

Up and scrambling

After one two-week postponement, Showtime/The Movie Channel began last Monday (Jan. 27) intermittent test scrambling of the Eastern satellite feeds of both its pay services. It plans to begin test scrambling on their Western feeds next Monday (Feb. 10) and, if all goes well, gradually move to full-time scrambling of all its feeds sometime in May. The test scrambling was to have gotten under way Jan. 13, but the failure of hundreds of affiliates to register and receive descramblers prior to that date forced the two-week delay.

Like other cable operators, Showtime/TMC is using M/A-Com's Videocipher II scrambling system. In addition to scrambling television signals, Videocipher II permits the transmission of high-fidelity stereo sound. According to Stephan Schulte, senior vice president, operations, Showtime/TMC will take advantage of the feature to distribute Showtime in stereo for the first time. The Movie Channel has been offered in stereo since its inception in 1979.

Schulte said TMC "can finally start to stem the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars in revenues that have been siphoned from our company, our retail distributors, program suppliers and copyright holders by unauthorized and illegal commercial ventures."

Program promos

The Cinemax pay TV service is in the midst of a three-month campaign, produced entirely in-house, promoting upcoming programs to its viewers. The campaign uses high-tech graphics, with theme music performed by rock 'n' roll singer Robert Gordon, in 15-, 30- and 60-second spots. The current phase, which started Dec. 21, 1985, consists of nine different combinations of six featured characters promoting January film offerings. There will be nine others in February and nine more in March, each group promoting that month's Cinemax movies.

"Cinemax is synonymous with fresh, irreverent entertainment," said Tim Braine, vice president for on-air promotion, HBO and Cinemax. "These new on-air spots are designed to capture that distinctive, high-spirited outlook with style and humor." He said 25 people were involved in creation of the campaign, the biggest ever undertaken by Cinemax entirely in-house. Braine and Judy Drosd, director of Cinemax on-air promotion, were in charge, with Drosd serving as executive producer. Jeff Weiser was director, Susan Dember producer, Paul Fuentes art director, Susan Israel music producer and Sarina Israel project manager.

Cambridge contract

American Cablesystems, Cambridge, Mass., said it had signed with the city the final license authorizing it to build and operate Cambridge's cable TV system. The company was awarded the franchise last March after a year-long competitive process, and it received a provisional operating license in October. The final license is for 15 years. Upon completion, due at the end of 1986, the dual-cable, 123-mile-long system will pass 41,000 homes and offer 55 basic channels in three levels of service, plus access to 11 premium channels. Officials said the system would also offer subscribers enhanced audio services, data retrieval services and a comprehensive package of locally produced programs. Construction started in November under a special waiver from the Massachusetts Cable Commission. The company hopes to begin marketing in the spring.

'Family' viewing

The *Family* drama series and five adventure series will make their national cable debuts in February on Lifetime, the Hearst-ABC-Viacom Entertainment company has announced.

Family, produced by Spelling/Goldberg in association with Mike Nichols and starring Meredith Baxter-Birney, Kristy McNichol and Sada Thompson, will be seen Mondays at 7-8 p.m. NYT, starting Feb. 3.

In addition to *Family*, a different adventure series makes its cable debut each night of the week, to be seen at 8-9 p.m., also starting Feb. 3: *Cover Up*, starring Jennifer O'Neill and the late Jon-Erik Hexum, on Mondays; *Partners in Crime*, with Loni Anderson and Linda Carter, on Tuesdays; *The*

American Girls, with Priscilla Barnes and Debra Clinger, on Wednesdays; *Cassie & Co.*, with Angie Dickinson, on Thursdays, and *From Here to Eternity*, with Don Johnson, Barbara Hershey and William Devane, on Fridays.

Officials said two parenting programs already in the Lifetime schedule will begin new production in February. *What Every Baby Knows* starts its third season Feb. 17, produced by Tomorrow Entertainment and presented Monday-Friday at 8:30-9 a.m. and 12:30-1 p.m. NYT. Joan Lunden's *Mother's Day* continues in production by Michael Krauss Productions, to go into its third season in March.

Lifetime also announced that in February some 25 films will be added to *Lifetime Moviebreaks*, which air features with romantic or adventure themes daily at 10 a.m. and 4 and 11 p.m., and Saturdays in 3-7 p.m. double features.

Advertising extravaganza

The Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau has added a hardware and software exposition to the agenda for its fifth annual cable advertising conference, to be held April 27-29 at the Sheraton Centre in New York. The exposition will run from 4:30 to 9 p.m. on opening day, a Sunday.

Officials said the show will display the latest hardware and software useful in local advertising sales operations, such as insertion, billing, traffic and production, with representatives of participating companies present to demonstrate and explain. Suppliers of local audience research services have also been invited to participate, and officials said "a limited number" of other spaces are still available on a first-come basis.

CAB President Robert H. Alter said: "The rapid growth of local advertising sales has created an immediate need for operators to have more sophisticated equipment, programs and research information to support their efforts. This exposition will, for the first time, bring together cable systems' management and suppliers of advertising-related goods and services in an environment which focuses solely on their mutual interests."

International effort

Madison Square Garden and Paramount Television International Distribution announced that they will work together to exploit the international rights to Garden-owned TV properties. Both companies are in the entertainment and communications group of Gulf + Western Industries.

Through the Madison Square Garden Network, the Garden has international ancillary rights to the Millrose Games track and field competition, college basketball, certain hockey games, Felt Forum boxing, the Westminster Kennel Club dog show and the National horse show, among other



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