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Cable High-Fives Into Hard Eight

Woe about year-end inventory deluge defied by both volume and CPM gains PAGE 4

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■ WORLD SERIES RATINGS DOWN FROM 2005

World Series ratings on Fox through the first four games were down 10 percent in households to a 10.0 from an 11.1, and down 19 percent in the adults 18-49 demo, to a 4.5 from a 5.6, according to Nielsen Media Research data. The network is averaging 16 million viewers per World Series game, compared to 17.2 million per game last year. But Fox spokesman Lou D'Ermilio said the viewer shortfall comes primarily from the fact that this year's two teams' home markets, St. Louis and Detroit, are drawing a combined 900,000 viewers less than last year's two teams, the Chicago White Sox and Houston Astros.

CAB. NIELSEN WORK ON ISSUES

Despite several cable networks opting out of having their commercial ratings data released by Nielsen Media Research beginning in December, Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau president Sean Cunningham said his organization and individual cable networks are continuing to work with Nielsen on their concerns. NBC Universal cable nets Bravo, USA and Sci Fi. along with Turner's TNT and TBS, and ESPN and MTV Networks are among those opting out, but Cunningham believes that once all of the data/ methodology issues relevant to cable are resolved, they will opt in. One media buyer from a major agency, who did not want to speak for attribution, said: "I thought NBC Universal was good to go and inroads were being made with TNT. But ultimately they got scared of what they don't know...Let's all take a breath, put our heads together, and try to fix this." (See related story, p. 5.)

BIDS IN FOR TIME INC. TITLES

Financial players were said to figure big among the dozen or so parties that turned in initial bids last week for Time Inc.'s niche titles, which include Time4

Media's Popular Science and Field & Stream as well as Parenting and Babytalk. Financials are disappointing, say execs familiar with the black book. Insiders added that major publishers such as Meredith Corp., Hearst Magazines and Condé Nast sat out the auction, while potential bidders included Stockholm's Bonnier Group and Curtco Media, parent of Robb Report.

■ AOL TO SHOW VIDEO FROM HERE! CABLE NET

AOL has partnered with gay-themed cable network here! to distribute a selection of short-form video

clips via its AOL Gay & Lesbian channel. The deal entails more than 300 video snippets from here!'s library, including the soap opera Dante's Cove. The here! clips, which range from two to six minutes in length, are ad supported, featuring both pre- and postroll video ad spots along with banner ads.

■ SINCLAIR SCORES VICTORY IN RETRANS BATTLE

Sinclair Broadcast Group declared the first victory in its retransmission battle with Mediacom Communications Corp., which filed an antitrust suit against the broadcaster earlier this month. The U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Iowa denied Media-

> com's motion to seek a preliminary injunction to allow Mediacom to continue to carry 22 Sinclair stations beyond the contract termination date. Unless Sinclair and Mediacom come to terms, Mediacom's carriage of 22 Sinclair stations in 16 markets is scheduled to end Nov. 30.

ADDENDA:

Ending nearly two years of contentious debate with Nielsen Media Research over local people meters, News Corp. signed an eight-year agreement with the TV ratings firm covering research services for 49 News Corp. TV entities... Cellfire, a free mobile phone application, will offer its users access to exclusive discounted subscriptions of several Condé Nast titles, including Wired and Glamour...Comcast Entertainment Group has named Publicis Groupe's MediaVest USA its media planning and buying agency of record for Comcast Entertainment Group, effective November. The assignment includes the Comcast cable networks E! Entertainment Television, Style Network and G4, and encompasses local and national broadcast, print, out-of-home and

digital. The incumbent on the account was Starcom, which did not take part in the review....Dan Bova was promoted to editor in chief of Dennis Publishing's Stuff, replacing Jimmy Jellinek, who became editor in chief of sibling publication Maxim earlier this vear. Boya has served as Stuff's executive editor since 2005... Wal-Mart has signed a subscription agreement for the pilot panel of Project Apollo, the national marketing service being developed through a cooperative effort of Arbitron and VNU (the parent company of Mediaweek).



publishers to pump up their platforms Page 20

e noiniq0 Media Elite 16 Inside Media 17 **Mr. TV 22**

Market Indicators

NATIONAL TV: BUSY Solid ratings by many returning shows offset shortfalls by freshman series, so advertising packages are not underdelivering by much. Wireless and auto wars continue to bring in dollars in all dayparts.

NET CABLE: ACTIVE A brief slowdown has given way to a resurgent scatter marketplace, leaving a handful of nets fairly tight. **Active categories** include wireless. movies, telecom and financial services.

SPOT TV: MIXED Core categories still lackluster, but far outweighed by gangbuster political dollars in hotly contested Senate states. Domestic auto pacing down for fourth quarter. Movies and telecom look positive.

RADIO: SLOW Sluggish conditions persist, even with some incremental political spillover into select News and Talk stations. Core categories pacing down, including auto and retail. Tune-ins ramping up for November sweeps.

MAGAZINES: SURGING Beauty spending is benefiting fashion, epicurean and shelter magazines. Travel books picking up strong endemic ads. as are affluent shelter. sports and food titles. Automotive is spending as dealers look to drive vear-end sales. Retail remains mixed.

MEDIA WIRE

Fox News Flash Reports Available on Web, Mobile

Fox News has launched a series of original short video clips, dubbed Fox News Flash, produced specifically for digital platforms. The clips, which launched last week, are available for users to view on the Web at both FoxNews.com and MySpace, as well as various mobile devices, including iPods via the iTunes Music Store and on Cingular subscribers' cell phones.

The new Flash reports, which are 60 seconds in length, come from the Fox News programs Fox & Friends and Fox Report With Shepard Smith. According to Jeremy Steinberg, vp of digital media sales, Fox News Channel, the reports are geared to serve commuters hoping to take Fox News with them (each Monday through Friday, Fox & Friends' clips go live at 7:30 a.m. and Shepard Smith's reports are posted at 4:30 p.m.) while also potentially reaching a new, younger audience.

Flash reports from other Fox programs are planned for a later date, said Steinberg. For now, the network has held back on selling advertising for the Flash segments, but will explore that option once the reports build an audience. —*Mike Shields*

Clear Channel Considers Taking Company Private

In a move that could dismantle the nation's largest radio group, Clear Channel last week retained Goldman, Sachs & Co. to "evaluate various strategic alternatives to enhance shareholder value."

The news followed earlier reports that the San Antonio, Texas-based group might be in talks with private equity firms about going private.

Clear Channel, which owns 1,200 radio stations and 90 percent of Clear Channel Outdoor, also moved up its third-quarter conference call from Nov. 6 to Oct. 30.

Although several private equity firms are reportedly interested in buying Clear Channel, some observers believe a leveraged buyout is the least likely of the several options open to CC. The company could sell certain (Continued on page 6)

THE MARKETPLACE BY ANTHONY CRUPI

Scatter Speaks Volume for Cable

Defying earlier concern of an avails surfeit, sales execs report brisk advances on volume, CPMs

To hear some cable ad sales executives rhapsodize about fourth-quarter scatter, the marketplace is nothing short of a roaring '20s bacchanal, replete with Lindy Hopping flappers and a hopped-up orchestra blaring "Happy Days Are Here Again." And while that exuberance is a bit overstated, most cable nets are doing brisk work heading into the Hard Eight, writing business slightly over upfront cost-per-thousand ad rates, and, in so doing, alleviating early concerns that an inventory glut would turn the last three months of the year into a pitiless grind.

Ad sales chiefs and media buyers generally concurred that average scatter volume is up anywhere from 10 to 12 percent, a nifty reversal of an upfront that saw volume fall 4 percent and CPMs ranging from plus 1 percent to down a peg or two. Though this is an encouraging sign, given the vicissitudes of the evolving scatter market, there's no guarantee that this momentum will carry over into first quarter 2007.

One thing that is readily apparent is that the nature of the scatter market itself has evolved with the changing needs of clients and their purchasing managers. "Scatter's not what it used to be," said Andy Donchin, director of national broadcast, Carat. "People are spending less and holding onto their dollars a little longer, putting in orders closer and closer to airdate." It's a trend that seems to be here to stay; most cable nets report that the tendency for dollars to come in later has been a defining characteristic of the last six or seven quarters.

Meanwhile, some sales execs believe that the fundamental way in which the upfront informs the scatter market has swung back toward a much more conventional arrangement. "We're seeing a return to a natural relationship between scatter and the upfront," said Hank Close, president, U.S. advertising sales, MTV Networks. "When the upfront is tepid, like it was this year, scatter usually picks up. That wasn't the case last year."

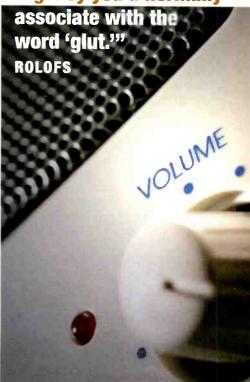
Having sold its targeted chunk of invento-

ry in the upfront, Close's team entered the quarter as a bit of an anomaly. The vast majority of cable networks undersold in the upfront because the demand just wasn't there, creating what some had feared would prove to be a market-clogging glut of inventory in scatter.

"Certainly, because there was a little lower sellout, there's a bit more inventory available, but we're not seeing the urgency you'd normally associate with the word 'glut,'" explained Louis Rolofs, vp, director, video investment and activation, MediaVest USA.

Buyers and ad sales execs agree that the pace of the scatter market has been customarily steady, with clients showing little impetus to rush in to make deals. Much of that has to

"There is a bit more inventory available but we're not seeing the urgency you'd normally



do with the time of year, said Scott Haugenes, senor vp, group director, national broadcast, Initiative. "Advertisers are holding money close to the vest for corporate reasons," Haugenes said. If business is booming and a client isn't worried about hitting its year-end goals, they'll spend on advertising. Conversely, "if they need that money, they can put it back into the bottom line," he added.

Both MTV Networks and Discovery Communications said that they could close the quarter with volume up as high as 20 percent over the upfront. If that's the case, those numbers would define the high end of the market-place, although buyers suggest the companies may be slinging a little Kool-Aid with their projections. "We haven't seen anything like that at our shop," one senior TV buyer said.

At least one ad sales chief has been a bit more restrained in his marketplace analysis. "It's been going along at a nice, steady pace, but I wouldn't say that it's been gangbusters," noted Bruce Lefkowitz, executive vp of ad sales for Fox Cable Entertainment. "It's a week-to-week phenomenon in that things were really moving for a few weeks and-thenright around Columbus Day, they slowed right down. Now it's picked right back up again."

In macro, economic indicators are generally favorable, as gas prices fall and the Dow hovers above 12,000. Of course, there's no telling how either factor will affect cable sales. "The thing about economic indicators is it usually takes about six months before they hit your budgets," Rolofs said. "Oil had been up for about a year and we still haven't seen any indication that that has had a major impact on sales."

In any case, buyers believe that it's still too early to definitively get a handle on how the rest of the year will shake out. "Up until now the fourth quarter seems healthy. The only question is how healthy it will be in latter part of the quarter," Donchin said.

One network that will be slightly less active in the quarter is Lifetime, which had such a good run with retail that it oversold the fourth quarter. "They have a history of doing that and then trying to make good in the cheaper quarters," said a senior buyer who spoke on the condition of anonymity. Lifetime confirmed that it is holding out some inventory for makegoods but said it was not out of sale.

Even though cable's not exactly in the midst of a Jazz Age, buyers and sellers remain encouraged in the medium. "I'm a big believer in TV and the 30-second spot," Donchin said. "It's encouraging that advertisers are still buying them."

Still, more than a few fingers are crossed that a Black Tuesday won't hit in early '07.

WASHINGTON BY TODD SHIELDS

Master of the House

If victorious, Democrats may stifle ownership reforms

victory in the Nov. 7 elections could give Democrats power to block Republicanled attempts to relax media ownership regulations. Democrats also might seek legislation requiring cable operators to carry multiple digital channels from each local broadcaster, and

Dingell may soon run a key Committee.

could seek increased subsidies for consumers switching to digital TV.

Such policies are among the most-watched as Washington's telecommunications community braces for elections next Tuesday in which Democrats seem likely to gain

control of the House and possibly the Senate.

Leadership of the Senate Commerce Committee overseeing telecom legislation would pass to Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), a veteran lawmaker so in step with current chair, Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), that the two are known as co-chairmen. Inouye habitually seeks consensus and Senate rules allow passage only of widely accepted measures so most observers expect changes at the margin of the committee's course. Inouye cooperated as the panel's Republican majority passed sweeping telecom reform legislation this year.

Things are different in the House, where rules prevent minorities from blocking action and a thin majority can carry the day. Leadership of the Energy and Commerce Committee would pass from Rep. Joe Barton (R-Texas) to Rep. John Dingell (D-Mich.), and the telecommunications subcommittee would be headed by Rep. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) rather than Rep. Fred Upton (R-Mich.).

Dingell and Markey have indicated they would consider legislation to compel cable carriage of multiple digital channels in return for broadcasters' guarantee of increased public interest programming. The two veteran Democrats also say the government should provide more subsidies for owners of old-fashioned analog TVs when the country switches to digital TV in February 2009. The law crafted under Barton sets the subsidy at \$40 for each set-top box needed to translate analog signals to digital, with a limit of two per household. Democrats want two free boxes for each household, and more spending on publicity for the coming change.

Like other House Democrats, Markey and Dingell have criticized the Federal Communications Commission's attempts to relax media ownership rules. The agency is again redrawing the rules under the leadership of Chairman Kevin Martin, a Republican who in 2003 supported sweeping deregulation that was rejected by a court. "Democratic control of either or both houses creates a more difficult environment for the Republican-controlled FCC to loosen the ownership rules," said Paul Gallant, an analyst for Stanford Group. House Democratic foes of relaxed rules may find allies in both parties in the Senate, which has voted to overturn the FCC's decisions of 2003.

Little change, however, is expected with broadcast indecency where both parties have backed stiffer penalties.

RESEARCH BY JOHN CONSOLI

Commercial Ratings Split

TNS gets net backing; Nielsen not eager for alliance

NS Media Intelligence's pitch that it can provide more accurate ratings data than Nielsen Media Research about when commercial occurrences appear within TV programs, and that it should be included in any industry plan going forward to measure commercial viewing, could stymie efforts come to up with one industry standard.

That's because any TNS data—which is able to pinpoint specifically when a commercial, by brand, airs within a show, even across minutes, while Nielsen can only offer minute-by-minute ratings without the other details—would need to be overlaid by Nielsen data to provide the one-source syndicated data the industry is looking for. It is unlikely the two

MEDIA WIRE

assets, such as its smaller-market radio stations or TV stations. It could also spin off more of Clear Channel Outdoor.

"While the Mays [family, which owns CC] are likely frustrated with their stock price, we do not believe that they are interested in giving up control of the company that their father founded in 1972," wrote Marci Ryvicker, a senior analyst with Wachovia Capital Markets.

In the last two years, the radio market has stalled and radio stocks have fallen out of favor on Wall Street. Despite efforts to stimulate market demand by reducing commercial clutter, Clear Channel's stock has languished at about \$35, a far cry from its record high of \$95.50 in January 2000. —Katy Bachman

The Horror! Comcast Unveils FearNet.com

Comcast this week hopes to scare up some ad dollars with a new broadband/video-on-demand venture dedicated to horror movies.

On Halloween, the company will pry open the lid on FearNet, a Web destination featuring horror films from the Sony-MGM and Lionsgate vaults, as well as full-length trailers, a search engine/horror movie encyclopedia and a community site. Each month, a new selection of nine features will be available for streaming on the site as well as on its companion VOD channel.

First announced at Comcast's VOD upfront in April, FearNet is the brainchild of Diane Robina, president of the company's emerging networks unit.

"Horror is an extremely attractive environment for people in the 18-34 demo," Robina explained. "It's a very balanced, very well-defined niche... These are the younger viewers the [linear] networks are always trying to reach, the tech-savvy early adopters."

FearNet will be ad-supported, with preroll spots appearing before the features and shorts. Sponsors will also be given the opportunity to incorporate their brand messaging into the site's embedded video player.

Robina said that the venture will target categories endemic to horror's young audience, including fast food, movies and wireless. —Anthony Crupi

rivals would partner, and the industry does not want to have to do half of the work itself. (Nielsen is owned by *Mediaweek* parent VNU.)

"It won't really do us much good if TNS provides some data and then we each on our own have to combine it with the Nielsen ratings," said Alan Wurtzel, president of research and media development at NBC. "The whole point is to get the most completely accurate information from one source. Of course, Nielsen could sell its ratings data to TNS. I'd love to see them work side-by-side."

Don't expect that to happen, unless the two

see merits for including the TNS data. While Nielsen can offer minute-by-minute ratings within a program, there is no guarantee that every ad will run on-the-minute. TNS claims its ability to pinpoint the exact time across each minute that a spot airs—along with whose spot it is—makes its data vital to get the most accurate viewer number per commercial.

While Nielsen is ready to begin rolling out its commercial ratings data on an "evaluative" basis in mid-December, based on several months of meetings with the TV networks, advertisers and media agencies, TNS

still needs to hammer out its involvement with the industry players. "We will be having further discussions with all industry parties to see how we can advance our participation," said Steve Fredericks, TNS president, CEO.

"The problem," Wurtzel explained, "is there is really no one place to go to get an indus-

try consensus on how to proceed here. While we'd like one standard of measurement, every network and agency is free to decide on their own what they want to use. But it would be better if the industry had one metric."

Ideally, Poltrack said, "If TNS gets accredited by the Media Rating Council, it might be best for the industry if TNS is able to work out a business relationship with Nielsen. But that could be a legal matter."



"It might be best for the industry if TNS is able to work out a business relationship with Nielsen. But that could be a legal matter." POLTRACK

can work out some type of contractual agreement, and that too is doubtful. "We haven't even considered that, because a TNS client who is also a Nielsen client can combine the data themselves," explained Jack Loftus, senior vp, communications at Nielsen. "So there is no reason for such a service. I don't see us providing our data to nonclients [like TNS]."

Both Wurtzel and Dave Poltrack, executive vp and chief research officer for CBS Corp.,

SYNDICATION BY MARC BERMAN

Veterans Rule the Roost

Only newbie entry Rachael Ray stirs the ratings pot

ld-timers in first-run syndication are not impressed with the competition from this year's new offerings.

As expected, King World's *The Rachael Ray Show* leads the freshman pack at a 2.1 (average audience) household rating and a 1.4 rating among the key women 25-54 demo through Oct. 16, according to Nielsen Media Research data. That is at least double the ratings of Warner Bros.' *Dr. Keith* (0.9 household rating; women 25-54: 0.7 rating), NBC Universal's *The Megan Mullally Show* (0.9; women 25-54: 0.5) and Sony Pictures Television's *The Greg Behrendt Show* (0.8; women 25-54: 0.5). But it is also less than half the initial results of the most recent first-run breakout, King World's *Dr. Phil*, which premiered four years ago.

"It's bad enough that you are dealing with

viewing habits that are often impossible to break," said Horizon Media senior vp, director of research Brad Adgate. "But in a more cluttered environment with fewer time periods for new product, maybe a 2 rating isn't so bad."

Results for the two new court entries are also lacking, with Twentieth Television's Cristina's Court at a 1.3 in households and a 0.6 among women 25-54, and SPT's Judge Maria Lopez at a 0.9 and a 0.5 in the demo. Three of the established shows in the genre—Paramount's Judge Judy (4.4 in households), Warner Bros.' People's Court (2.6) and Judge Mathis (2.3)—are all on par from one year earlier. But Twentieth's Divorce Court, with new host Judge Lynn Toler, is down by 20 percent in households (2.5 to 2.0) and 14 percent among women 25-54 (1.4 to 1.2).



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Also springing noticeable leaks are NBCU talkers *Maury* (households: 2.1, down 22 percent), *Jerry Springer* (1.5, down 21 percent) and *Martha* (1.3, down 24 percent), with double-digit losses in all key demos. Erosion for Warner Bros.' *Ellen* (2.0, off 9 percent; women 25-54: 1.4, off 13 percent) is less severe, but facing *Oprah* head-on in a number of the top markets stopped its momentum. *Oprah* stands



well above the rest, but even she has lost audience, with a 6.6 in households and a 4.9 among women 25-54 (down 8 percent in both).

On the positive side, underrated game show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* from Buena Vista has increased by 15 percent in both households (2.7 to 3.1) and women 25-54 (1.3 to 1.5). And the top tier in entertainment magazines—Paramount's *ET* (HH: 5.1, up 6 percent), King World's *Inside Edition* (3.5, up 6 percent) and NBCU's *Access Hollywood* (2.6, up 13 percent)—are seeing gains in households.

The freshman news is not good in off-net sitcoms, with leader *According to Jim* from Buena Vista at a 1.8 in households and a 1.1 among adults 18-49. That's less than half the audience of genre leaders *Everybody Loves Raymond* (5.1, off 12 percent; 18-49: 2.6, off 19 percent) and *Seinfeld* (4.2, off 18 percent; 18-49: 2.6, off 24 percent). Recent arrivals *Still Standing* from Twentieth (1.4; 18-49: 0.8) and Paramount's *One on One* (0.9; 18-49: 0.6), and weekly airings of Buena Vista's *Scrubs* (1.0; 18-49: 0.7) are all hovering in the bottom tier.

INTERACTIVE BY MIKE SHIELDS

User-Gen Turning Pro

Broadband video is attracting sophisticated producers

The user-generated video media landscape, while still pervaded by frat boys filming themselves being jackasses and pet owners posting cute clips of their cats, is fast becoming an arena for semiprofessionals who are producing scripted, episodic content for the new medium. In many cases, they are even being discovered by old media.

"We've seen a shift in the last six to seven months where more professional content is emerging," said Keith Richman, CEO of Break.com, a site that aggregates advertisersafe viral videos, and sometimes pays artists for exclusive work. "It used to be teenage boys with a Web camera. The stuff that really works is professionals doing funny creative content. The quality has risen dramatically."

"It's like a new independent film scene in a way," added Alex Delyle, managing editor of TheDailyReel.com, a four-month-old site that has become a sort of *Entertainment Weekly* for the online video world. "At this point, every single agency in L.A. is looking at this."

One pair of artists that have already been discovered is Barats and Bereta, two recent college grads who have churned out multiple comedic clips on Break and YouTube. A few weeks ago, they signed development deal to

produce a pilot for NBC.

Another such team is Matt Sloan and Aaron Yonda, two comedy/improv veterans whose series of vignettes depicting Chad Vader—the less intimidating brother of Star Wars villain Darth Vader—managing a supermarket, have become a YouTube sensation. The first episode of Vader has been viewed nearly 2 million times, and episode four premiered on *Good Morning America* a few weeks ago. According to Sloan, the pair has been in pitch meetings with two major networks, and are close to signing a deal that would have them producing original fare for the Internet.

At the other end of the online video spectrum is *Nobody's Watching*, the sitcom pilot produced by *Scrubs* creator Bill Lawrence that was rejected by the WB. In the last few months, the show was resurrected on YouTube, leading to an order of six new scripts by NBC.

Lawrence believes that online video is shaking up the Hollywood talent system, as well as the entire network TV pilot process. "The truth is, everyone one of us that is in this business was out there trying stuff like this [before the Web]," said Lawrence. "There isn't a huge gap between what I am doing and what these guys are doing."

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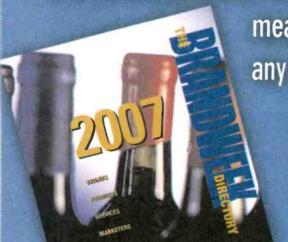
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OPINION GARY RUDMAN

Planning for a Happy Holiday

A primer for marketers trying to reach teens in the digital age

AS CHRISTMAS APPROACHES, most marketers and advertisers are focusing on traditional media to deliver messages to teens, a market segment that *USA Today* recently called "the top of the consumer food chain." Though the "Flux Gen," or "Gen Y," has a disproportionate influence on family spending and more purchasing power than previous generations, teens have never been harder to reach. Having grown up in a digitally oriented world, far apart from the one inhabited by those of us making the media-buying decisions, teens have become a marketing enigma.

To succeed with teens this Christmas—and all year long—here's what marketers need to consider:

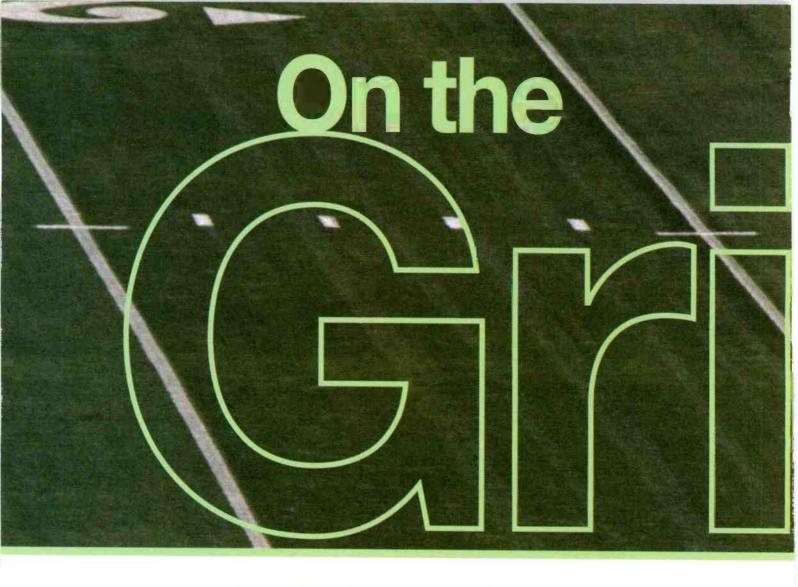
- Because teens consume multiple forms of media simultaneously, it's difficult to break through. In a trend we call Brain Blur, teens will often watch TV while using their cell phones, instant messaging online, playing a videogame and doing their homework. To reach these buyers, a message must play across platforms and must leverage all of these access points. Assuming a cross-channel platform must be the starting point for creative and message development.
- · Teens are Technomads who have backpacks equipped with wireless laptops, cell phones, PSPs, Sidekicks, BlackBerrys, iPods and digital cameras. As a result, they are virtually always (wirelessly) connected to one another, as well as to the infotainment pipeline. With this move toward everything digital, there is a diminished importance of timing in the delivery of messages. As a result, engaging content is everything. Teens inevitably discover media that is clever, hip, humorous and unusual. Allowing teens to discover something cool and then virally share it with their friends is where the gold lies. For example, the viral power of a clip that makes its way around the Internet is what made YouTube so popular-and why Google paid \$1.6 billion to purchase it. Building events or media that lend themselves to YouTube-like clips or viral Internet buzz is a relevant approach to the hearts and minds of teens.
- As soon as the final bell rings at school each day, teen society goes virtual. The physical neighborhood becomes the Neighbornet, populated by online social forums including chat rooms, blogs and online social networks such as MySpace, Friendster and Facebook. Beyond the physical world, teens seek to cast a wider net on their traditional quest for social acceptance. As a result, they seek out new friends online and try to gain

their approval by acquiring as much social currency as possible and posting it to their favorite personalized site. Popular people on MySpace are frequently visited and their MySpace pages can end up looking like advertisements for their favorite things—music, products, clothing and more. If a marketer plays his or her cards right they will receive beneficial buzz by being associated with cool online teens.

- As noted, digital devices have become the foundation of teen social structure. If you are a teen who's not connected, you're out of the loop. If marketers are interested in reaching these teens it is important to reach out beyond traditional delivery vehicles. However, it is critical to remember that the message delivered must be suitably incorporated and/or presented so as not to alienate them. Teens are accustomed to seeing multiple ads on sites in exchange for getting the site's services for free—it's a price they are willing to pay for free music downloads, e-mail accounts and social networking. But care must be taken in infusing ads into paid services such as cell phone texting. There is a fine line between cool and annoying. Therefore, striking a balance between engaging and intrusive is the ultimate challenge.
- Irrespective of the channels, message simplicity is paramount. If the message isn't simple, clear and wrapped in an interesting and engaging package, the product message won't penetrate the strong teen filter. They simply will not do the work as their brain bandwidth is already at over-capacity and they will not focus their energy on understanding an overly complicated message—there is just too much competing for the same space.

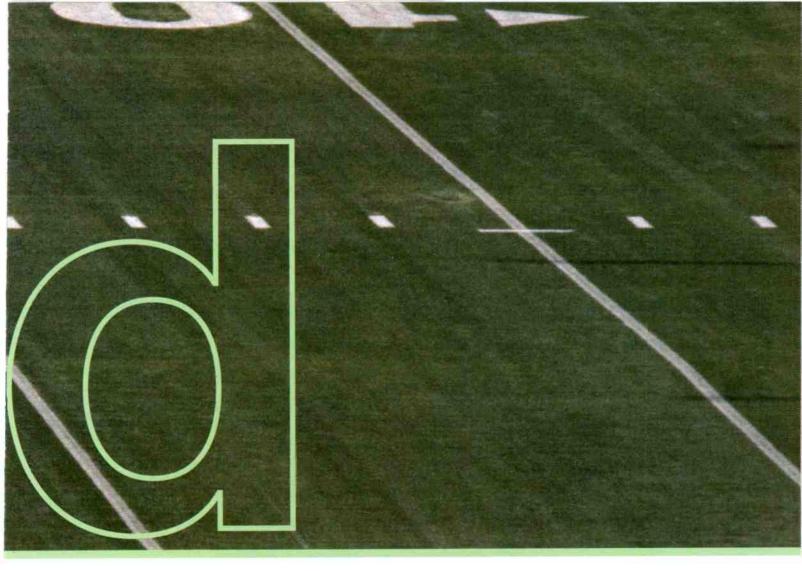
Teens have come of age in a democratized market-place where they can customize and virtually personalize almost every aspect of their lives—their clothes, music, technology and even news. As a result, teens thrive in the online environment where—in stark contrast to the offline world—they have ultimate choice and control. Thus, traditional print and broadcast advertising and rigidly structured programming will not penetrate the teen psyche alone. They must accompany customizable, portable, digestible, and most importantly, digital versions to get through.

Gary Rudman is founder and president of GTR Consulting, a firm specializing in qualitative and quantitative research among kids, teens and young adults. He can be reached at gary@gtrconsulting.com.



THE NFL NETWORK WILL
RUN ITS FIRST LEAGUE-GAME WITH
A HEFTY FRONT LINE OF ADVERTISERS DRAWN
TO THE NET BY BOTH ON- AND
OFF-THE-FIELD OPTIONS BY JOHN CONSOLI





WHEN THE SOON-TO-BE THREE-YEAR-OLD NFL NETWORK begins televising regular-season National Football League games for the first time on Thanksgiving night, it will have an impressive bevy of big-name advertisers in the fold.

Vonage will sponsor a three-hour pregame show, titled *Total Access on Location Presented by Vonage*, while Wendy's will sponsor the halftime show. The network is expected to finalize this week a deal with a major retailer that will be title sponsor of the postgame show. Other sponsors include General Motors and Nissan in the auto category, while Best Buy has signed up as the high-definition TV sponsor. Sprint and Verizon have signed up as wireless advertisers and in the beer category, Coors and Miller are also on board.

Not bad for a network that was clearly at a bit of a sales disadvantage, since most advertisers had already allocated the bulk of their football promotional dollars in the CBS, Fox, NBC and ESPN NFL regular-season game telecasts that began in early September. And making it even harder on the 40-million-subscriber

NFL Network was an internal decision not to just sell in-game spots, but to sell those game units as parts of packages that also included other assorted programming.

"The game units were the springboard, but they were used to get advertisers to make much deeper commitments into the network," says Ron Furman, senior vp of media sales for the NFL Network. "We went to each client and asked them how they wanted to wrap themselves around football throughout the year, and pointed out that there are things going on in the NFL post-Super Bowl through July. While more people will come in for the games, our audience is following football year-round."

Kim Williams, NFL Net's COO, agrees, saying the network will be focusing even more on predraft coverage, including the scouting operations in-house, including both its technology and content offerings, as approved by NFL club owners during a league meeting in New Orleans just last week. A relaunch of the site, which went online in 1995, is planned for next spring. As part of that relaunch, both NFL Network and NFL Films will provide more video content to NFL.com, including highlights and live press conferences.

Furthering its digital aspirations, Williams says, the network will also offer more content via wireless downloads, on Yahoo and on cable operators' video-on-demand channels. These additional platforms were also sold as part of the in-game packages. Furman adds that one popular feature that is part of the NFL Network's VOD offering is a set of four- to six-minute vignettes on the Top 25 players in the NFL draft. "We have sold sponsors for that too," he says.

Advertisers that agreed to buy packages beyond the live games say the network is offering attractive pricing as well as flexible buying. One sports media buyer, who did not want to speak for attribution, agreed that the network's rates were accommodating. "They are in a fraction of the cable homes that the other networks carrying the NFL games are in, but they recognize that, and they are being reasonable with what they are charging," the sports buyer says.

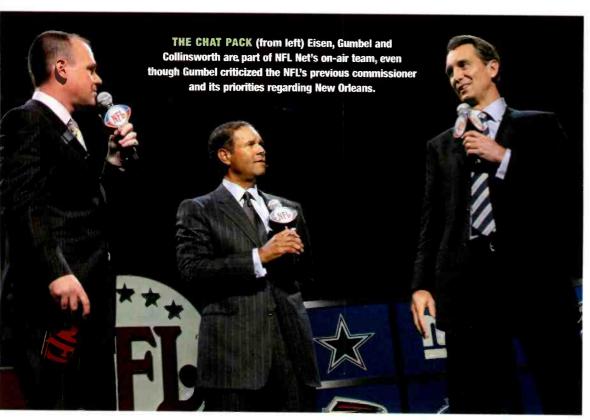
Furman says each advertiser picked the shows it wanted to be in beyond the games. "We did not sell run-of-schedule, where we just put units in any time period or program like a lot of cable networks do," he says. "The advertisers were allowed to custom-build their packages."

He points out that the network is not in cutthroat competition to sell against the other networks carrying the live NFL games. "We are positioning our-

selves as a network that is part of the NFL sports buy," he says. "We are not going out and selling to undercut the other networks. It is not us against them in a competitive sense. It's not like Fox versus CBS. We want to position ourselves differently."

One point of differentiation is offering its advertisers two-minute commercials, which are particularly attractive to movie studios for their trailers. "We cannot offer these in games, but they can run in other programming, particularly in our replays of games," Furman says. The network is re-airing 75 games this season and each will be enhanced by footage with miked players and the postgame player-and-coach press conferences. Other advertisers signed up for the telecasts include: Wendy's, Burger King, Taco Bell, Microsoft, IBM, Radio Shack, Federal Express, Pepsi, State Farm, Motorola, Kay's Jewelers and the U.S. Army. Movie studios that have signed on include Sony Pictures, Universal, New Line Cinema and Warner Bros.

The network has deliberately held back some game inventory, realizing that when the telecasts begin running on the network on Thanksgiving night, it is the start of the holiday shopping season. Furman is hoping that the live telecasts on Thursday and Saturday



combines, as well as coverage of the postdraft mini-camps and the actual training camps over the summer. Much of that programming will give die-hard fans access to parts of the NFL not previously available to them.

In addition, the NFL is making more of its film archives available to the network. One example is an original 40-part series called *America's Game: The Super Bowl Champions*, produced by NFL Films, which will offer an in-depth look at the history of each Super Bowlwinning team, with firsthand accounts from several participants. The show begins airing on Nov. 17, and the presenting sponsor is IBM, which also has in-game units for the eight telecasts.

"NFL content beyond the games is valuable and the league has always been careful about how the rights to this content were distributed," Williams says. "Previously we partnered with some networks to distribute it. Now we will be doing more of the distribution on our own network."

That will also apply to the Web. The league last week said it plans to assume full control of NFL.com, which has been run by CBS Sportsline for the past five years. The league will transfer the site's

nights through December will be seen by retailers and the studios as a way to reach holiday shoppers and moviegoers. "We're not nervous about selling all of our inventory out," Furman says.

The NFL Network derives the lion's share of its 40 million homes from satellite subscribers. While the network is carried by Comcast, the largest cable operator, it still has not yet cut deals with Time Warner or Cablevision, meaning it is not being carried in New York City and in immediate suburbs, among other key markets. As a result of its lower cable penetration, Nielsen Media Research will not be distributing ratings for the network's NFL game telecasts to start out with, but the network is still hopeful that agreements can be worked out with Time Warner and Cablevision prior to the Thanksgiving kickoff.

"I'm still hopeful they will find a way to get a deal done with Time Warner and some of the other cable operators prior to the start of their game coverage," says the sports media buyer who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "But we always welcome a viable choice and I am confident they will be a good partner going forward."

In the meantime, the network has hired IAG Research to do surveys once the game telecasts begin that will measure fan interest and engagement, in an attempt to show its advertisers the value of their ad spending. And Furman also believes that when Nielsen Media Research begins measuring out-of-home viewership in January, it will help bolster the networks ratings. Furman says being carried by DirecTV has not only brought more in-home viewers to the network, but has also given it exposure in many bars and restaurants and will do so even more once the game coverage begins. "Many people who didn't know about the network are being first exposed to it that way," he says.

Since the NFL Network is not being offered on cable systems in all the major markets right now, particularly in the New York City area, the sales staff has been sending out e-mails with links to video clips of programming to potential advertisers and their agencies.

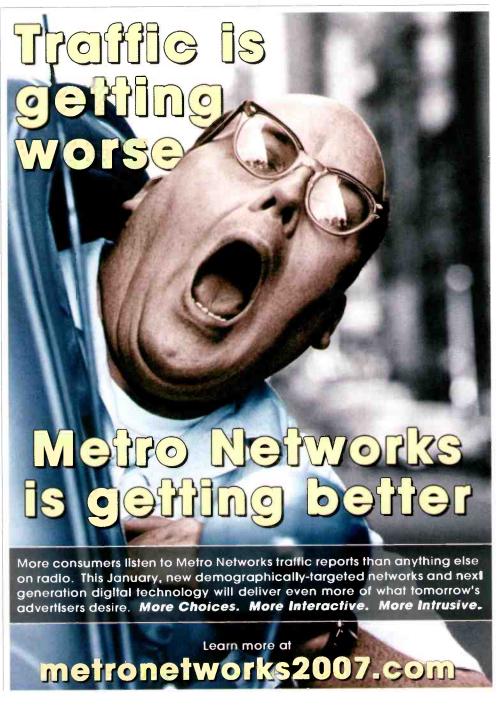
The network also is playing by the same rules as the other networks that have TV rights deals with the league. The number of commercials in-game are regulated by the NFL for all the networks, and like the other networks, NFL Network cannot sell any onscreen billboards or feature sponsorships during the games. The NFL Network has about 43 units to sell per game.

Furman joined NFL Network in May after a short stint at MTV. Prior to that he was at Univision for six years. Before that, he spent nine years at ABC. He structured his sales team to be platform-agnostic. "We have a fully integrated sales staff," he says,

"so each of our sales people can sell NFL Network, NFL.com, NFL mobile or NFL video-on-demand. It makes it easier for the advertiser to do business with us."

Furman feels he has his front line set, with vp of sales David Pattillo having helped launch the sales efforts of the network when it premiered on Nov. 3, 2003. Furman's other vp of sales, Carmine Parisi, was brought in more recently from media agency OMD, where he was group director overseeing accounts like Nissan and Universal Pictures, both now NFL Network advertisers.

The network will kick off its live prime-time telecasts with the Denver Broncos taking on the Kansas City Chiefs at Arrowhead Stadium, and the hype surrounding the announcing booth may be even greater than the buzz surrounding the game between two divi-



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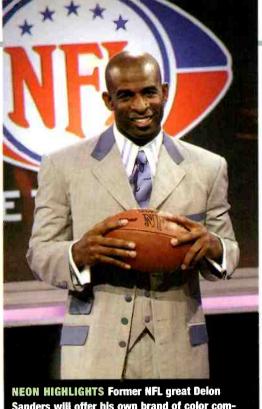
That's because NFL Network play-byplay announcer Bryant Gumbel created a stir in August when, as host of HBO's Real Sports, he offered an on-air commentary taking the NFL to task on a couple of issues. Gumbel criticized the NFL Players Association for being too cozy with NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue, called the NFL team owners greedy billionaires and said the league was more concerned with building a new football stadium to bring a team back to Los Angeles than it was with dealing with the post-Katrina problems facing the New Orleans Saints.

Tagliabue responded publicly by wondering whether Gumbel would be the right person to call the games on the network. But Tagliabue, who stepped down in early September, let his successor Roger Goodell make the call, and Goodell decided to keep Gumbel on board.

NFL Network's Williams says there was never a doubt that Gumbel would keep his job. "We hired these guys [Gumbel and fellow game analyst Cris Collinsworth] because they have a point of view," she says. "To stifle that would be a mistake."

Dick Vermeil, most recently coach of the St. Louis Rams, will serve as analyst for the Dec. 16 and 23 games, as Collinsworth has conflicts in his role as an analyst for NBC.

The network's pre- and postgame shows are also expected to create some noise with the presence of former NFL star Deion Sanders, known for his own colorful take on the game and team and player commentary. Viewers can expect more analysis like his recent statement about the 6-0 start of the Indianapolis Colts, of which he said, "I'm afraid of the Colts. They are my all-mascara team. They look good now, but they may not look good later [in the season]." Sanders will be joined on the show by host Rich Eisen and former NFL coach



Sanders will offer his own brand of color commentary during pre- and postgame coverage.

Steve Mariucci.

Under NFL policy, NFL Network's live games will also be carried on free, over-theair television in the city of the visiting and home teams if those games are sold out 72 hours in advance of kickoff. It was a policy the league negotiated in its TV rights deals to bring in additional revenue from the local stations.

While some observers said it would be ironic that the NFL's own negotiated policy could hurt viewership of the games on NFL Network, Williams believes airing the games on local broadcast stations in the two markets each week will actually give NFL Network a platform to promote itself to viewers who may not be watching it on a regular basis. It will also give the network exposure to viewers in markets where it may not currently be carried on cable. The telecasts airing on the local stations will be using the NFL Network feed, including the network's logo.

Most media agencies and advertisers are upbeat about the network adding live NFL

games on two more nights of the week. The network has had success in its ad sales so far, and more advertisers are expected to jump on board down the road. "What we are telling our clients is that they have to get their feet wet, stick their toes in with this network. It's a ground-floor opportunity and I think it has a very bright future," says Ray Warren, CEO of Carat North America. Warren says he is not concerned about more NFL games amounting to overkill for viewers. "There is room for more NFL games on television."

As far as clients coming up with the money to spend on ad packages, Warren continues, "We knew these games were going to be there, so many clients did hold some money back, or if they didn't, they can certainly find it."

That's certainly the play that NFL Network wants to run.

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Steve Koonin has been named president of Turner Entertainment Networks, He served most recently as executive vp/ COO, TBS/TNT, having joined Turner in 2000...Bravo elevated Amy Introcaso-Davis to senior vp, development and production, up from vp. programming and development...Kristin Bragg was promoted to vp of strategic planning for CNN ad sales in New York. Bragg joined Turner 12 years ago, working at Cartoon Network and TBS before moving over to CNN in 2001... Marva Smalls was appointed to the newly created role of executive vp of global inclusion strategy, MTV Networks. She retains current responsibilities as executive vp of public affairs and chief of staff for the Nickelodeon/MTVN Kids and Family group...Fox News Channel named Seth Hittman national director of digital media sales. Hittman joins from CBS Digital Media where he served as a senior account executive.

INTERACTIVE

Cathy O'Brien has been named president and chief operating officer at Beliefnet. She was most recently group publisher of growth markets at Time Inc., where she oversaw magazine and Web operations for titles ranging from All You to Teen People...Mike Rich was named vp/general manager, AOL Music, AOL Radio, Moviefone.com and AOL Television. He was previously vp, AOL programming products and operations.

MAGAZINES

Jeffrey Ahl has been named associate publisher of Golf Digest. Previously Ahl was associate publisher of Esquire... Ed Baker, chief marketing officer of American City Business Journals and publisher of the Atlanta Business Chronicle, added the title of publisher of Sporting News, which American City recently bought.

RADIO

XM Satellite Radio named Vernon Irvin chief marketing officer, effective Nov. 14. Irvin was executive vp and general manager of communications services at VeriSign... Buckley's WOR-AM New York named Jerry Crowley vp/director of sales, up from general sales manager.

media elite



Salvatore and Edwards

LIFETIME TELEVISION made an appearance in one of its own original movies last week, in Why I Wore Lipstick to My Mastectomy, the story of Lifetime public affairs director Geralyn Lucas' breast-cancer diagnosis at age 27, and treatment, which ran Oct. 23.

Lifetime rolled out the pink carpet twice for Linstick, which features Scrubs' Sarah Chalke as Lucas, in commemoration of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month and part of "Stop Breast Cancer for Life," its 12-yearold public-awareness campaign. In New York, the net, along with Redbook, screened the movie at the

new Hearst Tower Oct. 11. Lifetime also threw a premiere party in Los Angeles Oct. 17 at Social Hollywood. Lucas, we've heard, graduated from Columbia's journalism school the same year as Mediaweek's very own Lisa Granatstein...Little did Ladies' Home Journal editor in chief Diane Salva-



Chalke (left) and Lucas chatted on the pink carpet.

tore know when she hosted a lunch in honor of Elizabeth Edwards, wife of former vice-presidential candidate John Edwards, at the Gramercy Park Hotel Oct. 19, that the event would spark controversy. Edwards' recently published best-selling memoir, Saving

Graces—a chronicle of the loss of the couple's teenage son in 1996 and her subsequent battle with breast cancer—is excerpted in LH7's current issue. Edwards noted at the luncheon that she and Hillary Clinton were from the same generation. "We both went to law

school and married other lawyers, but after that we made other choices. I think my choices have made me happier. I think I'm more joyful than she is," she said, according to The Associated Press. The comment received an overwhelming amount of media play and news outlets speculated it was a dig related to Clinton's 2008

presidential run, possibly versus Edwards' husband. Edwards called and apologized to Clinton the next day, and Hil wished Liz well on her book tour. Ladies Home Journal had no comment on the matter....Premiere Radio Networks gave MPG, a New York media agency, an interactive radio experience

on Oct. 19, transforming the agency's lobby into faux radio-station WMPG. DJ Niko, from New York's Z100, rolled out the chart-toppers, and the band Bowling for Soup performed.

Pop artist Gavin DeGraw made a surprise appearance, mugging for the camera with the likes of MPG's Anges Lukasewych, vp and account director, radio broadcast. Partygoers also had the opportunity to be guest DJ for the day. In an exclusive soundproof booth, each guest DJ created and cut an individual hour of radio programming, which was then uploaded onto WMPGRadio.com.

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- The Media Convergence Forum: The Marketer's Dilemma convenes Nov. 1 at Le Parker Meridien in New York. Martin Sorrell, CEO of WPP. keynotes, with speakers from Dow Jones and The Economist. See economistconferences.com for further info.
- The Society for New Communications Research Symposium and Awards take place Nov. 1-2 at the Colonnade Hotel in Boston. The organization unveils its 2006 research projects and debuts the Journal of New Communications Research. Go to sncr.org.
- The 18th Annual EPM Marketing Conference: Engaging the Multi-Screen Consumer, Nov. 13-14 at the Hilton, Los Angeles/Universal City, Calif., explores strategies for engaging viewers across traditional TV and its cable, digital and VOD variations, along with computer screens and mobile phones, among other outlets. See epmcom.com/emc.
- Tables will be set Nov. 16 for Mediaweek's Media All-Stars Luncheon, celebrating this year's roster of A-listexecutive award-winners, at the Hilton Hotel in New York. Contact Hannah Doblick at 646-654-5174 or hdoblick@adweek.com for information.
- The third annual **DEMMX**, or **Digital Entertainment Media + Marketing** Conference & Awards, hosted by Adweek Magazines, Billboard and The Hollywood Reporter, takes place Nov. 29-30 at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza in Los Angeles, and provides a 360° view of the rapidly evolving digital entertainment, marketing and media landscape. A Mobile Marketing Forum is being held in conjunction with the conference on Nov. 28. More info at demmx. com.

inside media

RDA's Rachael Ray to Pump Up Rate Base

Reader's Digest Association last week announced that its year-old Every Day With Rachael Ray plans to raise its rate base twice in 2007. Effective with the February issue, Rachael Ray will jump to 1.3 million from its current level of 750,000. The second increase will take effect with the August issue, rising to 1.7 million. The magazine's first issue premiered October 2005 with a 350,000 rate base. The bimonthly frequency will also rise in 2007, up to 10 times a year.

MNF Scores Biggest Cable Ratings Ever

ESPN's Monday Night Football game on Oct. 23, in which the New York Giants defeated the Dallas Cowboys, was seen by the largest audience in cable television history—15 million viewers (12.8 household rating). The previous record was held in 1993 by CNN's airing of the NAFTA debate between then-Vice President Al Gore and Ross Perot on Larry King Live. ESPN's MNF this season now occupies seven of the top eight highest-rated cable audiences of all time.

Oxygen's *Dickinson* Expands to an Hour

Oxygen is in production on a second season of The Janice Dickinson Modeling Agency, which will expand from a half-hour to an hour. The new eight-episode season will begin in December. The unscripted series, which documented the former supermodel's efforts to start her own agency, was the most successful original series in Oxygen's history, averaging more than 350,000 viewers during its summer run.

Yahoo Talent Show Kicks Off Online

Yahoo last week kicked off Yahoo Talent Show, an eight-week online contest during which users can submit video clips of themselves at talentshow.yahoo.com showcasing whatever it is they are good at, with the chance at becoming Yahoo fixtures. Users can submit entries until Nov. 27. On Nov. 13, viewers can begin logging onto Yahoo to watch a daily selection of clips, which users can also vote on. The show's best clips run through Dec. 4.

Ex-GE CEO Welch Eyes Boston Globe

Former General Electric CEO Jack Welch and soon-to-retire Hill, Holliday, Connors, Cosmopoulos chairman Jack Connors are

part of a group that could make an offer to acquire The Boston Globe from The New York Times Co., according to sources, echoing a report in the Oct. 25 issue of the Globe. According to published reports, the pair have teamed with IPMorgan Chase and other investors for a proposed deal estimated at roughly half the \$1.1 billion the Times paid for New England's largest daily newspaper in 1993. Connors could not be reached; a Times representative declined comment.

Comedy Unwraps Broadband Shows

Comedy Central launched a new broadband series last week, live-action strip Good God, on its MotherLoad platform. The network has put in a six-episode order of the broadband show, which it described as an inside look at "God's workplace environment." The net has a second broadband-only series in the works in the animated Baxter & McGuire, which bows Nov. 6. Comedy Central raised a few eyebrows last summer at TCA when it introduced Baxter & McGuire; written and created by Michael Weithorn, creator of CBS sitcom The King of Queens, the titular characters are inseparable friends who just happen to be testicles.

CW Clears 99.7 Percent of Households

The CW signed a long-term affiliation agreement with Montecito Broadcast Group, which will clear the network on the digital station of KHON, the Fox affiliate in Honolulu, the 72nd largest TV market. KHON-DT will begin airing the CW lineup beginning today, Oct. 30. With the addition of KHON-DT, the CW will have affiliates in 99 of the top 100 markets. To promote the launch of the network on KHON's digital station, KHON-TV will air a special onetime-only prime-time broadcast of the CW's Tuesday and Wednesday programs.

GMC NBA Sun. Countdown Hits the Road

ABC has renamed its NBA pre-game show for the coming season, and will take it on the road, with the show originating each week from the live game site. Previously called GMC NBA Nation, the show will now be called GMC NBA Sunday Countdown. NBA TV also announced a new pre-game show hosted by Ahmad Rashad, which will premiere on Oct. 1. The first Countdown show will air on Dec. 25 at 2 p.m. preceding ABC's opening game coverage of the season.

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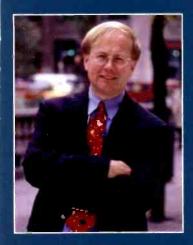








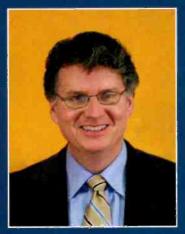
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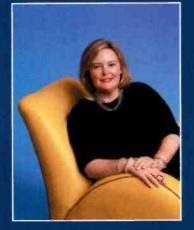
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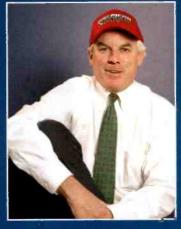
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PLANNING Ernie Simon, president, strategic planning, MindShare North America



MAGAZINES Brenda White, vp, director of print investment, Starcom























Page Turner

While still worried, publishers at this year's AMC clearly proved they have learned to love the Web

FEAR OF THE INTERNET IS SO FIVE YEARS AGO. THE TRANSFORMATION IS FAR

from complete, but publishers who once fretted about cannibalization have come to embrace the idea that they have to deliver their content where and how the consumer wants it.

Speaking at this year's American Magazine

Conference, Ann Moore, chairman/CEO of Time Inc. was unambiguous about the importance she places on hiring for the company's online operations. "The A-team's on it," she declared.

Indeed, at the conference, themed "Beyond the Page," Moore and other executives shared ways they're extending their brands, using the Web, events and other extensions to keep up with the way consumers use media today.

But alongside the selfcongratulating and optimism was much angst and criticism from within and outside the industry about the need to do more faster. Magazines aren't leveraging their ability to reader feedback, gather pointed out Tim Armstrong, vp, ad sales for Google, who addressed the conference. "If you look at the number of people using magazines, you have a huge opportunity to capture those users online," he said.

Brian Collins, chief creative officer, brand innovation group at Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide, proposed

in an interview that publishers should shoot for the moon. "If magazines establish trust and people are motivated and engaged with it, I think that gives them permission to explore all sorts of seemingly unusual platforms," he said. "Why shouldn't House & Garden be a small hotel chain? Dwell should establish a line of prefab homes. Rolling Stone should be an online music store."

Yet if publishers are making progress at

Kliger (top) gets down to business while Men's Health editor **David Zinczenko** catches up with MediaVest's Steinberg.

thinking of themselves as more than just print, magazines haven't made the transformation to effectively selling their platforms together and as part of a bigger media buy. "We're still selling vertically," complained Jack Kliger, Magazine Publishers of America chairman and Hachette Filipacchi Media president/CEO. "You don't make a stew with just potatoes." Siloed thinking about media persists on the buying side, too. "It's been a

work in progress since 1952 when TV first came on the radar," said panelist Ronnie Beason, executive vp, director of planning for Carat USA.

Magazines also have been slow to adopt the increased transparency and accountability advertisers are demanding. Publishers cry for clients to put less importance on the rate base as a basis for print buys. Yet they worry that providing the broader, faster information that advertisers say would let them move from a rate base-focused approach will be used by clients to drive down rates.

The big price tag for Readership.com, a newly developed issue-by-issue audience reporting system, is another reason fuller information hasn't become available. Pub-

> lishers also have been criticized as slow to sign up for the Audit Bureau of Circulations' new Rapid Report service that will allow for speedier reporting of circ.

> Robin Steinberg, senior vp, director of print investment at MediaVest, one of a dozen media buyers and clients who were invited for the first time to attend AMC, applauded publishers' moves to adopt other platforms, saying, "This industry that resisted change is embracing it more than ever before." She couldn't say the same for transparency, though.

"All publishers should be signed up for Rapid Report; it's disappointing that they're not."

Still, for all the talk about print losing relevancy at a time when news and information is readily available online and on mobile phones, not to mention TV and radio, some industry observers were bullish on the print medium. Stephen Riggio, CEO and vice chairman of Barnes & Noble, said the explosive growth of teen books shows reading is far from outmoded, while Jeffrey Cole, a researcher on media use, said magazines had much to be hopeful about. "We think people are only reading for the information," he said. "But what we also see is great reliance on some magazines-women's magazines, men's magazines, magazines people read as much for the ads as the content." Because of the unique experience of reading certain content on the printed page, he said, "We think some magazines will last forever."



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mr. television

BY MARC BERMAN



Analyzing Dr. Keith

ONE OF THE BENEFITS OF WORKING AS A JOURNALIST COVERING TV IS MEETing the subjects you write about. One person I have come to know is Dr. Keith Ablow, the psychiatrist with more than 20 years experience, who has bravely gone where so many others have gone - and failed - before; day-

time talk. When we met for lunch last summer just before the premiere of his Warner Bros. talker, two things that immediately impressed me about him were: 1.) his ability to get me to casually spill my guts over personal issues I have kept bottled up for years, and 2.) his humbly asking for my advice in his new role as talk show host.

Needless to say, I like Ablow. He is the real deal; much more than a Dr. Phil clone. I just wish that more viewers in daytime were aware of him. More importantly, I wish that his show was putting his extraordinary abilities to better use. This is, after all, the guy who had a room full of cynical TV critics glued to his every word at the Television Critics Association Summer Press Tour.

As predicted, it could be a long road ahead for Dr. Keith to find an audience (if Warner Bros. exhibits the patience it promised it would at NATPE last January, that is). In a daytime environment riddled with similar chatfests (13 to be exact, with four new this season), Dr. Keith is tied for last place with NBC Universal's The Megan Mullally Show and Sony Pictures Television's The Greg Behrendt Show at a 0.9 in households, according to Nielsen Media Research data. And ratings among key women 25-54 (0.7) come in only slightly higher than Greg Behrendt and Megan Mullally.

As I told Ablow over the summer, no one

I wish Dr. Keith was putting his extraordinary abilities to better use. This, after all, is the guy who had a room full of cynical TV critics glued to his every word at the TCA **Summer Press Tour.**

ever said launching a talk show is easy. Other than perhaps being entertainment president for a network, hosting a syndicated talk show is probably the riskiest job on the planet. So my advice to him was to focus on the show itself, and not the ratings, because initially the audience would not be there.

And I hope he starts to take my advice. Because after attending a taping on Oct. 19 on the subject of women with anger issues, I saw how a show loaded with good intentions was not living up to its full potential. There were too many guests telling the same story. No one had enough time to give anything but the most cursory information about their problems. Viewers had no background or insight into what the cause of these problems might be. And there was no time for Ablow

to offer any viable solutions to these troubled women. Basically, viewers heard about issues with anger, but were never offered any advice on how to solve those problems.

So, here is what I would do in the future to better showcase Dr. Keith:

- 1. Focus more time on fewer guests. While I got the message—loud and clear that anger issues among women is a serious one, I wanted to learn more about the first guest (a young woman with two young children) instead of seeing two other guests with a similar situation. There is only so much you can do in an hour, and I wanted to see Dr. Keith dig into this woman's past to find out what exactly the issues were that led to this behavior. Was she abused as a child? Bullied
 - at school? Is she in a bad marriage?
 - 2. Don't forget the male audience. Although the audience in daytime is predominantly female, anger is a subject that does not just impact women. Just ask my editor about little ol' me.
 - 3. Throw some humor into the situation. Even when know-itall Dr. Phil is in the middle of scolding his guests, he can find something to chuckle about. So, lighten up and remember that even the gravest of situations can be softened with a laugh or two.
- 4. Tell us more about your background. Since the majority of viewers don't yet know Dr. Keith, he needs to fill them in on some of the details of his life which, in turn, will put the audience and the viewers at ease.

Two months into the season, I am not giving up on Dr. Keith. Nor should you. Since even the higher profile Rachael Ray from King World is also coming in below expectations (see this week's story on updated ratings in syndication), I suggest you give Dr. Keith a chance. The potential for a great talker is there.

Do you agree or disagree with Mr. TV? Please e-mail mberman@mediaweek.com and let him know if you would like your response published in an upcoming issue.

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