

Road to NAB NEWSROOMS PAGE 32



Frank Salute Post-Newsweek's Alan Frank will be lauded as B&C Broadcaster of the Year at TVB confab this week. Page 43



\$20 Billion

How much money was spent on all auto ads in 2004

MARCH 28, 2005

BROADCASTING & CABLE

\$4.95

Reed Business Information

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NCTA PREVIEW

Sniffing for Deals

As the cable faithful prepare for their annual convention, the industry faces new threats—from indecency crackdowns to Supreme Court challenges to tough new DBS competition. With cable operators eager to capitalize on video-on-demand services,

less room is available for new channels. Page 18 Even the Puppy Channel is barking again this year. Page 10



Puppy Channel

The Art of Manufactured News



In a commercial spot, Kate Brookes reports for "News From the Net."



"It's estimated that three in every 1,000 kids are born with hearing loss."



"Now ... there is a hearing aid specially designed to meet the needs of infants."



A hearing expert is interviewed.



But the stories are not news—at least not by traditional standards.



They are ads, bought and paid for by a PR firm for a hearing-aid company.



VNR critics believe such ads blur the line between news and product pitches.



The producer, MediaLink, says the branded spots are not misleading.



Either way, this business is expected to grow.

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EXCLUSIVE

Forget the White House. PR firms take branded journalism to a whole new level.

By Joe Mandese Page 24



Wildest Dreams...



Continue!

B&C WEEK

Where to be and what to watch...

Monday, March 28

Have you heard? Hollywood stars are *rillyrilly* concerned about the environment. Plus they like traveling to attractive locales far from the *Star/Us/In Touch* magazine photos who make their lives a living hell. Put it together, and you get tonight's premiere of *Trippin'* (MTV, 10:30 p.m. ET). It's a 10-part reality-adventure series

with **Cameron Diaz**

traipsing across the world—accompanied by pals including **Kid Rock** and **Drew Barrymore**—in a quest to “explore some of the most exotic, environ-

mentally unique places on the planet and seek to discover ways to preserve them,” as the press release puts it. Like so much TV today, it's a derivative idea: As demonstrated on **History Channel's** four-part series *Conquest of America* starting at 9 ET tonight, celebs of yesteryear like Henry Hudson spent plenty of time exploring some of the most exotic, environmentally unique places on the planet. They just weren't that big on the whole preservation thing.

Tuesday, March 29

Punk'd by Captain Kirk! After *Star Trek's* revivification in the 1980s, **Riverside, Iowa**, declared itself the future birthplace of Captain James T. Kirk, thus inviting the wrath of the gods. And it arrived last fall, in the prosperous form of one **William Shatner**, intent on hoaxing all 928 Riverside residents into believing that he was making a science-fiction movie in their little town. Instead, contrived **Hollywood** insanity played out in front of unsuspecting farm folk!

The result, *Invasion Iowa*, runs tonight (Spike, 9 p.m. ET) through Friday. *The advertising upfronts roll on:* This morning, **Court TV** convenes at

Michael's restaurant in **New York City**. Awestruck marketing types in attendance wonder if they will ever achieve anything in their careers as sublime as the channel's own advertising for *Impossible Heists*. Showing images such as a would-be thief suspended from a

'Good Morning' Ascending

By J. Max Robins



The *GMA* team (left to right): Robin Roberts, Charlie Gibson, Diane Sawyer and Tony Perkins

For or months now, the buzz has been that Jeff Zucker is spending a lot of mornings in the control booth at *Today*. One would think the NBC Universal chief, who oversees such a vast empire, would have more important things to do. But then again, the wake-up show makes close to \$300 million annually, and for the first time in years, its amazing run as the No. 1 morning show is in jeopardy.

For the last six years, *Good Morning America* has been chipping away at *Today's* once seemingly impenetrable lead. In the February sweeps, *GMA* trailed by less than 500,000 viewers in the key 25-54 demo. A year ago, the two morning shows were separated by more than 1.2 million viewers. (CBS' *Early Show* is a perennial also-ran.)

In the cutthroat morning-news wars, any trace of blood in the water immediately prompts rumors of internal strife. It is no different with *Today*. Besides whispers about Zucker's presence in the control room, chatter has been rife for more than a year about changes at *Today's* helm. A few months ago, *Today* veteran Don Nash was recalled from his post as executive producer of the show's weekend edition, in order to help out on the daily production. Other consultants were also installed.

Still, *Today* executive producer Tom Touchet has soldiered on, perhaps doing as well as anyone could in his situation. Part of the reason for *Today's* current challenge is, quite frankly, out of Touchet's control. NBC no longer dominates prime time, and the loss of the turn-off/turn-on effect has inevitably cost *Today* in the ratings.

After the February sweeps, *Today's* spin machine argued that the Oscars had

inflated ABC's numbers and that *GMA* was aided by ABC's return from the prime time dead with *Desperate Housewives*, *Lost* and *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*. But *GMA's* emergence as a credible challenger began long before the network's prime time revival or the Academy Awards' move from March to February.

In *B&C's* Feb. 23, 2004, issue, we reported on behind-closed-door tensions at *Today*. Back then, veteran news analyst and *B&C* Contributing Editor Andrew Tyndall traced *Today's* vulnerability to the show's expansion from a two-hour broadcast to three in 2000.

“The third hour may make them money, but it's hurt the mothership,” Tyndall says now. “It slows things down. It means more Al Roker and Ann Curry in the second hour and less Matt Lauer and Katie Couric as they transition into the extra hour.”

Conversely, *GMA* has been packing more into each show since Ben Sherwood was named executive producer last April. When Sherwood, an NBC veteran, took over from Shelley Ross (who moved on to an ill-fated stint running *Primetime Live*), some at ABC wondered if he had the sort of drive Ross had shown in making *GMA* a credible No. 2. But Sherwood has proved a more than able successor. The word inside *GMA*

is that he has boosted morale, brought a new discipline to the show and put more emphasis on planning.

“Once upon a time, the goal was to narrow the gap between us and *Today* to 1 million viewers,” says Sherwood. “This has been six years in the making. Everything is clicking.”

Charlie Gibson and Diane Sawyer at *GMA* still have a ways to go before they dethrone *Today*. In January, dissecting the financials of the morning-show wars, *B&C's* Business Editor John Higgins spoke to *Today's* Touchet, who touted his show's dominance over its rival with upscale viewers and the premium that advertisers pay for spots.

True. But *GMA* has momentum, and if current trends continue through next February's sweeps, Katie and Matt might find Charlie and Diane wearing their crowns. ■

E-mail comments to bcrobins@reedbusiness.com

ceiling, accompanied by the logo “Well hung,” the campaign accomplishes the miracle of making the channel's coverage of the **Michael Jackson** trial seem like a cleansing experience. OK, that's going too far. But still.

Wednesday, March 30

Yesterday, the **Supreme Court** heard arguments in the peer-to-peer file-sharing case *Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc.*

v. **Grokster, Ltd.**, a

confrontation that has rather largish ramifications for the entertainment business (story on page 12). Today, staffers at the **Loews Santa**

Eyes' **Tim Daly**

Monica Beach Hotel roll their eyes every

time they hear the phrase “P2P” in the hallways as attendees arriving for a three-day **Digital Hollywood** conference on digital-rights management and anti-piracy chatter endlessly about the **Supremes** case. Meanwhile, we'll be at home, seeing how many minutes elapse after the premiere of the corporate-intrigue drama *Eyes* (ABC, 10 p.m. ET) before it's available for downloading.

Thursday, March 31

Ken **Auletta**

Ken Auletta, fresh from debriefing **Dan Rather's** cranky colleagues in *The New Yorker*, heads over to the **Bryant Park Grill** in New York this

morning to conduct “A Conversation with **Roger Ailes**.” An eager mob is likely to turn out for the **Syracuse University**-sponsored Newhouse School in New York breakfast series, since the **Fox News Channel** chairman and CEO is a reliably entertaining and combative interview, just the way Auletta likes 'em.

Roger **Ailes**

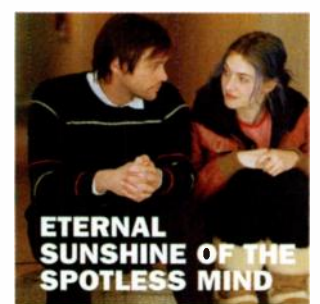
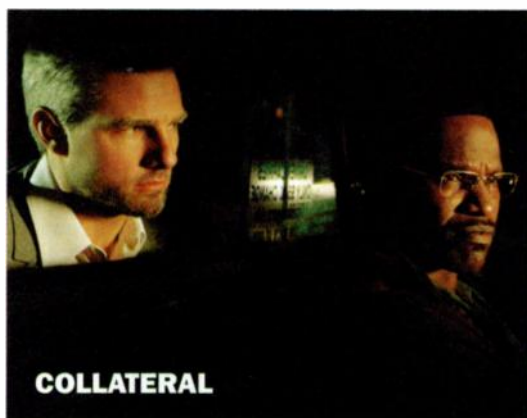
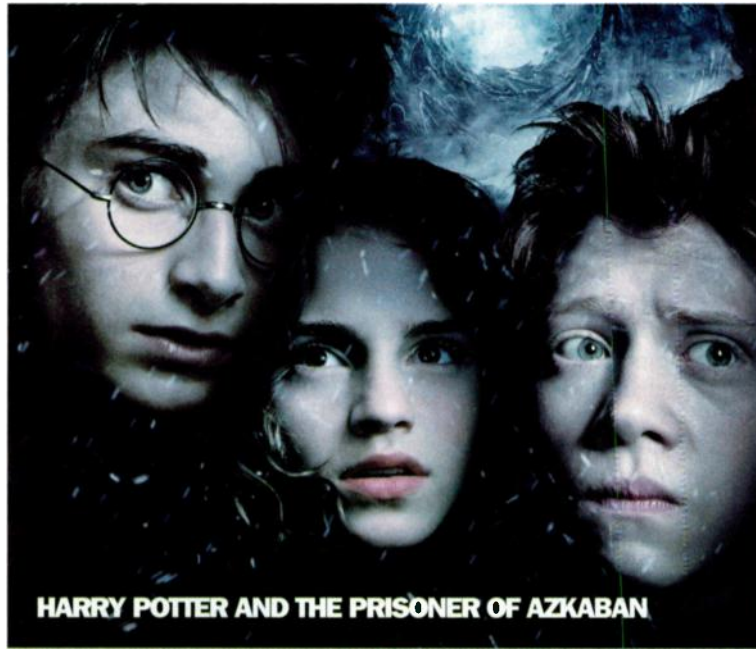
Friday, April 1

Here's a note from the **Vision World Foundation**, about new programming for **WXEL-TV** in **Palm Beach, Fla.**: “Hello, everyone! Just a reminder that *Cooking Without Looking*, the first TV show for people who are blind/visually impaired/low vision is going to be taping Friday, April 1, 2005 (this is no joke, ha!) at 9 a.m.”

—Mark Lasswell

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SPIDER-MAN™ 2 \$373M

HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN \$249M

THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW \$186M

COLLATERAL \$100M

STARSKY & HUTCH \$88M

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED \$84M

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- have the most licensing agreements with major Hollywood studios
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- have 99% of primetime theatricals in High Def**
- have it all On Demand after premiere



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*Source: The Hollywood Reporter, box office grosses through March 11, 2005. **For the period October, 2004 - March, 2005.

FAST TRACK

A Slow Start To 'Affair'

A *Current Affair* returned to television March 21 after a nearly nine-year absence, running pieces about the brutal murder of a Las Vegas high school student and a proposed Virginia law that would ban people from exposing the tops of their undergarments in public.

In its first night on the air, the program got off to a slow start in the three biggest markets. On **WNYW New York**, its 2.5 rating/5 share was down 31% from the time slot a year ago. **KTTV Los Angeles** was down 38%, with a 2.1/5. On **WFLD Chicago**, the show pulled a 1.2/3, down 25% from last year.—J.F.

'Project Runway' To Strut Again

Bravo and Miramax Television will strut their stuff in a second season of fashion-focused reality show *Project Runway*. The **Heidi Klum**-hosted competition for the next hot clothing designer grew 468% in the ratings throughout its first season, drawing more than 2 million viewers in its February finale after premiering in December to just 354,000.

Ten new episodes hosted by Klum will premiere as early as the third quarter. Klum also executive-produces the series with **Full Picture Managers**



Project Runway lives

and **Magical Elves'** **Dan Cutforth and Jane Lipsitz**. Bravo is a unit of **NBC Universal Cable**.—A.B.

Back to Business At Martin's FCC

After nearly a week in charge of the FCC, new Chairman **Kevin Martin** has returned the agency to business as usual, mostly. Upon taking the chairman's seat March 18, he issued an e-mail to FCC senior staff, ordering them not to release major staff-level decisions or public notices until

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

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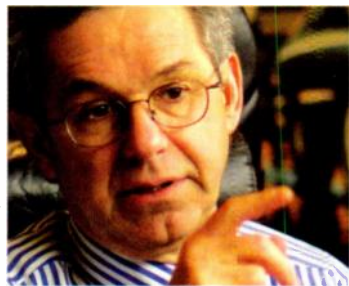


Photo: Paul Price

Alan Frank 43

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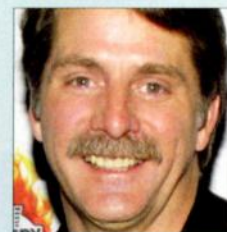
Najai Turpin 76

his office gets a chance to review them. Most proceedings have now been cleared to go forward. Staffers were also asked not to give speeches on behalf of the commission or make other public statements purportedly reflecting the commission's views "until further notice."—B.M.

Comedy Central Logs Top Cable Show

Comedy Central's *Roast of Jeff Foxworthy* laughed its way to the top of the cable ratings for the week ended March 20, attracting 6.2 million total viewers Sunday at 10 p.m. and ranking as the network's second-most-watched telecast ever, according to **Nielsen Media Research**.

Two airings of the **Scooby-Doo** movie on **Nick**, the film's premiere TV broadcasts, took the second and third spots, with 4.85 million and 4.80 million total viewers, respectively, on Saturday and Friday. The Saturday-night airing also nabbed the week's top cable-programming spot with kids 2-11, with 2.9 million in that demo tuning in.



Jeff Foxworthy

Rounding out the top five cable programs in prime were Saturday's 9:30 p.m. episode of *SpongeBob* on **Nick**, with 4.78 million viewers, and Monday's 9 p.m. **WWE** programming on **Spike**, at 4.60 million.

The top three networks for the week in prime were **TBS**, **USA** and **TNT**, averaging 2.44 million, 2.36 million and 2.35 million total viewers respectively.—A.B.

Hallmark: Big Growth Ahead

Hallmark Channel aims to post double-digit CPM increases and take in \$110 million from advertisers in this year's upfront—40% more than last year, says Hallmark Channels' executive VP of national ad sales, **Bill Abbott**.

To do that, the network projects 150 ad deals and 25 new clients. Hallmark will again offer 10 movies where advertisers get sole sponsorship with fewer, longer commercials.

The network ordered two installments of its high-performing,

Continued on page 72

B&C Broadcasting & Cable (ISSN 1068-6827) (USPS 0066-0000) (GST #123397457) is published weekly, except at year-end when two issues are combined, by Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc., 360 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010-1710. Broadcasting & Cable © 2005 by Reed Elsevier Inc., 275 Washington St., Newton, MA 02158-1630. All rights reserved. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Canada Post IPM Product (Canada Distribution) Sales Agreement No. 0607533. Postmaster, please send address changes to: Broadcasting & Cable, P.O. Box 15157, North Hollywood, CA 91615-5157. Subscription rates: USA \$189, Canada \$249 (includes GST). Foreign Air \$360. A reasonable fee shall be assessed to cover handling costs in cancellation of a subscription. Back issues: except for special issues where price changes are indicated, single copies are \$7.95 U.S. \$14 foreign. Please address all subscription mail to: Broadcasting & Cable, P.O. Box 15157, North Hollywood, CA 91615-5157 or call 1-800-554-5729. Outside the U.S. call 1-818-487-4552. Microfilm of Broadcasting & Cable is available from University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106 (800-521-0600). Broadcasting & Cable was founded in 1931 as Broadcasting. The News Magazine of the Fifth Estate. It was named Broadcasting & Cable in 1993. Broadcasting & Cable® is a registered trademark of Reed Publishing (Nederland) B.V., used under license.

best year-to-year growth!

ellen **+29%** **+20%** **+18%** **+25%**

	HH	W18-34	W18-49	W25-54
Oprah	+11%	+2%	+2%	+2%
Dr. Phil	flat	+16%	+6%	flat
Maury	flat	-8%	-4%	+5%
Montel	-4%	-12%	-11%	-6%
Regis & Kelly	-8%	-6%	-14%	-12%
Jerry Springer	-11%	-7%	-13%	-13%
Good Day Live	-18%	-17%	-17%	-17%

ellen
the ellen degeneres show

A Very Good Production
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TELEPICTURES
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Source: NSS Galaxy. GAA Ratings where available, 03-04 Premiere thru 3/06/05.
04-05 Premiere thru 3/07/05. Ranked on % difference HH.

World Radio History



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Dust Off the Tiara: Miss America Deal Nears

After more than five months in dating limbo since being dropped by ABC, the Miss America pageant appears to have a serious suitor. "We're getting very close," says John Ferriter, senior VP and head of network alternative programming at the William Morris Agency, which began repping the pageant after organizers had a falling out with the Creative Artists Agency over the winter. Ferriter expects to announce the buyer this week. "I think the show is going to be back on the air and back in a big way."

FLASH!

According to Ferriter, both broadcast and cable outlets have expressed interest in the contest. It is being pitched as a new kind of pageant, reconstituted by producers within the agency (reality and live-event specialists) as a multiple-part reality series. Under the working title *The Search for Miss America*, the series would follow contestants through state contests (letting viewers get to know them on their home turf), create a rooting interest in the hopefuls, and culminate with the two-hour beauty pageant. Who will buy the show? Definitely not Fox Televi-



Spring Break Shark Attack sent a message to ABC.



They needed a bigger boat: Shark sends housewives overboard on Spring Break.



Cable or kibbles? Puppy love, still unrequited

sion, which has opted out of the running, says Ferriter, and not Donald Trump. He might own the Miss USA, Miss Universe and Miss Teen USA pageants, and was widely rumored to be interested, but Trump, Ferriter says, "has not put an offer on the table."

'Desperate' Measure

Television executives regularly dream about killing the competition, especially the other guys' hit shows. But CBS took the idea to a new level with the movie *Spring Break Shark Attack*, when women who looked an awful lot like the women of *Wisteria Lane* on ABC's *Desperate Housewives* became chum in CBS's shark-infested waters.

The first shot of the TV movie, which aired on March 20, showed four attractive, middle-aged women out in the ocean, relaxing on a raft and drinking martinis. That got our attention right away: The movie was supposed to be a shameless jiggelfest of frightened coeds, aimed at guys who'd seen the hype on CBS's *March Madness* basketball coverage earlier in the day. What were those moms doing here?

Then it became clear. "Alice would have loved this," one of them lamented. (Hmmm, *Desperate Housewives* is narrated from the grave by suicide victim Mary Alice Young). Then there was the line, "Let Matt take care of the triplets for a change" (one *DH* couple has twins). After a hungry shark turned the women into a floating buffet, we saw this newspaper headline: "Desperate search for missing housewives continues..."

Executive producer Frank von Zerneck says he'd like to take credit for the scene, but it originated with screenwriter James La Rosa. "It was fun and a tip of the hat," von Zerneck says. The Spring Break programming stunt helped CBS win the ratings war for the night, though at a 7.1 rating/11 share vs. 8.6/13, the movie couldn't pull even a rerun of *Desperate Housewives* underwater while the two overlapped.

Dog Tired

Last week, an e-mail promoting the **Puppy Channel** rained down on nearly every member of the *B&C* staff and, we suspect, on many, many others in the media. The e-mail's sketchy wording—the "big dogs" that attend the NCTA convention this week "may have indicated the channel's time might have arrived"—reminded us

that we've been hearing for nearly a decade about the imminent launch of this channel devoted to the pairing of lovable pups and nice music. Dogs may be man's best friend, but journalists can be a puppy's faithful companion. A sampling:

2004: "...The Puppy Channel, which will begin next year"—*The Post and Courier* (Charleston, S.C.)

2003: "Cable channels in the works include...the Puppy Channel"—*Miami Herald*

2002: "The National Cable & Telecommunications Assn. notes such new aspirants as...the Puppy Channel"—*Los Angeles Times*

2000: "The Puppy Channel is just puppies, puppies, puppies"—*Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* (Little Rock, Ark.), apparently under the impression that the channel actually exists

1999: "Daniel A. FitzSimons of Cleveland is one entrepreneur with a channel vision...His idea: puppies, all day long."—*Philadelphia Inquirer*

1998: "...the Puppy Channel will be up and running in a few months."—*Virginian-Pilot* (Norfolk, Va.)

1997: "On this channel, any puppy can have its day"—headline, *USA Today*

1996: "The Puppy Channel still lacks an essential ingredient. It doesn't have a cable system that has committed to carrying its canine content."—*Crain's Cleveland Business*

It might be time for the Puppy Channel story idea to be spayed or neutered so it can't reproduce again.

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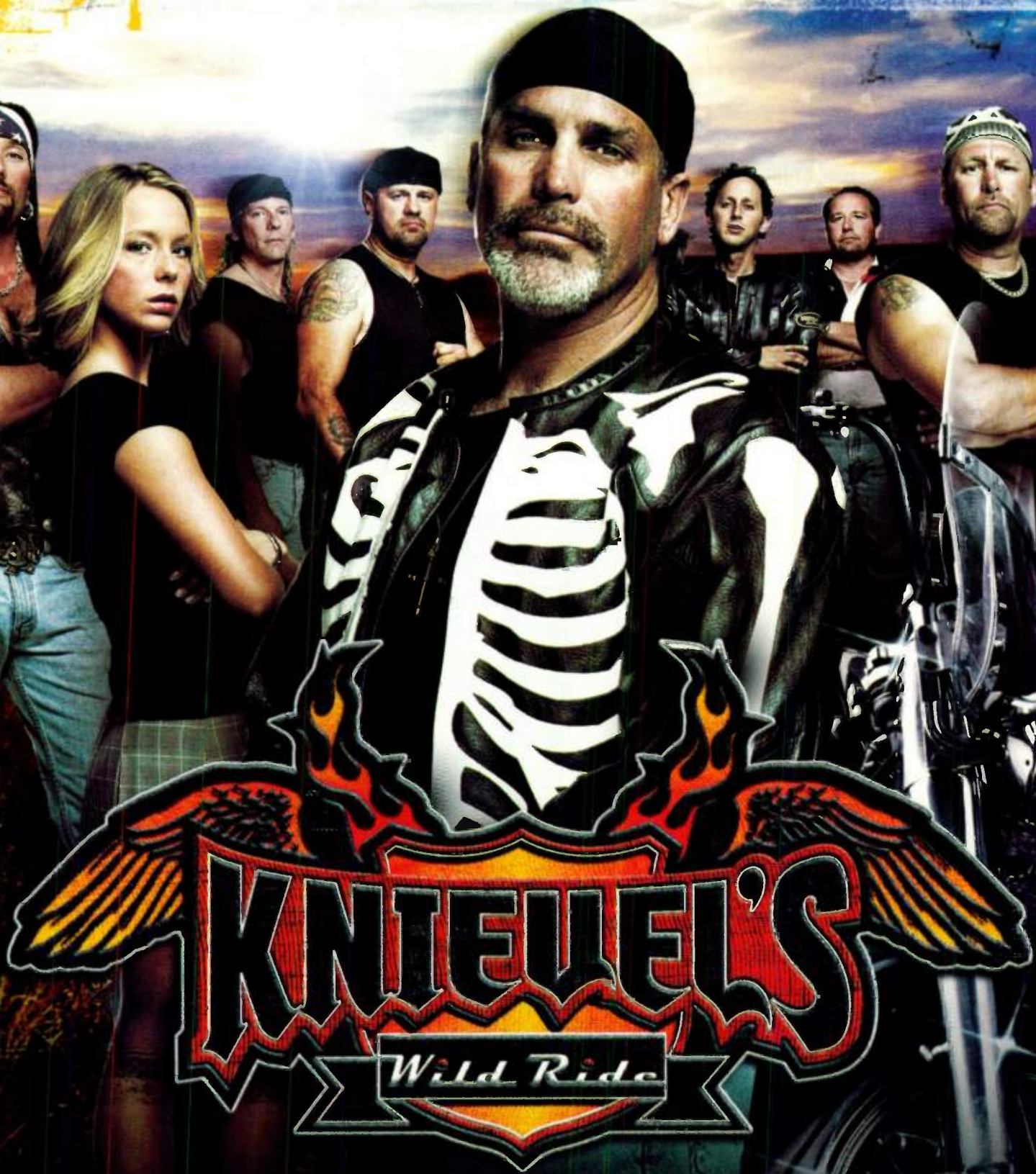
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		BALTIMORE • 7:30PM	W18-34	W18-49	W25-54
FEB. 2005	ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	4.1	5.7	5.8	
FEB. 2004	HOLLYWOOD SQUARES	1.6	2.8	2.9	
FEB. 2003	HOLLYWOOD SQUARES	1.9	3.4	4.0	
FEB. 2002	HOLLYWOOD SQUARES	1.3	3.4	4.1	
FEB. 2001	HOLLYWOOD SQUARES	2.1	3.1	4.0	
FEB. 2000	HOLLYWOOD SQUARES	2.1	3.0	4.3	
FEB. 1999	HOLLYWOOD SQUARES	2.6	4.0	4.6	
FEB. 1998	AMERICAN JOURNAL	1.5	3.0	3.8	
FEB. 1997	AMERICAN JOURNAL	1.6	2.9	4.3	

TELEVISION DISTRIBUTION

Source: NSI WRAP Sweeps, Feb '05 - '96 7:30-8pm, PA. Ratings. #1 Ent. Magazine among Adults 18-34, 18-49, & 25-54. Ent. Magazines = AH, ET, Extra, & Insider.

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World Radio History



Media Wars Move to High Court

Broadband, file-sharing cases will impact future TV revenue **By Bill McConnell**

The online revolution and the traditional TV business will clash at the Supreme Court this week, in legal battles that should have dramatic impact on the Internet's potential to rival television as a source of information and entertainment.

The two cases, both set to be argued Tuesday, March 29, are separate, but revolve around a single dilemma that has bedeviled media and telecom regulators for a decade: Should Washington give big media companies huge advantages in the broadband business in order to encourage multibillion-dollar investments in digital technology and content? Or should the government try to speed consumer adoption of new products and foster entrepreneurial ventures by tearing down roadblocks to competition erected by entrenched corporations?

In one case, the court must decide whether the FCC was wrong not to make cable operators carry rival Internet service providers (ISPs), such as Earthlink, on their high-speed Internet networks. In the other, the justices must rule whether Grokster, and similar peer-to-peer networks, can be held liable for copyright violations when users illegally download music, movies and TV shows.

THE ECONOMY AT STAKE

"What's at stake is much broader than movies and music," says NBC Universal General Counsel Richard Cotton. "It's about protecting the current and future foundation of the whole U.S. economy, which is now driven by innovation."

Although Cotton was speaking about the file-sharing case—NBC Universal has billions in TV and movie investments it wants to protect from online pirates—his sentiments also echo the cable industry's attempt to keep expensive new high-speed networks all to itself.

Hanging in the balance are billions of dollars in future profits to be earned from the high-speed digital pipelines being constructed to the front door of nearly every American home. The outcome of this week's Supreme Court "double-header," as Legg Mason analyst Blair Levin calls it, will determine whether big media companies that own traditional TV networks and other communications platforms will have the upper-hand in the new digital world, or whether they will face stronger competition from entrepreneurs seeking to distribute their own content. The outcome will also affect whether Wall Street will favor owners of cable lines, TV stations and other network infrastructure over new-content developers, Levin says. "One of the most important questions facing telecom and media investors is what part of the value chain will increase its market worth."

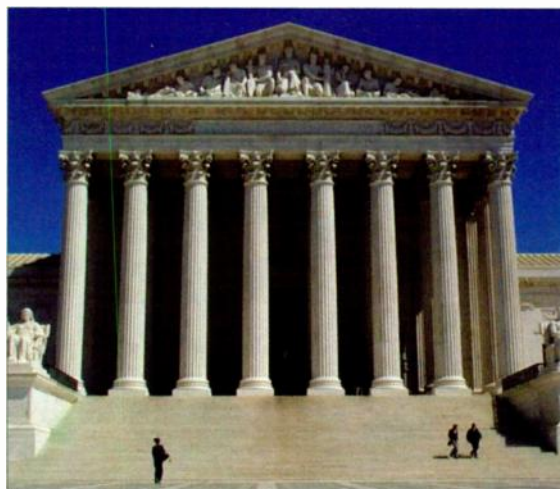
In the cable-Internet case, the justices will begin reviewing a seven-year legal fight over independent ISPs' right of access to cable operators' online networks. At issue is a 2002 FCC decision declaring that the agency does not need to impose access mandates on cable until there is evidence that cable operators are significantly interfering with consumers' ability to navigate the Internet.

ISPs Earthlink and Brand X, along with the largest consumer groups, argue that competition will be strangled in the broadband market if independent service providers are blocked from the cable

pipeline—the best Internet platform available. They will tell the justices that the FCC was wrong to reject access mandates. They say current telecommunications law already obligates cable operators to lease access to competing providers.

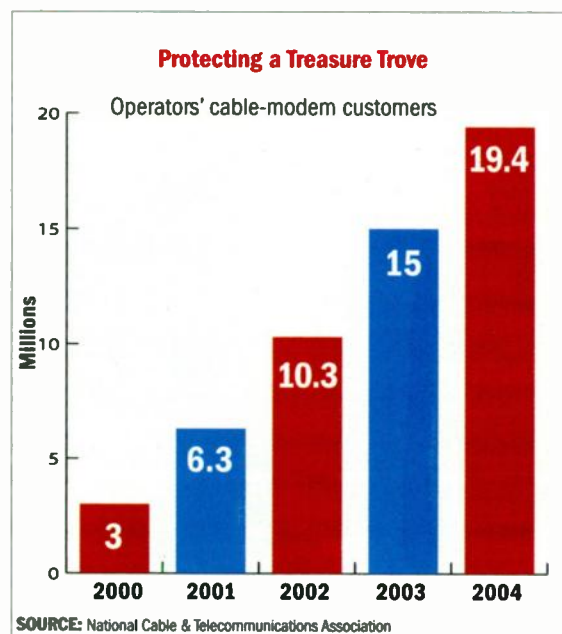
"We have lost hundreds of thousands of subscribers because of the FCC decision," says David Baker, VP of law and policy at Earthlink. Customers are losing out, too, he says, because independent ISPs like Earthlink are quicker to add critical new technologies like spam- and spyware blockers, while cable-run ISPs drag their feet.

If Earthlink and its allies win, subscribers to cable-modem service would be able to choose from many



"What's at stake is much broader than movies and music."

RICHARD COTTON, NBC UNIVERSAL



ISPs rather than being forced to use their cable company's broadband service.

If the justices side with the cable industry, however, operators will be able to dictate what rival services,

if any, are available on their networks. For instance, an operator might ban not only independent ISPs, but also companies offering Internet telephone service in competition with the cable company's brand.

It is easy to see why cable operators, with the FCC's support, are fighting the idea.

The industry took in \$10 billion in revenue from cable-modem subscriptions in 2004, according to the National Cable & Telecommunications Association. Growing at a 30% clip last year, it is cable's fastest-climbing revenue segment.

Mark Cooper, research director for Consumer Federation of America, says development of new high-speed services will be stymied if cable isn't forced to carry competing providers. For instance, the largest cable operator, Comcast, is only now rolling out Internet telephone service—three years after independent Vonage began offering the service over cable lines.

"It's not the Comcasts of the world that are inventing new technologies," he says.

Daniel Brenner, chief lawyer for NCTA, says it is simply untrue that cable operators aren't innovating. After all, they've spent \$95 billion since 1996 upgrading their networks to carry broadband and other digital services. Allowing rivals to piggyback on cable without investing in one inch of their own network is unfair, he says. The FCC's hands-off-for-now policy is "the best way to promote broadband service and the open values of the Internet, and allow companies to innovate without being hamstrung by government rules."

In the file-sharing case, the justices must decide whether to let Grokster and similar file-sharing networks operate without any obligation to halt the rampant illegal swapping of copyrighted music files, movies and TV shows.

The Motion Picture Association of America, supported by TV networks and the National Association of Broadcasters, has asked the court to shut down the service, or at least hold Grokster and similar companies liable for the 75%-90% of traffic on its system that is illegal. According to online-traffic monitor BigChampagne, 44 million illegal movie files are currently stored and available for peer-to-peer swapping.

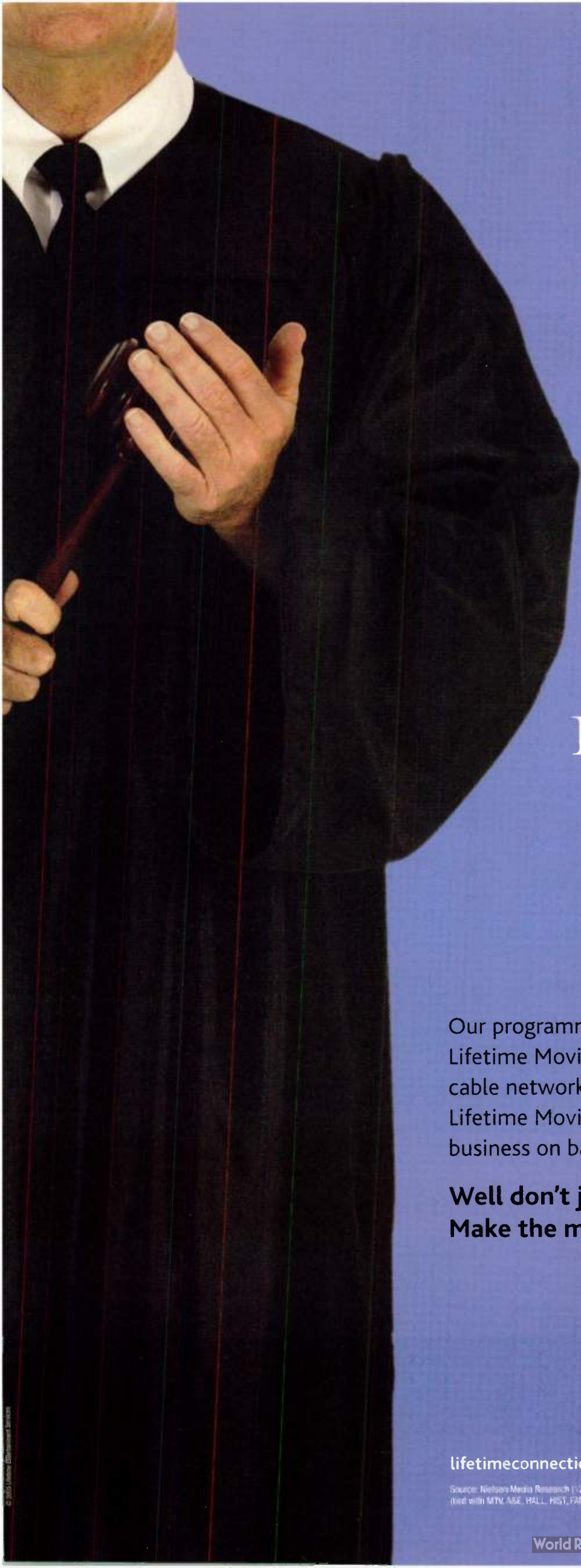
BILLIONS IN LOST PROFITS

Grokster's allies acknowledge that file-swapping has cost traditional content providers huge sums of money. The 100 million music files downloaded in 2004 represent \$1.3 billion in lost profits, says the Consumer Federation of America. The music industry says its annual losses are actually \$4 billion.

The federal-appeals court in San Francisco ruled in August that Grokster itself was doing nothing wrong, because its file-sharing system has legitimate uses and it was not storing illegal files on its own servers. Instead, the system allows swappers to trade files stored on their own computers.

Again, Cooper says Hollywood and other media giants are standing in the way of technology rather than finding ways to adapt their business to new options available to consumers. Now that technology has made it easy for Web surfers to obtain songs one at a time, they are no longer willing to pay the \$13 cost for an entire album. Rather than forcing consumers to stick with the old, expensive business model, media companies should make it easier to download single files legally by using royalty-management software already on the market.

Cotton agrees that big media companies must ramp-up efforts to sell content online, but he insists they can't take a chance on that business as long as it remains vulnerable to massive piracy. "There's no question we are headed for an on-demand world," he says. "But the normal legal rules need to apply in the digital space just as in other areas of commerce." ■



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and 2 families
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Make the move.**

lifetimeconnection.com

Source: Nielsen Media Research (12/25/03-12/26/04) among ad-supported cable networks; HH (tied with MTV, A&E, HALL, HIST, FAM, FX), W18-49 (tied with TLC), W20-54 (tied with TLC, HGTV).



Even better on basic.

STATION TO STATION

Weather Services Battle

By Allison Romano

To compete with cable's Weather Channel and to maximize their own digital capabilities and weather operations, an increasing amount of local broadcasters are starting 24/7 digital weather channels. So far, NBC's new WeatherPlus, a joint effort between the network and its affiliates, is the biggest player: 20 stations are on board and another 17 planning to launch soon.

Now, weather-forecasting service AccuWeather wants in on the action. AccuWeather is out pitching its new local AccuWeather Channel to stations, promising a customizable, low-cost service. About 50 stations nationwide currently use AccuWeather's forecasting tools; they'll get first crack at the new service. Partner stations would get programming and equipment free for the first year. After that, the annual cost estimated at less than \$50,000. Ad-sales revenue will be equally divided. No new stations have yet signed on for the local service.

The company currently partners with cable and local broadcasters on a combined 20 stations, including WFMZ Allentown and KJTV Lubbock, Tex., which offer AccuWeather-branded services on their secondary digital channels and local cable. WJHG Panama City, Fla., has a cable-only channel. Tech-savvy WRAL Raleigh, N.C., uses the company's forecasting to power its own WRAL Weather-



AccuWeather meteorologist Josh Kosek

Center Channel.

With the next generation of channels, AccuWeather says it can tailor service to fit specific needs.

A station can use its own forecasters (or AccuWeather's) and take as much content—a flexible mix of local and national forecasts—as desired. A station can use its own audio and video, and it is free to add sports and news.

That flexibility will set AccuWeather apart from Weather-Plus' wheel of national and local

FX's Liguori Replaces Berman

New Fox creative chief inherits dozens of pilots **By Jim Finkle**

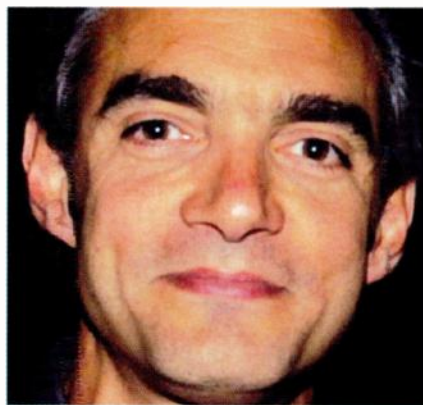
News Corp. wasted no time naming a successor to Fox Broadcasting Entertainment President Gail Berman, who resigned March 21 for a top creative slot with Paramount Pictures. Three days later, FX Networks CEO Peter Liguori was named to the post, putting him in a tight spot because he has to pull together next season's schedule in time for Fox's May 19 upfront presentation in New York.

The good news, says Liguori, is that the slate of more than two dozen pilots ordered by Berman and her development team looks strong. "I respect that team a lot, and what Gail has put in place," Liguori says. "We'll make a decision together."

Liguori's successor has not been announced yet, but sources inside Fox say the leading candidate is the network's head of development, John Landgraf. FX is in good shape creatively; Liguori has recently ordered two dramas and two comedies.

Don't expect any quick changes in strategy over at Fox, Liguori says. He plans to take his time settling into the new gig. "I've got to spend a lot of time listening to the good team over there before I start talking on that front."

His mission is to develop hit programs capable of pulling in strong ratings even when *American Idol* isn't on the air. (Until *Idol* returned in January, Fox was in fourth place among 18-49s this season.) Plus, Fox's schedule was heavy on reality shows, many of which bombed.



Peter Liguori, new Fox entertainment president

Liguori is known to be a stickler for quality in programming. He focuses on every aspect of production—from concept to casting, writing and direction. His biggest successes at FX have been *The Shield*, *Nip/Tuck* and *Rescue Me*, and there's already buzz about the network's next big drama, Steven Bochco's *Over There*, the first series about the war in Iraq.

Liguori's entrance, coupled with Berman's ambitious plans for next season's dramas and comedies, may be a sign that Fox has had its fill of sensational reality shows.

When the current season ends in May, thanks mostly to the *Idol* factor, Fox may claim its first ratings victory among 18-49s.

Beyond *Idol*, the Fox shows that endured have an original premise and distinctive voice—from *The Simpsons* and *Malcolm in the Middle* to *24* and *The O.C.*

Look for Liguori to launch programming in that same vein. ■

"I respect that [Fox] team a lot, and what Gail has put in place."

PETER LIGUORI

BERMAN'S DEVELOPMENT

Gail Berman is leaving Fox on a high note. The network will probably end the season No. 1 among 18-49s for the first time. Here is a sampling of pilots ordered for next season:

AMY COYNE: A Seattle woman inherits a sports-management firm in Beverly Hills.

BORN & BREAD: Fox bills this show as "a provocative new relationship drama set in the cutting-edge world of a Los Angeles fertility clinic."

THE BREAK: A structural engineer schemes to help his brother break out of prison, where he's on death row for a murder he says he didn't commit.

DON'T ASK: Kristen Johnston (*3rd Rock From the Sun*) plays a suburban housewife whose husband turns out to be gay and dating her therapist.

HEAVY ON MY MIND: Hip-hop artist Heavy D stars in a comedy about a tow lot.

HITCHED: An Aaron Spelling drama that looks like *Fantasy Island*-meets-*Las Vegas*. It is set in a 24/7 Las Vegas wedding chapel run by a brother and sister.

NEW CAR SMELL: Brooke Shields heads a comedy set at a Las Vegas car dealership.

PEEP SHOW: An updated version of *The Odd Couple* based on a British series.

QUEEN B: Alicia Silverstone stars in a comedy about a woman whose friends call her Queen Bee.

REUNION: This series chronicles the lives of a group of high-school friends. Each episode covers a major event in their lives, set about a year apart. (Pilot is set in 1986.)

WINDFALL: Drama explores how winning lotto jackpots change peoples' lives.

forecasting, says R. Lee Rainey, AccuWeather's VP of marketing. "The stations can structure the presentation," he says.

At KJTV, the AccuWeather channel hones on Lubbock. "Everything has to have a local perspective," says President/GM Brad Moran. Regional and national radar pictures are visually centered on Lubbock.

The field, however, is getting crowded. Along with WeatherPlus and AccuWeather, the Weather Channel has created Weatherscan, a local, graphics-heavy cable service that reaches about 8 million subscribers in 90 markets.

In the Philadelphia market, there is WeatherPlus on NBC O&O WCAU, WFMZ's AccuWeather and a Weatherscan channel. WFMZ, an independent station, was first in the market in 2001

"Everything has to have a local perspective."

BRAD MORAN, KJTV

to launch the digital-broadcast service. Local advertisers can sponsor segments and even air audio from radio spots while maps are onscreen. AccuWeather supplies the information.

At NAB next month, Local AccuWeather will demonstrate with an unnamed New York City station.

Viacom Shuffle

The Viacom Station Group is shuffling some local executives. Michael Colleran, most recently president/GM for Viacom's South Florida triopoly WFOR, WBFS and WTVX, is heading north to run the company's Philadelphia duopoly: KYW and WPSG. He was KYW's general sales manager from 1993 to 1997.

That spot opened after Peter Dunn was named president and CEO of Viacom Television Stations Spot Sales.

Brien Kennedy, station manager for WTVX West Palm Beach, Fla., has been tapped as the new president/GM for all Viacom's Florida stations, including two low-power outlets in West Palm Beach that Viacom will take over April 4.

Angie Kucharski has been named VP/station manager of Boston's Viacom duopoly, CBS station WBZ and UPN station WSBK.

Send station news to aromano@reedbusiness.com

RATINGS 3/7-13/05

Nielsen Media Research

Top 25 Shows

ADULTS 18-49

PROGRAM	AA	GAA
1 Seinfeld	4.3	5.2
2 Everybody Loves Raymond	4.0	5.0
3 Seinfeld (wknd)	3.8	4.6
4 Friends	3.7	4.7
5 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	3.1	3.5
6 Wheel of Fortune	2.8	NA
7 Oprah Winfrey Show	2.7	2.7
8 Jeopardy!	2.4	NA
9 Everybody Loves Raymond (wknd)	2.3	2.3
10 Dr. Phil	2.2	2.3
10 Entertainment Tonight	2.2	2.3
12 Malcolm in the Middle	2.1	2.5
12 That '70s Show	2.1	2.6
14 Judge Judy	2.0	2.9
15 King of Queens	1.9	2.3
15 King of the Hill	1.9	2.3
15 Will & Grace	1.9	2.2
18 Cops	1.7	2.0
19 Maury	1.6	1.7
20 Entertainment Tonight (wknd)	1.5	1.6
20 Home Improvement	1.5	1.9
20 Inside Edition	1.5	1.5
20 King of Queens (wknd)	1.5	2.0
20 That '70s Show (wknd)	1.5	1.9
25 Live With Regis and Kelly	1.4	NA

Top Off-Net Sitcoms

ADULTS 18-49

PROGRAM	AA	GAA
1 Seinfeld	4.3	5.2
2 Everybody Loves Raymond	4.0	5.0
3 Seinfeld (wknd)	3.8	4.6
4 Friends	3.7	4.7
5 Malcolm in the Middle	2.4	2.5

According to Nielsen Media Research Syndication Service Ranking Report March 7-13, 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

'Live' From Austin

Homegrown music show holds its own **By Jim Finkle**



Gigi Greco (right) gets help producing *All Access Live* from her husband, Dave Drapen.

In the world of syndication, Gigi Greco stands alone. A publicist, video producer and Little League mom, she is also the executive producer of *All Access Live*, a half-hour syndicated music show filmed in Austin, Texas. The program runs on barter in 30 markets and covers 26% of the U.S., mostly in weekend late-night slots.

Besides creating and producing the show, Greco also sells it directly to stations and oversees distribution. The show is delivered via satellite. Her husband, Dave Drapen, and his business partner, Rob Jacobsen, edit the show. Acts have included 2005 Grammy winners: Los Lonely Boys, a band that won a Grammy for hit single "Heaven," and Maroon 5, which won for best new artist. Both performed gratis, partly to boost exposure and partly because Greco is well-connected in music circles.

It's tough to determine how the show is received. Greco only gets a sampling of ratings data from clients who pass on information from their local markets. Ratings generally run between 1.5 and 4.0.

Greco stumbled into syndication by accident. She initially planned to produce a live music show for a local music chan-

nel in Austin. "But then we thought, 'If we're going to spend all this money, let's do major bands,'" she says. The show took off after the WB affiliate in Austin asked her for 26 episodes to run on a 50-50 barter basis. To date, Greco has produced 13 episodes, which stations started running at the end of 2003. It is now in repeats in most markets.

The next season won't kick off until Greco finds sponsors to help foot the bill. (She plans to shoot in HD, so production costs will rise.) She's hoping to entice advertisers with product placements, which must be planned prior to shooting.

To produce, market and distribute 13 episodes of *Access Live* cost Greco \$50,000. Although it's a tiny fraction of what a typical syndicator pays, she has just hit a break-even point on her investment. She garners ad revenue through an ad service that carries direct-response ads for chat lines, Time-Life music compilations and other "as seen on TV" products. A 30-second spot brings in from \$125 to more than \$1,000.

Greco's marketing approach is low-keyed. She makes cold calls over the telephone and sends bulk mailings to prospective clients. A postcard was enough to interest Stella Montoya, programming director at WHIZ Los Angeles, an independent station that broadcasts the show to some 2.5 million households. "I thought I'd give it a shot," Montoya says.

Now that Greco has gained momentum in lining up stations, she wants to grow her ad base. Her biggest obstacle is getting through the door to pitch her show. "If we could get right to the companies and past the sentinels," she says, "we could get somewhere." ■

IN FOCUS

OPRAH DOWN; PHIL UP

Ratings for most syndicated shows were down in the week ended March 13 versus the previous week. Many programs were in repeats after the end of February sweeps. *The Oprah Winfrey Show* posted the biggest drop of any first-run strip, falling 20% from the week ended March 6. *Dr. Phil* bucked the trend, gaining 2%. And NBC Universal's *Starting Over* was up 9%.

MALL TOUR

Starting Over, the unscripted soap strip involving troubled women living together in a house, is getting some ratings juice from shopping-mall promos. The show's "life coaches" have been traveling the country, running free weekend "revivals" on topics like "Challenges to Change." Visits are translating into bigger audiences, at least on the Monday after each event. A Feb. 27 visit to Portland, Ore., boosted ratings the next day by about one-third from the previous Monday. In Los Angeles, a revival bumped the audience by 40%.

PROMOTIONS



Joanne Burns

Twentieth Television has promoted its top researcher, Joanne Burns, to the newly created post of EVP for sales marketing, research and new media. Burns will be heavily involved in developing sales and

marketing campaigns, identifying opportunities in new media (such as the Internet and wireless) and advising the company on program development. She joined Twentieth Television in 2000 as SVP.

The independent syndicator Litton Entertainment has named Michael Weiden EVP of media sales. He had been executive director of advertising sales at Si TV.

Houston, we DON'T have a problem!

KRIV/F, 2-230 PM

HH Rating

2.4	3.6	3.0	3.6
+50%		+20%	
DIVORCE COURT	DIVORCE COURT	JUDGE JOE BROWN	DIVORCE COURT
Nov. '04	Feb. '05	Feb. '04	Feb. '05

BUILDING SWEEP TO SWEEP IMPROVES THE YEAR-AGO TIME PERIOD

Source: NSI WRAP Overnight Plus, as dotted. Rating

Carry th

\$500 billion in disposable income!

17 National Stations / 35 million Hispanics
0 National Stations / 35 million gays and lesbians

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Preparing for Battle

The cable industry faces new threats as its faithful prepare for the NCTA National Show in San Francisco **By Anne Becker**



NCTA President Kyle McSlarrow (l) and FCC Chairman Kevin Martin (r) make their public debuts at this year's National Show.

Leggy casino girls in hot-pink leotards strutted into TV trade-magazine offices last week, totting fuzzy dice and chocolates—a showy stunt by CGTV, the casino and gaming television network, whose smirking executives trailed behind, shaking hands and handing out marketing brochures.

The Vegas-based channel, looking to get publicity for its third-quarter launch, is one of more than a dozen newbie networks—mostly digital—trying to get attention before and during 2005's cable-industry confab, the NCTA National Show; this year, the show takes place April 3-5 at San Francisco's Moscone Center. The National Cable & Telecommunications Association estimates more than 17,000 attendees this year—and scores of new presenters from outside the cable industry.

Networks with large corporate parents stand the best chance of winning hearts in San Francisco. Fox Reality Channel and Viacom's upcoming gay-targeted Logo will both have a major presence, as will A&E Television Networks' Crime & Investigation Network and Military History Channel. Comcast launches a yet-unnamed kids network April 4 with PBS, the Sesame Workshop and HIT Entertainment.

If gay programming or crime shows don't fit the bill, cable operators can also choose from several religion-focused upstarts: Gospel Music Channel; GOD TV, a European Christian channel; and Hope Channel, a Seventh Day Adventist network.

The upstarts will have a tough time getting much attention from the MSO executives and financial analysts trolling the convention center's 190,000-square-foot floor. Although the number of digital subscribers is steadily rising (24.3 million customers in 2004), bandwidth is at such a premium that cable operators are looking to established networks' alternative services—VOD, broadband and HD—to fight erosion from satellite and phone competitors, rather than picking up new networks; discussions at this year's NCTA will reflect that.

YEAR OF THE RESPONSE

"It's really not a 500-channel universe anymore—it's more like 100. Anything more than that, and there's not usage to sustain it," says Jeff Gaspin, president

of NBC Universal Cable Entertainment, which owns USA, Sci Fi, Bravo and Trio. "It's not the direction cable operators are going in. Their belief is, viewers want access and on-demand—not necessarily 900 choices, but 20 good ones."

Cable subscriptions dipped for the first time in two decades in 2003, so chatter this year will likely surround establishing the best models for VOD, VoIP and telephony services that the satellite companies can't offer, says Steve Effros, a cable-industry consultant. "This is the year of the response," he says. "You can

"It's really not a 500-channel universe anymore. It's more like 100."

JEFF GASPIN, NBC UNIVERSAL CABLE

run around in circles and say, 'Oh my God, we're getting competition,' or you can get down to the nuts and bolts of being an active competitor."

Three major pavilions at this year's show will highlight cable's focus on being a triple threat: offering voice, video and data. CableLabs' "CableNET" exhibit will display video, home-networking and VoIP services. Best Buy will stock its "Fun Zone," a 53-foot tractor-trailer complete with a 16-foot stage, to resemble a mini-consumer-electronics store, in order to spark discussion about cable's fate in the retail environment. "The thing about cable now is, it's all three industries, and all three are firing on all cylinders," says Dan Brenner, NCTA's SVP, law and regulatory policy.

Given the show's proximity to Silicon Valley, executives from several major tech companies will speak at the show's four general sessions. The conference's 2005 chair, Comcast COO Steve Burke (whose company's recent deal with TiVo capped off a year of new cable-technology ventures), will speak at Sunday's "From Baud Band to Broadband" panel, sharing the stage with NCTA's Kyle McSlarrow, Vulcan's Paul Allen, Electronic Arts' Bing Gordon,

Cablevision Systems' Tom Rutledge and Yahoo!'s Jerry Yang.

Google co-founder/President Larry Page will headline Monday's general session, called "Attack of the Empowered Consumer: Understanding New Media Markets," along with AOL CEO Jonathan Miller and DreamWorks co-founder Jeffrey Katzenberg.

Gaming will claim a major presence at the show for the first time this year, with cable operators eager to capitalize on subscription-based gaming applications using broadband or VOD capabilities. Shorecliff Communications' 3,800-square-foot GameNET pavilion will seek to wow cable operators with game demos and info sessions on using broadband to deliver videogame content. "Gamers aren't just there to kick the tires," says Barbara York, who has coordinated the conference for NCTA for more than 20 years. "They have products in the industry pipeline. They are doing business, writing deals, making contacts with the cable industry."

THE INDECENCY ISSUE

The biggest buzz on the convention floor will center on Washington. Cable operators will likely be griping loudly about carrying rival ISPs on high-speed networks, especially because, earlier in the week, on March 29, the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments on the topic. Cable companies argue that they have spent \$95 billion to upgrade their systems with broadband and digital services, and they protest free piggybacking from rival ISPs.

Policy issues are paramount for cable, with the industry facing potential crackdowns on everything from indecency to carriage of digital-broadcast streams to à la carte packaging, any of which could be included in Congress' rewriting of the telecommunications laws this summer.

New FCC Chairman Kevin Martin will make his first industry-wide appearance at Tuesday's public-policy lunch. Several FCC commissioners, FTC Commissioner John Leibowitz, and Michael Gallagher, assistant secretary for Communications and Information, U.S. Department of Commerce/NTIA, will also speak.

Indecency is perhaps the greatest concern in Washington, and cable executives are expected to speak on the issue extensively. With new Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez promising a crackdown on pornography, several senators are pushing to let the FCC fine cable operators for indecent programming. Sen. John McCain is expected to continue a campaign for à la carte legislation in the coming months.

Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Ted Stevens, who has urged cable to create a ratings system and offer family-themed packages, plans to attend and will discuss indecency issues with industry executives.

"Cable as a whole needs to join together at this point because we need to be concerned [about indecency]," says NBC Universal's Gaspin. "Broadcasters have tried to sit back and be quiet. I don't think cable can do that." ■

HOW THE BUSINESS STACKS UP

CATEGORY	2004	2003
Basic cable customers	73,575,460	73,365,880
Annual cable revenue	\$57,600,000,000	\$51,300,000,000
Total advertising revenue	\$18,800,000,000	\$16,600,000,000
Digital-cable customers	24,300,000	22,200,000
Cable-modem customers	19,400,000	16,100,000
Residential cable-telephony customers	2,800,000	2,500,000
National video-programming services/networks	390	339
Average monthly price/expanded basic packages	\$38.23	\$36.59

SOURCE: National Cable & Telecommunications Association



3/28/05



M A R K E T E Y E

AT A GLANCE

The Market

DMA Rank	73
Population	1,029,000
TV homes	412,000
Income Per Capita	\$17,208
TV Revenue Rank	70
TV Revenue	\$62,300,000

Commercial TV Stations

Rank*	Ch.	Affil.	Owner
1	KCCI	8	CBS Hearst-Argyle
2	WHO	13	NBC New York Times
3	WOI	5	ABC Citadel Comm.
4	KDSM	17	Fox Sinclair
5	KPWB	23	WB Pappas Tele.

*November, total households, sign-on to sign-off, Mon.-Sun.

Cable/DBS

Cable subscribers (HH)	230,720
Major cable operator(s)	Mediacom
Cable penetration	56%
ADS subscribers (HH)**	94,760
ADS penetration	23%
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 (KCCI)	12/41
Network Show	
CSI (KCCI)	27/43
Evening Newscast	
KCCI	17/34
Late Newscast	
KCCI	20/39

***November 2004, total households

SOURCES: Nielsen Media Research, BIA Research

Battlefield Des Moines

KCCI, WHO locked in news race **By Allison Romano**

The nation's 73rd-largest TV market is more than cornfields and state fairs. "Des Moines is a vibrant market," says Paul Fredericksen, president/GM of Hearst-Argyle's CBS affiliate KCCI. In Iowa's capital, construction is booming, including a new revitalized downtown arena, the new Jordan Creek mega-mall and a science center. "We go against the perception that Iowa is old and stodgy," says Doug Sawyer, promotions manager for Citadel Communications' ABC affiliate WOI.

As Des Moines thrives, local broadcasters are filling their coffers. They took in \$62.3 million in gross revenue last year, up from \$57.7 million in 2003, according to BIA Financial. Automotive, retail and financial are among the largest ad categories.

In news, KCCI is the dominant player, winning most newscasts for the past decade, including last November, when the CBS station claimed top marks at noon and 5, 6 and 10 p.m. (As a diary market, Des Moines has to wait until late March to get Nielsen data from February sweeps.)

But the faces at KCCI are changing. Evening co-anchor Jeanette Trompeter departed after February sweeps for CBS O&O WCCO Minneapolis, leaving co-anchor Kevin Cooney. Weekend anchor Erin Kiernan was a candidate, but she will join WHO after May. "We think the changes will create viewer sampling," says WHO President/GM Jim Boyer.

Poaching Kiernan is one of WHO's tactics to catch up with KCCI. In the past two years, WHO shifted its focus to harder news and investigations. Now it is within striking distance in late news. In November, KCCI posted an average 20 rating/39 share at 10 p.m., compared with WHO's 13/25. WOI was a distant third, with 1/2. KDSM, the Sinclair-owned Fox station, airs a 9 p.m. newscast produced by sister station KGAN Cedar Rapids, Iowa, that earned 2/4.

Early morning news is also heated. KCCI and WHO, The New York Times Co.'s NBC affiliate, have been trading the top morning spot since KCCI launched its show three years ago. "The morning daypart is in its infancy but growing rapidly," Fredericksen says.

To set up local news, broadcasters are making various syndication maneuvers. WOI is buying Martha Stewart's new show for fall. KCCI recently replaced *Montel Williams* with *Dr. Phil* at 3 p.m. as the lead-in to *Oprah* and early evening news. The move paid off. In November, *Dr. Phil* nearly tripled *Montel's* ratings, up to 7/36 from 2/11 the year before. Sports programming is another popular genre with Des Moines viewers, particularly high school and college sports. WOI produces the only weekly high school sports program in town: *Friday Night Blitz*.

Optimistic about the future, Fredericksen notes the new mall has ignited more retail ad spending. "It is one more example of our brisk growth." ■



KCCI's Kevin Cooney

NEXT: DENVER

Heartland TV

Iowa's cornfields boast a rich broadcasting history. The Big Three network affiliates here have been on-air for 50-plus years.

WOI was the first to broadcast, on Feb. 21, 1950. The station was owned by Iowa State University and partly funded by payments from the feds for the university's work on the Manhattan Project. In its early days, WOI—then the only TV station in town—took programming from NBC, CBS and ABC. In 1994, the university sold WOI to Citadel Communications.

Competition arrived in 1954, when WHO became the NBC affiliate. KRNT (now KCCI) arrived in 1955 and became a CBS affiliate. KCCI is planning a celebration. "We will surround ourselves with events," says President/GM Paul Fredericksen, a 31-year vet.

Sinclair-owned Fox station KDSM started in 1983; Pappas Telecasting's WB affiliate KPWB began in 2001.—AR


THE DEMOS

WHO	SHARE OF POPULATION	INDEX*
Age 18 - 34	30%	98
Age 18 - 49	60%	97
Age 25 - 54	54%	93
Age 35+	70%	101
White	95%	115
Black	2%	20
Asian	1%	36
Hispanic Origin/Descent	3%	25

*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 (Feb. 03 - March 04)

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Source: NSI, WRAP Overnights, M-F, 6:30PM; 3/14 - 3/18/05 HH rtg. lead-in = 1/2 hr tp, year ago = March '04 tp (3/4 - 3.31/04)

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CBS' Newly Arrived Evening News Anchor

SCHIEFFER HAS ALREADY SET HIS STAMP ON THE JOB BY ANDREW TYNDALL Breaks Rank



Anchor Bob Schieffer (left) and correspondent Jim Stewart

stories each night. He reminds the reporter that, like the viewers at home, he has just watched the preceding package himself. He drives home the story's lead. He cites the angle that interested him most. He uses vernacular, even blunt language, to ask for more:

■ "I just want to underline what is important here—this guy escapes from the courthouse in the middle of town in broad daylight..."

■ "I thought one of the strangest things was when Canseco ... today asked Congress to grant him immunity so he could never be indicted. That does take some nerve."

■ "As I was watching your piece there, it occurred to me that the next of these trials is going to involve Ken Lay of Enron..."

■ "Whatever Michael Jackson did, if this is the best the prosecution can do—what we saw today—I think they are going to have a hard time proving this."

I analyzed 345 reporter packages and other longer-

form items on the three networks' weekday nightly newscasts: 172 on the first eight days of Schieffer's tenure, and 173 on the final eight days of Dan Rather's (anchor-only voiceovers and "tell" stories were not included). The majority of reports were the standard package: anchor introduction, roll-pretaped and edited video, no follow-up Q&A. Schieffer's tenure has meant more follow-ups, throwing to reporters for live stand-ups, and interviews with in-house experts and guests, such as the Minnesota reservation witness.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The before-and-after is striking.

Schieffer's live interactive style was used in 40% of CBS' items (ABC used it 9% of the time, NBC 3%); in Rather's final days, CBS used those techniques only 11% of the time (ABC 17%, NBC 3%).

CBS is clearly playing to Schieffer's strengths here. After years of honing his interviewing style on *Face the Nation* in the Sunday-morning inside-politics ghetto, he impressed the wider public with his straightforward questions in the domestic-policy presidential debate last October. Although CBS News was still being widely lambasted at that time for liberal bias in the

All weekend long on March 19-20, the major TV news channels were preoccupied by the Terri Schiavo watch. Late Sunday, Congress passed special legislation to move Schiavo's case to federal court, hoping for a ruling that would restore the feeding tube that had been removed by court order. On Monday, the ABC and NBC evening news shows led with more Schiavo.

At CBS, anchor Bob Schieffer zigged where the others zagged. He was on the phone with an eyewitness to the Red Lake Indian Reservation high-school massacre in northern Minnesota. We heard Schieffer, like the veteran newsmen he is, getting the basic facts—then breaking the news that the student had shot and killed his grandfather before arriving on campus, and that he had ended his rampage by killing himself.

Less than three weeks after Dan Rather's departure from the anchor chair, Schieffer has already markedly revamped the job description, showcasing a more inquisitive, interactive style than his predecessor or his competitors.

The Red Lake interview was just the most vivid example of *CBS Evening News*' change under Schieffer's guidance. On a daily basis, we see other, subtler tweaks. This anchor approaches his role more as a viewer's representative than as a reporter's leader; Schieffer's emphasis is more on summing up a story than on introducing it.

Specifically, Schieffer's *CBS Evening News* actually makes constructive use of the live sign-off that often ends a correspondent's taped report. In the TV news business, the live sign-off tends to be just an ornamental transition, but Schieffer makes it a valuable access point, posing follow-up questions to reporters on a couple of

BOB SCHIEFFER SHOWCASES A MORE INQUISITIVE, INTERACTIVE STYLE THAN HIS PREDECESSOR OR HIS COMPETITORS.

BY THE NUMBERS: SCHIEFFER AND RATHER

FIRST EIGHT WEEKDAYS UNDER BOB SCHIEFFER

	ABC	CBS	NBC
Number of Taped Packages...			
With No Live Interaction	51	35	56
With Live Follow-up Q&A	0	12	0
Live Reporter Stand-ups	2	6	2
Interviews	3	5	0

FINAL EIGHT WEEKDAYS UNDER DAN RATHER

	ABC	CBS	NBC
Number of Taped Packages...			
With No Live Interaction	49	47	58
With Live Follow-up Q&A	2	0	0
Live Reporter Stand-ups	2	5	2
Interviews	6	1	0

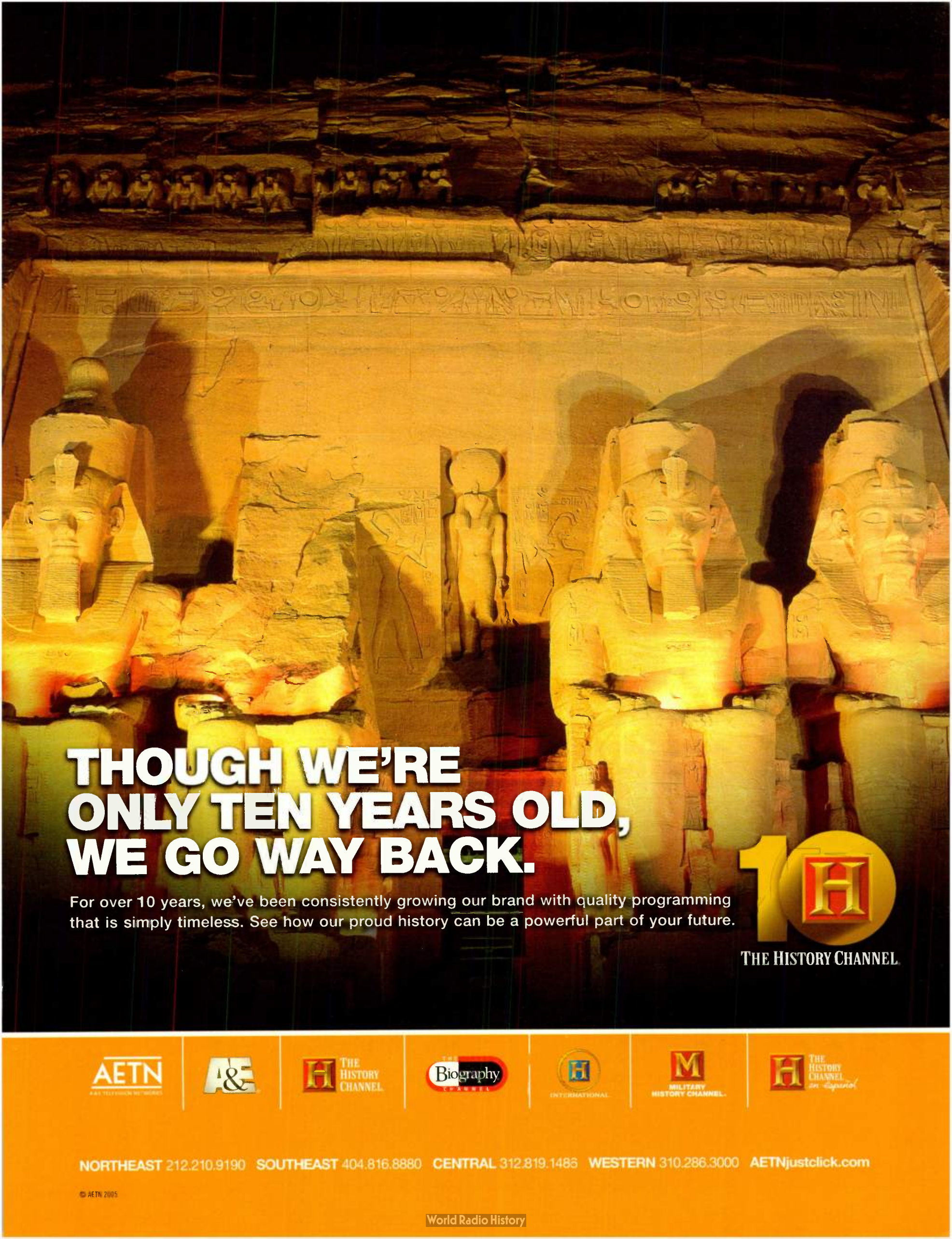
SOURCE: The Tyndall Report

matter of the *60 Minutes* Texas National Guard story that had aired only weeks before, none of the tarnish was attached to his debate performance.

Schieffer can capitalize on that success now: By positioning himself as a straight-talking, people's tribune, this son of Fort Worth may become the antidote for the reputation of CBS News as an organ of the East Coast liberal elite in a way that fellow Texan Rather could not manage to do, despite those trademark homespun "Danisms."

Nevertheless, let us be clear that these are changes in style, not in journalism itself. The questions that Schieffer asks out loud are the same routine ones every anchor and executive producer asks of correspondents before a story is filed. What *CBS Evening News* is doing is showing that Q&A in action, rather than simply weaving its results into the on-air report.

So Schieffer makes more of the anchor's behind-the-scenes job visible for all to see. How modish is that? At age 68, our oldest rookie news anchor is not only interactive, but transparent, too. ■



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'Insider' Drops Out

Seemingly unstoppable, Pat O'Brien seeks help for alcohol problem **By Deborah Starr Seibel**

As co-host of syndicated entertainment-news show *The Insider*, Pat O'Brien often has been called on to report about

troubled celebrities' "trips" to rehab and the mortifying incidents that often precede such visits. Now O'Brien, 57,

has himself become fodder for that sort of coverage. A statement he issued on March 20 said, "I have had a problem

with alcohol. I have decided to take action by checking myself into an intensive recovery program."

That was just the beginning of a weeklong free-for-all online and in gossip columns as speculation flew about what might have precipitated the sudden announcement. Lewd voicemails purportedly left by O'Brien circulated on the Internet, and the *New York Post* reported the possible existence of an embarrassing photograph.

It isn't clear when O'Brien will resume his duties for the Paramount Domestic Television spinoff of *Entertainment Tonight* that is this season's highest-rated freshman in syndication. "We support Pat's decision to seek treatment and look forward to welcoming him back on the air at the appropriate time," says a Paramount spokesman. O'Brien's Manhattan-based co-host, Lara Spencer, is anchoring the show solo.

When the former CBS Sports reporter and co-host of *Access Hollywood* launched *The Insider* last fall, he spoke to *B&C* about the stress of his new job. He noted that Mike Wallace of *60 Minutes* had advised him, "You're screwed when you're known as 'The Insider.'" O'Brien agreed that the designation presented a challenge: "There is a lot of pressure to get the right interview at the right time."

Colleagues said that O'Brien threw himself into the challenge. "Pat has been driving it pretty hard," Linda Bell Blue,

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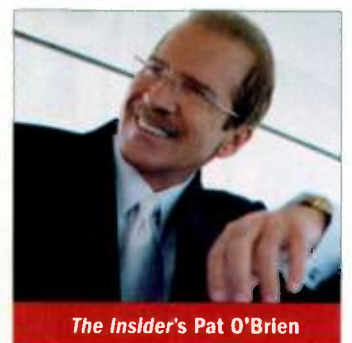
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The Insider's Pat O'Brien

ET and *The Insider*'s executive producer, said at the time. "But he sleeps well on planes."

O'Brien insisted that he thrived on the pace. "Look, we're not curing cancer. We're reporting on celebrities," he said. "I can walk home every night, look in the mirror and say, 'I did a great job today.' I didn't make a fool of myself or anybody else."

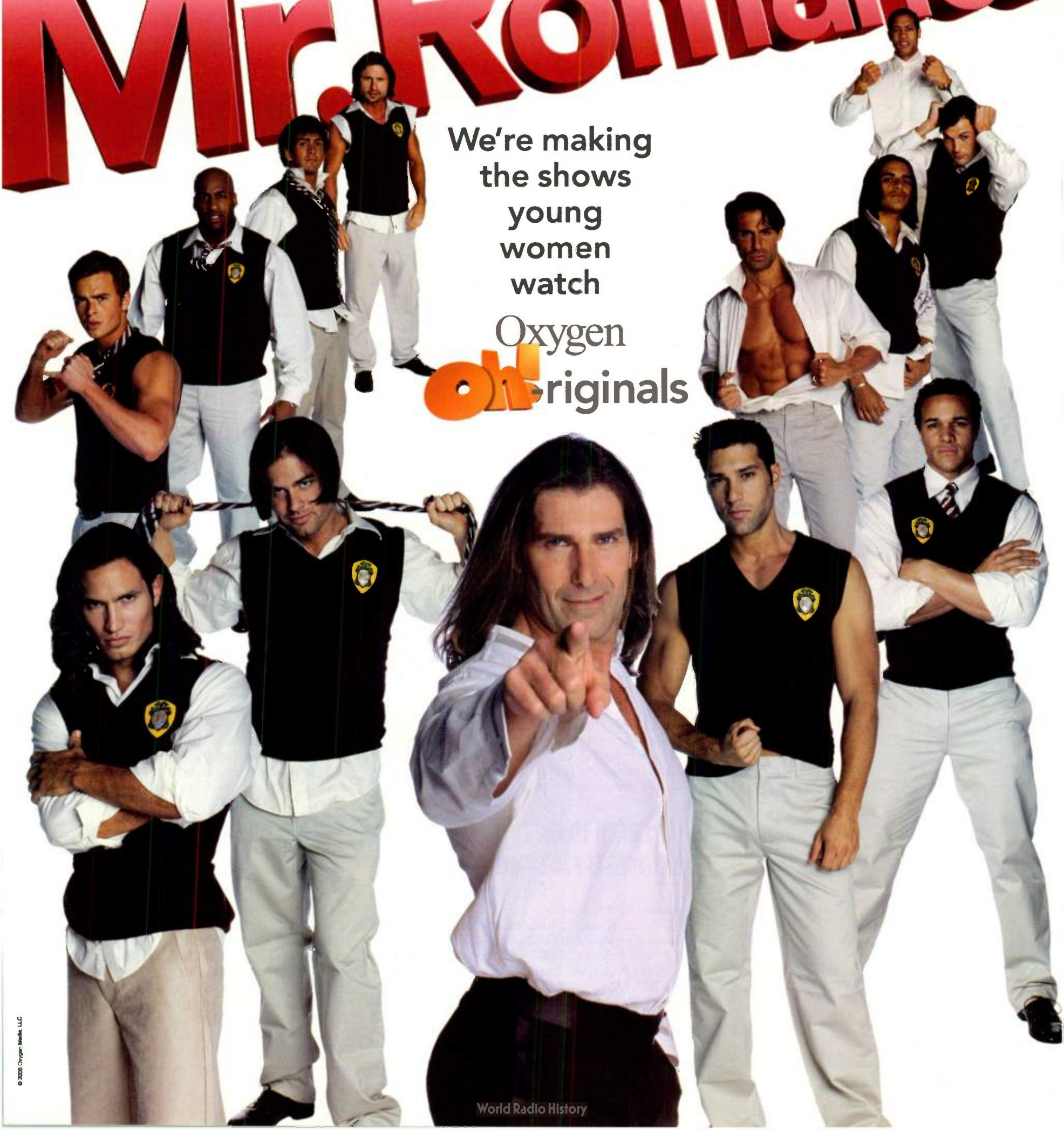
The question now is, given the fact O'Brien seems to have behaved foolishly away from the set, what impact that will have on *The Insider*'s prospects. ■

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BRANDED
JOURNALISM
TO A
WHOLE
NEW LEVEL

BY JOE MANDESE

"Now... News from the Net, with high-tech hearing aids for infants. Hi, I'm Kate Brookes with News Break."

So begins a 30-second commercial break that, at first glance, looks like so many network news updates. "It's estimated around three of every 1,000 newborns are born with hearing loss," reports Brookes. "Now, for the first time ever, there's a hearing aid especially designed to meet the needs of infants." But she doesn't work for a network, despite the official-looking logo and anchor backdrop. She is hawked hearing aids, in this case for the company that employs the "expert" being interviewed: Siemens Hearing Instruments.

The spot, bought by a public-relations company instead of an ad agency, is the latest twist in the morphing of news and public relations. As the media world assesses new ground rules, producer Medialink Worldwide says "branded journalism" is the best way to advertise in a splintered market. Instead of sending out video news releases in hopes that stations and cable networks will air them, PR firms are actually *creating the newscast*, then buying spots on networks the way a Madison Avenue firm would. If viewers were confused before, they'll certainly have a hard time discerning news updates from mini-infomercials now.

STRETCHING JOURNALISM

For years, PR firms have distributed VNRs and corporate B-roll footage, which is integrated and aired at the discretion of TV news producers. Medialink Worldwide is one of several firms proudly stretching the definition of journalism. Medialink Chairman/CEO Laurence Moskowitz defends VNRs as legitimate news releases as long as they are clearly branded. He says his firm's VNRs are not misleading.

Medialink's latest experiment is another spot that Moskowitz calls "a bona fide newscast"; it's scheduled to debut soon on national cable networks. Unlike pseudo-newscasts produced in the past by Medialink and its competitors, a new three-minute "newscast"

"IT'S BACK TO THE FUTURE. IT'S JUST LIKE THE OLD JOHN CAMERON SWAYZE NEWSCASTS FOR CAMEL CIGARETTES." LAURENCE MOSKOWITZ, MEDIALINK

features legitimate news.

"We can produce a 90-second newscast for the cost of catering a traditional 30-second spot—and we can turn it around in hours," Moskowitz boasts, estimating the price tag for a three-minute news vignette is \$15,000-\$25,000. The average cost of producing a national 30-second TV commercial is 10-20 times more.

Although he won't disclose the name of the "top-10 advertiser" sponsoring the three-minute newscast, he provides details: The company's logo will appear over



A "newsbreak" bought and paid for by Medialink being commercial for "Sit-N-Lift," a powered seat made by GM.

the shoulder of the show's news anchor, and its brand will be clearly identified during the segment. Medialink has bought time on cable networks for the vignette the way traditional ad agencies do. "It's back to the future," says Moskowitz. "It's just like the old John Cameron Swayze newscasts for Camel cigarettes," referring to the U.S. newscaster who gained fame for his "Camel News Caravan" segments.

For viewers, discerning real news from pitches has never been harder. Sometimes the paid "newscasts" are authentic reports sponsored by a client. Other times, they're corporate videos disguised as newscasts. Medialink has made buys for the latter on Rainbow Networks' AMC and Fuse channels, among others, and for General Motors Corp., Siemens AG and Philips. One of its competitors, News Broadcast Network (NBN), a New York-based company that distributes conventional VNRs and corporate B-rolls, buys remnant time on cable networks and on stations in small TV markets, as well as on radio stations.

The rewards can be enormous: Recently, NBN distributed a "Super Bowl" package to stations nation-

wide featuring replays of ads that ran during the game. The package included expert commentary from NFL execs, an ad reporter at *USA Today* and Ed Lubars, the chief creative officer of BBDO, the ad agency that created the most Super Bowl spots. NBN estimates that the VNR, which generally costs tens of thousands of dollars, generated 950 broadcasts reaching 74.5 million viewers, a number that approaches the 86 million viewers reached by the original Super Bowl telecast.

The advertisers sponsoring the VNR, including

News



h statistics on arthritic Americans. But it's actually a Motors.

Pizza Hut, Visa and Degree deodorant, got residual mileage, paid nothing to produce the spot, which was recycled from their own B-roll material, and paid only thousands of dollars to distribute it.

Critics say the most troubling aspect of the latest VNR product from Medialink—a paid ad spot—is that the news content is genuine but serves as a conduit for a brand or corporate mention. Moskowitz says Medialink is exploring a wide range of similar formats in what he calls “marketing public relations” and what other PR-industry insiders dub “secured placements.”

By secured, they mean that the media time was purchased and guaranteed to air unlike conventional VNR or B-roll footage. Moreover, Moskowitz says he is creating a new genre of television that blends news, PR and conventional Madison Avenue media-buying practices. In effect, he is competing with both Madison Avenue and the TV news industry, while blurring the lines between them.

In search of riches in a fast-changing environment, other makers of VNRs have followed. Buying time on cable networks and broadcast stations, they gain some control over their content and guarantee that corporate messages are aired. “They kind of look like and feel like news, but they’re not,” says Jeff Wurtz, SVP of sales and marketing at NBN, which is aggressively developing a paid-newscast model. Titles like “Consumer Report” and “American Scene” make it tough for many viewers to tell the difference between a PR message and a legitimate broadcast.

When NBN tried to make the segments look more like real newscasts, they were rejected by stations’ standards and practices departments. “You can’t make it look like straight editorial,” says Wurtz, “but the goal is to make it look as close as possible.”

GAO INVESTIGATIONS

The appearance of such indistinguishable content prompted investigations by Congress’ Government

Accountability Office, which concluded that federal agencies used taxpayer funds to produce TV news segments promoting Bush administration policies. Those were broadcast on hundreds of local news programs without disclosing the source. The GAO called them “covert propaganda,” but the White House recently instructed all agencies to ignore the GAO findings and continue to produce VNRs.

The confusion has forced news organizations to publicly delineate the two types of “news.” The Radio-Television News Directors Association is drafting new guidelines on VNRs, based in part on standards developed by Medialink. “Our principle is very basic, which is that you need to disclose the origin of material,” says RTNDA President Barbara Cochran.

“Sponsored content should be labeled as such,” says Edward Wasserman, Knight Professor of Journalism Ethics, Washington and Lee University. “In the past, that wasn’t a problem, because it was clear to reasonable viewers when a show ended and the advertising began. But [secured VNRs] are deliberately adopting forms of what would be the broadcast equivalent of editorial content to conceal the act of sponsorship, which is a fundamentally deceptive technique.”

Wurtz says NBN’s programs are clearly identified at the end of their segment, usually with a reference to a corporate Web site. “You would watch it because it doesn’t look like a commercial or an infomercial. It’s like a genuine news feed, but there’s a disclosure at the end that it’s a paid piece. It says go to www.tylenol.com or www.ford.com.”

In Washington last week, two media-reform groups, Free Press and the Center for Media and Democracy filed complaints urging the Federal Communications Commission to police the airwaves for government-sponsored news reports that don’t identify their source.

“Not labeling fake news produced by the government or corporations constitutes news fraud, plagiarism, and violates the most basic ethical standards of journalism,” says John Stauber, executive director of the Center for Media and Democracy. “Fortunately,

“NOT LABELING FAKE NEWS PRODUCED BY THE GOVERNMENT OR CORPORATIONS CONSTITUTES NEWS FRAUD, PLAGIARISM, AND VIOLATES THE MOST BASIC ETHICAL STANDARDS OF JOURNALISM.” JOHN STAUBER, CENTER FOR MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY

there is a simple solution for TV news producers: Do not use VNRs or, if you do, label them on-air showing who provided and paid for them.”

A TV ad sales executive at a cable network was surprised to learn, after being contacted by *B&C*, that the network had sold time for several VNRs. The executive says the network has revised its policies and requires VNR distributors to superimpose an explicit statement identifying the sponsor.

The criticism doesn’t seem to be hurting business.

COST COMPARISON

	TV COMMERCIAL*	“SECURED” VNR
Production	\$372,000	\$15,000-\$25,000
Media purchase	\$5 million-\$20 million	\$10,000-\$50,000

*Average for national 30-second spot in 2003

SOURCES: American Association of Advertising Agencies’ 2004 Television Production Cost Survey; *B&C* analysis of data from Nielsen Monitor-Plus; industry estimates

VNRs are “still a relatively small part of our business, but it’s growing fast,” says Wurtz. “Currently, if we do six VNRs a week, one of them is going to have some element of secured placement in it. A year ago, it would have been one in 12.”

Secured VNR buys are much more cost-effective than conventional ad buys. There are also built-in controls that unpaid PR tactics lack, including the ability to target specific demographics and to conduct a post-buy analysis of audience delivery.

Says NBN’s Wurtz. “You can go on DirecTV and Dish Network and reach 400,000, 500,000, or 600,000 people in one buy. Or you can go on something like the *Today* show in the top 10 markets, which will reach 2.5 million to 3 million people. You may want to hit a certain demo or income level that watches *Judge Judy* or *Judge Brown* that is watching at mid morning.”

That tactic, he says, is especially important when trying to target certain consumers—especially younger demos—on radio. “We’ve been doing a lot of secured placements on radio for clinical trials of prescription drugs, or remedies for seasonal allergies.”

Since music-oriented radio stations run very little news content, Wurtz says, the 60-second VNR spots are “striking.”

Moskowitz sees the distinctions between ad agencies and PR companies fading fast. Ad agencies spend millions producing commercials, buying media time or negotiating branded content deals; their PR counterparts are accomplishing the same for pennies on the marketing dollar.

NEW NEWS SOURCE

Meanwhile, unsecured VNRs are becoming a popular source of news content for TV news producers stretched for resources. A survey released last week by News Generation Inc. found that 77% of radio news directors, reporters and assignment editors in the top 50 markets said they have had to take on extra work due to layoffs or consolidations in the last year. Respondents said the effect has been less time to prepare news reports.

NBN’s Wurtz notes that even some network news organizations that claim not to air VNRs occasionally do so when they contain exclusive footage they want. “NBC News will tell you they don’t use VNRs, but when we distributed a VNR for the National Historical Register that included footage of the massive floods going through the Mississippi and Missouri valleys,” he recalls, “I got home that night and turned on *Brokaw* and our graphic was on behind him.”

He notes, however, that NBC News vetted the footage and incorporated it as part of its own newscast of an organic news event. Other TV news producers may not be as sophisticated about the source of VNRs, and recent developments in the business may blur the lines even more.

Recently, TheNewsMarket.com, a Web-based distributor of VNRs and corporate B-roll, launched Web product NewsBluntly.com, a blog that mimics the style of news-industry blogs and other community news sites. The site, which posts articles and discussion about the TV-news business, is designed to generate traffic from producers. It also offers free links to B-roll footage supplied courtesy of TheNewsMarket. ■



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World Radio History

The Cast (In Order of Appearance)

Aspect Ratios: Native 16:9 and 4:3	As Itself
Frame Rates: 60i, 30p, and 24p	As Itself
3 Progressive Scan CCDs	As Itself
Customizable Cine Settings	As Itself
Canon Interchangeable Lens System	As Itself
20x Professional Fluorite Lens	As Itself
Optical Image Stabilizer	As Itself
SMPTE Time Code	As Itself
Built-In XLR Audio Inputs	As Itself
Four Channel Independent Audio Control	As Itself
SMPTE Color Bars With Tone	As Itself
Program Auto Exposure Modes	As Itself
Zebra Pattern	As Itself
Skin Detail Adjustment	As Itself
3 Custom Presets	As Itself
Multifunction Color LCD Viewfinder	As Itself
BNC Video Terminal	As Itself
Rugged, Magnesium Alloy Frame	As Itself

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Avid Reaches the Pinnacle

Deal creates majority stake in global editing market

By Ken Kerschbaumer

Avid's estimated \$462 million acquisition of Pinnacle Systems last week created one of the three largest broadcast-equipment suppliers worldwide. It also grabbed a majority stake in the global consumer-level editing market.

The purchase rounds out Avid's portfolio, adding products like Pinnacle's MediaStream play-to-air server, which complements Avid's content-creation servers, and the DekoCast character generator to its inventory. All fit nicely into Avid's newsroom and editing systems.

"Leveraging those products will increase the efficiency of our sales," says David Krall, Avid Technology president/CEO. While there is some overlap in the Pinnacle/Avid product line, Krall says, 90% of Pinnacle's \$350 million yearly revenues come from noncompeting products. (Two-thirds of that revenue comes from the consumer side. Projected annual revenue for the new combined company is more than \$1 billion.)

Some integration work has already been done. Pinnacle, for example, will demonstrate the integration of its Vortex editing system with the iNews newsroom system at NAB. (The two companies will continue to compete until the deal is sealed, sometime in the second or third quarter.) Says Dave Schleifer, Avid VP broadcast and work groups, "There's a chance to deliver a lot more efficiency to users by bringing different functions, like editing and graphics, closer together."

LONG-TERM CONSUMER STRATEGY

The sale of Pinnacle's broadcast division has been anticipated for nearly a year. But Avid's announcement surprised most in the industry, because it purchased the whole company—not just a division.

"We see the consumer side as a growing, vibrant community," says Krall. "There are more ways to capture video electronically, whether it's a cell-phone, digital still camera or low-cost HDV camcorder."

By acquiring the consumer side of Pinnacle's business—its Studio video-editing application holds a 51% market share globally—Avid becomes an immediate player in a global market valued at \$500 million to \$600 million worldwide. But there was a more important long-term reason for the move: protecting Avid's professional business.

One of the reasons Avid has established a dominant position in professional non-linear editing (NLE) is that older NLE operators did not grow up with access to an NLE system. In the past 10 years, high school and college students have had their first editing experiences using systems from Apple, Pinnacle and Adobe, among others. That means new and future editors already have a preference for working with a non-Avid system. The concern was that future editors would pass on Avid products.

"As the industry evolves, it's hard to have a professional business without connecting to the early stages of people first learning the editing craft," says Krall. "Long term, this will cement our position in content creation at both the consumer and professional level."

Bob Wilson, president of Modulus Video and a former Pinnacle executive, says buying the company is a smart move on Avid's part. "It's something they need to do. Their biggest competitor is Apple, and Apple's strength

is the consumer or prosumer platform," he says. "The entire deal is as much about leveraging those 10 million seats [a seat is a computer outfitted with the software] as anything else."

MARKET IMPACT

But the move by Avid, which brings one of its main editing competitors into the fold, has one manufacturer wondering about market impact.



David Krall

"We see the consumer side as a growing, vibrant community."

DAVID KRALL, AVID TECHNOLOGY

"We're concerned this could limit customer choice when it comes to editing systems," says Jeff Rosica, VP for strategic marketing and business development for Grass Valley, a broadcast-electronics maker. "There's a real fear about this leading to a more closed or proprietary approach by Avid."

Krall counters that consolidation in the market already exists. Sony, for example, purchased the Vegas NLE from Sonic Foundry. "The best place for NLE technology to exist is within a more diversified business," he says. "What we're doing is fairly consistent with what is happening in the industry today."

Ajay Chopra, Pinnacle Systems COO, adds that the deal simply reflects a drive by vendors to fulfill customer needs for integrated systems. "If you're putting together end-to-end production tools like editing, graphics, playback and newsroom control, the company that integrates those best will have a market advantage," he says.

Both Avid and Pinnacle are known for doing facility-wide deals with broadcasters that cover editing, server and other equipment. Joe Truncale, chief engineer for NY1 News, uses equipment from both. He says he is concerned with how Avid would support Pinnacle's Vortex editing system.

"The one positive is we do have a relationship with Avid," Truncale says, "and it's been a successful one."

The deal now awaits approval by the SEC. Under the terms of the agreement, Pinnacle shareholders will receive 0.0869 shares of Avid stock and \$1 in cash for each Pinnacle share.

At closing, it is expected that Avid will issue approximately 6.2 million shares and pay \$71.3 million in cash, for a total estimated value of \$462 million. ■

TECH Q&A

Sport Smarts

Fox taps mobile apps

John Smelzer, Fox Sports Interactive Media VP, business development, is one busy guy. He not only keeps track of interactive developments but also gets to negotiate deals. Smelzer discussed a recent deal, which brought Fox College Sports to SmartVideo's mobile service, with B&C's Ken Kerschbaumer.

What is the SmartVideo service?

SmartVideo is geared to smart phones, which are basically phones with computer operating systems like Windows and Symbian. Any phone that has one of those two systems can access the product. At its core, it uses Internet Protocol [IP] to deliver video from a server in Atlanta. It streams at 15 frames per second, and it's effectively an Internet-video experience on your mobile phone.

Many TV stations and networks don't have someone monitoring these technologies. What's your advice on approaching these technologies?

It's tough because you want to be aggressive, anticipate the new technologies, and protect and honor your existing and core business. We're very careful with rights to highlights and games. A lot of people read press releases from us and misunderstand what we do. We don't distribute live games or highlight packages because, as a general rule, we don't have those rights. So we're distributing news, analysis, interviews, press conferences and the editorial coverage of the games, but not the games themselves.

In the UK, clips of soccer goals are sent within two minutes after they happen.

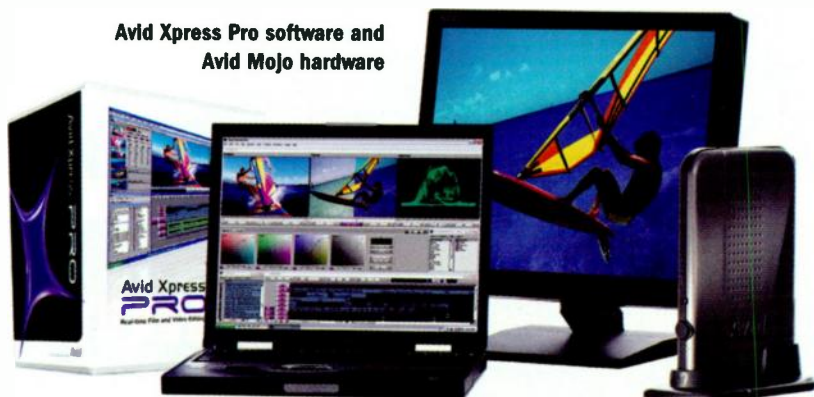
When will U.S. sports leagues be comfortable with that instant coverage?

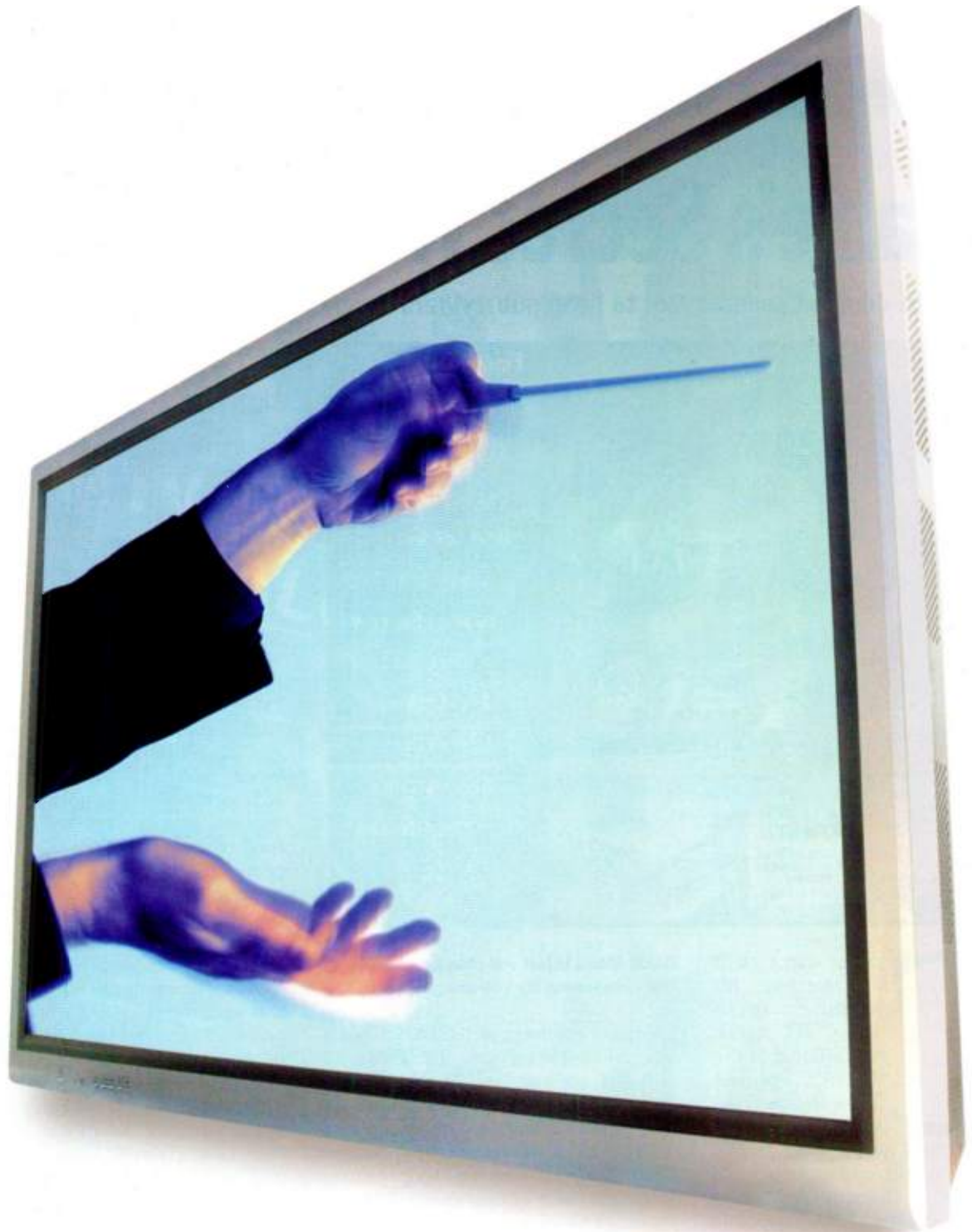
The leagues and broadcasters are discussing that. At the end of the day, the fans will demand it. There will be an economic model to support it. Major players will have to find equitable ways to do these deals.

Are rights issues clearer in college sports?

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based version of the most popular news edit system in the market, the NewsEdit SC system provides speed, ease of use, and tight integration with a wide range of newsroom computer systems.



Pinnacle Vortex will be iNews-compatible.



SPECIAL REPORT: PART 1/NEWSROOM OPERATIONS

Everybody Needs a Good Editor Digital systems help pros go with the flow

Digital newsrooms are only as good as their editing tools. So it is not surprising NAB will feature a number of new options for the editor

and multitasking journalist. One big name keeping its plans a secret is Apple, which has found a niche in field editing. Information about the

company's new products and features is as highly guarded as the Hope diamond, but all will become clear on April 17 at its press conference. The

following is a look at some of the editing highlights on the show floor.

AVID

When it comes to newsroom integration, it is tough to top Avid, which can closely align its editing systems with its newsroom systems. Each year, the two become a little more in sync, and this year is no exception. Dave Schleifer, Avid VP, broadcast and work groups, says the idea is to speed up the steps that lead to, and result from, the editing process.

"Tighter integration reduces errors and frees up time for the creative part of the process," he says. For example, station promotion departments, which typically have to wait to gain access to news material, will be able to complete promos without having to wait. Also, look for Avid to roll out editing functionality for material compressed using MPEG Long Group Of Pictures (LongGOP), a format much more efficient than other compression standards.

GRASS VALLEY

Grass Valley will introduce a prototype HD editing system it says will streamline the news-production process and save money. The new HD editing system leverages a highly flexible Grass Valley software-based architecture to provide the ability to import/export MXF files and distribute LongGOP files. It also offers several scalable storage options and a software-based design that combines cuts-only edit bay capabilities, traditional A/B-roll suite transition functions, and shared-storage and network-connectivity options.

PINNACLE

The next revision for the Vortex nonlinear news-editing system will be delivered in June. New features include Avid iNews support and other incremental changes, such as the ability to use the shuttle knob on a tape deck to control the on-screen timeline. Also look for Liquid system (version 6.1) at the show. It will be able to handle multi-stream HD and SD editing, format-independent FX, as well as a choice of inputs and outputs, including HD-SDI and HDV.—K.K.

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Winners Announcement

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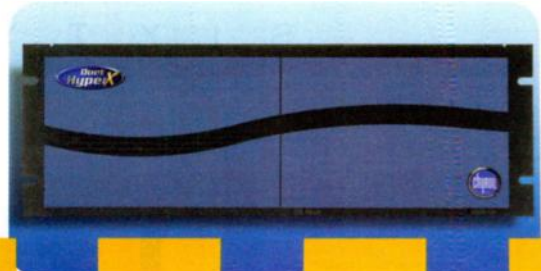
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Chyron's new Duet lineup will make realtime animations easier.



SPECIAL REPORT: PART 1/NEWSROOM OPERATIONS

NAB Looks Good for Graphics Fanatics Firms vie to improve on-air appearance

T

he makers of broadcast-quality graphic systems continue to add HD functionality, creating graphic devices that

can handle both SD and HD work. But the NAB show will also feature new systems that make it easier to share graph-

ics and handle scrawls.

CHYRON

The Duet character generator

will be bolstered with new features that improve workflow and throughput. For example, Chyron's Lyric creation and playout software is now standard, making 3D graphics and real-time animations easier. (Duet units range from \$12,000 to \$39,000). Also new is DynaCrawl (\$18,000), giving ticker operators the ability to insert up to four news elements quickly. DynaCrawl includes 3D animation capability for tickers.

LEITCH

Leitch's booth will feature graphic systems from the recently acquired Inscriber. Visitors can check out IncaStation, combining logo, multiple real-time data crawls and DVE capability. HD shoppers will want to check out IncaRTX HD, a real-time 2D/3D graphic, video and clip platform. It has multilayer, multiobject and multichannel capabilities in HD, an industry first. Also on display is Inca Studio HD, providing advanced HD multifunctionality.

PINNACLE SYSTEMS

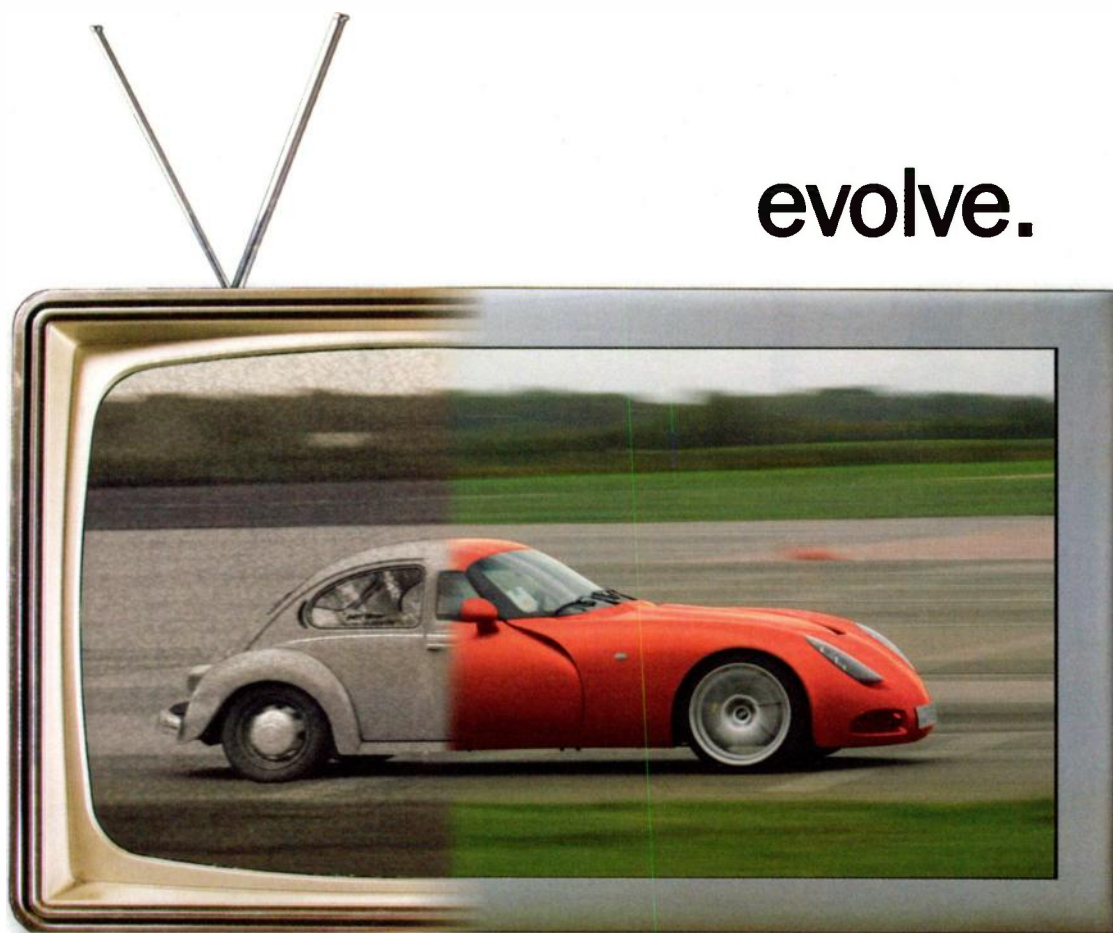
Pinnacle Systems rolls out two new dual-format Deko real-time graphic systems. Both the Deko 1000 (starts at \$29,000) and Deko 3000 (\$52,500) give users the ability to switch between native SD and native HD for graphics processing and output. Also, a software update is expected for an existing product, the Pinnacle Deko version 4.

VERTIGOXMEDIA

Those looking for graphics rendering and playback gear should check out Vertigoxmedia for its VertigoXG family of systems. Single- or dual-channel SD or HD capabilities are available to help automate promos and brand channels. VertigoXG systems combine hardware and software to allow for drag-and-drop functionality.

VIZRT

VizRT's HD/SD 3D character generator adds features and capabilities, and there is a new MOS option that supports all major newsroom systems and allows journalists to add graphic elements into templates. Also, it will offer new mapping capabilities, a result of VizRT's acquisition of Curious Software.—K.K.



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N I E L S E N M A R C H 1 4 - 2 0 R A T I N G S

THE PRIME TIME RACE
Top 10 Basic Cable Shows

March 14-20

Total Households (in millions)

PROGRAM	DATE	NET	HHS
1. Comedy Central Roast	3/20	COM	4.0
2. Law & Order 9p	3/15	TNT	3.5
3. WWE Raw 10p	3/14	SPIK	3.4
4. My: The Scooby-Doo Movie	3/19	NICK	3.3
4. SpongeBob SqrPants 9:30a	3/20	NICK	3.3
4. WWE Raw 9p	3/14	SPIK	3.3
7. SpongeBob SquarePants 9:30a	3/19	NICK	3.2
8. Fairly OddParents 10a	3/20	NICK	3.1
8. SpongeBob SquarePants 9a	3/20	NICK	3.1
8. My: The Scooby-Doo Movie	3/18	NICK	3.1
8. Fairly OddParents 10a	3/19	NICK	3.1
8. Fairly OddParents 10:30a	3/19	NICK	3.1
8. SpongeBob SquarePants 9:30a	3/19	NICK	3.1

Adults 18-49 (in millions)

PROGRAM	DATE	NET	18-49
1. Comedy Central Roast	3/20	COM	4.2
2. WWE Raw 10p	3/14	SPIK	2.5
3. The Shield	3/15	F/X	2.3
3. WWE Raw 9p	3/14	SPIK	2.3
5. CSI 8p	3/14	SPIK	2.1
5. Blue Collar Comedy Tour 2	3/20	COM	2.1
7. My: Legally Blonde	3/18	TBS	2.0
7. My: Legally Blonde	3/19	TBS	2.0
7. My: Legally Blonde	3/20	TBS	2.0
7. American Chopper	3/14	DISC	2.0

SOURCE: Turner Entertainment Research, Nielsen Media Research

Broadcast Networks

March 14-20

Total Households (in millions)

	WEEK	STD
1. CBS	8.4	9.1
2. NBC	7.0	7.4
3. FOX	6.6	6.7
4. ABC	6.0	7.3
5. UPN	2.4	2.5
6. WB	2.0	2.5
7. PAX	0.5	0.5

Adults 18-49 (in millions)

	WEEK	STD
1. FOX	5.4	5.3
2. CBS	5.3	5.2
3. NBC	4.2	4.8
4. ABC	3.8	5.0
5. UPN	1.7	1.8
6. WB	1.4	1.8
7. PAX	0.2	0.2

Top 10 Broadcast Shows

Total Households (in millions)

	WEEK	
1. American Idol Tue	FOX	17.8
2. American Idol Wed	FOX	16.6
3. Cold Case	CBS	12.0
4. Survivor: Palau	CBS	11.9
5. House	FOX	11.6
6. 60 Minutes	CBS	11.2
7. Medium	NBC	11.0
7. CSI: Miami	CBS	11.0
9. Everybody Loves Raymond	CBS	10.7
10. Two and a Half Men	CBS	10.5

Adults 18-49 (in millions)

	WEEK	
1. American Idol Tue	FOX	14.9
2. American Idol Wed	FOX	14.0
3. Survivor: Palau	CBS	9.0
4. House	FOX	8.8
5. The Simple Life	FOX	7.6
6. Medium	NBC	7.4
7. Desperate Housewives	ABC	6.7
8. The Apprentice	NBC	6.6
9. The Amazing Race	CBS	6.5
10. 24	FOX	6.4

SOURCE: Nielsen Media Research

	abc	cbs	nbc	fox	pax	upn	wb
Week 26	5.3/8	8.5/13	8.1/12	6.9/10	0.4/1	2.0/3	2.5/4
8:00	52. Extreme Makeover Home Ed: How'd They Do That? 5.7/9	44. Still Standing 6.0/9	41. Fear Factor 6.2/10	34. Nanny 911 6.6/10	126. America's Funniest Home Videos 0.5/1	107. One on One 1.9/3	94. 7th Heaven 2.7/4
8:30		55. Listen Up 5.6/8				105. Cuts 2.0/3	
9:00	62. Extreme Makeover 5.0/7	9. Everybody Lvs Raymnd 9.8/14	16. Las Vegas 8.0/12	25. 24 7.2/11	132. Mary Higgins Clark Mystery Movie—He Sees You When You're Sleeping 0.4/1	104. Friends 2.1/3	102. Summerland 2.2/3
9:30		10. Two and a Half Men 9.6/14				105. Half and Half 2.0/3	
10:00	60. Supernanny 5.2/8	7. CSI: Miami 10.0/16	7. Medium 10.0/16				
10:30							
MONDAY							
	5.8/9	7.5/12	4.9/8	13.4/21	0.2/1	1.5/2	2.0/3
8:00	74. My Wife and Kids 4.3/7	19. NCIS 7.7/12	89. Will & Grace 3.1/5	1. American Idol 16.2/25	136. Young Blades 0.3/1	113. All of Us 1.6/3	100. Gilmore Girls 2.4/4
8:30	75. George Lopez 4.2/6		89. Will & Grace 3.1/5			109. Eve 1.7/3	
9:00	42. According to Jim 6.1/9	21. The Amazing Race 7.6/12	76. Scrubs 4.1/6	5. House 10.6/16	139. Lie Detector 0.2/1	117. Veronica Mars 1.4/2	109. Starlet 1.7/3
9:30	42. According to Jim 6.1/9		82. Committed 3.5/5				
10:00	29. Blind Justice 7.0/12	25. Judging Amy 7.2/12	19. Law & Order: Special Victims Unit 7.7/13		139. Diagnosis Murder 0.2/1		
10:30							
TUESDAY							
	5.6/9	8.2/13	6.3/10	8.4/13	0.5/1	2.6/4	1.3/2
8:00	44. Lost 6.0/9	4. Survivor: Palau 10.8/17	77. American Dreams 4.0/6	67. That '70s Show 4.8/8	126. Doc 0.5/1	82. America's Next Top Model 3.5/6	108. Smallville 1.8/3
8:30				47. That '70s Show 5.9/9			
9:00	56. Alias 5.5/8	31. King of Queens 6.9/10	37. The West Wing 6.5/10	2. American Idol 15.1/23	126. Sue Thomas, F.B. Eye 0.5/1	113. Kevin Hill 1.6/2	123. Jack & Bobby 0.8/1
9:30		34. Yes, Dear 6.6/10		14. The Simple Life 8.1/12			
10:00	57. Wife Swap 5.4/9	31. CSI: NY 6.9/12	12. Law & Order 8.3/14		132. Diagnosis Murder 0.4/1		
10:30							
WEDNESDAY							
	5.3/9	6.5/11	6.9/11	3.8/6	0.7/1	3.3/5	2.1/3
8:00	62. Jake in Progress 5.0/8	52. NCAA Basketball Championships 5.7/10	47. Will & Grace 5.9/10	65. The O.C. 4.9/8	125. America's Funniest Home Videos 0.6/1	91. Jeff Foxworthy 2.9/5	
8:30	69. Jake in Progress 4.7/8		47. Will & Grace 5.9/9			87. WWE Smackdown! 3.3/5	
9:00	67. Jake in Progress 4.8/8		14. The Apprentice 8.1/13	94. Point Pleasant 2.7/4		120. Starlet 1.3/2	
9:30	69. Jake in Progress 4.7/7	39. NCAA Basketball Championships 6.3/11	34. ER 6.6/12		124. Diagnosis Murder 0.7/1		
10:00	39. Primetime Live 6.3/11						
10:30							
THURSDAY							
	4.1/7	6.4/11	7.0/12	2.6/5	0.4/1	1.3/2	1.6/3
8:00	80. 8 Simple Rules 3.7/7	51. NCAA Basketball Championships 5.8/11	25. Dateline NBC 7.2/13	99. Bernie Mac 2.6/5	126. America's Most Talented Kids 0.5/1	122. Enterprise 1.2/2	120. What I Like About You 1.3/2
8:30	79. 8 Simple Rules 3.8/7			93. Bernie Mac 2.8/5			117. What I Like About You 1.4/2
9:00	80. Hope & Faith 3.7/6		47. Medical Investigation 5.9/10	100. That '70s Show 2.4/4		115. America's Next Top Model 1.5/3	102. Reba 2.2/4
9:30	84. Less Than Perfect 3.4/6	44. NCAA Basketball Championships 6.0/11	18. Law & Order: Trial by Jury 7.9/14	94. That '70s Show 2.7/5	132. MGM Night at the Movies—Harry and Son 0.4/1		109. Blue Collar TV 1.7/3
10:00	61. 20/20 5.1/9						
10:30							
FRIDAY							
	4.6/8	6.9/13	5.0/9	4.5/8	0.2/1		
8:00			91. LAX 2.9/5	77. Cops 4.0/7			
8:30				65. Cops 4.9/9	136. Universal Family Movie—The Big Fix 0.3/1		
9:00	86. ABC Special Presentation—The Ten Commandments 4.5/8	25. NCAA Basketball Championships 7.2/13	57. Law & Order: Special Victims Unit 5.4/10	71. America's Most Wanted: America Fights Back 4.6/8			
9:30			37. Law & Order: Criminal Intent 6.5/12		141. Faith Under Fire 0.1/1		
10:00							
10:30							
SATURDAY							
	7.2/11	9.3/15	6.5/10	3.4/5	0.4/1		1.5/2
7:00	57. America's Funniest Home Videos 5.4/9	13. NCAA Chmpnships 8.2/16	52. Dateline NBC 5.7/10	94. King of the Hill 2.7/5	126. America's Most Talented Kids 0.5/1		117. Charmed 1.4/2
7:30		6. 60 Minutes 10.2/17		88. Malcolm in the Middle 3.2/5			
8:00	29. Extreme Makeover: Home Edition 7.0/11		72. The Contender 4.5/7	62. The Simpsons 5.0/8	136. Young Blades 0.3/1		109. Charmed 1.7/3
8:30		3. Cold Case 11.0/17		84. Arrested Development 3.4/5			
9:00	11. Desperate Housewives 8.7/13		16. Law & Order: Criminal Intent 8.0/12	84. The Simpsons 3.4/5	126. Sue Thomas, F.B. Eye 0.5/1		115. Steve Harvey Big Time 1.5/2
9:30		24. CBS Sunday Movie—Spring Break Shark Attack 7.4/12		94. The Sketch Show 2.7/4			
10:00	23. Boston Legal 7.5/12		21. Crossing Jordan 7.6/13		132. Diagnosis Murder 0.4/1		
10:30							
SUNDAY							
Averages							
Week	5.5/9	7.7/13	6.4/10	6.0/10	0.4/1	2.2/3	1.8/3
S-T-D	6.7/11	8.3/13	6.7/11	6.1/10	0.4/1	2.3/4	2.3/4

Tan tint indicates winner of time slot

KEY: Each box in grid shows rank, program, total-household rating/share • Blue bar shows total-household rating/share for the day • Top 10 shows of the week are numbered in red • TV universe estimated at 109.6 million households; one rating point is equal to 1,096,000 U.S. TV homes • Tan tint is winner of time slot • (NR)=Not Ranked; rating/share estimated • *Premiere • Programs less than 15 minutes in length not shown • S-T-D = Season to date SOURCES: Nielsen Media Research, CBS Research • Compiled By Kenneth Ray



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MAPPING THE TECHNICAL FUTURE ALONG THE IT ROUTE

NETWORK EMBRACES COMPUTER METHODOLOGIES TO OPTIMIZE BROADCAST CHAIN

Over the past five years, PBS has undergone a significant transformation in how it thinks about technology. The public broadcaster has always needed to be careful in balancing the requirements of its public service mission against a limited budget. But faced with a large investment in digital television and continued uncertainty over federal funding, PBS has taken an innovative approach in exploiting technology from the Information Technology (IT) market to create new cost efficiencies and operational improvements in its broadcast plant.

Currently, PBS is involved in several major technology initiatives. One is rolling out ACE, a new multi-channel broadcast system that will allow participating member stations to take advantage of modular technology and remote monitoring capabilities from PBS headquarters in Alexandria, Va. Another is developing NGIS, the Next Generation Interconnection System, a new distribution system that will replace traditional program feed recording with faster-than-real-time file transfers. And PBS is currently readying a new Network Operations Center (NOC) in Springfield, VA, that will begin broadcasting in November 2005.

Such IT-based, data-centric environments come with a long list of requirements that traditional broadcast vendors have sometimes been slow to address. Meeting PBS' needs for the IT-driven broadcast future required a change in corporate mindset from some manufacturers, says Ed Caleca, PBS Senior Vice President, Technology, Distribution and Operations.

"You go back eight, nine or 10 years, our strategic suppliers and vendors were almost lethargic," he says. "They had a fixed view of how we operate in the broadcast space. And in effect, they were incrementally making changes to a legacy architecture that had pretty much been in place for many years. They were doing

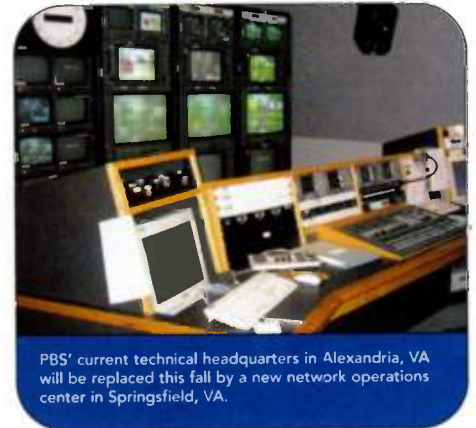
add-ons. There was no real breakthrough in how they approached what needed to get done."

The advent of digital television (DTV) in the late '90s changed all that, says Caleca. After years of uncertainty over DTV formats and transmission standards, stations finally began to invest in new transmission equipment to launch both HDTV and standard-definition multicasting. As the number of DTV stations grew quickly, vendors snapped to attention.

"They stood up and took notice, and said, 'What is our technology roadmap?'" says Caleca. "When we first started having conversations with them, these were the changes we all saw. You had the merging of two disciplines, in broadcast engineering and information technology."

The goal for PBS is to take the best practices and skill sets of both the broadcast engineering and IT disciplines and "let them take you into the future," says Caleca. In that vein, PBS has combined its broadcast engineering and IT staffs. In overseeing PBS' broadcast operations, Caleca works hand-in-hand with André Mendes, PBS Vice President and Chief Technology Integration Officer, Enterprise Technology.

Mendes is a good example of the new thinking that has come to broadcast engineering. With an IT background and professional experience



PBS' current technical headquarters in Alexandria, VA will be replaced this fall by a new network operations center in Springfield, VA.

across several industries including travel and pharmaceuticals, Mendes doesn't view television operations like your typical broadcast engineer. Instead, he is trying to take proven efficiencies from manufacturing and other industries and apply them to broadcasting.

"What we're trying to do is supply chain management, just like Gillette does with Afta razors," says Mendes. "It becomes a radically different proposition. Instead of a manual workflow that depends on very expensive equipment you now have a digital workflow with digital asset management. You can take advantage of technology's evolution to optimize your work flow and work environment at a much lower price point of distribution. So you put your concentration on the creation of new and compelling content."

In nine months' time, close to 60% of PBS's broadcast operations will be IT-based. Mendes says the crucial point for IT technology gaining a foothold in the broadcast plant came around 2000, when microprocessor capability got to the point where a general purpose microprocessor could deal with video. That reduced the economics substantially.

"We're not talking \$1500 chips, we're talking \$200, and Intel chips where they are making tens of millions," says Mendes. "At the same time,



PBS Senior Vice President Ed Caleca says that IT technology requires a new mindset from broadcast vendors.

disk storage got to the point where it became extremely cheap store to video files. The third component was the actual ability to network, both inside of the plant and out of the plant."

The advent of very fast networking technologies like Fast Ethernet, Firewire and Ultra-SCSI in the 1998-1999 timeframe, combined with improvements in compression codecs, allowed video to be moved around simply as digital files.

"You got the ability to treat broadcast quality video as an asset that could be moved around and distributed at a much lower price point," he recalls. "So there was a whole shift in the way media works. That evolved very quickly, from a little postage stamp-size stream to full motion broadcast video in DVD quality. That all happened in the space of four or five years. It was a radical transformation."

Today, PBS is trying to leverage cheap commodity hardware for as many applications as possible, while also getting traditional broadcast manufacturers to adopt the best practices from IT.

"We've seen the industry go from being totally broadcast-centric to IT-based on hardware," says Mendes. "Now we need it to be totally IT-based on software."

This requires a big change in mindset from broadcast vendors, says Caleca, who are used to fiercely defending their turf.

"We're asking them to drop their guard," he says. "The industry has been very protective of its customers. But they're moving to a space where by definition, they have to drop their protections. IT is more open, and you have got to be able to deal with different elements—you are not ever going to be the sole source of technology."

The ACE project is a good example of the type of collaborative thinking that PBS is seeking. To create a modular system that would automate master control functions at member stations, PBS has assembled a diverse consortium of companies that includes consulting firm Accenture; traffic system vendor BroadView Software; chip giant Intel; storage and archiving supplier MassTech Group; software giant Microsoft; routing, switching and branding supplier Miranda Technologies; server vendor Omneon Video Networks; automation supplier OmniBus Systems; satellite operator SES AMERICOM; and systems integrator Ascent Media Systems & Technology Services.

PBS did a deep technical evaluation of the players, trying to find the best vendors for each component while avoiding too much overlap between technologies. Overlap can lead to bickering, notes Mendes.

"What's remarkable is not only the speed with which it developed but also the level of integration that took place," he says. "It used to be, if you want Manufacturer A to speak with Manufacturer B, you had to deal with a proprietary interface. Now all of a sudden you're talking about communications methodologies, you're talking about vendors dealing with XML and standard APIs."

Mendes concedes that transitioning away from proprietary environments is a "very complex business issue" for broadcast manufacturers. But he says that PBS' goal is find software that it can use with hardware to "open bridges with the API," so the software runs the hardware.

"The thought processes are the same, but it creates a bit of dilemma," says Mendes. "From a hardware standpoint you can leverage economies [of scale], but from a software standpoint you have a much smaller area to work with. That's the process vendors are going through now: where can we make money in this brave new world?"

There is a constant creation of "abstraction layers" within the IT world, says Mendes, which in layman's terms, means that the technology has evolved to the point where "you're not worried about something—everybody is running Ethernet, everybody is running TCP/IP,



PBS offers a wealth of HDTV programming and provides a 24-hour HD feed to member stations.

everyone is using the same operating systems. These all become abstraction layers."

Broadcasting is similar, says Mendes, as technologies like RAID storage arrays and Ethernet networking have become commonplace. He thinks the changing business for broadcast vendors will mirror what has occurred in the IT industry over the last 20 years, as the big computer companies have now become mostly services and software companies.

"They can charge a lot less for software, and a lot more for integration services," says Mendes. "You are also starting to see outsourcing in broadcasting, where stations are starting to outsource their entire infrastructure in order to focus on content. The ACE system is an entire abstraction layer that allows you to run a station based on the traffic system, just by creating a schedule. It's in-house outsourcing."

One issue PBS has faced in embracing IT methodologies and cross-vendor integration, says Caleca, is making sure that skills are developed on "both sides of the house"—the engineering team and the IT team—in order to take advantage of new technology. In this technology shift, the broadcasting industry can look to the hard lessons learned by the telecommunications industry.

"The telecommunications industry had great support, but when it went from analog to digital, there was a huge skill set mismatch," says Caleca, an AT&T veteran. "You want to maximize your human resources. You take someone who knows a lot about the business, and work harder to make sure they are comfortable with new technology. In this industry you can't wait for people to retire—that's a waste of good talent." ■



André Mendes, PBS Chief Technology Integration Officer is bringing IT thinking to the broadcast world.

PBS ACES MASTER CONTROL

MEMBERS STATIONS WILL BENEFIT FROM MODULAR COMPONENTS, REMOTE MONITORING

PBS' most ambitious technology initiative will be played out not only at the public broadcaster's Virginia headquarters, but also across the network's 348 member stations. The project is ACE, the network's name for a new modular, multi-component broadcast system that will use IT technologies and IP-based

playout, automation, master control and data movement. Key ACE components include automated channel operations; multi-level automated systems monitoring; remote problem identification, resolution, and escalation; and locally hosted scheduling, traffic, and underwriting functions. PBS will also be maintaining an ACE lab in order to constantly test software updates to the various components of the ACE system before passing them along to ACE-equipped stations.

"It becomes almost impossible for a station moving from the old environment into the IT environment to deal with the constant change," says André Mendes, PBS Vice President and Chief Technology Integration Officer, Enterprise Technology. "Things change so quickly, and you constantly have to be testing out patches, updates, etc."

ACE was born out of research conducted by PBS for the re-design of its Technical Operations Center, which was designed to simplify signal paths and move to an exception monitoring paradigm.

"The goal was reducing the number of touch-points where the signal has to be modified," says Marilyn Pierce, PBS Senior Director, Digital Asset Management for Enterprise Technology. "You have video servers, frame synchs, the demuxer, all the way to master control. These are all separate places with different technology, and they are complicated. So we were looking for ways to simplify the signal and simplify the workflow."

Another important consideration was to bring the alerting function out of the automation system to a third-party platform, using an "exception monitoring" scheme that would allow PBS to monitor multiple locations remotely. The PBS engineering team began looking at technology for ACE at the NAB

2003 show and experimenting with vendors soon afterward.

"We started with the IT platform, working with an integrator to do the racking and heavy lifting," says Pierce. "On September 19, 2003 we had ACE online and broadcasting, acting like a totally separate six-channel master control system. We've been doing endurance testing and full load testing since then."

The ACE system includes a scalable, networked server infrastructure from Omneon Video Networks; network-based automation and video asset management from OmniBus Systems; video interfacing, routing, master control switching, channel branding, and visual/aural facility monitoring over Internet Protocol (IP) from Miranda Technologies; traffic, scheduling and underwriting software from BroadView Software; archiving and content management from Masstech Group; satellite bandwidth and communication services from SES AMERICOM; Microsoft .NET integration architecture and Windows Server software from Microsoft; critical server and desktop components and software-enabling services from Intel; and program management, design,



PBS' ACE laboratory will be used to continually test software updates on behalf of member stations that install ACE

satellite delivery to automate the master control functions of participating local stations. The ACE system will also allow PBS to remotely monitor the broadcast operations of local stations, a boon to some thinly staffed public broadcasters.

With ACE, PBS has assembled a consortium of leading broadcast and IT vendors to provide stations with a comprehensive solution for



PBS will use the ACE System to remotely monitor member stations across the country, explains Marilyn Pierce, Senior Director of Digital Asset Management for PBS.



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IPTV READIES FOR ACE LAUNCH

The first station to implement ACE will be Iowa Public Television (IPTV) in Johnston, Iowa. IPTV, which runs nine full-power stations across the state of Iowa, is buying a \$1.7 million, six-channel ACE system that will be installed in early April and should go online by early June.

The IPTV system will have four standard-definition channels, one high-definition channel, and one "fail-over" channel for redundancy. It is currently being built by ACE systems integrator Ascent Media Systems & Technology Services of Northvale, N.J.

IPTV will spend six to eight weeks setting up and debugging the ACE system and training staff in the new workflow that ACE will create. "It replaces our existing automation, our existing play-to-air server, and our existing traffic system," says Bill Hayes, Director of Engineering and Technology for Iowa Public Television. "It's a pretty comprehensive change."

IPTV's existing traffic system generates a playlist that is imported into the automation system to trigger the playback of interstitials and other programming off the server. Once that playlist is made, says Hayes, it is fairly static; changes require manual intervention by an operator.

"With the new system a change in the traffic log immediately ripples down to the automation, and at some point in time, everything based in the archive," says Hayes. "The changes happen almost immediately and in a very short duration, and can be made as close as ten minutes prior to program air."

Budget cuts of some 35% over the last four years forced IPTV to drop its programming from midnight to 6 am, which included educational and distance learning content, as the combined cost of paying master control staff and running its transmitters through the night became too expensive. IPTV now plans to return to a 24-hour broadcast day by taking advantage of the ACE system's remote monitoring capabilities.

"Their ability to monitor feeds is not quite the 'centralcast' model, but it comes close," says Hayes. "We can transfer control to them, and if there is a problem, the system will give them a call. We don't have to have a person sitting at a console six hours a night just to satisfy [FCC] rules on control."

and integration services provided by Accenture. Ascent Media Systems & Technology Services of Northvale, N.J. is handling systems integration for the project.

The ACE system can receive satellite dish inputs as well as studio inputs.

"It's very flexible, it can take actual studio inputs from a studio or remote truck," says Pierce. "Some stations cover their state legislatures, and they can take an input from that into the ACE system, then record the output of that. It's channel based, so they can route to wherever they want—an analog transmitter, a digital transmitter or a cable headend."

The ACE system also provides both analog NTSC and DTV feeds, with the DTV feed going to the station's ATSC encoder. To make sure the electronic program guides that digital televisions use get the most up-to-date information on local member station programming, PBS added a PSIP [Program System and Information Protocol] generator to the lab version of ACE and created an interface between the traffic system and the PSIP generator. This allows for local stations to automatically provide real-time updates of PSIP information.

"It's the law now, PSIP has to be accurate," Pierce explains. "What's changing is when they get that actual schedule and how they get the data. In the early days, they would subscribe to Tribune [Media Services], and it would be only a once-a-month upload. That makes it hard to make changes. So many stations are actually working with traffic vendors to do a day-by-day update. With BroadView, you can actually do an up-to-the-minute update. So

we're pushing master control management more into traffic than actually in master control. We want to move metadata functions upstream as much as possible, so the metadata just sits and runs."

After running the lab in full 24/7 operation for over a year, PBS has gained first-hand knowledge of how much work is actually done by the staff at local stations.

"We've had one major on-air discrepancy, and that was because I forgot to load the traffic data," says Pierce. "These people work hard. You don't really know somebody else's job until you sit in it for a few days."

One of PBS' major goals for the ACE platform was that the system would be robust enough to allow PBS to fully monitor stations from its Technical Operations Center in Virginia. Testing of this functionality has proven successful, and any station that adopts the ACE platform has the option of allowing PBS to monitor its master control operations. For example, the first ACE station, Iowa Public Television, plans to let PBS monitor its operations from 12 a.m. to 6 a.m., when the station currently goes off-air for lack of master control staff.

"One thing we're very clear on is that we're not in charge of broadcasting," says Pierce. "All we do is monitor the participating station's output to make sure they stay on air, and we'll be troubleshooting their output. But at no point do we want to get in the business of running a local market; we're just providing another service to stations. Many stations actually contract out their traffic and scheduling work, and the contracted companies are welcome to come in and use the same platform.

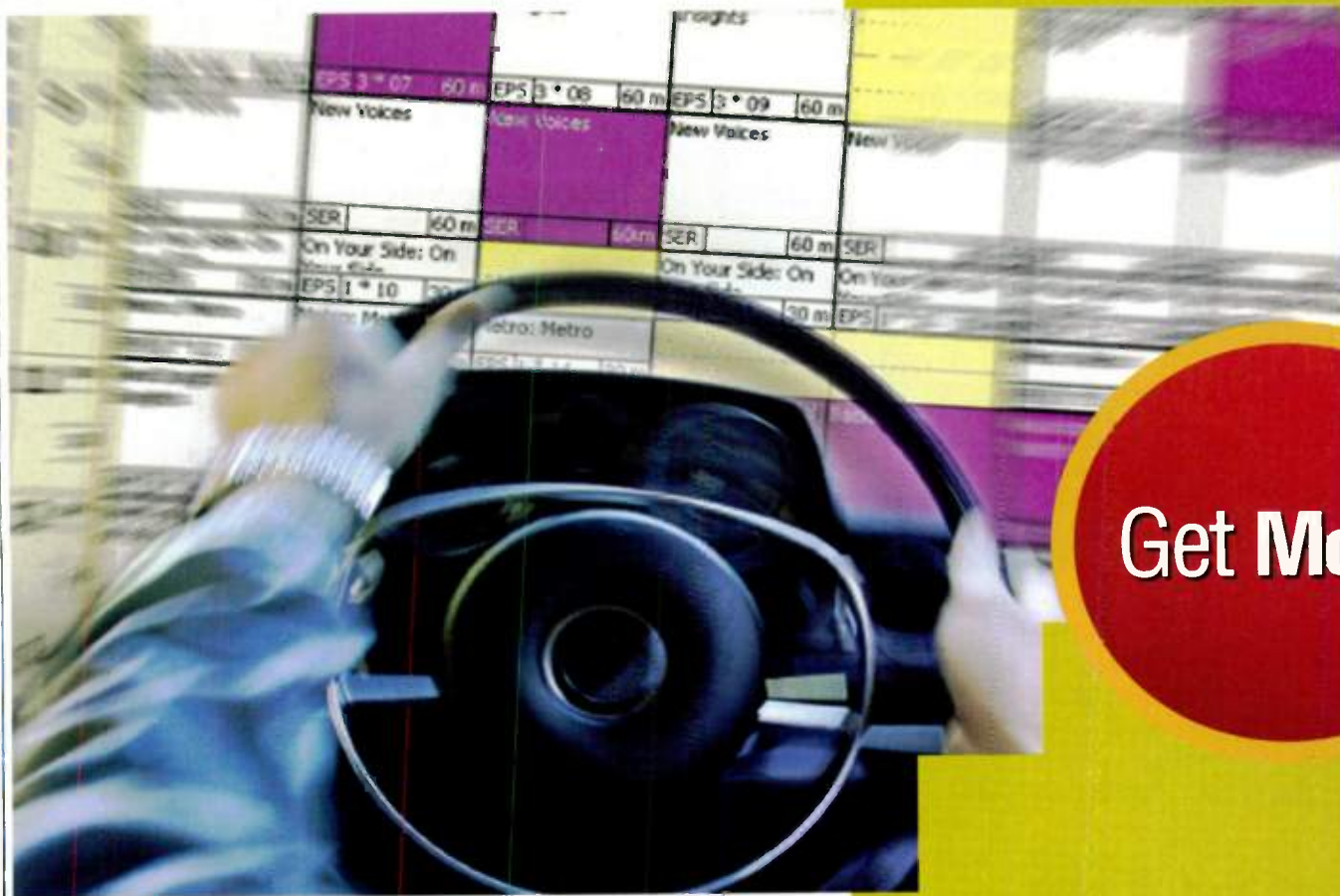
The stations that do elect to install the ACE system will undergo a significant change in their workflow, one that should greatly simplify their day-to-day operations.

"With its efficiencies, they don't have to redo the engineering," says Pierce. "Their traffic system connects to our traffic system, and things happen almost simultaneously."

A typical six-channel ACE system contains four standard-definition channels and one high-definition channel, with a fifth SD channel used as a "fail-over" channel for a total hot, redundant signal path. That system, which PBS calls a "four plus one plus one," says Pierce, includes



The flexibility of the ACE traffic system will allow PBS stations to dynamically schedule programs such as "NewsHour with Jim Lehrer."



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PBS CONTENT: CALLING ALL PLATFORMS

ONLINE SUCCESS SPURS VOD DEVELOPMENT

While PBS has been aggressive in exploiting the possibilities of DTV, that is far from the only digital platform for its content. PBS has been providing digital fare since the 1995 launch of PBS.org, which has grown into one of the most trafficked dot-org sites in the world. Today PBS is also experimenting with providing video-on-demand content to cable operators, with a particular focus on serving young viewers.

"We're really trying to ensure our public service mission continues on the digital platforms," says Cindy Johanson, PBS Senior Vice President for Interactive & Education. "We're also looking at new business opportunities. 'Not for profit' doesn't mean 'Not for revenue.' We're actively looking at solutions that will ensure a sustainable and more financially secure offering for PBS."

The scale of PBS.org is immense. In 2004, PBS.org had over 4.2 billion page views, and the site averages 30 million unique visits a month and 380 million page views a month. There are 1,300 companion Web sites within PBS.org, most of them related to PBS television programs and specials.

PBS has found that 65% of its online visitors are watching more TV on PBS. Johanson says that's no accident.

"They are engaged with the content, and online is pushing people to television, and vice versa," says Johanson. "The editorial process our producers go through when we extend content from the broadcast program ensures that it is not redundant with what we offer on-air, but has added value. As our 'Frontline' executive producer David Fanning puts it, the program on TV becomes an executive summary, inspiring viewers to drill deeper on the Web site. When we launch content on PBS.org, when we work with the producer to show rough cuts, etc., it is an additional on-demand

experience that couldn't be delivered in broadcast."

PBS has always been a leader in providing educational programming, and has extended that success online. 33% of the people who come to PBS.org identify themselves as an educator, including home-schoolers; that 33% has grown by 40% over the last three years.

PBS reaches children before they become students with its "Ready To Learn" initiative, a cross-platform offering for preschool and early elementary children designed to help them gain early literacy skills preparing them for success in school. PBS also provides services for teachers with dedicated Web sites such as PBS TeacherSource, which provides teachers with nearly 4,000 free lesson plans, and PBS TeacherLine, which provides educators with more than 90 courses in mathematics, reading, instructional technology and curriculum mapping.

PBS content is obviously very popular with kids as well, which is why PBS.org's biggest companion Web site is PBSKIDS.org, offering a mix of educational games and smart fun.

"Our interactive games are the number-one feature that children use when they come to PBSKIDS.org," says Johanson. "Our producers are developing robust, immersive experiences

and we plan to expand this offering with premium, downloadable games next year."

Last Fall, PBS began providing some of its content on video-on-demand (VOD) platforms. Its initial VOD offering was "PBS KIDS On Demand," a six-to-eight hour block of content it launched with Comcast and Time Warner. The trial saw very high usage rates and a high retention rate for popular kids' fare like "Barney." So PBS has expanded its VOD efforts into mainstream programming as well.

Several stations throughout the country are offering on-demand in a short window with programs such as "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer," including KCTS/Seattle; KOPB/Portland; KQED/San Francisco; KBYU/Salt Lake City; WNPT/Nashville; WQED/Pittsburgh; WGBH/Boston; WGBY/Springfield; and WNET/New York. So far, the early feedback is positive. PBS Kids On Demand continues to gain popularity and has been picked up Insight, Charter, Cablevision and Adelphia. It is now available in 12 million digital cable homes.

In fact, PBS recently reached an agreement with Comcast and children's program producers Sesame Workshop and HIT Entertainment to launch two new children's programming ventures on the digital cable platform. The first component, a 50-hour block of on-demand programming, will make its debut in April. That will be followed by a 24-hour digital network to be introduced in October.

"PBS stations generally stop airing kids' programming around 5 pm, and between 5 and 9 pm is when they were seeing peak usage for VOD," says Deron Triff, PBS Vice President of Digital Ventures. "That's really important, as we were obviously delivering on our mission. And it obviously makes the service really sticky for the cable systems." PBS Senior Vice President Cindy Johanson says. ■



PBS Senior Vice President Cindy Johanson says that PBS has always looked at the Internet as its "first digital channel," and has taken lessons learned on PBS.org and applied them to other platforms.

PBS CONTINUES ITS TECHNOLOGY LEADERSHIP WITH DTV

PBS has been a technology vanguard among broadcasters since its creation in 1969. In 1972, it pioneered the development of closed captioning, and went on to win a 1980 Emmy for Outstanding Engineering Achievement for its work. In 1975, it became the first broadcast network to launch its own satellite system. And in 1990 it followed up on its closed-captioning efforts by launching the Descriptive Video Service for visually impaired viewers.

The long evolution of the nation's digital television standard and subsequent conversion to digital broadcasts (DTV) has given PBS another technical arena in which to shine. PBS first formed the Advanced Television Test Center with a six other broadcasters in 1988, and was chosen by the FCC in 1991 to oversee field-tests of high-definition television (HDTV). PBS was heavily involved in the DTV standards process, which culminated in the ATSC (Advanced Television Systems Committee) standard in 1996.

PBS offered its first DTV programming in November 1998 through "Digital Week," which showcased a mix of HDTV documentaries and educational programming along with an "enhanced DTV" trial with Intel that delivered program-related data to personal computers. Seven PBS member stations initiated DTV broadcasts during Digital Week, including WETA, Washington, D.C.; KCTS, Seattle; WITF, Harrisburg, PA; Oregon Public Broadcasting; Mississippi ETV, Jackson, MS; WMVS, Milwaukee; and KCPT Kansas City, MO.

Also in 1998, PBS and Harris Corporation, with support from Philips Electronics, teamed up to launch the Harris/PBS DTV Express, a traveling DTV education center that went on a nationwide road show to demonstrate the possibilities of digital technology in 40 U.S. cities. The partners also developed a layman's guide to digital television, *DTV for Dummies*.

"It was a traveling road show introducing DTV to public television stations, representatives of state government, the federal government and the American public," recalls Ed Caleca, PBS Senior Vice President for Technology, Distribution and Operations. "As the DTV Express truck moved around the country, it became a soapbox for us to start projecting how television was changing and the impact of HDTV."

Caleca has been aboard for most of PBS' DTV ride. He joined PBS in 1997 after working for AT&T for 30 years, most of it in AT&T's media and broadcast businesses, where he sold satellite capacity and other telecommunications products to major networks, with PBS being one of his major clients. His last two big assignments at AT&T as national sales director were coordinating satellite capacity for the 1994 World Cup and the 1996 Olympics.

"That cemented me in the media industry," says Caleca, who views the contacts he made in the broadcast, cable and DBS spaces as a great help in furthering PBS' DTV goals. While Caleca was originally hired by then-PBS President and CEO Ervin Duggan to run the network's broadcast operations and engineering, his role has expanded into distribution as well.

Caleca helped broker carriage agreements for PBS DTV programming with cable operators, including landmark deals with Time Warner Cable in 2000 and Insight Communications in 2002. He was also involved in the agreement reached last January between the Association of Public Television Stations (APTS) and the National Cable Television Association (NCTA) whereby cable operators agreed to carry public broadcasters' digital multicasts. In all, PBS has the ability to reach some 42 million digital cable households with its programming.

The other important relationship for DTV, of

course, is between PBS and its member stations. Caleca says that PBS knew from the beginning that it had to exercise good judgment in utilizing the entire 19.4 Mb/s of a station's 6 megahertz DTV spectrum.

Some 300 member stations are currently broadcasting DTV. While many stations offer a mix of HD and SD multicasts, Caleca says there are "almost two camps" in public television, between those stations that fully embrace HDTV and those that prefer a multicast environment.



One of PBS' DTV experiments was a 1999 collaboration with Intel to broadcast enhanced episodes of the PBS kids program Zoboobafo.

"Finding a way to be a consultative engineering operation and provide leadership to both needs is an operational challenge," he concedes.

PBS currently offers a 24-hour HDTV programming service, which a few stations carry as their sole DTV programming, while others cherry-pick programming to run during different dayparts. While a number of local stations produce their own HDTV content, Caleca would like to see a lot more local HDTV production.

"Our next big challenge is how to get HD editing capability and production gear in the hands of local stations, so their content can be 'ever-green-ed' and used into the future," he says. ■

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A

lan Frank, president and CEO of Post-Newsweek, never aspired to run a TV station, let alone a group of six. It was 1988, and Frank was happy to be a corporate programming executive, advising the Washington Post Co.-owned stations on local and syndicated fare.

But the group needed a general manager for its largest station, WDIV Detroit, where Frank had once worked, and the brass wanted him. He hesitated because he thought he'd hate the hassles of being the big boss who had to manage all the mundane parts of a station's operations. "I spent my life creating programs and seeing them on the air, having an impact on my community," he says. "I never wanted to worry about the air conditioning."

Then, Frank says, he found a compromise: He would run a station with a producer's mentality. "You focus on what you want on the air and then cast it, in front of and behind the camera," he says. The script for WDIV was heavy local involvement, on-air and off.

When Frank took over Post-Newsweek in early 2000, he exported that vision to the company's other five stations. He demands first-rate news, encourages local programming and wants stations to be active in public affairs. Local executives are empowered to

Alan Frank: A producer's mentality

As head of Post-Newsweek, Frank guides the 14th-largest station group in the U.S., according to *B&C's* 2005 survey of the Top 25 Station Groups. Its six stations—two ABCs, two NBCs, a CBS and an independent in Jacksonville, Fla.—pulled in \$361.7 million in revenue in 2004, up 15% from \$315.1 million in 2003. With its three Florida stations, Post-Newsweek cashed in on last year's political season, taking in \$34.3 million in political ad spending.

Unlike many top television executives who come out of the sales side of the business, Frank studied journalism at Duquesne University in his hometown of Pittsburgh and worked at local public-TV station WQED, where *Mr. Rogers* originated. He then went to Pittsburgh's Westinghouse-owned KDKA as a volunteer, eventually working himself into a paid position. After journalism school at Syracuse University, Frank returned to KDKA



Alan Frank: Champion of Localism

Post-Newsweek TV's plainspoken chief is *B&C's* Broadcaster of the Year **By Allison Romano**

pull off the production, with Frank advising—much like an executive producer.

The hallmark of a great station, Frank says, is localism. "You need to have a clear understanding of your community." It has been a guiding principle throughout his career, and it is one of the main reasons Frank is *B&C's* choice as the Broadcaster of the Year, an honor he will be awarded at the TVB conference this week.

ADVOCATES AFFILIATES' INTERESTS

Frank is a champion for local broadcasters and, at times, a bit of a maverick. As chairman of the Network Affiliated Stations Alliance, he has collided with the Big Four networks, pressing for more local input in network programming and more opportunity to preempt network shows for local coverage. As an active board member for the National Association of Broadcasters, he similarly advocates affiliates' interests, including limits on the number of stations a company can own.

"He has a real talent for content and promotions, and superb instincts on the sales side," says TVB President Chris Rohrs. The two worked together at WDIV in the mid 1980s, and Frank, Rohrs recalls, often engineered ways to marry programming and ad sales. Examples of this include selling sponsorships of Detroit Tigers coverage with a series of vignettes on local businesses. "He was a great programming executive with a real gut for what would sell," says Rohrs.

and produced Pittsburgh Pirates baseball games, a career highlight for this baseball enthusiast. But this was the Vietnam era, and Frank enlisted in the Army; eventually, he worked his way into producing wartime documentaries and also worked on some Bob Hope Christmas specials. For a short time, he even ran the Armed Forces Video Network.

Returning from the Army, Frank became a producer for Westinghouse's *David Frost Revue*. Group W sta-

"Alan is a great judge of people and where they fit. He is hardworking, imaginative and people-smart."

DONALD GRAHAM, CHAIRMAN, WASHINGTON POST CO.

tions, as they were known, aggressively programmed local and regional shows, including *Evening Magazine*, a nightly news magazine. Frank found Frost's comedy show, filmed in New York, to be exciting, but he craved a more local Group W gig. When the company needed an executive producer at KPIX San Francisco, Frank headed west.

Over the next seven years, Frank hopped the

country with Group W, working at WBZ Boston and WJZ Baltimore. He considered moving to Los Angeles to pursue more producing opportunities, but he wanted to put roots down in a more livable community. He arrived in Detroit as WDIV's programming manager in 1979 and never left. He and his wife, Ann, reside in suburban Oakland County and have three grown sons, one of whom is battling cancer.

Although he has had the somewhat typical nomadic lifestyle of many TV executives, he also has a strong sense of community. His years at Group W and then at WDIV shaped his values on local broadcasting. "What we as local broadcasters put on the air is a big part of the community," he says.

That same sense of responsibility guides Frank as a group head and industry leader. "He is a champion of localism, preserving it and advancing it," says David Barrett, CEO of the Hearst-Argyle Station Group.

DEFECTIONS FROM NAB

Frank waves the local-TV flag for nearly every industry group. At NAB, Frank, Barrett, Cox Television President Andy Fisher, and association Chairman Phil Lombardo, CEO of Citadel Communications, are among the most vocal local broadcasters. They have led NAB's push to cap the growth of network-station ownership. This position rocked the association. One by one, the big broadcast networks

Continued on page 44

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Alan Frank

Continued from page 43

defected from NAB, with ABC the last to leave, in 2003. Frank says he still holds out hope the networks will someday rejoin.

Within NAB, there has been some friction between radio and TV members, with some radio members frustrated by the group's high legal bills for advancing

in what happens on their air. That means he believes stations should have fuller opportunities to preempt network fare without penalty and should control their own digital channels.

But Frank stands with the networks on some of the big issues. When ABC scheduled the uncut version of *Saving Private Ryan* earlier this year, Post-Newsweek's two ABCs were among the affiliates willing



Frank has been a vocal critic of raising the broadcast ownership cap.

TV causes. Industry executives say Frank is a calming presence. "Alan is a guy who tries to build bridges. He listens to all different constituencies," says one local broadcast veteran.

Frank's support for limits on station ownership is the prevailing view among leaders of the big affiliates groups, and it sets them apart from others. His position is, once again, framed by localism.

Capping the number of stations any one company can own, Frank argues, preserves a federalist-type system where local tastes are reflected in a myriad of stations. With more owners, "we get a diversity of voices and plurality of ideas," Frank says. "A more efficient system would be a more homogenous system" but wouldn't serve viewers as well as it would satisfy owners. Translation: More network owned-and-operated stations means more cookie-cutter TV.

BACKS UP LOCAL IDEALS

Through NASA (the Network Affiliated Stations Alliance), Frank has pushed for affiliates' rights in their contracts with the broadcast networks. This is perhaps his most passionate cause. "The local affiliate is responsible by law for what is on their air, not the network," he says. But as networks have gobbled up more stations, Frank says, the networks have become more powerful and less amenable to affiliates' input. Once, he notes, networks routinely sent out preview tapes of programs, so stations could give feedback. "Way too often," he adds, "decisions are made on either coast that are not necessarily going to fly in other parts of the country."

Frank argues local affiliates should have more say

to brave FCC sanctioning. Many ABC affiliates did not, fearful of the FCC's new, hard-to-decipher standards of indecency.

Frank's forthright attitude may occasionally give networks headaches, but, says Hearst-Argyle's Barrett, "the networks have a better understanding of local issues because of Alan's leadership."

How far is Frank willing to go in showdowns with the broadcast networks? Look no further than Jacksonville, Fla. In 2002, after a dispute over compensation, the station dropped its CBS affiliation and went independent (see page 48). It was a bold move, though not one Post-Newsweek will repeat anytime soon. Its other stations have long-term affiliation agreements in place.

Fortunately for Post-Newsweek, Frank backs up

"The networks have a better understanding of local issues because of Alan's leadership."

DAVID BARRETT
 HEARST-ARGYLE CEO

his local ideals on-air. WDIV sets the standard. The station produces documentaries and specials on area events, like the Thanksgiving Day Parade, the July Fourth fireworks display and the crucial North

Continued on page 46

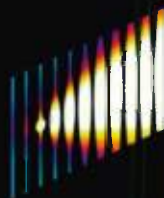
SONY PICTURES TELEVISION
congratulates

Alan Frank

on receiving

Broadcasting & Cable's
"Broadcaster of the Year"
Award

We applaud your achievements
and contributions to the television industry.



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It will be three years this summer since Post-Newsweek's WJXT Jacksonville, Fla., daringly abandoned its long-standing CBS affiliation to go it alone as an independent, one of just a handful left nationwide. Its path has been rocky. For an independent to thrive in the cutthroat local-TV business takes a steadfast commitment and deep pockets. But Post-Newsweek is determined to make WJXT a success story.

"We will end up profitable and totally in control of our own destiny," says Post-Newsweek President and CEO Alan Frank, one of the architects of the move.

As a CBS affiliate, WJXT ranked as one of the network's top-rated stations. But in July 2002, the station cut its network ties after a tug-of-war over network compensation. CBS offered WJXT payments similar to other affiliates', but Post-Newsweek balked, thinking its ratings in the market made it worth more.



WJXT's local news team keeps an eye on national news because the station has no network affiliation.

but also carry a stigma.

"The first year was very rough," says Graham, and it has taken a while to rebound. The company does not disclose financials for its individual stations, but executives predict WJXT will be close to its pre-2002 revenue levels by next year. Graham says he is now pleased with the station's ratings and financial performance.

In nearly the same time frame in San Francisco, Young Broadcasting's KRON went through a similar transformation.

Formerly the powerful NBC affiliate, KRON turned independent in 2001 after its own, much nastier compensation fallout with the network. But it is struggling. In the recent February sweeps, KRON finished fifth in morning, early-evening and late news.

Fortunately for WJXT, newscasts are holding up reasonably well.

From Top Dog to Underdog

In Jacksonville, Fla., WJXT, once a CBS powerhouse, is now a scrappy indie **By Allison Romano**

"It was not our first choice to go independent," Frank says. "But we were offered a business plan that was disheartening and embarrassing."

Usually when networks make those kinds of offers, stations consider the alternative, then swallow hard and agree to terms. Frank's decision, in a way, says something

and former Capital Cities/ABC CEO Dan Burke, all of them seasoned in the broadcast business. "We felt the superior performance of the station deserved more," says Graham.

Without network fare, though, WJXT had countless hours to fill. The station beefed up local news to eight hours a day and stockpiled top syndicated shows, like *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *Dr. Phil* and *Everybody Loves Raymond*. In prime time, *Dr. Phil* and reruns of sitcoms fill the schedule.

WJXT is also dabbling in original programming, like the monthly *Eye on Crime*, a series produced with the sheriff's department. Frank also hit on the idea of WJXT creating a local version of *American Idol*, called *Gimme the Mike*, sponsored by General Motors. Sister stations KPRC Houston and WPLG Miami expressed interest too and Post-Newsweek ended up selling the format to 32 other stations.

Still the station's strength, Frank says, is that it is Jacksonville-centric. It even calls itself "*The local station*."

Its four-hour morning show is hyper-local and regularly beats network news shows *Today*, *Good Morning America* and *The Early Show* in the 7-9 a.m. period, an indication that local can often trump national. It wins local news at 5 and 6 p.m. and often places second at 6:30, behind NBC's *Nightly News*.

COVERING NATIONAL STORIES, TOO

But just covering the news is more difficult. Affiliate stations turn to their national network for footage and coverage of big events. Even Fox stations can take a national feed from Fox News Channel. But, as an independent station, WJXT goes it alone.

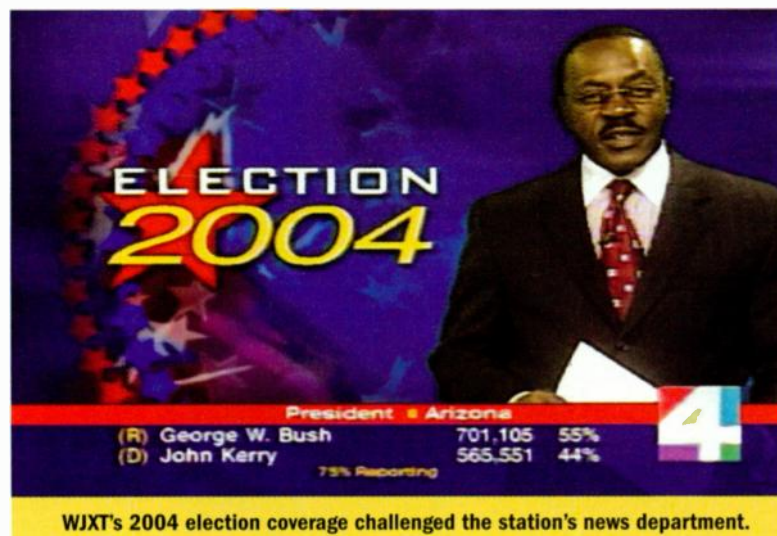
Big news events and breaking news are challenging. To cover Election Night last fall, WJXT needed to encompass the presidential race, as well as state and local contests, on its own.

"We had to use our own anchors to cover everything, and we have to book our own guests," says VP/GM Larry Blackerby, who joined in October 2003 from KMIR Palm Springs, Calif. "It took a tremendous amount of planning."

The station does get help on newsgathering from CNN's affiliate service, NewsSource, and its corporate cousins in The Washington Post Co.

On Election Night, it held its own, finishing second in prime time ratings behind NBC affiliate WTLV, an impressive showing for an independent.

As the station gets its footing, Post-Newsweek keeps backing it. WJXT has bought new cycles of *Everybody Loves Raymond*, *Oprah* and *Dr. Phil*, and the station plans to increase its local programming. It will be a slow build, Blackerby says, but "the key is to know we can compete." ■



WJXT's 2004 election coverage challenged the station's news department.

about the man: He'll walk away rather than blink.

So, suddenly, in July 2002, WJXT—once the market heavyweight—became the scrappy underdog.

Frank spearheaded the indie effort and was backed by Washington Post Co. Chairman Don Graham and board members Warren Buffett, chairman of Berkshire Hathaway; Barry Diller, chairman of InterActive Corp.;

STRUGGLING BACK

Maybe so. But losing CBS programming hurt, particularly in prime time. Confused viewers migrated over to the new CBS affiliate, Clear Channel's WTEV. The Post-Newsweek station went from being the first-place station to No. 2 or No. 3, and ad sales suffered. In fact, WJXT runs its fair share of infomercials, which bring in dollars and fill time

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CONGRATULATES

ALAN FRANK

BROADCASTING & CABLE'S
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Rohrs: TV Is Still the Medium That Builds Brands Best

TVB conference will confront changing contours of the media business **By Paige Albinak**

What if there was no mass in the mass media? That may never happen, but Chris Rohrs, president of the Television Bureau of Advertising, wonders if media executives ponder the downside of niche marketing.

"There's this sense that we should move away from mass marketing to one-on-one, that there should be a customization of the connection and not so much the mass marketing," he says. "We think that's premature and damaging. You cannot build brands with all this niche marketing. That can be a part of the mix on the edges, but you need a mass connection to build and sustain brands. You simply do."

Rohrs points out that TV watching still constitutes 54% of the media that audiences "consume" and that it is still, by far, the best way to reach mass markets and build brands.

He'll be bringing that message to advertisers this week at the TVB's annual convention at New York City's Jacob Javits Convention Center. Teamed with the New York International Auto Show for the fourth year in a row, the convention has almost tripled in size (to more than 1,000 attendees from 300) since it left Las Vegas after 2001. There, for years, it was held in tandem with the NAB Show.

Auto advertisers are local stations' biggest source of revenue in most years, so it is logical to have station execs here when automakers are in town, too. "Holding it here has really revitalized the conference," Rohrs says. "It was a good game plan for us. Not only is it tied in to our No. 1 category—automotive—you also get the visual appeal and excitement of being in the midst of an auto show."

NEW GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Last year, local broadcast revenues grew by 12%, according to a TVB analysis of estimates supplied by TNS Media Intelligence/CMR in the top 100 markets. Revenues were up in nine of the top-10 advertising categories for the year, led by political spending, real estate, furniture, automotive and car dealerships. In the fourth quarter of 2004, local television revenues jumped by 18%, driven mostly by political advertising as the presidential election came to a close.

Rohrs concedes that while most of local broadcasting is no longer a growth business, emerging technologies present broadcasters with new growth opportunities.

"If you are in markets that don't get political money and you are not getting Olympic money, then it's a slower growth environment," Rohrs says. Other than those two biennial categories, "this industry is largely driven by automotive dollars."

And that is not enough, so TVB is busily studying trends to figure out how to change the role of local and spot advertising as the industry experiences rapid change.

"At this conference, we're going to focus on at least four potential game-changers: high definition, video-on-demand, digital video recorders and handheld wireless devices," Rohrs says.

At the moment, Rohrs seems most bullish on high-definition TV.



Chris Rohrs

"HD clearly is a huge consumer home-run, particularly on broadcast television," he says. "It's the convergence of the best programming with the best picture, and that's a great place to be. We're excited about that, we see a huge opportunity for it. People who are not excited about high-definition in the home just don't have it yet."

"You cannot build brands with all this niche marketing. You need a mass connection."

**CHRIS ROHRS
TVB PRESIDENT**

While high-def is one technological area where broadcasters clearly have some advantage, they are concerned about other areas. Both VOD and DVRs allow consumers to skip advertising, while delivering television to wireless devices can take the viewer out of the local market altogether.

"These are tricky issues, and the good news is that

the distribution is going to roll out incrementally," Rohrs says. "We'll have time to adjust and adapt, and it's a mixed outlook so far. But there are ways to make smart, adaptive changes to all of these things. For example, we can have different-length commercials, and better commercials. We can become programmers and distributors of content to handheld wireless devices."

FOCUS ON THE CONSTANTS

Another potential hurdle for broadcasters is the FCC's pending decision on must-carry for digital multicasting. While the most recent FCC was not in favor of digital must-carry, with a new chairman and some new commissioners coming in, the thinking still could change in Washington.

"Even if that ruling stays just as it is, one of the outcomes will be that broadcasters will get much more creative about high-def," he suggests. "If we don't get that regulatory digital must-carry opportunity, then we'll have to maximize the opportunity of high-definition. And in a sense, it would liberate multicasting development as well, because broadcasters would be motivated to try some inventive things."

Even though change is the rule of the day, Rohrs also plans to focus on the constants.

"We're going to be talking about change, but we'll also focus on the things that are enduring," Rohrs says. "Television has a special connection to viewers. There's a lot of value in that for the advertiser."

Rohrs and TVB have intentionally kept the conference to one day, giving attendees an opportunity to do other business while they are in New York City, the world capital of advertising and marketing.

DOWN TO BUSINESS

But during the conference, there will be plenty to keep them occupied. Peter Jennings, anchor of ABC's *World News Tonight*, last of the veteran Big Three anchors now that NBC's Tom Brokaw and CBS' Dan Rather have retired, will give the keynote luncheon address.

Otherwise, it's down to business. Besides Jennings' talk, there will be a panel on local-television research, featuring executives from TVB and Nielsen; a discussion with top editors on advertising trends; a look at Project Roadblock, TVB's public-service campaign with The Ad Council (see page 60); and four breakout panels on important issues in local TV, including doing business electronically and new opportunities in a challenging media environment. A complete schedule of the conference appears on page 54.

B&C's four Broadcasters of the Year will also be featured in one afternoon session, moderated by B&C Editor in Chief J. Max Robins. Post-Newsweek's Alan Frank, the latest to receive the honor, will join Viacom's Dennis Swanson, Tribune's Dennis FitzSimons and Hearst-Argyle's David Barrett to discuss issues of the day.

The day ends with a cocktail party. At least that's one media environment still firmly in place. ■

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ALAN FRANK

B&C'S BROADCASTER OF THE YEAR



ALAN FRANK
PRESIDENT AND CEO
POST-NEWSWEEK STATIONS

*"DON'T AIM FOR SUCCESS IF YOU WANT IT; JUST DO WHAT YOU LOVE
AND BELIEVE IN, AND IT WILL COME NATURALLY."*

-DAVID FROST

TELEVISION STATION REPRESENTATIVES

Stations Hope GM's Bad News Won't Stall Ad Sales

Some say sluggish car market could mean even more advertising By Kevin Downey

Earlier this month, General Motors, the second-largest advertiser after Procter & Gamble, put its \$2.8 billion media account up for review. The announcement came as the carmaker and much of the rest of the automotive industry face sluggish sales, waning profits and no immediate signs of relief on the horizon.

The GM announcement also was not news television advertising executives want to hear, particularly not at local stations where, typically, auto advertisers are the biggest clients.

GM's woes raise fears among ad execs that GM is getting ready to slash its advertising budget—and that other carmakers will follow the leader.

But automotive analysts say local station ad execs and managers, in New York this week for TVB's annual conference held in conjunction with the New York auto show, should relax for now. GM is using the account review to uncover more cost-efficient strategies to tout its models to consumers, they say, and its ad budget isn't likely to come crashing down.

\$20 billion on advertising, which was a year-to-year increase of 10.2%, according to ad-tracking firm TNS Media Intelligence. Slightly more than half of those dollars came from manufacturers, while just over \$6 billion was spent by dealers and nearly \$3.2 billion was spent by dealer associations.

But that was last year.

This month, GM cut in half its annual forecast for profits. It has plans to cut as many as 10,000 white-collar employees and is looking for ways to trim health-insurance costs.

As GM struggles to regain its footing, it is likely that, for two good reasons, those hefty rebates and incentives will be gone. For one, they have been a costly come-on for GM and other carmakers. And, perhaps just as significantly, so many consumers took advantage that rebates have lost their allure.

Healey predicts the advertising message from domestic carmakers will change. The Big Three will re-emphasize branding messages in which a car's attributes, not its 0% financing, take center stage.

The good news for local stations is that when car sales are weak, the manufacturers tend to drum up sales by shifting ad dollars from national campaigns

newspapers, which the previous year accounted for 38% of expenditures.

GM's troubles stem from weak sales coupled with high operating costs. They aren't alone. Sales for the Big Three domestic automakers are down 5.9% on a year-to-year basis for the first two months of 2005, according to automotive research firm Morgan & Co.

At the same time, GM and other domestics are saddled with costs that have significantly less impact on imports and American-made Asian brands. Among the expenses dragging down profits for the domestics are so-called "legacy" expenses like retiree benefits, which J. D. Power's Healey estimates amount to nearly \$2,000 per car for GM.

Likewise, those incentives started after 9/11 and led to record car sales during this decade's recession—but at a cost. In January this year, the average incentive was valued at \$2,408, which was up about 2% from a year earlier and nearly 71%, or \$1,000, from Jan. 2002, according to Edmunds Information Solutions.

But now incentives don't bring customers through the doors, says analyst John Wolkonowicz of research firm Global Insight's North American automotive group.



General Motors has cut its profit estimates by half, hit by rising costs and weak demand. Other carmakers are also in a lull.

In fact, it might actually increase at the local level.

"Carmakers don't know how advertising works, but they know it works," says Tom Healey, a partner at J. D. Power & Associates in Westlake Village, Calif. "Anybody would be afraid to touch that. Advertising is still a very inexpensive way to get a message to a lot of people."

Chris Rohrs, president of the Television Bureau of Advertising, observes, "We've come through an amazingly long period of very strong car sales without a burp along the way. One would think somewhere along the way there needs to be a pause. And [high] gasoline prices may make people hesitate a little bit in making a decision. I don't think it will take sales away in the long term, but I think people are waiting to see if gas prices come down or if we're at a permanent new level."

STRUGGLE TO REGAIN FOOTING

The automotive industry last year spent more than

to dealership associations, which benefits local media outlets.

But, most analysts say, even if that is somewhat true, there will not be any dramatic shifts in the types of media used as a result of the return to brand messages or, for that matter, as the result of GM's account review. About half the \$10.9 billion manufacturers spent on advertising in 2004 was evenly split between network TV and spot TV, according to TNS. Another 19% of expenditures were placed in magazines, while 10% went to cable TV and 7% went to newspapers. Online advertising accounted for 2% of expenditures. The share for each media type was virtually unchanged from 2003.

WEAK SALES AND HIGH COSTS

Meanwhile, 70% of dealer ad dollars were placed in newspapers, while 16% went to spot TV. Dealer associations put 46% of spending into spot TV—a modest increase from 44% a year earlier—and 35% went to

"General Motors has announced that with new model introductions, rather than use incentives, they will lower the price [on cars] to come closer to the transaction price," he says. "They'd like to wean themselves off of rebates. They seem to have stopped working."

Mark Cornelius, president of Morgan & Co., says domestic car companies have to scale back incentives in order to raise profits. He says it will be a challenge for GM and other carmakers to get away from incentives, but notes they have done it before.

"They've been doing this for three-and-a-half years, so it will be interesting to see how they get out of this," he says. "But back in the 1970s, there was a big rebate war going on to keep car sales going, and they got out of it."

Analysts are forecasting flat to slightly lower sales in 2005 from last year's 16.9 million vehicles, due in part to rising interest rates and the fact that millions

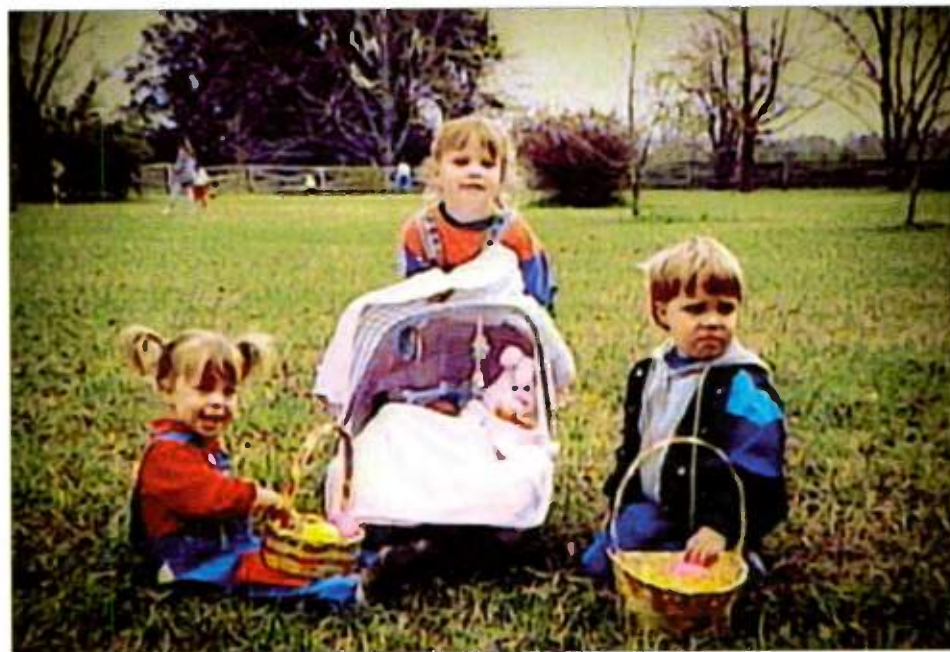
Continued on page 62

**Even the ladies are impressed
by our 40% ratings growth.**



Spike
TV

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Nielsen Media Research, 9/22/03-12/26/03 vs. 9/20/04-12/26/04. Mon-Sun 7p-12a. P18-49. CVG AA%. Spike TV. Subject to qualifications made available.



The TVB/Ad Council spots show victims of drunk drivers when they were full of life.

Friends don't let friends drive drunk. After hearing that refrain for the past 20 years, hardly anyone lets inebriated friends walk out the door without fighting them for their car keys. In fact, nearly 70% of Americans say they have stopped someone from driving drunk.

Last New Year's Eve, the Ad Council and the Television Bureau of Advertising (TVB) took that slogan a step further, persuading 517 TV stations to give the issue significant airplay. Stations spent the week between Christmas and New Year's Eve airing seven spots titled "Innocent Victims."

The emotional spots, created by BBD Needham Worldwide in New York, focus on people who have lost their lives because of drunk drivers.

donated media annually, with some \$10 million of that coming from TV.

What's more, a post-campaign Nielsen study determined that 38% of people polled were aware of the campaign, with 25% of those saying they had spoken to a friend or family member about it.

The name for the campaign is an inside joke, having nothing to do with driving drunk. In TV, a "roadblock" is a term stations or networks use when they book advertising so viewers in a market can scarcely avoid seeing a message. The Ad Council also organized roadblocks in 2000, the year following the tragic school shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., and last year, when it launched a campaign against juvenile obesity.

This week, at the TVB Conference in New York, both LIN Television's WANE in Fort Wayne, Ind., and



A Sober Success Story

To ring in the new year, TVB/Ad Council effort blitzed viewers with anti-drunk-driving ads **By Paige Albinak**

"This is a great campaign to do at the end of the year, when everyone is preparing to go to lots of parties," says Peggy Conlon, president and chief executive officer of the Ad Council. "Using the power of the media to remind people that they need to plan ahead is important."

And running the commercials didn't hurt stations' bottom lines, notes TVB Executive VP Abby Auerbach, "The week between Christmas and New Year's is a time when TV stations have more inventory available. We thought we could make a huge impact while demonstrating the power of local television."

A MESSAGE WORTH \$3.4 MILLION

As a result of the campaign, titled Project Roadblock, nearly anyone who turned on the TV on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day heard the message. Stations in 86% of designated market areas participated, and Nielsen's Sigma Data systems detected that spots ran 18,207 times, says Conlon.

That amounted to a five-day total of \$3.4 million in donated media, most of which fell on New Year's Eve. A typical Ad Council campaign earns \$30 million in

Hearst-Argyle will receive the Ad Council's Silver Bell award for work they did around Project Roadblock.

PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT, TOO

WANE tied the public-service spots into one of its existing community efforts: working with local taxi companies to give people rides during the holiday season. The station also prominently featured a news story about a woman who lost her 14-year-old son to a drunk driver.

"Project Roadblock fit perfectly into something we'd already been doing for a while," says April McCampbell, community-affairs coordinator for WANE. The station's public-service efforts have increased greatly since the arrival of Station Manager Alan Riebe more than two years ago, she adds: "It's really something that's in his heart to do. I have seen quite a change."

The Hearst-Argyle television group donated a total of \$387,877 in airtime, the most of the 105 groups involved in the project.

"I think this is a wonderful example of how media can adopt an issue and truly save lives," Conlon says. "There's no better use of media." ■



Congratulations
to our
friend and colleague,

ALAN FRANK

2005
Broadcaster of the Year

From all your friends at

Hearst-Argyle
TELEVISION, INC.

GM's Bad News

Continued from page 56

of consumers who wanted new vehicles have already bought them. Most car-watchers project modest but steady sales increases each year into next decade. For example, Global Insight expects car sales to reach 17.8 million vehicles by 2010.

There is evidence that technology has changed the way consumers enter the car-buying process. TNS does not release online expenditures for dealerships, but the National Automobile Dealers Association estimates the share of dollars going to the Internet grew from zero in 1993 to 5.3% in 2003.

John Thomas, an industry analyst with NADA, says

online ad dollars are not growing at the expense of other media types. In fact, he says dealers are simply spending significantly more money on all media types than in the past—NADA estimates expenditures doubled between 1993 and 2003, to more than \$8 billion—with the incremental dollars going to the Internet.

"Everybody is trying to be heard in the marketplace, so they are spending a lot more money for exposure," he says. "The primary driver for the increase in [online] advertising is because people do their research on the Internet before going into dealerships."

Moreover, analysts and dealers say spending in all types of media will continue going up, particularly in traditional media like TV and newspapers. One reason

for that: The auto industry is getting far more competitive as hundreds of new models roll into dealerships. The consultancy firm AutoPacific, for instance, estimates there will be 307 nameplates by 2010, up from 241 last year.

AGGRESSIVE COMPETITION

Dealerships will aggressively compete for market share by beefing up their advertising, too, says Marc Cannon, VP of corporate communications at AutoNation, the country's biggest car dealer.

"We will still use local TV a great deal and local newspapers because our sales are driven at the local level," he says. Next month, AutoNation, which operates 12 dealerships that go by different names in Phoenix, will rename all of them "Power" (as in "Power Ford," "Power Chevrolet" etc.). To kick off the name change, Cannon says AutoNation is "going to have a tremendous presence on local TV, local radio and in newspapers. We'll have a buyer's guide in newspapers and probably 4,000-plus commercials in seven weeks. On top of that, we will have some Internet promotions."

That's great for Phoenix media, but AutoNation's aggressive stance may be more the norm than the exception. "It could well be a sluggish year for car sales, but that's not necessarily a bad thing for advertising," TVB's Rohr says. "The importance of marketing and advertising has never been greater. Supply exceeds demand in the car industry, which is sort of a permanent condition. That means you have to have very aggressive marketing to keep moving these cars." ■



Some analysts worry that higher gasoline prices will make car shoppers even more cautious.

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and Colleague

Alan Frank
2005 BROADCASTER OF THE YEAR



NORMAN HECHT
RESEARCH INC.

**Alan, we've been hunting
for just the right words to say...**

CONGRATULATIONS
**YOU
WASCAL!**



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DEALS

TVs

WADA(LP) CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA.

PRICE: \$475,000
BUYER: Gray Television Inc. (Robert S. Prather Jr., president/COO/director)
SELLER: Tiger Eye Broadcasting Corp. (John N. Kyle II, president/CEO)
FACILITIES: Ch. 27, 50 kW, ant. 988 ft.
AFFILIATION: Pax

W28CT HARTFORD, CONN.

PRICE: \$225,000
BUYER: LIN Television Corp. (Gary R. Chapman, president/CEO)
SELLER: Communications Site Management (Cheryl A. Chase, managing member, Chase Entertainment)
FACILITIES: Ch. 28, 5.6 kW

K50IQ GREAT FALLS, MONT.

PRICE: \$50,000
BUYER: Sunbelt Communications Co. (James E. Rogers, president)
SELLER: Charles C. Townsend (Charles C. Townsend III, owner)
FACILITIES: Ch. 50, 50 kW, ant. 355 ft.

K30GS BOISE, IDAHO

PRICE: \$25,000
BUYER: Gary M. Cocola Family Trust (Gary M. Cocola, trustee)
SELLER: MS Communications LLC (Mark Silberman, manager)
FACILITIES: Ch. 68, 0.007 kW
AFFILIATION: Ind.

WHNE (LP) PINCONNING, MICH.

PRICE: \$25,000
BUYER: Thomas T. Tait (Thomas T. Tait, owner)
SELLER: P&P Cable Holdings (Robert Naismith, VP)
FACILITIES: Ch. 52, 0.25 kW
AFFILIATION: Ind.

KJTN(LP) ABILENE, TEXAS

PRICE: \$20,000
BUYER: Hispanic Christian Community Network Inc. (Omar Vasquez, VP)
SELLER: Powell Meredith Communications Co. (Amy S.

Meredith, president)
FACILITIES: Ch. 18, 5 kW

K16GB KINGMAN, ARIZ.

PRICE: \$15,000
BUYER: Smoke and Mirrors LLC (Rick L. Murphy, managing member)
SELLER: Powell Meredith Communications Co. (Amy S. Meredith, president)
FACILITIES: Ch. 16, 0.100 kW

KBBA(LP) LAKE HAVASU CITY, ARIZ.

PRICE: \$15,000
BUYER: Smoke and Mirrors LLC (Rick L. Murphy, managing member)
SELLER: Powell Meredith Communications Co. (Amy S. Meredith, president)
FACILITIES: Ch. 10, 3 kW

COMBOS

WVXR(FM) RICHMOND, IND.; WVXH(FM) HARRISON, WVXM(FM) MANISTEE AND WVXA(FM) ROGERS CITY, MICH.; WVXC(FM) CHILLICOTHE, WVXU(FM) CINCINNATI, WVXW(FM) WEST UNION, OHIO

PRICE: \$15 million
BUYER: Cincinnati Classical Public Radio (Richard Eiswerth, president/CEO); owns one other station, including WGUC(FM) Cincinnati
SELLER: Xavier University (Michael J. Graham, president)
FACILITIES: WVXR(FM): 89.3 MHz, 4 kW, ant. 187 ft.; WVXH(FM): 92.1 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 299 ft.; WVXM(FM): 97.7 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 515 ft.; WVXA(FM): 96.7 MHz, 42 kW, ant. 532 ft.; WVXC(FM): 89.3 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 351 ft.; WVXU(FM): 91.7 MHz, 26 kW, ant. 682 ft.; WVXW(FM): 89.5 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 381 ft.
FORMAT: WVXR(FM): Variety; WVXH(FM): Variety; WVXM(FM): Public; WVXA(FM): Nostalgia/NPR; WVXC(FM): Nostalgia/NPR; WVXU(FM): Nostalgia/NPR; WVXW(FM): Nostalgia/NPR
BROKER: Marc Hand of Public Radio Capital and Larry Patrick of Patrick Communications

KHOZ(AM) AND KHOZ(FM) HARRISON, ARK.

PRICE: \$3.7 million
BUYER: KHOZ LLC (Charles C. Earls, member); owns no other stations
SELLER: Harrison Broadcasting Corp. (W.J. Wheeler, president)
FACILITIES: KHOZ(AM): 900 kHz, 1 kW day/62 W night; KHOZ(FM): 102.9 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 981 ft.
FORMAT: KHOZ(AM): AC/Talk; KHOZ(FM): Country

KDDD(AM) AND KDDD(FM) DUMAS, TEXAS

PRICE: Undisclosed
BUYER: Kent Ries, trustee (Kent Ries, trustee); owns no other stations
SELLER: North River Investments (Joel Williamson)
FACILITIES: KDDD(AM): 800 kHz, 250 W; KDDD(FM): 95.3 MHz, 7 kW, ant. 259 ft.
FORMAT: KDDD(AM): Classic Hits; KDDD(FM): Classic Hits
COMMENT: Kent Ries has been appointed by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Texas, Amarillo Division, as Trustee of the Chapter 7 Bankruptcy Estate of Joel Williamson, owner of 100% of the stock of North River Investments Inc.

FMs

WWBR(FM) WEST POINT (NORFOLK-VIRGINIA BEACH- NEWPORT NEWS), VA.

PRICE: \$1.13 million
BUYER: Davis Media LLC (Thomas G. Davis, president); owns no other stations
SELLER: Winner Broadcasting LLC (Sherry L. Campana, executor)
FACILITIES: 107.9 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 328 ft.
FORMAT: Urban
BROKER: EnVest Media LLC

WWKZ(FM) ABERDEEN (TUPELO), MISS.

PRICE: \$1.1 million
BUYER: URban Radio Broadcasting LLC (Kevin Wagner, president); owns nine other stations, none in this market
SELLER: Clear Channel Communications (John Hogan, CEO, radio)
FACILITIES: 105.3 MHz, 50 kW, ant. 358 ft.
FORMAT: CHR

WSRM(FM)(CP) COOSA, GA.



DEALS

PRICE: \$1.1 million
BUYER: Southern Broadcasting Companies (Paul C. Stone, president); owns nine other stations, none in this market
SELLER: The Estate of Jean M. Gradick (Leslie E. Gradick, executor)
FACILITIES: 95.3 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 72 ft.
FORMAT: CP-NOA

WBGE(FM) BAINBRIDGE, GA.

PRICE: \$485,000
BUYER: Flint Media Inc. (Kevin Dowdy, president); owns no other stations
SELLER: Roy Simpson, receiver
FACILITIES: 101.9 MHz, 5 kW, ant. 351 ft.
FORMAT: Country

KWPK(FM) SISTERS, ORE.

PRICE: \$475,000
BUYER: Horizon Broadcasting Group LLC (Keith Shipman, CEO/president); owns four other stations, none in this market
SELLER: Thunderegg Wireless LLC (Lance W. Anderson, manager)
FACILITIES: 104.1 MHz, 34 kW, ant. 591 ft.
FORMAT: Hot AC
BROKER: Gary Stevens of Gary Stevens and Co

WSPI(FM) MOUNT CARMEL, PA.

PRICE: \$460,000
BUYER: Clear Channel Communications (John Hogan, CEO, radio); owns 1,194 other stations, none in this market
SELLER: H&P Communications Ltd (Gene Picarella, president)
FACILITIES: 99.7 MHz, 790 W, ant. 646 ft.
FORMAT: Soft AC

KTCJ(FM) CENTERVILLE, TEXAS

PRICE: \$424,809
BUYER: KUZN (FM) Inc. (Gerald R. Proctor, president); owns no other stations
SELLER: Good Samaritan Communications Inc. (Michael Augustus, president)
FACILITIES: 105.9 MHz, 25 kW, ant. 328 ft.
FORMAT: Country
COMMENT: Court-agreed judgment

KCGR(FM) COTTAGE GROVE (EUGENE-SPRINGFIELD), ORE.

PRICE: \$350,000
BUYER: Diamond Peak Investments LLC (Steve Master, managing member); owns no other stations
SELLER: Thornton Pflieger Inc. (Robert O'Renck, secretary)
FACILITIES: 100.5 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 115 ft.
FORMAT: AC/Spanish

WURB(FM) WINDSOR, N.C.

PRICE: \$300,000
BUYER: Lifeline Ministries Inc. (Johnny Bryant, president); owns one other station, none in this market
SELLER: Willis Broadcasting Corp. (Levi E. Willis, president)
FACILITIES: 97.7 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 299 ft.
FORMAT: Gospel

WIZB(FM) ABBEVILLE (DOTHAN), ALA.

PRICE: \$288,416
BUYER: Radio Training Network Inc. (James L. Campbell, president/CEO); owns 11 other stations, none in this market
SELLER: Celebration Communications Co. Inc. (Art Morris, acting chairman)
FACILITIES: 94.3 MHz, 20 kW, ant. 371 ft.
FORMAT: Christian Contemporary

KBDX(FM) BLANDING, UTAH

PRICE: \$270,000
BUYER: Thomas Troland; owns three other stations, none in this market
SELLER: KBDX Blanding LLC (William Schmidt, limited partner)
FACILITIES: 92.7 MHz, 610 W, ant. 3,406 ft.
FORMAT: Classic Rock

KDBX(FM) CLEAR LAKE, S.D.

PRICE: \$250,000
BUYER: Three Eagles Communications Inc. (Gary Buchanan, president/COO); owns 44 other stations, none in this market
SELLER: Waitt Radio (George Pelletier, SVP, radio)
FACILITIES: 107.1 MHz, 10 kW, ant. 532 ft.
FORMAT: '80s and '90s
BROKER: Chapin Enterprises
COMMENT: Three Eagles is exercising its option to purchase KDBX(FM) from Waitt Radio's WMMP LLC.

Purchase price includes non-complete payment.

AMs

KFRC(AM) SAN FRANCISCO

PRICE: \$35 million
BUYER: Family Stations Inc. (Harold Camping, president); owns 45 other stations, including KEAR(FM) San Francisco
SELLER: Infinity Broadcasting (Joel Hollander, president/COO)
FACILITIES: 610 kHz, 5 kW
FORMAT: Oldies
BROKER: Media Venture Partners

WCCD(AM) PARMA (CLEVELAND), OHIO

PRICE: \$2.1 million
BUYER: New Spirit Revival Center Ministries Inc. (Darrell C. Scott, president); owns no other stations
SELLER: Salem Communications Corp. (Edward G. Atsinger III, president/CEO)
FACILITIES: 1000 kHz, 500 W
FORMAT: Christian/Talk

KTIB(AM) THIBODAUX, LA.

PRICE: \$285,000
BUYER: Wilkins Communications Network Inc. (Robert Wilkins, president); owns 10 other stations, none in this market
SELLER: Delta Starr Broadcasting (Michael F. Starr, president)
FACILITIES: 640 kHz, 5 kW day/1 kW night

FORMAT: News/Talk
BROKER: Greg Guy of Patrick Communications

WHBS(AM) MOULTRIE, GA.

PRICE: \$195,000
BUYER: Sailor Broadcasting of Georgia Inc. (W. Ron Sailor Sr., president); owns no other stations
SELLER: Christ In You The Hope of Glory Church Inc. (Franklin D. Walden Sr., president)
FACILITIES: 1400 kHz, 1 kW
FORMAT: Religion

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

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PEOPLE

A Producer for All Seasons

Terenzio uses news lessons to beef up ratings at *Judge Brown* By Jim Finkle

John Terenzio has traveled the globe in search of big stories. He spent his early years in television as a field news producer, including stints at stations in Miami and Philadelphia, as well as senior and executive producer posts at ABC News and *NBC Nightly News*. At ABC alone, Terenzio covered four wars and three presidential elections and worked on at least two newsmagazines.

Today, Terenzio's primary focus is *Judge Joe Brown*, where he works as executive producer of the No. 2 court show in syndication. He gets high marks for his work on the show: Ratings are up across the board since he took over as executive producer in September 2003.

In February, *Brown* pulled in average of 6.9 million viewers and a 2.9 rating among women 25-54. The queen of the courtroom, *Judge Judy*, is far ahead with 11.3 million viewers and a rating of 4.6 in that key female demo. *Divorce Court* follows in third (5.2 million viewers and a 2.5 rating).

His full-time focus is sustaining *Brown's* growth among women: The show's biggest ratings gains have been in the youngest demo. Women 18-34 are up 15% so far this season compared with two years ago, before Terenzio came on board. Women 18-49 are up 13%, while women 25-54 are up 12%.

Terenzio says he used a simple strategy to push down the average age of his audience. He instituted new guidelines for selecting litigants, urging producers to avoid selecting people over 40. He also beefed up screening to identify the most entertaining candidates: the judge gets more animated when dealing with passionate litigants. If they sound dull on the phone, they're likely to fail on camera, says Terenzio.

LESSONS LEARNED

Reared in New Jersey, he graduated with a degree in journalism from Northwestern University in 1976. Three years later, he became an investigative reporter at KYW-TV Philadelphia. By 1979, he was a field producer at ABC News. In fact, he honed his booking skills while working as a producer for Ted Koppel on ABC's *Nightline*.

At ABC, he met an influential teacher: Roone Arledge, the broadcasting legend who turned ABC Sports and ABC News around during the 1970s and 1980s. "The lessons learned from him were immense," Terenzio says. "His understanding of demographics was visionary."

He spent two years at *NBC Nightly News* before moving in 1991 to a far edgier format: Fox's daily tabloid maga-

zine *A Current Affair*. He came in with a mandate from then-Twentieth TV Chairman Lucie Salhany to soften the show's sleazier edges. At one point, Terenzio bragged to *Daily Variety* the show would have its first sweeps with "no strippers swinging around a pole."

He also broke new ground at *Affair*, axing unwritten rules that stories on gays and urban America were verboten. Terenzio also landed an exclusive interview with Jennifer Flowers, who talked about her affair with Bill Clinton. But he refused to

pay \$100,000 for an Amy Fisher interview and passed on videotapes in which Mia Farrow's son Dylan allegedly described being molested by Woody Allen.

After leaving *Affair* in 1993, he worked as a consultant. By 1997, he took a job supervising news programming for

Fox Sports Net. Instead of preparing news to fill assigned schedule slots, Terenzio built a news operation. "He is very

good at thinking about his production as a business, as opposed to just a production," says Jeff Shell, former CFO of Fox Sports Net, who becomes Comcast's president of programming in May.

LOADED WITH IDEAS

In 2000, the enterprising Terenzio caught the Internet bug and took a post as programming and publishing president of Broadband Sports, which created multimedia sports content for Internet portals and sports Web sites. Terenzio was a good fit in the dotcom culture, says Richard Nanula, his Broadband Sports boss, now CFO at Amgen, the world's largest biotech company. "He's one of the highest-energy, fastest-talking, funniest guys I've ever worked with," says Nanula. "His mind moves quickly, coming up with an idea a minute."

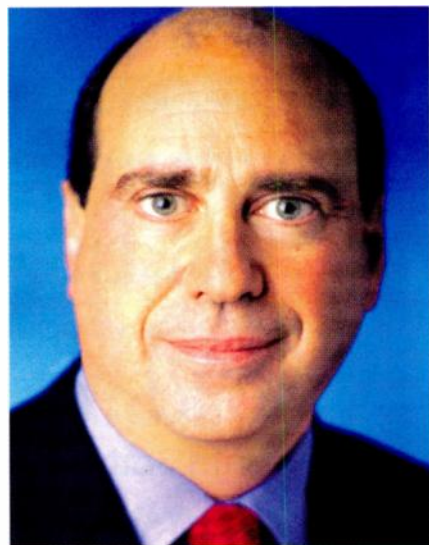
Although Broadband Sports failed, Terenzio says it gave him valuable training in new technologies. "You can take Internet lessons into traditional media," he says. Visitors to the *Judge Brown* Web site can view video clips, apply to appear on the show or get Web-based legal information by clicking through to links from another company, Nolo.

Terenzio also wants to turn the site into a profit center. He declined to discuss those details, but, given the subject of the show, logical options could include e-commerce (such as *Judge Brown* T-shirts and mugs), referrals, class-action lawsuit listings and a broad range of ads geared to women.

Tech savvy goes only so far, he says. It's important to stay apace with pop culture. "When I was young, I loved going to see the Rolling Stones. But I don't want to see the Rolling Stones today. I want to see young people on stage," he says. "You want to keep on the forefront on what's new, what your viewers will appreciate."

When not immersed in *Brown*, Terenzio travels to China four times a year as a consultant to a government-operated 24-hour English-language news channel run by CCTV in Beijing. *Time* recently described the seasoned TV pro as "the first foreigner charged with putting an internationally friendly face on the mainland's propaganda machine." ■

FIFTH ESTATER



JOHN TEREZIO

Executive Producer, *Judge Joe Brown*
(Consultant, CCTV-China Central Television)

B. May 14, 1953

EDUCATION

B.S., Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University, 1976

EMPLOYMENT

Assignment editor/producer/on-air investigative reporter, KYW-TV, 1976-79; field producer/national assignment manager, ABC News, 1979-85; news director, WPLG-TV, 1985-87; senior producer, ABC News, 1987-89; executive producer, *NBC Nightly News* weekend editions, 1989-91; executive producer, *A Current Affair*, 1991-93; executive producer, *The Crusaders*; consultant, Buena Vista Television, 1993-97; executive vice president/executive producer, Fox Sports Net, 1997-2000; president, programming and publishing, Broadband Sports, 2000-02; present position since September 2003

PERSONAL

Married; three children

FATES & FORTUNES

BROADCAST TV

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

DENISE FINCH, account executive, KTVT Dallas, named local sales manager.

At KTXA Fort Worth, Texas: **GLENN COLEMAN**, account executive, promoted to local sales manager; **KYLE BRAUNER**, account executive, Viacom Spot Sales Office, Austin, Texas, named national sales manager.

At KAUT Oklahoma City: **NICK NICOLL**, account executive, KOCO Oklahoma City, Okla., named new business development manager; **TINA DAWSON**, account executive, KOKH/KOCB Oklahoma City, named national sales manager.

CABLE TV

At Cox Communications: **DAN HENSON**, director, customer operations, Western region, promoted to VP, customer operations, Las Vegas; **JERMICA CURRY**, national sales support manager, Cox business services, promoted to director, national sales operations, Cox business services; **CATHY FERGUSON**, marketing coordinator and corporate event planner, Shenandoah Life Insurance, Roanoke, Va., named account coordinator, Cox Media, Roanoke, Va.

GARY WATERFIELD, area VP, West division, Comcast, Salt Lake City, returns to Comcast Southern division, Charleston, S.C., as VP.

PROGRAMMING

DEBORAH GIBSON, senior director, production finance, Court TV, New York, promoted to VP. **MATTHEW FRANKEL**, VP, public relations, IFC Companies, New York, named VP, corporate communications, Rainbow Media Holdings, New York.

At Turner Broadcasting System Inc., Atlanta: **KAREN CASSELL**, senior VP, public relations, TBS and TNT, promoted to senior VP, entertainment public relations, TBS Inc.; **MONICA NEAL**, VP, public relations, Turner South, adds oversight of Turner Classic Movies; **JAMES GLASSCOCK**, director, advanced media technology, Turner, Atlanta, named director, business development, Turner Broadcasting System Inc., Atlanta.

KELVIN DAVIS, senior director, editorial operations, CNN/U.S., Atlanta, named senior director, sales and affiliate relations, CNN

Continued on page 68

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Edward O. Fritts
President & CEO
NAB

Keynote Speaker



Ivan Seidenberg
Chairman & CEO
Verizon
Communications

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Recipient**



Lowry Mays
Chairman of the Board
Clear Channel
Communications

**Spirit of Broadcasting Award
Recipient: Howard University**



H. Patrick Swygert
President
Howard University



Debbie Allen
Producer, Director,
Actor and
Choreographer
Howard University
Alumna

April 17, 2005

**Broadcast Engineering
Conference Opening
Keynote Speaker**



Dr. Robert Pepper
Chief, Policy Development
FCC

April 18, 2005

**MultiMedia World
Keynote Speaker**



Hector Ruiz
Chairman & CEO
Advanced Micro Devices
(AMD)

April 18, 2005

**RTNDA Paul White Award
Reception & Dinner**

Award Recipient:



Charles Osgood
CBS

April 18, 2005

**Television Luncheon
Hall of Fame Inductee**



Jay Leno
Host of The Tonight Show
with Jay Leno

Luncheon sponsored by: **Microsoft**

April 19, 2005

**Radio Luncheon
Keynote Speaker**



John Gage
Co-Founder and Chief
Researcher
Sun Microsystems

Hall of Fame Inductee



Jack Buck
1924-2002

Accepting:



Carole Buck

Special Remarks:



Ozzie Smith
National Baseball
Hall of Fame

Luncheon sponsored by: **ASCAP**

April 20, 2005

**Technology Luncheon
Keynote Speaker**



Dr. Robert W. Lucky
Engineer/Author

**Engineering Achievement Award
Recipient (Radio)**



Milford K. Smith
Greater Media, Inc.

**Engineering Achievement Award
Recipient (TV)**



Dr. Oded Bendov
TV Transmission
Antenna Group, Inc.

**Convergence and Content on the
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April 18, 2005
Shane Robison
Chief Technology Officer/
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HP

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Video - The Next Wave in Publishing



April 19, 2005
Steve Saylor
Vice President of Digital
Video and Audio
Adobe Systems

**IFTV - The Technology and
Market Outlook**



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Jonathan Klein
President
CNN/U.S.

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**Look Before You Leap - The Dollars
and Sense of Transitioning to HD**



April 19, 2005
David Krall
President/CEO
Avid

**Taking It to the Streets - Mobile
Devices Add Drama to Sports &
Reality Programming**



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Mark Cuban
President
HDNet, LLC

New Technology for Digital Media



April 20, 2005
Kenneth Williams
Chief Executive Officer
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PEOPLE

Fates & Fortunes

Continued from page 66

relations, Turner South, adds oversight of Turner Classic Movies: **JAMES GLASSCOCK**, director.

advanced media technology, Turner, Atlanta, named director, business development, Turner Broadcasting System Inc., Atlanta. **MELVIN DAVIS**, senior

director, editorial operations, CNN/U.S., Atlanta, named senior director, sales and affiliate relations, CNN NewSource sales, Atlanta. **JANICE MOORE**, VP,

corporate marketing, Rainbow Media/IFC Network, New York, named senior VP, marketing, WE: Women's Entertainment, New York. **DANIEL SMITH**, director.

production, Playboy Entertainment Group, Inc., Los Angeles, promoted to VP.

ANTHONY WHITE, senior VP/director, Futures, Western region, Initiative Los Angeles, joins Hallmark Channel/Hallmark Movie Channel, Los Angeles, as VP, marketing.

At NBC Universal Cable, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: **CORINNE BELLVILLE**, regional sales manager, named director, affiliate field sales; **HEATHER**

Breakfast Research Forum

May 10, 2005

7am-12 noon

Marriott Marquis, New York City

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The Weather Channel

MCCALLION, manager, Southeast region, promoted to director, affiliate field sales; **JENNIFER TOOLE**, manager, promoted to director, affiliate field sales Northeast region.

BECKY A. POWHATAN, executive VP, business affairs and general counsel, The Weather Channel, Atlanta, adds



James Glasscock
Turner Broadcasting System

oversight of affiliates sales and affiliate operations.

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WICT NEW YORK
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MTV Networks Screening
Room, New York Contact:
nywict@yahoo.com

MARCH 30-APRIL 1
DIVERSITYBUSINESS.COM
**MULTICULTURAL BUSINESS
CONFERENCE AND AWARDS**
Foxwoods Resort Casino
Mashuntucket, Conn.
Contact: William Stokes 203-
255-8966, wstokes@ccaii.com
or www.DiversityBusiness.com/
conference

MARCH 31
**TELEVISION BUREAU OF ADVERTISING
MARKETING CONFERENCE**
Jacob Javits Convention
Center, New York Contact:
Janice Garjian at 212-486-
1111 or www.tvb.org

APRIL

APRIL 1
**BROADCASTERS' FOUNDATION
OFFSHORE FISHING CHALLENGE**
The Breakers, Palm Beach,
Fla. Contact: Gordon Hastings
203-862-8577 or gthastings@
broadcastersfoundation.org

APRIL 2
**RADIO-TELEVISION NEWS DIRECTORS
ASSOCIATION & FOUNDATION
EMERSON COLLEGE CHAPTER
CONFERENCE AND AWARDS**
Marriott Hotel, Newton,
Mass. Contact: Bob
Salsberg 617-357-8100 or
www.aprndaemerson.com

APRIL 3-5
**NATIONAL CABLE &
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION
THE NATIONAL SHOW**
The Moscone Center,
San Francisco
Contact: NCTA Industry
Affairs 202-775-3669 or
www.thenationalshow.com

APRIL 3-5
**NATIONAL CABLE &
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION
VANGUARD AWARDS**
The Moscone Center,
San Francisco. Contact:
www.thenationalshow.com or
202-775-3669; Nominations:
Michelle Ray 202-775-3669
or mray@ncta.com

APRIL 5
**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MULTI-
ETHNICITY IN COMMUNICATIONS
2005 ANNUAL AWARDS BREAKFAST**
Marriott San Francisco
Contact: Beatrice M. Robbio/
NAMIC at 212-594-5985 or

Dana Gleeson/Beaman Incor-
porated at 312-751-9689

APRIL 5
**[ITVT] AND THE NATIONAL CABLE &
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION
[ITVT] AWARDS FOR LEADERSHIP IN**

INTERACTIVE TELEVISION
Moscone West, San Francisco
Contact: [http://www.itvt.com/
eventregistration.html](http://www.itvt.com/eventregistration.html)

APRIL 7-10
CABLE & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**ASSOCIATION FOR MARKETING
CTAM OF THE ROCKIES PRESENTS
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Colo. Contact: SkiTAM
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★ **PENNSYLVANIA CONVENTION CENTER** ★

Fast Track

Continued from page 6
successful **Hallmark Mystery Movie** wheel: *Mystery Woman*, *McBride* and *Jane Doe*.—A.B.

Miss USA Gets Out the Vote

Beauty-pageant fans will cast votes for **Miss USA** finalists for the first time in the pageant's 54-year history.

The **Miss Universe Organization**, which produces the Miss USA event, has partnered with **Cover Girl** and **NBC** to give viewers a limited role in selecting finalists for NBC's April 11 broadcast.

From April 1 to 6, fans visiting the **Cover Girl** Web site (www.covergirl.com) will be prompted to select 10 of 51 Miss USA 2005 contestants in three categories: evening gown, swimsuit and interview. Voters will base their selections on interviews and photos available online.

Viewers' ballots will collectively represent a "virtual judge, filling one spot on the preliminary judging panel," according to an NBC release.

The **Miss Universe Organization** recently inked a two-year deal with **Cover Girl**, making the firm the official cosmetics sponsor of **Miss Universe**, **Miss USA** and **Miss Teen USA**.

FAST TRACK

—J.N.M.

'Wall Street Week' Axed

Long-running financial-analysis show **Wall Street Week** has been cancelled. The announcement was made by **Maryland Public Television** last week. **MPT** produces the program, which is shown on **PBS**.

The final episode of the 35-year-old show will be produced for broadcast on Friday, June 24 at 8:30 p.m. ET. **Wall Street Week With Louis Rukeyser** was relaunched in 2002 as **Wall Street Week With Fortune**, after host **Rukeyser** was removed. The move was an attempt to capture a younger audience. **Fortune** Editorial Director **Geoffrey Colvin** and **Karen Gibbs**—a former business correspondent for **Fox News**—served as the hosts of the relaunched show. **Rukeyser** went on to host the **CNBC** program **Louis Rukeyser's Wall Street**, which ended in December after he became ill.

"This announcement signals the end of an era for us," said **Robert J. Shuman**, president/CEO of **Maryland Public Television**.—J.N.M.

Time Warner Settles With SEC, Restates Numbers

Time Warner Inc. has settled a **Securities and Exchange Commission** investigation into fraudulent account-

Nielsen Needs a Fix, Study Says

After an eight-month review, the **Independent Task Force on Television Measurement** unveiled its recommendations March 23 to **Nielsen Media Research** to improve the company's television-ratings services.

The 19-member group, headed by former **Rep. Cardiss Collins**, called on Nielsen to improve the sample for its new local people meter (LPM) electronic measurement system, which has drawn fire for undercounting minorities. Other suggestions called for improving Nielsen's field force, internal diversity and public communications.

Nielsen President/CEO **Susan Whiting** pledged to adopt many of the recommendations, but said Nielsen's clients and the **Media Ratings Council**, which accredits audience measurement, will need to support changes.

At the top of the task force's list were the controversial LPMs, currently in place in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Boston, and slated to roll out soon in Atlanta, Dallas, Washington and Philadelphia. LPMs "can more accurately measure the diverse viewing audience" than the paper logs, or "diaries," they replace, the Task Force noted. Among the suggestions to improve the sample were financial incentives and a new recruitment video. The Task Force also studied Nielsen's field operations, concluding that multilingual written materials, female representatives and cultural training would aid in minority recruitment.

The full report is posted on www.everyonecounts.tv.

The group was formed in April 2004 on the recommendation of **Rep. Charles B. Rangel** (D-N.Y.) in response to concerns that LPMs were not accurately counting minority viewers.—A.R.

Cartoon Adds Five Shows

Adult Swim, **Cartoon Network's** male-skewing late-night block, will debut five original series and four new pilots in 2005, the **Turner** network said last week. Fifteen half-hour episodes of **The Boondocks**, based on the political comic strip, debut in October. Six episodes of animated private eye comedy **Stroker & Hoop** bow September 4. **American Dad** joins in May, and **Squidbillies**, **12oz Mouse** and **Perfect Hair Forever** premiere in September.

Four shows will air as pilots in October—**Moral Orel**, **Saul of the Mole People**, **Lucy: Daughter of the Devil** and **Minori-Team**. New episodes of **The Venture Bros.** and **Aqua Teen Hunger Force** will join the block. **Adult Swim**, which has posted a 42% jump season to date with viewers 18-34 (averaging 399,000 between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m.), will begin being tracked by Nielsen as an individual network March 28.—A.B.

Cable in the Classroom Picks Teacher To Lead

Senior **Education Department** official **Helen Soulé** will be executive director of **Cable in the Classroom**, the cable industry's education foundation. Currently chief of staff to the Assistant Secretary of Postsecondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education, **Soulé** begins her new job April 11. She succeeds **Peggy O'Brien**, who joined the **Corporation for Public Broadcasting** last fall.

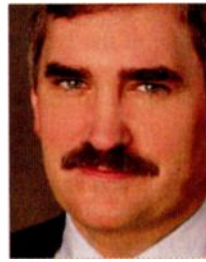
Soulé was a classroom teacher for 25 years.



Cardiss Collins



New Starz Edge logo



Josh Howard

ing of **AOL** advertising-revenue and subscriber numbers. The company will pay a \$300 million fine and incur other penalties as part of the settlement approved by the **SEC** last week.

The **SEC** charged that, as Internet stock properties began to lose value in mid 2000, **Time Warner** "employed fraudulent round-trip transactions that boosted its online-advertising revenue to mask the fact that it also experienced a business slowdown," according to a statement released by the commission.

Time Warner neither admitted nor denied any wrongdoing in the settlement. In addition to the fine, the company will reduce reported online-advertising revenues by approximately \$500 million (in addition to \$190 million already restated) for the period from fourth quarter 2000 through 2002.

The company agreed to comply with an **SEC** cease-and-desist order issued to **AOL**.

Time Warner will also restate accounting of a consolidation of the **AOL Europe** venture, which it co-owned with **Bertelsmann**.—J.N.M.

Howard Resigns From CBS

Josh Howard, who served as executive producer for a controversial **60 Minutes Wednesday** story on President **Bush**, has resigned from his position at **CBS News**.

Howard is the last of the three **CBS News** staff members to resign after a botched Sept. 8, 2004, story on the president's service in the **Texas Air National Guard**. **CBS News** SVP **Betsy West** and Senior Broadcast Producer **Mary Murphy** resigned several weeks ago.

Dan Rather, who reported the **Bush** story, remained with the network but stepped down from the **CBS Evening News** anchor desk earlier this month.

The only **CBS News** employee to be fired for involvement in the **Bush-National Guard** story, **Mary Mapes**, plans to write a book about the fiasco for **St. Martin's Press**. On Tuesday, **Reuters** cited sources who said the deal was worth more than \$500,000; the book will likely be published this fall.—J.N.M.

New Looks for Starz, Encore Nets

Starz Entertainment Group rebranded all 13 of its **Starz** and **Encore** channels with new on-air looks and logos. The company also launched three channels: **Starz Kids & Family**, which consolidates the **Starz Kids** and **Starz Family** channels; funny-focused **Starz Comedy**; and **Starz Edge**, which will target the males 18-34 demo.

Starz Theater, which had been programmed like a movie theater to air a handful of films at the same time each night, drops out of the lineup.

Encore will tack on its name to each of its thematic channels to help viewers associate the individual networks with the **Encore** brand. **Westerns**, for example, will now be called **Encore Westerns**. **Mystery**, **Drama**, **Action**, **Love** and teen-targeted **Wam** will follow suit. **Starz Entertainment Group** is owned by **Liberty Media**.

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The 2005 Brand Builders will be profiled in a Special Supplement published in both Broadcasting & Cable and Multichannel News during the annual PROMAX&BDA conference, June 21-23 at the Marriott Marquis in New York. Award-winners will also be formally recognized at the conference itself.

ISSUE DATE: JUNE 20, 2005

SPACE CLOSE: JUNE 9, 2005

MATERIAL DUE: JUNE 13, 2005



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Death By Television

Like the rest of the nation, we watched the Terri Schiavo ordeal play itself out on the news networks last week. As we did, we supposed that for at least some of those millions watching, the questions raised weren't only about states' rights, or patients' rights, or whether Schiavo is in a "persistent vegetative state", or whether Republicans are saints and the Democrats are killers.

Surely, many must have wondered: Aren't CNN and Fox and MSNBC and radio talk-show hosts making a freak show out of this sad, sick woman's predicament? And if those listeners and viewers considered the contrived shouting matches unseemly, what then did they make of the news media who used Terri Schiavo as a ratings gimmick?

Not much, we conclude. It is significant to us that the more news there is out there—the 24/7 news cycle—the more Americans have grown to doubt it and mistrust it, and the more the news business itself has bent its own better journalistic instincts to stay competitive. Terri Schiavo's predicament has existed for years but, for the media, the literal life-and-death struggle is impossible to resist. To jaded media-watchers, however, she is just more fodder—easiest to cover by not straying too far from the emotional argument.

The television and radio news media have by now nurtured the Us versus Them story so completely, it is not difficult to come up with medical experts with political agendas, or reli-

gious leaders who also have theirs. Roving bands of pundits travel the TV carny circuit at times like this, and even the stars at the center of the controversy show up everywhere.

Robert and Mary Schindler—Terri's parents—and Terri's sister, Suzanne, sat in the Florida outdoors in producers' chairs on Fox News Channel's *Hannity & Colmes* last Wednesday night, their sound bites down pat. Terri's father stated flatly, and without contradiction, "They're murdering her. It's judicial homicide." Suzanne said, emphatically, "I know my sister. She would never in a million years want to be starved to death." Pat Robertson, up next, said, "Why, you wouldn't treat a dog or horse the way they're treating Terri." A few minutes earlier, on *The O'Reilly Factor*, Bill O'Reilly ended his program with letters from viewers who lamented: The trouble with America

is that the power elite confuse legal right for moral right. And yes, there was just one lonely letter from a rational physician, who said he'd participated in "pulling the plug" cases and who admonished news professionals and their glib guests for referring to

"killing" or "murdering" Terri Schiavo. On other networks, to varying degrees of tastelessness, the same show was repeated.

The plight of Terri Schiavo would be sad enough if there had been no media coverage. But as she evolved into a media plaything, her situation became sadder than it was before. If the question was ever about Terri Schiavo dying with dignity, her opportunity to do so ended last week, right on your TV set.

EDITORIAL

Choking Broadband Competition

With the audacity of highwaymen, the Baby Bells are fleecing broadband subscribers through state laws outlawing fair competition by municipalities. The railroading of state legislatures is reminiscent of robber barons during the gilded age. It should provoke President George W. Bush to demand federal legislation nullifying the anti-competitive state proscriptions. Bush has celebrated universal broadband access as his telecommunications policy North Star. To sit idly by while the Baby Bells sabotage that objective would mark one of President Bush's least lofty hours.

Pennsylvania's recent law generally prohibiting municipalities from broadband competition is emblematic of the mischief afoot. At present, cable companies and the Baby Bells dominate the high-speed access market. In a large percentage of cases, either cable or digital subscriber line (DSL) service offered by the Bells are the only choices. The incumbents exercise market power, which inflates prices and dulls innovation and service. The Bells fear competition will erode excess profits and compel Mercury-footed rather than lead-footed responses to customer complaints and desires.

Broadband rates in the United States are among the world's highest—\$35-\$40 per month—for relatively slow speeds of 1 to 2 megabits per second. Japan, in contrast, features \$15 per-month rates for speeds approximating 30 megabits per second.

The anti-competitive Pennsylvania statute was occasioned by Philadelphia's plan to offer wireless Internet access throughout the city. A smaller municipality, Kutztown, had deployed a high-speed fiber network that similarly threatened Verizon's broadband subscriber base. The telephone colossus confronted a choice between beating the new competition with superior prices and service, and defeating the municipalities through the law. Verizon chose the latter.

The anti-consumer statute provoked outrage sufficient to require a grandfather exception for Philadelphia's plan. But most of Pennsylvania's residents and businesses are now vulnerable to broadband predation by Verizon.

Pennsylvania joined 13 other states which shield the Baby Bells from competition by municipalities. The Bells unpersuasively argue that cities would enjoy an unfair advantage because of their exemption from taxes or access to low-cost capital.

President Bush's complacency with a remonopolization of the telecommunications industry is inexplicable and inexcusable. He has praised free enterprise, but has neglected to subject the Baby Bells to antitrust laws—the Magna Charta of economic liberty. The President has celebrated small businesses' 20-cylinder engines of economic growth, but has acquiesced in the FCC's laceration of small local-exchange carriers and monumental rate hikes for small-business subscribers. The president is exhibiting the same complacency over the Baby Bells' legal assaults on broadband competition.

What is at stake is not intellectual tidiness, but a choice between a forward-looking, consumer-friendly and competitive telecommunications industry, and a backward-looking, sluggish and monopolistic alternative. Shouldn't President Bush choose the former, and begin by initiating federal legislation to protect the right of municipalities to compete for broadband subscribers?

Bruce Fein was the FCC general counsel under President Ronald Reagan, and is a contributing editor to Tech Central Station, an attorney at Bruce Fein & Associates, and an international consultant at The Lichfield Group.

AIRTIME Bruce Fein

OPEN MIKE

The 'SNL' Funny Nose Job

Editor: You mentioned in Flash! ("The 'Saturday Night Live' Nose for News," March 21, page 6) that no one had yet filed a complaint regarding the show [in which David Spade's nose was fit by makeup artists to look like a penis]. For your records, I filed a complaint regarding the episode. Yes, I understand *SNL* is going for the shock value and an "I can't believe they went there" type of reaction—but it's simply inappropriate. My wife and I don't care to see that. Plus, if you read what violates FCC guidelines, the "implant" is clearly in violation of that rule.

Tony May
Mayday Media, Inc.
Atlanta

Editor: *SNL* considers itself (as does NBC) a "cutting edge" comedy. If *SNL* really wants to push the entertainment humor envelope, they should try being funny. That would be unique. Over the many celebrated years past, Lorne Michaels' only success has become less funny and more crude.

Perhaps the media should be creative and clever and begin to apply a new category to TV entertainment. We have drama, reality, comedy—how about crude? [This is] a better solution to ratings, parental guides, etc., than anyone has come up with so far. Utilizing this nomenclature, those who want crude can tune in—while those who want comedy have the opportunity to keep searching.

The fact that the FCC received no complaints is probably less an indicator that few were offended, and more of a clue that few were watching.

Richard Brown
(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: bnletters@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.

TWO CENTS

"The new 'bitch,' in a usage that has become popular on network television, refers not to dogs or women, but to men.

And while parody and overuse are taking the misogynistic sting out of the old one, this new bitch is just getting its claws."

Virginia Heffernan, writing in *The New York Times*, on the preponderance of the use of the epithet "bitch" on prime time television

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Maul in the Family

The Contender is too sadly real to be a reality hit

Can a reality TV show be too real for its own good? This rather harsh reality check came to mind repeatedly while watching the unintentionally downbeat March 20 episode of NBC's critically underwhelming and underperforming (ratings-wise) boxing saga, *The Contender*.

This was the hour devoted to the match involving Najai Turpin, the 23-year-old Philadelphia hopeful who shot himself in a car outside his training gym on Valentine's Day, long after filming had completed on the much-delayed series but three weeks before it actually premiered.

Although NBC had hyped the episode in promos as "a loving tribute to a fallen contender," the show itself made no mention of Turpin's fate until an episode featuring series star Sugar Ray Leonard told viewers of the death and disclosed that a trust fund had been established for Turpin's adorable 2-year-old daughter, Anje, the only thing in the young man's life that seemed to bring him much joy.

Still, the pre-publicity of Turpin's tragedy made it impossible to sit through the episode without being aware of the shuddery poignancy of his on-camera confession that, "if I die today or tomorrow, [my family will] have nothing." He spoke of the show as a way "to fight your way out of the ghetto." In

The Contender is such a strange and unsatisfying show, even by reality TV's weird standards.

a sour irony, the camera later focused on a sign on the *Contender* set sporting the proverb "That which doesn't kill us makes us stronger."

Unfortunately, in the case of Najai Turpin, who lost in five rounds to the more book-smart Sergio Mora—earlier shown quoting Napoleon (!), Oscar Wilde (!!) and Nietzsche (!!!)—this didn't appear to have been much of a growth experience.

But there's really no way to know. In the episodes leading up to his match, Turpin was (like many of the show's cast) next to invisible. As often happens in a reality show, if you don't make noise, you don't get noticed. And Turpin appears

to have been unusually quiet.

Throughout his spotlight episode, he remained an enigmatic figure. One of his rivals on the opposing "West" team said no one wanted to fight him because no one really knew him. "He's a nut," said Mora, before learning he would face Turpin in the ring.

Among Turpin's few sound bites was a line that has become a *Contender* cliché, however based in truth it might be: "My family needs this," he said. "I'm here for a real reason." The desperation in his tone was unmistakable—and, yes, real—as was the bewildered pain in his eyes after losing the fight and his chance for the ultimate \$1 million purse.

The family-values thing is a mantra for everyone involved in this series. Boxers are constantly hugging their kids, mom or significant other in what seems to be a transparent effort to clean up boxing's tarnished image, or just to give the show a larger context than being a series about guys who beat the hell out of each other. "I fight for my family as much as myself," said contestant Jeff Fraza earlier in the episode, before he learned he had chicken pox and, to his dismay, was quickly sent packing.

The guy voted in to take Fraza's place, world-ranked Peter Manfredo, had been defeated in the series opener while his 2-year-old daughter watched. Weeping in the shower after his loss, the humiliated and humbled Manfredo had acted as if his life were effectively over. Now he gets a second chance to prove himself. But by the time

he does, will anyone tune in to notice?

The Contender is such a strange and unsatisfying show, even by reality TV's weird standards. Half of each episode is like a male weepie, with contestants unveiling personal sob stories as if they were auditioning for the juggernaut competition on ABC, *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*. Then in the final act, it turns from *Rocky* lite (with Sly Stallone as pumped-up cheerleader) to *Raging Bull*, with the players pounding each other in ferociously edited bouts that use sound and visual effects to slow down and accentuate each significant punch.

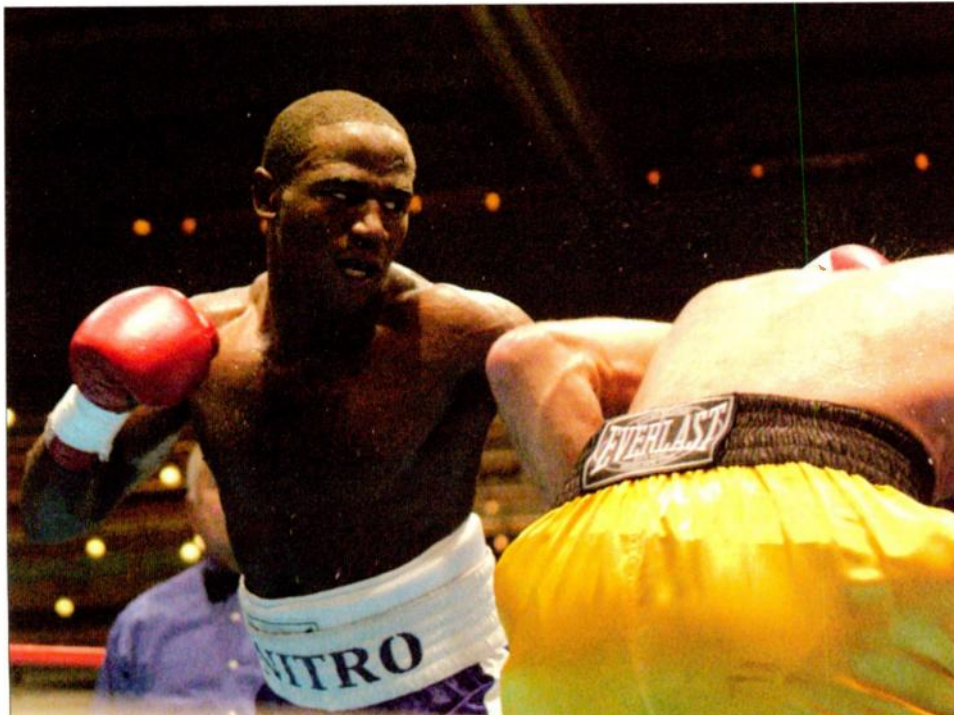
The first part is boring, the last part revolting, and it's all coated in a sentimental goo that doesn't quite disguise the raw need of these men to win. *It's for their families, remember?* Yes, but it's also for their personal macho pride.

I can't fathom who the target audience of this show is meant to be. It's not that *The Contender* is badly done as much as it is a bad idea. (NBC had good reason to be scared when Fox's shameless ripoff, *The Last Great Champ*, instantly flopped last fall.) Better for Mark Burnett to stick to tribal councils and boardroom firings. In the ring, *The Contender* is anything but.

Unlike most reality-TV shows, which are guilty pleasures at best and voyeuristic train wrecks (like TV Land's misbegotten *Chasing Farrah*) at worst, *The Contender* is not an escapist experience. The stakes feel too high. The game is more than a game. It's life and, literally, death.

But as a reality contest, it's a real downer. ■

MATT ROUSH



Last week, *The Contender* paid tribute to Najai Turpin, a contestant who killed himself.

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We are enabling customers to create new revenue streams today, providing stability during technology transitions and offering scalability to ensure a secure investment for expansions ahead. We include the service and support to back it up.

Partnering with Leitch is a winning strategy.


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