, and NBC-owned independent Spanish-language channel Mi San Diego TV 43 as VP, channel development.

STEVE BAILEY, manager, affiliate marketing and broadcast services, The WB Television Network, Burbank, Calif., appointed VP, promotions, ACME Television LLC, St. Louis.

CABLE TV

At NBC Universal Cable, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: **RON LAMPRECHT**, director, new media, promoted to VP; **MEGUMI IKEDA**, director, strategic initiatives and new media, promoted to VP.

HOWARD LEVINSON, general sales manager, WPIX New York, named regional VP, media sales, Time Warner Cable, New York.

JOURNALISM

DIA WALLACE, formerly weekday morning co-anchor and co-producer, WBRE Wilkes-Barre, Pa., returns to the station as weekend morning anchor.

PROGRAMMING

At DIC Entertainment, Burbank, Calif.: **RYAN GAGERMAN**, executive director, international licensing, named VP, international consumer products; **LORNE BLOCH**, manager, domestic licensing, consumer products, Viacom, named director, licensing; **STEPHANIE MENTE**, licensor relations supervisor, consumer products division, Vivendi Universal Games, named manager, international consumer products.

At Here!, New York: **MARIA CAULFIELD-DWYER**, VP, affiliate marketing, TV Land and TNN, named VP, affiliate marketing; **BOB DILLON**, director, affiliate marketing, A&E Television Networks, named VP, brand marketing; **CAROL HINNANT**, regional VP, affiliate sales, eastern division of Great American Country Network, Jones Media Networks Inc., named VP, affiliate sales.

At Logo network, New York: **LISA SHERMAN**, SVP/group account director, Hill, Holliday Connors, Cosmopolos, New York, named

Continued on page 50

Broadcasting & Cable's

NAB 2005

Technology Special Reports

MARCH 28, 2005

ROAD TO NAB #1 – NEWSROOM OPERATIONS

Newsroom technology continues to dominate the shopping needs of television technology buyers. We'll take an end to end look at what's ahead at NAB 2005 in this category.

APRIL 4, 2005

ROAD TO NAB #2 – STATION OPERATIONS

Our NAB build up continues with a look at TV station operations and the category of products serving these needs including: Servers, Asset management, Production switchers, Routing switchers, Automation, Graphics & more.

APRIL 11, 2005

ROAD TO NAB #3 – IT INFRASTRUCTURE

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APRIL 25, 2005

NAB WRAP-UP ISSUE

We'll get the word out the week after NAB with a rundown of major technology deals and important product introductions from the show. A great environment to remind buyers of your offerings.

NAB 2005 - TECHNOLOGY SPECIAL REPORTS

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E-mail: nyjobs@reedbusiness.com and include job title "Senior Account Manager - Vifite & Variety" in the subject line.

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The successful candidate will possess an entrepreneurial spirit and confidence to drive and build relationships with high-level clientele. We are seeking a dynamic individual that has an understanding of the industry, savvy business sense and a great appreciation for the nuances of the industry. The ideal candidate will be a team player, possess excellent communication skills and ability to multi-task. Individual will thrive and succeed in a fast-paced environment and will welcome challenges and growth. Candidate must have a minimum of 3 years consumer advertising sales experience.

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The First Freedom

There was a time when newspapers wouldn't even print news about TV. Both media viewed each other through jaundiced eyes. But over the past week, journalists—print, television and radio—have joined in an effort, called Sunshine Week, to educate the public about their rights to government information and the government's attempts to deprive them of those rights, often under the invocation of "national security."

The Bush administration is choking off information, and chilling it when it can't choke it, by hunting down and punishing those who dare to break ranks in the government or do their jobs as journalists.

The "un-information" campaign goes from stonewalling at the White House to beating up on WJAR's Jim Taricani, an investigative reporter in Providence R.I., for exposing corruption and properly protecting a source.

Sam Donaldson, the highest-profile White House reporter of his generation, says that not since the Nixon Administration has there been such animus from the White House, and we would add that perhaps never has there been as widespread and organized an attempt to control information.

Add to that the impending renewal of some Patriot Act restrictions on civil liberties, then throw in the content crackdown on the FCC that has news departments talking about time-delays on live newscasts, and we are in danger of surrendering our fundamental right to criticize the government or hold it accountable for the duration of a war on terrorism that may have no end date.

(Note to new FCC Chairman Kevin Martin: Declaring un-

comfortable content "indecent" is the third rail of censorship. You're leaning that way. Don't fall.)

It's not just journalists who are worried. "We believe that our political system can still maintain our security while maximizing the freedoms that are our birthright. Individual liberties are not negotiable, even in the face of terrorism." Those words come not from a bleeding-heart but from former Rep. Bob Barr, the libertarian conservative Republican from Georgia, who, like others in both parties, fears a nation where rights are being trampled,

Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), for one, is pushing bills that attempt to restore some of the balance between the legitimate protection of government secrets and the public's right to know. Another important effort is a bill to create a federal shield law that would exempt reporters from being forced to reveal confidential sources to federal investigators, sponsored by Rep. Mike Pence, a Republican (and former radio talk host) from Indiana. This is an issue and a concern that crosses all party lines.

At the moment, the Department of Homeland Security is something like a Swiss bank for corporate information. Post-9/11 restrictions on Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests allow corporations to shield information on conduct that affects public health and safety. Leahy's bill, the Restore FOIA Act, would narrow some of those FOIA exemptions and restore protections for whistle-blowers.

Corporate leaders of our industry must flex some of those rusty muscles and speak out loudly and often on the issue. America's free press is crucial to keeping our nation free.

EDITORIAL

OPEN MIKE

The Bottom Line on 'Nightline'

Editor: Regarding your article "'Nightline' a Go Go" [The Robins Report, 3/14, page 3]: There is no question that much of TV news has gone to the dark side, i.e. entertainment. As a former TV anchor and news editor, I am discouraged to see the highest standards of journalism ignored and "rip-and-read radio" on TV news. PBS does a better job.

This should be no surprise to anyone. Business runs TV news today. It makes money, so why shouldn't the pencil-pushers dictate who is on the air? I nearly puked when Peter Jennings offered "congratulations" to the new CEO at Disney on ABC's *World News Tonight!*

Frank Magid be damned! "We have met the enemy and he is us." Right on, Pogo!

Bill Wippel
Normandy Park, Wash.

Journalists Don't Challenge Bush

Editor: As a journalist, I understand how the corporate parents of these organizations can influence coverage of various events ["Tough Talk on the First Amendment," 3/14, page 30]. I have a harder time accepting why the media—particularly the White House press corps—has grown so compliant in this administration's campaign of confusion and disinformation. It's one reason why no one trusts the mainstream media anymore.

One way for the media to get through to the Bushites is to wait for one of the president's few press conferences—in particular, one for a pet project like Social Security—and stage a boycott. It gives me a warm glow to think of the briefing room completely empty, save the folks from "Talon" and Fox. It seems to me a sure way for the Fourth Estate to actually regain some of its cojones. Sometimes, they act like Democrats, for God's sake. It's embarrassing.

Brian Clark (received via e-mail)

Editor: NBC News President Neal Shapiro says it's time to "sound the alarm." ("Tough Talk on the First Amendment") Why have I seen no coverage of this event on TV? Many news people from all major networks were present.

If [networks] are under fire from the government, use the networks to let the American people know about it. David Hitchen (received via e-mail)

WE LIKE LETTERS

If you have a comment about anything in *B&C* or the media business, we'd like to hear from you. Send your letters, with a daytime phone number. E-mail: bnclatters@reedbusiness.com; fax: 646-746-7028; or mail to BROADCASTING & CABLE, Letters to the Editor, 360 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10010. We reserve the right to edit.

Let's Define the Public Interest

Both Members of Congress and a majority of Federal Communications Commission members are calling for a clear definition of the public-interest obligations of digital-television broadcasters this year. These policymakers understand TV's importance to our country, that it is much more than a toaster with pictures.

Because of the speed and immediacy of television, broadcasters perform a public-forum function with immense power to influence public opinion and affect elections. TV is a window onto our world and a mirror of our society. It is our society's primary source of information. And local news is used even more than national news by citizens.

What we see and hear helps inform what we think and believe. Research shows that television points out not only what issues people should think about but also what to think about those issues—something no toaster has ever achieved.

As broadcasters are quick to point out, they are in the business of competing for eyeballs—and that competition gets fiercer in the digital age every day. The Internet, computers, Blackberrys, Gameboys and a host of

other gadgets vie to be the central device in a person's life. Doesn't it make sense that broadcasters would want to reach the greatest number of viewers with content that is not peripheral but central to their lives? Ironically, that is what public-interest obligations encourage broadcasters to achieve.

In return for serving the public, broadcasters enjoy a variety of government-ensured benefits. Among them:

- Free, exclusive use of a valuable but scarce public spectrum—including many billions of dollars worth of temporary additional spectrum to convert to digital.

- Legal protection against anyone else who seeks to compete in their market or broadcast over their licensed frequencies.

- Federal preemption of local zoning and environmental regulations in order to make sure stations' transmission towers can be erected and send signals to viewers.

- Free carriage of programming on local cable systems for which other programmers pay millions.

As the FCC's recent vote on digital must-carry shows, these benefits may not survive in the digital age without a strong commitment from broadcasters

AIRTIME
Charles Benton and
Jim Goodman

HISPANIC TELEVISION UPDATE



NCTA • MONDAY, APRIL 4TH • SAN FRANCISCO



NCTA BREAKFAST DISCUSSION: TURNING THE HISPANIC MARKET INTO REVENUE

The unabated growth of hispanic households and the resulting economic impact continue to provide an excellent opportunity for the Cable Industry—from programmers to mso's to driving advertising revenue—understanding and addressing this market-place is a critical issue.

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I Was a Critic for the CTU

Or: How I saved the world and still filed by deadline

Some of us would go just about anywhere for great trash. Not ordinary trash, which is painful to watch, but trash so transcendently bad it dazzles the room. Great trash unites aspirations of grandeur with ferocious banality in a bizarro realm where flaws are attributes and usual definitions of good and bad no longer apply.

Ordinary trash is the labor of hacks. Great trash is art.

Think *Noah's Ark*, a 1999 extravaganza on NBC preaching that Genesis was written by Borscht Belt comics, or *Helen of Troy*, a 2003 USA Network epic that launched a thousand clichés. Both were exquisitely trashy. And nearly as impressive last year was ABC's *Judas*, notable for the image of pretty boys Jesus and Judas roughhousing together in the forest.

As for series, ABC's *Lost* and Fox's *The O.C.* aren't quite bad enough to be good. Answering the call instead is *24*, now boasting solid ratings in a third incandescently goofy season on Fox. Each hour triggers the next in a cycle of pandemonium testing the mettle of a high-tech government counterterrorist unit known as CTU. Although *24* fixates to the extreme on Islam-driven plots to destroy the U.S., its stunningly lunatic scripts—the sheer implausibility of its minute-to-minute bedlam and characters' robotic responses—are what make it so irresistible.

For example, if I were writing this column as *24* superhero Jack Bauer (the whispery action figure played by Kiefer Sutherland, right), it would look something like this:

7-8 a.m.: Begin column, fight off masked Ninja warriors.

8-9 a.m.: Framed for murder, escape police. Fall into manhole, break leg. Ignore pain, escape manhole.

9-10 a.m.: Column halted by mysterious worm attacking home computer. Repairman arrives. Turns out to be Middle Eastern terrorist. Abducts wife and cats. I have chest pains.

10-11 a.m.: Open-heart surgery goes well.

11 a.m.-12 noon: Recovery aborted when rearrested in hospital by police. Escape in drag, wearing uniform of nurse I beat senseless. Didn't like her accent. Write 200 words of column on laptop in car while pursuing terrorists with police on tail.

12-1 p.m.: Column vanishes from screen. Suspect rival magazine columnist who speaks broken English. Get concerned call on cell from editor. Turns out to be mole in cahoots with Middle Eastern terrorists. Dying to go to bathroom; no time.

1-2 p.m.: Save world single-handedly.

2-3 p.m.: Pass out from sleeping gas. Awaken in Middle East. Seize jet, pilot it back to U.S. Spot wife and cats with Middle Eastern terrorists at Starbucks. Run toward them. Fall over table and break arm. Terrorists flee. They take cats, leave wife. Not surprised.

3-4 p.m.: Arm heals. Reconstruct 400 words of vanished

column. Words in Arabic. Baffled by this. Suspect Middle Eastern terrorists. Dying to go to bathroom; no time.

4-5 p.m.: Rearrested. Give police tongue-lashing; escape. Fall into another manhole. Bump into mother there. She asks why I never call. Suspect she's Middle Eastern terrorist. Stand on her head and escape to street.

5-6 p.m.: Called on cellphone by MCI telemarketer issuing threat: Switch carriers or will set off nuclear device. Wonder about his Middle Eastern accent. Arrange meeting. Torture him with electric shock. Learn he is AT&T double agent. About to disclose name of boss. Picked off by sniper.

6-7 p.m.: Major earthquake hinders pursuit of sniper. Suspect terrorists of Middle Eastern origin. Turn on CNN for earthquake coverage, instead get Larry King special "Who Killed Jon Benet?"

7-8 p.m.: Suffer cerebral hemorrhage. Ignore it and pitch in helping earthquake survivors. Write more of column on laptop. Boxer shorts riding up. Why?

8-9 p.m.: Bladder exploding.

9-10 p.m.: Kidnapped by neoconservatives. Tortured with electric shock. Freed when endorse private accounts for Social Security.

10-11 p.m.: Coldcock Middle Eastern terrorist trying to implant electromagnetic pulse in me where sun don't shine. Column vanishes from screen. Reappears in Farsi. Why?

11 p.m.-12 midnight: Save world single-handedly; *really* got to go.

12 midnight-1 a.m.: Have severe asthma attack. Inhaler transmitting signals to a mosque. Suspect the worst. Police rearrest me. Escape when police stop at Mr. Doughnut.

1-2 a.m.: Pounding in chest, breathing labored. Ignore it. Dig out elderly earthquake victims. Wonder about their foreign accents. Something fishy happening below. Boxer shorts transmitting signals to Middle East. Change to Jockeys. Called on cell and tongue-lashed by new editor who turns out to be mole for neoconservatives in cahoots with radical environmentalists moonlighting for a Colombian drug cartel paid by

Middle Eastern terrorists. Tortured with electric shock. Freed when endorse Green Party. Secretly cross fingers.

2-3 a.m.: Suffer amnesia; can't remember column I'm writing. Bladder feels like Goodyear Blimp. Why? Suspect Middle Eastern terrorists. Memory returns when jolted by meltdown of nuclear reactor.

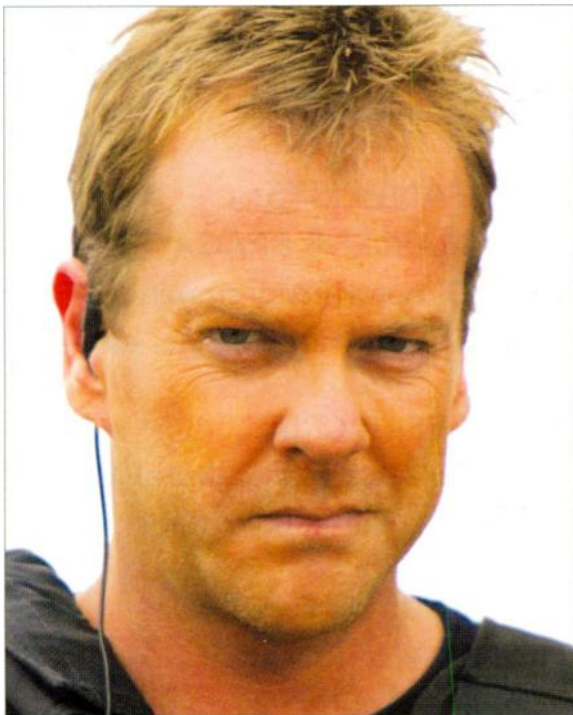
3-4 a.m.: Adelphia cable telemarketer calls cell. Why? Arrange meeting. Torture him, rip out fingernails. Admits he is Chechen rebel.

4-5 a.m.: Wife runs off with Ninja warrior. Cats call on cell. May be MCI moles.

5-6 a.m.: Type madly as deadline nears; complete column in thigh underwear.

6-7 a.m.: Save world single-handedly; wet pants. ■

HOWARD ROSENBERG



So many terrorists, so little time.

Editor in Chief

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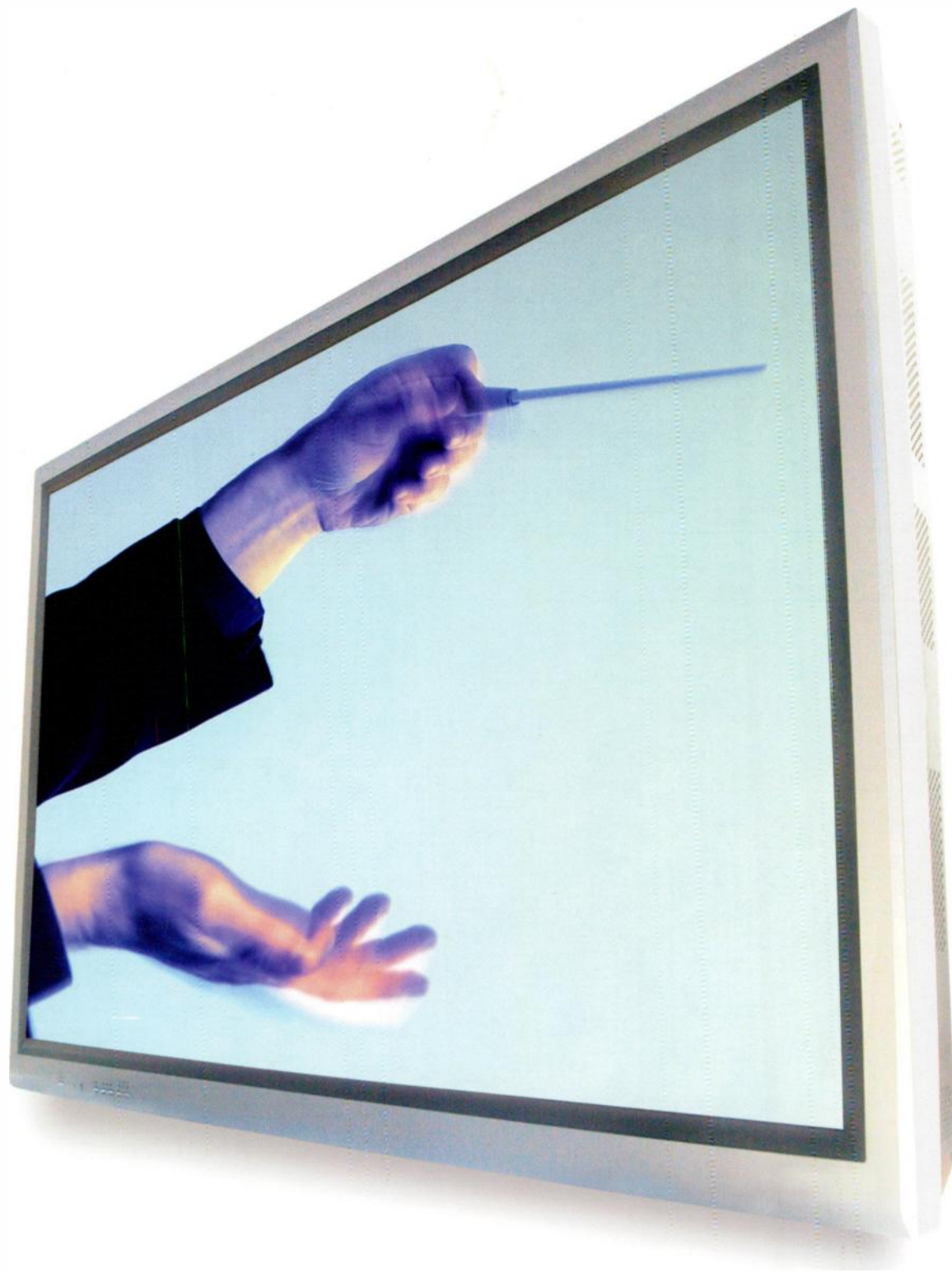
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