

Special Report: NEW INFO-TECH PAGE 17



Diary of a Mad Man

Wall Street stock jock Jim Cramer gets busy on CNBC's Mad Money. Page 10



4.1 Million

The number of viewers for FX's Over There premiere

AUGUST 1, 2005

BROADCASTING & CABLE



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INSIDE

Networks Feud, Critics Cheer 8

Selling Cable: New Products, Old Problems 12

'Housewives' To India? 9

EARLY EMMY LINE

Playing the Odds

The Shield's Glenn Close is a front runner. Boston Legal star James Spader looks for a best actor repeat. Will voters say they love Ray Romano with a parting gift? B&C handicaps this year's Emmy nominees.



James Spader

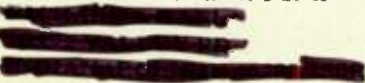
Page 16



BAD BOYS = BIG MONEY

Cops has no stars, no plot and no contests, and it's a killer on TV By Ben Grossman Page 14

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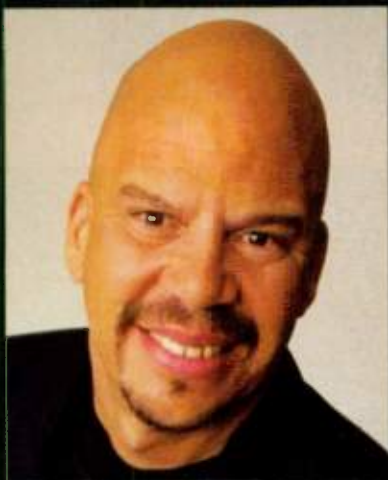


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2005 INDUCTEES



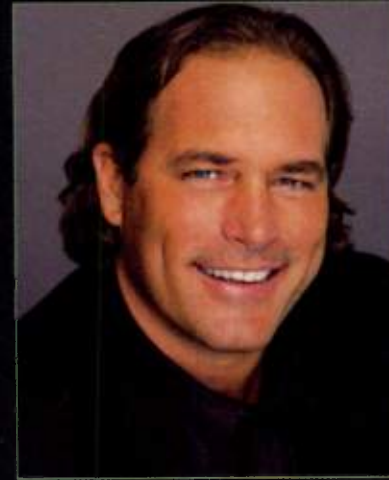
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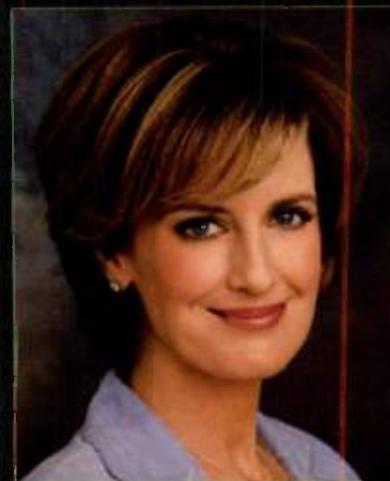
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*Journalist and TV
 Personality*



William Shatner
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Dennis Swanson
*Executive Vice President,
 COO, Viacom Television
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Anne Sweeney
*Co-Chairman
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B&C WEEK

Where to be and what to watch...

Monday, Aug. 1

Palm Pilot and BlackBerry ticklers merrily tickle away in Democrats' pockets this morning with the reminder that **Al Gore's** new TV channel is launching. *Not that*



Al Gore

Current will be a partisan platform—the former VP was quite clear on that score when addressing television critics in **Los Angeles** a couple of weeks ago. In fact, Gore himself isn't so big on the whole political thing anymore: "I consider myself a recovering politician. I'm on step nine," Gore said. Wait a minute. Step *nine*? That's the one about making amends to people you've injured in the past, isn't it? Listen, Al, NBC's already got that angle covered with *My Name Is Earl*.

Tuesday, Aug. 2

Current: Day Two. The reviews start rolling in. Will the channel succeed in redressing the problem that, as Gore said this spring, "young adults have a powerful voice, but you can't hear that voice on television—yet"? It's about time for a revolution in an industry where nobody under 40 can get a job and where programmers and advertisers are always chasing the elusive 64-79 demo. Even **Nickelodeon** skews old! Why, check out Nick at Nite's *Hi-Jinks* (premiere, 9:30 p.m. ET), a hidden-camera show with parents pranking their kids. Grownups, laughing at children. So sad. (Advisory: Even if your child



Gilbert Gottfried

likes **Gilbert Gottfried** from his *Hi-Jinks* appearance on Sept. 6, do not under any circumstances buy the kid a DVD of *The Aristocrats* for Christmas.) Also tonight: a two-hour ABC special,



Dolly Parton

CMA Music Festival: Country Music's Biggest Party (9 ET), taped at the industry's annual fan-friendly **Nashville, Tenn.** gathering. Performers include **Gretchen Wilson, Alan Jackson** and, bless her heart, **Dolly Parton**.

Winds of Change

By **J. Max Robins**



Invasion, coming to ABC in September, has its antecedents in a post-9/11 world.

Clearly, the success of *Lost* is the most obvious reason why so many sci-fi/fantasy/mystery series will be all over prime time in the fall.

But if you talk to Shaun Cassidy, the creator of ABC's *Invasion*—which the network will pair with *Lost* in September—there's something else at play that has its antecedents in a post-9/11 world. *Invasion*, Cassidy says, is "trying to solve the problems in the world in a little community in the aftermath of a hurricane." His well-wrought pilot is informed by living in a world where the specter of an unseen enemy is a fact of life. Sometimes in prime time, the influence is overt, such as the New York City firefighters on FX's *Rescue Me* and the soldiers fighting in Iraq in that network's new series *Over There*. Other times, the post-9/11 influence we see on the tube is more subtle.

"We're living in an aftermath world," says Cassidy, addressing a sea of scribes at the Television Critics Association's summer powwow at the Beverly Hilton. "Very, very, very terrible tragedies have come, and there hasn't been a rulebook for the aftermath. In *Invasion*, the cast has all gone through a hurricane and survived. How they come to terms with their own survival is what our show is about."

The 46-year-old Cassidy obviously has traveled far from his days as the teen idol star of *The Hardy Boys* series. *Invasion* is just the latest in a career in which he has created some smart series that have tended to do better with critics than with the Niensens, including the short-lived *American Gothic* (CBS) and *Hollyweird* (Fox). It will be a marketing challenge for ABC to make sure *Invasion* doesn't get lost among the other *Lost* wannabes

set to launch, from CBS' *Threshold* to NBC's *Fathom*. Having *Lost* as a lead-in could prove a blessing or a curse. Fans of the genre will be teed-up, although, given the quality of *Lost*, expectations will be high. But if Cassidy produces a series as strong as his pilot and he has read the national zeitgeist right, *Invasion* may be the one newbie to cut through the clutter.

"The country is at war," he says. "There's a red country and a blue country out there. There's very clearly drawn lines of divisiveness in the world, and who's an alien is kind of a subjective thing. I'm not making a political statement with the show. But it is certainly in the air and in my head and heart, and that's going to come out on the page."

The post-hurricane town of Homestead in *Invasion*—where some survivors are not who they seem—isn't so much about lurking alien monsters as it is an allegory for these troubled times. "In the show, there's an allegorical situation where some characters perceive a conspiracy afoot and are feeling like they may be losing control," says Cassidy. "We are living in a society where a lot of things are being taken away from us for our own protection. We start wondering, who's the good guy? Who's the bad guy?"

At its heart, too, *Invasion* is a series about families and how they deal with upheaval, he says: "The invasion is the hurricane. The invasion is the new stepfather in your home, the baby in your body, those orange things in the water. The invasion is change and how we acclimate, how we respond and survive against pretty formidable odds. I know that's broad and sounds highfalutin, but it's sort of what it is." ■

E-mail comments to bcrobins@reedbusiness.com

THE ROBINS REPORT

If Shaun Cassidy has read the national zeitgeist right, 'Invasion' may be the one newbie to cut through the clutter.

Wednesday, August 3

It's **Kathy Griffin** night on Bravo: a comedy-performance special, *Kathy Griffin Is ... Not Nicole Kidman* (9 ET) precedes the debut of her six-episode, one-hour unscripted series, *Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List* (10 ET). In the latter, the plastic-surgery-dabblin', anti-Lasik-surgery-campaignin', celebrity-lampoonin' comic lets cameras follow her around as she tends to her showbiz career. Kinda like Valerie Cherish in HBO's *The Comeback*, except, uh, Griffin told the critics' tour in July that she thinks **Lisa Kudrow** based the character on



Kathy Griffin

her. Given how brittle and pathetic Valerie is in Kudrow's b-r-i-l-l-i-a-n-t performance, maybe that's not something to brag on.

Thursday, Aug. 4

Just in time for the first hint of back-to-school, summer's-winding-down anxiety: **BBC America's Teachers** (premiere, 10 p.m. ET), a series about British molders-of-young-minds who "are as irresponsible and desperate to be cool as their students," as the flackogram says. "Smoking in the toilets and drinking comes first ... marking homework and preparing lessons comes later!" Not to be pedantic, but doesn't that have a verb-subject agreement problem?



Friday, Aug. 5

With **X Games 11** (9 p.m. ET), **ESPN**, er, "EXPN," reaches out to young'uns who couldn't care less about *Baseball Tonight* and *SportsCenter*. Somehow, we don't think there will be any X Games fans out in their



Colts QB Peyton Manning

driveways—they don't have driveways—in the wee hours tonight, tailgating in anticipation of ESPN2's 4 a.m. telecast of the first NFL preseason game of the year. Why four-ay-em? The **Atlanta Falcons** are playing the **Indianapolis Colts**—in Japan. —Mark Lasswell

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World Radio History

FAST TRACK

Tate And Russell May Go to FCC

The **White House** is expected to nominate Tennessee regulatory utility commissioner **Deborah Tate** and administration technology-policy adviser **Richard Russell** to fill the two Republican seats, one vacant and one soon-to-be-vacant, on the **Federal Communications Commission**.

The White House declined to comment.

Tate is a member of the **Tennessee Regulatory Authority** and had been on several short lists for the FCC.

Russell is a senior director for Technology and Telecommunications at the **National Economic Council**. He also is an associate director with the administration's **Office of Science and Technology**.

Prior to joining the White House in 2001, Russell worked for six years as a senior staffer for the **House Science Committee** and has a background in technology and environmental policy.

Tate, appointed to a six-year term as a director—and one year as chairman—of the **Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA)** in February 2002, is no stranger to the FCC. In December 2003, then-Chairman **Michael**



Richard Russell

Powell named her to the agency's **Federal-State Joint Conference** on Advanced Telecommunications Services.

She also has been active on the voice-over-Internet Protocol front (VoIP), weighing in at the FCC in her capacity as chairman of the **National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC)** Washington Action Committee.

Tate's résumé includes legal counsel for then-Tennessee Governor **Lamar Alexander** and assistant to the present governor, **Don Sundquist**, who appointed her to the TRA.

Legg Mason media analyst and former FCC staffer **Blair Levin** says he expected the two, if nominated, to give Martin a working Republican majority on a generally deregulatory agenda.

He suggests that both will be friendly to cable and the Bells, saying Russell might prove "challenging" to broadcasters on spectrum issues, though not on

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

AUGUST 1, 2005 VOLUME 135 NUMBER 31



Cops, page 14

COVER STORY: Bad Boys = Big Money

Cops Has No Stars, No Plot and No Contests, and It's a Killer on TV Page 14

NEWS & COMMENT

The Robins Report Page 4

B&C Week Page 4

Watching Their Step Page 8

Cox CEO Retiring Page 8

Flash! Page 9

Jim Cramer Is Going Mad Page 10

Station to Station Page 12

SPECIAL REPORT: The Early Emmy Line

As Ballots Are Sent, *B&C* Lays Out the Odds on the Nominees Page 16

MONEY TALKS

Cable's Wake-Up Call Page 12

SYNDICATION

Hey, Look at Us! Page 11

In Focus Page 11

Ratings Page 11

MARKET EYE

At a Glance: Seattle-Tacoma Page 13

KING of the Hill Page 13

Blogging Industry Page 13

SPECIAL REPORT: Embracing IT

Discovery's New Facilities Exemplify the Move to Information Technology Page 17

NIELSEN RATINGS

PEOPLE

Fifth Estater: Mark Shapiro, ESPN Page 19

Fates & Fortunes Page 19

OPINION

Editorial Page 22

Airtime Page 22

media ownership.

The two open Republican seats belong to Powell, who left in March and was replaced by sitting Commissioner **Kevin Martin**, and **Kathleen Abernathy**, who is ready to leave whenever the nominee can be confirmed. Abernathy's term expired in June 2004, but she was allowed to stay on until either the end of 2005 or a successor was installed.—*John Eggerton*

Lachlan Murdoch Resigns

Lachlan Murdoch, the presumed heir to the **News Corp.** throne of his father, CEO **Rupert Murdoch**, abruptly resigned and is moving to Australia.

Lachlan, 33, was News Corp.'s deputy chief operating officer, chairman of Fox's TV-station group, and chairman of the *New York Post*. He will remain on the board of the company.

As the dashing son of a billionaire who married a former lingerie model, Lachlan is a frequent subject of gossip columns, particularly his personal real-estate moves.

Wall Street analysts note that the elder Murdoch, 74, has increasingly favored President **Peter Chernin**, coaxing him to reject approaches to run **Walt Disney Co.** Says **Merrill Lynch** media analyst **Jessica Reif Cohen**, "We continue to expect Mr. Chernin will take the helm of the company when Rupert Murdoch retires." —*John M. Higgins*

Reynolds Exit Puts CBS in a Quandary

Fred Reynolds' abrupt departure as CEO of the **Viacom Television Station Group** leaves **CBS** chief **Les Moonves** in a lurch. Reynolds not only was responsible for the part of CBS that makes most of the money but was widely expected to be promoted to the number-two slot at CBS if it's spun off from Viacom next year as planned.

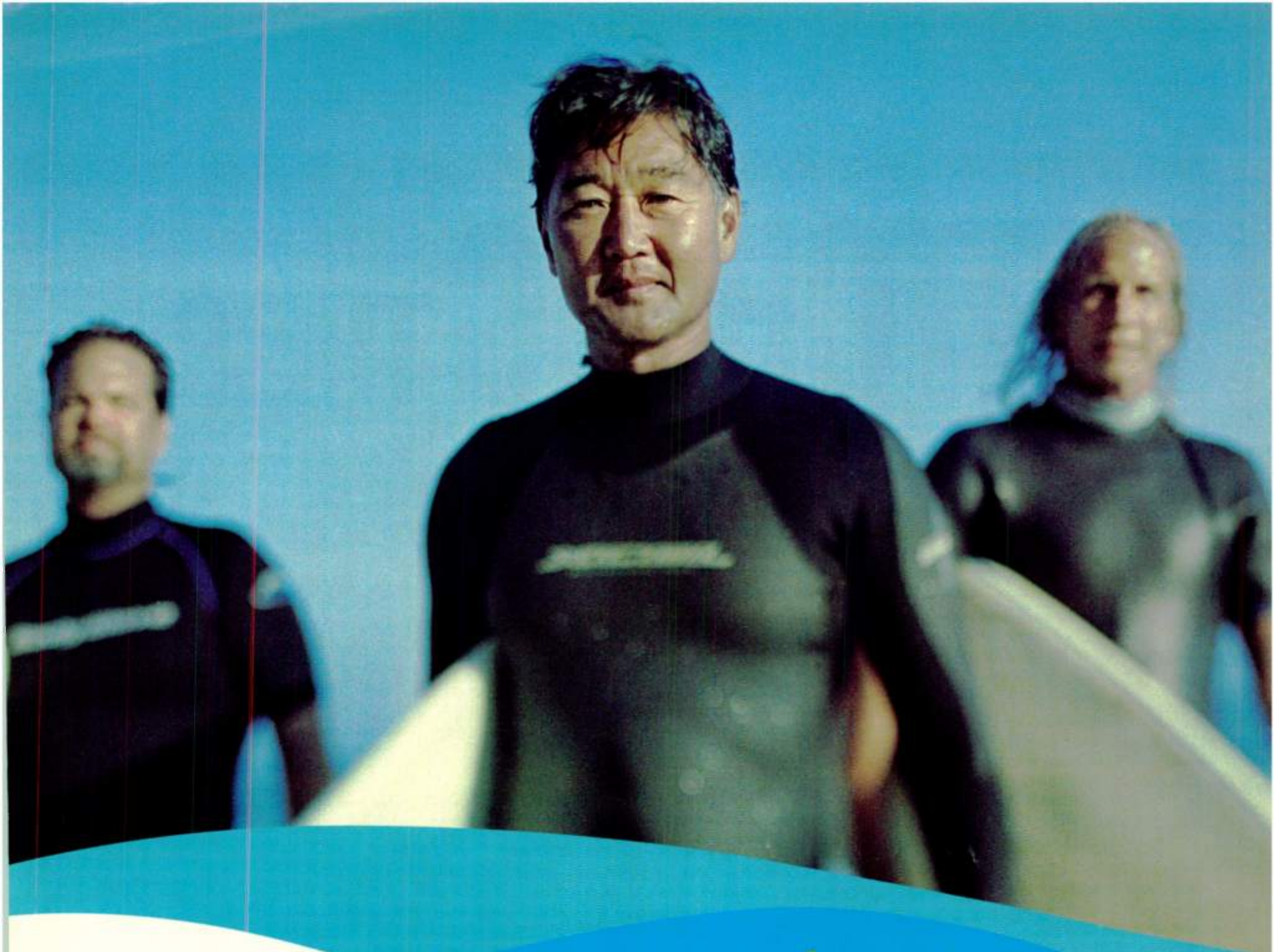
Several leading candidates have emerged for the station-group spot. Industry executives say one option would be for **Dennis Swanson**, the highly regarded executive VP/COO of Viacom's stations, to share CEO duties with **Tom Kane**, head of the group's spot sales division. But it



Fred Reynolds

Continued on page 20

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WATCHING THEIR

Fear, loathing and lots of dancing at TCA press tour. We're not kidding.

By Ben Grossman and Jim Benson

STEP

Dancing, Paula Abdul's sex life and talk of colonics dominated the final week of the Television Critics Association summer press tour in Beverly Hills.

Fox, which concluded the 2½-week publicity orgy Friday, was deluged with questions about *American Idol* judge Abdul's alleged sexual relationship with a contestant. Fox Entertainment President Peter Liguori said the ongoing investigation into whether Abdul or any producers affected the outcome of the show won't prevent her from continuing as a judge, even if the process is not finished prior to auditions, which start Aug. 18. He refused to name the independent counsel conducting the investigation.

The network tried to steer the conversation elsewhere, announcing a new sci-fi reality elimination show, *Xquest*, for next summer, in which two teams live and compete in "biocrafts" that simulate space travel.

Fox also said it's close to signing former Olympic skaters Katarina Witt and Nancy Kerrigan to appear on upcoming reality show *Skating With Celebrities*, designed to capitalize on the success of ABC's summer hit *Dancing With the Stars*. Preston Beckman, Fox's executive VP, strategic program planning and research, said the show will be ready for air by September and will probably air "sometime before the Olympics."

Fox's big dancing show, *So You Think You Can Dance*, went into development last November, long before ABC's hit show debuted, said Mike Darnell, Fox executive VP for alternative programming and specials. The show averaged 7.9 million viewers last week, gaining every half-hour from 8 to 9:30 p.m. Wednesday, and won its time period in the key measures, including adults 18-49 and total viewers.

ABC TAKES A SHOT



Steve McPherson

After his presentation, ABC Entertainment President Steve McPherson took a jab at Fox for imitating the successes of other networks. "I hope that, with [Liguori], we are going to see a little different approach," he said. "I was certainly disappointed to see *Ice Skating With the Stars*. But what can you do? It's pretty sad."

A year ago, McPherson faced tough questions about the network's struggles, but this time TCA members showed him the love—except when it came to critical questions about the voting process for *Dancing With the Stars*. ABC responded a day later, announcing the addition of a 30-minute results show when *Dancing* returns midseason and possibly a "dance-off" special

between winner Kelly Monaco and John O'Hurley.

McPherson, meanwhile, was mum about marketing plans for the fall season. "I don't mean to be cagey. It's just gotten so competitive, and people are stealing everything," he told *B&C*. "I want to give as little as possible to the other networks. It's kind of kooky."

Both NBC Universal Television Group President Jeff Zucker and Entertainment President Kevin Reilly stressed that they do not expect ratings to turn around this season. "There is no question that we understand we're in a downturn right now," said Zucker, "and that doesn't turn around overnight." He also gave Reilly a vote of confidence, saying rumors that he is on his way out "are the games played in this town."

Reilly, for his part, purged immediately after breakfast. "Last season for us was kind of a colonic," he told critics. "It wasn't a lot of fun to go through at the time, but it's going to be healthy in the long run. It literally took any residual sense of entitlement or complacency at our company and blew it out, so to speak." ■

Retiring Robbins

Cox CEO discusses his exit and what's next

Innovator Jim Robbins' legacy in the cable industry will be the "bundle." The Cox Communications CEO, 63, was the first operator to launch a combination of video, Internet and telephone products, in 1997. Today, that move is transforming the telecommunications industry, with other operators pushing into the phone business while panicked Baby Bells rush to launch video products. Announcing that he'll retire at the end of the year after 22 years at Cox, Robbins spoke to *B&C*'s John M. Higgins about the bundle and what advice he leaves behind for his successor, COO Pat Esser.

I told Cablevision Chairman Chuck Dolan about your retiring, and he expressed surprise: "He's awfully young, isn't he?"

If I can be as together as Chuck is at almost 80, that would be great. But he owns the joint, and I don't.

I'm on the page of QTR: quality time remaining. I've long said I don't want to be one of those trophies sitting around the office for years. One of the risks of having the old farts hang around too long is that some of the good young farts go away. You don't want that to happen.

What do you see coming for the cable industry?

The industry's in a more competitive marketplace than ever. Different operators are in different positions of readiness. We're in a great position, maybe the best of anybody, because of our investment in the platform and execution in selling the video/phone/data bundle. That's what everyone else is chasing.

Someone said to me, "You're getting out at the right time." I don't think so. In the late '80s, DBS was coming. Then we got reregulated. Three years ago, we were looking at the freight train ESPN coming at us. We've always had these challenges. We're going to have to fight harder because clearly, the telephone companies are coming to play at our table.

That's different from some media executives, who privately tell us they hope they retire before the big technology changes sweep their businesses.

I don't feel that way. As there's more and more demand for capacity, we're best positioned to handle that. If we do it right, we're in a great place.

What advice are you leaving behind for your team?

Keep doing what you're doing. Execute extremely well on the three-product bundle. The phone business absolutely cements the customer relationship.

It seems the hardest transition for you would be no longer being a "player."

My life isn't all about that. It's about balance and trying to leave behind something that's worthwhile. I've got other things to occupy my mind. I'd like to read some histories, biographies. I'm on a nonprofit that needs some things done. I'm happy to join some corporate boards, though they're riskier these days. ■



Jim Robbins



India Gets Ready To Pave Wisteria Lane

Edited by Joel Meyer

Flash! is still learning how to say *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* in French after last week's NBC Universal deal with Gallic network TFI. Now comes word that *Desperate Housewives* may soon take a Hindi twist.

We hear that talks are under way to carry the Touchstone Television juggernaut from Hollywood to Bollywood. Yes, a localized version of Wisteria Lane for television viewers in India.

It would be the latest effort by Disney's Buena Vista International Television and other studios to sell formats of successful series around the world.

Selling formats allows producers to profit from their creations before other territories can steal—er, creatively interpret—them.

One country notorious for taking liberties with property rights is India, where the race is on to find a home for a locally formatted version of the ABC sensation. (A prospective partner, Zee Network, is already in business with Buena Vista, which has a



Melancholy matrons around the world may soon get their own version of *Desperate Housewives*.



Online clearinghouse Scoopt wants cellphone photos.



Abram of *Real World/Road Rules Challenge*

make to a new player," notes Ari Sloggin, of citizen-journalism blog Citizen Paine. "Scoopt also might want to consider giving contributors some alternatives."

McRae is already tweaking the business plan. Scoopt initially asked for six months of exclusivity on photos, but last week, the company retreated to a three-month period.

After all, a picture is worth at least 90 days.

multi-year licensing agreement with the broadcaster for theatrical and TV films.)

Another successful Touchstone entry, *Grey's Anatomy*, could be next on Buena Vista's formatting "to-do" list.

But there's more: In June, the studio was talking about selling localized formats of *Housewives* in at least a half

dozen countries south of the border, as long as they

aired the U.S. version first. If that succeeds, there would be Spanish-language clones of Susan, Bree, Edie, Lynette and Gabrielle in Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela and either Colombia or Ecuador. Brazil was also said to be looking *Desperate*.

If this works, will Homer Simpson be next? Could the parody on the Web, *The Simpsons*, become a reality? We suggest Bollywood animators make the convenience-store clerk a redneck.

Scoopt Up

It was just a matter of time until "citizen journalism" yielded an entrepreneurial venture like Scoopt, a Glasgow, Scotland-based startup.

The self-proclaimed "media agency" acts as a middleman connecting cellphone-camera-equipped average Joes with news outlets hungry for exclusive, eyewitness pictures.

"Camera phones are ubiquitous now, and it effectively gives us global coverage," says founder Kyle McRae, a journalist and technology writer. But ordinary people don't know how to get their goods in the hands of photo editors. So, the pitch goes, turn them over to Scoopt.

McRae dreamed up the business last spring and planned to unveil it July 7, but, that morning, four suicide bombers attacked London's transportation

system. Scoopt rescheduled its launch for July 21, but its debut was again foiled by attempted attacks that day. Now McRae plans to launch early this week.

But sellers, beware. Scoopt has reams of terms and conditions. The cellphone photographer must agree to give Scoopt a three-month exclusive window to market it. During that period, the user cannot publish the photo anywhere—not even a personal blog. After the 90-day window expires, Scoopt will continue to peddle the picture, but the licensing is returned to the photographer. Any profits—McRae estimates photos could fetch anywhere from a few pounds to £10,000—will be split 50-50. Scoopt will eventually expand to cellphone video, too.

In "soft launch" since early July, the company has several hundred members from 21 countries. Several blogs have taken notice. The exclusivity is "quite a commitment to

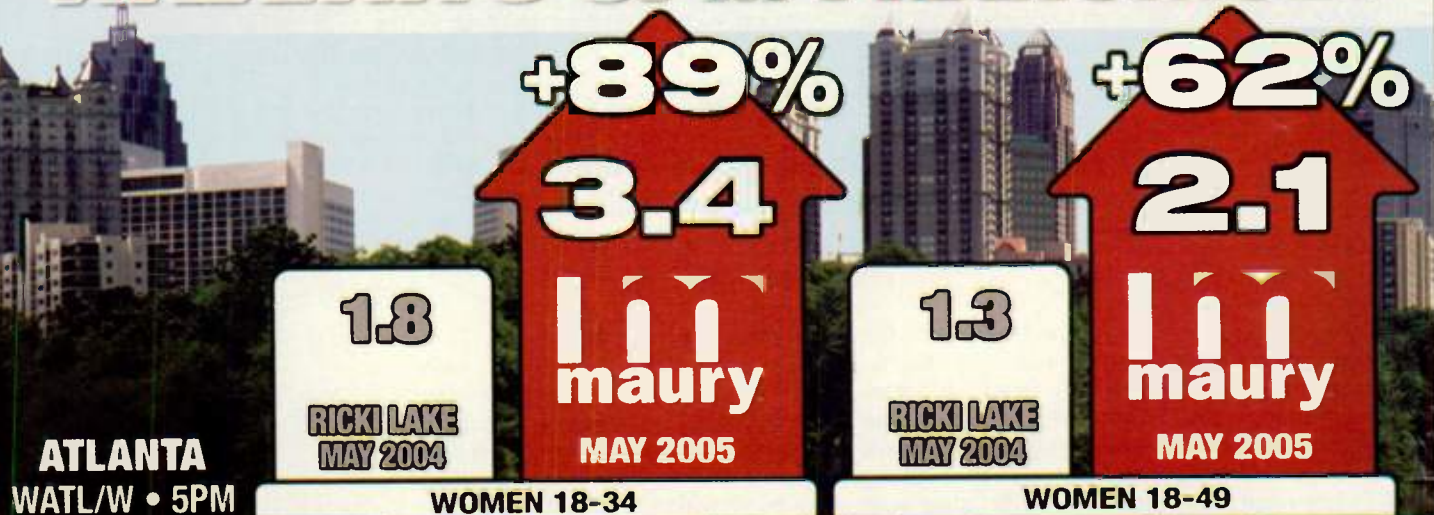
Reality Check

Attention, civilians! Producer Bunim-Murray is searching for normal people to compete against the hyper-beautiful cast of the *Real World/Road Rules Challenge*, the fusion of MTV's two long-running reality shows. "For the first time ever, we're daring our viewers to go head to head with veteran cast members in the most exciting *Challenge* yet!" reads the company's online casting call. The company typically gets 30,000 applications for *Real World* or *Road Rules*, but the demo tape haul could be higher for the chance to take on fan favorites. Beautiful or not, there is a catch: Applicants must be 18-25 years old. Or as the company's Web site barks: "The *Challenge* needs fresh meat."

FLASH!

NBC UNIVERSAL
TELEVISION DISTRIBUTION

ATLANTA'S 5PM FRANCHISE!



SOURCE: NSI SNAP 3, MAY 2005, OR AS DATED. PA, RATINGS.

Bounding around the set to heavy-metal music, Jim Cramer is shooting the first live telecast of his CNBC show *Mad Money*. The program mixes elements from professional wrestling, infomercial pitching and hyperkinetic game shows, all the while dispensing stock tips to couch-potato investors. Cramer, a balding 50-year-old in a rumpled shirt and goatee, spews sports analogies and slams sound-effects buttons like an overcaffeinated drive-time disk jockey. An adoring audience—ranging from students to seniors, many wearing Cramerholic T-shirts and clutching his books—clamor to fire questions at this unlikely TV idol. Mopping the bulging veins on his head with a bandana, Cramer begs the crowd for more questions.

"Hit me! Hit me! HIT ME!" he shrieks in a thick Philly accent.

Surely, some in the industry would like to do just that. The hot-tempered ex-money manager, co-founder of TheStreet.com, and pundit for business publications and TV shows, has had a spate of public feuds and developed a reputation in

Mad Money airs at 6, 9 and midnight—ensuring that viewers on both coasts see it in prime.

Last November, Cramer, who put himself through Harvard Law School after finishing undergrad there and working as a newspaper reporter, faced a decision: renew his contract with *Kudlow & Cramer*, where he was dissatisfied with its middling ratings, or return to the world of money management. He opted for neither, instead brainstorming a concept for a new program and then going up the CNBC ladder to pitch it. After being soundly rejected, he begged his way into a meeting at the top of NBC's food chain, with NBC TV networks chief Jeff Zucker.

"I told Jeff, 'Listen, I'm a manic, overachieving, competitive dollar sign,'" Cramer says. "Unleash me, and I'll bring you the goods, or I'll die trying. I think he wanted to see if I'd blow myself up."

Thus far, Zucker seems happy to have taken the risk. "He's a character, and in television, characters rule," says Zucker. "In cable, outlandish characters really rule."

"CNBC'S BREAD AND BUTTER"

Cramer's outlandish ways—the live show saw him peel off a straitjacket, then pull on a lab coat to "doctor" up stock picks in a segment called "Am I Nuts?"—prompt some to question the quality of his finance guidance. A camp of supporters maintains that sound investment wisdom lies behind his manic delivery, while some say the man behind *Mad Money* is, well, simply mad. Among the former is *Washington Post* media writer and CNN host Howard Kurtz, who profiled Cramer in his book *The Fortune Tellers*: "Cramer brings the kind of fierce intensity you rarely see on television, and it happens to be on a subject—the stock market—that is CNBC's bread and butter."

Cramer has an obvious fan in CNBC President Mark Hoffman: "[Jim] fits what CNBC's about: real-time business coverage of actionable information."

But what Kurtz calls intensity, some might call

including what he describes as a \$17 million loss in one day on Cendant, when the travel/real-estate-services giant was charged with fraud. Cramer reviews his misfires on a *Mad Money* mea culpa segment called "Cramer vs. Cramer."

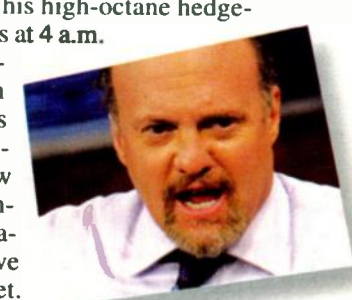
He's also open about bad calls he has made in life, including not attaching a disclaimer to a 1995 column he wrote in *Smart Money* in which he touted stocks he owned, prompting an SEC investigation. (*Mad Money* runs such a disclaimer, and Cramer does not currently own any stocks, instead managing a charitable trust, whose trades CNBC must clear.) He also fought a very nasty contract battle with Fox News chief Roger Ailes, when Cramer wanted out of his *TheStreet.com* program in the late 1990s.

Comfortably settled at CNBC, Cramer hasn't lost all the structure from his high-octane hedge-fund routine. He wakes at 4 a.m.

each day to read newspapers, then crafts an outline for the day's program, which he reworks right up to show time. Despite his on-screen histrionics, Cramer claims to have mellowed off the set. He makes more time for fishing, relaxing with his wife and two daughters, ages 12 and 14, and tending to his pumpkin patch.

"I have a pond that I stocked three years ago," he says, reclining on a couch at CNBC. "I tell the kids it's the magic pond: You can't help but catch something."

And he's pleased to be working for everyday investors instead of Wall Street fat cats. "Anybody who has worked only with rich people has no idea how much fun it is to work with regular people," he says. "This is what I wanna do with my life: Educate people, entertain people, and help 'em make money." ■



Jim Cramer Is Going 'Mad'

TV host may have lost his mind, but he has found lots of viewers

By Anne Becker

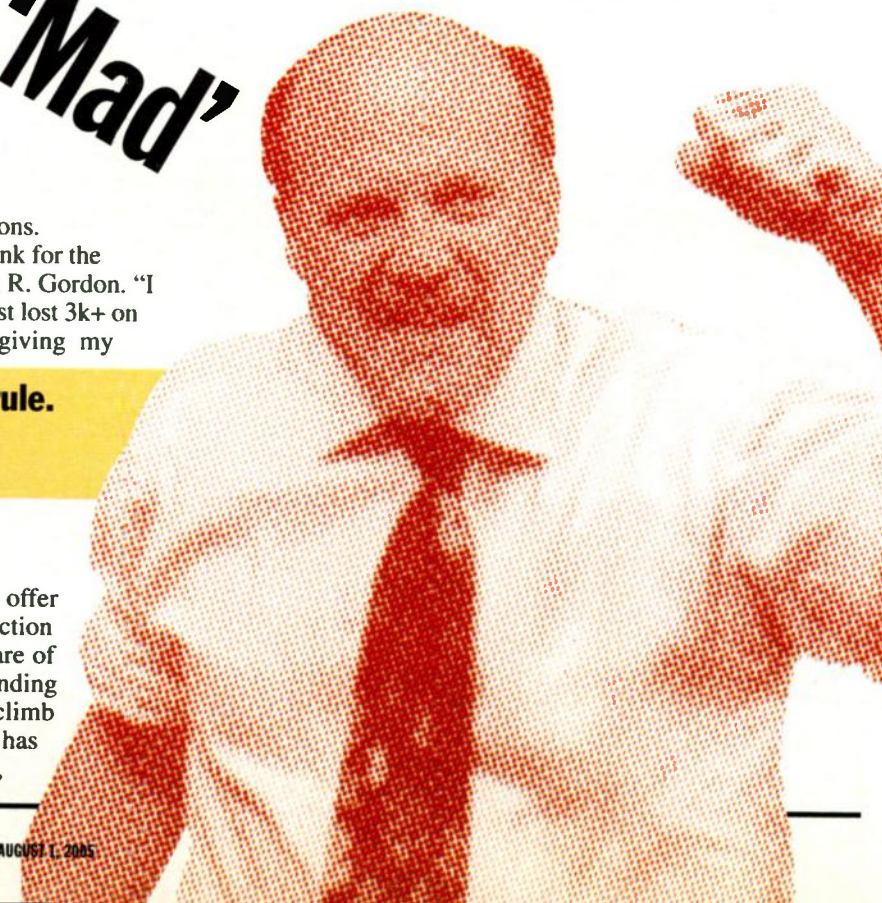
insanity. Cramer has made his share of enemies, and some on the message boards dedicated to him lambaste his predictions. "Thank you for greasing the plank for the rest of my money," posted John R. Gordon. "I am a low income person who just lost 3k+ on this trade ... Thank you for giving my

"He's a character, and in television, characters rule. In cable, outlandish characters really rule."

JEFF ZUCKER, NBC UNIVERSAL

CNBC execs are pleased by *Mad Money* thus far. Since debuting in March, the program has boosted the struggling financial-news network's ratings at 6 p.m. by 68%, averaging 170,000 total viewers. More than 236,000 tuned in for the town-hall-style live telecast, 38% above the show's average. A bright spot among CNBC's low-rated prime time castoffs, including most recently *Dennis Miller* and *Topic A With Tina Brown*,

money to the insiders." While CNBC would not offer details on Cramer's stock-prediction track record, he has had his share of lucrative hits, such as recommending Kmart at \$40, only to see it climb to \$157 within a year. But he has also had some colossal misses,





Wheel of Fortune

BC 8/1/05

SYNDICATION

RATINGS 7/11-17/05

Nielsen Media Research

Top 25 Shows HOUSEHOLDS

PROGRAM	AA	GAA
1 Wheel of Fortune	7.7	NA
2 Jeopardy!	6.4	NA
3 Oprah Winfrey Show	6.1	6.1
4 Everybody Loves Raymond	5.5	6.9
5 Seinfeld	5.1	6.4
6 Seinfeld (w/nd)	4.9	6.1
7 Judge Judy	4.8	7.3
8 Friends	4.6	6.1
9 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	4.5	5.1
9 Dr. Phil	4.5	4.6
9 Wheel of Fortune (w/nd)	4.5	NA
12 Entertainment Tonight	4.4	4.5
13 Live With Regis and Kelly	3.5	NA
14 Judge Joe Brown	3.3	4.7
15 Everybody Loves Raymond (w/nd)	3.2	3.4
16 Inside Edition	3.1	3.1
16 Maury	3.1	3.4
16 Who Wants To Be a Millionaire	3.1	3.5
19 Cops	2.9	3.6
19 That '70s Show	2.9	3.6
21 Divorce Court	2.8	3.9
21 Malcolm in the Middle	2.8	3.4
23 King of the Hill	2.7	3.4
23 People's Court	2.7	3.0
25 Judge Mathis	2.5	2.6
25 The Insider	2.5	2.6

Top Court Shows HOUSEHOLDS

PROGRAM	AA	GAA
1 Judge Judy	4.8	7.3
2 Judge Joe Brown	3.3	4.7
3 Divorce Court	2.8	3.9
4 People's Court	2.7	3.0
5 Judge Mathis	2.5	2.6

According to Nielsen Media Research Syndication Service Ranking Report July 11-17, 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

Hey, Look at Us!

Syndication's sunny season **By Ben Grossman**



Raymond loves syndication in summer.

While dancing shows are all the rage on broadcast-network TV this summer, the Syndicated Network Television Association (SNTA) wants to remind advertisers that the syndication world also has a little bounce in its step.

The organization released a June ratings analysis touting its strength against the networks, leveraging the most advantageous demographics and time of year to state its case.

SNTA is pushing syndication's value to ad buyers by pointing out that, in the adults 18-49 demo, June syndication ratings are flat from a year ago, while the networks are off 5% in prime time. According to the study, on an average weekday in June, six or seven of the top 10 rated shows in all households were syndicated. In the 18-34 demo, syndicated shows represented five of the top 10, on average.

"As ratings ebb and flow through the summer months, syndication can really

take hold," says Mitch Burg, president of the SNTA. "Our ratings don't vary across the year, usually never more than plus or minus 10% from our yearly average. By comparison, the networks were down 30% last summer."

But questions could be raised as to whether any summer-syndication success stories are really a direct result of cannibalizing the audience from the networks.

"A drop [in network ratings] is business as usual," says Tom Bierbaum, VP, ratings and programming information, for NBC Universal Entertainment. "I think it's great for the syndication world that they are flat; obviously, we are a big player in that world. But saying it is happening at the expense of the networks—that I'm not sure about."

According to the report, several syndicated sitcoms outperformed network repeats of the same show.

In the 18-34 demo, for example, *Everybody Loves Raymond* (3.3 average rating in syndication, 1.8 on network), *That '70s Show* (2.5, 2.2), *King of the Hill* (2.5, 2.0) and *Malcolm in the Middle* (2.2, 1.6) all rated better in syndication than they did on network runs. However, *Will & Grace* repeats on NBC (2.3) outperformed the syndicated version (1.8).

The report uses the 18-49 demo to demonstrate that top network sitcom *Two and a Half Men* averaged a 3.3 in repeats on CBS, which trailed the average syndication rating for *Seinfeld* (4.4), *Friends* (4.1) and *Everybody Loves Raymond* (3.3).

Bierbaum cautions, though, that using June to compare different dayparts is "getting into a little bit of apples and oranges." ■

IN FOCUS

NO DISTRACTIONS FOR A CHANGE

Finally, a week without any holidays, major news stories or sports preemptions—and virtually all of the syndicated strips rebounded, with the exception of *Access Hollywood*.

During the week ended July 17, strips gained in the Nielsen national barter rankings or held their ground, except for the NBC Universal entertainment newsmagazine. It dipped to a 2.1 rating, down 5% from the previous week and 13% from a year ago.

Meanwhile, *Jeopardy!* continues to feel the impact of its own year-ago success, when contestant Ken Jennings began his highly publicized winning streak on the King World game show, making it the top show in syndication with a giant 10.2 rating. It can't top itself: It was down 37% to a 6.4. But that is still a 7% improvement from its 6.0 rating of the previous week.



Ellen DeGeneres

Companion *Wheel of Fortune* (7.7), which most weeks leads the syndicated pack, benefited in summer 2004 from the tandem halo

effect of *Jeopardy!*. In the week ended July 17, its 7.7 rating was off 10% from that year-ago performance. Nonetheless, it was still up 10% from the previous measurement period.

In talk, *Oprah Winfrey*—even with four days of reruns—climbed 11% to 6.1 from the previous week, while falling 3% from a year ago. *Dr. Phil*, also with four reruns, scored with a 4.5, up 2% for the week and a hefty 18% from a year ago. And *Ellen DeGeneres* continued its winning streak, leaping 20% from a year ago while remaining even with the previous week at 1.8.—*Jim Benson*

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR NOMINEES



"24"
- OUTSTANDING DRAMA SERIES

Kiefer Sutherland
Lead Actor in a Drama Series

"ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT"
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Jason Bateman
Lead Actor in a Comedy Series
Jeffrey Tambor
Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series
Jessica Walter
Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series

"MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE"

Jane Kaczmarek
Lead Actress in a Comedy Series
Cloris Leachman
Guest Actress in a Comedy Series

"BOSTON LEGAL"

James Spader
Lead Actor in a Drama Series
William Shatner
Supporting Actor in a Drama Series



STATION TO STATION

Takin' It To the Streets

By Allison Romano

ABC affiliate WFAA Dallas is about to give viewers a closer look at local news. The Belo Corp.-owned station is building a street-side studio next to the American Airlines Arena in downtown Dallas as part of a development called Victory Plaza. The area will also feature the trendy W Hotel and upscale shops and restaurants.

Plans call for WFAA to have ground-floor space with floor-to-ceiling windows and large video screens in the plaza carrying its newscasts. Some newscasts, most likely morning shows, will originate from the studio, which is slated to open in 2006. The space could also host sports and entertainment specials tied to events at the arena, such as Dallas Mavericks basketball games.

WFAA's 5,000-square-foot facility is among several street-side studios popping up across the country. In Salt Lake City, CBS-owned KUTV recently opened a windowed studio downtown, and Chicago will soon boast three. WMAQ, the NBC owned-and-operated station, has a *Today*-like facility, and ABC O&O WLS and CBS-owned WBBM are building their own. WLS plans to move all newscasts to a new 8,000-square-foot space next fall, and WBBM is relocating its entire operation to a new building on downtown Daly Plaza by the end of 2007.

"It will bring us closer to the



Rendering of the new WFAA Studio

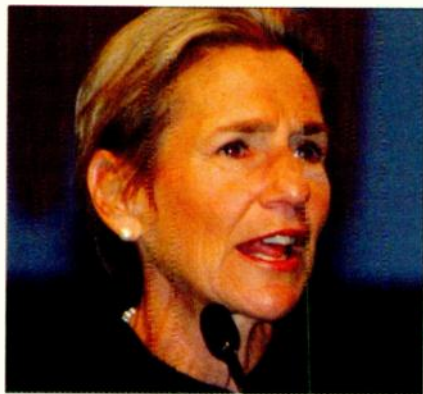
viewers," says WLS President/General Manager Emily Barr.

But at a cost. While no execs would give specific price tags, the studios typically cost \$2 million to \$5 million to build, and some might run as much as \$10 million.

WFAA isn't giving up its current digs. The station shares a facility with sister newspaper *The Dallas*

Cable's Wake-Up Call

In selling new services, operators wrestle old problems



Ogilvy and Mathers' Shelly Lazarus spoke at CTAM's conference.

A gathering of marketing executives usually scares me; they are black belts in mystifying jargon and doubletalk.

But the annual conference of the Cable & Telecommunications Association for Marketing (CTAM) in Philadelphia cut through a lot of the bluster and delivered two clear messages: that the rollout of sophisticated products such as video-on-demand has stumped cable operators in the marketing department and that cable operators are still suffering from decades-old customer-service problems.

That latter message is particularly harsh. It was delivered by Shelly Lazarus, CEO of ad agency Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide. Lazarus can definitely shovel her share of marketing-speak: "I want to talk to you about brands and lovers," she told the 3,300 executives attending the conference. (That number, by the way, was a record, up from 2,700 last year.)

LOUSY CUSTOMER SERVICE

But Lazarus said cable's biggest marketing problem lies not in lofty ideas about brand loyalty, but in the basic blocking and tackling of operators' businesses. After years of struggling to overcome their image of bad service, cable operators continue to infuriate their subscribers. Lazarus—a customer of Time Warner Cable in New York and Comcast in Vail, Colo.—feels as though she's imposing every time she calls a system's customer-service department.

"If I were going to do one thing right now, I would do something with everybody who answers the telephone for you," Lazarus said, adding that "all the advertising in the world cannot make up for a lousy customer experience."

Besides customer service, perhaps the biggest challenge cable faces is how to sell new products that don't fit old ad models. At panel sessions and in the hallways, the cable faithful talked about DVRs, high-definition and VOD as tools to coax more money out of customers in the face of threats from DBS and telco video systems.

"Our biggest challenge is taking products that customers don't know they need or want and convincing them they do," says CTAM CEO Char Beals.

The most interesting insight I heard came almost offhandedly from Marty Youngman, marketing manager of Cox Communications' San Diego system. Youngman noted that, once consumers get VOD and DVRs and are freed from the tyranny of the programming guide, a funny thing happens: Their approach to cable changes.

"We're seeing a behavioral change in San Diego," Youngman said. VOD and DVR subscribers pretty much cease channel-surfing or using their on-screen guides. They are now operating in a search mode, carefully hunting for specific shows or genres.

That presents a couple of quandaries for operators. The immediate one is that there is no fast search engine for shows in cable systems, so it's hard to pluck just the right

sitcom out of thousands of choices.

So if subscribers can find precisely what they want to watch anytime they want to watch it, the traditional cable-TV model seems almost superfluous. A giant part of their systems' resources is devoted to the conventional cable channels, which suddenly become less important.

Operators have spent \$80 billion in recent years expanding their capacity to deliver ever more channels. Some of that goes to Internet and phone traffic. But about 75% of the costly capacity is devoted to delivering an average of 223 plain, old linear video channels.

CAN VOD TAKE OFF?

The technical nature of VOD, a switched video system, means it only needs a slender piece of bandwidth and rarely needs more, even as usage explodes. So operators could conceivably have a lot of "stranded" capital, billions of dollars' worth of capacity they may no longer really need.

This becomes problematic only if VOD takes off—which could be a tremendous bonus. But VOD's chances for success are iffy—unless cable operators can fix the customer-service basics, such as learning to answer the phone with a smile. ■

MONEY TALKS By John M. Higgins

Morning News in a less-trafficked part of downtown. Like Barr, Kathy Clements, WFFA's president/general manager, says the new studio will bring the station closer to viewers. "We can talk to viewers, interact with them and turn the cameras on them," she says. "They can watch the making of local TV."

Of course, a live audience creates security concerns, whether it's a streaker or someone with a profane sign getting on live TV, particularly given the heightened concern about indecency and possible fines from the FCC. Clements says WFAA will employ guards to keep an eye on the crowds and use overhead cameras to film them from a distance when necessary.

Atlanta: News On the Go

Atlanta residents can now take their news to go through a new mobile news service from CBS affiliate WGCL. The free service, billed CBS46ToGo.com, features news, weather, sports, finance and movie headlines, and can be downloaded to any cellphone or PDA with Internet capability.

Meredith-owned WGCL Atlanta is the first outlet in the 13-station group to roll out a mobile product. Its sister stations are studying WGCL's experience and may soon follow suit.

So far, response to WGCL's news-to-go has been strong.

Across town, Gannett station WXIA delivers more-limited news to PDAs. Its free 11 Alive News features news, sports, weather and money headlines but works only on Windows CE-enabled devices.

So far, response to WGCL's news-to-go has been strong, says VP/General Manager Andy Alford. More than 10,000 users tried the system on its inaugural day July 25.

Local automobile dealer Tim Stewart Ford has signed on as a sponsor, and Alford says the station is courting other advertisers to buy sections, such as movie listings: "This is a great opportunity for us to expand our news product and create additional opportunities for our viewers and advertisers."

Send local news to aromano@reedbusiness.com



Mt. Rainier

BC 8/1/05

MARKET EYE

AT A GLANCE

The Market

DMA rank	12
Population	4,432,000
TV homes	1,697,000
Income per capita	\$21,900
TV revenue rank	18
TV revenue	\$312,900,000

Commercial TV Stations

Station	Ch.	Affil.	Owner
KOMO	4	ABC	Fisher
KING	5	NBC	Belo Corp.
KIRO	7	CBS	Cox Bdcstg.
KSTW	11	UPN	Viacom
KVOS	12	Ind.	Clear Channel
KCPQ	13	Fox	Tribune
KDNG	16	Ind.	Belo Corp.
KTBW	22	WB	Tribune
KWPX	33	Pax	Paxson

Cable/DBS

Cable subscribers (HH)	1,217,520
Major cable operators	Comcast, Charter
Cable penetration	72%
ADS subscribers (HH)	253,650
ADS penetration	15%
DBS carriage of local TV?	Yes

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

What's No. 1

Syndicated Show	Rating/Share***
The Oprah Winfrey Show (KING)	8.4/22
Network Show	
Desperate Housewives (KOMO)	22.8/33
Evening Newscast	
KING	10.3/23
Late Newscast	
KING	9.9/21

*** May 2005, total households

SOURCES: Nielsen Media Research, BIA Research

KING of the Hill

Station rules Seattle in lucrative market **By Allison Romano**

Belo Corp.'s NBC affiliate KING may wear the Nielsen crown in Seattle, but a court of well-armed rivals is threatening to depose it. In May, KING nabbed top marks in total day, prime time, and early-morning, evening and late news. The station is so strong that it routinely ranks as one of the most watched NBC stations in the country, even outperforming NBC-owned-and-operated stalwarts like WNBC and KNBC.

Such positioning is lucrative. The Seattle-Tacoma region, Nielsen's 12th-largest TV market, boasts an urbane and af-



KING's Lori Matsukawa and Dennis Bounds

fluent population. The per capita income is \$21,900, according to BIA Financial, on par with Boston and San Francisco. Seattle TV stations took in \$312.9 million in gross revenue last year, up from \$286.5 million in 2003. KING grabbed \$87 million of that.

Its two closest competitors are Cox-owned CBS affiliate KIRO and Fisher Communications' ABC station KOMO, both of which logged \$63 million in revenue last year, according to BIA.

KIRO is trying to zig where its compet-

itors zag. Last winter, it moved the CBS *Evening News* back to 5:30 and added a 6 p.m. newscast, opposite KING's and KOMO's network news. "This provides our viewers with a choice," says KIRO VP/General Manager John Woodin. KIRO's news product is nationally recognized: The station recently won its third straight regional Emmy for outstanding daily newscast and also snagged an Edward R. Murrow Award for investigative reporting.

Seattle's residents support a wide array of local newscasts. KOMO recently added the market's first 4 p.m. news. Tribune-owned Fox affiliate KCPQ offers an hour-long 10 p.m. newscast and last year expanded its morning show, which now runs 5:30-9. VP/General Manager Pam Pearson says that show now ties for second among viewers 25-54, the key news audience, even against *Today* and *Good Morning America*. "Our strength is, we are live and local," Pearson says.

KING programs news for KONG, its sister independent station. After KING's morning-news crew finishes its duties on the NBC station at 7 a.m., staffers switch over to KONG and anchor a local-news program from 7 to 9 a.m. KONG also airs a 10 p.m. newscast, which ranks second to KCPQ's. Belo also owns a regional cable news channel, Northwest Cable News, and former KNBC General Manager Ray Heacox becomes president/general manager for the three outlets later this month. Charter and Comcast are the market's major cable operators.

"Seattle is a very smart and well-educated city," says Pearson. "We have great competition here among the stations." ■

NEXT: WICHITA-HUTCHINSON, KAN.

Blogging Industry

KING Seattle is giving viewers a look inside local news with a recently debuted Web log. On "Blogger KING," 19 staffers highlight news stories and features, post job openings, and even dish about their weekend plans.

One of the editors is Cory Bergman, KING's director of digital media and founder of the popular TV-industry blog *Lostremote.com*. When he posted an announcement about KING's blog in early July, the effort got a mixed response. Said one reader, "Great blog! I love hearing from the anchors, reporters, even the helicopter photog! Very cool." But another was more skeptical: "Does anyone really want to read fluff written by anchors and approved by the promotions department?"

Some readers have even offered suggestions: "[I] would like to see some live Webcam images from the newsroom, studio and control room. Great to see that one-way, single-direction TV newsgathering is dead."—A.R. ■

THE DEMOS

WHO	SHARE OF POPULATION	INDEX*
White	87%	105
Black	4%	37
Hispanic	6%	49
Asian	4%	158

*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

HATCHETT RULES CHICAGO!

Judge Hatchett delivers superior ratings on **WFLD!**

JUDGE HATCHETT

#1 IN DAYTIME ON WFLD!

+39% OVER YEAR AGO!

+14% WEEK TO WEEK!



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Source: NSI WRAP Overnight+, 7/11 - 7/23/05. HD Prg M-F 10:30AM. Daytime rank: 10AM-3PM. Year ago = July '04 (7/8-8/4). Texas Justice, Week to week - vs. w/o 7/11/05.

On a hot June day in Las Vegas, Metro Police Officer Ryan Cook patrols his beat as he normally would, but today he's the one under surveillance.

Cops associate producer John La Count points a camera at him from the passenger seat, while associate producer Hank Barr adjusts a microphone behind La Count. Suddenly, a call comes in that a man has threatened people with a gun.

Cook flips on his lights and sirens, and guns the car down side streets as La Count focuses the camera. Barr and La Count yell "Clear right!" or "Clear left!" as he shifts lanes. Suddenly, they spot the suspect's gold Mercedes off the Las Vegas Strip and direct it into a restaurant parking lot. Two patrol cars screech to a halt behind it.

The male suspect in the passenger seat won't respond to the shouts of five officers—all with guns drawn—to step out with hands up. After a long pause, he acquiesces. He's handcuffed and questioned, and everything is caught on the *Cops* cameras.

Says La Count, "I could tell on his face he just wanted it to end quickly."

This scene is all in a day's work for *Cops*. Fox's feisty reality show that was a hit before the genre was cool. It has no stars, no plot and no contests, yet it is the network's longest continuously running series and one of the most successful and profitable shows on television today.

Now in its 17th season, the show has brought in an estimated \$500 million from network, syndication, cable and DVD sales since its start, despite operating on a relative shoestring in the world of network television. While reality TV is constantly morphing to suit the changing tastes of fickle audiences, *Cops* long ago

discovered a simple, enduring truth: Putting camera crews with police officers makes great TV.

To deliver those 22 minutes of footage to Fox each week requires that the *Cops* crew "be in the right place at the wrong time," says co-creator John Langley.

ADRENALINE RUSH

Langley was in the right place in 1983, on location filming a show about the drug scene in South Florida called *Cocaine Blues*. While researching the project, Langley and his producing partner, Malcolm Barbour, went on a raid with drug-enforcement officers and were taken by the tension of pulling up at a scene and the unpredictable nature of what could—and often did—ensue. "Just the adrenaline rush of not knowing what would happen at any time," Langley says. "It seemed a natural to do a TV show in the shoes of police officers."

But as unknowns, Langley and Barbour failed to sell the *Cops* format to the networks. Then, after Tribune Entertainment matched them up with Geraldo Rivera for a series of crime-themed reality shows, they tried anew with pitches for *Cops*. One day, they hooked a young, virtually unknown Fox programming executive named Stephen Chao, who would later become president of Fox Television Stations and then USA Network (and is now a private investor in media and entertainment). Langley and Barbour pitched four shows, and Chao told them to pick one. They took *Cops* to Barry Diller, then CEO of the network.

The timing was right. A writer's guild strike was happening when they pitched this unscripted show in 1988. As they talked to Diller, Langley recalls, an "accountant-looking guy" was "sitting over in the corner." When the pitch was over, the "accountant" suddenly said he wanted to see four episodes. It was News Corp. Chairman Rupert Murdoch.

Says Langley, "Who knew what Rupert Murdoch looked like back then?"

The show first aired on the seven Fox O&Os, premiering in January 1989. Shot in Broward County, Fla., the premiere featured a raid on a crack house and a sheriff's

attending of an officer's funeral. "At the time, the network wasn't doing particularly well," Chao says, "so they were a bit more desperate, I suppose, to take a chance on something."

He says the original concept was to follow "the home lives of the characters, like a soap opera, like *Melrose Place*. It quickly became evident that it was just kind of artificial and didn't really work, so we canned it."

From then on, the formula simplified: three separate segments with no narrator, scripts or music during the action. The show did well enough to warrant a network pickup, following the same path *America's Most Wanted* had taken.

A typical episode begins with an action scene to hook the viewer, often a trademark foot race in which the only soundtrack is the heavy breathing of the pursuing officer—and the crew.

These scenes make the job of a *Cops* crew member like few others in TV. "You just have to be mentally and physically ready for this job every day," says La Count, a 13-year veteran who has the name of the show tattooed on his right bicep. "You can be in the car chatting and, literally the next thing you know, you may be fighting for your life or in a situation that is going bad. If you're not focused, it can get away from you."

Barr and La Count recall the time in 1994 in Los Angeles when their vehicle rolled up on a seemingly routine traffic stop. "We were just getting out, and bullets started whizzing by my head," says Barr, a 17-year veteran of the show. "John and I were wrestling to pull each other into that little back seat."

THE SENSITIVE SEGMENT

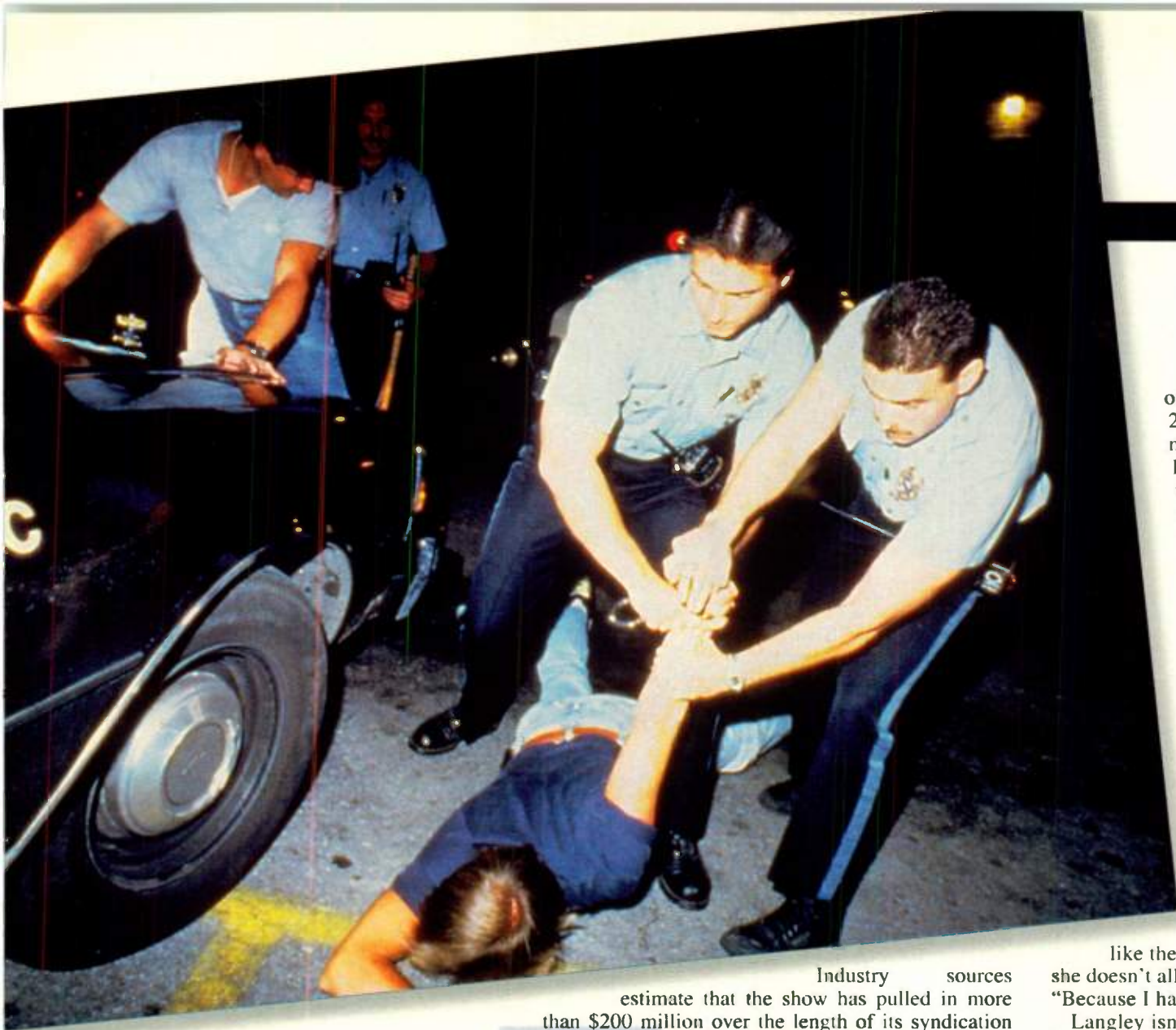
The second scene of a show is usually more emotional or humorous, and the comedy that often results from dealing with society's underbelly is a big part of the allure of *Cops*. A favorite of the crew is the time a man desperately pleaded with an officer that he was innocent of a drug accusation—all the time with a joint nestled over his ear.

"The chases all run together when you look back, but people remember the funny stuff or the real sensitive stories," says Barr. The sensitive stories tend to run in the third segment. In 1989, for example, he accompanied officers responding to a call that a child was running around unsupervised in a low-income housing complex in Portland, Ore. They found the child and took him



COPS HAS NO STARS, NO PLOT AND NO CONTESTS, AND IT'S A KILLER ON TV BY BEN GROSSMAN

BAD BOYS = BIG



officers a total of 400 hours to produce 22 minutes of television weekly for as many as 36 weeks. And while filming has taken place in more than 140 cities, there are still cities in which they have never been welcome. In Honolulu and Chicago, for example, the producers have been turned down enough that they stopped asking. Says Chicago Police Department Deputy Director of News Affairs Patrick Camden, "Police work is not entertainment. What they do trivializes policing. We've never seriously even thought about it."

Most police departments, which reserve the right to screen the video before it is aired, say the show serves as a recruiting tool. Las Vegas Metro's Cook says seeing the *Cops* episodes from Vegas made him eager to transfer from his former law-enforcement job in Cook County, Ill. But even in his own precinct, not all fellow officers

like the idea. When Cook asked a sheriff why she doesn't allow a crew to drive along, she snapped, "Because I have to do police work."

Langley isn't worried about finding enough cops. "As long as there is an appetite for the show," he says, "we'll try to supply the goods. I would genuinely like to see *Cops* hit 20 years." ■

Industry sources estimate that the show has pulled in more than \$200 million over the length of its syndication run, which is still going strong. Also over that time, network fees have grown to more than \$650,000 per episode, from about \$200,000.

Costs remain relatively minuscule. "We had the lowest license fee in network TV for many years and may still today for the Big Four networks," Langley says. "But the syndication—that made us a little money, obviously. My kids got through college."

Aside from becoming a cult hit on television, the *Cops* franchise has been a winner in home-video sales. In 1995, Langley and Barbour formed Real Entertainment, a company focusing on direct-response sales of a trilogy of videos of *Cops* footage unfit for broadcast. They took the videos to retail, and sales again skyrocketed. A second trilogy released last year sold more than 1 million units. The show has also been licensed internationally through Fox and is seen in 40 other countries, although the format has been copied often. Langley is currently looking at a videogame and "best-of" DVDs for each year of the show.

After another strong season in 2004-05, the show has already been renewed for an 18th season on Fox. It still consistently wins its Saturday time slots, even with an 8 p.m. original episode and an 8:30 repeat. "For Fox to be paying that little for a show that wins its time slot and then repeats so well is still a steal," says one industry executive familiar with Fox's deal.

On the advertising side, *Cops* attracts about \$60,000 for a 30-second spot, a rate that has remained flat in recent years. And while the content keeps certain advertisers away, many blue-chip advertisers are happy to take advantage of the young demo it delivers. Among them: Procter & Gamble, Unilever, Pfizer and Taco Bell.

RECRUITING TOOL

For one 30-minute show each week, *Cops* may have 10 two-person crews in three cities. With each duo working 40 hours a week, that means crews are with

home, only to discover a single father of three sitting in a run-down apartment with an empty refrigerator.

The man had been emotionally rocked by the very recent death of his wife. "He was a good guy," Barr recalls. "He just needed some help." Barr filmed the officers going to a neighborhood store to get the kids some food before social services arrived to assist. "I know it was a bit hokey," he says, "but it feels good to help a guy." And viewers often connect.

Keeping that format intact, the show grew its audience through the early years, peaking on the network in 1992-93, when it averaged just under 14 million viewers. The syndicated version, which is averaging 4.8 million viewers per day nationally this year, is sold on a cash-plus-barter arrangement. Court TV airs it every evening. FX uses it more sporadically yet still averages around 1 million viewers, just off the network's average audience of 1.2 million. Even a Feb. 19 VH1 special on *Cops* attracted 1 million, a 50% increase over the network's regular audience at that time.

In 1994, the show began its syndication run, which partially explains a subsequent drop-off in network ratings. (Syndication debuts historically hurt network ratings.) But the show's popularity was booming—as was its profitability.

RAP SHEET

- ★ Burt Lancaster voiced the *Cops* disclaimer in the pilot. (Langley met him when Langley was a publicist on a 1985 movie called *Little Treasure*.)
- ★ MTV Networks Music Group President Brian Graden was an intern on the show when it began, and *Amazing Race* co-creator Bertram Van Munster was a *Cops* producer for nine years.
- ★ Reggae band Inner Circle was about to split up at the time *Cops* found "Bad Boys" on a local CD in South Florida while filming the pilot. The group stayed together, toured Europe, then returned to the U.S. to record the Grammy-winning album of the same name. The song has sold more than 7 million copies worldwide; the group still collects royalties from the show.
- ★ Comedy Central's *Reno 911* is a direct spoof of *Cops*. "What's great about watching *Cops*," says the show's co-creator Thomas Lennon, "is you can't believe there are criminals that are so stupid."

ONEY



the EARLY EMMY LINE

As ballots are sent, *B&C* lays out the odds on the nominees

We won't know the winners until Sept. 18 when CBS airs the *Prime Time Emmy Awards*, but everybody in Hollywood is guessing who'll be taking home the gold. Judging tapes for the awards that will be given out on the telecast (in other words, the big ones) will be sent starting Aug. 8. Here, *B&C* takes a stab at sizing up the competition in the top categories and handicapping the odds.

Next week: The critics weigh in with their picks.



Will & Grace? Don't make us laugh.

OUTSTANDING COMEDY

Some observers think the 15 nominations for *Will & Grace* is the funniest *Will & Grace* moment of the season. That fading sitcom matches ABC's *Desperate Housewives* for most nominations for a series this year. But the poisoned tarts and horny moms of *Housewives* could take this category in a walk. CBS' *Everybody Loves Raymond* might take a farewell win, of course. Another statue for last year's winner, Fox's *Arrested*

Development, might be justified. And everybody loves NBC's *Scrubs*, but like a brother, if you know what we mean.

ODDS: *Desperate Housewives* is tops at 2-1 odds to win. *Everybody Loves Raymond*, 3-1; *Arrested Development*, 4-1; *Will & Grace*, 6-1; and *Scrubs*, 10-1



Deadwood: It's so good it's obscene.

OUTSTANDING DRAMA

NBC warhorse *The West Wing* improved when it hit the campaign trail, but not enough to deserve a nomination over FX's *Nip/Tuck* or *The Shield*. HBO's *Six Feet Under* should have won this category when it was better in earlier years. Fox's *24* is pulse-pounding, but it's a parlor trick that doesn't hold up to close scrutiny. ABC's *Lost* took an old Hollywood-movie concept—marooned strangers thrown together—and turned it into

something far weirder. But our vote would go to *Deadwood*, HBO's &@# \$ fantastic frontier series. David Milch's writing was out-&\$@#*-standing!

ODDS: *Deadwood*, 2-1; *Lost*, 3-1; *Six Feet Under*, 4-1; *The West Wing*, 5-1; *24*, 6-1



Will Emmy love Raymond?

LEAD ACTOR IN A COMEDY

Tony Shalhoub won in 2003 for USA's *Monk*. Ray Romano won in 2002 for CBS' departing hit *Everybody Loves Raymond*. Eric McCormack won in 2001 for NBC's *Will & Grace*, but now that the gay angle doesn't seem so fresh, he doesn't seem so funny either. NBC's wacky *Scrubs* star Zack Braff is a funny fellow, and we'd be pleased if he won, but very

surprised. Romano could get the sentimental vote, but our Ouija board points to Jason Bateman of Fox's *Arrested Development*.

ODDS: Romano, 3-2; Shalhoub, 2-1; Bateman, 4-1; Braff, 6-1; McCormack, 10-1



The odds-on favorite: James Spader

LEAD ACTOR IN A DRAMA

Hank Azaria was marvelous in a breakthrough role on Showtime hit *Huff*. The network was also smart to send DVDs of the series to voters before it aired, but it won't be enough. Kiefer Sutherland once again made Fox's *24* riveting. Hugh Laurie is a deserving underdog as Dr. Gregory House on Fox's *House* and won the award from the Television Critics Association. We're

betting on James Spader, who delivers as the deliciously devious Alan Shore on ABC's *Boston Legal*. But we're hoping for Ian McShane, as the black-hearted tyrant on HBO's *Deadwood*.

ODDS: Spader, 2-1; McShane, 3-1; Sutherland, 4-1; Laurie, 7-1; Azaria, 10-1



It's possible all those *Housewives* will cancel each other out. But we like Marcia Cross.

LEAD ACTRESS IN A COMEDY

Patricia Heaton of CBS' *Raymond* won in 2000 and 2001 and will win again only if Emmy voters go off on a nostalgia jag. Jane Kaczmarek of Fox's *Malcolm in the Middle* has been nominated five times without a win, and the only way she gets it is if the *Desperate Housewives* split their vote. Speaking of which: Teri Hatcher's lonely Susan and Felicity Huffman's stressed-out Lynette seem like relatively normal folks acting

abnormally, and they're getting the most press. But Marcia Cross as the uptight Bree—"Martha Stewart on steroids"—is way out there in *American Beauty*-land. She's so over-the-top we want her to land there. We like Cross in this race.

ODDS: Hatcher, 3-2; Huffman, 2-1; Kaczmarek, 3-1; Cross, 5-1; Heaton, 7-1



Emmy's quirks: Glenn Close gets a nod, but Michael Chiklis doesn't.

LEAD ACTRESS IN A DRAMA

Did Emmy voters really think that Glenn Close's season-long gig on FX's *The Shield* was worthy of nomination and series star Michael Chiklis wasn't? Well, the Emmys can be that way. ABC's *Alias* didn't draw as many raves this year, which paradoxically means it might be time for tardy Emmy trend spotters to finally notice Jennifer Garner. Both Mariska Hargitay for *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit* and Patricia Arquette for *Medium* star in depressing shows, but Hargitay has star power. We'd like

to see the Emmy go to ... Frances Conroy, nominated twice before as the lovingly flawed matriarch on HBO's *Six Feet Under*. But probably this is Close in a cakewalk. Emmys go to big movie stars who show up on TV.

ODDS: Close, 2-1; Hargitay, 3-1; Arquette, 4-1; Conroy, 5-1; Garner, 7-1

Compiled by Joel Brown



Embracing IT

Discovery's new facility exemplifies the industry's move to information technology

By Ken Kerschbaumer

In the industry's latest example of how information technology (IT) is radically improving workflow, this week Discovery Communications takes the wraps off a 53,000-square-foot facility in Sterling, Va. The spanking-new Discovery Television and Technology Center signals the end of one era and the dawning of a new one. Since the launch of the first Discovery Network 20 years ago, the company has relied on third-party facilities to handle on-air playback of its 17 networks. But by the end of August, Discovery will handle the playback: Instead of being stored on videotapes, each network's content will be stored and archived as data files that contain audio, video and other information.

Relying on outsiders to handle on-air playback meant that every change brought on a new negotiation for transmission and production services. "Now we'll be able to repurpose and reorganize our staff to best react to our business," says John Honeycutt, senior VP, Discovery Television Operations Group.

With 80 new employees on board, content is now ingested as files, giving Discovery greater flexibility when it comes to producing and distributing content. The new facility, built by systems integrator Ascent Media, is only the first step. Discovery and Ascent are also working on new playout centers in London and Singapore. The three will be file-based and, with the help of fiber connections, will quickly send content back and forth with the use of File Transfer Protocol (FTP).

"Since April, we've encoded 1,200 program master tapes to files that are viewable by our networks all around the globe," says Honeycutt. "If they want to see the latest episode, they can have digital files pushed to them, as opposed to waiting for changes on tape to arrive via airplane."

MORE COMPANIES GOING HIGH-TECH

Whether they're using PC-based editing systems to create content, utilizing video servers to store commercials and programs for playout, or even employing tapeless formats, more facilities are moving to IT-based workflows. "A lot of our infrastructure is now IT," says Ardell Hill, Media General senior VP, broadcast operations. "Just three years ago, we were scratching our heads over how to do it, and now we move content around as much as a data file as we do as audio and video."

Discovery's new home features a state-of-the-art infrastructure. Two Cisco data switches will move files throughout the facility, and 14 virtual local area networks will give each network dedicated storage and networking so that each has greater control of its own content. An OmniBus automation system will handle

on-air playout and commercial insertion, pulling content from Omneon video servers, while a StorageTek archive system and Front Porch Digital's digital archive-management system can pull up older material via keyword searches.

"Content arrives one of two ways: either as a file or on tape," says Honeycutt. "Everything is then placed onto the Omneon server, and, at the same time, a copy is sent to the archive." The advantage, he says, is the ability to simply flush a file off the Omneon server without having to first encode it and send it to the archive.

RELYING ON SERVERS

It is because of such capability that servers like those from Omneon are increasingly important to broadcast facilities—particularly those with hundreds of program hours passing through the system each week. "One benefit is the ability to move content more easily from one workstation to the next for editing," says Geoff Stedman, Omneon VP, worldwide marketing, "and to introduce transfer processes that are faster than real time."

IT begins, however, with being able to easily turn video into data files. Omneon unveils servers compatible with the new HDV format next month at the International Broadcasting Convention in Amsterdam. Video servers like those from Omneon, Avid and Leitch have replaced about half the videotape recorders in the market.

Yet despite the servers' technological advantages, some users miss the ability to move content around in a physical form, such as on a tape or DVD. If IT is going to spread beyond the station facility and into the field, stations need a simple way to acquire content in file form, not to simply dub over a tape. That's where products like Sony's XDCAM and Panasonic's P2 formats are helping the industry move further toward IT—and how Grass Valley's deal with Iomega will move it ahead even more.

The two companies recently signed a deal that will allow users of Grass Valley's Turbo digital disk recorder to move content to and from the 35-GB REV disk cartridge, a portable storage disk from Iomega. For \$1,000, Turbo iDDR users can add a REV drive to the recorder, allowing content to be copied to and from removable REV cartridges. The cartridges cost \$400 and can hold 35 GB of data—enough for 45 minutes of high-definition material at 75 megabits per

second (Mbps) or two hours of standard-definition material at 25 Mbps.

"It weighs about the same as a floppy disk, but its write speeds can be up to 200 Mbps," says Mike Cronk, Grass Valley VP/general manager, servers and digital news production. "Someone can take an entire program, put it on the drive and dump it off somewhere else much quicker than with a DVD burner."

Grass Valley's use of the REV drive aligns the company with others—such as Panasonic, Ikegami and Sony—that have products designed to acquire video in file format. Grass Valley won't comment on plans to create a REV-based camcorder or camera, but such an offering would add another serious competitor to the battle between XDCAM, which records on Blu-ray optical disks, and P2, which records on solid-state Flash memory.

There are other hurdles en route to successful IT integration, such as incompatibility between one vendor's file format and another's. "A lot of the solutions traditional broadcast suppliers are trying to move are still based on a closed-loop architecture," says Steve Canepa, IBM VP, media and entertainment industry. "For those vendors, the challenge is using open standards."

NINE DIFFERENT VERSIONS

And sometimes standards are, unfortunately, anything but standard. Introduced two years ago, Material Exchange Format (MXF) is a transport standard that makes it possible to send a content file between different vendors. The only problem is that there are nine different versions of it. "Think of MXF as the envelope to send the letter," says Hugo Gaggioni, Sony Broadcast chief technology officer. "But it doesn't mean anything if the letter's in Chinese and you can't read Chinese."

Sony's version of MXF is called OP1a and is designed to help send files recorded using Sony devices over iLink high-speed transfer connections. So far, two-dozen vendors have signed on, meaning that products from such vendors as Leitch, Pinnacle and Avid are compatible.

It's certainly not the first time a technological advance has raised problems. Switching from analog to digital tape a few decades ago was anything but seamless, and a cultural rift between IT and video professionals is apparent as well. But Discovery, for one, seems to have it sorted out.

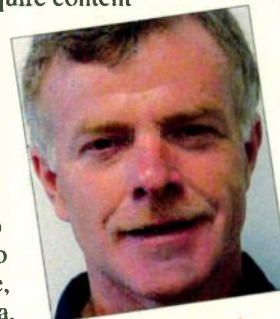
"We merged those two groups last November," says Diane Duggan, Discovery executive VP, technology and media services. "Hardware used to put a wall up between those two groups, but now everyone works together. And the end result has been phenomenal." ■



John Honeycutt

"Our networks can have digital files pushed to them, as opposed to waiting for changes on tape to arrive via airplane."

JOHN HONEYCUTT,
DISCOVERY



Hugo Gaggioni



N I E L S E N J U L Y 1 8 - 2 4 R A T I N G S

THE PRIME TIME RACE Top 10 Basic Cable Shows

July 18-24

Total Households (in millions)

PROGRAM	DATE	NET	MHS
1. NASCAR Nextel Cup: Pocono	7/24	TNT	5.1
2. WWE Raw 10p	7/18	SPIK	3.8
3. The Closer	7/18	TNT	3.6
4. Monk	7/22	USA	3.2
5. WWE Raw 9p	7/18	SPIK	3.0
6. The Real World XVI	7/19	MTV	2.8
6. My: The Waterboy	7/24	TBS	2.8
8. Fairly OddParents 10a	7/23	NICK	2.8
9. SR: SC Nominee John Roberts	7/19	FOXN	2.7
10. SpongeBob SquarePants 9:30a	7/23	NICK	2.6

Adults 18-49 (in millions)

PROGRAM	DATE	NET	18-49
1. NASCAR Nextel Cup: Pocono	7/24	TNT	3.2
2. WWE Raw 10p	7/18	SPIK	3.1
3. My: The Waterboy	7/24	TBS	2.5
4. WWE Raw 9p	7/18	SPIK	2.4
5. The Real World XVI	7/19	MTV	2.0
6. Monk	7/22	USA	1.9
7. The Dead Zone	7/24	USA	1.8
7. Family Guy	7/21	TOON	1.8
9. The Closer	7/18	TNT	1.7
9. Rescue Me	7/19	FX	1.7

SOURCE: Turner Entertainment Research, Nielsen Media Research

* Program length less than 15 minutes

Broadcast Networks

July 18-24

Total Households (in millions)

	WEEK	STD
1. CBS	5.5	8.5
2. NBC	4.5	6.7
3. FOX	4.1	6.2
4. ABC	4.0	6.6
5. UPN	2.0	2.4
6. WB	1.3	2.3
7. PAX	0.5	0.5

Adults 18-49 (in millions)

	WEEK	STD
1. FOX	3.3	4.9
2. CBS	3.0	4.7
3. ABC	2.4	4.5
4. NBC	2.3	4.2
5. UPN	1.3	1.7
6. WB	0.9	1.7
7. PAX	0.2	0.2

Top 10 Broadcast Shows

Total Households (in millions)

	WEEK	STD
1. CSI	CBS	10.8
2. Without a Trace	CBS	9.5
3. Law & Order: Criminal Intent	NBC	7.2
3. Law & Order: Special Victims Unit	NBC	7.2
5. NCIS	CBS	7.1
6. Law & Order 10p	NBC	7.0
6. So You Think You Can Dance	FOX	7.0
8. Two and a Half Men	CBS	6.9
9. 60 Minutes	CBS	6.6
9. CSI: Miami	CBS	6.6

Adults 18-49 (in millions)

	WEEK	STD
1. CSI	CBS	6.2
2. So You Think You Can Dance	FOX	6.0
3. Without a Trace	CBS	5.1
4. Brat Camp 9p	ABC	4.8
5. Family Guy 9p	FOX	4.6
6. Two and a Half Men	CBS	4.4
6. Big Brother Tue	CBS	4.4
8. The Simpsons 8:30p	FOX	4.3
8. Hell's Kitchen	FOX	4.3
10. American Dad	FOX	4.1
10. Big Brother Thu	CBS	4.1

SOURCE: Nielsen Media Research

	abc	cbs	NBC	FOX	i (PAX)	4N	WB
Week 44	3.7/6	5.5/9	3.9/7	4.0/7	0.5/1	1.6/3	1.5/2
MONDAY							
8:00	70. The Scholar 2.9/5	17. King of Queens 5.3/9	62. Fear Factor 3.2/6	51. Nanny 911 3.5/6	122. Doc 0.5/1	90. One on One 1.6/3	102. 7th Heaven 1.2/2
8:30		11. Everybody Lvs Raym 5.9/10				90. All of Us 1.6/3	
9:00		8. Two and a Half Men 6.3/10	32. Las Vegas 4.1/7	27. Hell's Kitchen 4.4/7	116. Diagnosis Murder 0.7/1	87. Girlfriends 1.7/3	87. Summerland 1.7/3
9:30	38. ABC Monday Movie of the Week—28 Days 3.9/6	44. Rock Stars: INXS 3.7/6				93. Half and Half 1.5/2	
10:00		10. CBS: Miami 6.0/10	25. Medium 4.5/8		127. Early Edition 0.4/1		
10:30							
TUESDAY							
8:00	51. My Wife and Kids 3.5/6	4. NCIS 6.5/12	62. Average Joe 3.2/6	74. Trading Spouses 2.8/5	122. Doc 0.5/1	98. One on One 1.3/2	98. Gilmore Girls 1.3/2
8:30	59. George Lopez 3.3/6					90. All of Us 1.6/3	
9:00	54. According to Jim 3.4/6	17. Big Brother 5.3/9	78. I Want To Be a Hilton 2.6/4	24. House 4.7/8	115. Diagnosis Murder 0.8/1	85. Girlfriends 1.8/3	110. One Tree Hill 0.9/1
9:30	62. Rodney 3.2/5					93. Half and Half 1.5/2	
10:00	67. Empire 3.1/5	32. Rock Star: INXS 4.1/7	4. Law & Order: Special Victims Unit 6.5/11		122. Early Edition 0.5/1		
10:30							
WEDNESDAY							
8:00	32. Brat Camp 4.1/8	80. The Cut 2.5/5	14. Most Outrageous Moments of Live TV 5.7/11	6. So You Think You Can Dance 6.4/11	119. Doc 0.6/1	98. Eve 1.3/3	110. One Tree Hill 0.9/2
8:30						102. Eve 1.2/2	
9:00	11. Brat Camp 5.9/10	82. Rock Star: INXS 2.4/4	11. Law & Order 5.9/10		116. Diagnosis Murder 0.7/1	102. Veronica Mars 1.2/2	102. Smallville 1.2/2
9:30		80. King of Queens 2.5/4					
10:00	67. Lost 3.1/5	17. CSI: NY 5.3/9	6. Law & Order 6.4/11		127. Early Edition 0.4/1		
10:30							
THURSDAY							
8:00	40. Extreme Makeover 3.8/7	17. Big Brother 5.3/10	54. Joey 3.4/6	74. That '70s Show 2.8/5	119. Doc 0.6/1		96. Smallville 1.4/3
8:30			59. Joey 3.3/6	74. That '70s Show 2.8/5		62. WWE Smackdown! 3.2/6	
9:00	51. Hooking Up 3.5/6	1. CSI 9.9/17	54. Joey 3.4/6	85. The O.C. 1.8/3	116. Diagnosis Murder 0.7/1		110. Everwood 0.9/2
9:30			70. Will & Grace 2.9/5				
10:00	22. Primetime Live 4.9/9	2. Without a Trace 8.7/15	62. Will & Grace 3.2/6		122. Early Edition 0.5/1		
10:30			59. Will & Grace 3.3/6				
FRIDAY							
8:00	70. 8 Simple Rules 2.9/6	44. 60 Minutes II 3.7/8	36. Dateline NBC 4.0/8	70. Fox Movie Friday—Barbershop 2.9/6	131. America's Most Talented Kids 0.3/1	110. What I Like About You 0.9/2	
8:30						109. Blue Collar TV 1.0/2	
9:00	77. Hope & Faith 2.7/5	40. 48 Hours Mystery 3.8/7			87. UPN's Movie Friday—Devil's Pond 1.7/3	102. Reba 1.2/2	
9:30	82. Less Than Perfect 2.4/4				127. MGM Night at the Movies—A Rumor of Angels 0.4/1	107. Living With Fran 1.1/2	
10:00	23. 20/20 4.8/9	32. Numb3rs 4.1/8	28. Law & Order: Trial by Jury 4.3/8				
10:30							
SATURDAY							
8:00		54. Big Brother 3.4/7	96. The West Wing 1.4/3	67. Cops 3.1/7	131. Universal Family Movie—Legend 0.3/1		
8:30				44. Cops 3.7/8			
9:00	54. ABC Saturday Movie—Notting Hill 3.4/7	29. Crimetime Saturday 4.2/8	107. The West Wing 1.1/2	36. America's Most Wanted: America Fights Back 4.0/8			
9:30		21. 48 Hours Mystery 5.0/10	93. Revelations 1.5/3		134. World Cup of Comedy 0.1/1		
10:00							
10:30							
SUNDAY							
7:00	49. America's Funniest Home Videos 3.6/7	9. 60 Minutes 6.1/12	25. Dateline NBC 4.5/9	84. Malcolm in the Middle 2.1/4	127. America's Most Talented Kids 0.4/1	110. Charmed 0.9/2	
7:30				78. King of the Hill 2.6/5			
8:00	44. Extreme Makeover: Home Edition 3.7/7	15. Cold Case 5.6/10		40. The Simpsons 3.8/7	122. Doc 0.5/1		
8:30				29. The Princes of Malibu 4.2/7			
9:00	38. Desperate Housewives 3.9/7		3. Law & Order: Criminal Intent 6.6/11	29. Family Guy 4.2/7	119. Sue Thomas, F.B. Eye 0.6/1	98. WB Sunday Summer Movie—Tuck Everlasting 1.3/2	
9:30		44. CBS Sunday Movie—Martin and Lewis 3.7/6		40. American Dad 3.8/6			
10:00	49. Grey's Anatomy 3.6/6		16. Crossing Jordan 5.5/10		131. Xtreme Fakeovers 0.3/1		
10:30							
Averages							
Week	3.7/7	5.0/9	4.1/7	3.7/7	0.5/1	1.8/3	1.2/2
S-T-D	6.0/10	7.7/13	6.1/10	5.6/9	0.4/1	2.2/3	2.1/3

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 indicates 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



PEOPLE

Shapiro's Ahead of the Game at ESPN

He's young, he's brash, and some say he's ready for a bigger stage **By Ben Grossman**

When watching ESPN, you never have to wait long to find out what's looming. From constant "coming-up" graphics during games and news shows to *Pardon the Interruption's* on-screen rundown of topics, the cable giant is built for the attention span of today's young adult male.

That's why Mark Shapiro is perfect for the job. ESPN's 35-year-old programming whiz has vaulted up the ladder at the Disney-owned sports channel by constantly focusing—some might say obsessing—on what's coming next. It's a trait that has helped him shoot through the ESPN ranks at breakneck pace.

"The guy is always moving around and thinking about the next thing," says IMG Broadcasting Senior VP/Managing Director Sandy Montag, who negotiates with Shapiro as an agent for such clients as John Madden. "Even at dinner, he is already thinking about what's for dessert. We had dinner recently, and my wife said after, 'Is he ever off?'"

EVOLVING ESPN

Shapiro's rise at ESPN has been nothing short of meteoric: He joined as a production assistant in 1993 and, just eight years later, took over as senior VP and general manager of programming at the age of 31. Now executive VP of programming and production, he has helped evolve ESPN into an entertainment outlet, complete with original movies and serialized dramas.

With Comcast currently working to remake its Outdoor Life Network into a more mainstream sports channel that could compete with ESPN, Shapiro needs to be on top of his game. "You always have to spend time looking in the rear-view mirror," he says of the possible competition, "figuring out just how close those images appear."

Shapiro has succeeded thus far thanks to a willingness to experiment, something he wants to continue to instill in ESPN's culture. He challenges his entire staff to constantly e-mail him new concepts. "I want risk-takers," he says. "Throw it out there, take a chance. If we fail, we fail."

ESPN Executive VP/Executive Editor John Walsh says Shapiro's commitment to idea generation is one of the best aspects of his leadership. "He doesn't care if ideas come from the switchboard operator or the president of Disney," Walsh says. "He's constantly putting together forums and mechanisms to come up with the next great idea and

always gives credit to whoever came up with it."

Shapiro, who gets five or six pitches every day (mostly movies), is even considering recent suggestions from staffers to bring back both the demolition derby and roller derby. "We're going to try them out," he says. "They might stink, but you never know. Poker should show you everything. [The idea] came from a junior guy on my staff who works on the NHL. Is anything hotter than poker right now?"

A willingness to throw Hail Mary passes takes a certain brashness, which those around Shapiro say he has—in spades. "Sure, he's cocky," says Montag. "But he's cocky without being

FIFTH ESTATER



MARK SHAPIRO
Executive VP, programming and production, ESPN

B. Feb. 25, 1970, Chicago

EDUCATION

B.A., political science and communications, University of Iowa, 1992

EMPLOYMENT

NBC Sports: production assistant, associate producer, 1989-92; ESPN2's *Talk2* and ESPN's *Up Close*: production assistant, producer, 1993-96; ESPN's *SportsCentury: 50 Greatest Athletes*: coordinating producer, 1997-99; ESPN Classic and ESPN Original Entertainment: VP/general manager, 1999-2001; ESPN: senior VP/general manager, programming, 2001-02; current position since 2002

PERSONAL

Married; two sons

arrogant, if that makes sense. He's confident and aggressive and competitive. If you don't know him, he could definitely come across as arrogant."

Shapiro, who splits time between offices in Bristol, Conn., and New York, isn't concerned about failure. "I don't worry about my job," he says. "If I can't get it done, get rid of me."

And if he got fired tomorrow? "I'd be in a new job in one week," he says with a shrug.

RISING INDUSTRY STATUS

Shapiro's status in the industry rose even further last year when he was offered a programming job at ABC entertainment. He passed on it, dissatisfied with the proposed reporting structure. (He wanted to be the top programming exec at the network).

"It was very flattering and a great opportunity," he says. "The structure just wasn't something that would work for me. And before you leave what is arguably the most successful network in television, it better be the right move, especially if you are going to move your family 3,000 miles. And it wasn't right."

But ABC was in Shapiro's future anyway, as he assumed control of programming and marketing at ABC Sports earlier this summer. When not being pitched new shows and movies, his days are dominated by the integration of ESPN with ABC Sports. "This is a no-brainer," he says of the merger. "It should have happened 10 years ago."

He now has around 2,500 people reporting to him and admits the stress can be overwhelming. "You work as hard as you can and can't seem to get your head above water," he says. "My only outlet is my family these days."

Yet Walsh says Shapiro has another outlet: the band U2. True to character, Shapiro follows the band obsessively. "A U2 song came on, and I asked Mark if he liked them," Walsh says. "And he goes, 'Yeah, look, I have like 440 U2 songs on my iPod.'"

CONTEMPLATING THE NEXT STEP?

But while Shapiro's evolving of the ESPN brand continues (he's launching three shows this month and wants to add a late-night talk show, a "Letterman-type show with a sports theme," he says), some wonder if he is already contemplating his next step.

"I think he's past a Hollywood entertainment-programming job," says IMG's Montag. "When he goes, it will be to run an entire network or media company. He's ready." ■

FATES & FORTUNES

BROADCAST TV

JIM LEMON, news director, KOVR Stockton, Calif., named VP/news director, WITI Milwaukee.

DONITA TODD, VP/general manager, WFTX Cape Coral, Fla., named VP/general manager, WPXI Mobile, Ala./WJTC Pensacola, Fla.

LARRY A. MOST, local sales manager, WPLG Miami, appointed general sales manager, WTVX Ft. Pierce, Fla./WTCN Stuart, Fla./WWHB West Palm Beach, Fla.

CABLE TV

CHRISTOPHER C. LOY, area controller, Integrated Electrical Services Inc., San Antonio, joins Time Warner Cable, Southwest Division, as VP, finance, Flower Mound, Texas.

JEFF GIBSON, division director, technical, L&D, Midwest division, promoted to senior director, Comcast University.

PROGRAMMING

At NBC Universal: **MARK MILLER**, executive VP, national sales, television stations, New York, promoted to senior VP, cable entertainment sales, New York; **FRANCES MANFREDI**, senior VP, cable sales, domestic television distribution, New York, named senior VP/general sales manager, cable and non-theatrical sales.

JOE GANGONE, CEO, GangOne Consulting, named executive VP, ad sales, CSTV Networks, New York.

TORRAE LAWRENCE, marketing manager, affiliate sales and marketing, Discovery Networks, Silver Spring, Md., named marketing manager, affiliate sales and marketing, AmericanLife TV Networks, Washington.

JOURNALISM

BRAD HIRST, senior producer, *Cold Pizza*, ESPN2, New York, returns to local cable network News 12, The Bronx and Brooklyn, N.Y., as main sports anchor and sports team leader.

TECHNOLOGY

AL JOHNSON, senior VP, Iptek Inc., named VP, technology and advanced architectures, Xtend Networks, Atlanta.

MATTHEW J. ADEN, senior VP, sales and customer operations, connected home solutions business, Motorola, appointed senior VP, worldwide sales and customer service, Terayon Communication Systems Inc., Santa Clara, Calif.

Fast Track*Continued from page 6*

is unclear whether Swanson wants the top spot, and he has talked about retiring as soon as a year from now.

That might prompt Moonves to look outside. The most likely candidate is **Mitch Stern**, a long-time Fox executive who headed News Corp.'s TV stations and briefly ran DirecTV. He has been on the sidelines since being ousted from DirecTV last March.

Another possibility is an alliance between Stern and Swanson. Under that scenario, Swanson would continue rebuilding the stations for a limited time, while Stern guides the business end. CBS would not comment.

Reynolds quit two weeks ago to join private-equity firm **Evercore Partners**. Speculation on Wall Street is that Reynolds was frustrated by the plan to lump all of Viacom's slow-growth assets into CBS, then load it up with debt. That would free sibling **MTV Networks** to acquire new operations and keep growing but would likely leave CBS fairly inflexible. Reynolds is known as a deal-maker and has indicated to associates that under the new structure there could be too few deal opportunities.—Allison Romano

NBC Selling 'House'

Fox's top doctor will soon be making **House** calls to TV stations and cable networks. NBC Universal, which produces the Fox medical drama, will start shopping the series for syndication this fall—a speedy move considering that **House** just finished its first season. But, with few hit dramas and sitcoms to sell, syndicators are striking fast wherever they have a hot opportunity. NBC Universal Domestic Television Distribution will position it as a procedural crime drama, playing up its closed-ended episodes, which wrap up stories and tend to repeat better.

On broadcast, **House** is in fine health. After a strong debut last fall, it exploded when Fox made it the lead-out for **American Idol** in January. In its freshman season, **House** averaged a hearty 13.3 million viewers and a 5.2 rating/13 share in adults 18-49. It isn't all **Idol**, though. "**House**'s success is very independent," says NBC Universal's **Frances Manfredi**. Indeed, the show is performing well on its own this summer, luring an average 8.2 million viewers and garnering a 3/8 in 18-49, better than first-year phenoms **Lost** and **Medium**.

Manfredi, formerly with NBC Enterprises, was recently named senior VP, general sales manager, cable and non-theatrical sales, replacing **Arthur**

Comcast Suit Against Orioles Is Thrown Out

A judge last week dismissed Comcast's suit against the **Baltimore Orioles** over the baseball team's startup of a regional sports network in the Washington and Baltimore markets. Orioles games currently air on **Comcast SportsNet**, but the team plans to move the games to its own MASN, the Mid-Atlantic Sports Network, in 2007.

Comcast sued, claiming its current contract gives it right of first refusal, a right to match any other offer. But the Orioles countered that the right covers only bids from "third" parties. Since MASN is 90% owned by the team, the network is not a third party.

The dismissal does not immediately affect another part of the

dispute, Comcast's refusal to carry MASN coverage of **Washington Nationals** games.

Comcast had bid on the rights for the Nationals—the relocated Montreal Expos—but lost out to MASN. The operator has, in turn, refused to carry the network on cable systems serving nearly 2 million subscribers in the network's territory.

The Orioles have turned to the FCC for help and are trying to make the dispute an issue in regulators' review of Comcast's planned purchase of parts of **Adelphia Communications**. In a statement, Comcast Executive VP **David Cohen** said, "We are disappointed in the judge's decision today. He has invited us to amend the complaint, and we will promptly decide whether we will amend or appeal."—J.M.H.



House's Hugh Laurie



Ted Koppel



Howard Stern



Sen. Conrad Burns

Hasson, executive VP of cable, Canadian and ancillary sales for NBC Universal Domestic TV Distribution and one of the highest-ranking holdovers from the Universal Domestic Television era.—A.R./Jim Benson

'Nightline' Names New Exec Producer

James Goldston, senior producer of prime time specials and investigative reports for ABC News, has been named executive producer of **Nightline**.

He takes over when **Tom Bettag** leaves at the end of the year. Bettag and host **Ted Koppel** plan to hang out their shingle as an independent news/documentary team.

Goldston will run **Nightline** offices in Washington and New York, remaining based in the latter.—J.E.

MSNBC Moves Carlson's 'Situation'

MSNBC will move **Tucker Carlson's** new show, **The Situation With Tucker Carlson**, from 9 to 11 p.m., replacing it with **Rita Cosby's** new show.

The live program has averaged

201,000 total viewers and 82,000 in the adults 25-54 demo since its June 13 premiere, significantly fewer than its competition in the time slot, Fox News' **Hannity & Colmes** and CNN's **Larry King Live**.—Anne Becker

FEC Clears '60 Minutes' And Sinclair Shows

Broadcasters are off the hook for possible legal penalties arising from two controversial news reports generated during the 2004 presidential campaign.

All six members of the **Federal Election Commission** have voted to dismiss complaints against both CBS and **Sinclair Broadcast Group** for reports that cast **President Bush** and Democratic challenger **John Kerry** in harsh lights.

The FEC found that Sinclair's airing of excerpts from **Stolen Honor**, a documentary criticizing 2004 presidential candidate Kerry's military service in Vietnam and his subsequent anti-war activities, did not violate federal election laws because the broadcast was protected by the government's exemption of news shows from campaign-finance restrictions.

Similarly, the FEC said CBS and

former anchor **Dan Rather** could not be held liable for a discredited **60 Minutes** report questioning whether the president fulfilled his National Guard obligations. Sinclair says it is "pleased" by the rulings.—Bill McConnell

Sen. Burns May Reassess Ratings Bill

Sen. **Conrad Burns** (R-Mont.) said last week that he remains committed to legislation aimed at settling TV-industry disputes over ratings but might back away from a provision that would require **Nielsen** or others to obtain accreditation.

Burns' proposal calls for Nielsen to get accredited by the **Media Rating Council** (MRC) before rolling out or changing product. Due to a crush of obligations before lawmakers leave Washington for the August break, though, Burns was the only senator speaking at the Senate Commerce Committee hearing on his bill, although the room was packed with onlookers.

Burns' reassessment came after both Nielsen CEO **Susan Whiting** and MRC Executive Director **George Ivie** indicated that agreement on a voluntary code could be reached, requiring audits for potential problems, which Nielsen has agreed to permit before product rollouts.

Currently, ratings services' cooperation with the MRC is voluntary.

Whiting's pledge to at least submit new products to MRC audits did little to sway her critics, including **Tribune Broadcasting** President **Patrick J. Mullen**, who said, "The measurement system we have today in the largest television markets is not worthy of public trust."—Bill McConnell

In Demand Sets Howard Stern Channel

Distributor **In Demand** is close to finalizing a deal to distribute a "channel" devoted to **Howard Stern**. Fans of the shock jock will be able to call up video of Stern's **Sirius** radio show. The package will be sold as a subscription video-on-demand service, for a monthly fee, and will be available to all systems that are affiliates of In Demand. When Stern's **Infinity Radio** show was taped and aired on **E!** **Entertainment Television**, the basic-cable channel heavily edited the footage, particularly the strippers who were frequent guests. As a VOD service, the Stern show will likely be every bit as explicit as the jock promises his satellite-radio show will be.—J.M.H.



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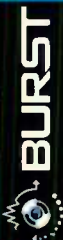
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Over Here

Last week, as we watched the debut of FX's *Over There*, a gritty depiction of the Iraq War, we were reminded of how bold and timely television can be. Never before has a television war drama been shown at the same time the war is being fought.

FX could have irritated both proponents and opponents of our continued involvement in Iraq. Instead, *Over There* appears to have won over many of both with its complicated portrayal of the job of war, drawing one of the largest audiences in cable history for a series premiere and getting good reviews in the process.

As the medium has proliferated and matured, it has changed the way the world sees itself. In its prime, Ted Koppel's *Nightline* brought together world leaders who discussed the hard issues—live, and with candor and hope.

However, the image of leaders with something important to say on *Nightline* has unfortunately morphed into footage of terrorists beheading captives, as shown on Al Jazeera.

In an earlier era, Vietnam became known as the television war. So, when Walter Cronkite talked on the air about the hopelessness of the American presence there after the 1968 Tet offensive, President Johnson, it was widely reported, said, "If we've lost Walter Cronkite, we've lost the country." Three months later, LBJ announced he would not seek re-election.

Cronkite has never been a fan of the current war, but the anchor-as-arbiter model has been diluted by the explosion of media outlets. TV war coverage is now instant in a way undreamed during Vietnam, and yet Iraq War coverage re-

mains strangely distant.

It seems to us that we saw more of the Vietnam War, and its tragic consequences for soldiers and the Vietnamese people, than we now see of the war in Iraq. In part, that's because, while Vietnam was a guerilla war, there was something like a front—a North and a South, along with large, ongoing battles.

Journalists in Iraq are now targets for insurgents. And by contrast, the journalists in this war usually arrive after the "battle" right along with the nurses and doctors rushing to mend bodies ripped to shreds by suicidal terrorists. This is a different kind of war.

Still, even with a proliferation of all-news outlets and a cluster of journalists embedded with troops, we cannot see the returning dead. It's an official rule: We are rarely shown in real time, from the real battlefield, our own casualties of war.

It's sometimes as if we're *not* over there.

For all the faces we could put on the statistics, they still become a roll call of body counts, except ex post facto in stories of difficult homecomings and high-tech prosthetics.

That is why FX's *Over There* is a gutsy endeavor. In the first three episodes that we have seen, the series from Steven Bochco and Chris Gerolmo reflects the wide ambiguities of the war.

Over There is neither pro- nor anti-war. But it does portray the idea that this war is a particular hell—on the battlefield and for families back home. And it does a better job of showing it than most of our newscasts most of the time. That's good for FX, but not a particularly flattering commentary on the news business.

EDITORIAL

Payola: The Next Big Storm?

Like the "perfect storm" that led to the strongest indecency crackdown in FCC history, recent events could produce a wave of aggressive FCC enforcement of payola and related sponsorship-identification rules. Broadcasters ought to take protective action, and the FCC needs to be careful not to interfere with broadcasters' editorial discretion and First Amendment rights.

Nearly two years ago, FCC Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein began calling for more FCC action on payola and sponsorship identification. Recently, a series of high-profile revelations have focused attention on government-sponsored video news releases (VNRs); columnists or experts being paid to tout products or political positions on the air; gifts from record promoters to disk jockeys; and plain old "pay for play." Some have questioned whether program producers, promoters and others are making the required disclosures to broadcasters and whether broadcasters are exercising enough diligence about on-air disclosures. An advocacy group began a campaign to flood the FCC with e-mails about the issue. Congress held hearings, and

enactment of VNR legislation appears imminent. New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer last week announced a \$10 million settlement with Sony BMG Music Entertainment regarding "gifts" to radio stations for airplay.

The FCC has announced two payola/sponsorship-ID investigations—involving Armstrong Williams and "pay for play" allegations at a radio station in Buffalo, N.Y.—and released a public notice strongly warning broadcasters (and others) about their disclosure and due-diligence responsibilities regarding VNRs. This spring, Commissioner Adelstein encouraged members of the public to file complaints in what he referred to as a "neighborhood-watch" approach to payola/sponsorship-ID enforcement. More recently, he called for an FCC investigation as a follow-up to the New York settlement.

It is unclear whether this is the tipping point for a new round of FCC investigations. In any event, broadcasters certainly should promptly take steps to ensure they are complying with the law. This means disclosing payment or consideration (even to others) to air program material,

and reasonable diligence to find out about such payments from their employees and program suppliers. It also means redoubling efforts to learn about and disclose sources of program material that is political or involves controversial issues, even if it is provided for free. Compliance by broadcasters now may forestall the need for strong FCC enforcement later.

If the FCC decides to move more aggressively in enforcing payola and sponsorship-identification rules, it would be wise to be sensitive to the editorial discretion and First Amendment rights of broadcasters, particularly relating to news and public-affairs programming. And overly burdensome interpretations of disclosure rules, or stricter requirements, could deter broadcasters from airing certain news and public-affairs programs that would serve the public interest, and may even run afoul of the First Amendment.

Solomon is a partner at Wilkinson Barker Knauer LLP in Washington. From November 1999 until this past May, he served as chief of the FCC Enforcement Bureau.

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Group Deputy Editorial Director **Carol Jordan**

646-746-6582

Associate Publisher, Marketing **Madelyn Hammond**

323-965-4439

Senior Director of Finance **Jim Guttridge** 646-746-6861

Director of Finance **Rawley Moore** 646-746-6445

Reed Business Information

Chief Executive Officer **Jim Casella**

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