



Promax
Brand Builders
MARKETING PROS HONORED
PAGE 17

13

Number of networks that carried Michael Jackson's verdict live



Cable's Hot Summer

Originals like TNT's *Closer*, with Kyrsten Sledz (left), are scoring big. **Page 12**

JUNE 20, 2005

BROADCASTING & CABLE



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Reed Business Information

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EXCLUSIVE

WB's Shopping Spree

Now that The WB cancelled its afternoon kids block, WB

Chairman Garth Ancier has to figure out what to fill the time with. Syndicators are seeing dollar signs. **Page 16**



Garth Ancier

THE DOLAN DISCOUNT

WHY CABLEVISION CAN'T GET RESPECT

Despite boardroom drama and a money-burning startup, cable giant stays focused and bests its peers. **By John M. Higgins**



Despite the drama surrounding Cablevision CEO James (left) and his father, Chairman Charles, the cable operator's systems are surprisingly strong.

Cablevision Systems Corp. suffers from what some investors dub the Dolan Discount, the markdown on the stock due to the company's controversies: a bruising yet successful public fight to block a stadium in New York City, a money-burning satellite startup called Voom, and caustic boardroom battles. Recently, the cable giant bid \$16.5 billion for Adelphia Communications, a move criticized on Wall Street as counter to



Madison Square Garden

its strategy to concentrate on greater New York. Today, Cablevision's stock trades at a valuation that's 20%-25% less than its peers, analysts say. ■ But behind the headlines, there's plenty going *right* at family-controlled Cablevision, a \$5 billion-a-year cable company that owns AMC, Fuse and IFC networks, as well as Madison Square Garden, Radio City Music



AMC's *Celebrity Charades*

Hall, the New York Knicks and the Rangers. By several key measures—including revenue per subscriber, cash flow and sales of high-speed Internet service—Cablevision outperforms giants like Comcast, Time Warner Cable and Cox Communications.

■ Why so much better? The answers are rooted in smart decisions made years ago by the father and son known throughout the industry as mavericks. **PAGE 14**

Radio City Rockettes



Eight Years!

- **#1*** in 25 of the Top 25 Markets!
- **#1*** in 52 of 56 Overnight Markets!
- **Highest Overnight Avg. Rtg. in 8 Years (8.1)!**
- **Up 69% Over Lead-In Average (4.8)!**
- **Up 11% Over Last May (7.3 vs 8.1)!**

Market	Station	HH Rtg	HH Shr	Rank	Market	Station	HH Rtg	HH Shr	Rank
New York	WABC-TV	8.0	21	#1	Hartford	WFSB-TV	7.1	20	#1
Los Angeles	KABC-TV	5.3	15	#1	Charlotte	WSOC-TV	8.0	21	#1
Chicago	WLS-TV	7.5	27	#1	Nashville	WSMV-TV	10.2	22	#1
Philadelphia	WPVI-TV	9.4	21	#1	Kansas City	KMBC-TV	9.0	21	#1
Boston	WCVB-TV	6.8	20	#1	Milwaukee	WISN-TV	8.9	20	#1
San Francisco	KGO-TV	5.2	15	#1	Cincinnati	WCPO-TV	8.5	21	#1
Dallas	WFAA-TV	7.6	17	#1	Columbus, OH	WBNS-TV	9.3	24	#1
Washington, DC	WJLA-TV	8.2	21	#1	Salt Lake City	KTVX-TV	8.1	21	#1
Atlanta	WSB-TV	9.8	21	#1	San Antonio	KSAT-TV	10.7	22	#1
Detroit	WXYZ-TV	10.5	25	#1	W. Palm Beach	WPTV-TV	9.8	24	#1
Houston	KHOU-TV	9.1	19	#1	Birmingham	WBMA-TV	8.0	17	#1
Seattle	KING-TV	8.4	22	#1	Norfolk	WVEC-TV	10.3	22	#1
Tampa	WFLA-TV	7.3	18	#1	New Orleans	WWL-TV	11.1	23	#1
Minneapolis	WCCO-TV	8.5	22	#1	Memphis	WMC-TV	7.7	14	#1
Phoenix	KTVK-TV	7.9	19	#1	Oklahoma City	KOCO-TV	9.2	20	#1
Cleveland	WEWS-TV	7.7	19	#1	Buffalo	WIVB-TV	8.9	22	#1
Miami	WFOR-TV	5.1	11	#1	Albuquerque	KOAT-TV	5.9	14	#1
Denver	KMGH-TV	7.4	18	#1	Greensboro	WXII-TV	8.7	21	#1
Sacramento	KCRA-TV	8.7	20	#1	Providence	WJAR-TV	8.3	21	#1
Orlando	WFTV-TV	9.9	22	#1	Louisville	WHAS-TV	8.0	17	#1
St. Louis	KSDK-TV	11.1	24	#1	Las Vegas	KLAS-TV	7.2	20	#1
Pittsburgh	WTAE-TV	7.5	18	#1	Jacksonville	WJXT-TV	7.6	17	#1
Baltimore	WBAL-TV	9.8	23	#1	Austin	KVUE-TV	8.2	21	#1
Portland, OR	KGW-TV	7.6	19	#1	Knoxville	WATE-TV	7.3	16	#1
Indianapolis	WTHR-TV	10.8	25	#1	Tulsa	KOTV-TV	13.1	26	#1
San Diego	KGTV-TV	8.0	19	#1	Ft. Myers	WINK-TV	10.2	22	#1

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World Radio History



Dream
Big...

Best May In



B&C WEEK
Where to be and what to watch...
Monday, June 20

There has been so much branding going on among cable channels, you'd think it was Sizzle Night on the Ponderosa ranch. **TBS:**

Very Funny. **TNT:** We Know Drama. **Spike TV:** The Network for Men. And now, **USA Network:** Characters Welcome. Which, we're guessing, refers to the on-screen talent and not a colorful but nichey target audience. It should all become


Miles O'Brien

clear tonight—until the cocktails kick in—during USA's rooftop launch party at the **Hotel Gansevoort** in New York. Meanwhile, CNN apparently has decided to brand its morning news unofficially as "Breakfast With the O'Briens." **Miles** joins **Soledad** on *American Morning* starting today.


Soledad O'Brien
Tuesday, June 21

When someone a while back mentioned a TV show called "I Want To Be a Hilton," we assumed it was a reference to the old working title of **Kirstie Alley's** *Fat Actress*, as in "I Want To Be a Radisson." We never dreamed that you could hang an entire reality show on the aspiration to live life in the manner of **Paris Hilton & Co.** How hard is that, anyway? Be very careless about your rodent-dog, your **T-Mobile Sidekick** and your homemade video erotica, and—*voilà!*—you're a Hilton. But apparently **NBC** saw a series, and Paris' mother, **Kathy**, saw...well, we're not quite sure what she saw in agreeing to host *I Want To Be a Hilton* (9 p.m. ET), since the paycheck isn't exactly an issue. Also tonight: *Rescue Me* returns to FX (10 p.m. ET). Now that **Miller** has discontinued its beer product-placement deal, given the tastes of **Denis Leary's** character, it seems a chance for **Smirnoff** to step up.


Kathy Hilton
Wednesday, June 22

CNN's **Paula** "Not an O'Brien" **Zahn** hosts the Gracie Awards

'Nightline' Newsies Can Relax

 By **J. Max Robins**

Look for *Nightline* to get jazzed up over the coming weeks. But that doesn't mean a move to the ersatz smoky nightclub set, complete with jazz combo, that I wrote about a couple of months back when ABC was weighing replacement formats pending Ted Koppel's departure at year's end.

The network shot some pilots, toying with a top-to-bottom reinvention of the show that included changing its name, focus and base of operations, from Washington to New York.

But now the idea is to let *Nightline* keep its name and evolve over the next six months into what it will look like in the post-Koppel era. Last Friday's edition, for example, at press time was scheduled to have Bob Woodruff anchor a show with different stories built around a Father's Day theme. Other *Nightline* newscasts throughout the summer are likely to trade the show's traditional single-topic format for a multi-topic structure. *Nightline* won't abandon its news and public-affairs roots, but look for the show to retain the live format that helped make its reputation, as well as sprinkle in more human-interest and pop-culture fare.

In addition to Woodruff, a number of ABC News stalwarts, including George Stephanopoulos, Terry Moran, Chris Bury, John Donovan and Jake Tapper have surfaced as part of a rotating anchor cast. One idea being bandied about is to do away with the traditional anchor format altogether and go with something more akin to *60 Minutes*, where a cadre of high-profile correspondents each introduce their own pieces.

"We can't just move into a post-Koppel era by simply putting a new person in the anchor chair," says *Nightline* executive producer Tom Bettag, who plans to go out the door with Koppel. "I was at CBS when we did that, going from Cronkite to

Rather, and it can just be disastrous if you don't shape the show to fit who the talent is going to be."

Bettag has told *Nightline* staffers that, for "the foreseeable future," the show will continue to be done from Washington, although, within ABC News headquarters in New York, it's still an open question whether the show may eventually make Gotham its home. Either way, the noise from New York is that the days of *Nightline's* being a quasi-independent D.C. fiefdom are coming to a close. ABC News brass is intimately involved in all changes being made, and network higher-ups are keeping a watchful eye.

Nobody is happy that *Nightline's* ratings have been in descent in recent years. About 3.6 million people on average watch *Nightline*, down from 3.9 million a year ago. That's significantly below the 5.8 million who watch Jay Leno or the 4.5 million who tune into David Letterman.

In recent months, ABC News President David Westin has repeatedly stated his commitment to the *Nightline* franchise in the post-Koppel era. No doubt, but back in 2002, Westin's corporate bosses were willing to dump *Nightline* and made a serious but

ultimately unsuccessful run at Letterman. The *Late Show* host ultimately decided to stay at CBS and let it be known that he didn't want to be seen as the guy who knocked Ted Koppel out of his job. "Today, even with Koppel going, it looks like *Nightline* is

safe," says a veteran ABC News executive. "But we're really powerless if Jon Stewart becomes available and the guys in L.A. decide to make a secret run at him."

Stewart is tied to Comedy Central through the 2008 presidential election,

so *Nightline* newsies can relax—but not too much. Letterman is basically tethered to CBS until 2007. By that time, Dave certainly wouldn't be known as the guy who put Ted Koppel out of work. ■

E-mail comments to bcrobins@reedbusiness.com

THE ROBINS REPORT

John Donovan may be part of a Nightline rotating anchor cast.

The idea is to let 'Nightline' keep its name and evolve over the next six months into what it will look like in the post-Koppel era.

at the Marriott Marquis hotel in New York tonight. Winners of the American Women in Radio and Television award, named for comedian Gracie Allen, include **Meryl Streep** (for HBO's *Angels in America*)


Hannah Storm

and CBS News anchor **Hannah Storm**. Someone should do the young pups in the audience a favor and explain who the delightful Gracie A. was.

The Marriott's seeing a lot of media action this week: It's also the site of the **Promax & BDA** promofest (Tues.-Thurs.). *B&C* promo: See our Promax coverage on pages 17 and 24.


Gracie Allen
Thursday, June 23

Don't be fooled by the cushiness of the agenda for the **Consumer Electronics Association's** annual CEO Summit at the luscious **Broadmoor** hotel in **Colorado Springs** (Wed.-Sat.). Yes, there are a lot of nice activities built into the schedule—"Hiking Tour in **Garden of the Gods**," "**Van Briggles** Pottery Studio Tour and Shopping Excursion"—but don't be fooled:


A Broadmoor amenity

This is a wartime summit. See page 26 for a dispatch from the front in the CEA's battle with

the **National Association of Broadcasters** over the transition to digital TV. Beats watching a potter's wheel spin.

Friday, June 24

Latest lesson from **The Learning Channel**: "Wannabe" is noun and a verb. "Do you wannabe **Stacy London**, **Clinton Kelly**, **Nick Arrojo** or **Carmindy**?" So goes the casting call for an upcoming two-hour special, *What Not To Wear: Wannabe*. Deadline for applications is today. Not that it wouldn't be fun, but we don't wannabe those folks, and we don't wannabe a Hilton. We just wannabe going. Say goodnight, Gracie, wherever you are.

—Mark Lasswell

Email info for *B&C Week* to bcweek@reedbusiness.com

FAST TRACK

House Scales Back CPB Cuts

The House Appropriations Committee last week restored the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's forward funding for FY2008, at the full \$400 million it had asked for. But the cut of \$100 million from FY2006's \$400 million was not restored. Neither was the eliminated \$23.3 million grant for **Ready to Learn** (RTL) kids programming, \$39.4 million to help with the digital transition, and \$39.6 million for interconnection equipment.

The restoration of the \$400 million for 2008 was thanks to an amendment to a larger appropriations bill introduced by ranking Democrat **David Obey** of Wisconsin, who said he hoped the other cuts would also be restored when the bill is considered next week by the full House.

CPB's advance funding was meant to be some insulation from the politics of having to go to Congress every year with tin cup in hand. Zeroing out Ready to Learn was seen as a signal of Republican displeasure with RTL's *Postcards From Buster* episode featuring lesbian parents and the perception that PBS kids programming in general was not sufficiently grounded in basic language and math skills.—*J.E.*



David Obey

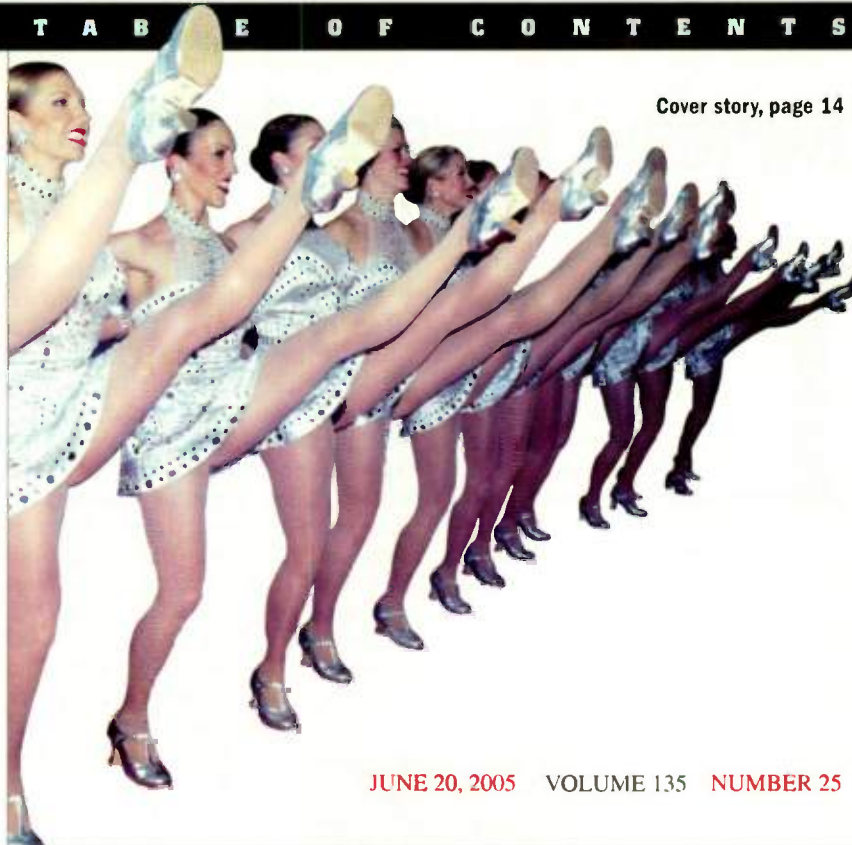
Viacom Board Approves Spinoff

Viacom's board of directors unanimously approved a plan to split the company into two parts.

The company says it will spin off the bulk of its operations into a new company to be called **CBS Corp.** That unit will include the CBS network and stations, **Paramount** and **King World** television production and syndication units; **Infinity radio**, **Viacom Outdoor**; **Showtime**; and publisher **Simon & Schuster**.

Viacom Inc. will have the faster-growing business units, including **MTV Networks** and **Paramount Pictures**.

Viacom Chairman/CEO and controlling shareholder **Sumner Redstone** will be chairman of



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Despite Boardroom Drama and a Money-Burning Startup, Cable Giant Stays Focused and Bests Peers **Page 14**

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both companies when they're divided early next year but will no longer be CEO.

Tom Freston will become CEO of Viacom, while **Les Moonves** will become CEO of CBS Corp. Viacom expects to spend more than six months securing regulatory approval of the deal.—*J.M.H.*

Madden Jumps To NBC

John Madden is joining NBC as analyst for its new *Sunday Night Football* package, and, if NBC gets its way, his current *Monday Night Football* broadcast partner **Al Michaels** may not be far behind.



John Madden

Madden signed a six-year deal aligning with the network's six-year package to begin airing in 2006. He

will make the jump from ABC's *Monday Night Football* after the 2005 season, when *MNF* moves to ESPN as Sunday nights go from ESPN to NBC.—*B.G./J.B.*

Cameras Still Banned In New York Courts

The New York State Court of Appeals has decided not to overturn a 1952 state law banning cameras in trial courts in the state.

Court TV had challenged the law as unconstitutional in oral arguments before the court April 27.

The appeals court pointed to various precedents in which other courts had ruled that the press had the same right of access to attend a trial as a member of the public but no additional right to bring cameras into the court.

It also pointed out that the New York State legislature had tested cameras in the court four times, reviewed the findings and reports, all of which recommended allowing the cameras, and then voted all four times to continue to exclude them, despite "the technological improvements to audiovisual equipment which renders its presence in courtrooms less intrusive."

"We will not circumscribe the authority constitutionally delegated to the legislature," the court said.

Though disappointed, **Court TV** was also buoyed by the court's suggestion that it was "more properly remedied by the legislature."

Currently, 39 states allow TV coverage of criminal trials.—*J.E.*

Continued on page 32

Audible.com announces a revolutionary breakthrough in podcasting. **Profit.**

audible.com®

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Considering podcasting?

Standard mp3 files are quick to create and easy to listen to, but ask yourself these questions: How will I manage it? Can I charge subscription fees? How will I protect my content? Will it support advertising? How will I measure it? How will I really create revenue from podcasting?

Here's your chance to make your podcast more "Audible".

Audible is the #1 spoken audio information and entertainment service on the Internet today. Every day, thousands of people download Audible content to 135 AudibleReady® devices including the Apple® iPod™. For nearly 10 years consumers have trusted Audible to provide the service and the technology to keep them plugged into the audio content they love – and producers have trusted Audible to protect and create revenue from their spoken word audio content.

Starting June 24th, you can put Audible's management experience, platforms and tools to work for you and your podcasting strategy. Audible now offers content producers the infrastructure for circulation control, paid subscriptions and advertising management needed to effortlessly produce and manage podcasting – and turn that audio content into predictable, incremental revenue.

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Startup Sues Nielsen

Ratings firm brings federal antitrust charges against industry titan

By Allison Romano

A tiny Florida-based ratings provider is charging in federal court that industry Goliath Nielsen Media Research crushes would-be rivals and that its "antiquated" system negatively affects viewers and advertisers.

ErinMedia, a startup audience-measurement firm, and its sister company ReacTV filed suit last week in United States District Court in Tampa, Fla., alleging that Nielsen maintains an illegal monopoly over the TV-ratings industry "through various predatory practices designed to impede or prevent competitive entry by companies like ErinMedia."

The allegations of antitrust violations create yet another headache for Nielsen, which increasingly finds itself defending its methodology and products. Even if ErinMedia's case does not make it to trial—which legal experts say is distinctly possible—the legal action brings unwanted attention and publicity to Nielsen, a division of Dutch media conglomerate VNU, at a time when it is trying to work out delicate issues with its clients. Its new local-people-meter (LPM) ratings system, already under fire for undercounting minorities and younger viewers, is about to roll out in

Nielsen refutes that claim. (Just last week, Nielsen announced acquisition of Audio Audit, which develops audience-verification systems.)

ErinMedia has sought to launch an alternate ratings service using different data-collection methods but says Nielsen stands in its way. Where Nielsen's current system relies on samples of viewers to report what they've watched, ErinMedia seeks to capture data from digital cable boxes, currently in about 25 million homes.

Using patent-pending technology, ErinMedia takes data from set-top boxes, which have the ability to report second by second what is being watched and for how long, including commercial breaks. Combining that data with census data and program information, ErinMedia calculates demographic ratings information.

"We'll only charge advertisers based on what viewers actually saw the commercial," ErinMedia Chairman Frank Maggio says. "And that's why Nielsen can't help me." He adds that the ability to "measure 25 million households in a privacy-compliant way" is superior to Nielsen's current system, which samples about 8,000 homes.

ErinMedia has spent months pitching potential clients, includ-

(Nielsen has provided limited financial and research support to the project.)

BATTLE OF THE WEB SITES

One of the most public campaigns against Nielsen has been "Don't Count Us Out," a Fox-backed group that is unhappy with Nielsen's LPM system and is pushing for government oversight. The group posts information on its Web site, www.dontcountusout.com. In response, Nielsen launched an information Web site, everyonecounts.com. Not to be outdone, Maggio last week launched his own site, www.weshouldallcount.com.

While it works to improve these systems, Nielsen is also developing ways to measure advanced technologies, such as video-on-demand (VOD) and digital video recorders (DVRs), that are catching fire with consumers. Those technologies concern advertisers worried that their spots won't be seen and measured. Some clients carp that Nielsen isn't doing enough to stay ahead and innovate. "In many respects, Nielsen can't keep up with the today of television, let alone the tomorrow," says Tim Hanlon, VP/director, emerging contacts, for Starcom MediaVest Group.

Though complaining about Nielsen, TV networks and advertisers have balked at paying steep rates for competitive services. "Research is expensive,



FRANK MAGGIO, ERINMEDIA

"The industry needs to feel like there is momentum. They want to see proof that the monopoly can be broken."

Washington and Philadelphia June 30. Nielsen's older system of set-top meters and paper diaries is criticized by some clients as archaic.

DIFFICULT TO PROVE

For its part, Nielsen calls the action "frivolous" and "completely unfounded" and says it is "very confident that this meritless lawsuit will fail." Legal analysts say antitrust cases are usually difficult to prove, particularly when the plaintiff is a competitor.

In the suit, ErinMedia claims Nielsen dominates the market in part by staggering long-term deals with the Big Four networks—CBS, NBC, ABC and Fox—leaving no opening for the networks to entertain a new service. It also asserts that Nielsen gobbles up smaller competitors, thwarting competition. ErinMedia says Nielsen even tried to acquire it, although

ing ad firms and cable operators, but it needs access to cable operators' trove of data to launch. Maggio says several operators are interested but are hesitant to sign on because Nielsen is the de facto ratings currency in the industry. Unable to do business, Maggio says, his company opted to file suit.

ErinMedia is hardly the first would-be rival to Nielsen. Over the years, a number of high-profile competing services have tried—and ultimately failed—to take on the ratings giant. In the 1990s, networks and advertising firms invested \$60 million in Statistical Research Inc.'s SMART ratings system, but it ran out of money before getting off the ground. Until 1992, radio-ratings provider Arbitron also measured TV ratings in local markets. More recently, that company has been developing a portable people meter, a pager-like gadget that monitors viewing and will soon be tested in Houston.

and the costs get passed along," says Horizon Media research chief Brad Adgate. "Will the industry be willing to support two ratings services? For 50 years, the answer has been no."

MINING SET-TOP DATA

ErinMedia is one of several companies mining data from set-top boxes. The largest cable operators, including Comcast and Time Warner, are participating in trials to measure VOD usage and glean ratings from digital boxes. Nielsen itself has agreements to work with Comcast and Time Warner. And, as digital cable penetration grows, the prospect of utilizing the boxes for audience measurement will only get more attractive.

Maggio's \$14 million acquisition of ErinMedia in 2004 was driven not by a desire to beat Nielsen but rather to help ReacTV, an interactive gaming channel that he is looking to get on digital cable

systems, develop a business model. On ReacTV, viewers would compete for prizes by playing skills-based games through the television. Viewers submit answers to a Web site, and a prize winner is pulled at random from the correct entries (Maggio says prizes could include anything from gift certificates to automobiles). Niche networks like ReacTV usually attract such a small audience that they fail to register even a 0.1 household rating in local markets.

Nielsen has 20 days to respond, although legal experts say the company may likely file for an extension. If ErinMedia's lawsuit is successful, Maggio says, cable operators will have the confidence to move ahead aggressively. "The industry needs to feel like there is momentum. They want to see proof that the monopoly can be broken." ■

Additional reporting by Ken Kerschbaumer

EXCERPTS

ErinMedia v. Nielsen

"Among other things, [Nielsen] has acted to preserve its monopoly by strategically acquiring potential competitors (or otherwise eliminating their competition through business arrangements) and by securing multi-year, staggered contracts with some or all of the four largest broadcast companies—ABC, CBS, Fox and NBC—which makes it effectively impossible for any competitor to establish a competing television audience measurement tool."

"Cable MSOs have been reluctant to agree to provide their set-top-box data and develop national contracts with ErinMedia because ErinMedia is effectively precluded from gaining contracts with broadcast networks ... Cable MSOs also fear that [Nielsen] will disparage any effort by cable MSOs to provide set-top-box data to a competitor like ErinMedia, and will raise unfair concerns about whether cable subscribers' privacy can be protected if set-top-box data is shared to generate ratings."

"[Nielsen] has undertaken predatory acts designed to impede and prevent the successful entry of competitors, such as ErinMedia, that will erode [Nielsen] monopoly position by selling better, more innovative products at lower prices in the relevant market."



6/20/05

THE MORNING LINE

Total Viewers for NBC's 'Today' vs. ABC's 'Good Morning America'

	WEEK OF JUNE 6	PREVIOUS WEEK	ONE YEAR AGO
Today	5,500,000	5,650,000	5,310,000
GMA	5,010,000	5,150,000	4,800,000
The gap	490,000	500,000	510,000

SOURCE: Nielsen Television Index

NEWS & COMMENT

'Law & Order' Out of Order: FCC Fines NBC U

Edited by Mark Lasswell

Broadcasters are known for hounding the FCC to crack down on pirate-radio operators...

It was embarrassing enough, then, that on June 8 the FCC's enforcement bureau accused that upstanding citizen of the broadcasting world, NBC Universal...

No, Dennis Farina and S. Epatha Merkerson weren't taking advantage of a little down time to D.J. a rogue jazz program...



Not guilty! L&O's Annie Parisse didn't cause the tech gaffe that prompted an FCC fine. It was the crew's fault.



Former Adelphia head John Rigas



Reality producers are trolling for 12 wealthy people.

radio transceivers, to communicate during production of the show, causing interference on the city's public-safety radio pool...

the FCC's New York field office used a mobile transmission-monitoring vehicle to track the offending signal. The sleuth ended up at Universal's studio at Pier 62 on Manhattan's West Side.

NBC U explained that the L&O crew wasn't aware that they needed a license for the radios. The studio had relied on an outside vendor to supply radios for years but then decided to purchase its own equipment instead.

"Universal Television takes

seriously its obligations to comply with FCC requirements," the company said in a statement. But the studio also said that, although it "disagrees with the current outcome," it is reviewing the decision and considering its options.

Rating Rigas

After months of delays, John Rigas likely faces sentencing this week for the multibillion-dollar fraud at Adelphia Communications. He has certainly rallied the troops to lobby Federal Judge Leonard Sands to show leniency.

In a standard part of the sentencing dance—marshaling supporters to write to the judge attesting to the defendant's good character—Rigas' supporters have made the pitch that he is a good-hearted, small-town fellow who,

though he has been fabulously wealthy, is also the sort who's willing to help strangers. Or so we've gleaned from court documents filed by both sides.

One man believes Rigas saved his son's life. The injured boy needed to be rushed by plane from Coudersport in rural Pennsylvania to Pittsburgh for treatment, his father told Judge Sands, but the plane broke down. Rigas, who lives in Coudersport, had just landed in his own plane at the airport and offered to provide transportation.

Prosecutors dismiss this kind of endorsement as coming from people who never "knew of or saw the criminal acts proven at trial." They point to the case of Rigas' sole character witness, David Acker, a lawyer and CEO of a Coudersport hospital, who praised Rigas for flying a friend with bone cancer to Florida for a fishing trip. But as prosecutors pointed out to Judge Sands, when

Rigas also lent Acker's own family his condo in Cancun for two days, Acker might have thought it was what he called "an act of kindness," but unbeknownst to him, Rigas billed Adelphia \$4,900 as a business expense for the Ackers' stay. And he claimed the family kicked back in the Cancun condo for two weeks, not two days.

Lawyers for Rigas, the former Adelphia chairman, and his son, ex-CFO Tim Rigas, are hoping Judge Sands will sentence the two to probation or house confinement. Prosecutors are seeking 215 years apiece in federal prison.

Reality Check

In an ongoing quest to keep readers abreast of where reality TV is heading, Flash! presents this Casting Notice of the Week, culled from an anonymous Craigslist posting:

"We're looking for 12 very wealthy people to take the ultimate gamble on a unique reality show. Are you a millionaire? A lottery winner? A socialite? Perfect!!! You'll gamble your own money for a chance to win the \$3,000,000 pot—Winner takes all! The competitions will be tough and the challenges will be unique, but the reward is worth it!"

FLASH!



THE KING OF DAYTIME! #1 AT 10AM & 12PM IN PHILADELPHIA

10:00AM • W18-49

MAURY #1 WPHL/W 3.1

GUIDING LIGHT	KYW/C	1.7
TONY DANZA	WPVI/A	1.3
10!	WCAU/N	1.2
DIVORCE COURT	WTFX/F	0.5
LIFE & STYLE	WPSG/U	0.2

12:00PM • W18-49

MAURY #1 WPHL/W 2.6

LOCAL NEWS / MILLIONAIRE	WPVI/A	2.1
DAYS OF OUR LIVES	WCAU/N	1.7
LOCAL NEWS/ Y&R	KYW/C	1.2
PEOPLE'S COURT	WPSG/U	1.1
DHARMA & GREG	WTFX/F	0.2

NBC UNIVERSAL

TELEVISION DISTRIBUTION

SOURCE: NSI SNAP 3, MAY 2005. 10-11AM & 12-1PM, PA WHERE AVAILABLE. RATINGS.


WASHINGTON WATCH

Foe of Campaign-Finance Law To Leave FEC

Bradley Smith, the controversial **Federal Election Commission** commissioner and opponent of campaign-finance restrictions, said he will resign Aug. 21 and resume teaching law at **Capital University** in **Columbus, Ohio**. Smith's term expired April 30, but he has been able to remain at his post because no replacement has been named.

Smith, appointed by **President Clinton** in 2000 to a Republican FEC seat, drew intense criticism from Sen. **John McCain** (R-Ariz.) and other authors of the 2002 campaign-finance-reform law for speaking out against it even after it was upheld by the **Supreme Court**. McCain once called Smith "bullying and cowardly" for berating a witness testifying before the FEC.

McCain's anger intensified last summer when the FEC ruled that controversial attack ads by **Swift Boat Veterans for Truth** and **MoveOn.org** did not violate the 2002 law.

Smith's views on campaign-finance limits were well-known before he joined the commission. In his book *Unfree Speech: The Folly of Campaign Finance Reform*, he argued that regulations on political spending violate the First Amendment and the power of the citizens to influence elections.

Unlike McCain, Smith sees "little corrupting effect" on legislators from financial campaign contributions and argued that politics needed more money, not less.

Despite his reservations about the rules he was charged with enforcing, Smith insists he never wavered in his duty to uphold them.

"In the last three years," he points out, "we have assessed the highest penalties ever against a sitting senator, an incumbent House member, a party congressional-campaign committee, and a state party committee, which was also the largest penalty assessed against a registered committee of any kind."

Broadcasters Face Terrorist Threat

Sen. **John McCain** launched a public-relations campaign against TV stations, warning they could

Back to the Drawing Board

Facing another rewrite of ownership rules, FCC chief Martin must reach common ground with commission Democrats

By **Bill McConnell**



FCC Chairman **Kevin Martin**

In a few weeks, the FCC will launch its third attempt in six years to write local-broadcast-ownership rules that will withstand the scrutiny of federal judges, a move likely to reignite protests from anti-consolidation activists and intense lobbying by big media companies seeking to get even larger.

FCC Chairman **Kevin Martin** is obligated to launch a new review after the Supreme Court last week upheld a lower-court decision striking down sweeping deregulation by the FCC in 2003. To avoid the bitter grassroots battle that led to the demise of the previous rule changes and still preserve his own wishes for deregulation, he must find a way to get commission Democrats on board.

To reach common ground, Martin may have to "bring in other broadcast issues like public-interest requirements that the Democrats would support," says **Paul Gallant**, a media-policy analyst with **Stanford Washington Research**. Gallant also was the lead FCC staffer overseeing the 2003 rewrite. That deregulation relaxed limits on the number of TV stations one company could own nationwide and raised the number of TV and radio stations an owner could control in individual markets. The FCC also voted to eliminate the ban on ownership of broadcast stations and daily newspapers in the same market.

The 2003 deregulation itself was a rewrite of 1999 revisions also thrown out by federal appeals judges.

"The FCC has a fresh opportunity now to come up with a set of rules to encourage localism, competition and diversity in our media," says Democratic Commissioner **Michael Copps**. A month ago, he rallied anti-consolidation activists in **St. Louis** to fight unless Martin agrees

to hold a round of hearings around the country on media ownership and consolidation. "If we roll up our sleeves, all of us—advocates, creative artists, elected officials, consumers, citizens everywhere—we can settle this issue of who is going to control our media and for what purposes."

Martin last week issued only a perfunctory statement acknowledging the task before the FCC: "I am now looking forward to working with all of my colleagues as we reevaluate our media-ownership rules." But he had previously indicated that he'll offer some carrots to the FCC Democrats. In April, he won their votes to give **Tribune Co.** more time sell either **WTXX** Hartford, Conn., or the *Hartford Courant* by basing the extension in part on the company's pledge to improve the TV station's programming.

NEWSPAPER CROSSOWNERSHIP

Along those lines, Martin could lift the ban on newspaper crossownership in top-10 markets and require that crossownership in smaller cities be permitted only for owners that spell out how they will improve the stations' news and local programming.

The review he begins next month won't be nearly as complicated as the massive revision the FCC tried to impose two years ago, although it could be just as controversial. Congress took responsibility for national broadcast-TV ownership out of the FCC's hands late in 2003 by passing legislation that restricted one company's national ownership at 39% of U.S. television households.

The top priority of the **National Association of Broadcasters** will be winning permission for TV duopolies in

The top priority of the NAB will be winning permission for TV duopolies in smaller markets.

smaller markets. Currently, ownership of two stations is limited to markets with eight or more stations.

As for relaxing the 1975 ban on newspaper crossownership, Martin has long been eager to move forward.

That would be welcome news to companies like **Tribune**, **Gannett** and **Media General**, which have a strategy of combining the news operations of papers and stations in their markets.

Media Access Project President **Andrew Schwartzman** says the legal fight has brought the negative consequences of newspaper/TV combos to the attention of most Americans. "We rely on over-the-air broadcasting and daily newspapers for the information we use in picking our mayors and city councils." ■

be blamed in part for future terrorism casualties if they do not give up their old analog channels, portions of which are slated to be turned over to fire, police and other emergency departments.

At a **Capitol Hill** press conference, **McCain** and the mothers of two 9/11 victims said communications problems between **New York City** rescue workers played a role in preventing the rescue of hundreds killed in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

McCain called the press conference to unveil legislation that would force broadcasters to return their old analog channels to the government Jan. 1, 2009, years sooner than current law requires. Broadcasters have not committed to a deadline.

A chunk of that returned spectrum will be used to alleviate the frequency shortage plaguing emergency workers' communications. The shortcomings of emergency communications were detailed in the **9/11 Commission's** report in 2004. **Mary Fetchet**, president of **Voices of September 11**, says her

son **Brad** might have survived the collapse of the second World Trade Center tower had communications snafus not prevented him from learning that there was an open stairwell



John McCain

after the plane hit the second tower. "I believe his death could have been prevented," she says.

FCC Solicits Payola Complaints

The FCC is making it easier for viewers to complain when they suspect TV stations are violating the ban on payola.

At the urging of Commissioner **Jonathan Adelstein**, who has been pressing the agency to crack down on stations that don't tell viewers when they receive compensation for airing programming, the commission's Web site now includes a payola fact sheet with instructions for filing complaints.

Right off the bat, media activist group **Free Press** took up **Adelstein's** offer. The group is asking the FCC to widen its investigation beyond conservative pundit **Armstrong Williams' PR** contract to promote the **White House's** No Child Left Behind education policy on cable TV.



6/20/05



SYNDICATION

RATINGS 5/30-6/5/05

Nielsen Media Research

Top 25 Shows HOUSEHOLDS

PROGRAM	AA	GAA
1 Wheel of Fortune	7.6	NA
2 Oprah Winfrey Show	6.6	6.7
3 Jeopardy!	6.5	NA
4 Everybody Loves Raymond	5.7	7.2
5 Seinfeld	5.5	6.8
6 Seinfeld (wknd)	5.4	6.7
7 Dr. Phil	4.9	4.9
8 Judge Judy	4.8	7.3
9 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	4.6	5.3
10 Entertainment Tonight	4.4	4.5
11 Live With Regis and Kelly	3.5	NA
11 Wheel of Fortune (wknd)	3.5	NA
13 Entertainment Tonight (wknd)	3.4	3.4
14 Everybody Loves Raymond (wknd)	3.1	3.1
14 Inside Edition	3.1	3.1
14 Judge Joe Brown	3.1	4.4
14 Who Wants To Be a Millionaire	3.1	3.5
18 King of the Hill	3.0	3.6
18 Malcolm in the Middle	3.0	3.8
20 Cops	2.9	3.7
20 Maury	2.9	3.2
20 That '70s Show	2.9	3.6
23 Divorce Court	2.8	3.8
24 People's Court	2.7	2.9
24 Will & Grace	2.7	3.2

Top Court Shows HOUSEHOLDS

PROGRAM	AA	GAA
1 Judge Judy	4.8	7.3
2 Judge Joe Brown	3.1	4.4
3 Divorce Court	2.8	3.8
4 People's Court	2.7	2.9
5 Judge Mathis	2.5	2.7

According to Nielsen Media Research Syndication Service Ranking Report May 30-June 5, 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

Stewart Begins 'Martha' Push

NBC U will cross-promote—carefully **By Ben Grossman**

While serving up two portions of Martha Stewart this fall with *The Apprentice: Martha Stewart* Wednesdays on NBC and *Martha* weekdays in syndication, NBC Universal knows it will have to be as meticulous as Stewart herself in handling cross-promotion. Since nearly 60% of stations carrying the syndicated *Martha* are not NBC affiliates, don't expect a parade of Stewart's *Apprentice* cast-offs from the night before when the live show airs on Thursdays.

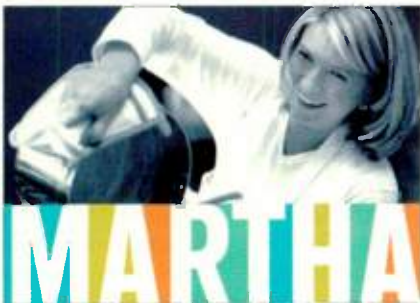
"We are looking at ways to cross-promote, but it has to be a win-win for everyone," says Betsy Bergman, VP of marketing for NBC Universal Domestic Television Distribution. If a personality like famously prickly *Apprentice* rejectee Omarosa Manigault-Stallworth becomes a pop-culture figure of the moment, she says, "that is going to transcend any affiliate ties. But appearances can't be gratuitous. Once we get into the show airing, the need to find other means of cross-promotion is definitely on the radar screen."

The non-NBC stations carrying the show will be watching closely. "We will definitely be looking for some input from them as to how they are going to brand the two shows," says Steve Spendlove, general manager of KTVX Salt Lake City, an ABC affiliate that

will air *Martha*. "Stewart certainly has experience managing several brands, but things like this are a bit of an experiment, so time will tell."

Produced by Mark Burnett, the syndicated show premieres Sept. 12 and is cleared in more than 96% of the country. *Martha* will blend celebrity guest spots with such Stewart staples as advice about cooking, home décor and gardening. The promotional push begins this week at the 2005 Promax & BDA convention in New York, where Stewart is hosting a luncheon at the Marriott Marquis hotel sponsored jointly by NBC U and Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia (MSLO).

At the June 22 event, Stewart will screen the first round of promos for *Martha*. The initial campaign includes six tease spots reinforcing the live aspect of the production and showcasing the host's heretofore little-noted self-deprecatory sense of humor. A second phase of promos set for mid July will be more show-specific.



The new live show is cleared in more than 96% of the country and premieres Sept. 12.

The promo effort, not surprisingly, will leverage plenty of NBC U and MSLO platforms, from Stewart's twice-a-month appearances on the *Today* show to retail promotions at Kmart. Plans also call for sweeps promos, including trip giveaways to see *Martha* in New York.

"When a show becomes a priority for so many tentacles of two companies like NBC Universal and Martha Stewart Living," Bergman says, "it obviously becomes quite a marketing priority as well." ■

IN FOCUS

ALSO PITCHING AT PROMAX...

Warner Bros. will outline a 12-week campaign for *The Tyra Banks Show*. Targeting women 25-35, at least 12 spots will roll out in three month-long phases. On-air will be backed by both cable and print, with guerilla and viral campaigns planned for August. "This is probably the biggest first-



Tyra Banks

run launch we've ever done here," says Senior VP of Marketing and Advertising Services Yelena Garofolo. Warner Bros. will also talk up plans for *Sex and the City* and *Smallville*.

Twentieth Television is bullish on *Judge Alex*, a new courtroom show featuring Alex Ferrer, a Hispanic judge from Miami who was formerly a cop and a lawyer. The female-focused campaign will begin six weeks prior to the Sept. 12 launch and use humor in the branding of the show. "We know court shows are something of a guilty pleasure," says Senior VP of Marketing and Creative Susan Kantor. "We're going to play off of that angle." Twentieth will also outline plans for *Bernie Mac* and *24*, the latter of which needs an early push, given the challenges presented by a serialized format in attracting new viewers late in the story.

Buena Vista Television will be pouring energy into a targeted relaunch for *The Tony Danza Show*, which debuts this fall in Washington and will be upgraded from late-night to daytime slots in Los Angeles, Chicago and Boston. "We'll be essentially introducing the show to daytime viewers in these markets," says VP of Marketing Sal Sardo. Buena Vista will also promote the launch plan for off-net *My Wife and Kids*.

DIVORCE COURT

Largest Growth Among ALL Court Shows

All Court Shows, % Change May '05-May '04, Rtg	HH	W18-34	W18-49	W25-54
DIVORCE COURT	+18%	+12%	+16%	+26%
JUDGE JOE BROWN	FLAT	-10%	+10%	+23%
JUDGE JUDY	FLAT	-16%	+3%	+11%
JUDGE MATHIS	+13%	+8%	+21%	+29%
THE PEOPLE'S COURT	+12%	-8%	+14%	+20%
TEXAS JUSTICE	+4%	-31%	-14%	FLAT
JUDGE HATCHETT	-4%	+8%	FLAT	FLAT

Source: NSS, Galaxy Explorer, May '05 vs. May '04 % Change, GAA Rtg



STATION TO STATION

Web Newscasts Begin To Click

By Allison Romano

With fewer viewers at home to watch daytime shows, a growing number of TV stations are launching customized online newscasts. Usually abbreviated versions of on-air news, the online shows offer two to five minutes' worth of headlines, weather and traffic updates.

Stations have been offering archived video on their Web sites for several years. Some even stream their TV newscasts in real time. But creating a newscast specifically for the Internet is the latest in a wave of high-tech innovations as local broadcasters search for new ways to deliver information to viewers on the go.

KNTV San Francisco, an NBC O&O, recently debuted "Web News on the Hour," brief newscasts updated hourly on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. "We want to break the old pattern of telling people that you are going to get the news when we give it to you," says VP of News **Jim Sanders**. "We don't think people at work can invest 20 minutes, but two minutes here or there to keep up is more user-friendly." The station's reporters, anchors and producers all take turns creating the Webcasts.

In Chicago, KNTV sister station **WMAQ** reruns shortened versions of its 6 and 11 a.m. newscasts online.

Station executives say startup costs for Webcasts are negligible because they largely use existing systems and staff. Plus, the Webcasts have potential to make money. When **KPNX** Phoenix revealed plans to start online newscasts, its sales staff fielded calls from several interested advertisers. "Some of our TV advertisers thought it was unique way to reach a daytime audience," says VP/General Manager **John Misner**.

KPNX, a **Gannett**-owned NBC station, collaborates with sister newspaper *The Arizona Republic* on three-minute Webcasts updated hourly from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. On a recent day, the "I-cast" featured a commercial break with a spot for **American Funds** and a promo for **KPNX's** morning show. A local **Ford** dealer also sponsors the Webcasts.

Viacom-owned **WCBS** New York and **WBZ** Boston feature ad-

Cable's Summer Sizzlers

Original shows take a bite out of broadcast **By Anne Becker**

Tuesday's summer solstice officially starts the season, but cable is already steaming with record-breaking ratings for the debuts of its original programming.

In what has become a rite of summer, after sweeps end, the broadcast networks pad their schedules with low-brow reality. Then cable steps up to counter-program. This season's earliest entrants—new series and returning shows alike—are often besting broadcast ratings. The June 13 premiere of TNT's crime drama, *The Closer*, was the highest-rated showing ever for a basic-cable original scripted series, notching a 4.8 household rating; it also outperformed the premieres of summer broadcast shows like Fox's *The Inside* and ABC's *The Scholar* in total viewers, with 7.03 million.

Returning shows on other cable networks continue to perform as well. Last week, *The 4400's* season-two second episode drew 4.38 million total viewers, and *The Dead Zone's* fourth-season premiere attracted 3.45 million. Lifetime's *Strong Medicine*, the longest-running basic-cable original series, logged 2.9 million viewers for its sixth-season premiere, and FX's *The Shield* finished its fourth season with 3.2 million viewers.

In addition to attracting viewers, original hits solidify branding, garner press and critical acclaim, and create new product-placement and sponsorship opportunities. Each successful show also improves cable shows' yet-unproven backend prospects for syndication and foreign sales.

SMART SPENDING

Cost is the biggest concern for cable networks looking to score a hit. Cable networks usually have smaller budgets for originals than broadcast networks do, so the number of shows and their production costs must be kept lower. That means selectively greenlighting pilots: three instead of 30, for instance; sometimes using those that don't go to series as one-off movies; and often

using cross-promotion on parent companies' broadcast networks.

"Our philosophy is fewer, bigger, better," says Bonnie Hammer, president of USA and Sci Fi. "We grew up without money, so when we started getting into the ballgame with originals, we became extremely effective developers and producers."

Cable series' producers save by avoiding cost overruns from numerous script rewrites and multiple shoots. Says Kevin Beggs, programming/production president of boutique studio Lions Gate Television, "You might not need that seventh guest star."

His company is producing four of cable's summer shows, including USA's *Dead Zone* and Lifetime's *Missing*.

STRATEGIC MARKETING

Lions Gate is also behind *Wildfire*, ABC Family's first-ever original drama, which debuts June 20. Beggs kept production costs low on the ranch-based show by casting unknown actors and shooting in Albuquerque, N.M. (The state offers producers tax incentives.)

With ratings growth from acquired *Gilmore Girls* and *Smallville*, ABC Family is using *Wildfire* and the network's second original series, July's *Beautiful People*, to further establish itself as destination for modern 18- to 34-year-olds, says President Paul Lee. Support from ABC and Disney has helped ABC Family launch one of its priciest and most comprehensive marketing campaigns ever to promote *Wildfire*—including print ads, movie-theater and shopping-mall

promos, and prime time ads on ABC. The Turner networks have been similarly aggressive with marketing their originals. TNT spent \$50 million to market *Into the West*, its current Steven Spielberg/DreamWorks Television limited series. (Turner reports that the 12-hour drama cost another \$50 million to produce.)

"Our plan's starting to come to fruition," says Steve Koonin, executive VP/COO of TNT and TBS. "We're thrilled because we've beaten lots and lots of broadcast shows. This is a great thing for us." ■



ABC Family expects big things from *Wildfire* (with Genevieve Cortese), which debuts June 20.

vertisers such as **Crest** Whitening Strips in their online newscasts. Both offer once-daily, five-minute Webcasts at 12:30 p.m., which are archived until 3 p.m. and updated as needed. Regional cable news network **NECN** also offers lunchtime news online. "Internet usage is highest during the day at work," says **WCBS** President/General Manager **Lew Leone**. "If we give people five minutes of news, they will watch."

Hurricane Info Via Cellphone



WRAL's mobile alert service

Another new high-tech offering has arrived just in time for hurricane season.

Two stations in the Southeast, **WSVN** Miami/Fort Lauderdale and **WRAL** Raleigh/Durham, N.C., are offering cellphone alert

systems to warn viewers when a hurricane is approaching and to provide updated forecast information.

WSVN, **Sunbeam Broadcasting's** highly rated **Fox** affiliate, calls its service "Cone on Your Phone" (the cone is the forecast path of a hurricane). The free service will include a storm's coordinates and wind speed and a list of emergency needs. It's available on all major mobile-phone carriers. After just one week, the station says, more than 2,000 users have signed up.

The mobile alerts are **WSVN's** foray into cellphone content. "You're not always near a television or radio," says VP of News **Alice Jacobs**. "As the season starts acting up, we're hopeful that more people will sign up."

WRAL is adding hurricane news to its existing cellphone service, which includes headlines, weather and updated traffic from 50 traffic cameras. The hurricane alerts will track a storm's location, wind strength and heading and include forecast maps.

Currently, the service, supplied by **News Over Wireless**, is available to only **Sprint** PCS users for \$3.99 per month, although it is expected to expand to other carriers soon. **WRAL** does send out free severe-weather messages for Web-site subscribers.

Send local news to aromano@reedbusiness.com



6/20/05



MARKET EYE

AT A GLANCE

The Market

DMA rank	55
Population	1,358,000
TV homes	556,000
Income per capita	\$18,046
TV revenue rank	60
TV revenue	\$84,200,000

Commercial TV Stations

Rank*	Ch.	Affil.	Owner
1	WNYT	13	NBC Hubbard Bcstg.
2	WRGB	6	CBS Freedom Bcstg.
3	WTEN	10	ABC Young Bcstg.
4	WXXA	23	Fox Clear Channel
5	WEWS	45	WB Tribune Bcstg.
6	WNYA	51	UPN Venture Tech.

*May 2005, Mon.-Sun., 5 a.m.-2 a.m.

Cable/DBS

Cable subscribers (HH)	444,800
Major cable operator	Time Warner
Cable penetration	80%
ADS subscribers (HH)**	55,600
ADS penetration	10%
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***
Jeopardy! (WTEN)	12/24
Network Show	
American Idol (WXXA)	21/33
Evening Newscast	
WNYT	9/23
Late Newscast	
WNYT	7/23

***May 2005, total households

SOURCES: Nielsen Media Research, BIA Research

Political Hotbed

Albany stations beef up on big issues **By Allison Romano**



WXXA anchors John Gray and Ann Hughes

It may be a political off-year, but TV stations in the Albany-Schenectady, N.Y., market are enjoying an unusual burst of political advertising. Advocates and opponents of such issues as the construction of casinos by Native American tribes and the building of a new stadium for the New York Jets have spent several million dollars to get their messages across to politicians in Albany, the state capital.

"Political this year is far greater than the political money last year," says Jeff Whitson, VP/general manager of Fox affiliate WXXA; his comments reflect the fact that New York was not a battleground state in the 2004 presidential race. But issue advertising, currently the market's hottest category, is tightening Albany stations' inventory this year.

The infusion will help them post slightly better ad revenue than last year. The market, Nielsen's 55th-largest, took in \$84.2 million in gross revenue last year, according to BIA Financial, up from its 2003 tally of \$80.4 million.

The state government provides Albany's economic backbone. Still, the region has created a "Tech Valley" of new high-

tech facilities; General Electric's Global Research Center, IBM and dozens of others have set up shop there. (GE used to own CBS affiliate WRGB.)

Stations hope technology will be the next economic motor. "There is more of a corporate base in the economy now," says Steve Baboulis, VP/general manager of NBC affiliate WNYT. "Housing prices have started to climb, and there is a lot of building."

WNYT reigns as the market's top-rated station and local-news leader. The Hubbard Broadcasting-owned station is the most watched in early-morning, early-evening and late news and boasts marquee syndicated shows *The Oprah Winfrey Show* and *Dr. Phil*. ABC affiliate WTEN airs *Wheel of Fortune* and *Jeopardy!*.

Time Warner Cable is the region's major cable operator and runs cable news channel Capital News 9.

Albany is one of the largest TV markets to remain on the diary system instead of upgrading to set-top meters that kick out overnight household ratings. (Installing set-top meters would require additional investment from Nielsen Media Research and the stations.) So, as a diary market, Albany reports ratings information only during the four sweeps periods.

Local broadcasters expect the political money to keep flowing. In 2006, New Yorkers will vote in a high-profile gubernatorial election, as well as U.S. Senate and House elections and state Senate races. Once again, Albany expects to be at the center of it all. Says Bob Furlong, VP/general manager of WRGB, "Next year will be very big." ■

NEXT: SALT LAKE CITY

Nitty-Gritty News Battle

NBC affiliate WNYT wins all the major newscasts except noon, but its rivals are giving chase. In May, Fox affiliate WXXA's 10 p.m. news posted top late-news ratings for adults 25-54—the key news demographic—with a 4.2 rating/12 share, versus WNYT's 3.2/19. (It won in households with a 7/23.)

The gains come as WXXA overhauls its news product. In 2004, the station recruited former KLAS Las Vegas News Director Gene Ross, who helped remold that station. A year ago, WXXA poached market veteran John Gray from WNYT to anchor its 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. news. It is also upgrading its weather technology and on-air look, says VP/General Manager Jeff Whitson.

An overhaul is under way at ABC affiliate WTEN, too. News Director Rob Puglisi is gone, and so are several veteran reporters. The station recently axed regular sports reports.

Last fall, WNYT added an hour of morning news on weekends, and CBS affiliate WRGB will soon start a cellphone service to provide news and weather alerts.—A.R.

THE DEMOS

WHO	SHARE OF POPULATION	INDEX*
White	93%	113
Black	5%	44
Hispanic	3%	23
Asian	1%	21

*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 2004 75 Markets Report

THE King OF CINCINNATI!



THE KING OF QUEENS

scores a May Sweep victory on WXIX!

4.0 HH RATING!

+18% OVER LEAD-IN!

+11% OVER YEAR AGO!

Source: NSI, WRAP Overnights+, May '05 (4/28-5/25/05). HH Rating, M-F 6-30PM. Year ago = May '04 (4/29-5/26/04) TP. 1/2 hr lead-in: That '70s Show.

www.sonypicturetelevision.com

S

tanding center stage in a Manhattan blues club with his hands a blur on the guitar, Jim Dolan brought the crowd to its feet fronting his band J.D. & The Straight Shot a few months ago.

Investors hope the 49-year-old CEO and scion of the founder of Cablevision Systems Corp. can command the same attention on Wall Street. At the moment, Cablevision suffers from what some investors dub the Dolan Discount, the markdown on Cablevision's stock due to the company's penchant for controversy, including a bruising public fight to block a stadium in New York City, a money-burning satellite startup called Voom, and caustic boardroom battles. While Cablevision's stock has outpaced other media firms so far this year, today, it now trades at a valuation 20%-25% less

than peers like giant Comcast, analysts say.

And two months ago, the cable giant tendered an all-cash \$16.5 billion bid for Adelphia Communications, a move criticized on Wall Street as running

counter to Cablevision strategy to dominate a single region.

The company's defenses are still on high alert. After initial questions from a *B&C* editor, Cablevision public-relations executive Charlie Schueler launched an obscenity-laden tirade attacking the press and citing recent negative stories. Two days later, he agreed that Jim Dolan and COO Tom Rutledge would talk about the company's performance. Then, at one scheduled interview time, Schueler said neither executive would speak, "and I don't have a good reason why."

Some defensiveness might be expected, but perhaps the company should take a cue from Jim Dolan's debut album: *Nothing to Hide*.

Despite recent headlines, there's plenty going right at family-controlled Cablevision, a \$5 billion-a-year company, the dominant cable operator in greater New York City, owner of national cable networks AMC, Fuse

and IFC, and holder of New York City crown jewels Madison Square Garden, Radio City Music Hall, the New York Knicks and the New York Rangers. By several key operating measures—including revenues, operating cash flow, sales of high-speed Internet—Cablevision outperforms major operators like Time Warner Cable and Cox.

During the first quarter—when the board was publicly divided over Voom—Cablevision's system operations posted a strong 15% increase in revenues and an enormous 19% jump in operating cash flow.

The strength goes beyond just one quarter. While DBS continues to steal customers from other operators, Cablevision has increased basic-subscriber counts for four consecutive quarters. The systems have long topped the industry in the amount of revenue drawn from each subscriber: a whopping \$95 a month. Cash flow is just as strong, averaging \$36 per customer monthly. By comparison, that's about 20% more than even Comcast's \$79 in revenue and \$31 in cash flow.

The company is also more successful in selling products to potential customers, beating other major operators in basic penetration

(67% of all homes versus the 55% industry average); digital-cable penetration (54% of basic subscribers versus 41%); and high-speed data (32% of basic subs versus 21%).

Why so much better? Some factors are rooted in smart decisions made years ago by the Dolans, who are known throughout the industry as mavericks. Chuck Dolan, 78, is a sharp but soft-spoken entrepreneur. He owns sports teams and Madison Square Garden but prefers to watch his New York Knicks on TV. He made cable history by wiring Manhattan in 1965 and conceived of the first movie network, which is today known as HBO.



Fuse VJs

Gold-plated systems

Jim Dolan, though persuasive in private conversation, isn't as polished in public and lets other executives push the company's line. Unlike his father, Jim is an ardent fan who revels in controlling sports teams. And the Voom battle was testament to how far he has stepped out from his famous father's shadow.

Starting in the late 1990s, the Dolans sold all of Cablevision's systems outside of metro New York, retaining a tight cluster in towns with very attractive demographics for advanced services.

Also, when all operators were upgrading systems several years ago, Cablevision "gold-plated" its plant, spending extra for more capacity, allowing the company to roll out new services more quickly. At the time,

"You get surprise

the company was criticized by investors for that spending, but it's paying off today. For example, Cablevision subscribers can surf the Internet service at 10 megabits per second, triple the speed offered by other cable operators and eight times faster than Cablevision's biggest threat, telephone company Verizon. That has allowed Cablevision to hold on to some customers tempted by steep discounts for DSL.

Industry and Wall Street executives give much of the credit for Cablevision's operating success to Tom Rutledge, a former senior Time Warner Cable executive tapped in 2002 to run the cable-systems unit and promoted to COO last year.

He was recruited after a three-month stint as president of Time Warner Cable,

COVER STORY



IFC's Dinner for Five



Why Cablevision Can

DESPITE BOARDROOM DRAMA AND MONEY-BURNING

succeeding Glenn Britt, who became chairman in August 2001. Rutledge had spent his career at the unit, starting as a management trainee in 1977 and working his way up the corporate ladder, running systems in Austin, Texas, and Portland, Maine, before reaching the top. When Britt changed the management structure, Rutledge wasn't interested in sharing duties and quit.

Rutledge's strength is in executing on basic but crucial system operations, including customer service, installations and sales. But his time as Time Warner Cable's head of corporate development gave him the vision to help Cablevision hone its broader cable strategy. "Rutledge changed the whole company," says Wall Street money manager John Kornreich. "He's made a big difference keeping them on track with an orderly rollout of services."

Bear, Stearns & Co. media analyst Ray Katz says giving Rutledge all the credit isn't entirely fair to Jim Dolan, who is often harshly compared with his father. One sign of a good manager, says Katz, can be the ability to give a smart executive wide authority: "Jim hired Rutledge. And Jim has let him do his job."

Telephone soars

Moreover, adds Katz, "Jim opposed Voom, and he was right about Voom." The company has since shut Voom down and has started dismantling and selling the venture.

Those three factors—Rutledge's appointment, investment in the systems, and the strategy to con-



earlier using an older, more expensive technology. Cablevision had waited for the perfection of VoIP, voice over Internet Protocol, so when systems were upgraded for high-speed Internet service, they could also be equipped to add VoIP.

The bigger surprise was Cablevision's aggressive discounting. In June 2004, it cut prices, offering new customers a "triple play" of phone, digital cable and high-speed Internet for just \$30 per product. With those products normally selling for a combined \$140 monthly, analysts feared the deep discounting would be unprofitable and the new subscribers would churn off once the promotion expired.

Instead, more basic subscribers signed up, and the package is profitable because Internet phone service is so cheap to provide. Cablevision has now sold telephone service to 15% of its 3 million customers, up from 13% at the end of March. "We think that the total value proposition is really effective competitively," Rutledge recently said at a media conference.

Other cable executives disagree. Comcast COO Steve Burke lauds Cablevision's success in securing subscribers but doesn't see enough profit in the pricing plan. "That's not the road that we see ourselves going down any time soon," he told investors recently.

Cablevision would like to buy



COO Tom Rutledge

out of this company." **RAY KATZ, BEAR, STEARNS & CO.**



AMC's Celebrity Charades

centrate in one geographic area—crystallized when Cablevision launched telephone service. In October 2003, the company surprised the industry by becoming the first operator to make phone service available to 100% of its customers.

Other companies, Cox Communications among them, had started deploying phone service years

more systems, but Rutledge and Jim Dolan have said that they don't see any good buys ahead.

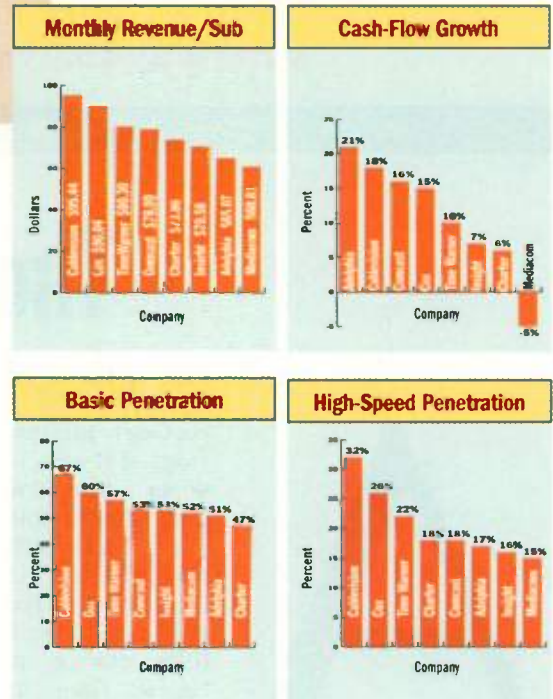
Meanwhile, the company is girding for a battle with Verizon, which is upgrading its telephone system to offer video and will target many of Cablevision's best markets. Growth for the cable giant may come through its Rainbow programming unit, which hopes to create a business around the programming originally slated for the high-definition networks on Voom.

One sure way for Cablevision stock to trade at a premium is the sale of the company—a subject of speculation for more than a decade. But no one sees that coming any time soon.

So to get their stock up, the Dolans need to keep the company on an even keel. "They should stick to their knitting," says Bear Stearns' Katz. "I think it makes the most sense right now. ■"

BEHIND THE DRAMA

Cablevision posted high marks in key areas in 1Q 2005



SOURCE: Bank of America's Drug Shapiro

MONEY TALKS

STAY OFF THE RADAR

Media moguls like to define themselves with bold moves. Brian Roberts transformed Comcast by acquiring AT&T Broadband. Walt Disney Co.'s Michael Eisner bought ABC and ESPN.

Chuck and Jim Dolan can redefine their company through a different kind of bold move: stay off the radar. Many of their successes over the years, including the current financial strength of their cable systems and Rainbow Media networks, seem to be overshadowed by Wall Street's fear that they will steer the company into the headlines for the wrong reason.

Cablevision's performance is so strong that analysts believe its shares could be valued as highly as Comcast's or higher. Instead, as a multiple of operating cash flow, Cablevision trades for 20%-25% less. According to Merrill Lynch media analyst Jessica Reif Cohen, Cablevision trades at 7.2 times estimated 2005 operating cash flow. By contrast, Comcast trades at 9 times, troubled Mediacom at 8.4 times and Insight at 9.1 times. (DBS rivals DirecTV and EchoStar trade at more than 13 times.)

Investors remember Cablevision's behavior following its financial crisis of summer 2002. Its stock had plunged 80% to \$5 because of a looming cash crunch. The cable operator had become snarled in troubled late-'90s acquisitions far afield from its core skills: a movie-theater chain, The Wiz electronics stores and Radio City Music Hall. Heavy capital spending at the cable systems exacerbated the problem.

Over \$700 million in debt was coming due, and its ability to refinance was in doubt. The Dolans rescued themselves partly by restructuring and selling Bravo to NBC. By January 2003, all was calm again. But within 18 months, the first satellite of DBS service Voom was launched. Until Jim Dolan killed the venture, Cablevision burned through \$1.4 billion.

Given that history, how can Cablevision boost its stock? First, don't do big deals. The next movie studio on the block? Take a pass. Another \$17 billion cable company on the market? Don't throw in a last-minute bid like Cablevision's for Adelphia. The next dispute over programming? Don't let it escalate into courthouses and even state legislatures as the refusal to carry the New York Yankees network did.

Second, continue running the cable systems and networks well. COO Tom Rutledge has clearly brought a strong hand to company operations. Keep him happy. He has been wooed by Charter Communications and might even be courted to return to Time Warner Cable when it goes public.

Finally, pay a dividend. Wall Street's current mantra is "return capital to shareholders." The Dolans seem to be sellers. Chuck has filed to sell \$25 million worth of shares since April. Even Jim Dolan is selling (\$7.4 million just last month.) Cablevision should start generating meaningful "free" cash flow next year. Initiating a dividend would be a sign of stability.—J.M.H.

ANALYSIS

BY JOHN M. HIGGINS

Don't Get Respect

ARTUPS, CABLE GIANT STAYS FOCUSED AND BESTS ITS PEERS

The WB's Shopping Spree

Scrapping its afternoon kids block, the network is in the market for off-net product

A

cceding to pressure from affiliates to dump afternoon kids shows with young-adult off-network fare in January 2006, The WB will have little chance to benefit from its own studio's program library.

Warner Bros., which is the network's primary prime time supplier, has already sold many of the key franchise shows elsewhere, and off-network success has increased the properties' value, leaving little opportunity for The WB to get them back for the 3-5 p.m. programming block.

The switch has left the network in desperate need of off-network comedies and dramas for the valuable early-fringe real estate. "We're a victim of our own success," says The WB Chairman Garth Ancier.

For stations, tight government restrictions prevent their promoting most of their valuable early-evening, access and prime time adult offerings during kids cartoons, and the shows themselves hurt audience flow. And with the kids business faltering, advertising suffered.

"The last two years, the block became increasingly onerous for the station side because no one could sell the inventory, couldn't give it away except for the fourth quarter," says a syndication source. "Now, with something even like *Gilmore Girls* plugged in there, suddenly you could sell that inventory, and it's found money."

A LIFT FOR SYNDICATORS

For a long time, The WB opposed dropping the kids block, but now the shopping spree by Ancier and WB Entertainment President David Janollari—which could lead the network to "repurpose" some of its existing prime time shows in the afternoons—has left downtrodden syndicators ecstatic. With Fox and Tribune station groups in the hunt for only a few top-tier sitcoms, programmers have seen demand and prices for the spate of lesser comedies relax in recent years.

The plan under development by Ancier and Janollari, designed to build viewership



Ancier (left) and Janollari aim to build WB's afternoon audience.

in the afternoon for top station groups like Tribune and Sinclair, involves acquiring off-net product for January. The WB will place full-season orders for more off-net programming in September 2006 and then rotate new

product into the block in the future.

Stations are pleased. "I've heard [Ancier and Janollari are] the most popular programming team in Hollywood, the prettiest girls at the prom," quips

Bill Butler, VP of group programming and promotion for Sinclair Broadcasting, who helped lead the campaign to get The WB out of kids programming on weekdays.

Ideally, Ancier would like to schedule two comedies and a drama in the block and is not even thinking now about first-run shows. "These are time periods that have not had adult programming for many years, since the network began," he says. "We need to learn to crawl before we walk—and get [the block] lit up with some numbers."

If and when the time comes for first-run, he insists, it will be based on the cost, concept and talent involved in the project—not on whether it comes from Warner Bros.' Telepictures production unit. Still, The WB could look in-house before approaching other studios to supply original shows.

But as long as the off-network sitcoms keep working, there really won't be much need to make huge



WB might add five runs of *Reba* a week.

Currently airing an original on Friday night and multiple repurposed episodes on Sunday evening, The WB would be adding five runs of the comedy throughout the week.

Before that can happen, though, Twentieth would first need to reclaim the series from stations that have acquired it for a fall 2006 broadcast off-net syndication launch—and likely replace it with another comedy on the same level.

The syndicator cleared *Reba* on Tribune and other station groups for two years starting in fall 2006 on a straight-barter basis and had planned to extend the deals for one year if it did well.

But The WB's hunger for off-network programs like *Reba* presents Twentieth with a big opportunity. Sacrificing barter deals with stations and

By Jim Benson

"These are time periods that have not had adult programming for many years, since the network began." GARTH ANCIER, THE WB



Off-net drama *Everwood*—with (from left) Tom Amandes, Treat Williams and Scott Wolf—could fill a daytime slot on The WB.

investments in first-run shows until 2007 or '08 at the earliest—most likely introducing one in the summer when The WB can build on its core 18-34 audience with college kids home from school.

LIKELY FOR JANUARY

The most likely candidates available for January, according to industry sources, include Warner Bros.-produced shows now on The WB, such as drama *Everwood* and comedy *What I Like About You*; Sony Pictures Television's *Dawson's Creek* (which ran on The WB from 1998 to 2003); Paramount's *Charmed* (returning this fall); and Twentieth TV's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (cancelled after leaving The WB for UPN in a heated license-fee battle with Fox) and possibly popular WB Friday-night sitcom *Reba*.

obtaining an all-cash deal with The WB, which would likely be reluctant to give up ad inventory, could help erase the show's production deficits.

Ancier would not comment on the deal terms The WB is seeking from syndicators, and a Twentieth TV spokesman declined to comment on the entire situation. One industry source, however, contends that Twentieth probably "could not cut a better deal if it took *Reba* out into syndication."

RECLAIMING REBA

Twentieth also sold the cable run of *Reba* to Lifetime last year for a reported \$300,000-plus per episode, with the series slated to debut in August 2006. The cable network also gave up five 30-second spots to gain cable exclusivity on the comedy for five years, making it the highest-grossing sitcom to come off The WB.

On the eve of the network upfronts in May, news broke that Twentieth was in a testy fight over license fees with The WB concerning *Reba* and other series. The producer reportedly sought \$1.5 million per episode to renew the sitcom, while The WB refused to exceed \$1.1 million per half-hour. It also wanted the right to multiple Sunday-evening airings of episodes. Terms were not disclosed when the two sides eventually settled their differences.

Tribune, the largest station group acquiring *Reba*, is not likely to put up much of a fight if Twentieth moves to take the sitcom back. As a 20% stakeholder in The WB, Tribune, along with powerful WB affiliates Sinclair and Acme Communications, has led the effort pushing the network to get out of the kids business in the first place. ■

Additional reporting by Ben Grossman

Brand Builders 2005

They're some of the best in the business. On June 21, as part of the Promax & BDA conference at New York's Marriott Marquis, a small group of marketing and promotions pros will be awarded this year's Brand Builders Awards, sponsored by *Broadcasting & Cable* and *Mul-*

tichannel News. On the pages that follow, we highlight some of the honorees' achievements. Also included are mini-profiles of the 2005 winners of Promax & BDA's Century Award, marking a career of excellence in the television business.

Pat Mitchell

PBS president toughs it out **By Paige Albiniak**

PBS President and CEO Pat Mitchell has been head of the Public Broadcasting Service for only five years, but it hasn't taken long for her to make her mark.

Mitchell, along with fellow PBS luminary Bill Moyers, will collect her Century Award June 21. In June 2006, Pat Mitchell will officially leave PBS, and when she does, she hopes that it is in a stronger position.

After three decades as a news-woman, Mitchell arrived at PBS a little more than a year before 9/11. That event made her job even more challenging.

"With the bad economy that followed and the coming digital transition, that created some stress at the stations and at PBS," Mitchell says. "So one of my goals since the beginning was to identify and secure new funding."

Over the past couple of years, Mitchell has managed to set up the PBS Foundation, which can accept grants from large corporate contributors. To date, the PBS Foundation has been awarded one \$10 million grant from the Ford Foundation. Another is on its way, Mitchell hints.

Now she hopes Congress creates a trust fund, with as much as \$20 billion,

to provide cash for non-com stations. The money would come from a portion of the revenues expected after auctions of reclaimed TV analog channels.

At the same time, Mitchell is fighting a conservative movement that says both PBS and NPR are too liberal.

She has been busy working with a group called Digital Future Initiative, led by former Netscape CEO Jim Barksdale and former FCC Chairman Reed Hundt. They have taken a serious look at creating a new blueprint for public television's mission and funding opportunities. Now, in her last year at PBS, she'll travel to 60-70 cities to talk with community leaders about PBS' mission.

"I really wanted to spend the last year doing just what I'm doing: concentrating on how I can build a more sustainable future. I think one of my best assets as president and CEO is telling the story of the value of public broadcasting, because I'm absolutely passionate about it and committed to the need for a strong public broadcasting service—now more than ever."



Pat Mitchell

CENTURY AWARD WINNERS

Bill Moyers

Thirty Emmys and a load of controversy

It is fitting that Bill Moyers—one of TV's most honored—is getting his Century Award at the same time PBS President and CEO Pat Mitchell is getting hers.

It was Mitchell who brought the only regular series of Moyers' career, *NOW*, to PBS in 2002, and now both are feeling heat for it. Recently, Kenneth Tomlinson, chairman of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting—the funding arm of public broadcasting—wrote that the "left-wing bias" Moyers exhibited "jeopardized essential support for public TV" by conservative viewers and underwriters.

Moyers later called Tomlinson's remarks "dangerous." Clearly that is Moyers' view of the state of the nation at

this moment, too.

Speaking at commencement exercises at the City University of New York recently, Moyers, as quoted in *The New York Times*, said, "This is no ordinary time. [The] basic constitutional principles of America are under assault: an independent press and judiciary, the separation of church and state, progressive taxation, and the social contract." On the final season of *NOW*, Moyers hammered away at media consolidation and also attacked big media in his commencement speech.

Moyers does not consider *NOW* to

be his best forum; he always preferred diving deep into one subject at a time. And he did it well. His documentaries—including *A Walk Through the 20th Century*, *The Power of Myth* (with Joseph Campbell), *A World of Ideas* and *Healing and the Mind*—have won more than 30 Emmys and 10 Peabodys.

"I was fortunate enough not ever to be hostage to the news of the day," Moyers told the *Austin American-Statesman* late last year.

Moyers hit the national spotlight as a special assistant and press secretary to President Lyndon B. Johnson. Serving with Moyers was Jack Valenti, who went on to become president of the Motion Picture Association of America.

Says Valenti of Moyers, "He is an astonishing talent—with persuasive skills that President Johnson saw and used to the benefit of the country. As a television communicator, he knew how to get inside a complex issue, dress it in clarity, and wrap it in a dramatic narrative that engaged and enticed audiences. That's a gift that's hard to clone. Maybe that's why there's only one Moyers."—P. A.



Bill Moyers

George Bodenheimer

ESPN boss presides over a branding giant **By Stuart Miller**

ESPN chief George Bodenheimer has spent most of 2004 and the first half of 2005 celebrating. Last year, ESPN was feted from coast to coast as the sports network marked its 25th anniversary. In the fall of 2004, Bodenheimer was inducted into the B&C Hall of Fame. He was given the National Cable & Telecommunications Association's coveted Vanguard Award in April. And he is receiving the Promax Century Award this week.

Bodenheimer's titles are actually president of ESPN Inc. and ABC Sports, co-chairman of Disney Media Networks, and chairman of the ESPN board of directors. This is all the more impressive because, just as in a Hollywood movie, he started at ESPN in the mailroom back in 1981. (His official bio says he began in the "administration department.")

No matter. Bodenheimer now presides over what is one of the nation's most potent brands. There are the net-

works: ESPN, ESPN2, ESPN News, ESPN Deportes, ESPN Classic and more. There are the magazine, the radio network and the Web site. There are even the sports bars. In 2003, *The Sporting News* named him "the most powerful person in sports." Bodenheimer is more modest about himself. "We're very proud of what we built," he says. But he emphasizes, "It's not about me. It's about 4,000 people who work here" in Bristol, Conn., where ESPN is headquartered.

His employees are loyal to an executive known to send notes to them asking about a sick family member. He is also prone to engaging in the kind of horseplay ESPN's promo campaigns highlight.

Under his watch, ESPN has led the way with the new ESPN Digital Center, one of the world's largest high-definition television facilities. And he has landed programming

agreements with virtually every major professional sports association that exists, including, of course, the NFL. In 2006, ESPN becomes the home of ABC's *Monday Night Football*, a cable migration the whole media world is waiting for.

Outside of ESPN, Bodenheimer has been an influence on the cable business itself. He chaired the marketing committee for the NCTA's On Time Guarantee, the cable industry's most important effort to turn its bad-service image around in a hurry. He still serves on the boards of the NCTA, Cable in the Classroom and the V Foundation for Cancer Research, which ESPN founded with late basketball coach Jim Valvano, who was diagnosed with terminal cancer in 1992.

"He's a great leader in terms of organizational dynamics," says Chuck Pagano, ESPN's senior VP of technology, engineering and operations. "He focuses on doing what's best for the organization without losing sight of the human element." Still, Pagano says, Bodenheimer is the boss: "He's honest, and he tells you what he's thinking—even if it's not always what you want to hear."



George Bodenheimer

National Geographic

A venerable brand spawns a network By Kevin Downey

Steven Schiffman, executive VP, marketing

The National Geographic Channel debuted four years ago with an unusual problem: The management concluded that the 117-year-old National Geographic Society's namesake magazine struck many cable viewers as rather dry compared with, say, Animal Planet or even Discovery.

But Executive VP of Marketing and New Media Steven Schiffman tapped into what he learned as brand manager at Kraft Foods in the 1990s to fashion a new identity for the network that makes it distinct from the magazine.

"When you think of the hundreds of brands on the cable dial and thousands of Internet options, the parallels in terms of selection and choice are not too dissimilar to going into a grocery store and trying to sift out what [brand] you want to take off the shelf," Schiffman says. He leveraged Nat Geo's name recognition and improved it through ads on outlets owned by majority partner Fox Cable Networks. And he got the word out: This was not a video version of your grandfather's dusty collection of *National Geographic* magazines.

Key to Schiffman's marketing strategy has been to give Nat Geo a contemporary feel while emphasizing the word "channel." He and his team did that in part by incorporating brighter onscreen colors—adding a red logo while retaining *National Geographic* magazine's traditional and iconic yellow border—and, perhaps most indicative of the network's identity, adding the tagline

"Dare to Explore."

The changes, put in place early last year, were crafted in large part from work Schiffman and his team undertook with San Francisco-based research firm Odyssey. The studies measured consumer attitudes to better understand who were most likely to watch the nonfiction programming the channel airs.

Findings from the research were used to group consumers into six categories. Among those were the New Enthusiasts: people interested in adventure programs that make up much of the National Geographic Channel's lineup.

Schiffman says it was from listening to the New Enthusiasts that Nat Geo's fresh look and tagline were developed: "What we've done with this attitudinal segment is that we've learned how to screen for New Enthusiasts in focus groups, and we get feedback on programming and marketing ideas so we can get smarter about the type of tone, content and messaging that's relevant to them."

And programming more originals, such as this month's *Inside the Mafia*, has boosted Nat Geo's audience. In the first quarter, its prime time audience in its core 25-54 demo was up 99% from a year earlier, to an average 133,000 viewers. Nat Geo reaches 63 million homes.

"We wanted a salient idea that was aggressive, challenging and straightforward, right in their face—"Dare to Explore,"" says Schiffman. "We created a campaign that I think is very different, where we market the channel as a destination and not simply a collection of shows, series, specials and stunt weeks that have no consistency."



Steven Schiffman

Comedy Central

Hard work for a funny business By Stuart Miller

Cathy Tankosic, former VP, marketing, Comedy Central

For Cathy Tankosic, building the brand might mean clever on-air promos, or it might mean innovative Internet guerrilla marketing, but it would all be meaningless if she didn't first nail down the basics: understanding her audience.

"I felt we needed to hear from viewers about what drew them to MTV's Comedy Central. Are they drawn to the network or just to specific shows?" says the former senior VP of marketing at Comedy, who is now serving as a consultant on new-business endeavors to MTV Networks. "We discovered they are, in part, drawn to the network: Comedy Central stood for something to them, a particular sensibility. They connected with the irreverence and loved the honesty."

Clearing up what the network stood for "made us realize there was a lot of power that we could tap into," Tankosic adds. So in creating a new image for the channel, the first step was to craft a sense of consistency—both visually and editorially—for on-air promos and marketing. One key issue was tone. "You need to be funny but not say you're funny," Tankosic says. "You need to deliver humor but not lecture."

The on-air team was "incredibly collaborative" with the various shows' producers and talent to ensure they felt the programs were well-positioned. Marketing comedy requires a "delicate balance," Tankosic says, especially since many of the shows, like *The Daily Show* or *Chappelle's Show*, often find humor in material that might not seem funny out of context.

"It's often about story-telling, not just about rapid-fire jokes," she says, "and that makes it tricky."

But even funny material wears thin if repeated too often. "We had to really build into the planning of how many spots we'd need to make to keep the campaigns fresh so viewers wouldn't get bored by one joke," Tankosic says.

To build the brand and keep it on track, the network's promotional and marketing campaigns take chances and break the traditional rules. For instance, while most networks would never mention in-house problems, Comedy Central recently promoted a *Chappelle's Show* marathon with spots that poked fun at the strange twists the show and its star, Dave Chappelle, had recently endured. "It's saying, 'Hey, we're on the same page and we won't talk down to you,'" Tankosic says.

In branding *Crank Yankers*, Tankosic broke with all convention by initially releasing crank calls via the Internet without including any mention of Comedy Central. Only after the mystery created buzz among the people sending them back and forth did the network reveal itself; then it created an on-line program where people could have a crank phone call automatically sent to one of their friends.

And that is how, Tankosic says, "we delivered on the sensibility of the show in a unique way."



Cathy Tankosic

Comcast

A cable giant grows demand for video-on-demand By Ken Kerschbaumer

Page Thompson, VP, marketing, new video products

While Page Thompson may be the one stepping front and center to accept the Promax Brand Builders Award, he is loathe to be the only one getting the credit.

"There are hundreds and hundreds of people at Comcast who have made this product succeed," says the cable giant's VP of marketing, new video products, about video-on-demand (VOD). "From every tech in the field who demonstrates it, to the customer service representative who talks to the customers on the phone about the product, it should be a team award for everyone at Comcast."

There is little denying the success Thompson has overseen with respect to Comcast's VOD offering. The operator delivers thousands of hours of free VOD content to viewers every month—more than 100 million views in March alone. That is a long way from what was a brand-new offering only 30 months ago.

"In the early days, VOD was perceived as another vehicle for transactional business with the customer, offering movies and other pay services," Thompson explains. Comcast turned that around. "The main thing we've done was focus on offering hundreds of hours of free content."

Comcast went a different way, basing its model loosely on what happened in the first wild years of the Internet. Consumers wanted free content. Comcast saw that and decided to get users comfortable with the interaction and experience of the convenience of VOD without paying for it. The payoff came later: Buy rates went up 63% after Comcast began offering free VOD, too. "We now have the highest buy rates ever seen," says Thompson.

Comcast has undertaken an intense marketing blitz that makes customers well aware that free VOD is available and of where to find it (at channel 1). First there are barker videos, produced by E! Entertainment, which

look to bring viewers into the VOD area. That is complemented by commercials tailored for a number of audiences—everything from sports fans to parents. Comcast also blasts 1.5 million e-mails each month to viewers who opt-in for VOD updates, and sends out hundreds of thousands of pieces of direct mail.

"From day one, we invested money into building a VOD presence," says Thompson. "That takes three things: first, let the viewer know VOD is available; second, let them know it's free; and third, let them know where to go."

"When I had an opportunity to come here and back to Philadelphia, I was very excited," adds the 1983 Princeton grad (with an M.B.A. from Harvard), who was born and raised in the City of Brotherly Love and today lives seven blocks from his parents.

To help build Comcast's VOD service into a brand, Thompson drew on skills he learned while working at Pepsi and General Cinemas, where he was VP of marketing. But he isn't bragging. He says, "This award is really a recognition of the people at Comcast who have taken VOD from being a theoretical idea to an exciting part of something that changes the way people watch television."



Page Thompson

Brand assets.

Congratulations to

Page Thompson

VP/General Manager, On Demand Comcast Cable

John Miller

Chief Marketing Officer
NBC Universal Television Group

Vince Manze

President
The NBC Agency

Vivi Zigler

SVP Marketing & Advertising
The NBC Agency

... and all of this year's Brand Builder Award winners.

NBC  **UNIVERSAL**

C A B L E

Fox Broadcasting

How DVD giveaways gave *House* a good home By Kevin Downey

Chris Carlisle, executive VP, marketing; Brian Dollenmayer, senior VP, on-air promotion; Rick Laurenze, VP, on-air promotion

Dr. Gregory House is a tough character to sell. The abrasive, blunt lead on Fox's recently renewed medical drama *House* isn't warm and fuzzy, nor is he immediately endearing. And, to boot, he lacks the good looks of the network's cavalcade of twenty-something stars.

But while that made it difficult to convince viewers that Dr. House and the show were worth watching, Chris Carlisle, former FX marketing chief and, since August, executive VP of marketing at Fox Broadcasting, figured if people just watched one episode, then they'd be hooked. Carlisle devised a strategy to get viewers to give *House* a shot: Fox sent out about 1.1 million DVDs of the pilot through *Entertainment Weekly* and *People*.

"That's not a tactic you use every day, because it's expensive," Carlisle acknowledges. "But when you

have tremendous faith in the pilot, the best tool is to get it into the hands of people. And because it has such a unique character at the center, we thought seeing him in context was the best way to do it."

Working with Brian Dollenmayer, senior VP of on-air promotion, and Rick Laurenze, VP of on-air promotion, Carlisle also experimented with a number of on-air promos to run on Fox and its sibling cable networks—which include FX—before settling on spots that incorporated three components: the show's focus on medical mysteries, the Dr. Gregory House character and good reviews.

But Carlisle says the promos alone were too short to adequately explain Dr. House's personality to uninitiated viewers, making the DVD that much more important.

"It was such a strong pilot, but when you boil it down to a 30-second promo, his character—because you have one or two soundbites to portray this acerbic character—seems magnified," he says.



Chris Carlisle

"Once you see the pilot, you see it in the context that he has a personality people live with because he's such a great doctor. His personality [becomes] much more palatable."

Still, *House* wasn't an immediate hit. It took the rather lofty Tuesday lead-in of *American Idol*, which had its season premiere in January, to catapult it into one of Fox's most-watched programs.

House averaged 13.2 million viewers for its entire run but, partnered with *Idol*, became a top-15 show among adults 18-49 by the end of the season, with a total audience of 19.5 million for its season finale.

Now that *House* has a fairly high profile, Carlisle says, promoting it next season will be far easier. But challenges remain, notably the show's move next January from last season's cushy post-*Idol* slot to Monday, where it will lead into *24*.

"People have embraced [Dr.] House and other characters on the show, so now we have a returning show that people are already sold into," Carlisle says, adding, "The on-air promotions were extremely aggressive [this past season] on our network and on our sister cable networks, and we're going to come out next season very aggressively."

Harpo Productions

Behind *Oprah's* Pontiac surprise By Jeff Borden

Tim Bennett, president; Ellen Raki-eten, executive producer; Harriet Seitler, creative services and program development; Lisa Halliday, director of communications

Oprah Winfrey initially turned down a proposal by General Motors' Pontiac division to showcase its new G6 sedan as one of "Oprah's Favorite Things."

Yet there she was on the premiere of her 19th season, handing out keys to 276 fully loaded Pontiacs to an audience composed of fans who desperately needed a new set of wheels, a stunt described later by *The Washington Post* as "the product placement to end all product placements."

A change of heart? Not really.

"She didn't depart from her instincts," explains Tim Bennett, president of Harpo Productions, who, along with three other top *Oprah* executives, is getting a Brand Builders Award because of the novel promotion. The car was *not* one of Winfrey's favorite things, and she didn't want to pretend it was. Coming up with the idea

of giving the cars to viewers who badly needed a new auto made the giveaway something more; it was a piece of altruism that promoted Pontiac's brand—and Winfrey's, too. "The creativity of [the Harpo] team found a way to get it done," Bennett says.

Pontiac got a rapturous introduction for its G6: Winfrey mentioned the model name 15 times during the program.

Ratings for the season premiere were the highest since the first show of the 1996 season, earning a national 10.1 rating, a 31% increase over the season-to-date Nielsen average of 7.7. Meanwhile, according to comScore Networks, which tracks Web-site traffic, visits to *Oprah's* Web site jumped 800% the day after, with 600,000 logged on.

Pontiac spent \$7.8 million on the vehicles and used the program as the opening shot in a \$50 million ad campaign. Pontiac's Web site traffic jumped 600% following the *Oprah* show, and dealerships were crowded.

Led by Ellen Rakieten, the Harpo team took months to put the segment together. A marketing scheme from Harriet Seitler and Lisa Halliday ensured massive coverage. Three weeks preceding the season premiere, Harpo began advising the press that a "major announcement" was in the offing but gave no hints. All guests and journalists were required to abide by an embargo to prevent the news from leaking before the show aired the following Monday. Remarkably, everybody complied. The day after the show, stories about Winfrey and the free Pontiacs were inescapable—not just in the U.S. but in all 112 countries where the show airs.



Tim Bennett



Oprah Winfrey giving away Pontiacs

ABC News

GMA, *World News* battle toward the top By George Winslow

Alan Ives, VP and creative director; Diane Brenner, director and senior producer, affiliate news promotion

Sometimes a branding campaign can capture the mood of not only a single show but an entire network. When ABC launched a new promotional campaign for *Good Morning America* in February, the network's creative team decided to fashion a kind of music video, combining images of Diane Sawyer, Charles Gibson and other top talent with music from rising country vocalist Julie Roberts, who sings the show's tagline, "Good To Go."

That feel-good message certainly sums up the buoyant mood at ABC, which has seen its ratings soar this year, helped by *Desperate Housewives*. On the news side, *Good Morning America* has racked up its best ratings since 1992 and is now close to topping NBC's long-dominant *Today* show. In the evening, *World News Tonight* won both February and May sweeps.

Successful branding campaigns for both *GMA* and *World News Tonight* have resulted in a Brand Builders Award at this week's Promax for two ABC executives: Alan Ives, the VP and creative director of ABC News Advertising and Promotion, and Diane Brenner, director and senior producer of affiliate news promotion at ABC Affiliate Marketing.

Ives, a 19-year ABC veteran, has put together the team responsible for developing ABC's branding campaigns and messages. Brenner, who reports to John Nuzzi, VP of ABC Affiliate Marketing, handles affiliate marketing for the ABC News programs.

While Brenner does not work directly with Ives' team, Ives thinks her work with local affiliates is crucial: "What we've achieved wouldn't be possible without her efforts."

He stresses that it is easier to promote a product that has something going for it. "It all starts with a terrific, breakout show," he says, speaking about *GMA*. "Honesty and trust are the foundation of any branding message. Too often, marketing folks come up with a clever idea that doesn't necessarily fit the show."

The music video with images of *GMA* talent and the new tagline demonstrated that *GMA* can be both fun and serious, Ives says. It is intended to convey an "optimistic feeling that will help viewers start the day," he adds.

With *World News Tonight*, Ives and his team faced very different branding issues and opportunities. In 2004, a year when two broadcast-network anchors stepped down and mainstream media outlets faced increased public scrutiny, ABC News launched a branding and promotional campaign featuring the tagline "Trust Is Earned." The campaign, relying heavily on images of Peter Jennings, "was designed to remind people that we've earned people's trust," Ives says.

That trust has also sustained the news program following Jennings' absence due to his battle with lung cancer. "We won the May sweeps for the second straight year without him," says Ives, who adds that Jennings continues to set the show's editorial direction. "We are very happy that Peter will be coming back to the No. 1 newscast."



Alan Ives

CNN News Group

Trust, with a sense of humor By George Winslow

Scot Safon, senior VP marketing and promotions, CNN News Group, and Andy Mitchell, director of interactive marketing, CNN News Group

In an on-demand world, it isn't hard to imagine having your own private news anchor. That at least was the premise of a lighthearted campaign to promote CNN.com that began airing last November. The spots featured CNN anchors in situations interacting with average viewers who wanted simpler but precise info that a news Web site can provide.

In one spot, for example, Wolf Blitzer starts to explain current economic news to a woman, who really just wants the price of her stock.

The humor highlights the way many people use the Internet, notes Scot Safon, senior VP of marketing and promotions for the CNN News Group. But the tagline, "CNN.com: The Power of CNN Under Your Command," reinforces the branding message that "CNN.com offers users the newsgathering resources of the most trusted name in news on demand," he says.

This campaign is one of the reasons that Promax is giving Brand Builder Awards to Safon and Andy Mitchell, director of interactive marketing at CNN News Group. Safon also credits Brendan Gibbons of Hungry Man Productions, who wrote and directed the promos.

Such efforts to promote CNN's brand outside of its television networks are increasingly crucial to CNN's future. As CNN has discovered in its 25th year, there are plenty of news sources, and it also trails Fox News in ratings. That competition has "created both enormous opportunities and challenges for our branding efforts," Safon says.



Scot Safon

CNN's overall cross-branding efforts position the networks as the "Most Trusted Name in News," a slogan that fits when news, like the tsunami or the Pope's death occur. "We aren't just showing pictures," he says. CNN is selling experience.

Safon acknowledges Fox's success with its personality-driven approach, "but we believe that, no matter how crowded the marketplace is, there is a real need for an objective, trusted news source."

CBS Network

The art of turning hits into brands By Paige Albinak

Ron Scalera, executive VP/creative director, CBS Marketing Group

The shows *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* and *The Amazing Race*, both from Jerry Bruckheimer, would probably be hits even without Ron Scalera's deft touch, but his innovative promotional campaigns have been so out of the ordinary that they caught the eye and admiration of contemporaries.

He is no stranger to Brand Builders Awards: At Promax&BDA this week, Scalera will pick up his second in three years.

Scalera, the executive VP and creative director for the CBS Marketing Group, credits the shows for his success: "CSI is everything a promotion person could ask for." And *Amazing Race*? "There's no other show like it in the world," he says. "I still can't believe how they produce that."

This year, Scalera focused on two *CSI* events in particular: the season premiere and the riveting Quentin Tarantino-directed season finale.

In May, Tarantino directed a two-hour season episode in which one

cast member, George Eads, was alive. Scalera homed in on that "buried-alive" imagery. Nearly 40 million viewers tuned in.

Scalera's marketing efforts are also helping build Emmy-winning reality show *The Amazing Race* into a mega-hit. Scalera used a song by The Killers, called "Change Your Mind," as a promotional anthem because, he reasons,

"if you think a reality show can't move you, this is going to change your mind." He loves the show, he says, because of its raw emotion: "There are tears, hugs, pumped fists. That's what this show is really about."

Says George Schweitzer, president of the CBS Marketing Group, "Ron is a brilliant, creative guy who is able to take a vision—his or someone else's—and see it through to finished product."

Scalera maintains a "dare-me" attitude toward promotion that keeps him excited. "There's always something new to try," he says. "And, unlike everybody else at a network, we are the only department that can think of something this morning that will be seen by 30 million people that night."



Ron Scalera

It takes hard work to build businesses.
It takes vision to build brands.

Congratulations to
Page Thompson
and
Steve Schiffman

for their achievements as 2005 Brand Builders.



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NBC Network

Revelations promo was wholly intriguing By Ben Grossman

Vince Manze, president, NBC Agency; John Miller, chief marketing officer, NBC Universal Television Group; Viv Zigler, senior VP, marketing and advertising services, NBC Agency

Selling the end of the world to TV audiences would seem tricky enough, but selling the end of the world up against *American Idol* is a task bordering on demonic.

Yet that is what was asked of NBC Agency President Vince Manze, who led the push for the six-hour event series *Revelations*, which debuted on NBC Wednesday night, April 13. And thanks to a creative and rather risky approach, NBC attracted 15.6 million viewers to the premiere, despite the tough competition.

"If it was me, I would have made my task a little easier and not scheduled it there. But that's not my job, unfortunately," jokes Manze.

The six-week series followed a Harvard professor and a nun who find evidence that the world is coming to an end, as predicted by The Book of Revelation in the Bible.

To create buzz for the event, Manze—along with NBC Universal Television Group CMO John Miller and NBC Agency Senior VP, Marketing and Advertising Services, Vivi Zigler—rolled out a campaign featuring a single Latin phrase and no translation.

Two months prior to the premiere, they launched billboards containing the words "Omnium Finis Imminet." Only later did they then add a rough English translation, "The End Is Near." But what was being advertised wasn't disclosed.

NBC, across all of its networks, used a series of on-air "interruptors," seven- and 10-second cut-ins made to look as if they were interrupting programming with the same phrases. But still no reveal.



Vince Manze

"Some thought it was for *War of the Worlds*," Manze laughs, referring to the old Orson Welles radio play that scared the nation in 1938. "It was all to create buzz; we knew they'd know what it was for eventually."

A month later, NBC added the series name and tune-in time. They also added an online element: If users typed phrases such as "end of the world" into Yahoo! or Google, they would be offered links to the official *Revelations* site.

The campaign created enough intrigue to drive the significant tune-in number. But while the premiere attracted a respectable 15.6 million viewers against *Idol*, the series' ratings eventually faded badly.

Manze was still proud of the opening. "Certain things like *Joey* are a lot easier to open to a good number, because of where it came from," he says. "But things like this are much different, and it is much more difficult to deliver that number, so this is one we were pretty happy with."

Martha Stewart

How to keep a business going By Joel Brown

Martha Stewart, founder; Susan Lyne, CEO; Heidi Diamond, president, television

How fitting that a tumultuous year for Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia Inc. (MSLO) can be best explained with a reference to ... yarn.

"We stuck with our knitting" is how Heidi Diamond, president of the television division, explains the brand's ability to survive after the domestic diva went to jail for five months for lying about a stock sale.

"They definitely don't teach this in business school," Diamond says. "There's no manual, no how-to guide in terms of ready reference for what to do in this kind of situation. We were continuously committed to our brand and its mission, and we were unwavering in knowing that it was going to endure."

Stewart's trademark focus and determination helped her, new CEO Susan Lyne and Diamond steer the company through layoffs, quarterly losses, an avalanche of brutal press and endless jokes.

"All of us here are made from that same good stock. The die-hardness and commitment and dedication is evidenced by how prolific our company is

as a producer of high-quality content," Diamond says. "Martha certainly is a wonderful example of someone who is just nonstop about that, and her quest is really a beautiful thing to watch, because it's about continuing to please and delight her loyal customers."

As for watching, audiences will get their chances. *Martha*, a daily daytime studio show owned by MSLO and syndicated by NBC Universal, will premiere Sept. 12. Her version of *The Apprentice*, owned by NBC, will air in prime time beginning this fall. Reality guru Mark Burnett is producing both.

Lyne, the former ABC Entertainment president, was key in "architecting" MSLO's strategy, Diamond says, and promoting the strength of "the wonderful assets that make up our company within the television arena as well as publishing, retail and the Internet area."

Even before Stewart "went away for the winter" (as Diamond puts it), she and Burnett were discussing the shows. After her house arrest ends in August, the programs will really take shape.

"Martha talked about how she'd be coming back on television and she'd be ready for a little renovation, a little re-invention," says Diamond, who worked at AMC and the Food Network before joining MSLO in 2002.

"And Martha said, 'Mark promises he won't interfere with the recipes, and I promise that I won't interfere if Mark wants to show us having more access to our viewers, a little bit of humor, a little bit of urgency.'"



Heidi Diamond

The WB

Bob Bibb and Lew Goldstein make this *Blue Collar* fit

Bob Bibb and Lew Goldstein, co-presidents of marketing

The WB might not have the highest ratings on broadcast television, but you might be hard-pressed to find a network known for better-looking stars. The Frog's prime time slate seems an unending parade of young eye candy, from *Smallville* hunk Tom Welling to *Charmed* vixen Alyssa Milano to ... Larry The Cable Guy?

In a marked departure from its brand, The WB has found a nice ratings pickup with redneck laughter *Blue Collar TV*. Featuring comedians Larry The Cable Guy, Jeff Foxworthy and Bill Engvall, *Blue* is a hodgepodge of sketches straight out of NASCAR nation: The subject matter is much more likely to be a double-wide than a double latte.

And so far so good for The WB, which has seen

Blue collar an average of 3.3 million viewers for its Thursday time slot, up 16% over a year ago. It is men who are watching—a 43% bump year-to-year in men 18-34 and a 33% jump in males 12-34.

Although Co-Presidents of Marketing Bob Bibb and Lew Goldstein knew the "redneck" genre was not necessarily typical WB, they also saw an opportunity to expand the scope of the network brand—and audience.

"The show introduces a lot of people who would never come to The WB," says Bibb. "It's a way to get to market No. 30 and below and get exposure for our network where maybe we couldn't in the past. The whole key to branding and marketing is, it's okay to dip your toe into something that may be a little off-brand. We always wondered what could bring us young guys, which maybe could help open

up our brand a little bit."

A radical scheduling move like *Blue Collar* is not foreign to The WB. Bibb likes to allude to "a little show called *Buffy*."

Says Bibb, "When we launched *Buffy*, the network

was built on family comedies. If we had just stayed with the same stuff, we'd still be a family-comedy network."

From a promotional standpoint, the network has been fortunate to be able to leverage the success of the *Blue Collar* stars' comedy tours and CDs, as well as the burgeoning fame of Larry The Cable Guy (real name Dan Whitney).

The network has used extensive outdoor shots featuring the three stars mounted on hunting plaques and the tagline, "Well Hung Comedy." A new on-air campaign this summer edits Larry The Cable Guy into snippets of *Smallville*, *Gilmore Girls* and *One Tree Hill*.

Next for Larry and the boys? A good old-fashioned shootin' match with the ladies of Wisteria Lane, as The WB moves *Blue Collar* to Sundays at 9. "If you can get more counter-programming than that," Goldstein says, "I don't know how."—B.G.



Lew Goldstein



Bob Bibb



A radical programming move for The WB

E.W. Scripps

Synergy can work if you work at it By P.J. Bednarski

Bonnie Barclay, president, The Branding Iron; Sheila Obermeyer, director of marketing, WCPO Cincinnati

Depending on the circumstance, synergy is either a horrible waste of time or the smartest use of a company's varied assets. E.W. Scripps Television Group prefers the latter.

To accomplish that, Scripps employs Bonnie Barclay, a marketing veteran and president of her own Atlanta-based company, The Branding Iron, which coordinates promotion between Scripps' broadcasting outlets and its high-flying cable networks, particularly HGTV, The Food Network, DIY and Fine Living.

For example, DIY (for Do It Yourself) is a Scripps cable network, but it's also a local TV show in some of Scripps' broadcast markets.

"DIY is a terrific example of our synergy," says Barclay, who is getting a Brand Builders Award for her prowess. "It grew out of the idea that the stations

and the cable networks would work together to help each other."

Barclay and others make sure that the local versions are relevant to Scripps markets. "You can do a DIY segment on how to get rock salt off your car in Detroit, where we own WXYZ," she says, "but you don't want to run that segment in Phoenix," where Scripps owns KNXV.

Another example: Before *Iron Chef America* started on The Food Network, Barclay made sure that Scripps stations with chatty morning shows aired behind-the-scenes segments about it. The result: *Iron Chef America* had the most-viewed debut in Food Network history.

Obviously, Barclay knows that promos on Scripps' stations are just a part of a larger, company-wide promotional and programming effort. Still, she insists on a "very aggressive schedule

of promos for the cable properties" and keeps those cable promotional activities going even during sweeps periods at the stations. She notes with pride that stations like the interaction with the cable networks.

"We don't cook 'em up; they cook 'em up," she says, referring to some of the best synergistic promotions. In Detroit, WXYZ teamed with DIY and Habitat for Humanity to have former President Jimmy Carter help with a building project in Motown. In Cleveland, WEWS dreamed up the The Great Big Food Show, for which Food Network chefs showed up at a food fair sponsored by the station. Scripps' 10 traditional stations run "interstitials," short info-snippets prepared by Scripps cable networks, in their newscasts. (Five other Scripps stations are Shop at Home channels that operate separately, in terms of promotion.)

Barclay's job includes coordinating other messages at Scripps stations, such as integrating company-wide slogans like "Coverage You Can Count On" and "Working for You."

She watches a lot of tapes of local promos and can quickly see little flaws before they develop into big problems. "It takes a great deal of trust for them to let me look at their work and make suggestions," she says, adding, "but sometimes it is just a forest-for-the-trees kind of problem."

And sometimes things work so well, Barclay can only smile. At WCPO in Scripps' hometown of Cincinnati, Director of Marketing Sheila Obermeyer, also a Brand Builders honoree, played a big part in turning the ABC affiliate into one of the network's top performers. She credits tight coordination between her department and News Director Bob Morford for creating promos that often seamlessly tie in to ABC programs. The magic, she says, is finding a relationship with the newsroom that "they can feel comfortable with."

It's another example of cooperation that Barclay knows is crucial for success. "Viewers are bombarded by so many messages," she says, "getting the hearts and minds of viewers is much harder than it used to be."



Bonnie Barclay



Scripps stations help Food Network's Iron Chef America.



SCRIPPS

The E. W. Scripps Company and The Scripps Television Station Group congratulate all of this year's honorees, including our own Brand Builder Award Winners

Bonnie Barclay,
President, The Branding Iron

Sheila Obermeyer,
Director of Marketing/Creative Services,
WCPO-TV, Cincinnati



A Very Special Trend in Network Promos

Out: Clichés and bombast. In (with help from the right hardware): Eye-catching, of-the-moment spots **By Ken Kerschbaumer**

If the expanding TV universe means hundreds of channels, then it also necessitates tens of thousands of promos every year—a glut of video lapel-grabbing that industry professionals suspect is losing its ability to capture the attention of jaded viewers.

The response in some quarters where network promos are hatched: Cut the clichés, tamp down the hype and find new ways of piquing audience interest.

At CNN, words that had been staples of the network's promotion of its news operation—words like “resources,” “coverage,” “perspective” and “insight”—have outlived their usefulness, says Scot Safon, senior VP, marketing and on-air promotions. “You have to say those things in a way that speaks directly to the viewer. No viewer uses words like ‘resources’ when they’re telling a friend why they watch CNN.”

NBC is also moving on from hype it once embraced. “You have no credibility if every episode is special or the one you must see,” says Senior VP for On-Air Advertising Jim Vescera. “We still do ‘Must See TV,’ but we’ve refined the message and treat that audience intelligently.”

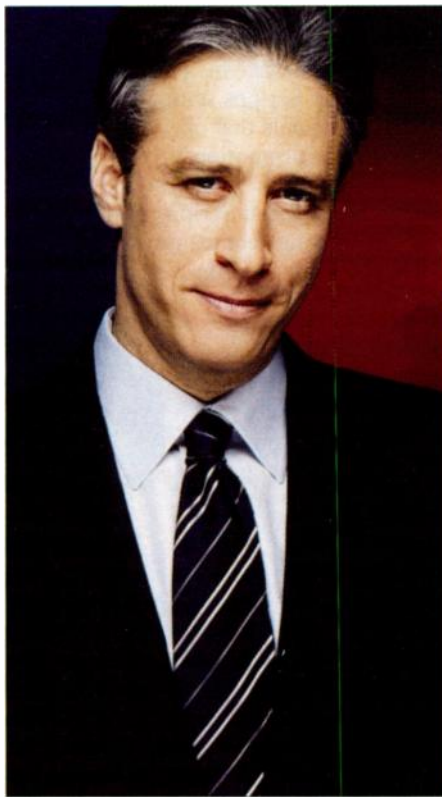
But that doesn't mean “must see” has morphed into take-it-or-leave-it; if anything, the impulse to try new approaches to promos is driven by an urgency that is greater than ever. An effective promo “needs to give the viewer a real strong reason to tune in because they have so many choices,” says Vescera. “It’s easy to do a promo that doesn’t give the viewer a motivating factor.”

Luckily, interest in overhauling the TV hype machine arrives at a time when hardware makes it easier than ever to produce promotional spots with arresting graphics and a quick turnaround time that can make them seem as fresh as the shows they’re promoting. In the past, the process of making promos was so time-consuming and labor-intensive that nimble, creative thinking lost out to the urge just to get the thing out the door.

HOW TO HYPE THE MISSING CHAPPELLE?

A prime example of the new promo culture is Comedy Central, which suffered in the 1990s from a lack of lightning-rod shows but has flourished more recently with shows like *The Daily Show With Jon Stewart*, *Chappelle's Show* and *Reno 911!*. With the help of effective branding, the network has turned the likes of Jon Stewart and Dave Chappelle into household names and, in turn, discovered new revenue streams in DVDs and books.

Building those household names,



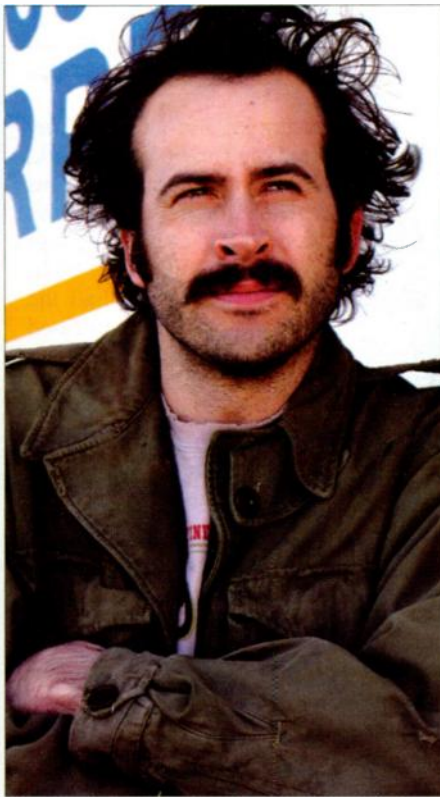
Effective branding has made *The Daily Show's* Jon Stewart a household name.

though, involves more than simply scheduling a show and blasting out hundreds of promos for it every week. Comedy Central works closely on its spots with the producers of the programs it airs, making sure the tone and message are on point. The work is greatly facilitated by an Avid DS editing

system and Adobe After Effects, which are used by network graphics and editing teams to work on 30-100 promos at any one time. Says Kendrick Reid, Comedy Central VP, on-air design, “Between the Avid system and After Effects, we can do everything.”

Comedy Central programs are ripe for promos that, in a matter of seconds, can offend and attract at the same time. Bob Pederson, Comedy Central VP, on-air creative, says that's fine: If a promo doesn't offend someone, the odds are that it isn't doing its job, since the network believes its viewers consider themselves edgier and hipper than mainstream audiences.

And the promos, given the timeliness of *The Daily Show* and *South Park*, need to be turned around quickly. “We usually get a five-second clip from *South Park* on Monday for a program that debuts on Wednesday,” says Pederson.



NBC's upcoming *My Name Is Earl* promises to be a challenge for promo producers.

“Then we have to get that promo on-air Monday night.”

Comedy Central faced an unusual challenge last month when Dave Chappelle failed to show up to begin the third season of *Chappelle's Show*. How do you hype something that doesn't exist? “There was no place to hide and pretend

story develops. “One of the challenges,” Safon says, “is often figuring what you'll say when you might only have a chance to say 12 words.”

NBC'S CHALLENGE

CNN does have opportunities to build complex promos. With special reports, the Autodesk Flame and Avid Symphony systems are used for adding elaborate effects and compositing images. In-show promos, Safon says, are built using the same graphics and character-generation gear (CNN uses the VizRT system) employed for the show in which the promo is appearing. “They'll be built right alongside,” he says.

But where Comedy Central and CNN have only to master the art of promoting shows from a single genre of TV, a major broadcast network like NBC has to make promos for everything from *Fear Factor* to *The West Wing*.

Promoting comedy at NBC has been especially challenging lately, Vescera says. One quirky new show this season, for example, doesn't lend itself to a quick hit. With *The Office*, as with Fox's *Arrested Development*, the humor relies to a large degree on viewers' growing to know the characters: The better you know them, the funnier the jokes—a daunting situation for the promo maker.

“You can take a 22-minute comedy and distill it down to the jokes,” Vescera says, “but you won't know why they're funny unless you watch the whole

“We usually get a five-second clip from ‘South Park’ on Monday for a program that debuts on Wednesday. Then we have to get that promo on-air Monday night.”

BOB PEDERSON, COMEDY CENTRAL

show.” The network produced longer promos for *The Office* in order to give viewers a taste of the show's trademark awkward silences and sidelong glances. “You need to get out of the way of the show and let it breathe,” he says.

The fact that viewers didn't exactly flock to *The Office* hasn't dampened Vescera's enthusiasm for taking on challenging assignments. He's particularly looking forward to working on selling the lowlife-to-lottery-winner comedy *My Name Is Earl* to audiences. “It's definitely our most original new show,” he says, getting a bit of a head-start on the promotional work.

Building a proper promo or even a show open takes more than just having a great clip. That's why a gathering of promo professionals, the Promax & BDA convention in New York this week, will feature workshops like the one led by Chris and Trish Meyer, co-

Photo: Michael Harris/WireImage.com; Left: David Longoria/Comedy Central; Right: Comedy Central; Chappelle



owners of CyberMotion, a Los Angeles-based post-production and design facility.

RIGHT BRAIN, LEFT BRAIN

Trish Meyer says the theme they hammer home in their sessions is that it's important to understand not only how to produce an effect or animation but how the system that makes it works. "It's all about using both the left and right sides of the brain," she says. "Creativity is great, but if an artist compromises because they don't know how to solve technical problems, they'll quickly become frustrated, and creativity will suffer."

If users take the time to understand a tool like Adobe After Effects, she says, they can personalize the system to best meet their needs. "It allows you to do things like go into a pre-set special effect and change the parameters so that it becomes a personalized effect."

One of the challenges that all promo designers face is high-definition TV. Trying to design show opens for both the widescreen and standard-screen versions for one project, Meyer says, often means the designer can't take advantage of the extra space afforded by widescreens. "It's very difficult to design type for an open and not have it go to the left or right of the screen," she says. Meyer will offer tips for finessing HD in the Promax workshop.

MOVING TOWARD HD

NBC Agency, a Burbank, Calif.-based facility that handles promos for a variety of NBC Universal networks as well as for outside clients, is also looking more closely at HD. To that end, the facility has Avid Nitris Symphony systems and high-end SGI systems outfitted with Autodesk Flame, Inferno and Fire systems available for building up to 40 promos per day.

"We're moving towards providing everything in HD,"

says Senior Director, Technical Operations, Jim Keller.

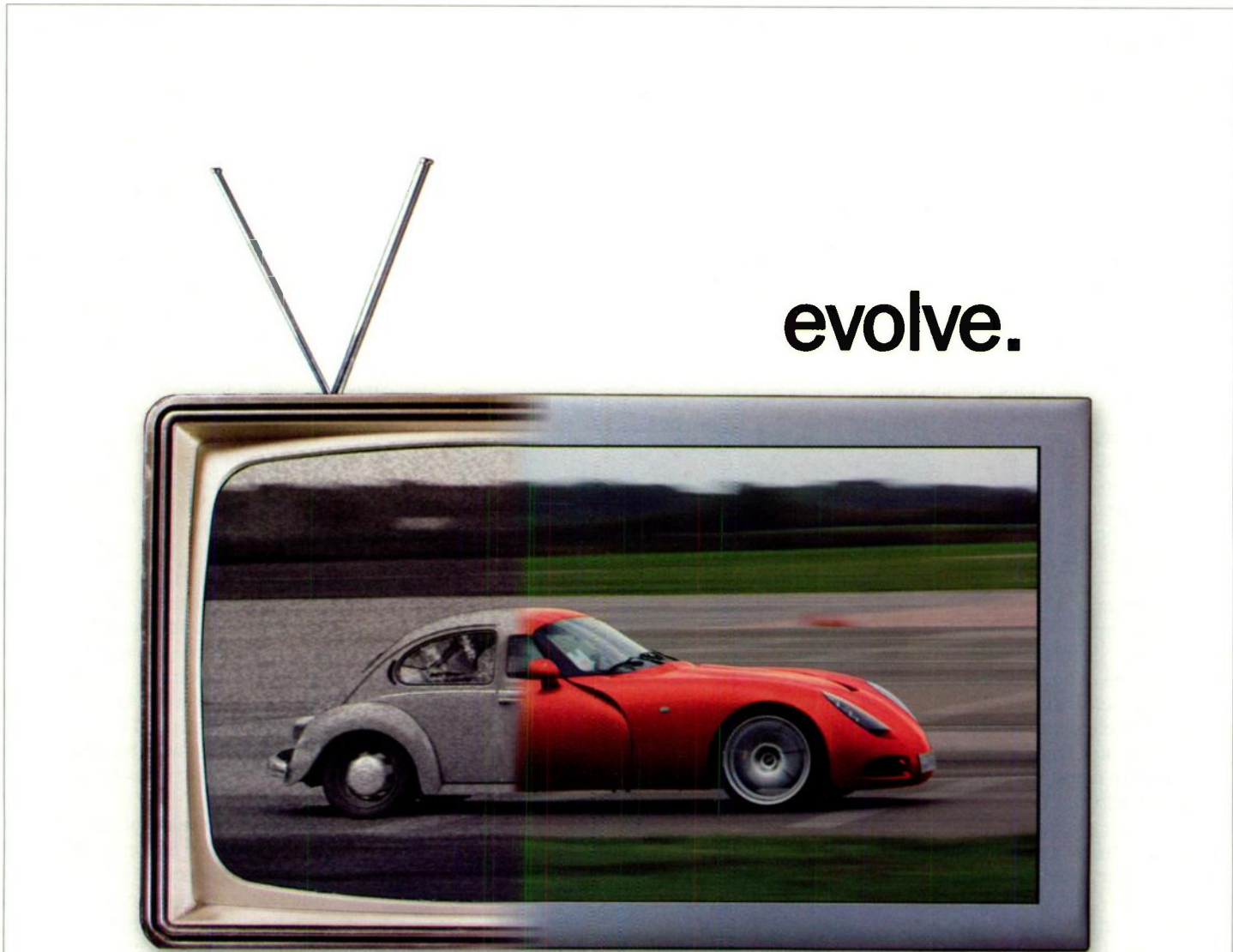
Getting to HD, however, won't be easy. The higher resolution nearly quadruples the time it takes to render a graphic, as well as the cost of

the gear, according to Keller. It also requires the team to work on larger monitors so that they can see details that viewers with large screens will be able to see. "The quality has to be uniform, and that means more

critical review and analysis," he says.

Just when promo makers are taking advantage of faster, more powerful hardware to help produce work that breaks the mold of the old-style "A

very special..." promo, the demands of HD may slow the process, at least temporarily. But when it does, the new sensibility about how to promote shows should be firmly established. ■



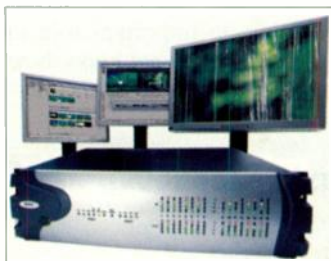
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A Digital Divide Cracks Wide Open

Broadcasters and consumer-electronics makers clash as the transition to DTV accelerates **By Ken Kerschbaumer**

As government officials and regulators turn up the heat on the nationwide transition to digital TV, the relationship between broadcasters and the consumer-electronics industry is feeling the strain. The two groups' battles to influence decision-makers are usually fought in Washington hallways and offices, away from the public eye, but lately open warfare has erupted.

On Wednesday, the National Association of Broadcasters and another industry trade group, the Association for Maximum Service Television (MSTV), announced that they would begin soliciting proposals from consumer-electronics makers to produce a digital converter set-top box. The group's aim: to have a set-top box available to consumers who watch over-the-air TV by the end of this year, priced at about \$75.

The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA) immediately dismissed the announcement as a "publicity stunt." Michael Petricone, the CEA's VP, technology policy, government and legal affairs, says, "If they really wanted to help jump-start the DTV market, maybe they could use their analog channels to promote HDTV and the wonders of digital television. This is simply an attempt to confuse legislators."

The spat comes on the heels of another contretemps over the NAB's recent ads in Capitol Hill publications *Roll Call* and *The Hill* criticizing the consumer-electronics industry for continuing to make and sell analog TV sets. The ads, which depict TV viewers staring at snowy screens, say that "foreign electronics manufacturers continue to sell soon-to-be obsolete analog televisions to American consumers. Those Americans will lose their picture or be forced to buy a new set on whatever date Congress chooses to flip the switch to digital-only signals."

The CEA's Petricone objects to the ads, particularly their use of the word "foreign." Says Petricone, "The ads say the debate over hard deadlines and the transition comes down to foreign manufacturers' wanting to turn off consumers' televisions. They're relying on name-calling and xenophobia, and I think it's shameful."

NAB spokesman Dennis Wharton says it's worth pointing out that sets

being made overseas could cost some Americans their programming. "Those ads are meant to warn Congress of the consequences of legislation that could disenfranchise millions of viewers."

The NAB's message is likely to resonate with at least one lawmaker. Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), told reporters last month, "I don't know why these foreign manufacturers shouldn't shift over to digital, and if they don't, they should give us a box."

The recent war of words comes at a time when Washington is focusing on three important DTV-related priorities, all intended to speed up the switch to digital transmission.

means-testing). And third is speeding up the deadline that will require consumer-electronics makers to build digital tuners into new TV sets.

"RETAILERS HAVE NO INCENTIVE"

Moving up the tuner deadline is the most complex issue. For example, the Federal Communications Commission decreed two weeks ago that 50% of TV sets between 25 and 36 inches manufactured after July 1 must have built-in DTV tuners. The CEA expressed disappointment with that ruling but then, in the same breath, thanked the FCC for granting its request to move up the date when 100% of the sets need the tuners. (The deadline is now next March instead of next July).

At first glance, that reaction seems contradictory. But, for the CEA, the problem isn't the cost of adding the tuners to 50% of the TV units shipped after this month. It's that retailers, which aren't mandated by the government to help sell TV sets with integrated DTV tuners, sell more sets without digital tuners than sets with them because the former are cheaper for consumers (sometimes \$200-\$300 less expensive). Another hurdle: Most American homes don't need the tuners because they don't receive over-the-air TV signals.

"Retailers have no incentive to order 50% of the sets with digital tuners because 87% of their customers use cable or satellite to receive their TV signals," says Petricone. "So instead, retailers will stockpile the cheaper sets without the tuners. And that isn't good for us, the DTV transition or even broadcasters."

The NAB's Wharton says the CEA's information is inaccurate. "The Government Accountability Office has testi-

fied in front of Congress saying that 19% of all households rely on over-the-air television signals," he points out. "Whose numbers are more believable? The highly respected GAO or the trade organization for TV-set manufacturers? We think the answer is obvious." (The difference, it should be noted, is between 87% and 81%.)

The FCC also proposed a rule to move the date by which all sets larger than 13 inches must have DTV tuners, from July 1, 2007, to Dec. 31, 2006. That alarms the consumer-electronics industry because, with many of those TVs costing \$100-\$200, adding digital tuners at the current expense of \$100-\$150 would make the sets essentially unsalable. Manufacturers likely would simply stop making TV sets of that size until the tuner cost dropped.

"Manufacturers obviously want to make sure the sets they sell are in compliance with the law," says Petricone. "If you push the deadline up too soon, manufacturers may have no choice but to stop manufacturing sets in that product category."

And it's the nature of new electronics gear to drop in price over time. John Taylor, LG Electronics VP, public affairs, expects the cost of the DTV tuner to be about \$40 by 2007. If the manufacture of smaller sets is stopped, it likely would only be until the cost of the DTV tuner becomes as inexpensive as the analog tuner.

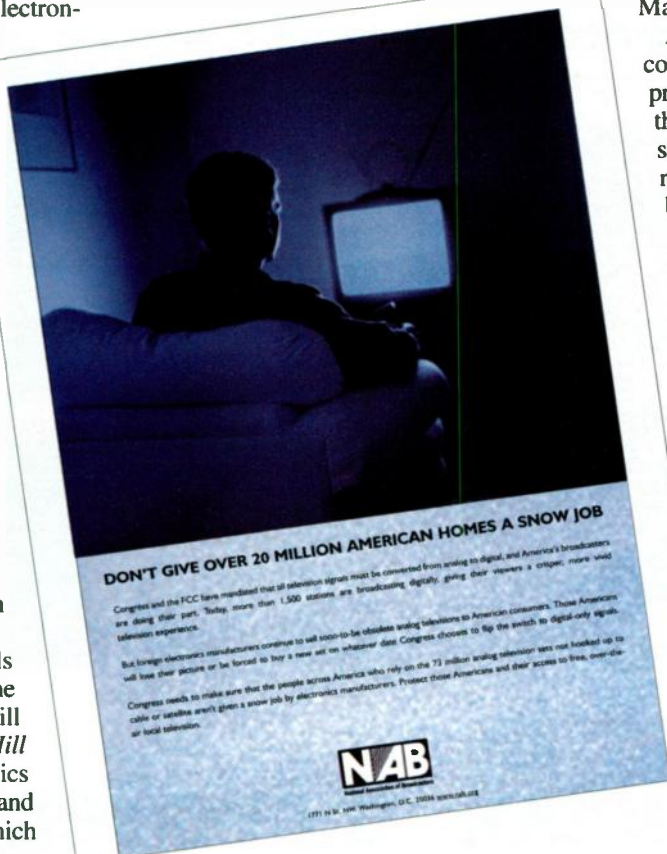
"POTENTIAL CONSUMER REVOLT"

Those cheaper tuners will also play an important part in making DTV converters for analog TV sets affordable. Once the analog signals are turned off, every analog TV set that receives over-the-air signals will need the DTV converter.

"Congress needs to be aware the potential consumer revolt is enormous if millions of Americans wake up on Jan. 1, 2009, and their sets don't work," says Wharton.

LG Electronics' Taylor says that developments in DTV-receiver-chip technologies will help drive the costs down and, once chip volume exceeds 15 million per year, the cost will fall even more. "Who would have thought two years ago that you'd be able to buy a progressive DVD player for \$50 today?" he says.

Stranger things can happen—such as the almost certain outcome of the current feud between the NAB and CEA. Converter boxes will accomplish more than changing analog signals into digital: The converters likely will turn enemies into allies. After all, broadcasters will play an important role in letting over-the-air viewers know how and where to buy the new consumer-electronic devices. ■



An NAB-sponsored ad in Capitol Hill publications read, "Foreign electronics manufacturers continue to sell soon-to-be obsolete analog televisions to American consumers."

First is setting a hard date for shutting off analog transmissions and, in turn, giving spectrum back to the government so it can reallocate a portion of it to emergency-service needs and then auction off the rest to wireless-service providers. Second is deciding whether or not the government should subsidize the cost of DTV receivers so consumers who own analog sets and rely on over-the-air service will still be able to watch digital broadcasts (Democrats support a subsidies-for-all policy, while Republicans are seeking

"They're relying on name-calling and xenophobia, and I think it's shameful."

MICHAEL PETRICONE, CONSUMER ELECTRONICS ASSOCIATION, COMMENTING ON A RECENT NAB PRINT AD (ABOVE)

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NIELSEN JUNE 6 - 12 RATINGS

THE PRIME TIME RACE Top 10 Basic Cable Shows

June 6-12

Total Households (in millions)

PROGRAM	DATE	NET	HHS
1. NBA: Pistons vs. Heat	6/6	TNT	6.8
2. Into the West 8p	6/10	TNT	4.4
3. WWE Raw 10p	6/6	SPIK	3.4
4. 2005 MTV Movie Awards	6/9	MTV	3.2
5. WWE Raw 9p	6/6	SPIK	3.3
6. NBA Playoffs Pregame Show	6/6	TNT	3.0
7. Fairly OddParents 10a	6/11	NICK	2.9
7. Into the West 8p	6/12	TNT	2.9
9. SpongeBob SquarePants 9:30a	6/11	NICK	2.8
9. Fairly OddParents Movie	6/10	NICK	2.8
9. Law & Order 9p	6/7	TNT	2.8

Adults 18-49 (in millions)

PROGRAM	DATE	NET	18-49
1. NBA: Pistons vs. Heat	6/6	TNT	5.1
2. 2005 MTV Movie Awards	6/9	MTV	3.0
3. WWE Raw 10p	6/6	SPIK	2.5
3. The 4400	6/12	USA	2.5
5. RW/RR Challenge Inferno	6/6	MTV	2.3
5. WWE Raw 9p	6/6	SPIK	2.3
7. Inside the NBA	6/6	TNT	2.1
8. NBA Playoffs Pregame Show	6/6	TNT	2.0
9. 2005 Movie Awards Post Show	6/9	MTV	1.9
9. The Dead Zone	6/12	USA	1.9

SOURCE: Turner Entertainment Research, Nielsen Media Research

Broadcast Networks

June 6-12

Total Households (in millions)

	WEEK	STD
1. CBS	6.1	9.0
2. NBC	5.1	7.0
3. ABC	5.0	6.9
4. FOX	3.8	6.6
5. UPN	2.0	2.5
6. WB	1.7	2.4
7. PAX	0.5	0.5

Adults 18-49 (in millions)

	WEEK	STD
1. ABC	3.3	4.7
2. FOX	3.0	5.2
3. CBS	2.9	5.0
4. NBC	2.8	4.5
5. UPN	1.4	1.8
6. WB	1.2	1.7
7. PAX	0.2	0.2

Top 10 Broadcast Shows

Total Households (in millions)

	WEEK		
1. Dancing With the Stars	ABC	10.9	
2. CSI	CBS	9.4	
3. Primetime Live Special Edition	ABC	8.6	
4. Two and a Half Men	CBS	8.5	
4. Two and a Half Men 10p	CBS	8.5	
6. Two and a Half Men 10:30p	CBS	8.2	
7. Two and a Half Men 9p	CBS	8.1	
8. NBA Final Game 1	ABC	7.9	
9. Law & Order	CBS	7.8	
10. NCIS Tue 10p	CBS	7.7	

Adults 18-49 (in millions)

	WEEK		
1. Dancing With the Stars	ABC	6.2	
2. NBA Finals Game 2	ABC	5.9	
3. NBA Finals Game 1	ABC	5.7	
4. Primetime Live Special Edition	ABC	5.5	
5. Family Guy	FOX	5.4	
6. CSI	CBS	5.2	
7. The Simpsons 8:30p	FOX	5.0	
8. Hit Me Baby One More Time	NBC	4.8	
8. Two and a Half Men 10:30p	CBS	4.8	
8. Two and a Half Men 10p	CBS	4.8	

SOURCE: Nielsen Media Research

	abc	cbs	nbc	fox	pax	upn	wb
Week 38	3.3/5	7.2/12	4.5/7	3.6/6	0.5/1	1.5/3	1.6/3
MONDAY							
8:00	61. The Scholar 3.3/6	18. Everybody Lvs Raymond 6.2/11	55. Fear Factor 3.5/6	72. Hell's Kitchen 3.0/5	129. Extreme Fakeovers 0.2/1	97. One on One 1.5/3	92. 7th Heaven 1.7/3
8:30		13. Two and a Half Men 6.8/11				97. Cuts 1.5/2	
9:00		7. Two and a Half Men 7.4/12	39. Las Vegas 4.5/7	46. Hell's Kitchen 1.5/2	118. Monday Mystery Movie—Mary Higgins Clark: We'll Meet Again 0.6/1	94. Girlfriends 1.6/3	97. 7th Heaven 1.5/2
9:30	61. ABC Monday Movie of the Week—The Ring 3.3/5	4. Two and a Half Men 7.8/12				97. Half and Half 1.5/2	
10:00		4. Two and a Half Men 7.8/13	25. Medium 5.3/9				
10:30		6. Two and a Half Men 7.5/13					
				TUESDAY			
	5.2/9	5.7/10	3.8/7	4.9/8	0.2/1	1.5/3	1.5/3
8:00	66. My Wife and Kids 3.2/6	10. NCIS 7.0/13	81. NBC Movie of the Week—Behind the Camera: Mork & Mindy 2.4/4	53. Trading Spouses 3.6/7	129. Lie Detector 0.2/1	106. All of Us 1.4/3	89. Gilmore Girls 1.8/3
8:30	58. George Lopez 3.4/6					94. Eve 1.6/3	
9:00	44. According to Jim 4.3/7	23. Fire Me Please 5.5/9		18. House 6.2/10	133. Cold Turkey 0.1/1	92. Britney/Kevin: Chaotic 1.7/3	110. One Tree Hill 1.2/2
9:30	31. According to Jim 4.9/8					110. Bad Girls Guide 1.2/2	
10:00	3. Primetime Live Special Edition 7.9/13	35. 48 Hours Mystery 4.7/8	14. Law & Order: Special Victims Unit 6.6/11			121. Diagnosis Murder 0.4/1	
10:30							
				WEDNESDAY			
	6.5/11	5.4/9	5.8/10	3.1/5	0.4/1	1.3/2	2.0/3
8:00	27. Supernanny 5.0/9	24. 60 Minutes Wednesday 5.4/10	39. Psychic Detectives 4.5/8	68. That '70s Show 3.1/6	121. Doc 0.4/1	109. All of Us 1.3/3	81. Beauty and Geek 2.4/4
8:30				78. Stacked 2.6/5		106. Eve 1.4/3	
9:00	1. Dancing With the Stars 10.0/16	35. King of Queens 4.7/8	22. Law & Order 5.7/9	61. The Inside 3.3/5	121. Sue Thomas, F.B. Eye 0.4/1	114. Kevin Hill 1.1/2	94. Smallville 1.6/3
9:30		46. Yes, Dear 4.2/7					
10:00	39. Lost 4.5/8	16. CSI: NY 6.4/11	9. Law & Order 7.1/12			121. Diagnosis Murder 0.4/1	
10:30							
				THURSDAY			
	5.7/10	6.7/12	4.1/7	2.2/4	0.6/1	3.4/6	1.7/3
8:00	61. My Wife and Kids 3.3/6		51. Joey 3.8/7	88. The O.C. 2.1/4	121. Young Blades 0.4/1		89. Blue Collar TV 1.8/4
8:30	61. NBA Gametime Finals 3.3/7	34. The Cut 4.8/9	39. Joey 4.5/8			58. WWE Smackdown! 3.4/6	89. Blue Collar TV 1.8/3
9:00			35. Hit Me Baby One More Time 4.7/8	84. The O.C. 2.3/4			97. Beauty and Geek 1.5/3
9:30	8. NBA Finals Game 1—Detroit Pistons vs. San Antonio Spurs 7.2/13	2. CSI 8.5/15	58. ER 3.4/6		116. Diagnosis Murder 0.7/1		
10:00							
10:30							
				FRIDAY			
	3.3/6	3.2/6	5.6/11	3.0/6	0.3/1	1.5/3	1.4/3
8:00	77. 8 Simple Rules 2.7/6	81. Joan of Arcadia 2.4/5	21. Dateline NBC 5.9/11	72. Fox Movie Friday—Exit Wounds 3.0/6	121. America's Most Talented Kids 0.4/1		110. What I Like About You 1.2/2
8:30	87. Complete Savages 2.2/4					97. UPN's Movie Friday—Angel Eyes 1.5/3	110. What I Like About You 1.2/2
9:00	84. Hope & Faith 2.3/4	75. JAG 2.9/6					97. Reba 1.5/3
9:30	80. Less Than Perfect 2.5/5		31. Law & Order: Trial by Jury 4.9/9		129. MGM Night at the Movies—Cool Blue 0.2/1		97. Living With Fran 1.5/3
10:00		48. Numb3rs 4.1/8					
10:30	27. 20/20 5.0/8						
				SATURDAY			
	2.8/6	4.5/8	3.1/6	3.7/8	0.3/1		
8:00		53. Without a Trace 3.6/8	76. NBC Saturday Night Movies—The Thomas Crown Affair 2.8/6	68. Cops 3.1/7	121. Universal Family Movie—Pure Luck 0.4/1		
8:30	78. Wonderful World of Disney—Tarzan 2.6/5			52. Cops 3.7/8			
9:00		27. Crimetime Saturday 5.0/10		49. America's Most Wanted: America Fights Back 4.0/8			
9:30							
10:00	68. America's Funniest Home Videos 3.1/6	31. 48 Hours Mystery 4.9/10	55. Crossing Jordan 3.5/7		129. Faith Under Fire 0.2/1		
10:30							
				SUNDAY			
	5.1/9	5.9/10	5.3/9	3.9/7	0.9/1		1.3/2
7:00	68. Am Funniest Home Vid 3.1/6	10. 60 Minutes 7.0/14		84. Malcolm in the Middle 2.3/5	128. America's Most Talented Kids 0.3/1		114. Charmed 1.1/2
7:30	55. Extreme Makeover: Home Edition 3.5/7		43. Dateline NBC 4.4/8	72. King of the Hill 3.0/6			
8:00	66. NBA Gametime Finals 3.2/6	16. Cold Case 4.5/8		49. The Simpsons 4.0/7	120. Doc 0.5/1		106. Charmed 1.4/2
8:30				35. The Simpsons 4.7/8			
9:00				27. Family Guy 5.0/8	116. Sue Thomas, F.B. Eye 0.7/1		97. Steve Harvey Big Time 1.5/2
9:30	12. NBA Finals Game 2—Detroit Pistons vs. San Antonio Spurs 6.9/12	26. CBS Sunday Movie—Raising Weylon 5.1/9	15. Law & Order: Criminal Intent 7.0/11	44. American Dad 4.3/7			
10:00			20. Crossing Jordan 6.3/11		118. Diagnosis Murder 0.6/1		
10:30							
Averages							
Week	4.6/8	5.5/10	4.6/8	3.5/6	0.4/1	1.8/3	1.6/3
S-T-D	6.3/10	8.2/13	6.4/10	6.0/10	0.4/1	2.2/4	2.2/3

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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"The fact that people think that education and entertainment are mutually exclusive is ridiculous. Fortunately, we didn't listen."



DEBORAH FORTE, SCHOLASTIC ENTERTAINMENT

PEOPLE

A Scholastic Achievement

Build an entertainment division? Forte aced the test **By Melanie M. Clarke**

As a young girl, Deborah Forte was an avid reader, whipping through classics, biographies and "every single book in my elementary-school library except for science fiction," she says. As president of Scholastic Entertainment, Forte has turned children's books into more than 300 television episodes, including those for animated series like *Maya & Miguel*, *Clifford the Big Red Dog*, *Goosebumps* and *The Magic School Bus*.

"Our business is about creating meaningful franchises for television," says Forte. "For us to do a program, it has to have a unique reason to be."

That taste for non-cookie-cutter programming might have been influenced a bit by Forte's childhood years, which weren't devoted exclusively to reading: Growing up in Lexington, Mass., she was enthralled by Rocky and Bullwinkle cartoons, which were unlike anything on TV at the time. "I just loved the tone of that show," she says. "It had very adult humor and parody and all sorts of things."

"I HAD TO LEARN HOW TO PRODUCE"

As a liberal-arts major at Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y., she wasn't sure of her career path, just that she wanted to live in New York City. But upon graduating in 1975, Forte decamped with friends for Mexico's Pacific coast. She stayed for several months, taking photographs (a hobby she still practices) and studying Spanish. The temporary immersion in a Hispanic culture would prove valuable later in her career.

Forte soon indeed moved to New York, where her liberal-arts background attracted job offers from CBS Television and Viking Press. Thinking she "never wanted to work in television," she recalls, she chose the publishing company. After rotating through several departments, Forte landed in sales and marketing. There, she started the Special Markets group, creating book-sales opportunities at non-traditional outlets, such as New York's Museum of Modern Art.

After eight years, the pace of publishing proved too slow, and Forte decided that working in TV might not be so bad after all. In 1984, she joined Scholastic Productions as VP of new business development, working on sitcoms and after-school specials. "My career really was much more focused at Scholastic"—because it turned out that she "loved" working in the medium.

Looking at Scholastic's assets in its publishing content and video programming, Forte saw the opportunity to

expand home video and collaborations with TV networks.

A breakthrough came in 1990 when Forte spun Scholastic's *The Baby-Sitters Club* books into an HBO series. "That changed the shape of our media business and created a direction for me," she says. "I then came back and had to learn how to produce it."

In the early '90s, Forte began hearing from increasingly worried parents and teachers that many girls and minorities had tuned out science education by the time they reached

middle school. She looked at *The Magic School Bus*, a popular Scholastic book series, as a way to create a hands-on, field-trip-style show that enabled children to learn science in a fun way. Scholastic received a grant from the National Science Foundation and sold *The Magic School Bus*—with Lily Tomlin voicing the main character, teacher Ms. Frizzle—to PBS. It also ran on The Learn-

ing Channel and Discovery Kids (Tomlin won a Daytime Emmy in 1994).

Despite scoring with *Magic School Bus*, Forte ran into resistance when she began pitching another Scholastic book franchise, R.L. Stine's *Goosebumps* books, as an animated series that would encourage young boys to read. Educational concerns and entertainment didn't mix, TV executives told her, and besides, kids wouldn't follow an anthology. But

Goosebumps began airing on Fox Kids in 1995 and was sold in more than 60 countries. The series also

goosed book sales, Forte says, which have passed the 250 million mark.

"The fact that people think that education and entertainment are mutually exclusive is ridiculous," says Forte, "Fortunately, we didn't listen."

Just as she had taken cues from parents and educators in launching *Magic School Bus*, Forte responded to feedback from early-childhood care providers when she resolved in the mid '90s to animate classic book series *Clifford the Big Red Dog*. Forte believed in the project's ability to ease preschool kids' discomfort in unfamiliar social situations: Clifford's large size and red fur represented physical differences, and warm reception by his peers taught social acceptance.

But making the idea work took four years, and the show launched in 2000. Forte "just kept working on it in different iterations," says Martha Atwater, VP, special projects, Scholastic Entertainment. "She's very smart about adapting and thinking on her feet."

SOMETIMES, IT'S INSTINCT

Not every show Forte undertakes is prompted by consultations with children's experts. Sometimes she just goes by instinct. Her admiration for Lucille Ball in *I Love Lucy* ("smart and funny and warm"), combined with her experience living in Mexican communities, led to the animated series *Maya & Miguel*.

"She knows the DNA of this character. She has good rhythm, comic timing and a great sense of drama," says *Maya & Miguel* producer Machi Tantillo. The series launched in October, aided by a \$14 million grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and PBS, and now reaches 97% of the U.S.

Two decades after Forte joined Scholastic, the entertainment division she heads includes home video, merchandising, brand marketing and international components. Forte plans to keep building. "Convergence is necessitating that we look at our programming and our media business in new ways," she says. "I hope my greatest contribution hasn't occurred yet." ■

FIFTH ESTATER



DEBORAH A. FORTE

President, Scholastic Entertainment;
Executive VP, Scholastic Inc.

B. Aug. 25, 1953, Lexington, Mass.

EDUCATION

B.A., liberal arts, Hamilton College, 1975

EMPLOYMENT

Specialty sales and marketing, The Viking Press and Penguin books, 1976-84; VP, new business development, Scholastic Productions, 1984-95; executive VP, Scholastic Productions, 1995-97; current position since 1997

PERSONAL

Married, two children

FATES & FORTUNES

BROADCAST TV

MATT RYAN, account executive, Fox Television Sales, New York, to account executive, KPIX San Francisco.

At KCPQ Tacoma, Wash.: **TRACY RECORD**, executive producer, *Q13 Fox News @ Ten*, promoted to assistant news director; **DARREN DEDO**, evening anchor/health and consumer reporter, KOKI Tulsa, Okla., named general assignment reporter.

MARK GENTNER, local and regional sales manager, WWAY Wilmington, N.C., named station manager, WVBT Virginia Beach, Va.

DOUG DAVIS, station manager, WVBT Virginia Beach, Va., promoted to VP/general manager, WAVY Portsmouth, Va.

CABLE TV

ED RENICKER, senior VP/general manager, New York Interconnect, named executive VP/general manager.

At Cox Communications: **HENRY SCHWAB**, manager, system hurricane recovery, Pensacola, Fla., named VP, network development, Las Vegas; **WALTER JONES**, field services manager, Atlanta, promoted to director, field services.

PROGRAMMING

At World Wrestling Entertainment Inc., Stamford, Conn.: **MICHAEL SILECK**, senior VP/CFO, Monster Worldwide Inc., New York, named CFO; **MICHAEL MCNEIL**, director, development, Olympic organization, NYC2012, New York, named VP, partnership marketing.

LOU WALLACH, VP, original programming and development, Comedy Central, New York, promoted to senior VP.

KRISTIN FRANK, regional VP, Northeast region, MTV Networks, New York, named senior VP, multi-platform distribution and marketing, Logo, New York.

AMY BAKER, VP, Discovery Solutions, New York, named senior VP.

LAURA SHERIDAN, director, ad sales research, Hallmark Channel, New York, named VP, programming research, Court TV, New York.

At TV Guide Spot, Los Angeles: **VAUGHN MORRISON**, news director, Fox Sports Net, named VP, production; **FRED POSTON**, VP, production operations, ABC Family, named VP, production operations.

THEANO APOSTOLOU, VP, media relations, Fuse, New York, named VP, public relations, AMC and WE: Women's Entertainment, New York.



PEOPLE

At Current, San Francisco: **ANTHONY D'ARRIGO**, VP, New York department, managing Midwest region, Fuse, named VP, sales; **JEFF MORTON**, VP, advertising sales, Fuse, Los Angeles,

appointed VP, sales; **TONY DEMAURO**, consultant, TV Guide Channel/ABC Cable Networks Group, named executive director, ad sales operations.
At Discovery Networks

U.S.: **LISA HOLLAND**, manager, affiliate advertising sales, named account director, Western region territories, Los Angeles; **TRISH ILIFF**, manager, affiliate advertising sales, named account director,

Northern region territories, Silver Spring, Md.

JOURNALISM
ESTHER PESSIN, managing editor, *Inside Edition*/senior show producer, *Inside Edition Week-*

end, New York, named co-executive producer, *Inside Edition*.

At CNN, New York: **VICTOR NEUFELD**, executive producer, *CBS Early Show*, named senior executive producer, *Paula Zahn Now*; **DAVID DOSS**, executive producer, *PrimeTime Thursday*, ABC, named senior executive producer, *Anderson Cooper 360°*.

At MTV News, New York: **ROBERT MANCINI**, managing editor, promoted to editorial director;

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Theano Apostolou
AMC and WE: Women's Entertainment

BENJAMIN WAGNER, director, MTV News Online, named executive producer.

TECHNOLOGY
STEVEN M. GLICK, executive VP, business affairs, licensees, and business



Steven M. Glick
Thomson

development, Paramount Pictures, Hollywood, named senior VP/general counsel, Americas, Thomson, Burbank, Calif.

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Fast Track
Continued from page 4

Bill Fine Moves To WCVB

WBAL Baltimore President/GM **Bill Fine** is returning to his native Boston to run sister station **WCVB**. Both are owned by **Hearst-Argyle Television**.

On Aug. 1, Fine will take over as general manager from **Paul La Camera**, a longtime station veteran who is currently president/GM. He will remain president until the end of the year, when he will retire and Fine will take that title as well. Hearst-Argyle says La Camera will remain a consultant for its station group.

This will be Fine's second tour at WCVB. He served as VP/general sales manager from 1996 to 1998, when he moved to WBAL. That station's general sales manager, **Jordan Wertlieb**, will take over as general manager.

FAST TRACK

KATV at Murrows: Take 2

KATV Little Rock, Ark., took home two Edward R. Murrow Awards—the most of any station—for overall excellence in small-market television and for documentary work when the Radio-Television News Directors Association handed out its top prizes for excellence in electronic journalism June 13.

WTAE Pittsburgh was recognized for overall excellence in large-market television.

For continuing coverage, WABC(TV) New York won for large markets, and KLAS Las Vegas won for small.

In national investigative reporting, NPR won on the radio side, and NBC's *Date-*

line among TV networks.

For investigative reporting, KIRO Seattle won for large-market stations, while WATE Knoxville, Tenn., won for small markets.

WHO Des Moines, Iowa, was honored for feature reporting and videography, while WTHR Indianapolis won in news documentary and news series.

NBC News led the national news outlets with four awards, but CBS News won two awards, one for overall excellence and the other for radio. ABC News' *World News Tonight* was also a winner of a single award. ABC News Radio took three, including overall excellence in radio news.

Among cable networks, MTV News won for news documentary, ESPN for feature reporting and CNN for writing.—A.R.

PBS Adds Ombudsman

Following in the footsteps of other public-broadcasting entities and many print publications, PBS will hire an ombudsman.

National Public Radio has employed an ombudsman since 2000, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting added a pair in April.

The latter move has drawn criticism from some quarters because the use of ombudsmen to investigate audience complaints about programming and to pursue their own reviews of editorial standards come amid charges of the politicizing of public broadcasting under CPB Chairman **Ken Tomlinson**.

Depending on who's critiquing, public broadcasting suffers from either a liberal bias in need of balancing or unjustified interference from GOP lawmakers trying to remake it in a conservative model.—J.E

News Corp. To Buy Back Stock

News Corp. says it will spend up to \$3 billion buying back its own stock. The company plans to repurchase



Rupert Murdoch



Into the West

both Class A and supervoting Class B shares. Most of the more powerful shares are controlled by News Corp. Chairman and CEO **Rupert Murdoch**.—J.M.H.

'48 Hours' Names Senior Producer

Judy Tygard, a longtime Emmy-winning *48 Hours* producer, has been named senior producer of *48 Hours Mystery*. She replaces **Katie Boyle**, who has moved over to be senior broadcast producer at *The Early Show*.

'West' Wins Big

TNT's Steven Spielberg-produced limited series, *Into the West*, the network's most expensive production ever, earned a hefty 9.59 million viewers over back-to-back airings of its premiere episode

Friday, June 10. The 8 p.m. ET showing earned 6.47 million total viewers and a 4.0 household rating; the 10 p.m. rerun, 3.12 million total viewers.

Grossman Joins B&C in L.A.

Ben Grossman has joined B&C's Los Angeles bureau as associate editor, working in tandem with Bureau Chief **Jim Benson**.

Among other positions in the communications business, Grossman is a veteran of *TV Guide* and *The Sports Business Daily*. At B&C, he can be reached at (323) 965-5318.

"Having worked closely with Ben when I was at *TV Guide*, I know how media-savvy he is," says Editor in Chief **J. Max Robins**. "It's a pleasure to welcome him to the B&C team."

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TELEVISION

SALES CAREERS

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LIN West Michigan Television is looking for a Local Sales Manager to lead the Sales Team for the Market's Number One News product and NBC affiliate. Candidate must possess leadership, marketing and decision-making abilities. A track record in recruitment, revenue success, knowledge of VCI and One Domain a plus. Please email your resume and cover letter to: Ann Marie Young, WOOD TV8, 120 College SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503; annmarie.young@woodtv.com; No Phone Calls Please. EOE

SALES MANAGER

WLFI-TV, a LIN Television station, has an opening for a Sales Manager. Must have strong people skills to lead, motivate, and train. Television and sales experience a must. Effective planning and execution of sales strategies essential. Send letter and resume to Tom Combs, Station Manager, P.O. Box 2618, West Lafayette, IN 47996. WLFI-TV is an Equal Opportunity Employer, M/F.

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

WISN-TV, a Hearst-Argyle television station and ABC affiliate, is seeking an experienced salesperson. Applicant should have two plus years of sales experience (broadcast sales a plus), a dedicated work ethic, excellent written/oral communication skills and a proven track record with new business development. This is a growth position with an excellent opportunity to advance in an aggressive/forward thinking company, the Hearst-Argyle Television Group. Must have a valid Wisconsin driver's license and own or lease own vehicle. Fax resume to 414-342-4486, e-mail to mgehrman@hearst.com, or mail to Human Resources Department, WISN-TV, P O Box 402, Milwaukee, WI 53201. EOE

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TELEVISION

SALES CAREERS

GENERAL SALES MANAGER - ABC7

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PRODUCER CAREERS

SEGMENT PRODUCER

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*TECHNICAL DIRECTORS: Positions require significant experience with modern digital production switchers and effects systems used in a fast-paced environment. The ability to work a varied schedule including early mornings, nights and weekends is required. Please indicate dept. FLTD/BC.
*STAGEHANDS: Positions require skills in lighting, lighting maintenance, prop management and light construction. Positions may be full or part-time. The ability to work early mornings, late nights, and weekends is required. Applicants must be able to lift and carry equipment up to fifty pounds in weight. Please indicate dept. FLS/BC.
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TELEVISION

MANAGEMENT CAREERS

KNXT CHANNEL 49 GENERAL MANAGER

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MARKETING CAREERS

MARKETING DIRECTOR

WJHL-TV Newschannel 11, Media General's CBS affiliate in the Tri-Cities, TN/VA market in the beautiful, pictureque mountains of East Tennessee is looking for a creative, enthusiastic individual to become our Marketing Director. This position oversees the marketing department in all aspects of station marketing and promotion efforts as well as community relations. Individual will direct all station branding efforts, including updates of station logo, graphics and set design. Duties include management of the creative staff to produce compelling news topical and image promotion as well as community event promotion and sweeps targeted special report promos. Must be able to develop and execute strategic action plans to achieve research driven goals and objectives. Knowledge of how to develop and manage a budget is critical. The ideal candidate will have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in communications with an emphasis in advertising, broadcasting or related field. Requires an organized, multi-tasker who thrives under deadline pressures, 1-3 years experience required. If you have the qualifications for this exciting opportunity, please send resume and salary requirements to: **MARKETING MANAGER**, Attn.: Human Resources, WJHL-TV, 338 E. Main Street, Johnson City, TN 37601 or hr@wjhl.com. EOE/M/F/V. Drug and background screening required.

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Cameras Belong in Court

Last week, millions of Americans were surprised by the Michael Jackson “not guilty” verdicts. But most journalists who covered it weren’t, and when jurors were asked to react to the apparent disconnect between themselves and half of the country, a number of them essentially said, “Look, they didn’t see what we saw. They didn’t hear what we heard.”

That’s exactly our point. We have called for allowing TV cameras in all courtrooms since the early 1980s when videotaping became routine in Florida courtrooms and elsewhere.

It’s Henry Schleiff’s point, too. Schleiff, the chief executive of Court TV, has arguably the clearest self-interest in opening up the courts. That also makes him one of the most passionate spokesmen for the cause. But he is joined by journalists across the country who resent being micromanaged by any branch of government.

“The viewers’ ability to see and hear the testimony makes a decision far more understandable,” says Schleiff. Not only that, but witnessing how the judicial system makes its particular brand of sausage is a constitutional right.

Only after the trial did the public learn that many jurors believe, indeed, that Jackson has abused children but the state didn’t prove its case. Had viewers seen the case unfold day after day, they might have understood sooner the subtle but vital protection afforded by the phrase “reasonable doubt.” These jurors had that doubt.

The last time we looked, the Sixth Amendment still requires a “public” trial. When the public traveled by horse and buggy to the courthouse, the limit was the number of seats in the court-

room. But TV and radio have long since removed that limitation, giving us the ability to extend that right to anyone with a TV set. (Similarly, after years of resistance, Congress finally let TV in, through C-SPAN, in 1979.)

We have nothing against sketch artists, but if there is anything more ludicrous than limiting our view of court proceedings to high-definition TV images of pastel drawings, let us know.

Critics argue that cameras turn the courtroom into a media circus, citing the O.J. Simpson trial, but as Schleiff points out, that was more an issue of the judge’s control of the court. Banning cameras can turn trials into an even bigger circus. Case in point: the media outlets that produced hokey re-enactments with actor stand-ins and used countless talking-head legal surrogates.

The bottom line is, the Jackson trial could have been instructive, not just theater of the absurd. Last week, three days after the Jackson verdict, the New York State Court of Appeals decided not to overturn a 1952 law banning cameras and said the issue was for the state’s legislature to decide, not the judicial branch. It was a ray of hope for the future. But by now, cameras should be allowed in federal criminal courts, all federal appeals courts, and in those 11 states that continue to bar them from trial courts.

Most important, the Supreme Court should open itself to cameras. The nation’s highest court makes decisions that can affect all of us in dramatic and fundamental ways, from identifying when life begins to who will occupy the White House.

Lady Justice may be blindfolded. But in the 21st century, the public should not be.

EDITORIAL

TWO CENTS



Diane Dimond

“If someone calls me in another 10 years and someone tells me they’re going to raid whatever house he lives in then, I am there.”

Court TV reporter **Diane Dimond**, who covered allegations of child molestation against Michael Jackson in 1993 and Jackson’s 2005 trial, in *The New York Times*

“What is *The Situation* supposed to be? It’s not a news show, since it doesn’t spend any real time on any topic, and it’s not a debate show, for the same reason. It’s also not particularly entertaining.”
CJRDaily.org’s **Brian Montopoli**, on the debut of former *Crossfire* host Tucker Carlson’s new MSNBC show

“A journalist is someone who gets shot at in a war zone so he can report back material that can’t be broadcast because it might be too disturbing.”
Actor and public-radio show host **Harry Shearer**, answering the question “What is a journalist?” on the Huffington Post blog

“Like most documentary efforts, *30 Days* is an advocacy piece rather than an effort to be impartial. But the unmistakably liberal tilt is far outweighed by a greater goal: To open our minds just a bit to the world beyond our living room walls.”
The Seattle Times’ **Kay McFadden** on *Super Size Me* filmmaker Morgan Spurlock’s new FX reality series, in which participants live under drastically different circumstances for a month

“Exactly who *Inside the Mafia* is supposed to rivet is unclear. Like Nazis, great white sharks and James Bond, organized crime is one of cable TV’s evergreens.”
Newsday’s **Noel Holston** on a National Geographic Channel documentary

“Nobody wore costumes to this con-fab, unless you count the woman with the red blob of fake flesh attached to her shoulder. ‘It’s a piece of Arzt,’ she explained, referring to the character who inadvertently blew himself up in the season finale.”
The Los Angeles Times’ **Roy Rivenburg**, on the two-day fan convention inspired by the ABC series *Lost*

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.

“Never Let Them Intimidate You”

The prolific journalist David Halberstam, whose 1979 book *The Powers That Be* remains one of most significant accounts of the world inside the nation’s most powerful media companies and who covered everything from the civil-rights movement to the war in Vietnam, was the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism’s commencement speaker. Below is an excerpt from his address:

One of the things I learned, the easiest of lessons, was that the better you do your job, often going against conventional mores, the less popular you are likely to be. (So, if you seek popularity, this is probably not the profession for you.)

I learned how to work a story, how to talk to ordinary people, and what a joy doing legwork was. I learned the best question of all for any interview: “Who else should I see?” To this day, the back cover of my notebooks is covered with lists of names of people to see.

I learned that the more legwork you do, inevitably the better the writing

seems because you have more details, more anecdotes, and more authority. And I learned that the great fun of journalism was talking to people, that it was where you kept learning. What a marvelous way to grow intellectually!

So when *The New York Times* called in 1960, I was ready. The “apprenticeship” [at other papers] was over, and six months

later, I was in the Congo, which was the big foreign story that year, and a year later in Vietnam in time to be in on the beginning of that tragic war. I was well-trained—I had made myself into a professional and had done it, in no small part, not so much by trying to reinforce my strengths as most people do, but by trying to eliminate my weaknesses.

There are a few things I would like to pass on to you as I come near to the end of my career.

One: It’s not about fame. By and large, the more famous you are, the less of a journalist you are. Besides, fame does not last. At its best, it is about being paid to learn. For 50 years, I have been paid to go out and

ask questions. What a great privilege to be a free reporter in a free society, to be someone whose job is a search for knowledge. What a rare chance to grow as a person.

Nor for that matter, is it about prizes or awards, although these are very nice. Rather, the richness of the profession—and it has been an uncom-

monly rich life for me—has been in the wonderful collegial friendships I have.

I have been enhanced by the profession over all these years: It has given me far greater faith in democracy than I had when I began, and faith in the nobility of ordinary people, the belief that, in the worst of times, someone will always tell the truth.

I want to leave you today with one bit of advice: Never, never, never let them intimidate you. People are always going to try in all kinds of ways. Sheriffs, generals, presidents of universities, presidents of countries, secretaries of defense. Don’t let them do it.

AIRTIME David Halberstam

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Chew on This

Ellerbe always dishes up food for thought

The title of Linda Ellerbe's robust new memoir is *Take Big Bites*, although, in fact, in the book and in life, she thinks things through and chews everything thoroughly.

Food metaphors come easily to Ellerbe, notably her still-operative putdown of the genderless genre of sponge-headed, cream-filled, all-sugar-and-chemicals newscasters. She long ago dubbed them Twinkies: "You've seen them on television acting the news, modeling and fracturing the news while you wonder whether they've read the news or if they've blow-dried their brains, too."

Amen to that. Don't be surprised to turn on a news-cast and hear one of them report breathlessly, "This just in! Terri Schiavo still dead!"

Sadly, attitudes have changed only marginally in the 24 years since a Kansas City news anchor named Christine Craft was famously informed by the tree stump running her station that viewers found her "too old [mid 30s], too unattractive [only nice-looking] and...not sufficiently deferential to men [the nerve: she knew sports]." Forget being bright, articulate and a strong journalist. Craft was history as a K.C. anchor.

Here we are in 2005. And even as media are redefined daily in this blogaspheric, anything-goes age of communications, when it comes to TV news biz, from locals to CNN, Twinkiedom persists like halitosis.

Against that backdrop, here comes Ellerbe, with a laugh-out-loud-funny book, published by Putnam, that is ostensibly about her eating odysseys but just as often is tender and perceptive in addressing the wider complex universe and her own shaping influences while

In many of these essays, food is just a side dish. The book is much less about Ellerbe's chowing down than about her observations on topics from Christian missionaries to global hunger to that TV-news staple, the almighty standup: "You're in the middle of a crowd, talking to a television camera you're trying to pretend isn't there, sounding like an idiot and certainly looking like one."

After various life pit stops, she arrives at the cuisine and then later at the recipes that cap each chapter.

These range from something called Liar's Soup to a "recipe" she suggests during a visit to Kabul in 2002 to tape a show about the children of Afghanistan: "Buy a bag of oranges. Give them to children who don't

have oranges."

Ellerbe calls herself a "recovering journalist," but sadly, the 12-step program hasn't taken hold. Throughout her travels chronicled here, she continues to act and think as a journalist—one teed-off at the craft. She pairs that beef at one point with her belief (and who would argue?) that the U.S. invaded Afghanistan and kicked out the Taliban solely as payback for 9/11, not from a desire to better the plight of ordinary Afghans.

"The United States hasn't come here to right wrongs against women or to ensure the future of children," she writes. "Why would it? Who cares? Not the mainstream media. In America, what makes news is America."

There may be sterner indictments of U.S. media ethnocentrism, but this one will do for the moment.

As a bonus, she's right, especially about the fissure-narrow global view of television news, which is a miserable failure in its self-proclaimed role as a

HOWARD ROSENBERG



Linda Ellerbe is no Twinkle.

Ellerbe has morphed into a lusty, earthy Renaissance babe who mulls life's vagaries in a brand of sensible plainspeak and "Hey, chum" intimacy.

growing up Linda Jane Smith in Texas. Witty, intelligent reflection has been her signature in a long and varied media career, from her days as an NBC correspondent to her inspired guidance of *Nick News*. In her grand news documentaries for kids—through Lucky Duck Productions, which she runs with her partner, Rolfé Tessem—she never talks down to the little ones.

With all this and more, plus several books under her belt, Ellerbe has morphed into a lusty, earthy Renaissance babe who mulls life's vagaries in a brand of sensible plainspeak and "Hey, chum" intimacy. She sounds like she's talking to you from the next barstool.

Her manner wins through again in *Take Big Bites*, subtitled "Adventures Around the World and Across the Table." Ellerbe describes herself in it as someone "who's traveled and eaten her way around the planet and lived to tell some tales." One tale is that she owed her girlhood popularity to her mother's fudge pie. Another finds her eating Grape-Nuts sprinkled over cold spaghetti on an Outward Bound expedition.

Bethlehem Star of enlightenment. Newscasters must share some of the blame that many real problems go unheeded by Americans and that we remain generally ignorant of the world beyond our borders and are concerned mostly with who is sleeping with whom.

When a celebrity does shed that skin, as Brad Pitt did in urging more aid to destitute countries during a recent ABC interview with Diane Sawyer, the impact is ultimately drowned out by media trying to figure out his love life.

But let's hear it for Ellerbe. In revolutionary TV work aimed at kids, she has titillated them not with gossip but with ideas and other cultures, turning them on to what they need to know.

Extending that to her entire career, she has made herself a provocative role model by becoming TV journalism's worst nightmare, its equivalent of the Antichrist: the AntiTwinkie. ■

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