

among the publishers.

The PTT is also offering an electronic mail service as part of the project. Any of the test's subscribers can write electronic messages to any of the other subscribers in or out of real time over the system. (The PTT press release stresses that "strict controls have been established to protect the privacy of and security of participants.")

French firms contributing hardware or software to the project are Steria, Cap Sogeti, Cii-Honeywell Bull, Matra and Thomson-CSF.

Transponder shifting for Satcom I

HBO and MSN trade time slots on transponder 22, paving way for HBO's 24-hour expansion

Transponder juggling figures prominently in HBO's expansion of its schedule to 24 hours on weekends. That programming shift will take place the weekend of Sept. 4, with HBO running from sign-on at 5 p.m. on Friday through sign-off at 2 a.m. the following Monday. HBO had previously announced plans to expand to a full 24-hour schedule starting in January.

Facilitating the move is a swap of transponder time between HBO and Modern Satellite Network. The two services share time on transponder 22 of RCA's Satcom I bird (Cable Net I)—MSN had the 8 a.m.

AP on the bird. The Associated Press began satellite delivery of APTV, its 1,200-word-a-minute news service for television stations, last week. APTV serves stations in nearly 70 locations across the country, according to AP, and is the first AP service to be totally satellite-delivered. Eventually AP plans to switch all of its services to satellite delivery and is installing more than 800 satellite receive earth stations this year. "This is a major step forward in the way we bring the news to television stations," Roy Steinfort, AP vice president for broadcasting, said in announcing the APTV switchover. "As AP enters the world of satellites, it's significant that the first news service to be totally satellite delivered is APTV." AP uses transponder 9 on the Westar III satellite. Earlier this year, AP Radio network had moved most of its locations to the satellite.

to 1 p.m. slot on Saturdays and Sundays, and a noon to 5 p.m. block weekdays. (MSN recently subleased the bulk of the latter, a 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. slot, to Hearst/ABC Video Services for its planned Beta women's service.)

Under the agreement announced last week, MSN will turn over its weekend hours to HBO, and get the 10 a.m. to noon period on weekdays.

Neither party would discuss the monetary consideration involved. However, given the value of the times involved to each service, the deal would probably require payment of some consideration by HBO.

HBO president Jim Heyworth called the weekend expansion "the logical next step in our move to 24-hour programming," explaining that "the largest daytime audience is available on weekends." He added that the shift would provide "an early bonus" to subscribers, in advance of the fuller January expansion.

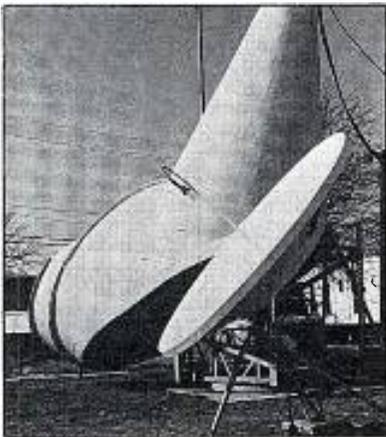
MSN found a lot to crow about in making the move as well. The network's direc-

tor, Jay Campbell, said the additional 10 hours during the week "would put the network in a stronger position to program for its primary audience" and to "complement" the Beta package. (MSN had said back when it made its deal with Hearst/ABC that its intention for the weekday hour it kept was to produce programming for women as well).

"This swap ..." said Campbell, "permits us to concentrate our resources and talents on programming to one audience segment."

The seven-day, 24-hour schedule HBO plans in January won't affect MSN. In the first place, MSN is a direct lessee with RCA for its transponder time—and transponder 22 is the one HBO has been using for its delayed West Coast feed.

This latest HBO move follows Showtime's switching to 24 hours on July 4 (Showtime had started 24-hour weekends last January). The third major pay movie service—the Movie Channel—has long been a 24-hour service.



It does the job. Warner Amex Cable Communications reports that the three-meter earth station (foreground), supplied by Satellite Syndicated Systems for its Columbus, Ohio, system, is providing good reception of SSS's Satellite Program Network off Westar III. The SSS unit is contrasted in the picture with the larger, shielded-horn antenna needed to receive cable programming from Satcom I because of that satellite's lower power and lower look angle. The Satcom station cost around \$30,000; the Westar station's cost, shared by SSS and Warner, was less than \$4,000.

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