

ting about one-third less than what regular hour-long fall series were receiving, maybe one-half of what the budget is for *The Flash*," said Brand. When the producers got the current order for eight more episodes, the show's budget "went up significantly, putting us on par with other first year shows." The increase in license fees has freed the producers from a six-day work week to a five-day week and has allowed them to take eight days to produce an episode.

If there was some skepticism on the network's part before the show premiered, its brief run and reception has intensified their commitment. "This is probably the most difficult show for me to talk about because I have less objectivity about it than probably any other show," said Peter Tortorici, senior vice president, program planning, CBS Entertainment, who admits he became a quick fan. "The level of writing and execution is fantastic" said Tortorici. The network is considering slotting the show at 10 p.m. on Monday night at the end of CBS's lone night of comedies. The producers are hoping for the time period following *Murphy Brown* and *Designing Women* that will become vacant when *The Trials of Rosie O'Neill* has finished its run.

The series has also caught the attention of the Museum of Broadcasting, which is including the show in its upcoming 8th Annual Television Festival in Los Angeles. Ron Simon, curator of television for the museum, said each year the museum tries to structure each festival with both contemporary and traditional series. "We look for new programs that haven't been discovered by either an audience or by many critics. We thought *Northern Exposure* was a new show trying to do something different. They've really showed the characters developing with each episode," he said.

In addition to *Northern Exposure*, Brand and Falsey are in the beginning of a two-year exclusive production contract signed with Lorimar Television last year. Brand said the first project from the new alignment would be ready to air next fall or midseason. He said one project which may be the first to air is a traditional drama for NBC. For the time being, though, his attention is focused on *Northern Exposure*. As for having the show on CBS, which might be construed as a liability because of its third-place standing, he said there is a definite upside. "The third-place guy has to try harder. We're with a network that seems to want to take chances. And besides," he said, "when we did *St. Elsewhere*, NBC was in third place."

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SYNDICATION MARKETPLACE

Twentieth (Fox) Television has sold half-hour weekly *Not Just the News* to 29 stations, representing 40% of U.S., since end of last month's INTV and NATPE programing conventions. Program, which is to be produced by Fox O&O WTTG-TV Washington, and will be hosted by Steve Doocy (formerly of Group W-NBC Productions' *House Party*), is being marketed as one of growing number of educational-prosocial kids programs that will help stations meet new license renewal requirements under Children's Act of 1990. Twentieth spokeswoman said an original half-hour will be produced each week, and promotional plans call for "lesson plans" to be distributed to schools in each station market for each corresponding episode featuring current affairs and informational segments. Twentieth is offering *Not Just the News* on undisclosed cash basis.

Viacom Enterprises has reported that its June 1991 late night strip, *Johnny B...On the Loose*, has been sold in 40% of U.S., with Chris Craft, United Television, Act III Communications and Viacom Broadcasting group stations signed to clear program. Set to be taped at WMAQ-TV Chicago's recently completed NBC Tower, Viacom will offer *Johnny B.* on 3½-minute local, 3½-minute national barter splits. Brandmeier, who is radio disk jockey on WLUP-FM(AM) Chicago, originally taped hour pilot for NBC Productions, but network production wing and Pierce/Silverman Company approached Viacom about handling distribution of program.

TPE (Television Program Enterprises) is currently making *The International Auto Show* available to stations for broadcast through March 10. Program is culled from coverage of North American International Auto Show in Detroit by Cox Enterprises' WKBD-TV Detroit. So far, Dwayne Kell, WKBD-TV's general manager, says TPE has sold hour-long special to 177 stations, representing 92% national coverage. Robin Leach (host of TPE's *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*) and singer Anita Baker serve as hosts. TPE is offering special to stations on seven-minute local, six-minute national barter splits.

Saban Entertainment and **Bohbot Entertainment** have reached agreement where-by Bohbot will handle station sales of *Saban Entertainment's Adventures of the Little Mermaid*, planned fall 1991 half-hour weekly animated series. Targeted for Saturday and Sunday mornings, Saban has picked up classic undersea tale after copyright was not renewed and it became public domain. Spokesman for Saban said barter split has not yet been determined. In related company news, Saban and Bohbot have announced that two-year production commitment has been given to current half-hour kids series, *Video Power*, through 1992-93 season. Saban, Bohbot and Acclaim Entertainment will produce total of 65 half-hour episodes with Bohbot looking to complete two-year station renewals for video game magazine.

Goodman Entertainment Group has licensed Canadian distribution rights for its ad hoc *Movie Greats Network* and 1991-92 syndicated half-hour series *Wide World of Kids* and *The Bottom Line with Adam Curry* to Telegenic Programs.

Sachs-Finley Advertising will go forward with new weekly animation program, *Toxic Crusader*, probably with a July or August 1991 start date, according to Shelly Hirsch, president, Sachs-Finley. Hirsch said that stations in more than 60% of the country have signed for the new series. The show was tested as a five-part mini-series two weeks ago, and Hirsch said the company was pleased with the results. In 18 of 24 metered markets where the program ran in its entirety, Hirsch said, it grew in share from its Monday Jan. 21 debut to the Friday Jan. 25 conclusion. The weekly series will have an initial 13-episode commitment. It is produced by Murakami Wolf Swenson, producers of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*.