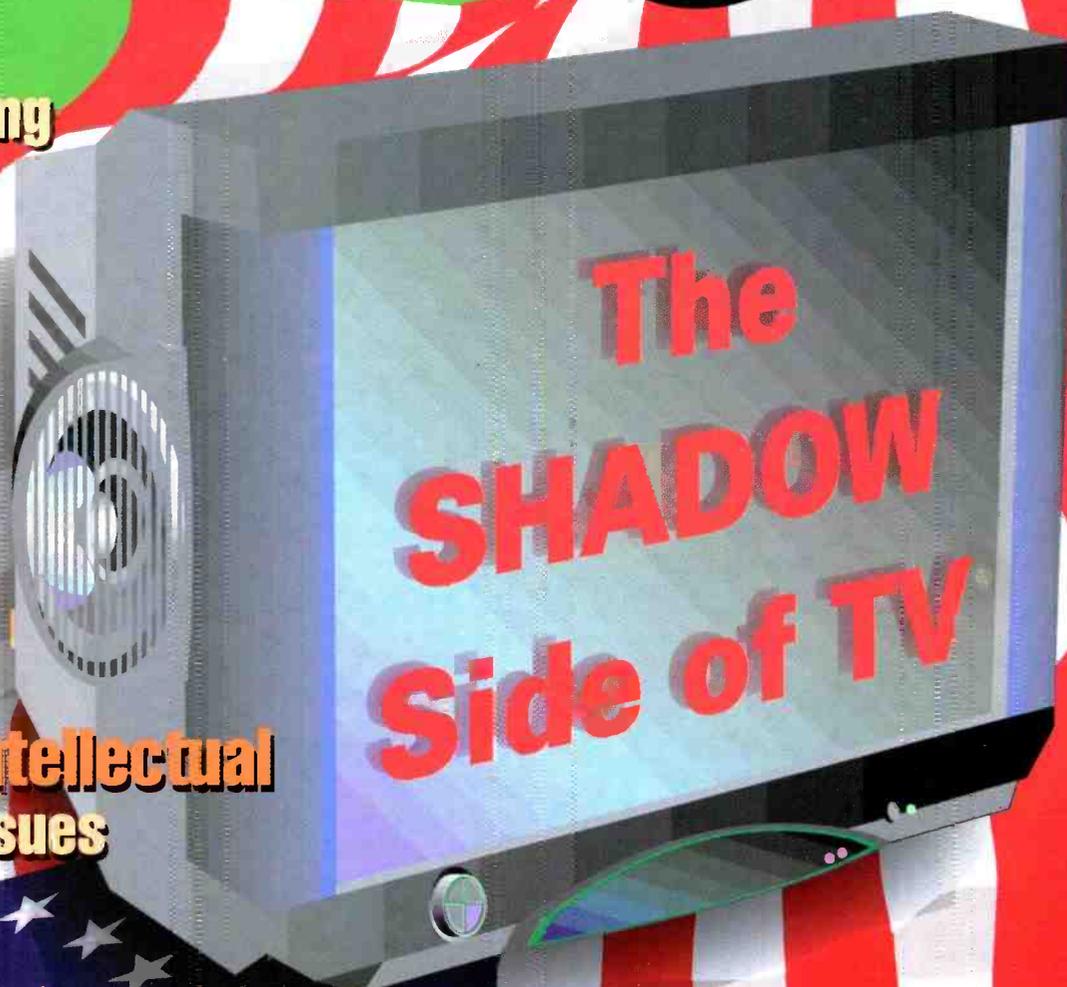


# BROADCAST Dialogue

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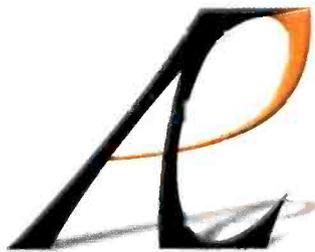
**Dialogue**  
**Remembering**  
**Alden Diehl**



**Internet intellectual**  
**property issues**

**ROBTV re-launches from**  
**new broadcast centre**

**New technologies**  
**could reposition radio**

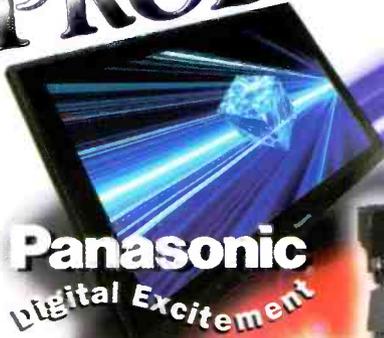


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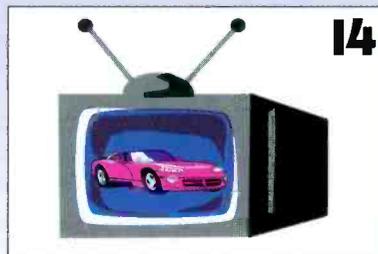
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John Gorman • John Harding • Stephanie MacKendrick  
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# BROADCAST Dialogue

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE



It was just two days before Christmas 100 years ago—December 23, 1900—that Canada's Reginald Fessenden spoke the first words ever transmitted by radio: "One. Two. Three. Four. Is it snowing where you are, Mr. Thiessen? If it is, telegraph back to me."

A mile away, Mr. Thiessen, his assistant, quickly reported by Morse code that it was indeed snowing, and that he could hear Fessenden's voice.

Reginald Fessenden was born in East Bolton, Quebec, and produced more than 500 inventions. But, no question, his greatest invention—and a gift to the entire world—was radio broadcasting.

The Canadian Communications Foundation (CCF) is working to preserve Canada's broadcast history. And it invites you and your station to share in honouring Fessenden's achievement on the 100th anniversary of radio's first broadcast.

To learn more about Reginald Fessenden, visit the Canadian Communications Foundation Web site at: [www.Broadcasting-history.ca](http://www.Broadcasting-history.ca).

For more information on CCF, a registered charitable public foundation, contact Ross McCreath at (416) 221-7965.

\*\*\*\*\*

This is the very best time of the year for all of us at *Broadcast Dialogue* to acknowledge the tremendous support readers and advertisers have demonstrated for our efforts on Canadian broadcasting's behalf. We are committed to truly speak—for and to—all sectors of the Canadian broadcasting craft.

To you, our warmest greetings for this special season.

## Merry Christmas! Happy 2001!

Howard Christensen

Barry Hamelin

Jane Inglis

Sue Wahay

Daphne Lavers

Ingrid Christensen



## the **↓** n basket

Got *Broadcast Dialogue* on my email—it works great! In fact, I printed one test page and it looks better than the fax—a lot better. How cool!

**Scott Jackson**

*Life 100.3, Barrie*

*(If you want to eliminate the faxes and receive your weekly newsletter via e-mail let us know. If you're not getting the newsy Broadcast Dialogue weekly, and want to, call (416) 782-6482.)*

I think you may have picked up an erroneous implication from the *Globe & Mail* (*Broadcast Dialogue*/Nov. 2). The subject of the interview very carefully did NOT say that Web surfing is pointing to erosion of TV viewing. The *Globe & Mail* writer leapt to this conclusion all by herself.

In fact, we are delighted that the TV audience continues to grow. Here are the national people meter numbers from Nielsen (Per Capita TV Viewing total week, weeks 3-35 each year, All Persons 2+): 1996/97 (23.3), 1997/98 (23.8), 1998/99 (24.7), 1999/00 (25.7).

To put this in perspective, the 647 minutes per month spent by net users translates to about 21 minutes per day. This translates to about 9 minutes per capita per day. Net users are using the web mainly for e-mail, information seeking and music. These are complementary to TV viewing, not competitive. SRI's SMART Home Technology and Television Ownership study found nearly 74% of online users cite "information" or "e-mail" as the main benefit, compared to only 3% citing "entertainment".

While the main focus has been the impact the Internet has on television, the real victim has been the print media. A report from Starcom Media Services show that the usage of magazines is plummeting. The findings at the International Print Research in Florence, Italy, provided further evidence that the Internet may be a major factor in readership declines. The magazine fall-off is not just readers reading fewer magazines, but they are devoting less time to the ones they read. The average monthly minutes spent reading magazines (Adults 18-plus) dropped 8.9% ('99 vs. '95).

Perhaps most interesting, use of most electronic media rose in those Internet households.

**Rob Dilworth**

*CTV Toronto*

## CanWest Global, Rogers Communications and BCE



Abbott, holding photos of Izzy Asper, Ted Rogers and Jean Monty on the season opener of Royal Canadian Air Farce

**BY GILBERT SMYTHE BITE-ME**

This summer, I spent months touring this country's various theatre festivals and I made a fascinating discovery...I wasted my summer.

Looking more closely into the heart of the arts in Canada, one name sprang to mind: Izzy Asper. This leads to the question, what the hell is an Izzy Asper? More like an Izzy Aspirin—take over two media companies and call me in the morning.

But, the Izzinator comes a poor second in media moguldom to this man...Ted Rogers. Motto? So little time, so much to buy. Mr. Rogers is a media visionary!

So what media assets does Ted own? Nothing, if you don't count 28 radio stations, The Shopping Channel, 55 publications including *Chatelaine*, *Flare*, and *Maclean's* (Canada's national waste of paper), the Web sites *Excite Canada*, *Quicken Financial Network*, and the *Electric Library of Canada*, Rogers Cable

TV, Rogers Video stores, Rogers AT&T, and Rogers Toronto Blue Jays.

This is just what we need, the entire country wired into Ted Rogers' ass!

Now, if you were to combine the total acquisitions of Izzy Asper and Ted Rogers, you would still be nowhere near the holdings of Bell Canada Enterprises (BCE), which is run by this man—Jean Monty.

And what does M'sieur Monty control?

Only Bell Canada, BCE Emergis, Bell ExpressVu, Bell Mobility, Teleglobe, CTV, CTV Newnet, The Sports Network, the Comedy Network, Sportsnet, the Outdoor Life Network, Discovery Channel, Sympatico, Lycos, not to mention *The Globe and Mail* and nine interactive Web sites.

Gives new meaning to the term, the full Monty.

Despite the fact that these media titans control such a vast empire, not one of them is willing to admit ownership of

the most virulent of all media outlets—the Women's Television Network, aka the cramps channel; a desolate wasteland devoid of intelligent content and employer of three of my ex-wives.

So, what does it mean to the average Canadian that these three separate sources control so much of our media? Well, if you like to read newspapers or watch television or surf the Net or talk on the telephone, chances are you're going to get BCE'd, Izzy'd or Roger'd six ways from Sunday.

That's how I see it. I'm smarter than you. I'm Gilbert Smythe Bite-Me.

*Gilbert Smythe Bite-Me is Roger Abbott's character on CBC Television's Royal Canadian Air Farce. This commentary was aired during the show's season opener and is published in Broadcast Dialogue by permission of Roger Abbott. It was written by Gord Holtam and Rick Olsen.*





# A penny a month secures the future of VoicePrint

BY JOHN STUBBS

I began my broadcast career in 1967 with the world's oldest broadcaster, CFCF Montreal. In 1969, to celebrate the station's 50th birthday, we went on the road with an audio/slide show to service clubs. When presenting one of these shows one evening, I discovered that the bulb had blown on the slide projector. I quickly began apologizing, and was warmly advised apologies simply were not necessary—the presentation was being *shown* to a group of blind people. As a group, they were the most enthusiastic about listening to so many memorable events over the past 50 years collected from the radio airwaves. It touched me and, as a result, I have always been acutely aware of this particular segment of the listening audience.

So as fate would play out, today I find myself Director of Operations for The National Broadcast Reading Service.

The National Broadcast Reading Service, or NBRS, is a non-profit registered charity providing news, information and entertainment to Canadians who are vision-impaired, blind or can't access print for health or physical reasons. The core business of NBRS is VoicePrint™, the world's largest broadcast reading service in terms of homes accessed. VoicePrint™ was licensed by the CRTC in 1990 and now serves some nine million subscribers of Canada's cable, satellite and other broadcast delivery systems.

Since VoicePrint™ is an *audio* only service, it is typically distributed with an alphanumeric service such as the stock channel. It also is distributed on cable FM. And, in some cases, it is distributed as the Secondary Audio Program (SAP) feed of the TV listings channel or as a feed on the closed-circuit audio selections.

With such a hodge-podge of distribution channels, it has been tough for us to promote VoicePrint™, and it's been even tougher for listeners with low or no vision to find us. This prompted us to file a licence amendment application earlier this year asking the CRTC to order distributors to carry VoicePrint™ as the SAP signal of CBC Newsworld.

SAP frequently is used in the United States for audio description of television shows that might appear on the

Public Broadcast Service, or for Spanish broadcasts of sports events such as baseball and television shows. The SAP allows the viewer to choose whether to listen to this alternate audio output or to the regularly broadcast audio output. The SAP can be received through a stereo television set, a video cassette machine or a special receiver.

CBC Newsworld has delivered VoicePrint™ free of charge to cable head ends since we launched in 1990, and they now generously have agreed to allow us to use their

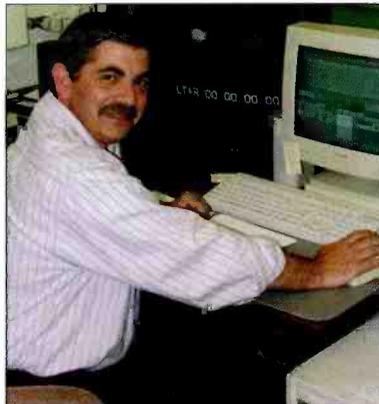
SAP, again, free of charge. The CRTC approved our application on September 11.

As part of our licence amendment, the Commission also approved a penny a month pass-through fee for VoicePrint™. This means that, effective March 2001, we'll get a penny per month for each cable, DTH or MDS subscriber able to receive VoicePrint™. This will provide a financial safety net for us and ensure we can continue to provide our unique and valuable service.

VoicePrint™ began broadcasting at 6 AM on December 1, 1990 and will be celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. Programs are recorded in five centres across Canada, the main studio being at Toronto. Bureaus are located at Ottawa, Toronto's Queen's Park, Winnipeg, Calgary

and Vancouver. Broadcasts consist of 30-minute, pre-recorded theme programs comprised of articles gleaned from newspapers, magazines and periodicals. These programs are read by volunteers, who donate their time and effort on a daily basis. Many high-profile broadcasters have donated their time, and voice, to VoicePrint™, including Peter Mansbridge, Lloyd Robertson, Sharon Dunn, and Premier Ralph Klein.

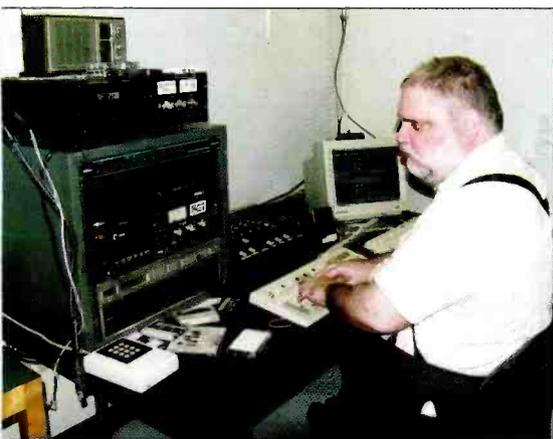
From the beginning, the programs recorded at Toronto have been produced by blind technicians. The equipment used when the service started included analogue audiocassette recorders. Video tape recorders were used for recording blocks of programs and then played back as a crude automation system. The drawback for our technicians was that they had to rely on the volunteer readers to tell them



John Stubbs is Director of Operations of The National Broadcast Reading Service Inc. He can be reached by e-mail at [jcstubbs@home.com](mailto:jcstubbs@home.com) or by phone at 416-806-9638.

the running length of a particular program and assist them in setting the correct levels for sound. A sighted producer would then add music to the cassettes as required to complete a 30-minute program.

In the fall of 1996, we made the switch to digital. It was a project that took careful planning and a great deal of research to find a digital audio recording system that was adaptable to blind users. We found CartReady from WireReady, a DOS-based software that easily adapted to text-to-speech software or screen-reader software. The software is extremely user-friendly and performs the same functionality of a cassette recorder. When a reader makes a mistake, the blind producer can rewind and record over the previous material with no assistance from the sighted volunteer. Completed recordings from the bureaus are fed over



*Bill Shackleton, Blind Studio Producer*

the internet using high speed cable internet connections. The producer imports the recordings into the automation system for air play.

A second major area of activity for NBRS is the production of described video programming. Video description is the insertion into a program of narrated descriptions of ac-

tions and settings that are not apparent from dialogue. Woven into the sound track so that it compliments the dialogue and sound effects, this added description makes the program accessible for people with impaired vision. When broadcast in closed format on the SAP, it is the equivalent of closed captioning for the hearing impaired.

Our video description activity began with a note pad, an HB pencil, a stopwatch and a videocassette machine. Up until now, each described program has been a one-of. Almost like a new prototype every time. Each time we have to hire the staff and gear up for production. This way of producing programming is expensive.

We've known all along that the high cost of production would only change when we could begin producing described programming in volume. Production in volume will allow us to hire staff on a full-time basis and establish the infrastructure, which will allow cost efficiencies to come into the equation.

Two recent developments give us renewed optimism that we will be able to develop that infrastructure in the not-to-distant future.

On July 21, this year the FCC issued new rules that requires private broadcasters in the top 25 U.S. markets to broadcast four hours a week of described programs by April 2002. The same applies to the top five specialty services on cable and satellite delivery systems with more than 50,000 subscribers.

At a minimum this means the four U.S. networks and the top five specialty services will each broadcast 208 hours

of described programs each year. That adds up to almost 2,000 hours a year of described programs. Compare that to today when not one hour of described programming is aired by these broadcasters. Currently, PBS is the only broadcaster which regularly produces and airs described programming.

This move by the FCC brings the United States into line with Great Britain, where 10% of the broadcast schedule has to be described by 2006.

Clearly video description has come of age! The rest of the English-speaking world has moved way beyond NBRS' efforts to make the case that there's a need and there's a way to fill that need. Based on the actions of FCC and British regulators, the demand for described programs will explode over the next two years.

We at NBRS hope to be in a position to produce programming for these foreign broadcasters. But regardless of whether the programming is produced by NBRS or someone else, the demand for described programming is set to rise dramatically. And it is reasonable to expect that the supply of described programming also will rise.

The second development is a proposal by BCE that is included in its benefits package associated with its proposed acquisition of CTV. BCE proposes to donate \$2 million to NBRS to underwrite the production of described programming.

This single gesture by BCE would allow NBRS to hire the staff and put into place the infrastructure needed to produce Canadian described programming in volume. This, in turn, should allow us to significantly reduce the cost-per-hour of described programming.

We are also actively working on how to use digital technology to bring down the time it takes to produce described programming. We're working with developers to generate new software, which will dramatically improve efficiencies.

The developments in technology, when coupled with the infrastructure and the growing market for described programming, all point to one thing. There will be a growing supply of described programming and inevitably the cost of producing it will come down. We know it has to be done if description is going to be economically feasible for the Canadian broadcast industry.

We think NBRS, through VoicePrint™ and AudioVision Canada, makes an important contribution to the Canadian broadcasting system. And it wouldn't have been possible without the generous support over the years of a great many people and companies.

NBRS began through the efforts and support of the CRTC, CBC Newsworld, the Federal Department of Communications, Rogers Cable, Shaw Cable, Human Resources Development Canada, the CNIB, NFB:AE, Industry Canada: Assistive Devices Office, the Trillium Foundation and the Richard and Jean Ivey Foundation.

NBRS is alive today from the continuing support of those mentioned and CTV, CanWest Global, BCE, CBC Television, Wild Rose Foundation, Alliance Atlantis, Birks Family Foundation, R. M. McLaughlin Foundation, J. P. Bickell Foundation, Edwards Family Foundation and, most importantly, the volunteers who come in and share their eyes and their voices with our listeners. To all of these people and companies, NBRS says a heartfelt thank you.

# We have only one thing to **SELL** Part 2

BY GEOFFREY BATE

A radio station serves many masters, and the seemingly disparate group of people who make it work are sometimes at cross-purposes, but unless your ultimate focus is on "How do we get the best results for our clients?" you will never maximize the potential for your operation. There will never be enough revenue to really make it work.

As we discussed last month, advertisers don't buy spots...they buy results. They don't care how big your audience is or who your morning crew is. All they care about is "return on investment".

So, in my opinion (based on 20 years of radio consulting), here are the TOP TEN things you can do to increase results for your clients, and thereby increase long-term revenue for your radio station.

1. Hire the best writers and producers you can find. Pay them more. Treat them better. Get them ongoing training. Send them to creative seminars. Understand that they are more likely to affect the long-term success of your operation than anyone else.
2. Stop training your salespeople to "sell". Instead, train them to be "partners" with their clients...to work with them towards the common goal of increasing business for the client. That also means walking away from a budget that is too small to do the job. It is much better to politely decline the business until another day than to add another advertiser's voice to the refrain of "radio doesn't work".
3. Get your writers out of the building and into the clients' place of business. I can't tell you how many times I've heard a frustrated client complain that the person writing their commercials has never been in their store! You expect your salespeople to be "out on calls" for much of the day...why wouldn't you encourage your writers to do the same?

4. Be sure every client's commercial includes a "sound logo". It can be a short sound effect (like Intel or Rogers), or four notes on a tuba (like A&W) or clinking bottles (like Sleeman Beer) or a full blown jingle (like "Why buy a mattress anywhere else"). Without a consistent "logo", they will never build "equity" in an image. How many print ads do they run without their print logo?
5. Set up reciprocal "creative sharing" relationships with other stations outside your market. Literally every day your writers should be communicating with this "circle" of other writers, swapping ideas and scripts, sharing resources, e-mailing MP3 files of their latest successes...doing better work... all at no extra cost.
6. Set up reciprocal "voice sharing" relationships with other stations outside your market. It takes less than a minute to e-mail a script to one of your "circle" of stations, and less than a minute to e-mail back the finished MP3 file for airing. More of your clients will benefit from an "out-of-market" voice, and your station will sound better. Again, far too many clients have told me "The station's commercials all sound the same, with the same voices over and over."
7. Invite each of your clients (especially the larger ones) into the radio station for a "brainstorming" session with the writers. Imagine, nobody in your boardroom but the client and the creative team...no salespeople. The client finally feels serviced and understood, the writers are much better equipped to promote the client's business effectively. A sense of teamwork results...much better than the "adversarial" relationship that can exist between those who sell, and those who feel they are "being sold".
8. Be sure the client's "goals" for their radio investment (short- and long-



Geoffrey Bate is President of *Imagine Words and Music Inc.*, and a sales and creative consultant to over 250 radio stations across North America. He can be reached at 1-800-246-2446 or by e-mail at

[gbate@imaginewordsandmusic.com](mailto:gbate@imaginewordsandmusic.com).

- term) are clearly stated and are realistic. Now be sure the creative execution and the schedule you are proposing will accomplish that. Until we know exactly what the client's expectations are, we leave ourselves wide open to hearing "it didn't work".
9. Contract out-of-station production resources. Work with independent creative houses, music producers and guest speakers to expose your clients to outside resources. There are many helpful "tools" to increase their results that your station does not have the facilities or personnel to produce. A client who invests in outside production will always invest more in airtime to promote it.
  10. Find ways to encourage "partnership" between sales and creative. Almost every radio station I've ever consulted with (well over 300) has a major "rift" between the two departments. This may be the single biggest impediment to your success and growth. Here's a radical idea...maybe it's time to look at dropping those department titles, putting all those people in the same room, and calling it the "Results Department". Maybe its time to pay a percentage of sales commissions to the writers. Maybe it's time to re-write a lot of old "rules" about how things have always been. Results. It's all we've got.

# When the Book is bad...



Jeff Vidler is a partner in Solutions Research Group, a research-based consulting firm specializing in serving Canada's media, communications and entertainment sector. He may be contacted by e-mail at [jvidler@srgnet.com](mailto:jvidler@srgnet.com).

THIS ARTICLE CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM [WWW.BROADCASTDIALOGUE.COM](http://WWW.BROADCASTDIALOGUE.COM)

I remember those sleepless nights as a program director the night before the BBM. I was like a kid at Christmas, squeezing my eyes shut, counting up everything we had done right, all the missed opportunities, and trying to figure out whether, on balance, we'd been bad or good. And whether the book would agree.

It didn't really matter that fretting about it wouldn't change a single number. Too much hung in the balance. What would I say to my staff, to my GM, to the reporter from the local paper who always did his best to make all the stations look like losers?

That's when I really got interested in research. If I could learn enough to ex-

plain away a bad book, then I could sleep well, knowing I was covered.

The most important thing I learned is that most bad books aren't as bad as they look. (Of course, the same thing goes for good books too.) This statistical phenomenon is called "regression toward the mean" or, as you might know it better, the "the law of averages". What it means is that the really bad books (and the really good ones) are usually wobbles and that stable trends emerge over time. In other words, poor ratings that break the trend line for no apparent reason will probably improve next time around. (Likewise, big ratings increases that don't make sense will likely go down in the next book.)

How do you know when the book is a wobble and when it's real? It helps if you're getting a second opinion by doing ongoing research. But, beyond that, you can look for clues in the survey itself.

Two things in particular cause wobbles: a small sample size and a low response rate. Small sample sizes are bad enough; low response rates make it worse.

First, the issue of sample size. The fact is that most of the sample sizes that we use in traditional media measurement are too small for the job we ask them to do. Think of a station that goes from a 10.1 share, to a 9.4, then a 8.6. Sounds like the a free fall, right? Maybe not. Applying what it is generally considered an acceptable level of confidence, there is no statistically significant differ-

ence between any of these share figures unless you have a sample size of at least 3,000 respondents. So, the drop of 1.5 share points might just be an illusion.

And it gets crazier from there. To double the precision of the measurement, you would need to quadruple the sample. That means that, to feel confident that a drop from a 10.1 to a 9.4 share was real, you would need a sample size of roughly 12,000—more than twice as many respondents as any single radio market survey in Canada. (If you want to try this stuff at home, e-mail me, and I'll send you the formula.)

The second place to look is response rate. Any responsible research survey (yes, that includes BBM) tries to get as many people as possible who have been selected for the survey to complete it. The success ratio of completed surveys versus selected sample is referred to as response rate. (By the way, the "response rate" is always lower than the "return rate" that BBM publishes, because "response rate" also factors in those households that BBM was unable to reach or wouldn't agree to take the diaries in the first place.)

When the response rate is high (more than 50%), most researchers feel comfortable that the people measured are pretty much the same as the ones they didn't. However, the response rate for BBM is usually much lower than this, especially in the "problem" demos (namely 18-44 males). This means that if you're targeting these demos, or if the response rate is low in your market for a particular BBM survey, you're even more susceptible to wobbles.

All of this should help program directors sleep better, knowing they can dance around just about any bad book. Sales managers of course have to dance to a different tune—that the BBM numbers, right or wrong, fix the price that advertisers are willing to pay. Next issue, we'll look at how the sales department can exercise damage control after a bad book.

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*Whenever we have a special project or an urgent need,*

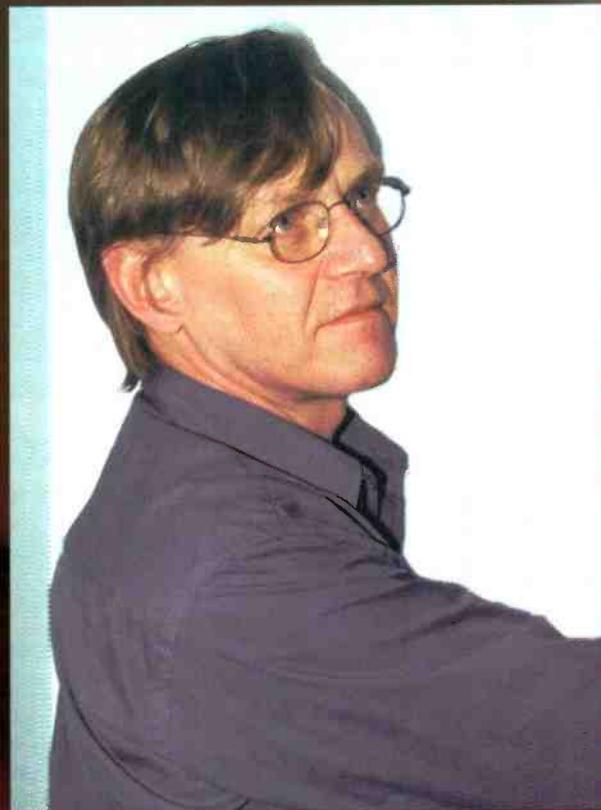
*Coyne will head out in the evening, use his home shop — including woodwork — to make what we need.*

*On the computer side, he's right there — never criticizing or complaining. He just simply bails you out, then equips you with the pertinent knowledge so you won't be caught that way again. He's an incredible teacher!*

*Outside his station life, Robert is a private person. Yet we know him to be an active supporter of community efforts and charities. And, as though we don't give him enough to do on the radio side here, he also volunteers his technical expertise for the Native station at Cape Croker.*

*A Hero of Broadcasting? Absolutely. Robert Coyne does it all with an enormous, quiet and solid, efficiency. And everybody here loves him for it.*

*Ross Kentner, General Manager  
Bayshore Broadcasting Corporation,  
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# Remembering Alden Diehl

BY JJ JOHNSTON

Some people are "the salt of the earth." Alden Diehl, the "saltiest" of them all, lost his battle with cancer in late October. He was 68.

Alden was the kindest, most generous, funniest, warmest, happiest, smartest, irreverent, coolest, and most entertaining person I've ever met. I had the pleasure of working with him at the FOX Vancouver...and I'll never forget what he said when he hired me: "You don't have to worry about me, kid. You go do your job, you don't even have to see me if you don't want to."

That was one of the great things about Alden: he let you do your job.

But I came back with, "Are you crazy? I need to talk to you. I need to pick your brain. I need to learn from you."

He said, "Great! Let's go."

That was the thing about Alden. He was a resource when you needed him. He was the guru. He'd run interference. And, he'd save your butt! He knew when to step in and when to stand up for us. That kind of leadership goes a long way. People responded to Alden. People loved Alden. People wanted to do well for Alden.

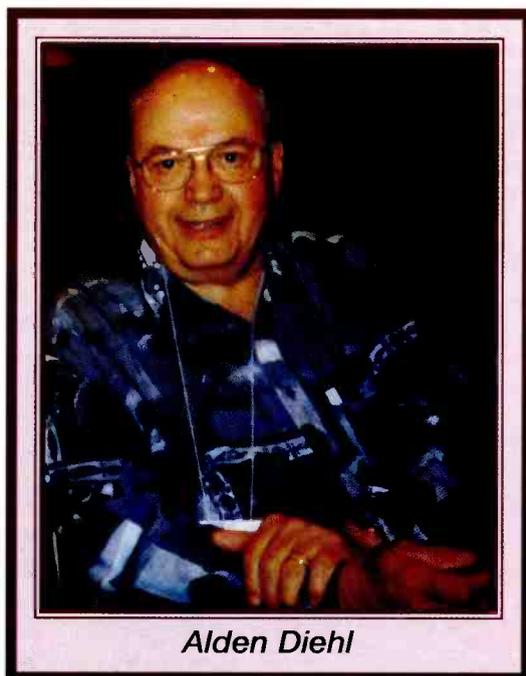
And all Alden wanted was for people to do well for themselves.

Alden Diehl built the CFRA Ottawa powerhouse in the late 60s, circulation going from 100,000 to 600,000. From there, he went to CKLW Windsor to help build The BIG 8 into Canada's biggest-ever radio station. He stopped in Winnipeg for a number years as GM of KY 58/CITI-FM and then ran THE FOX/LG 73 in Vancouver until his retirement a few years back.

He was a spiritual figure...one who gave me two great pieces of advice.

The first was to always find ways to relax for the sake of family, the people we work with, and for ourselves. He taught himself, as he encouraged me, to make a conscious effort to evolve into the most relaxed, roll-off-your-back, fun guy you'd ever meet.

The second bit of advice, administered in that gruff voice I'll never forget: "Son, you're going to have to stand up for yourself one day with your bosses. When you do that, just make sure that you're doing it for the right things. But someday, if you're going to be anything in this or any business, you're going



Alden Diehl

to have to put your job on the line for what you believe in."

Alden was a showman.

At the British Columbia Association of Broadcasters Convention one year, when he was Master of Ceremonies at the President's Dinner/Awards ceremony, he took to the podium, talked about how he wanted to make the sponsor mentions more exciting than a simple recitation of names, and that it was the part of the festivities that always seemed to drag. A talented singer, he'd lyricized sponsor mentions into a song—the words

on a big screen with a bouncing ball—and had everyone sing along. I looked around in wonder as a roomful of broadcast executives sang sponsor mentions!

At that same BCAB, his wonderfully irreverent wit came to the fore when he threw out the name of a guy from across the street and said: "Love him as a competitor. Hate him as a man." I just about fell off my chair.

I talked to him just before he passed away and, even though he was hurting, he was still the same, bouncy, upbeat guy. He said, "JJ, I'm not sure what I'm dealing with. The doctors are coming tomorrow to give me to the lowdown. But as soon as I know, I'm going to kick some ass!"

Way back when I walked into Alden's office at CFOX to quit, he and I sat down and cried. I walked out knowing that I'd left a wonderful and caring person behind. And even though I went across the street, Alden continued to invite my wife and I to their annual mini-golf tournament. What class!

Later in life, Alden became the facilitator for the Lou Tice Foundation, an establishment aimed at helping people reach their personal potential and goals. It was tailor-made for him and he helped many, many people.

He fought on as hard as he could and I, for one, will miss him terribly.

Alden Diehl will be inducted into the Hall of Fame at the upcoming Canadian Music Awards, to be held in Toronto at Canadian Music Week in March.

JJ Johnston is Vice President of Programming for Standard Radio and General Manager of The Mix (CKFM-FM) Toronto. He may be reached at (416) 922-9999.

# H..E..double hockey sticks

**N**ow, here's a broadcast-ers' convention that's exactly the same as every other one you've been too—and exactly the opposite too!

In fact, Christian Radio in the United States holds upwards of half a dozen events for members of its "congregation" each year. I had the pleasure of joining broadcasters in the AC format at the *BBCM (Brad Burkhart Christian Media) AC 2000 Conference* in Atlanta. BBCM also held one for the CHR format just two weeks earlier in the same hotel with a slightly different offering of guest speakers.

Brad Burkhart is a programming consultant and research expert in the field of Christian media. All of his events are sponsored by suppliers to the industry, the most visible being record labels. Design consultants are used to transform hotel ballrooms into ambient spaces where performers praise God and sing their hearts out. And the bag of swag you receive after each elegantly catered meal or event is substantial.

To say that this group is passionate about what they do is a gross understatement. These folks are dedicated to their faith, and their purpose: to spread God's word to the masses. They do so in a variety of formats with music that could technically play on any mainstream station, providing you didn't listen closely to the lyrics. Here's the real difference: every word coming out of an announcer's mouth is positive and uplifting with spiritual overtones.

They even promote their stations this way. In fact, one of the tactics used to launch a new Christian morning show is challenging other stations in the market to provide a minimum of one-hour of "cuss-free" radio: if you're a Howard Stern station, this could be tough!

They do some other clever promotions too. They do trade with church bulletins who run their print advertising in exchange for featuring a 30-second com-

mentary from a church official. Talk about targeted marketing! What other station knows where 80% of their audience is, every Sunday morning?

With election action in full swing south of the border, who could resist printing placards for their loyal audience to place on the lawn that reads "Vote for Jesus", and then their call letters and frequency? How many members of your audience would put a sign on their lawn advertising your station?

On-air promotions include playing "bad" lyrics from mainstream songs and positioning them against songs with more positive, uplifting lyrics. Some stations also position themselves as suitable for family listening. As one programmer brought up, their advantage is that they don't talk about things in their morning

show that will create questions from your 12-year-old daughter that you're not prepared to answer.

Something all broadcasters agreed on was the need to

"cast a wider net", and not just go after the listeners of competing Christian stations but the audience of all stations in the market. Why preach to the converted when there are so many other people who need your kind of broadcasting? Mainstream broadcasters, beware.

And, if you have any doubts about the buying power of these audiences, take the lead of Canadian company Imark, who revamped their *Swamp Critters* TV series and video cassettes (with music and lyrics by Bobby Goldsboro). They incorporated Christian lyrics to cater to the growing demand for this type of product. The top selling Christian children's video sold in excess of five million units through Christian book stores in 1999. That's all the black ink Imark needed to see, to identify the Christian market as the biggest growth potential for them in the coming year.

But marketers take note, be sincere about your product and message or you won't be taken seriously.

There is a sizable Christian audience



Maureen Bulley is President of THE RADIO STORE. She may be reached at 1-888-DO RADIO or by E-mail at doradio@total.net.

that has tremendous buying power, and there are thousands more potential listeners and viewers who would genuinely like this programming and music, given the opportunity to experience it. We could all use a little uplifting, feel good television or radio in our lives.

Besides, who could argue with billboards that say "Listen to us, or go to hell!"

*What other station knows where 80% of their audience is, every Sunday morning?*

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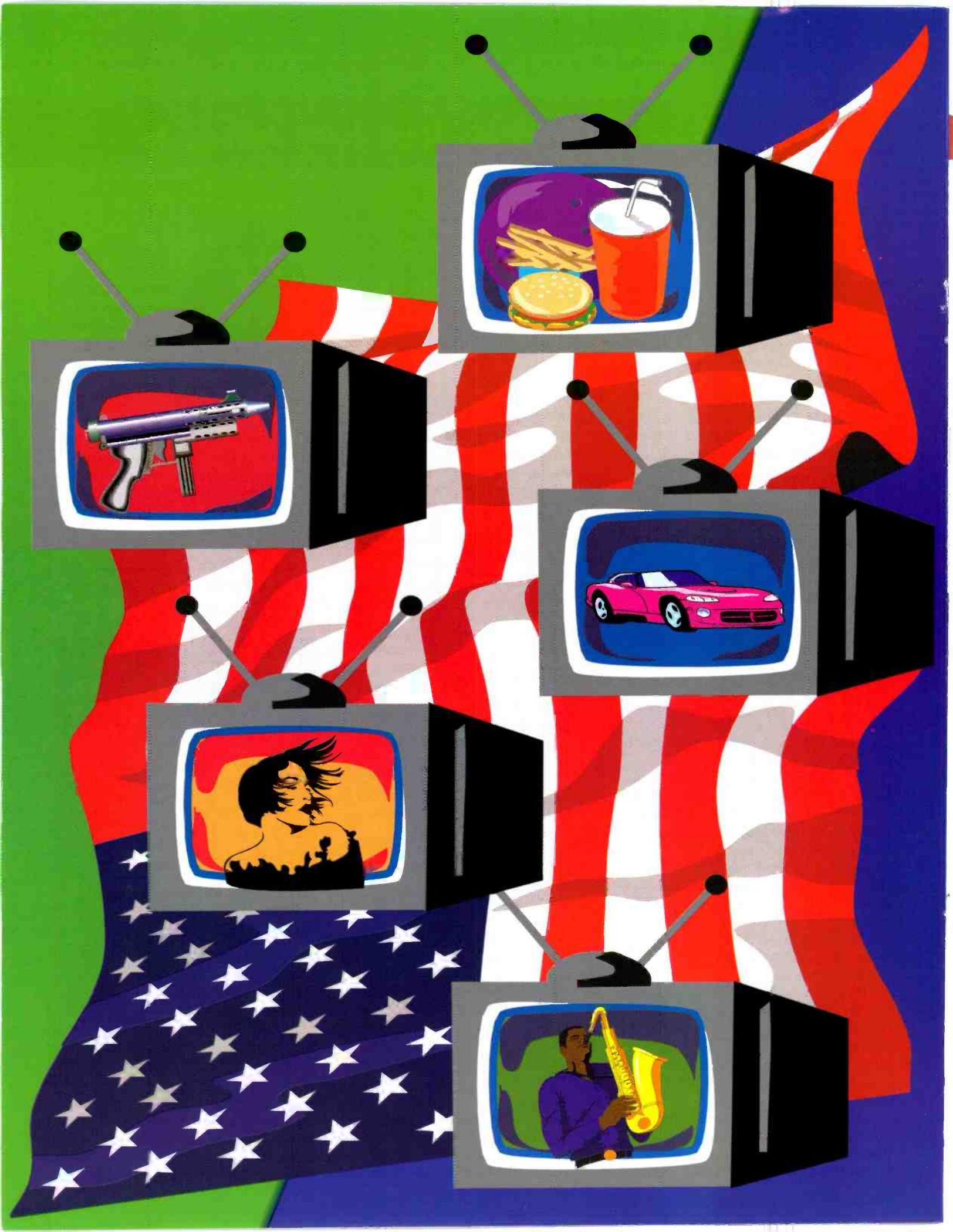
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# The



# side of TV

BY DAPHNE LAVERS

At the start of this new century, planet Earth was, for the first time, connected from one corner of the world to the other. Hour after hour, as the year dawned, one time zone and country after another joined in the celebration of welcoming a new year and a new era. The medium with which we welcomed each other was television.

In September of this year, the U.S. Free Trade Commission (FTC) released a report titled *Marketing Violent Entertainment to Children*. The investigation, prompted by President Clinton following the massacre at Columbine high school, looked at marketing practices in the movie, music and electronic game industries. Although the three industries have "self-regulatory" systems...the Commission found that members of all three routinely target advertising and marketing for violent entertainment products directly to children.

In his statement to the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, FTC Chairman Robert Pitofsky said: "The outcome is consistent: individual companies in each industry routinely market to children the very products that have industries' self-imposed parental warnings or ratings with age restrictions due to violent content. Indeed, for many of these products, the Commission found evidence of marketing and media plans that expressly target children under 17."

By about age 11, children have seen 8,000 murders and 100,000 other acts of violence on television; five to six acts of violence per hour on prime time, and 20-25 acts of violence an hour on children's programming. The amount of violence and the number of violent acts increases continually.

Much of what's on "the tube" is emi-

nently forgettable; formula drama, sitcom trivia, frenzied game shows, staged and contrived "reality" shows. And much of it is targeted at children, 'tweens and teens.

In this issue, *Broadcast Dialogue* takes a broad, critical look at television content; the business, the direction, the escalation, the target-marketing, and the socialization effect of this most ubiquitous medium.

This is not about violence, though that's part of it; nor is it about misrepresentation in marketing, though that's also part of it. And it does not focus on much of the excellent programming available from Canadian and international public broadcasters.

Rather, it's a look at the shadow side of the nature of popular culture and the business of contemporary imaging. The shadow side of television and movies is ratcheting-up every element of the medium—from volume levels to pacing, from special effects to violence, from jolts-per-minute to incivility—to catch the attention of an increasingly elusive viewer. And there are consequences to that.

## The Culture of the Medium

"This is the dual nature of the medium," said Neil Postman, "that it is essentially visual and that it is commercial. What American television is about is selling audiences to people. It's almost axiomatic that the direction it would move in is toward having shows and events that will attract the largest number of people which then can be sold to the advertisers."

A renowned communications scholar and academic, Postman is chair of the Department of Culture and Communication, New York State University. He is the author of the seminal text *Amusing*

*Ourselves to Death*, together with *Informing Ourselves to Death*, and *The End of Childhood*.

"Television," writes Postman in *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, "has become, so to speak, the background radiation of the social and intellectual universe, the all-but-imperceptible residue of the electronic big bang of a century past, so familiar and so thoroughly integrated with American culture that we no longer hear its faint hissing in the background or see the flickering grey light."

In an interview with *Broadcast Dialogue*, Postman observed: "I do think television does lead culture in many ways. The decline of serious political discourse is to a considerable extent brought on by the fact that it's almost impossible to do that on television. So the sort of idiot levels of discourse on television begin to influence other forms of political communication. But it also works the other way. Things that are trends in the culture are picked up on television, and also in the movies."

## Popular Culture as Outlaw

The continuing and circular exchange between media and popular culture ensures the escalation of both. According to author Neal Gabler: "Popular culture has always been rather dumb...not because people are stupid, necessarily, but because people want to make some kind of declaration against high culture...as much as you hate it, that's how much we like it...popular culture is a form of democratic enfranchisement and a form of outlawry."

Gabler is the author of *Life The Movie: How Entertainment Conquered Reality*, a thought-provoking analysis of contemporary culture. He is also a senior fellow at the new Norman Lear Center,

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Annenberg School for Communication, at the University of Southern California, founded by television writer/producer Norman Lear. The well-springs of popular culture, according to Gabler, are the young and minorities, the very groups that are most likely to be disconnected from and disenfranchised by mainstream culture. "The irony is that this is what now becomes mainstream culture, it almost inevitably gets co-opted."

A most disturbing issue in popular/mainstream culture is its "creeping plotlessness", Gabler asserts. Narrative plot creates order and functions to elicit responses. But narrative and plot require skill, and is gradually being eliminated.

"We've learned how to do something," Gabler said in an interview with *Broadcast Dialogue*. "What we've learned is there are ways of eliciting responses without a narrative context." Within the jukebox of popular culture, conditioned by the media into a kind of "attention deficit disorder", avoiding narrative and eliminating "emotional sub-routines" previously integral to movie narrative, visual imagery can attack the viscera and go directly to the response.

"When we don't have narrative, all we get is sensation," Gabler said. In an L.A. Times article, he expanded: "The result is that big American movies, which rake in most of the money now, are almost always sensation machines with only the most cursory plots to connect the effects and give the audience a small rooting interest."

### Attention—the Medium of Exchange

It is a peculiarity unique to the television business that the currency of the medium, the product that is bought and sold, belongs to a third party who is outside the financial transaction. The eyeballs and attention of viewers is the product. The relationship of the viewer to both seller and purchaser is one step removed from direct exchange and thus, from direct involvement and control.

Wayne Grisgby is head of Big Motion Pictures, with offices in Chester, Nova Scotia, and Toronto, and creator of programs including *North of 60* and *Black Harbour*.

"They (broadcasters) are in the audience-delivery business," he said. "They are delivering an audience to an advertiser. Advertisers want to have people with gobs of disposable income who are easily parted from their dollar. You just described kids between five-to-15, they've got more money with nothing to

spend it on, they don't have to deal with rent and all the stuff grown-ups do, it's all money they can spend. The idea is to get their eyeballs in front of something bright and flashy, and separate them from their money. That's another aspect of television, certainly private sector television—it's about delivering great gobs of people to an advertiser in an appealing demographic."

The demographics with the most appeal are getting younger and younger, moving television programming towards an ever more youthful focus. The teen market, the 'tween market and the preschool market are the focus in terms of content, in terms of what remains of plotlines, in terms of characters and in terms of hugely-profitable corollary marketing of associated products.

"Last year, U.S. teens spent \$141 billion, twice as much as they spent 10 years ago," said Toronto-based Jesuit priest John Pungente. "There is no comparable figure for Canada, but it probably exceeds \$20 billion. That's why they're going after that market, they have all that wonderful spending money."

As head of the Jesuit Communications Project, Pungente, a native of Brandon, Manitoba, has become a well-known advocate for media, for media literacy and education. He hosts the Bravo program *Scanning the Movies*, and is the author of *More Than Meets the Eye: Watching Television Watching Us*.

Pungente is unabashedly, openly enthusiastic about television—but his enthusiasm is tempered by certainty that media literacy and education is critical, and by the strong belief that "the more you learn about television, the less impact it has on you."

"I do love television, it entertains me, it excites me, it educates me, it can even move me on occasion and no other medium can do that with that consistency. It's 90% junk, but it's the 10% that makes it worthwhile. The 10% is the good stuff, (which) can bring this country together ... I never underestimate, though, the 90%, because there's some times you just want to sit there and be washed over with mindless entertainment!"

Pungente drew the connection between falling network audiences and increasing fragmentation. The "alphabet networks", the major U.S. broadcasters, currently have about a 58% audience share. Twenty years ago, that share was closer to 98%. The now-familiar explosion in television channels will continue,

with the pending licensing of new digital channels in Canada, which may result in as many as 50 new channels.

"Your niche marketing is going to get even more narrow, it's going to be all narrowcast from now on," he said. "It's great for viewers, bad for the networks, because how do you find advertisers?"

Canadian broadcaster Laurier Lapierre, chairman of Telefilm Canada, and host of the ground-breaking *This Hour Has Seven Days* news program in the 1960s, concurs.

"Competition makes the search for what it is that people will watch more compelling—competition between networks," he said in an interview. "If you do all the *Will & Grace*'s, the nice little insane comedies of grown-up adolescents, one must find the program, the series, that will attract the greatest number of potatoes or whatever one wishes to sell."

Said Alan Mirabelli, vice-chair of the Media Awareness Network and Executive Director of Administration, Communications and Information for the Vanier Institute of the Family: "It doesn't seem to matter what gets put on the air when you have 30-40-50-60 channels. You simply make the decision to watch television and then once you've made that decision, you watch the least objectionable program per given half hour until the next one comes along...For some people these days, I think it's either television or Valium in the sense that it's the choice to simply disconnect from what they normally do and think about, and just sort of give in to the entertainment that's provided."

### The End of Childhood

The drive of demographics and the overwhelming emphasis on youth in broadcasting has placed more and more programs for the under-30 set, the under-20 set, and even the under-10 set on the screen. That downwards drive has consequences—for programs, for broadcasters, for writers, for society. In a business dependent on the sale of attention, the age of the eyeballs is becoming increasingly irrelevant.

"The culture is moving away from the idea of childhood being some special category of people and toward the idea that all people irrespective of their age are just markets," said Postman. His book, *The End of Childhood*, blames television for the movement away from the idea—and the special care and handling—of childhood.

"The whole idea of childhood depends on being able to keep certain kinds

of secrets from the young—this is what we mean by socialization. You learn in gradual stages the secrets of adult life, while the thing is that everything from violence to all forms of sexuality become immediately accessible to people of all ages. And television is the leading medium for doing that, so it becomes difficult to maintain an idea of childhood that is some special category of person who does not yet know all of the dimensions of adult life and has to learn these gradually. Television blows that idea to pieces."

It is at this point that views of media educators, writers, politicians and scientists begin to diverge on the ultimate value—and the impact of incivility—of television.

### Incivility and Learning

Dr. Ed Blackstock is the chief psychologist for the Peel Region Board of Education, west of Toronto, and an expert on the effects of media on children.

"I'm suspect of my own perceptions that things are getting dumber, or that kids are getting ruder or that kids are worse now than they were 10 years ago," Blackstock said. "Some of the kids' programs are really good, they teach them social situations and social skills. It's a way of gaining social intelligence by observation, so they seem really dumb to me, but when I step back, I see my 11-year-old daughter is learning something valuable. I'm always appalled by the intellectual levels and the bad humour, and I wish the kids would watch something more sophisticated but they won't."

"Television also gives kids a heart start," said Mirabelli. "It (television) tells them how to be affectionate, how to be aggressive, it tells them how to respond with that sort of raw first emotion. And the question is can any other social institution compensate for that, whether it's school, or parents, or combination of schools and parents, is there enough of a community that cares about kids that actually chooses to engage with them?...We tell wonderful stories but they don't sell to the U.S. so we choose not to make them. I think ours are better, they speak to us, to the things that matter to us."

"Yes, there is shlock, there is nonsense, yes there is violence on Canadian television, most of which comes from the United States of America," said Laurier Lapierre. "What surprises me about American television in terms of their sitcoms is how juvenile they are.



"In the United States, a 14-year old with no firearms training, enters his school with a stolen handgun. Eight shots are fired with eight "hits", all of them upper torso and head."

Media Violence 101,  
Valerie Smith

"The imagery of television makes the spoken word less important as a means of understanding what the world is like...maybe it does mean that we're getting dumber in the sense of our having less an ability to cope with complex language. (Perhaps) the young become more visually sophisticated than people who, as McLuhan would have said, are print-oriented."

Neil Postman

"The whole of television being entertaining and entertainment—it's not that entertaining anymore. Think of the average movie of the week—it's last year's top news story which was pretty grisly anyway. Why would I want to relive it in dramatic form? Where's the flight of fantasy?"

Alan Mirabelli,  
Vanier Institute



"There are lawsuits against these entertainers because their violent content, particularly in video games and movies, is now being directly related or correlated to violence in our society, so when they're talking about it being necessary for their bottom line, if these profits are being offset by lawsuits because people are getting killed, I think they need to look at that again!"

Melanie Cishecky,  
MediaWatch

"We have several laws on the books that curtail various forms of expression; we have a law on hate propaganda, obscenity, child pornography, libel and slander laws. We already have censorship. If you look at the hate propaganda and obscenity laws, they have already been upheld by Canada's Supreme Court, so that battle is over... (court) decisions are based on the notions of harm, not on morality. It's constitutional; the legal framework is there in Canada for governments to go further."

Media Violence 101,  
Valerie Smith

That's alright for a juvenile, but for a person in his late 20s or 30s, to behave as though he was just beginning to discover what sex was all about—they remind me of a lot of the (older) beer commercials ...in which the young people who were there seemed to have absolutely no other concern about human life than how many bottles of beer they can drink in one night."

Lapierre observed that much of the shock on television comes from the U.S. "I think the state of Canadian television is much better than the state of American television," he said. "The source from which we are fed television seems to come 90-95 per cent out of the United States. I think that's where the danger lies. Unless the Americans can put some order in their house, I think it will be very difficult for us to put order in our house."

Laurier's observation was confirmed by a number of others in the industry. Some of that perception may be an undercurrent of Canadians' surreptitious sense of superiority; some of it may be accurate for reasons that have to do with money and budgets, and some may be simply that Canada is a different country, with different values.

"A lot of the problematic material is foreign content," said Melanie Cishecky, communications manager for MediaWatch, an advocacy watchdog group that monitors television and other forms of popular culture. "I think in Canada we make a relatively good effort to address these problems. But we have this stuff coming from across the border and they're not held to the same legal standards as Canadian content is."

### Writers—the Creative Force

Just as programming has begun to focus on youth generations, so too television writing has moved into younger and younger generations. As one industry observer stated, television is a youthful business, demanding, and exhausting. And while senior television executives may be of older generations, many of the new programs are done by younger creators with a different take on things.

Writer/producer Wayne Grigsby taught at the Canadian Film Centre a couple of years ago. He was "quite struck by how TV literate" students were at the Film School, and he sees substantial change in those who create television programming.

"A lot of the writers (originally) came from theatre, and other forms of media

—there was a kind of contempt for television writing even as television writing was getting better and better," he said. "The first generation of Canadian television writers felt it was 'generally beneath me'. Now, a whole generation of kids who grew up on television series of one kind or another think of it as a perfectly legitimate forum to express themselves, and have absorbed the particular demands of television drama and structure. They get it. They understand what an act-end is, they know how to write in television terms, whereas 15 years ago there was a lot of writing going on by people who didn't really understand the structure of television drama. There are commercials—get over it! There are certain things you have to accept about the form."

Canadian drama isn't exempt from creating the "problematic material" on television; in fact, a fair amount of it is actually done in Canada for U.S. companies.

"The *Xena's* and WB shows, *Queen of Shorts*, *Nikita*, we do all that stuff which is industrial Canadian product for America," said television writer Ann MacNaughton. "We do a hell-of-a-lot of that kind of programming, which is just as violent and stupid as anything the Americans produce."

MacNaughton is an independent writer who was part of the creative team that developed the top-rated *ENG* television news drama series, and one of the writers on the hit series *Traders*.

"Our indigenous Canadian drama is smart because, God there's so little of it that we have a long time to think about it!" she said.

### Generational Touchstones

MacNaughton is not in the least surprised at the rise of younger television writers, which sometimes means the older writers are out of work.

"L. A. is a youth-driven engine and people are more comfortable with people of their own age bracket," she said straightforwardly. "They don't want to be told by people who created great programs in the past that this is what works; they want to re-invent things. They want to add freshness and vision, they don't want to see the same ideas recycled even though that eventually ends up what happens... Every generation wants to create it's own touchstone of drama and comedy, and they will change a few things but they need to re-invent it through their own eyes. You have to understand that when someone isn't

talking your language, they're not talking your language."

Another element in the lower violence content of Canadian television is, quite simply, cost.

"Violence is generally quite expensive," MacNaughton said. "Production concerns dictate quite a few things—if you have to have a big violent stunt and car chase and stuff, it isn't going to happen on Canadian television...We have much smaller budgets than American shows. That's why we have shows about coroners; everybody's already dead! or Cold Squad, the crime happened 25 years ago! That's the perfect Canadian show!"

There are also Canadian sensibilities, MacNaughton observed, which may influence a lower level of graphic violence and explicit sex in Canadian programming.

"People who pull out guns and fire and don't have to deal with moral consequences—that's just easy, shitty writing," said Grigsby. "I have no interest in doing those kinds of shows. I find a lot of them just uninteresting."

There is a common recognition and appreciation for those programs ranked as the top U.S. television series, including *The West Wing* and *Law and Order*.

Those two are about the only programs that the Vanier Institute's Mirabelli will watch. And they're difficult and challenging to write, observed *Traders'* veteran MacNaughton, because "you basically have to weave together the lives of eight characters in 13-18-22 episodes" in a multi-character, multi-plotline series.

The immediacy of television, and the requirement for immediacy of pay-off works against these kinds of programs. It takes time to build an audience.

"Really good shows are always built over a year or two," said Grigsby, "and that takes faith from somebody who says, 'we've got to figure out how to build this audience, there should be one for this program.'"

The issue, in all kinds of dimensions, is time.

### Drama and Time Management

In *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, Postman wrote that "television's conversations promote incoherence and triviality...and that television speaks in only one persistent voice—the voice of entertainment."

"The average length of a shot on American commercial television is about 3.5 seconds," said Postman. "So that

means, in effect, every 3.5 seconds you have to have a new point of view, a new image to process, and all up-to-date TV directors know this. So when you have a high degree of visual stimulation which is what television provides, language diminishes in its importance...so when it's concentrating on the movement of imagery, conversation of any kind cannot have a sustained sense of continuity."

Broadcasters now have to fight harder for a profitable share of the audience, said Grigsby, "so they tend to reach into more provocative directions than ever before. But that's true in the newspaper business, (and) in the recording business."

The reach for provocation draws the line between acceptable, unacceptable, excitement and incitement.

"People get jaded very quickly," said Gabler. "I compare popular culture to a drug... In popular culture, there is always a ratcheting mechanism. Once you've had this experience, this sensation, you want more; once you've had that, you reach a plateau and you want more. There is always something out there that's going to provide more. In fact that's what the people who provide popular culture are aiming to do, to give us some new

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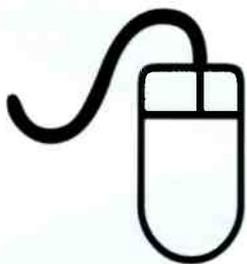
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sensation, not necessarily a new experience any longer but some new sensation."

That kind of acclimatization, increasing familiarity, ratcheting-up of demand, and the need for greater and greater stimulation to reach the same level is the mechanism of addiction.

"It shares that characteristic (of addiction) that you need increasing amounts in order to achieve—in this case—arousal," said Dr. Brian Wilcox, a research psychologist at the University of Nebraska and spokesperson for the American Psychological Association. Wilcox chooses not to use the term "addiction", however, "because there's no reason to suggest that people can't walk away from media violence, and they don't experience the (physical) consequences of withdrawal."

The phenomenon of desensitization is a proven result of a continuing diet of television; inuring viewers to violence and violent acts creates a demand for visual imagery that is "louder, faster, more violent, more and more stimulating," said Dr. Ed Blackstock, chief psychologist for the Board of Education of the Region of Peel and an expert on media violence and children. "We learn less to use our own minds to stimulate, and the imagination gets dumbed down."

The continual increase in violent programming, however, is "fairly definitive," said Dr. Wilcox. "We have to keep upping the ante in order to get that arousal which is what we might call excitement...and so entertainment has become increasingly violent over time because we've become desensitized over time, we adapt to the level of violence."

But of concern to psychologists is the increase not just in the amount of violence, but more importantly in the nature and presentation of violence—the extremely graphic and realistic portrayal of gruesomeness.

Valerie Smith is the Toronto-based activist who tried to halt the Toronto performance of misogynist white rapper Eminem in the fall. A media researcher and activist for 10 years, she has clearly observed the ratcheting-up of violent content.

"I started (research) with slasher movies and I've stayed at the extreme end of the violence scale. I don't fool around with *Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers* and stuff like that," she said. "In the 10 years that I've been working on that, I've seen brutality that used to be a sub-genre, and shown in cult films and film festivals,

that level of brutality has moved into the mainstream."

## Research & the FTC Report

It's at this point in the debate on television that proponents ride off in all directions at once. Some state categorically that incivility and violence on television have no effect on society; others state that incivility and violence on television engenders and escalates exactly those components.

Clear-cut, irrefutable evidence exists in hundreds upon hundreds of research studies that there is a causal relationship between television violence and societal violence. Humans are natural mimics and learn by seeing, whether children or adults; the widespread dissemination into everyday society, in the schoolyard, the boardroom and the workplace, of behaviour and phrases from programs ranging from *The Simpsons* to *Power Rangers*, from *The West Wing* to *Star Trek* provide inarguable evidence of the permeation of television sensibilities into every life.

Research studies have been conducted and statements released on this causal relationship by organizations including the American Association of Pediatrics, the Canadian Paediatric Society, the American Psychological Association, the American Medical Association, the U.S. Surgeon General and the U.S. National Institutes of Mental Health. The body of evidence covers a period of nearly 50 years—the concerns are neither new nor are they badly understood; one of the very first investigations was launched in 1952 when the U.S. House of Representatives conducted the first House Committee hearings on TV violence and its impact on children.

The Federal Trade Commission report, released in September, started from the position that television violence is harmful; that was an initial premise. As Dr. Wilcox stated, "They (the FTC) went beyond whether violence is potentially harmful or not, and they began their report by saying there's lots of evidence concluding that it is and we concur. Then they went on to say not only is that an issue but violence is being very heavily marketed to children by different facets of the entertainment industry."

The FTC said: "The Report was conducted...to answer two questions about the marketing of violent entertainment material: Do the industries promote products they themselves acknowledge

warrant parental caution in venues where children make up a substantial percentage of the audience? And are these advertisements intended to attract children and teenagers? The report found that for all three segments of the entertainment industry, the answers are plainly yes."

And finally, the entertainment industries in question have issued ratings systems and warning-label systems for their products. Such warnings are prima facie acknowledgment that there is some danger associated with these materials. If no problem existed, no ratings or warnings would be necessary.

### Self-Regulation

In both Canada and the United States—and in fact, around the world—the notion of self-regulation appears to have advanced in lock-step with the much-touted imperative of globalization.

The Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) instituted its first Violence Code in 1987. The organization drafted its Canadian Broadcast Standards Council manual, and subsequently launched regional councils and appointed a national chair in 1990. The CRTC endorsed the CBSC a year later.

In 1993, the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture held hearings resulting in its report *Television Violence: Praying our Social Fabric*. The CAB Violence Code was rewritten and strengthened, and introduced in 1993, followed by the CRTC's Pay Television and Pay-Per-View Programming Code Regarding Violence in 1994, and around the same time the industry formed the Action Group on Violence on Television (AGVOT), whose principal responsibility was the creation of a classification structure for the Canadian broadcasting system. By 1996, the industry was moving to adoption of V-chip technology, which would allow parental censorship of inappropriate programming at the device level.

In Canada, ratings systems are mandatory. In the U.S., they are voluntary. The FTC report stated that "Of the 44 movies rated R for violence the Commission selected for its study, the Commission found that 35, or 80%, were targeted to children under 17. Marketing plans for 28 of those 44, or 64%, contained express statements that the film's target audience included children under 17. For example, one plan for a violent R-rated film stated, 'Our goal was to find the elusive teen target audience and make sure everyone between the ages of 12-18 was

exposed to the film'. The FTC found that children were regularly allowed in to R-rated films, allowed to rent or purchase R-rated material."

### The Codes

Adherence to the codes in Canada is mandated, with violent programming restricted to airing after 9 p.m., and a prohibition on gratuitous violence or the glamorization or sensationalizing of violence. The CAB code, however, defines "gratuitous" violence as violence not integral to the plot. If a program is *about* an act of violence or a violent person, then the Code does not ban showing those acts or the actions of that person.

"If a complaint is filed with the Commission and it's filed about a broadcaster who is a member of the CBSC, we forward it on to the CBSC and wait for their decision," said Martine Vallee, the CRTC's director of discretionary services and social policy. "The CRTC's position is to rely as much as possible on self-regulation... We don't censor; we're not a censorship body... We remain the ultimate authority, but with self-regulation what we're trying to do is give the first steps or main actions to the industry itself, but the Commission's always there as a back-up."

In 1994/95, the CBSC received 219 complaints and actually handled 138 (63%). Of those, 20 dealt with radio programming (15%), and 115 dealt with television programming (83%). In 1997/98, the CBSC reported "a staggering number of complaints, the equivalent of about four years worth in a single year," according to the CBSC Web site. In 1998/99, yet another record was set: the total number of persons who registered a complaint with the CBSC was a whopping 14,844. This very large number, the Council's annual report stated, comes as a result of numerous multiple-signature petitions received by the Council, for each of which only one complaint file was opened. The total number of files opened by the CBSC was 1,191.

The Council makes its decisions available to the public and announces them to the media. If the broadcaster has breached any of the codes, it must make a public announcement during prime-time television hours or peak radio listening hours. If the Council decides that the broadcaster has met the standards set out in the codes, it will explain why it has reached that decision. However, in the case of a favourable decision, the



"Yes, businesses are entitled to make a fair return. But you are still a cultural industry and a cultural industry is about reflecting something back to me that I can understand, that's part of my reality. This violent stuff isn't part of my reality and I'd just as soon it wasn't."

Alan Mirabelli,  
Vanier Institute

"Nobody pays you to create cultural icons. You don't work in television because of the number of people you can reach with your message...television exists to sell things."

Ann MacNaughton

"We found that for example, there's often significant distortions in the way television presents the way people live. There is a lot of gender role stereotyping that takes place, not surprisingly. There's very few roles for ethnic minorities in television...there are many more roles for African-Americans although the population of Hispanic Americans is greater than African-Americans".

Dr. Brian Wilcox



**"The quickest way to kill it (violent programming) is to not watch it. It'll go away. If there was no audience, it would not be on the air".**

**Wayne Grisgsby**

**"The violence issue for me is a non-starting issue because television has become the scapegoat for the people who don't care to really analyse what it is that causes violence...Sure, it's part of it but just to say television is at fault is wrong."**

**John Pungente, Jesuit**

**"I call them (slasher movies such as Halloween) violent pornography...these films they take the violence and divorce it from any kind of human response, so that what you're doing is simply responding to the knife entering flesh or whatever, you're not responding to any kind of human context, in the same way that pornography divorces the sex act from any other kind of context."**

**Neal Gabler, author and media scholar**

station is under no obligation to announce the result. There are no penalties for breaching the code, financial or otherwise, although the CBSC may elect to terminate the membership of an offending broadcaster. One media critic has stated that "punishment by press release has had absolutely no effect on the behaviour of broadcasters."

In the U.S., the Federal Trade Commission recommended strengthening self-regulatory codes, and in addition, recommended Congressional oversight of industry actions. In a country where First Amendment rights are paramount, this is an unprecedented step.

### **The U.S. Movie Industry Response**

The entertainment industry in the United States, and to some degree in Canada, has been fiercely independent and somewhat dangerous territory for politicians and government. Observed activist Valerie Smith: "Because of a backlash against politicians from columnists, editorialists and pundits and whatnot, they have been afraid to tackle this industry. It has changed a little bit since Columbine (High School massacre) but it's kind of sad that the murders had to reach the double digits before politicians got the guts to say anything. (One)...good analogy; politicians tackling the entertainment industry is like the third rail—touch it, you die."

And in fact, the bulldog defender of the rights of the American movie industry, Jack Valenti, responded to the FTC report in September with the astonishing declaration that the motion picture industry "tries harder to be more attentive to the needs of parents than any other enterprise in the fifty states:" that "the movie industry has been the only segment of our national marketplace...that voluntarily turns away revenues in order to redeem the pledge we have made to parents." And in a veiled threat, the head of the MPAA congratulated U.S. representatives "for addressing the issue of media violence in a constructive manner that is respectful of First Amendment freedom."

Before the month was out, Valenti presented a 12-point initiative on behalf of the largest movie studios in the U.S., including Disney, Dreamworks, MGM, Paramount, Sony Pictures, Twentieth Century Fox, Universal Warner Brothers. The 12 points dealt with not showing trailers for R-rated movies in G-rated films, in exhibition or video or DVDs; no company will use children under age 17

in research screenings for R-rated movies unless accompanied; each company "will review its marketing and advertising practices in order to further the goal of not inappropriately specifically targeting children" in advertising for R-rated films.

The initiative also dealt with annual reviews, "encouraging theatre owners and video retailers to improve compliance" with the rating system; seek ways to include the reasons for ratings; and other points such as rating DVDs, etc.

### **Defining Responsibility**

A number of media observers contacted by *Broadcast Dialogue* made the connection that the target marketing of children with violent material, combined with blanket denials of such marketing throughout the U.S. entertainment industry, is reminiscent of the protracted and bitter wrangling over the tobacco industry, and the revelations of its marketing practices.



"We're right back at the place where the government started with tobacco so before you get to legislation and litigation, before that should be an educational campaign," said activist Smith. "One of the biggest stumbling blocks to getting any progress on this issue is the lack of education. The public does not know about the research, which is why we're always having these discussions."

And in fact, litigation appears to be where the industry is heading. Law suits have already been filed in cases involving the movies *Natural Born Killers*, and *The Basketball Diaries* along with video games.

"I think it (litigation) is the most powerful tool that we have at the moment, in

the face of a lot of political apathy," said Smith. "Maybe it's not political apathy—it can be very hazardous to a politician's career to tackle the entertainment industry. So I don't know if it's apathy as much as fear. In the face of political inaction, I think the lawsuits are what will actually bring about a change, because that's what Americans do, they litigate, and the juries hand out such enormous settlements, I think that's what is really going to bring about a change."

A November, 1999 article by Tom Vander Neut in the publication *Risk & Insurance*, stated: "Add violence incitement to the list of liabilities entertainment and media companies face... Recently, court cases seeking punitive damages in the millions of dollars have claimed that companies can be held liable if the content they publish plays a part in an individual's violent act, resulting in the loss of life. And juries are finding for the plaintiffs."

In Canada, the CRTC is planning a review of self-regulation guidelines sometime within the next year. The review is part of the Commission's regular practice of examining existing policies, said Vallee, to gauge whether policies are achieving desired objectives.

And earlier this year, Heritage Canada raised the possibility of a new policy that could preclude access to tax credits by productions that contain objectionable subject matter, including undue violence or violence of a sexual nature, hatred or contempt, and demeaning depictions of people.

### The Entertainment Virus

"Incivility is entertaining and civility isn't," said author Gabler. "And that's, in a nutshell, the problem. Everyone is looking for what's the most entertaining form, because that's how you gain attention. And we live in a world where everything is competing for attention, individuals, business, philosophies. The way to gain attention is to be more entertaining than something else. And when that becomes the way to gain attention, then entertainment becomes the top value, which it is."

The Vanier Institutes' Mirabelli echoed that notion, saying, "It's as if we're all walking away from what it means to be civil, including our industries."

To Gabler, one of the most critical issues—an integral part of the increasing incivility, coarseness and violence in popular culture—is the extent to which

entertainment values permeate every aspect of life, "when entertainment values leap tracks from television and movies and into our political process," and into every other sphere of activity. He likens it to a virus that infects everything from business to the stock market.

"And that's true virtually across the board," he stated. "Our religion is entertaining, our education is entertaining, you name it, we've learned how to make an entertainment medium out of virtually anything we do, because entertainment is the dominant value, in my estimation, of modern life. There are certain things for which entertainment should not be the dominant value; politics, I think, is one of them. Religion is one of them; education is one of them; business may be one of them. Look at each of these things, there are alternative values in each of them; in religion, there are spiritual values which are very different from entertainment values; in education, there are intellectual values which are very different from entertainment values; even in art there are aesthetic values which are not always exactly congruent with entertainment values."

And finally, Gabler asks hypothetically,

why is the United States the "republic of entertainment", and not any other country in the world? "The subtext of American culture, I think, becomes the sub-text of world culture... America provides entertainment. That's what it is we do. We've had a kind of cultural colonization over the past 50 or 60 years, and it's a process that will only continue... You can't deny it, you can't arrest it, you can't change it, you can only analyse it."

To those in the Western hemisphere, the increasing dominance of American entertainment may suggest the resurrection of "Manifest Destiny", the American political theory that attempted to justify American hegemony in this part of the world.

In a recent newspaper article, a northern Canadian politician was quoted as saying, "It doesn't matter what anyone thinks. Big business isn't a popularity contest."

Globalization may indeed export the shadow side of popular culture and contemporary image-making; and that shadow may be shades of the stars and stripes.

*Senior Writer Daphne Lavers is a Toronto-based freelancer. She can be reached at [dlavers@passport.ca](mailto:dlavers@passport.ca).*

## ANNOUNCEMENT

It is with great pleasure that *Mario Cecchini, Vice-President Sales, Marketing and Research, Telemedia Radio Inc.*, announces the appointment of **Byron J. Garby** as **National Sales Director** and **Angy Massarella Sanci** as **National Promotions Manager**. Together, they form the nucleus of Telemedia's new, national sales division. In listening to the concerns of radio clients, their mandate is to meet needs by streamlining, simplifying and increasing the benefits of Telemedia Radio to advertisers. Both come with extensive backgrounds in their fields of expertise.



Byron was recently Vice President with Canada's leading radio representative company and has spent over 14 years in national radio sales and marketing.

Angy has over 12 years of promotion and marketing experience. Beginning with Telemedia Publishing, she has been Promotion Manager for key national magazines such as TV Guide. Most recently, she was Sales Promotion Manager at Toronto's EZ Rock.

Their wide ranging talents and knowledge of the Canadian experience will provide enormous scope to Telemedia's ability to provide creative, innovative and effective radio solutions to Canada's advertisers and agencies. As well, under their direction, IMS Radio, Telemedia's national representatives, will gain a powerful resource. Telemedia is one of the country's leading broadcasters with 78 stations across Canada.

These appointments were effective September 2000.



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Chian, Fairchild Media Co.



Jean-Marie Feinrath,  
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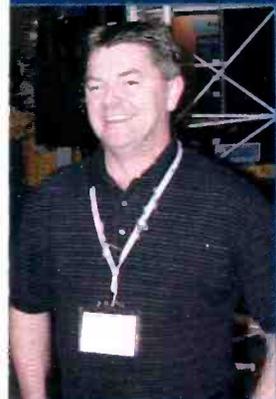
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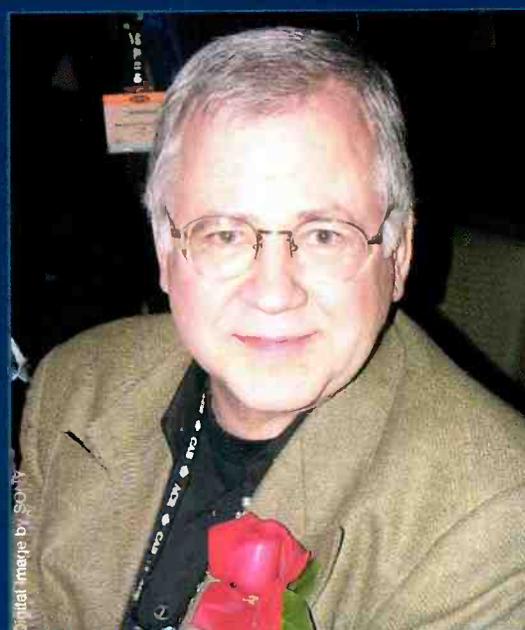


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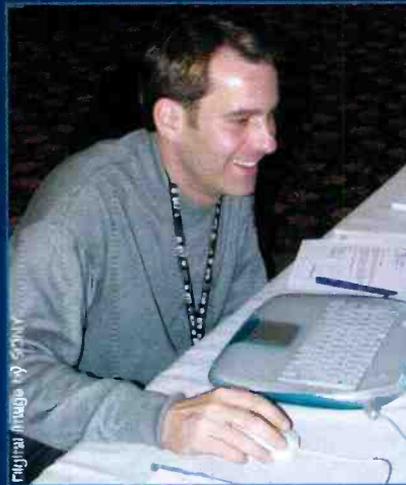
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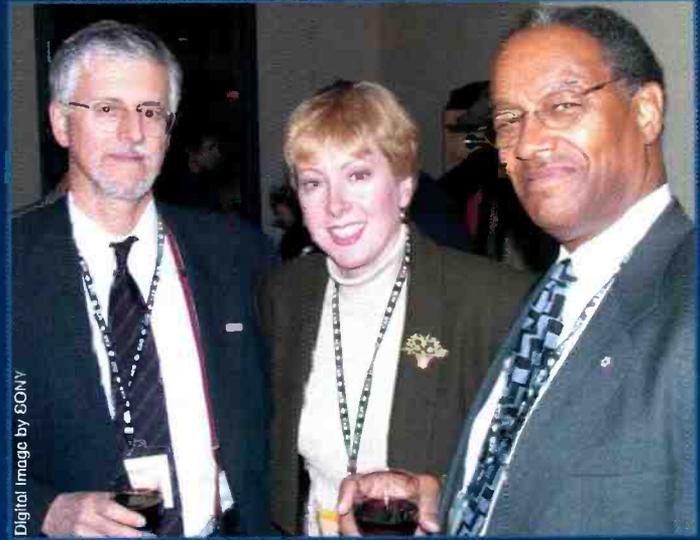
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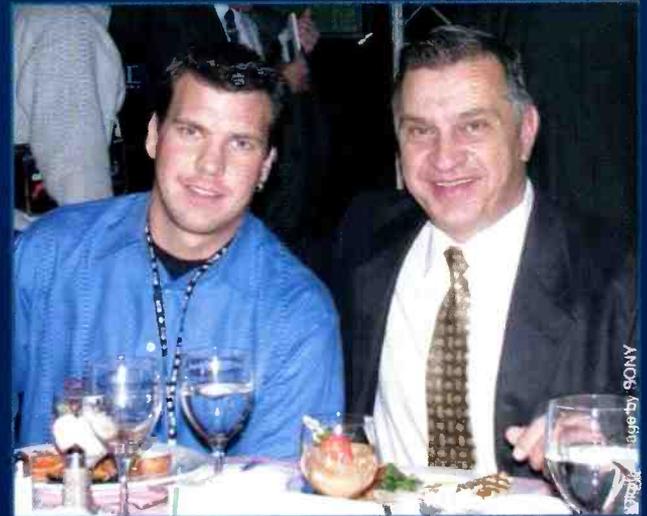


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Western Association of Broadcast Engineers  
celebrating the Association's 50th anniversary



# Radio does make a difference to those who listen

**A**s we approach the Holiday Season, and with winter pulling into the Canadian driveway as it does annually, my thoughts focus on the many different people I know, especially the people that I am truly inspired by.

One of those people is Don Buckley, a former announcer with Global Television—in fact he was Global's first employee and became well-known as their booth announcer.

I first came to know Don through John Rode at CHUM Toronto. Don is involved in a number of charities and goodwill undertakings and CHUM always does whatever it takes to assist him and his endeavour of choice, whether it's a telethon or Big Bucks Bingo. Don came to the station and would sit in with John and I. Don loves radio and knows his music and when he was in that studio with us he was plugged in. As a boy growing up in Toronto he spent hours listening to legendary jocks in Canada and the U.S., and his favourite station 1050 CHUM.

Don's finely tuned radio ear is possibly due to, in part, the fact that he is visually impaired. Could it be that he may be more acutely aware of sound elements in a natural effort to compensate for his visual limitations? Whatever it is, he listens differently than I do, I can see it in his face, and when he comments on something, he usually presents a unique and interesting perspective, often one that I would have never considered. His passionate expressions and reactions to jingles or song intros are reminders to me that radio is indeed, a "theatre of the mind" and totally concerned with emotion.

I'm constantly encouraging Don to get more involved in the Internet because I know how much it has to offer radio junkies and I know that eventually he will not be able to stop talking about

how great it is once he gets hooked. Don has his computer fonts set on large to allow him to read documents and e-mail with ease, and I predict that when he reaches that same comfort level with the Internet the better his experience will be.

Internet radio portals often have easy-to-use interfaces, which contain presets, memory keys, and even voice-command modes that allow users to access their content in a simple manner. Many Web sites have audio links making information accessible to all users, especially people with visual impairments, and it is advancements such as these that exemplify the positive benefits of technology and truly practice the laws of interactivity.

I urge all web designers, especially those in radio, to ensure enhancements such as these exist and are available to all users because, after all, broadcasters have the resources to do this better than anyone else. In doing so, they will demonstrate exactly what, together, radio and the Internet do best.

During a recent visit to CHUM, Don told me that his father had a connection to "The Big House" (CHUM) on Toronto's Yonge Street. Don's father, Frank, knew CHUM's original owner, Jack Part, through the medicine business. Frank Buckley just happens to be that famous deadpan company president peddling the virtues of his own father's "awful tasting" cough



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medicine known as Buckley's Mixture. Part eventually sold CHUM to Allan Waters, and to this day Canada's most famous radio station is still a major part of Don's life. He is also an active part of VoicePrint, Canada's national reading service for the visually and reading impaired.

If you know someone like Don, take the time to observe why he or she loves radio and ask them why they listen to your station, if indeed they do, and for what reasons. In Don's case, CHUM is a good friend and, without him speaking a single word when he was in the studio that day, I knew he was truly enjoying the reunion with his "old friend" just as if it was a boyhood pal. He didn't have to say a thing, his expressions said it all.

Thanks, Don, for reminding me that what we do in radio really does make a difference to the people who listen.

## CHUM Radio Network

ask Rhona

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For more information, contact Liz Zlabis at (416) 926-4075 or [lizz@chumradionetwork.com](mailto:lizz@chumradionetwork.com).



## celebrates silver anniversary

BY BILL WHITE

**I**t's a miracle. CKCU-FM, a community radio station at Carleton University in Ottawa, has celebrated 25 years on the air.

Officially, the birthday chimes rang at midnight November 14. The following weekend, hundreds of station volunteers and alumni from across Canada and the United States descended on Carleton to mark the milestone.

As word-of-mouth spread about the anniversary celebration, some alumni expressed amazement that CKCU-FM was still going after all these years.

Since 1975, Radio-Carleton has had its fair share of crises. The usual stuff—money, staff turnover, and internal scuffles over programming and management.

Despite the ups and downs, CKCU-FM has consistently served up public affairs and music programs that reflect the cultural diversity of the nation's capital. At the same time, it has maintained its role as the flagship of Canadian community radio.

The key has been a constant influx of people bent on working in radio as an extension of their interest in public affairs or music—or even both. It's a common link among volunteers, and alumni who started media careers at CKCU-FM.

Diane Laursen, an announcer at CHEZ-FM Ottawa, tells a typical story: "I was learning so much at CKCU that I gave up university. Eventually, I got the job as music director which paid \$114 per month."

Another alumni with a unique perspective on the station's roots is David Mowbray, former host of CBC Radio's *Quirks and Quarks* science program and a principle with Babab Productions, a multi-media and communications firm.

When he joined Carleton's radio club in 1965, the total output was a Sunday-night public affairs show on CKOY Ottawa. Mowbray says they had few listeners.

That changed with a brazen act in the late 1960s. Following a bomb blast in a House of Commons wash-room, the students decided to test the beefed-up security. They went to Parliament Hill, Mowbray recalls, and "David Balkin had one of the very few first Phillips audio cassette recorders, which he smuggled in to the Visitor's Gallery under his raincoat."

Balkin recorded every party leader in the House. They added some interviews to make a hard-hitting show—and "we expected the roof to fall in."

Instead, Mowbray exclaims, "nobody heard it!" But the news release they issued triggered a tumultuous week of publicity.

By 1970, the "Carleton Broadcasters" wanted to expand. Ken Rockburn—now host of CBC Radio's drive-home show in Ottawa—helped organize efforts to wire Carleton University for sound.

The project evolved into AM 670, and student radio

was a part of campus life. The club was given studio space in a new building, but they wanted something more than carrier-wave status.

"It was always a dream to have a station and make a difference," Mowbray notes. By 1975, the dream was riding a wave of optimism. That June, a hundred people attended a CRTC licence application hearing in Hamilton.

The application was granted and at midnight on November 14, 1975 Steve Colwill cued up Joni Mitchell's *You Turn Me On I'm A Radio*.

"I was terrified," Colwill admits. "We thought everyone in town was going to be listening." Within an hour or so, Colwill calmed down and Radio-Carleton was on its way. Today, he's X FM's program director and CHEZ-FM Ottawa's music director.

Three years later, CKCU faced its first public crisis: a licence renewal application was denied by the CRTC, which cited an "excessive drive for professionalism". Essentially, the ad department was doing amazing things—with almost no overhead. Volunteers often spent a whole day on one spot. No commercial station could afford to match that.

CKCU gave up its paid-ad revenue, renewed its licence—and panicked. A funding drive was drummed up to make up for the shortfall.

Paid staff, volunteers and listeners all pulled together to help keep the alternative radio dream alive. Now, the funding drive is an annual event—as it is for most non-profit broadcasters.

While music helps define Radio-Carleton for its listeners, public affairs programs reflect its conscience.

Mowbray says that "one of the reasons the station has such a strong public affairs side is that public affairs came first and music came second. The two strong streams were guaranteed."

Over the years, the emphasis on public affairs has attracted several ethnic groups to CKCU-FM. Dr. Harsha Dhejia, the host of *An Indian Morning*, one of the station's longest-running programs, was on the team that applied for the FM licence in 1975.

"Those who had dreams of broadcasting were turned down by other stations, especially when it came to ethnic broadcasting," Dr. Dhejia says. "So when the opportunity presented itself, I took it up. I've never looked back."

Steve Neale, the current Chair of CKCU-FM's Board of Directors, explains that "CKCU FM is a valuable community resource. Many people live here and it's important that they have access to the airwaves."

*Bill White was a public affairs producer and broadcaster at CKCU-FM from 1979-1984. He lives in Chelsea, Quebec and can be contacted by e-mail at bill.white@pwgsc.gc.ca.*

# Content is king and Copyright is the army protecting it

**I**t's an unwritten rule most of us learn early on—if you want to use something that belongs to someone else, get permission first.

What's happening as new technologies emerge daily to leverage the potential of the Internet is that for some the lines between asking and taking and who owns what are becoming blurred. The information highway has opened the virtual doors to the global sharing and exchange of content, and images and sounds of every imaginable kind and combination. As a result, we're seeing more and more entrepreneurs and technology innovators stirring the cyber pot with major implications for copyright-protected content world-wide.

Broadcasters and content creators have been at the forefront on this issue. In defending our products and services from misappropriation we're ensuring the Net remains an appealing and viable tool for the distribution of protected works in the new global market. We fought iCraveTV to uphold these principles.

The shut-down in February 2000 of this Web site by a coalition of Canadian and U.S. broadcasters, producers, and representatives from the film and professional sports industries, signalled that the rights of content creators and copyright owners cannot and must not be ignored.

Let me be very clear: Broadcasters and content creators are not adverse to new legitimate forms of distribution. We argue however that content is the basis and future of the industry. It can only be fostered by a regime that allows for negotiated use and fair exploitation of rights.

The iCraveTV battle raised a red flag over a loophole in the Canadian Copyright Act that told us our copyright law is not strong enough to protect Canadian content and services. Essentially, iCraveTV sought to be considered as just another retransmitter within the compulsory licensing scheme of Section 31 of the Act.

This would allow them, as an Internet retransmitter, to stream television programs once they pay a fee set by the Copyright Board for a compulsory licence. The rub is the law doesn't identify the retransmitters by technology, which leaves the door open to interpretation. The Section also only applies to retransmission in Canada. This overlooks the reality of the Internet where borders and frontiers disappear and the fact its close to impossible to limit access to users in one geographical area based on their Internet Protocol or with firewalls.

The impact and reach of the Internet we know today could not have been foreseen 10 years ago when Section 31 was drafted. Had it been, the definition of retransmitter would have been much different, requiring iCraveTV and other upstarts in the offing like Montreal's JumpTV to ask permission and pay copyright owners.

The Internet is here to stay and no copyright action against one of its users is going to make it disappear. That being said, we need to ensure the Net does not become a lawless free-for-all. If we don't strengthen our Copyright law, we will undermine the progress we have made in developing a Canadian broadcast industry that boasts unique, quality Canadian content. As more broadcasters add the Internet to their business strategy to deliver their content, stream their programs, promote their communities, and develop new sources of revenue, amendments to Canada's Copyright Act become even more urgent.

Canada lags behind Australia, the U.S. and the UK in its Copyright legislation. We must defend our reputation as a progressive jurisdiction by safeguarding our Intellectual Property as other industrialized nations have done, or risk becoming a haven for copyright pirates, subject to market retaliation and international sanction under the WTO. The longer our Copyright law remains as is, the more difficult it will be to encourage



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and support Canadian content and culture that broadcasters depend on and contribute to, and the more challenging it will become to buy programming and export Canadian product.

Simply put, content is king and copyright law is the army that defends it.

The CAB is leading a coalition of broadcasters and content creators calling on the government to amend either the Copyright Act or its regulations, immediately. This initiative is part of our FuturePlan strategy aimed at promoting the establishment of a fair and modern copyright regime that reflects ongoing changes in the Internet age in Canada and on the international stage.

Canada must ensure the Internet does not become the exclusive domain of e-distributors who turn a blind eye to content ownership. We can do this by ensuring private property is respected in Canada and abroad, and by allowing broadcasters and creators to receive their fair share from the use of their work in the burgeoning cybermarket. Content protection and new media development and growth in Canada hinges on a speedy amendment to the Copyright Act. The sooner, the better.

# News reporting is a responsibility: Everything else is crap



Wisconsin-based Barbara Brebner's Production Support Services, Inc. serves commercial and entertainment production companies with production management and auditing services. She can be reached by phone at (920) 336-3748 or by

e-mail at [b4dbirds@wildbirdhq.com](mailto:b4dbirds@wildbirdhq.com).

**A**s I write this I'm toiling here in the Wisconsin wilderness, managing a location shoot for a huge corporation. My job is to find locations, research what's happening at those locations, and support the fancy-pants New York production company in its efforts to make a big deal documentary.

This isn't an unbiased script. The project's mission violates every moral and ethical value I hold dear. It's propaganda, plain and clear.

And yes, I took the gig.

While making calls and getting background information, I learned that the river running through my town is one of the most contaminated and dangerous in the country. The fish, eaten by people who don't know any better and who can't afford store-bought fish, are loaded with PCBs and heavy metals.

Now, I knew some of this before but, prior to doing the research, I had NO idea just how bad the situation really is. I'm probably an anomaly but I read three newspapers a day and watch at least one news broadcast, never mind my radio listening. So, if I'm the anomaly, how does the struggling Laotian family ever know

that the fish they desperately need are going to poison them?

How?

They would know if we told them. They would know if we took journalistic responsibility to heart and tackled the big, ugly stories. Most "newscasts" are borderline infotainment. There's really very little reporting. By that I mean digging into and following the stories no matter which big employer might be offended.

Right now, in towns and villages across North America, people are dumping poison into local rivers. Right now, a little old lady is handing over her life savings to a con artist. Right this minute a politician is taking a kickback.

There IS real news out there, real stories that broadcast news departments have a responsibility to attack, no matter who might pull advertising or who might attempt to strong-arm reporters and managers.

The value of local "news", I believe, has been depreciated to the point of absurdity. Stations will never legitimize news operations unless reporters are encouraged—nay commanded—to take on the real stuff, not just stand in front of a camera blathering about community events.

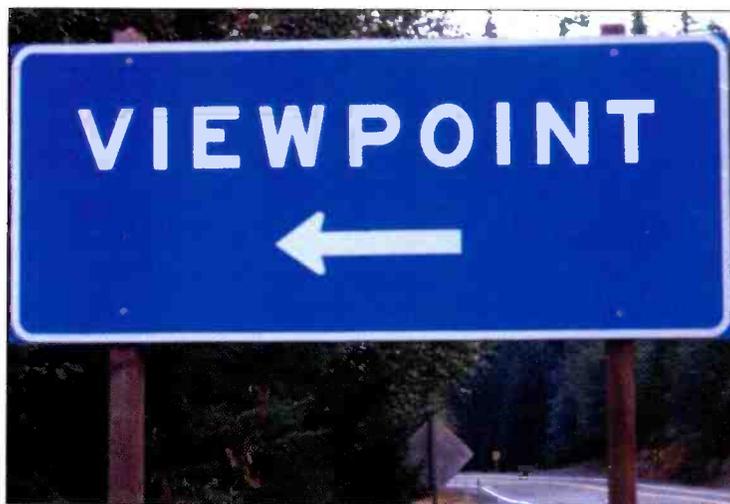
Heck, most of what we see is reporters talking about what used to be called "human interest". This isn't news, and it certainly isn't journalism.

There's real news out there crying for somebody to unearth it and take it to the masses. Real news that will help broadcast operations kick ass in ratings. Real news and real voices that create dedicated viewers and listeners.

What I don't want anymore...what I can't abide anymore...is local TV news that tells me where to find where the Jaycee's Haunted House fundraiser is. I really don't need 90-seconds of video tape for a story that tells me that the local marching band is going to the Rose Parade.

What I DO want to know about is the fact that 39 miles of my local river is a sewer, a potential death-dealing stink hole.

I don't want to see the 90-second bit on the drum majorettes. I really think it's great "Matilda" tuned 100 but I don't need two-



minutes of dumb questions, e.g. "What's the secret of living to be 100?" I really don't care that some local yahoos—knowing full well that the TV and radio folks will eat it up—decide to protest something on a Saturday or a Sunday. Why in the world do we let ourselves be manipulated like this. Ignore the weasels!

LOCAL does not mean caving-in nor does it allow for being lazy.

And, why would chocolate milk spilled on a Canadian politician get the lead and his newser only get a "by the way"? Why do we allow—and consequently encourage—a single yahoo with a cream pie or a container of chocolate milk to hijack the news?

Responsibility. Broadcast newsrooms and their managers have it. We owe it to our communities to be a great deal more than a bulletin board at the laundromat.

# What to do when you've been sold!

It seems that every day in our industry there's another announcement of a merger, acquisition or sale. Two years ago I was personally affected by the acquisition of CISS-FM Toronto by Rogers Broadcasting, and I'm here to say that I lived through it. And it hardly hurt at all. Many of you will inevitably go through one of these major changes and I hope that this personal account will help shed light on the things that happen when your station is sold.

I never even thought about the possibility of working for another company.

Nor did it cross my mind that my employer would ever negotiate the sale of my station. So, it came as somewhat of a surprise when, one cold February night, six men in suits, looking very "Godfather like", suddenly marched in to the station and declared that Rogers had purchased CISS-FM from Rawlco.

That shocking announcement was followed by another—that we would be immediately flipping formats from Country music to Top 40. And then, that was that.

In a five-minute period of the radio station's life, CISS-FM went from playing Garth Brook's *The River to Lauryn Hill's Doo Wop (That Thing)*—not the best mix ever...

My initial reaction was...why didn't they tell me this was going to happen? I'd have gone to a movie and not spent four bloody hours editing the weekend country music logs!

To be honest, my real reaction was a combination of sadness, fear and insecurity.

I was sad that I was no longer employed by a company where I had invested the last seven years of my life. I remember weeping in the meeting after learning that many of my close friends would not be moving with me to the new company, like PD Danny Kingsbury and our GM Sharon Taylor.

I also felt bad for all of the terrific country music artists who would no longer



Julie Adam is Program Director at CISS-FM (Kiss 92 FM) Toronto. She can be reached by phone at 416-935-8420 or by e-mail at jadam@rci.rogers.com.

## BY JULIE ADAM

have a radio outlet in Toronto. And of course, I feared for my own future in radio with Rogers.

Even though that Friday night was very difficult, it ended up being the best thing that has ever happened to my professional career.

If you're about to go through a merger or a significant change, it's important to realize that great things can happen for both the employees and the company. I would never have been given the chance, at that point in my career, to be the Program Director for a radio station in Toronto.

And I am not the only person that was awarded a terrific opportunity. Several people from CISS-FM Country are now in key roles at KISS 92 or other Rogers properties—including the national radio Imaging Director Greg Stevens; the two newly-appointed Promotion Directors, Lianne Tapuska (XFM Vancouver) and Julie Hamilton (Rock 97 Calgary); the Operations Manager for Rogers radio in Toronto, Brenda Selzer; the Chief

Engineer for Vancouver, Rick Dal Farra; and Danny Kingsbury, who is now the GM/PD of CHEZ-FM and the PD of XFM in Ottawa.

For me, the Rogers/Rawlco consolidation allowed me to be part of an amazing company. Rogers is an organization with seemingly endless opportunities. (I've applied for the job of left fielder with the Blue Jays...I'm still waiting to hear.) Plus, I've also been able to grow as a business person. Chuck McCoy, my new boss, has taught me more about radio in a year and a half than I learned since I got out of university.

If you are about to go through a merger, or your station has changed owners, I hope you are able to have the same positive experience that many of us "new people" have had with Rogers. My best advice? Give it a shot. Who knows. Somethin' good just might happen.

(PS: If not...ask for a big severance cheque and send your tape and resume to KISS 92, 777 Jarvis Street, Toronto, ON, M4Y 3B7.)

*This column on programming revolves among program directors from small, medium and major market radio stations across Canada.*

Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP is pleased to announce that Cynthia Rathwell has joined the firm as a senior associate in the Communications Law Practice based in Ottawa.

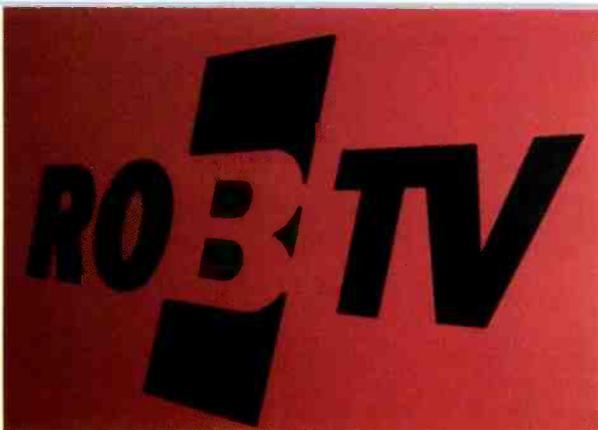


Cynthia is a member of the Public Law and Advocacy Group, providing advice to our clients in the area of broadcasting and communications law. Prior to joining Oslers, she served as Vice-President, Legal Affairs with the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) in Ottawa. Her primary practice focuses on broadcasting law, as well as media content and copyright issues.

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# re-launches from

On September 1, 1999, a partnership comprised of the Globe and Mail, WIC and Cancom launched Report on Business Television, Canada's first all-business news network and one of the country's last analog licensees. The genre that is Canadian all-business television, however, did not come into its own modern and unique form until one year later when ROBTV re-launched from its new, state-of-the-art broadcast centre in downtown Toronto.

The new facility provides ROBTV with the ability to expand its programming schedule, dramatically improve its graphics and on-air look, and offer advertisers and other clients services such as the development of customized business-oriented programming. The new facility has also put ROBTV and Globe Interactive, the online division of the Globe and Mail, under one roof, thus allowing the two companies to better work together on multi-media sales initiatives and to set the stage for enhanced convergence.

However, as anyone in television who has built a new broadcast centre can tell you, the process—from site selection to technical implementation to physically moving—is both complex and costly; a process that eventually boils down to a switch from an old system to one that is new. And when your product is live business news, everyone—from owners to advertisers to viewers—is watching.

Due to a variety of regulatory and corporate issues, the initial launch of ROBTV was an exercise in speed and sacrifice. The entire process—from conceptual planning to airing our first broadcast—occurred in just 60 days whereas most specialty channels benefit from a launch window that extends from nine to 16 months. And to compound the challenge facing our new staff, the single biggest Canadian business story of 1999—the fight to merge Canada's two major airlines between Air Canada and Canadian-backed ONEX Corp.—broke the day the network officially went on air.

Prior to the opening of ROBTV's new broadcast centre, the network's operations were divided between three locations. Master control and transmission facilities were provided by ONtv Hamilton, the administrative staff were housed in the mbanx tower at Bay and Bloor and the network's team of editorial and production staff worked out of rented facilities operated by Electric Entertainment at Carleton and Jarvis streets. Not only did this multi-site arrangement dramatically increase ROBTV's fibre optic line costs, but the network faced a number of graphical and production limitations.

The search for a single and permanent home for ROBTV commenced in November 1999 with the hiring of John Camp, ROBTV's first Vice President of Technology and Broadcast Operations. John's mandate was to build a facil-

ity that would provide ROBTV's management and editorial staff with the necessary tools to offer Canadians the best business and personal finance news on television.

Given ROBTV's status as a television network tightly focussed on business and finance, the two key considerations in selecting a location for the network's new broadcast centre were proximity to Toronto's financial district and finding a building with the logistical and technical specifications to accommodate a television studio. Ideally, ROBTV wanted a highly visible street-level presence at or near the epicentre of Canadian finance: the intersection of King and Bay streets. Unfortunately, there were a paucity of buildings in Toronto's downtown core that were able to house a street-level television studio and its accompanying administration offices.

The search for a new location ended just west of the financial district near the corner of Toronto's King and Bathurst streets. Once a relatively run-down area of the city known for its taverns and textile operations, the King West area has seen a growing number of new economy firms locate there as well as condominium developments and a wide selection of new cafes, restaurants and bistro-type bars. ROBTV and Globe Interactive signed a lease for space on the 9th and 10th floors at 720 King Street West, a 26-year-old building undergoing a complete renovation.

At 720 King Street West, ROBTV selected office and studio space on the 10th (top) floor of the building. This was the only space in the building that allowed ROBTV to have a 50'x 50' studio as the contractors were able to remove a supporting column on the 10th floor without compromising the building's structural integrity. The displaced column allowed us to have four to six shooting locations with unimpeded views across the studio, which was a major objective of our production team.

Finally, some significant electrical changes were also required at 720 King Street West to accommodate the power demands of a television studio that were three times the consumption expected by the landlord. As anyone in broadcast will know, few people outside the business fully appreciate and understand the amount of power consumed and heat generated by a television operation. With the help of



*Mark Jan Vrem, General Manager and Chief Operating Officer of Report on Business Television*

# new broadcast centre

BY MARK JAN VREM

Goven Brown, the construction managers, the building was readied for the development of a television studio.

Building issues aside, the real challenge for John's team was to blend as much of our existing technology with a variety of new systems within a three-month install cycle. To assist us with this project, ROBTv hired Applied Electronics to act as integrator. Both ROBTv and Applied made it very clear to all prospective and actual vendors that the short install window did not allow for experimentation with vapour wear. ROBTv required products and services that were on the leading edge of technology and ready for integration in a very short period of time. In total, ROBTv purchased and integrated six key systems:

- **Traffic:** ROBTv purchased Stars Two Plus, a Windows NT-based traffic system from VCI. The relatively new version is an emerging product that was particularly well positioned to integrate with our automation system.

- **Automation:** For its automation system, ROBTv selected Florical. Florical was willing to develop and modify its system to accomplish the ambitious automation goals that ROBTv had established from the outset.

- **Graphics:** The primary value proposition of a business television channel to its viewers is its ability to provide real time stock market data and state-of-the-art graphics to visually highlight those equities being examined. ROBTv hired VDS 1 to provide the network with Chyron's Duet, a custom-written software package that uses an IIX data feed to provide the network with the graphics that viewers require to make informed decisions about the market.

- **Video Servers:** To provide ROBTv's editorial staff with the ability to almost immediately begin cutting various stories from a single video and audio feed, the network purchased two ASC VR 300 NT computers from Leitch. Each server provides the network with 100 hours of storage and staff can begin editing a story between four and seven seconds after recording has commenced. One server is now used for editing purposes while the other is used for either commercial or long format play outs.

- **Switcher:** The network purchased the Kalypso Switcher from the Grass Valley Group. Kalypso is one of the most advanced production switchers on the market and ROBTv



was the first install in Canada for this product.

- **Newsroom:** Open Media, the newsroom editorial system and "Star Drive", the newsroom automation system, were purchased from ANN. Together, they allow ROBTv's editorial staff to digitize incoming video, utilize low resolution browsing on their desktops and have all over-the-shoulder and lower-third graphics automated.

In order to effectively staff and operate these varied systems, ROBTv integrated the network's traffic, technology and operations divisions. There was also an enormous amount of training required to equip our employees, both on- and off-air, with the knowledge necessary to utilize the network's new technology.

The narrow install window resulted in a steep learning curve, but the network now benefits from having a well-trained and highly flexible group of staff working behind the scenes. Moving forward, the team's primary challenge is to build upon our graphical look and enhanced automation to ensure that we are achieving the most out of the systems that we have purchased.

Since ROBTv's initial launch in September 1999, much has changed. The network's ownership has evolved due to regulatory and corporate decisions, our production schedule has been expanded both during and outside of prime time and we clearly employ the strongest team of reporters and anchors in Canadian business television. ROBTv now has the ability to develop customized business programming for clients and to produce segments and shows for syndication.

Such obvious on-air changes, however, were only made possible by a methodical, multi-million dollar move that saw the purchase and integration of various complex systems and their housing in a new broadcast centre that truly is state-of-the-art. To arrange a tour, I would invite readers of *Broadcast Dialogue* to contact John Camp (jcamp@robtv.com) or myself.

Mark Jan Vrem is General Manager and Chief Operating Officer of Report on Business Television. He can be contacted by telephone at (416) 957-8139 or by e-mail at mjanvrem@robtv.com.



John Camp, ROBTv's Vice President of Technology and Broadcast Operations

# Be more productive in all areas of life if less involved with “self”



*John Gorman is President of John Franklin & Associates. He can be reached by phone at (905) 889-6828 or by e-mail at therep@home.com*

I'm having one of those days. An appointment I had set up for 1:00 P.M. was bumped to 4:00—in the heart of the rush hour; they tell me they can't find my shirts at the cleaners; I put enough money in a parking meter for two hours and it gave me 33 minutes, during which I raced into the passport office to get forms for my daughter who resides in the U.S., and now my wife tells me that I've been given the wrong forms.

On top of which I went to the doctor this morning for my annual check-up

and discovered that I'm an inch and half shorter than I thought I was—in height.

He also suggested I was grossly overweight and that most of my complaints were to be expected at my age.

Terrific.

This is all somewhat incompatible with my plan to write a column about recharging the batteries for the New Year.

I have always admired people who approach the annual opening of a new chapter of their life with childlike optimism. It's as if the turning of a page on a calendar provides an opportunity to awake reborn, free of sloth, procrastination and the bad habits it has taken one a lifetime to perfect.

Mind you, my admiration is tempered with suspicion. Such enthusiasm for radical change suggests that one is not truly aware of the magnitude of their defects. As an example, I didn't even know I was short.

Nevertheless, everywhere one turns during this season there are urgent admonitions to clean up one's act and do better in that segment of your life described as The New Year. (This is not to be confused with The Broadcast Year, The Fiscal Year, The Tax Year, etc.)

In the past I've used the occasion to make a list of promises to myself that Ghandi couldn't have lived up to. A typ-

ical make-over memo always included, but was not restricted to, such items as quitting smoking, quitting drinking, losing 50 pounds, jogging 30 minutes a day, never being late for meetings, having management reports and financial reviews completed by deadline, never losing my temper, being a more considerate husband/father/boss, having dinner alone with my wife at least once a week and doing more volunteer work in the community.

You get the message.

I was doomed to fail on most counts from the beginning. This invariably led to more smoking and drinking which made it impossible to jog, lose weight or be nice to anybody, let alone become more efficient at anything.

Fortunately, over the years I have learned to set more realistic, perhaps attainable goals. Of course better health habits are sensible objectives, but I can't expect myself to consistently provide a negative response to the question "do you want fries with that?"

So while I will try (again) to consume fewer carbohydrates, my targets for the coming year will be limited to a short list of sensible items.

If I make the necessary effort, my business objectives will be achieved. I would suggest that most of us can be reasonably successful in this area of life if we apply liberal measures of discipline, energy and enthusiasm.

It's in the quality of life areas I find myself coming up short and in need of improvement. I get so busy making certain that my perceived needs are met that I fail to recognize those of others.

If I can develop the habit of "listening" to those who are close to me I find that, by some magic, I become a more complete person and a more effective employee or manager. If I can be less involved with "self" I become more productive in all areas of my life.

As a friend of mine says "if I can put the other guy first and me second, I'll consider myself a success."

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# Hello digital, goodbye glass ceiling?

**I**t was exciting to hear encouraging words on the future of women in business from Geraldine Laybourne, Chair, CEO and founder of Oxygen Media, an "integrated media brand that supervises modern women by combining the best qualities of the Internet and television". Before founding her digital empire, Laybourne was President of Disney/ABC Cable Networks following several years at the helm of Nickelodeon. And when she talks, people listen; in 1996 she was named one of the 25 most influential Americans by Time Magazine for her work at Nickelodeon. So, her views on how women are likely to fare in the digital environment were highly anticipated in a rare Canadian appearance.

The occasion which brought Ms. Laybourne to Toronto on October 2 was a Canadian Women in Communications event called *Digital Seduction—The Love Affair between Broadcasting and the Internet*. Ms. Laybourne gave the keynote address, followed by two panel discussions involving industry leaders and digital experts on what's happening as Internet and TV converge and the impact it's having on communications and associated industries.

As part of her address, Ms. Laybourne offered *The Top Ten Reasons Why The Digital Revolution Will Be Good for Women*. I don't have the space here to talk about all 10 of her points, but you can find her remarks on the CWC website—[www.cwc-afc.com](http://www.cwc-afc.com).

Finally, a playing field that favours

women (unlike poor Ginger Rogers who had to do everything Fred Astaire did, but backwards and in high heels.) This echoes the views of a number of futurists, saying that when people talk about the qualities of leadership that will win out in the 21st century, they use female words—intuitive, collaborative, inclusive. It's a world filled with webs and networks, replacing the hierarchies of the military command and control management model to create an environment that plays toward women's traditional strengths.

Whether women love to shop or not, they're still the chief purchasing agents and everybody knows it. Women control the majority of purchasing decisions and the digital environment provides the tools to enhance this role by sharing information, tracking needs, getting together to do bulk purchases and to pressure discounts (i.e. Mercata), and to buy in new ways (i.e. Priceline).

No woman wants to be an island. Traditional social structures isolated women in certain situations. The digital environment will reduce this isolation with greater ease of access to information-providing opportunities to stay-at-home mothers, curious teens and remote grandmothers to explore, or learn and mingle, get involved, stay connected and gain control of their time.

To Ms. Laybourne, the lure of creating something that would combine the internet and television to serve women in this exciting time was strong enough to move her from her rarefied perch at Disney. While her outlook on the cyber-economy is bullish, she advises that the move to digital is really an evolution, not a revolution, and to get it right those who are addressing the cybermarket need to keep consumers (that means women) at the centre of the evolution.



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## Stress This, Part II— More encouraging news

On another note, in October I wrote about the impact of stress on the workplace and the bottom line. Since then, I've noticed two major articles in the national media talking not only about the impact of stress, depression and other mental health issues in the workplace as a business issue, but also suggesting ways to approach the issue.

On top of that, a very interesting conference was held October 25 called *Walking the Worklife Tightrope*. One of its key focuses was ensuring that the needs of children are fully met in the juggling act of families. It provided a how-to for three main areas: Becoming an Employer of Choice, Developing Work-Life Harmony and Parenting in a Time-Pressured World. Conference Chair, Dr. Barbara Moses, told me that "Demands on employees have escalated in the institutionalized leanness of the workplace. But workers, especially in the knowledge economy, see work-life balance as a right, not a privilege, for various reasons—20-somethings want to run marathons, 30-somethings are parenting young children and 40-somethings are sandwiched between caring for kids and parents."

Dr. Moses says working toward a better balance is an important business issue, not simply a "nice to have" for employers. "It's a productivity issue. Tired, worried and stressed employees are not productive," she said.

# New technologies could reposition radio as the market-dominant medium

BY RALPH LUCAS

The image of a box of Kellogg's Corn Flakes has become one of the icons of the mass-marketing age and is as instantly recognizable as any corporate logo. So when the cover of the New York Times Magazine (August 13, 2000) featured an exploding box of my favorite breakfast cereal it really got my attention. The accompanying headline was equally compelling: *The End of the Mass Market*.

The article, by Michael Lewis, is about a new technology that promises to bring an end to the mass market as it has come to be defined: Television. While international corporations will always use print, outdoor and radio in their media mix, the backbone of any media plan is TV. With some of the best commercials costing upwards of \$250,000 to produce (some going as high as \$3 million), corporations and agencies need to ensure that investment pays.

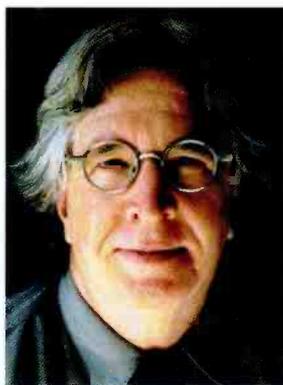
Having lots of eyes seeing your commercial is critical. But thanks to the rapidly growing use of a new technology, Michael Lewis predicts a bleak future for the mass marketer.

Right now a significant number of households watch prime time TV on their own schedule thanks to the VCR, but tape can capture only eight hours of content, complete with commercials.

Enter TiVO and Replay—two companies hoping to break the VCRs dominant position. Instead of tape that degrades, stretches and often breaks, both systems use memory chips. For somewhere between \$US399 and \$US499 these systems provide 30 hours of content storage. But what's important is the feature that allows viewers to skip, or almost skip, commercials. Unlike video where "Fast Forward" still allows some of the message to be seen, TiVO features three forward speeds: fast, faster, and faster-faster, leaving ads that whiz past in a blur. Replay, however, comes with a button on its remote titled QuickSkip and it simply eliminates the commercials.

Having the potential to basically avoid commercials for five prime-time hours a night, six nights a week is scary enough, but it's only the beginning. Both systems can gather information on what viewers actually watch and what they don't.

In the U.S., audience data is based on numbers provided by Nielsen Media Research and their sample of 5,000 homes. They measure which shows get watched. TiVO and



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Replay started shipping their product in March 1999. By June 2000 they estimate combined sales of 100,000 units. They predict sales of five- to seven-million units by the end of 2002 and within 10 years hope to be in 90 million homes. They are verging on having pinpoint accuracy of what people watch and what they don't. While ultimately this will bring far tighter targets and far more accurate target marketing, the era of the real mass market will have dawned. As the article states: The question isn't "How does P&G sell soap?" but "How does P&G survive?"

A possible answer could be radio. Since the first wave of specialty channels debuted over a decade ago, I have believed radio might one day enjoy a measured resurgence as a mass market medium. The continued fragmentation of the TV universe through specialty channel

proliferation coupled with technologies like TiVO or Replay, plus what might be available in the near future, means its impact—while possibly remaining supreme—will none-the-less diminish.

Radio's ability to influence buying decisions right into the parking lots of shopping malls is unmatched and should remain that way no matter how many specialty channels arise. Radio's ability to dominate specific geographic areas is also unmatched. The concept of the specialty channel is to form ad hoc communities of like-minded viewers across the country and, through Internet distribution, around the world. That's fine as long as you're not trying to sell 400,000 new cars in the Greater Toronto Area every year. For that you need something a lot more focussed.

Depending on how digital radio receivers are developed there could easily be a time in the very near future when a listener will be able to download a sales coupon at the push of a button, printed right from the radio, or on a mobile printer, or embedded as a piece of information on a loyalty listener card slipped into an ATM-like slot in the radio.

While new technologies may mean an end to the mass market as we know it, new radio technologies—combined with radio's inherent strength in certain areas—will help reposition radio as the market-dominant medium it was always meant to be.

# Radio – the momentum continues

**T**oday, advertisers and broadcasters are operating in a world of incredible change. Whether from a marketing perspective, learning how to utilize and embrace e-commerce, or from a technology perspective, learning how to utilize the Internet or digital highways for transmission of the broadcast signal, change and new opportunities are all around us. For every new opportunity that is presented, there are a multitude of answers as to which approach will be successful.

Not all answers will prove to be correct. However, one thing is for certain; radio is emerging as a leader in this dynamic era. A leader that is growing both in revenue and stature.

Let's look at some of the signposts that are indicating radio's growing leadership position:

## **Radio—Its Growing Share of Market**

In 1999, radio revenue grew 3.4% to \$952-million, outpacing the advertising industry that grew only 2.2%. Advertisers are looking for effective ways to reach the consumer and radio provides one of the answers. Looking at the recent TRAM Reports, there is no question radio will touch \$1 billion in sales by the end of 2000.

## **Consolidation Helps Improve Radio**

Consolidation of radio stations has been good for all of the radio industry, whether it be a stand-alone operation or a large corporation. It has created pressure on the total talent pool, increasing the professionalism of every station. It has, to a certain degree, made the purchase of the medium easier and, importantly, has provided a more unified sales force that sells radio first. All are important ingredients that help keep radio growing.

## **Radio Works Symbiotically with the Internet**

All traditional media are in a state of flux and, in varying degrees, under attack from both changing consumer usage habits and from the growth of Internet utilization. Canadian magazines are being impacted negatively from the growth of U.S. publications coming over the border; television, from the standpoint of fragmentation and new personal recording devices like TiVo and TV Playback; newspapers, with declining circulation; and outdoor, with declining available prime real estate. All of these media, to some degree, are also being negatively impacted by changing consumer usage habits when regarded in conjunction with Internet usage.

It is, however, in company with the Internet that radio is beginning to shine. Radio's usage pattern, alongside the Internet, is stable due to its passive nature. We can surf the net while listening to our favourite local station on the net or on terrestrial radio. It also provides radio with tremendous cross-platform sales opportunities not only in selling traditional radio, but also on its companion Web site.

Additionally, as radio content evolves onto the Internet, radio will excel in its ability to attract and maintain ears and eyes, that being radio's forte. Radio knows how to hold an audience through exciting programming 24 hours per day, seven days a week.

The skill sets are transferable from terrestrial radio to Internet radio to build and maintain audience loyalty.

## **Radio Offers Advertisers Target Ability**

Advertisers are looking for ways to target the key consumers, both geographically and psychographically, and radio provides that target ability. Radio is demanding more and more of the advertiser communication dollar due to its pinpoint effectiveness, not to mention its economical creative production.

## **RTS Qualitative Study Will Become Gold Standard**

The Return to Sample Qualitative



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Study will provide radio broadcasters with the tools to provide exceptional intelligence about an advertiser's consumer while, at the same time, providing information on the effectiveness of radio. When this study is released in 2001, it will provide in-depth information in 10 key markets across Canada plus a National over-sample with more than 39,000 respondents that RMB is proud to sponsor. RTS Canada will become, over time, the gold standard of qualitative research within the advertising community.

These signposts, and more, show that radio has the momentum to carry the medium forward well into this century. Radio is in a leadership position to continue its gains and effectively manage the convergence of technology.

The Radio Marketing Bureau is proud of the role it is playing with advertisers, to act as a catalyst to effectively position radio as the medium to achieve results for today and tomorrow in the vast communications arsenal available to clients.

# The urge to merge and converge



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BY GUY SKIPWORTH

**//** Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there." Mark Twain's words were written many years ago, but they were certainly taken to heart by the broadcasting sector in the first year of the new millennium.

The past year featured a wave of new corporate combinations, transformations and permutations. Friendly mergers were the order of the day. So it's not as though the companies involved were run over. Many of these corporate arrangements were labelled as examples of "convergence". In reality most of the mergers seemed to have had their germination in a "big-is-crucial-to-our-survival" mentality.

Broadcasters' efforts to "bulk up" have been partly in response to consolidation on the part of those who connect the audience to the broadcaster. Who has the leverage, the content providers or the

companies delivering the content? And is this "convergence" really new?

The marriage of print and broadcast is not a new phenomenon. In fact the first radio station in Toronto, CFCA (Canada's First Covers America,) was owned by the Toronto Star. In 1929, CFRB became the first station to broadcast news from the editorial room of a newspaper—The Globe. The newspaper established an "announcing corps" and broadcast three newscasts per day. (An early forerunner to today's ROBTv where Globe and Mail reporters are seen speaking on camera from the newsroom.)

Looking back, the past 12 months provided an interesting tutorial in corporate strategy as various broadcasters explained the rationale for choosing a particular path to growth.

"We think there's room for both (alliances and acquisitions). But certainly our alliances with AT&T and Microsoft have been extraordinarily successful. We have been enriched with ideas and technology and excellent advice," said Ted Rogers of Rogers Communications Inc. as quoted in the Globe and Mail.

Jean Monty, CEO of BCE, told the CRTC during the CTV hearing "alliances are inherently unstable". Monty explained that alliances present a problem when a company like BCE promotes a partner's product, and a competitor later purchases the partner. "You have lost significant value that you spent a lot of money and time to create." In short the partner becomes a competitor.

Conversely, Telus CEO Darren Entwistle was quoted as saying: "If you decide to own content, then what about all those other content providers that you might like to have partnered with? Well, all of a

sudden, they don't become potential partners. They start to see you as a competitor."

Regardless of the path chosen to grow, Canadian broadcasters have increased their strength in order to increase the ability to compete in an ever-changing sector—one in which it is difficult to predict how consumers will react to new products and what they are willing to pay.

The answers won't be easy to find, but the North American Broadcasters Association works to harvest the best intelligence about new and best practices in North America and beyond.

One of the great benefits of the work of NABA is that members have an opportunity to dialogue

with senior management from the largest broadcasting organizations on the continent. Whether it's a committee meeting at Televisa in Mexico City, or a technical demonstration at Fox Broadcasting in Los Angeles or a board meeting at CTV in Toronto, NABA members acquire terrific first-hand insights into the benefits and challenges of corporate consolidation from the people who are

making these changes happen.

Last month, for example, Don Wear Jr., President of International Policy for Discovery Communications, provided NABA members with a roadmap to navigate the media landscape during a breakfast meeting at NetStar in Toronto. And, in late February NABA's Broadcasting Forum will be held in Hollywood where a number of issues will be examined, including the protection of creative content, by speakers such as Jack Valenti, CEO of the Motion Pictures Association of America. For more information about the Broadcasting Forum visit [www.nabanet.com/hollywood.html](http://www.nabanet.com/hollywood.html).

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# Internet Intellectual Property Issues: Beyond the typical gripes

BY JASON SCOTT ALEXANDER

With words like "Napster", "MP3", and "DivX" circulating in the media everywhere we look these days, it is clear that public interest has taken the topic of Internet intellectual property from the legal backrooms and courthouses to the water coolers and martini lounge circuit. Heated discussions over whether what the latest dot.com start-up is doing is legit or not have become as commonplace as barbing your co-workers about their favourite overpaid sports hero's play of the night before.

While the mainstream tech pundits have been focussing their attention, or should I say their wish-lists, towards the sexy aforementioned technologies—candy-coated with pop music icons for consumption by the 16-24 year old crowd—little attention has been given to the topic of copyright as it applies to products of integrated Internet technologies, "traditional content", designs, and code.

When the editor at *Broadcast Dialogue* and I first discussed this article, I admit I was a little nervous about dedicating a feature to such a seemingly bland and dry topic. Or so I thought.

After talking with lawyers and Internet infrastructure colleagues of mine, it turns out that "convergence media" companies have much more to be concerned about when it comes to the Internet than simply music royalties and pirated video streams. What about some of your most valuable assets, such as your identity, market branding, and style marks? How about that proprietary web-coding you've spent a small fortune of time and money on? Not nearly enough attention has been given to the question of "traditional" Internet Protocol (IP) that gets placed on the Net, nor what many are calling "infrastructure IP"—the code that runs your site, your pages, your databases... and security!

## Starting from the top

We've seen it coming. We've been hyped. We've been sold on it. We've even got the hip lingo to go with it—call it new media, interactive media, convergence media, future media, whichever—it's here, and now we're digging in and developing it.

Just as the unprecedented technologies behind Napster and iCraveTV made their respective industries of target sit up and take notice, both traditional broadcasters-cum-convergence pioneers and new breeds of non-traditional "datacasters" will surely be developing technologies of their own that will push the envelopes of IP, albeit in different ways. What we currently consider to be the leading edge of broadcast convergence is absolutely nothing in comparison to what it has the potential to become.

But do we really know what our legal safety zones are? Should there even be safety zones, or do we go for broke and let technology fall where it may, again like Napster?

First we should examine the hardware aspect of the Internet. Who really owns, if at all, the infrastructure of the Net and its underlying technologies? Is there a potential down the road for some sort of a "toll" to be paid to the developers of Net infrastructure?

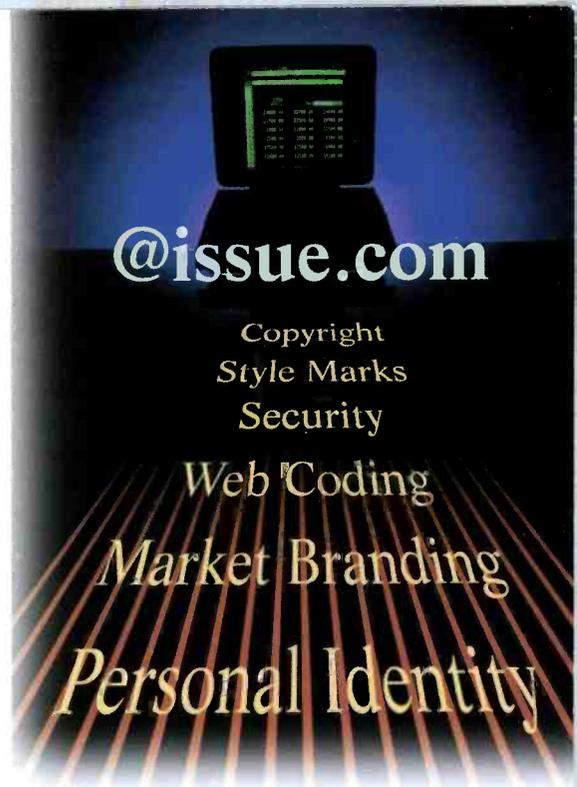
"Nobody owns the infrastructure," confirms Toronto-based Internet Intellectual Property and e-commerce lawyer Mike Erdle, a partner with Deeth Williams Wall.

"That is one of the benefits of the Internet. Open standards are set by international bodies. Anyone can add 'plumbing' to the Network. There are many competing suppliers—JDS Uniphase, Nortel, Lucent, Cisco, just to name a few—so no one can assert a monopoly the way the phone companies or the cable companies used to."

Considering the importance of the Internet, the general principle of competition law would prohibit an individual or company from imposing tools or royalties to be paid for the use of various parts of the Internet. Rather, the restrictions that a hardware supplier places on the use of its components are likely to be general contract issues, but won't affect the public's access to the technology on the net in any way. Intellectual property issues often arise in the case of hardware cloning, where the originator holds IP rights in the form of patents or trade secrets that are infringed by the manufacture, use or sale of the cloned components.

What this means to the broadcast industry is an uninhibited growth potential without fear of being shut out of a new trend or otherwise proprietary development. A prime example of this would be in the future development of ultra-high capacity net connections and transfers. Today, it's hard to fathom any Internet broadcaster being able to service the tens of millions of simultaneous TV-quality streams that current traditional network broadcasters require. You'd sure hate to have competition come up with the infrastructure technology to do so and restrict its use only to their backbone.

Dig a little bit deeper. When company ABC implements



a proprietary software technology on their web site—be it a server-side application, a distribution technology (again, such as Napster), customized JavaScript, downloadable applets, etc.—is it automatically considered to be pseudo public domain, for lack of a better word? (Use at your own risk, perhaps?)

According to the lawyers, not at all. It is regarded as being protected intellectual property first, until otherwise stated.

### **The (free) buck stops here**

Creators of copyrightable works automatically have a copyright as soon as the works are created and “fixed” in a tangible form e.g. written down, coded, recorded, etc. Discovering what is published and what is public domain, however, is not a straightforward claim.

“A lot of the technologies have been made available to the public. Linux, for example, is an ‘open source’ technology—although now there are some proprietary programs that use the Linux platform. I think a lot of this is confusing to people. They don’t know what is public and what is private any more. So it is easy for them to assume everything is public,” says Erdle.

Leonora Hoicka, Staff Counsel and Patent Portfolio Manager in the IP Law and Licensing Department of IBM Corporation, stresses that we must observe Internet software application technologies the same way we do traditional software code, or books for that matter.

“In my opinion, it is not any different. Computer software is recognized under the Canadian Copyright Act as a literary work (Section 2), and I can see no reason to apply a different standard for copyright protection to a Java applet that produces an animated figure on a Web site and to digitized multimedia data,” observes Hoicka.

So, the word of caution here is not to go around ripping off the coolest new JavaScript to hit your block, or to try tweaking a competitor’s new page technology. Chances are you’ll be committing copyright infringement.

Furthermore, subtleties such as cases of inserting HTML meta-tags (keywords), hyperlinks, or frames containing unauthorized third-party registered names, phrases, trademarks, logos and so on have already been successfully won by rights holders in courts of law. This is to prevent the owner of Joe Blow Startup Inc. from attracting visitors to his site via search engines, simply by including popular names such as “CNN” or “MuchMusic”, as examples, in his meta tags. Even linking to a site without their permission could be risky, for that particular site’s ownership may not want to be associated with yours.

To be safe, the lawyers suggest that you place a notice on your site indicating that you provide links to external sites, controlled and maintained by other companies, organizations and/or individuals, and that you are not responsible for the content of these external sites, nor do you promise the content presented therein to be accurate, or that the quality of products or services featured on the sites to which you link reflect your company’s endorsement. Furthermore, it’s better practice to use plain text links to other sites; using an icon or logo could constitute misuse of the trademark represented by that logo.

You should also be aware of the extreme legal ramifications behind framing technology. When radio and TV stations first started developing their Web sites for listeners,

some were not yet equipped to stream their signals over the net, so they offered interim services such as “encapsulating” third-party services, such as CNN news streams, Bloomberg stock reports, or Top-10 audio charts, within frames or pop-up windows on their own site. While this may at first appear to be “fair use” or “borrowing” from fellow media outlets for the better good of all, framing has different legal consequences from mere linking.

The problem arises from the fact that framing can constitute unfair competition or trademark infringement, as you are “passing off” material from someone else as being your own, possibly implying an association between companies that does not actually exist. If you are making an income from your site through banner ads, it could be argued that you’re “using” the popularity of the external, possibly international, source material to draw visitors to your site simply to generate more revenue from your local ads. It could even be argued that any referral to your services or on-air personalities could be misinterpreted as including association or accreditation by these external sources.

### **Jurisdiction, Control & Security**

One can’t help but talk about security measures and jurisdictional issues when discussing Internet IP. Where you are located and in whose legal ballpark you are playing can often make or break your business model. The legal ground you stand on isn’t necessarily backed on the same ground that your company does. As you know, Bill Craig and the ill-fated iCraveTV found that out the hard way.

Our laws seem to work quite well, though, as long as our courts have jurisdiction. And with the Internet, that is a big “if”; sites originating within Canada are very likely to be accessed in other countries. Both “community standards” and IP regulations can differ vastly between them—especially between eastern countries and western countries. Furthermore, registrations in Canada will do no good if the infringer is not located in Canada, has no assets in Canada and whose server is not located in Canada. Of late, this has been working the other way around—with U.S. companies “heading north” to Canada to set up shop, so as to avoid claims by U.S. copyright holders.

“IP rights are territorial in nature,” explains Andy Jarzyna of Ottawa’s Macera & Jarzyna. “Each country has different laws and there are different forms of protection available. The big problem with the Internet is that it is very expensive to obtain protection on a worldwide scale, and a careful infringer can stay out of jurisdictions in which protection has been obtained. This is not a new problem; however, the Internet provides instant exposure on a worldwide scale and magnifies the problems which existed before.”

Because digital works are more malleable than works in other media, new concerns arise about authenticity and integrity.

To a copyright owner, protection of distribution is of utmost importance. We are entering into an era where the control of content is becoming more and more important. The most recent mergers in the communications and telecommunications fields emphasizes this trend.

Hoicka advises that taking protective measures is essential at this stage in the game. She explains that new-media companies, with highly converging areas of IP interests, should begin by taking a look at the numerous

technologies currently available, and in development, that can provide Web site security, copy protection for data, watermark protection for the identification of corporate identities and logos, etc.

"I would say protect yourself. If companies want to use the Internet, they should take adequate protective measures. IBM and many other suppliers are continually innovating to develop new technologies to protect against piracy and IP infringements," instructs Hoicka.

### Copyright or Copywrong?

Ironically, the two main factors contributing to intellectual property's rough ride of late are what make the Net such a powerful tool and medium in the first place: an open architecture with far-reaching peer-to-peer access capabilities, and an incredibly fast distribution, or pass-along rate.

By its very nature, the Internet is nothing more than a continuously growing repository of information, and whether that information be considered public or private is strictly up to the individual creators, or current owners.

This, combined with the growing perception that the Web is an open-source creative pool, has led to the development of numerous grey areas, legally, ethically and, with regard to old-fashioned business models, fundamentally.

Seeing as how music file-sharing has gone completely out of control, some cyber-analysts and critics have been so bold as to predict the complete abandonment of [traditional] notions of intellectual property.

Copyrights, trademarks, patents—a thing of the past when it comes to the Net?

"Hardly", say the lawyers. "Absolutely", say the critics.

Notable technology observers, such as John Perry Barlow, don't see much future for copyright as we currently know it. He believes that the success of "idea creators", as he calls them, will be safely insured by factors such as strengthened relationships between the creator and the user, contributed in part by the heightened convenience and massive scale of network-based sharing. Ethical powers will, he assures, force users to form a compensatory relationship with the creator, similar to leaving a tip for a server at a restaurant—because it's the right thing to do. Lawyers aren't so sure about such naive proposals (of course!), especially when you take the fun factor of entertainment services out of the equation. After all, who is really going to pay for a whack of HTML code that can easily be "ripped" from someone else's Web site and jazzed up for your own site? And are you about to get permission from the owners for every single outgoing hyperlink you place on your pages?

So, again, is the concept of copyright dead?

"No. If we look at this historically, we see that the development of copyright laws and international copyright treaties arose when innovations such as the development and automation of the printing press made possible the rampant piracy of the works of popular artists of the day such as Hogarth and, later, Mark Twain," says Hoicka.

"Over the past few centuries we have evolved away from the idea of a common pool to the understanding that copyright is a property right, and that copyright owners are entitled to control the distribution and copying of their creations."

That evolution of legal perspective is ongoing, with cyberspace replacing the printing press. Question is, will the increased interactivity of our new globalized sharing com-

munity be too much of a burden for old-fashioned laws based on tangible goods and physical methods of distribution to handle?

Erdle doesn't see this as posing a problem. "Traditional [legal] ideas will have to change, but basic concepts of property are still necessary. Material published on the Internet [in any form] is not 'public domain' any more than a book becomes public domain when it is published," he says.

He admits that cases such as Napster's have brought into the spotlight the ethical questions necessary to rewrite traditional ideas. Still, there is a massive learning curve that both the public and the lawmakers must become educated with.

"I think people are beginning to understand that there is something wrong with copying other people's material, whether it is text, audio, video, or software, without their permission. Unfortunately, it is so easy to do, that many people ignore their conscience and go ahead and copy. It is also quite easy to rationalize that: 'it doesn't really hurt anyone if I make a copy. They're still making lots of money.' But it's like littering, pretty soon everyone is doing it and then it does hurt everyone." As far as the lawmakers themselves go, they must become educated with the way in which our industry's technologies work and develop—and at the amazing speeds with which they do so. As well, a fundamental understanding of the overwhelming consumer demand, and our incumbency to respond to it, must be had in order to massage the law books in a way which does not hinder industrial progression. All while keeping in mind that IP is still IP, and must be protected.

Johanne Gauthier, Technology team coordinator at Ogilvy Renault in Montreal, along with partners Claude Brunet, a guru of Canadian Copyright law, and Benoit Clermont, an IP lawyer with the firm explain: "Intellectual property concepts have always adapted themselves to technological innovations. From the advent of sound recordings to radio broadcasting, to public performances of cinematographic works to cable retransmission and satellite distribution, copyright concepts have always been able to adjust without being an impeachment to the development of technology, nor to creativity or freedom of communication."

But can the legal "two-stroke" engine keep up with the supersonic jets of 21st century Internet technology? We're seeing more and more cases bypassing the courts altogether and heading straight for arbitration through organizations such as WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization). Furthermore, settlements prior to an actual trial are becoming a lot more common, as both sides of an argument fear the inevitable mountain of legal costs involved with arbitrating precedent-setting cases.

"It is more in the nature of law to follow a technological development than to precede such development. There will always be a time gap between the arrival of a technology and an opportunity for a tribunal to render a decision concerning said technology," defends the Ogilvy Renault team.

"The increased number of settlements or arbitration cases is not a sign that intellectual property laws are not able to adapt to new technology."

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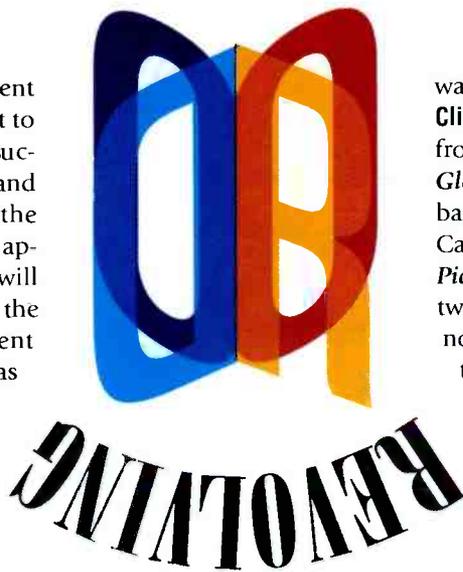


**T**here's a new senior management structure at *CHUM Limited* meant to facilitate senior executive level succession planning. **Jim Waters** and **Ron Waters**, Directors of the Corporation, have each been appointed Exec. VPs of CHUM Limited. They will serve with their father, **Allan Waters**, on the newly formed Executive Management Committee. Jim Waters continues as President *CHUM Group Radio*. **Jay Switzer**, former Sr. VP/GM at *CHUMCity* and Sr. VP Programming of *CHUM Television*, has been appointed President of CHUM Television, succeeding Ron Waters. CHUM Ltd.'s Management Operating Committee consists of **Taylor Baiden**, VP Finance/Treasurer/Secretary, **Moses Znaimer**, VP Corporate Development, and Switzer... After a 40-year career with *CHUM Ltd.*, a period when the company went from a single station to its current multimedia status, **Fred Sherrat** has retired as VP/COO. Sherrat, however, will be available as a consultant to CHUM for the next five years and will remain on the Board of Directors as Vice Chairman...

**Red Robinson** wrapped up his 46-year radio career Nov. 8 at *CISL Vancouver*... **Rina Steuerman**, who has managed the *Broadcast News* satellite services since the branch's inception, has been promoted to Manager, *BN Distribution*. Also at BN, **Cindy Orrett** becomes Account Manager, BN Distribution... **Jennifer Lo** has been promoted from Publicist at *Bravo!* to Communications Manager for both *Bravo!* and *Space: The Imagination Station*.

*Global Television* has made some moves. They include: **Patrick O'Hara**, ex GSM at *Global Quebec (CKMI-TV Montreal)*, becoming GM at *CHCH (ONTV) Hamilton*. **Bryan Ellis**, who'd held the position, moved to *Corus Entertainment* in August to become a VP there; *Global Quebec* Business Manager **Maureen Rogers** has been promoted to General Manager there; and, **Barry Saunders** has been appointed GM at *Global Television Network (Atlantic) (CIHF-TV Halifax/MITV)*. That's a promotion from his GSM duties. Former GM **Rick Friesen** is now with *CanWest Global* in New Zealand... New MD/Swing Announcer at *MIX 106 (CIXK-FM) Owen Sound* is **Tim Blackwell**, ex Morning Announcer/MD at *Magic 98 (CFCP-FM) Courtenay*... **Andy Newman**, ex PD/Morning Announcer at *NewCap* in St. John's (who lost his job in the *VOCM* acquisition), is now the TV Host for the *St. John's Maple Leafs*... **Blair Daggett**, ex of *NewCap*, goes to GM position at *CHCD-FM Simcoe*... **Ron Nadeau** is new COO at the *Aboriginal Peoples Television Network*... **Rae Hull** has been appointed Sr. Director, Network Programming for *CBC-Television*. She retains her Regional Director of Television role for British Columbia and remains based in Vancouver... **Catherine Warren**, COO of Vancouver-based *Blue Zone Entertainment*, has been named to the Board of Directors of the *WTN Foundation*, an organization dedicated to advancing women in the broadcast field.

**David Kines** is VP/GM of *CHUM's* new *CIVI-TV Victoria*. Kines



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was part of the 1984 launch of *MuchMusic*. **Clint Nickerson** becomes ND at *CIVI*, moving from his Sr. Producer role at *Citytv Toronto*... *Global Television Network's* **Edward Holmes**, based in Toronto, has been re-elected as the Canadian Governor of the *Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers* for a second two-year term... *Talk 640 (CFYI) Toronto* afternoon Host **Marsha Lederman** did her last show there Oct. 20 before heading to *CBC Radio One* to do morning newscasts on both the Toronto outlet and those across Ontario...

**Jack Mattenley**, who retired his GM position at *CKVR-TV Barrie* back in 1991, has been appointed a *CHUM Ltd.* Director of The Board... The contracts of *Expos* broadcasters **Joe Cannon**, **Claude Raymond** and **Alain Chantelois** weren't renewed when they expired Oct. 31. There were no *Expos* games on TV nor was there English radio, with the exception of the final home game, during the last baseball season. *CKAC Montreal* did French broadcasts... Former *Montreal Canadien* **Murray Wilson** is new Colour Commentator for *CJAD Montreal* hockey broadcasts of *Canadiens'* games. He succeeds **Pierre McGuire**, who moved to *TSN* for *Leafs* coverage.

#### SIGN OFFS:

Well-known B.C. broadcaster **Alden Diehl** died Oct. 27 at 68 after a short battle with cancer. Diehl ran *CKLG/CFOX-FM Vancouver* for over 20 years and, before that, was the "power house" PD who steered the on-air fortunes of "The Big 8", *CKLW Windsor*. He served on many broadcast association boards, including the *British Columbia Association of Broadcasters*, and received various awards from the industry he loved.

**Tim Ralfe**, the former *CBC-TV* Reporter who elicited the "just watch me" challenge from **Pierre Elliott Trudeau**, is dead of a heart attack. He never regained consciousness after suffering the attack two weeks ago.

**Matthew Baker**, 18, son of *Tri-Co Broadcasting* (Cornwall) GSM **Angie Baker** and builder of the company stations' Web site ([www.seawayvalley.com](http://www.seawayvalley.com)), of what is believed to be a congenital heart defect. His passing was sudden and unexpected.

**Frank George Arthur Makepeace**, 93, who entered Canadian broadcasting in 1928. He worked at *Sunwapta Broadcasting* in Edmonton (*CFRN*) for 30 years, retired, then built *CHQT Edmonton* and stayed there for eight years before traveling to Fort MacMurray to build the first studio for *CJOK*. At age 73, he was asked to build another station: *CKER Edmonton*. He was 80 when he decided retirement would be for real.

**William C. Fyffe**, 71, the TV news exec who helped pioneer "happy news" more than 30 years ago. Fyffe died in Bloomington, Indiana, of injuries suffered in a fall.



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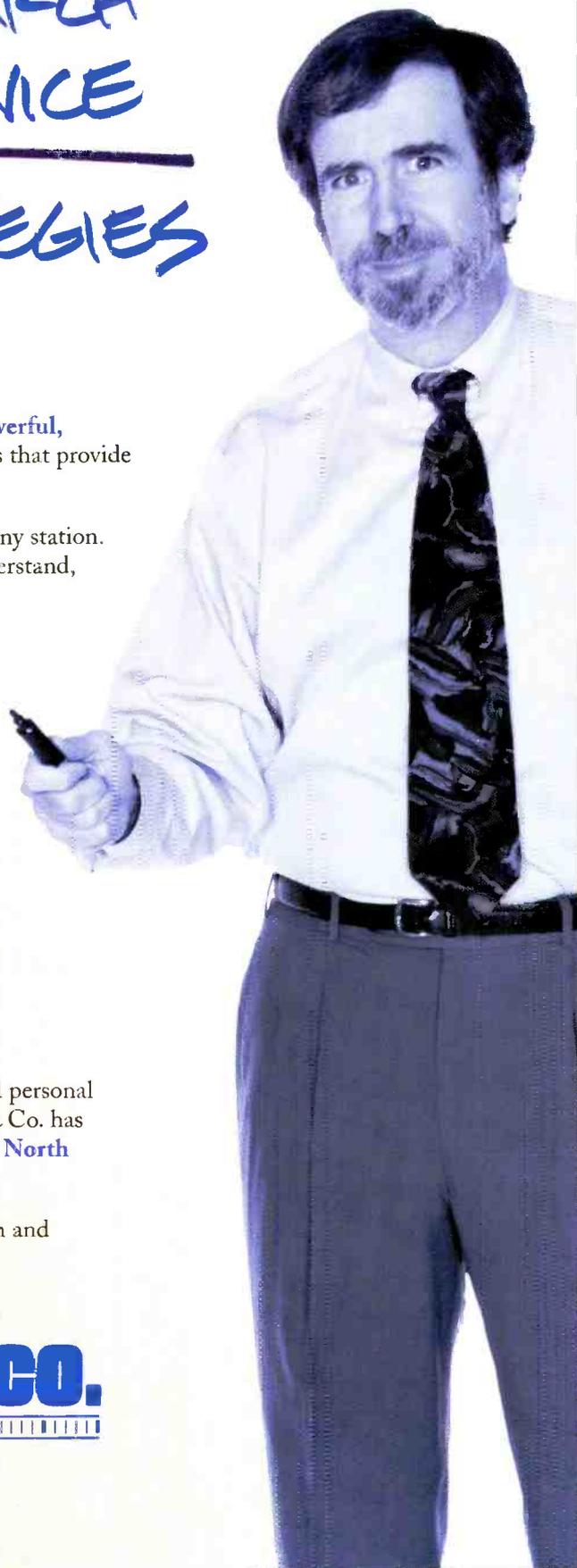
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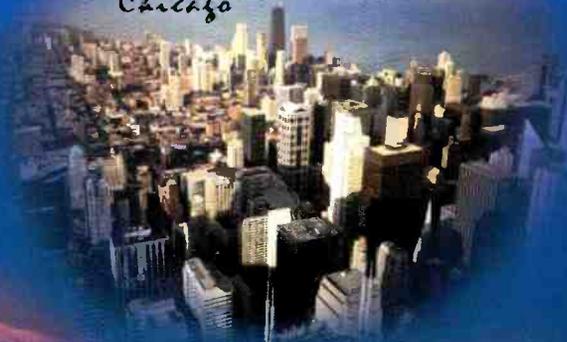
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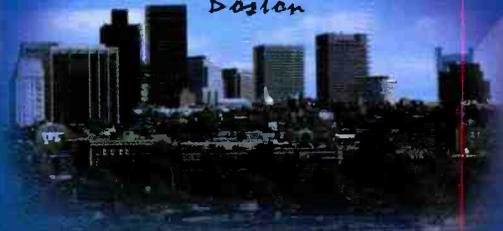


# The Most Demanding Markets

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Boston



Los Angeles



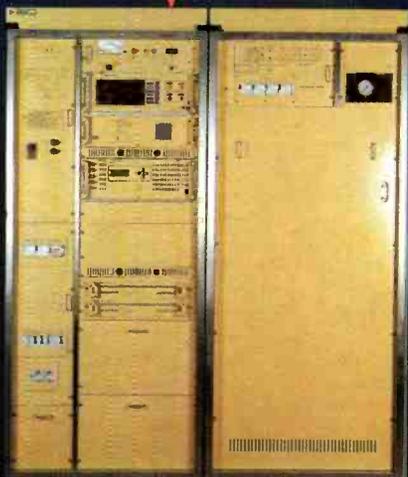
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