

designed or because of a weak lead-in. To substantiate claims of the show's longevity, Group W executives point to the performance of *PM* on Group W-owned stations: in access at 7:30 during the November sweeps, it won the time period in four of five major markets. (The exception is KYW-TV Philadelphia, where it came in second to *Wheel of Fortune* on WPVI-TV.) At KPIX-TV San Francisco, where *PM* was born, the show is still number one in its time period after nine seasons.

Currently, 75 stations carry *PM Magazine* and all but three carry it in access or prime time. Of the 75, 21 subscribe to the "national edition," a fully edited and prepared half-hour that does not require local production, talent or crew.

Some of *PM*'s setbacks stem from being dropped in important markets like Miami, where it aired on WTVJ(TV) until after the May sweep, and WISN-TV Milwaukee, which canceled it in July after its ratings slipped to the mid-teens. (It was subsequently picked up by independent UHF WCGV-TV for weekend airing.) WWL-TV New Orleans also moved it from daily access to a weekend slot.

Not surprisingly, Group W executives say those are isolated cases and are not indicative of a national trend. In New York on WNEW-TV, for example, *PM* slipped from a 9 share in October 1983 to a 5 share in October 1984. But Group W points out that WNEW-TV pushed it back a half-hour to 8:30 and made *Rituals* the lead-in, which has affected *PM*'s ratings.

According to Vane, the research yielded three principal sets of findings. The first concerned the "general environment" of the show; the second, what stations executives are looking for, and third, what viewers are looking for.

As to "general environment," Vane said the typical *PM* viewer is female, better educated and comes from a dual-income, two-career household. In larger markets, Vane said, "viewers are looking for information, principally, and then they want something that is wholesome, exciting and relaxing. In smaller markets, the emphasis is on wholesomeness first, then information, followed by excitement and relaxation. That was an interesting finding that we had not expected."

Vane said the research found the audience wants to be informed on a day-to-day basis what to expect on *PM*, and that audiences are very responsive to promotion for particular segments, "which means that any participating station, in order to maximize the audience, must promote the program very specifically, as opposed to a generic 'watch *PM* because it's always entertaining.'"

On viewer attitudes, Vane said the research showed what one might expect: viewers like the "local orientation" of *PM* and consider it "their show," no matter which city they live in. And general managers, he said, believe *PM* is "good for the station's image and that it fulfills their obligation for local programming in access time."

And while those findings may reinforce what general managers and program directors believed all along, Vane said part of the reason for the research was to "chart the course correctly for the future." As Group W sees it, a large part of that course involves giving participating stations a bigger financial hand in producing local segments and promoting *PM* in their local markets.

Therefore, part of the \$1.2 million will go towards boosting by 48% the amount of money Group W grants to stations that wish to produce a story of national interest for the cooperative but are unable to because of travel expenses or other financial reasons. Group W is also increasing its co-op advertising budget with stations, according to Bob George, vice president and national executive producer for *PM Magazine*. During each sweep period, he said, Group W shares the cost of 20 *TV Guide* advertisements with *PM* stations. And to give more prominence to the show, Group W is asking stations to move up the size of their sweep advertisements and to help foot the higher bill. Also, another consulting producer will be added, bringing the number to five, to coordinate with stations. The money involved in the renovations is budgeted for the 1984-85 season.

Station executives in the *PM* cooperative, however, testify that the "national office"—as the *PM* headquarters in San Francisco is called—is more flexible in the stories it will accept for the national reel than it once was. George agrees with this assessment. "What we've done is settle on a format of varied lengths because there is no one perfect length for any story," George said. Previously, all stories submitted for consideration to the national reel had to be six-and-a-half

minutes.

George said Group W is also holding regional production workshops where producers and program directors from *PM* stations from around the country come to learn about production techniques and to exchange ideas. And the addition of an extra consulting producer, George pointed out, will cut the number of stations to which each consulting producer is assigned down to 10 each.

Several station executives believe even if *PM* shows significant national ratings erosion in the Nielsen and Arbitron books during the next several weeks, and stations begin to drop the show, Group W will keep it on its own stations because of its well-known commitment to local programming. But, George states, *PM*, perhaps more than any other syndicated show, is only worth the support a station is willing to give it. "We really believe the strength of the show is local, and in fact, the research bore that out," he said. "If the local news runs into a problem, you don't cancel it. You work with it. The same is true of a local magazine show, which this is. The fact that the Group W stations are totally committed to the show I think also speaks to the fact that it's going to be around for awhile." □

CBS structures new marketing unit

It forms CBS Productions from theatrical films and worldwide groups to be headed by Alan Levin; Lund named head of sports and McKenna to be general manager of East Coast operations

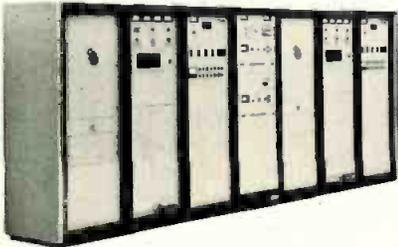
CBS has created a new division in its Broadcast Group to expand the production and marketing of CBS-produced programming outside the CBS Television Network. The new division, CBS Productions, consolidates the CBS Theatrical Films division and Worldwide Enterprises international sales and marketing unit and will concentrate on producing programming for all outlets, including domestic and foreign theatrical release, cable, home video and all areas of international distribution. And, at the same time, the Broadcast Group has appointed a new president of its sports division and a new East Coast vice president-general manager of its operations and engineering division.

Alan Levin, executive vice president, CBS Entertainment, has been named president of CBS Productions. He will report to James H. Rosenfield, senior executive vice president, CBS/Broadcast Group.

CBS/Broadcast Group Worldwide Enterprises unit was formed in 1981 as CBS Broadcast International to sell CBS-produced news, sports and entertainment programming to foreign markets as well as to non-broadcast and new technology markets in the U.S. CBS Theatrical Films produces about four to five theatrical titles annually which are distributed through Warner Bros. Recent CBS Theatrical productions include "American Dreamer" and "Windy City."

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