

MEDIAWEEK

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Kicking Out the Kids

CBS, UPN are cutting low-rated cartoons from their schedules **PAGE 4**

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Texas station airs explicit hidden video clip on news

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Cable Programming

A&E	Castles 710648	McMillan and Wife "Night Train to L.A." 104938	Lovejoy 822822
AMC	Live Fast, Die Young (1958), Mary Murphy, Norma Macdonald, 933025	Kiss the Blood Off My Hands (1948), Joan Fontaine 455209	Broken Arrow (1950) art, Jeff Chandler. 21
BET	B. (1996) U. (1996) (1996)	Benson	Hit List (CC) 492648
BRV	B. (1996) U. (1996) (1996)	Public programming 131025	
CBS	Business (1996) (1996) (1996)	Money Wheel 49551	
CNN	Early Edition 454445	Morning News (CC) 366990	
CO	Incorrect Daily	Gimme an 'F' (1984) Stephen Shellen. 84483	
CSPAN	Washington Journal Clarence Page, Chicago Tribune 825121	Public Policy Conf	
CUN	European American Cinema (C) 918795	Art/N.Y. 82716	
DSC	id programming (6:00) 279648	Home Matters 8377	
E!	Alice	New Da	
ESP	Sports Ctr.	Ctr. (CC) 280	
ESP 2	Tennis A	Crunch	
FAM	Highway	Club 18628	
HIS	Chief Jos	West 5630	
LIP	Workout	Our Ho 844919	
MSG	Motion	Motion	
MT	James 566629		
NBC	Muppet		
SC	Product	Product	
SCI-FI	Believe! 8161174		
TBS	The Boss? Family 3634261 791726		
UPN	Pappyland Gnome		
	Gilligan 786464		

TCI chief John Malone challenges cable's basic economics

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MARKET INDICATORS

National TV: Moving

First-quarter scatter budgets are starting to surface. Scatter is expected to be as strong as fourth quarter, which saw 15-20 percent increases over upfront.

Net Cable: Moving

GM last week dropped millions in last-minute calendar-year business, but some nets will not take the money because the carmaker is looking for rate rollbacks.

Spot TV: Cooking

Holiday movie buys are fueling a fourth-quarter spurt. Automotive and packaged goods are still dragging a bit.

Radio: Steady

Most markets continue to see holiday business with legs, a big improvement over the past quarter but down from early year expectations. L.A. is showing signs of life, as is the Northeast.

Magazines: Upbeat

Early indicators for the new year are promising. Publishers have more early advertising commitments from clients than they did last year. Detroit automakers are coming through in a big way, as are food and packaged goods.



PHOTO MONTAGE BY AMY GOLDBERG

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Laura K. Jones

DEC 08 1996

AT DEADLINE

TV Version of 'EW' Pitched to CNN

Time Inc.'s *Entertainment Weekly* is shopping a 30-minute TV version of the magazine to new corporate cousin CNN. Sources close to the two organizations said that CNN has seen a pilot (filmed in New York this fall) and is deciding whether to put the program on its schedule sometime next year. The news-and-reviews show would depend heavily on *EW*'s editors and writers, many of whom appeared in the pilot. The model of such synergy, said an *EW* source, would be CNN/SI, the new cable network involving Time Inc.'s *Sports Illustrated*. *SI* has built a small TV studio in its editorial offices to facilitate reporters' switching from print to broadcast. Back in the world of print, *EW* announced last week it will raise its rate base by 50,000, to 1,275,000, in January.

Classic Sports Setting Up Eateries

Classic Sports Network is extending its brand into family-oriented, themed restaurants, with plans to open its first in Dallas in early 1997 and five more by the end of June, all in suburban areas. The restaurants, a joint venture with a national hotel chain, most likely Marriott, will follow a formula of memorabilia, trivia contests, interactive games and a "[TGI] Friday's-type menu," a source said. CSN delivers nostalgic highlights shows and complete games from yesteryear to 15 million cable households; new roll-outs are slated for Philadelphia and L.A.

FCC Action Possible on TV Liquor Ads

FCC commissioner Susan Ness said last week that she is not dismissing the possibility of FCC action against hard liquor advertising on television. Ness' remarks came on the heels of recent comments by commissioners James Quello and Rochelle Chong that the FCC may lack the authority to regulate hard liquor advertising. Also, the FCC last week announced an extension of the deadline for filing reply comments for digital TV channel-assignment rulings. It had been Nov. 22; it is now Jan. 10.

H&R Block to Sell Off CompuServe

In a week in which CompuServe was buffeted by bad news, its owner, H&R Block, said that it was seeking to sell its 80.1 percent stake in the ailing service. Block had sold 19.9 percent of the company to the public earlier this year and had hoped to sell its remaining stake after CompuServe had turned around. However, Block lost \$74.1 million in its last fiscal quarter, ended Oct. 31, with most of the loss coming from the online service's troubles. (See *New Media*, page 17.)

Viacom Combines New Media Units

Viacom New Media was folded into sibling Virgin Interactive last month, Viacom representative Nancy Bushkin confirmed last week. The unit created CD-ROMs and other interactive entertainment, much of which derived from Viacom properties. Virgin Interactive is 90 percent owned by Spelling Entertainment, which in turn is majority-owned by Viacom. Bushkin said that 70 people would be "affected" by the decision, but that some would be reassigned within the company. "We really felt that economically it made sense to combine the two entities," she said.

Paramount Media Buying to Televest

Without a review of the business, Paramount last week moved its \$60 million national media buying account to DMB&B's media buying unit, Televest, from Ogilvy & Mather. The account, which consists primarily of the studio's movie ad schedule, had been put up for review last year but was kept at O&M. The move is a blow to O&M, which had changed its staff and operations to keep the account.

Popcorn Channel Hits Bottom of Bag

The Popcorn Channel, the movie listings cable service that counted less than 1 million homes in its year of operation, is closing its doors on Nov. 30. After losing the backing of the New York Times Co., one of its investors, the network had unsuccessfully sought new capital in the past month.

Addenda: ABC plans a Jan. 6 premiere for *Politically Incorrect With Bill Maher*.

The former Comedy Central show will air following *Nightline* with Ted Koppel...Discovery Networks is looking to get into the retail family travel business. Discovery would likely lend its name to a tour-packaging business and might offer computer camps and Outward-Bound-type experiences for kids, according to company sources...Todd W. Smith has joined Times Mirror's *Outdoor Life* as editor in chief. Smith had been editorial director of Petersen Publishing's Outdoor Group, including *Hunting*, *Bowhunting* and 14 other special-interest titles...FreeMark Communications, Cambridge,

Mass.-based provider of free, advertiser-supported e-mail, will shut down within days unless additional financing is found. The decision to not finance the company further was made by majority owner CMG Ventures, which also owns the Lycos search engine, among other properties. Ameritech and Transnational also had stakes in the service. FreeMark currently has 50,000 members.

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Nets to Cut Back Kids

CBS, UPN dumping cartoons

NETWORK TV / By Scotty Dupree

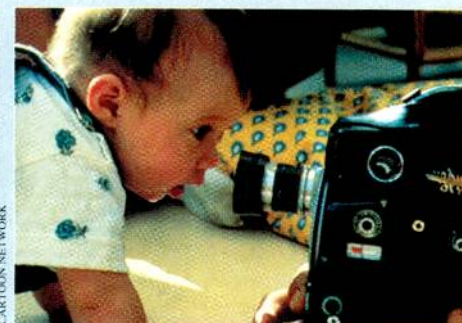
CBS and UPN are planning to scale back on traditional kids animation. Both networks are rethinking their children's programming strategies in response to the recent drop in kids ratings.

UPN has shifted its plans to target kids in its Monday-Friday schedule and instead will seek an older audience of teens, much like NBC's Saturday-morning lineup. It's likely that UPN will seek less-expensive and potentially higher-rated live-action strips for the weekday hours that the network will be able to program beginning in fall 1997. Whether UPN will shift its animation strategy on weekends (most affiliates program the network's kids block on Sunday) is still undecided, because the network has production commitments already in place for animated product, including *The Incredible Hulk*.

The UPN move comes on the heels of CBS' moves to restructure its Saturday-morning lineup. CBS is said to be in the process of scaling back its schedule of kids programming for next fall. The network is expected to announce, possibly as soon as this week, that the fall 1997 Saturday-morning schedule will feature current standards *Beakman's World* and possibly *Baily Kipper's POV*, with the addition of *SI for Kids* and a newsmagazine for youngsters. In the fall of 1998, according to network insiders, CBS will cut back to a three-hour Saturday-morning kids lineup that will segue into local news.

CBS parent Westinghouse pledged to program educational programming to kids when it bought the network last year. CBS will honor that commitment, said a network official, "but it's not a network obligation. Technically, it's up to the stations to provide the programming." The new format will likely give affiliates flexibility in programming their Saturday mornings with news, a tactic that has been largely successful for NBC and its affiliates.

With CBS and UPN stepping back in kids, ad agencies and sales executives expect market values to go up. In addition to releasing some of the viewership that is now with CBS to other networks, unit prices should go up because there will be less ad inventory available. When NBC got out of the young kids market, advertising executives noted, prices shot up 30 percent. ■



TCI's Family

MSO drops Comedy Central, adds 4 services in

CABLE TV / By Michael Bürgi

A series of moves last week by Tele-Communications Inc., the country's largest and most influential cable operator, could change the paradigm of cable television. Until now, the cable industry has defied the conventions of the programmer/distributor relationship; in cable, the programmer has historically been paid by operators to be carried. Now, John Malone, TCI's president, wants to turn the tables, at least in the short term.

In a series of steps that the multiple systems operator will execute over the next few months, TCI plans to increase the distribution of five cable networks—four ad-supported basic cable nets and one pay channel—across its systems. Four of the five are part-owned by TCI or its programming arm, Liberty Media. They are: Cartoon Network, a product of Time Warner's Turner Broadcasting System; The Learning Channel and Animal Planet, two services owned by Discovery Communications, in which Liberty owns a 20 percent stake; and Encore, a pay-cable service owned by TCI. The fifth service, HGTV, is majority-owned by the E.W. Scripps Co. With the exception of Encore, all of the services TCI expects to roll out plan to pay TCI to get on, anywhere from \$2 to \$5 per subscriber.

The plans were announced in a press conference call last week led by Jedd Palmer, TCI senior vp of programming; Bob Thomson, senior vp of communications and policy planning; and Dick Treich, vp of regulation. The decision to carry the five services has more to

Founder's Shares Eyed

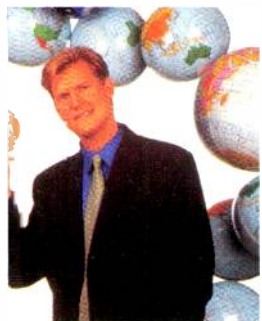


The death Nov. 15 of **Bob Magness** (left), who founded Tele-Communications Inc. in 1968 and was its chairman, leaves John Malone, TCI's president, alone at the top of

the leading cable system operator. Magness was TCI's single largest stockholder, controlling some 42.7 million shares, or 26 percent of the \$7 billion powerhouse. Malone controls 27.5 million shares, with 18 percent voting control. Analysts say that Malone has right of first refusal for Magness' stake in the company. As it stands, Malone's shares, based on TCI's closing stock price last Friday of \$13.50, are worth \$371 million. Add to Malone's wealth his 7 million shares in Liberty Media, TCI's programming arm tracking stock, and he's worth another \$165 million, calculating Liberty's closing price on Friday of \$23.50. That totals an impressive \$535 million. TCI's investor-relations representatives said that out of respect to the Magness family, details of ownership control of Magness' stock will not be disclosed for several weeks. —M.B.

do with "improving our channel lineups" than financial concerns, Palmer said. But he did admit that "we have to think of our shareholders, too."

To make room for these services, TCI said



Malone is making room on TCI for (from left) Cartoon Net's Moxie and the Learning Channel by axing Comedy Central and its 'Daily Show'

Affair

holds stakes in

that it will kill its Intro! service, which was a showcase for newer channels that had little cable penetration. Also, "several services will lose some distribution," said Palmer. He cited Comedy Central and WGN as two examples. He said that TCI will reveal more details on networks that to be cut or moved to higher tiers within the next two weeks.

Analysts said that TCI based its decision on its demand that all networks freeze their subscriber fees at current rates well into 1997 or farther. Those nets that did not agree are apparently being targeted.

USA Networks, MTV Networks, The Travel Channel, E!, Lifetime, Comedy Central and ESPN had not been contacted by TCI as of late last week. Even Comedy Central, which was mentioned by Palmer, said it had not received word. "We'd be surprised if Comedy Central were materially affected," said Sarah Miller, Comedy Central executive vp.

TCI's Treich said that the MSO in January will put through an average 6 percent rate hike (coming to an average \$1.65 more per month) in "unregulated" systems reaching some 3 million subscribers. Later in the year, TCI's 11 million other subscribers will be charged a yet-to-be-determined rate increase. TCI will also charge some 26 cents more per household for addressable set-top boxes, now costing an average \$3 per home, and "modestly" raise the price of its premium services—including Starz!, a pay network, Treich said.

"I see these moves as business maneuvers and nothing else," said analyst Ray Katz of Bear Stearns. "It's called the free market, and it will take care of itself." ■

SMART Shopping Spree

Nielsen alternative quietly seeking support on Madison Ave.

TELEVISION / By Scotty Dupree

Amidst widespread discontent with Nielsen's TV audience measurement service, Statistical Research Inc. has been shopping its alternative TV audience laboratory to ad agencies in New York and is getting some strong support. McCann-Erickson, BBDO, DDB Needham, True North and Young & Rubicam are among the agencies that have been approached about subscribing to the new service. Gale Metzger, SRI president, would not discuss details but said that none of the agencies pitched so far have declined flat-out to participate.

SRI is asking agencies for financial participation in the SMART (Systems for Measuring and Reporting Television) test, which would give the shops and their clients access to the service's newly developed methodology as well as data collected in Philadelphia, the system's only test market. To date, SMART has been funded by CONTAM (the Committee on Nationwide Television Audience Measurement), which gets its financial support from ABC, CBS and NBC. In recent weeks, CONTAM upped its sponsorship by an additional estimated \$10 million. SRI has asked for considerably smaller commit-

ments from ad agencies, estimated to be in the \$500,000 to \$1 million range.

"They're asking for so little money that we can't say no," said an ad executive. This exec believes that SRI's strategy is to line up agencies so that the other broadcast and cable networks will eventually have to participate. Currently, Fox, UPN and The WB are not SMART participants, and so far the cable networks have been on the sidelines as well.

"We've always wanted to contribute," said the advertising executive, "but they didn't need us then. If they're developing a system, I want a say in what goes on."

The SMART system has several features that agencies like, including more-flexible reporting methods than Nielsen's, electronic-coded programs and commercials for monitoring purposes and a simplified method of installation and data collection in measured homes. What SRI's presentations last week lacked were long-term plans for national expansion in competition with Nielsen. Last year, NBC asked SMART for a business plan, but neither the network nor the research outfit have said if SMART intends to roll out nationwide. ■

Waiting for a UHF Windfall

Paxson yanks two U's off block; seen anticipating OK on duopolies

TV STATIONS / By Michael Freeman

As the FCC considers relaxing station-ownership rules, major group owners of UHF stations such as Paxson Communications, Silver King Communications and Sinclair Broadcasting see a potential bonanza in the making. If group owners are permitted to own two stations in a market, the value of UHF stations is likely to rise as they become acquisition targets.

Paxson Communications last week pulled its two West Palm Beach, Fla., stations, WPBF and WTVX, off the block. Media analysts and station group owners are interpreting the move as an attempt by chairman and owner Bud Paxson to wait out

the proposed dual-ownership rules change, making the two stations more attractive.

Paxson broke off negotiations to sell ABC affiliate WPBF and United Paramount Network affiliate WTVX, the latter of which Paxson operates under a local marketing agreement (LMA) for principal owner Whitehead Media Inc. Paxson was said to be seeking more than \$100 million for the ABC affiliate alone. There was "little more to the decision other than deciding on refocusing on increasing the asset value of the stations and looking at what opportunities lie in the market," said James Bocoock, president of Paxson Communications.

"My suspicion is that Paxson is looking to

TOP FIVE GROUP OWNERS OF UHF STATIONS

Group Owner	No. of UHF Stations
Tribune Broadcasting	12
Silver King Communications	12
Paxson Communications	14
Sinclair Broadcasting Group	18
Raycom Media (Ellis Comm.)	8

see if the dual-ownership [rules] fall by the wayside, then create a stronger buyers' market for UHF independents," said one group owner who had taken a look at acquiring WPBF.

The FCC is expected to amend the duopoly rules to allow for the ownership of two UHF stations or VHF-UHF combinations in a single market. Such a change, not expected until next summer at the earliest, could mean that group owners with concentrations of VHF stations will look to buy matching UHF stations, thus driving up the values of the stations.

At an investors' meeting two weeks ago, Barry Diller, chairman and principal owner of Silver King Communications, told shareholders that if SKC could get a reasonably higher price for a particular station, the company might be inclined to sell it. Art Rockwell, a media analyst for Yaeger Capital Markets who attended the meeting and related Diller's comments, said the value of Silver King's 12 UHF stations could rise sharply in such an atmosphere.

Doug Binzak, executive vp of broadcasting for Silver King, confirmed the strategy. "We would like to think that we have some quality beachfront property," Binzak said. SKC owns 10 UHF stations in the top 20 markets. "A loosening up of the [ownership rules] would allow us to gain access to additional resources, as we can create new alliances or partnerships with other broadcasters," said Binzak.

Silver King could attempt to sell individual UHF stations in one of the top-10 markets to fund the acquisition of programming or of other stations. Binzak said that Silver King and an outside partner could seek to jointly manage UHF-VHF combinations in certain markets.

Rockwell said that Silver King is looking to build a group with "almost zero cash flow," because its station revenue is tied to product sales from Home Shopping Network, which Diller plans to drop next year. "The assumption by Barry is that if you can get a palette of strong local programming and possibly link it with another [VHF] station in the market, it could increase Silver King's cash flow to \$40-50 million a year right off the bat," Rockwell said.

A number of the major owners of VHF stations, including the four network O&O groups, could see owning UHF stations in selected markets as a great opportunity. Alan Bell, president of Freedom Newspapers' broadcast group, which owns CBS affiliate WPEC in West Palm Beach, suggested that owning either Paxson station has its "advantages and disadvantages. A plus is the broad spectrum of demos [ratings] you can get with two stations," Bell said. "But the negative is heavy concentration—all of your eggs in one market." ■

AOL Slammed on Pricing

Service agrees to scrap negative-option plan for unlimited access

NEW MEDIA / By Cathy Taylor

America Online's efforts to recast itself as a programming service similar to a cable network took a negative turn last week as 17 state attorneys general and the state of Washington took issue with the online service over elements of its new pricing plan. The states charged that AOL may be in violation of laws regulating negative-option plans, which automatically charge customers higher prices for goods or services unless they are proactive about notifying the company involved.

As of last Friday, AOL had reached agreement with Washington over its plan to move all customers to a \$19.95-per-month unlimited-access service unless the customers specifically told AOL otherwise. Currently, AOL's main plan charges \$9.95 for the first five hours and \$2.95 for each additional hour per month.

AOL ceo Steve Case conceded last week that "there's some confusion over the process" by which the new plan is being implemented.

An agreement with the 17 other states was still pending late last Friday, although Washington said that AOL would implement the settlement on a national basis. It calls for AOL subscribers to see a "pop-up" screen about the Dec.1 pricing changes when users first log on to the service.

Paula Selis, senior assistant attorney general of Washington, would not comment about whether the state would have filed suit against AOL had an agreement not been reached. Selis dismissed speculation that AOL's archrival, Bellevue, Wash.-based Microsoft, had anything to do with the state's move.

A more likely precedent is a 1991 suit filed by Washington against TCI. The state sued the cable operator over its move to make subscribers automatically pay for a premium movie service, Encore, unless they notified TCI that they did not wish to continue receiving the channel after the first free month. TCI changed its plan and settled the suit out of court. ■

Teaching the ABCs of Kids TV

Producers move toward unified voice in dealing with new FCC regs

CHILDREN'S TELEVISION / By T.L. Stanley

Children's TV producers are planning the join together to respond to the FCC's new regulations on educational programming. Members of Hollywood's creative community took their first formal step toward speaking together on the issue after a meeting last week with FCC chairman Reed Hundt failed to yield answers to their two primary questions: What programming qualifies as educational? How will the broadcast nets remain competitive with cable when they air these kind of shows?

Hundt "told us to do what we think is right," said one senior-level network executive who attended the meeting. "But what we really have to do is what the FCC thinks is right, and we can't get a consistent, clear answer about what that is."

The goal of an ad-hoc industry committee is to better educate the FCC about the competitive TV market and to give producers guidance on what might meet the new government require-

ments. It also would give children's programmers a unified voice in Washington.

"[Hundt] is looking to us for practical solutions," said Gary Krisel, head of TV animation for DreamWorks SKG. "I hope the meeting will be a catalyst for people in the kids TV industry



Krisel: Seeking cooperation

to put their heads together and come back to the FCC with suggestions."

Membership of the ad-hoc group is undetermined, but producers said it is vital that network executives be involved.

Last week's meeting with Hundt, hosted by DIC Entertainment and sponsored by the Children's Action Network and Center for Media

Education, drew about 60 TV execs. Among them were Margaret Loesch, president of Fox Kids Network; Jean MacCurdy, president of



>> A system error
has occurred in
your media plan.

>> If you're not advertising information technology in The Wall Street Journal, you may have to restart.

>> @ work

Coverage: Technical Professionals

Primary technical job responsibilities

PC Magazine	19.3%
The Wall Street Journal	14.3%
PC World	13.7%
PC Computing	11.3%
Computer Shopper	11.1%

>> @ home

Coverage: Affluent Consumers

Plan to spend \$2000+ on computer hardware

The Wall Street Journal	24.2%
Time	23.9%
Newsweek	21.8%
USA Today	20.3%
U.S. News & World Report	17.3%

Coverage: Senior Level Executives

Personally involved in computer purchases

The Wall Street Journal	25.2%
Time	21.3%
Newsweek	21.0%
USA Today	19.3%
Sports Illustrated	16.3%

Coverage: Home Office

Use PC for business conducted from home

The Wall Street Journal	22.5%
Time	22.1%
USA Today	21.6%
Newsweek	20.2%
Money	17.7%

If you're not using The Wall Street Journal to sell information technology, you should be. According to IntelliQuest, our numbers more than hold their own – even when compared strictly to computer magazines. If we're not included in your media plan, fortunately, it's an easily correctable error.

The World's Business Daily.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

It Works.

Source: 1996 IntelliQuest Business Influencer Study

Source: 1996 IntelliQuest Home Influencer Study
Base: HH1 \$75K+

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TV STATIONS

Gannett Co., forced by federal ownership regulations to shed its TV stations in Cincinnati and Oklahoma City, last week agreed to swap those stations for Argyle Television-owned properties in Buffalo, N.Y., and Grand Rapids, Mich. Since acquiring Multimedia Entertainment and its NBC affiliate WLWT in Cincinnati in December 1995, Gannett's ownership of *The Cincinnati Enquirer* (203,110 daily circulation) put the company in conflict with FCC cross-ownership rules. In Oklahoma City, the addition of Multimedia's cable systems forced Gannett to shed ABC affiliate KOCO. Argyle chairman/ceo Bob Marbut says the trade for the stations in Cincinnati (the country's 29th-ranked market) and Oklahoma City (43) "gives us greater geographic diversity and substantially higher combined cash flow." In giving up ABC affiliate WZZM in Grand Rapids (market No. 38) and NBC affiliate WGRZ in Buffalo (39) to Gannett, Argyle surrenders its presence in two markets of similar ranking, both somewhat lower-ranked than the Cincinnati market. To make up the difference, Argyle is paying \$20 million in "considerations" to Gannett; Marbut declined to elaborate if the amount would be purely on a cash or stock basis or a combination of both. Argyle officials estimated that the company's pro forma revenue for the nine months ended Sept. 30 would have been \$60.2 million with the swap, instead of the actual return of \$53.1 million. Gannett's temporary waivers from the cross-ownership rules were due to expire in December. Gannett also said that it will sell the *Niagara* (N.Y.) *Gazette* (26,371 daily circ) as part of its deal to take over WZZM in Buffalo, which is considered to be in the same coverage area as the newspaper. By doing a swap rather than a sale, Gannett and Argyle are largely unaffected by capital-gains tax provisions. The addition of the Cincinnati market will sweeten Argyle's station portfolio in seven markets. Since retaining Merrill Lynch last August to solicit inquiries about either a group sale or other "strategic alternatives," Marbut says that the "continuing objective is to maximize the value of the group for our shareholders and positively reconfigure our station mix to make us more attractive to investors." —By Michael Freeman

Warner Bros. TV Animation; and officials from Saban, Disney and all the broadcast networks.

After the meeting, Hundt was upbeat about the mandate, saying that educational programming is what responsible broadcasters should do for parents and kids. He said the rules are not designed to turn the FCC into the "Federal Censorship Commission." The regulations, which take effect next fall, say that broadcasters must air three hours of educational shows per week.

Producers fear that the rules could create an

atmosphere in which only the safest shows will reach the networks' lineups. Taking such a route would be less risky than investing millions of dollars in a groundbreaking or experimental show only to have the government deem it unacceptable. "We still have the question of what constitutes compliance," said Robby London, DIC senior vp, creative affairs. "And the networks feel at a tremendous disadvantage that while they're losing share to cable, they're saddled with new rules that likely will continue to decrease share." ■

San Antonio Sweeps Slip-Up

News footage of men's-room encounter embarrasses CBS affil

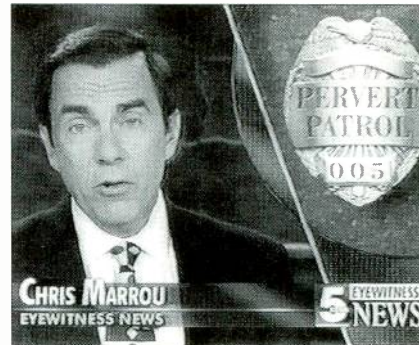
LOCAL TV / By Claude Brodesser

Did a Texas station go too far in its quest for ratings at sweeps time? A furor erupted in San Antonio in the second week of the November sweeps when Harte-Hanks' KENS-TV broadcast incompletely edited, sexually explicit footage obtained by a hidden camera. The film aired on the 10 o'clock newscast on Nov. 14 as part of an investigative series entitled "Perverts in the Park." The report focused on problems of sexual misconduct in rest rooms in San Antonio's Olmos Park.

The controversial footage showed two men engaging in oral sex in one of the bathroom stalls. According to KENS' news director Jerry Ridling, airing the incompletely digitally masked footage was an accident, "occurring because the edits made were not saved into the digital editing cube."

The station, a CBS affiliate, received some 300 complaints, about 100 of which came in during the newscast. Several viewers complained to the FCC in Washington via e-mail, the agency said.

Minutes after the incident, KENS-TV anchor Chris Marrou appeared on the screen, decrying the use of the



Marrou decried KENS' use of sex video

video and taking the reporter to task. "We were running late on the story and I looked at the first [properly digitized] part and said... 'I don't want to see any more than that,'" Marrou explained to viewers. "And at that point I'm sitting [on the news set] next to [reporter] Al Zimmerman and I see the second, uh, video that everyone is calling about right now. I just looked at Al like,

"How the hell could you do that?"

Marrou had originally introduced the piece with the warning: "Most likely the video we're about to show you will shock you." But in his impromptu apology to viewers at the end of the newscast, the anchorman railed against the shock-value of the bathroom footage, which he blasted as "the result of a continued attempt to shock people and get ratings. I think we've gone too damned far."

Marrou was in belated agreement with the approximately 100 viewers who quickly called the station to protest. Twenty-four hours later, that number ballooned to around 250 complaints. *San Antonio Express-News* television columnist Jeanne Jakle says she received about 200 complaint calls after the incident.

"The shadow of this thing is going to be cast

over all of us," said an executive of another TV station in San Antonio.

KENS vp and chief financial officer Susan Lynch said she does not believe the story will get KENS in trouble with the FCC. "I don't think we have any concerns," Lynch said.

FCC officials have not rushed to judgement. "It happened after the 6 a.m. to 10

p.m. 'safe harbor' from indecency," said Norman Goldstein, FCC chief of complaints and political programming. News of the incident spread quickly among news directors around the country. "I'm appalled at the level of crap on TV [newscasts] these days," said Marselis Parsons, news director of WCAX, a CBS affiliate in Burlington, Vt. ■

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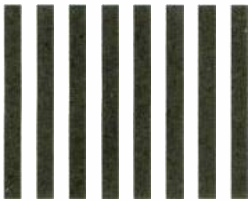
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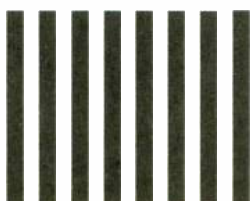
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TV, Print Coming Up Roses

Report says cable margins are falling, old media is on upswing

THE INDUSTRY / By Michael Shain

Traditional media—radio, broadcast TV, magazines and newspapers—is king again, according to the annual Veronis, Suhler Communications Industry Report released last week. Despite the colossal growth of new media and the enviable profit margins of cable TV, broadcast stations and print had higher earnings and faster-growing margins in 1995 compared to their new rivals, officials at the investment banking firm said.

The profit margins for TV and radio based on cash flow, which media companies say is a more reliable indicator of financial performance, show why traditional media are such hot properties. TV and radio's margins rose 2 full points in the last year, to 33.2 per cent. Cable TV continues to enjoy the industry's highest margins, 39.4 percent in 1995—down more than 3½ points over the year before. Meanwhile, margins in the magazine publishing rose last year to their highest level in five years, at 14.4 per cent.

The healthy economics of broadcasting and print, coupled with low interest rates, means that the rash of media mergers is not likely to end any time soon, said John Suhler, president of the firm. "Foreign investors especially are showing a lot interest in new acquisitions," he said. "They were looking at Eastern Europe [for investment opportunities] in the last few years. But now they are ready to turn their attention back the U.S." Leverage buyout funds also are expected to continue to play a big role in acquisitions because so much money is pouring into the equities market.

The economies of scale for bigger firms promise to hit the print media, Suhler predicted. Bigger print companies should the first to feel a profit boost from the savings they should see quickly on inventory costs—lower paper prices, cheaper warehousing and transportation costs and the elimination of redundancies.

The rosy report says that acquisitions accounted for the lion's share of revenue growth in the communications industry in

1995. The rate of deal making is slowing down (675 in 1995 vs. 498 so far in 1996), the report said. But the deals are getting richer and bigger (\$77.5 billion in 1995 vs. \$118 billion so far this year). All in all, industry consolidation made it possible for 50 media companies to report more than \$1 billion in revenue in 1995. Last year, there were 43 billion-dollar-plus firms.

If media companies are not being gobbled up by one another, they going public at a heavy rate. The report, the 14th annual by Veronis, Suhler, surveyed the revenues of 443 public reporting companies last year—up from 268 companies the year before. That means nearly 180 new companies went public or sold debt publicly for the first time last year.

Among individual communications companies, Westinghouse exhibited the highest annual growth in the last five years. Veronis estimates that the addition of CBS increased Westinghouse's annual growth by more than 50 percent. Viacom's annual growth rate was No. 3 in the last five years (26.8 percent) due to the acquisitions of Paramount and Spelling Entertainment, the report said. Turner

Broadcasting was ranked No. 4 in revenue growth, up 24.8 percent.

The financial performance of magazine publishing was relatively flat last year after a bad 1994. Sky-high paper prices hobbled publishing's bottom line two years ago. Last year, a big boost in ad revenue helped magazines to a five-year high in operating income.

"Newspapers stopped writing their own obituaries last year," said Veronis Suhler's industry expert Kevin Lavalla. Increases in classified ad lineage (the highest-profit type of newspaper advertising) have offset weakness in retail advertising, the report said. Meanwhile, the fall in newsprint prices should mean higher margins in the years ahead.

Revenue in the new media field increased 50 percent from 1994 to '95. But margins slipped, as online services re-evaluated how they accounted for the high cost of content. ■

Handsome Profits

Cash flow is the *lingua franca* of the media business. Here's how each segment performed in 1995:

Industry	Cash Flow	Margin
Cable Operators	\$7.56B	39.4%
Newspapers	\$4.17B	18.9%
TV Networks	\$2.99B	18.9%
TV Stations	\$2.92B	33.2%
Pay-Per-View	\$1.65B	19.3%
Magazines	\$1.49B	14.4%
New Media	\$0.34B	10.0%

Source: Veronis, Suhler and Associates

CABLE TV

The 20th anniversary of TBS Superstation next month is something of a milestone in the history of ad-supported cable. The network will tweak its on-air look to tout its status as the original superstation, according to president Bill Burke. Behind the scenes, TBS actually is preparing to become more of a standard cable network, directly collecting affiliate fees and allowing cable operators to insert local advertising. TBS is leaning on the superstation tag because its research showed that people associate the term more with TBS than any other superstation, including Tribune-owned WGN and Chris-Craft-owned WWOR. The research also found that TBS is one of most-recognized taglines in television after ABC's "TGIF" and NBC's "Must See TV." A marketing effort will kick off across all Turner-owned networks after the Dec. 17 anniversary. Other changes include the addition of movie franchises like the "Dinner and a Movie" grouping on Friday night, said Burke. The new franchises include "Big Shots" and "Movies to Die For." New theatrical acquisitions for TBS will be announced in coming weeks, Burke added. Some of those new films will be added to the network's Sunday night franchise, "Destination Sunday," which to date has only incorporated non-fiction original programming but will expand into dramatic fare. One uncertainty: Will TBS be able to retain rights to air Atlanta Braves baseball games? "Conversations are ongoing, but we hope to keep the Braves," said Burke.

SeaChange International is venturing into the video-on-demand business with partner IPC Interactive. The two companies are targeting the hotel business via cable operators first. They have signed a deal with Time Warner Cable of New York City to offer the service to 140 hotels reaching 40,000 rooms in New York.

USA Networks last week acquired the off-net rights to 91 episodes of *Saved by the Bell: The New Class* and also picked up 75 episodes of the original series *USA High*, both produced by Peter Engel Productions and NBC Productions in association with Rysler Entertainment. —By Michael Bürgi

Lowest cost per geek and other misconceptions about advertising on the web.

What was once the basement plaything of the pocket-protector crowd is fast becoming mainstream media. The web is, quite simply, the next big thing. Describing how big is like describing television in the year 1950. Overnight, the web has gone from "Wow, cool graphics," to "Wow, cool numbers," growing from 2.3 million users per day in '95 to 9 million users per day in '96. Which means now is the time to get on. And Time Warner's Pathfinder is the place to do it. Fact: Pathfinder users' average HHI is \$71,450. And 72% graduated college. Fact: Pathfinder delivers loyal users*

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FORUM

Will George Clooney's boycott of 'Entertainment Tonight' have any long-term effects on TV tab and newsmag shows?

Ron Martzolf

Director of Programming, *Petry Television*

"There won't be any long-term effects. This is the way these shows make their living. *Hard Copy* has been on the air a long, long time, and every now and then they do a little tweaking and changing, but I don't think we're going to see any radical overhauls, because then it becomes a different show. It becomes an *Extra* or an *Entertainment Tonight*. Watching *Jenny Jones* [in the wake of the recent lawsuit involving the talk show], I haven't seen any real

effect on the way they do business over there, and that was certainly a more severe case. She probably won't do any more 'ambush' segments, but she hasn't backed away from sensational topics."

Garnett Losak

VP, Director of Programming, *Blair Television*

"It might have a minor long-term effect. It's a whole big-picture thing, though—a combination of the *Jenny Jones* trial, the *Geraldo* trial, and *George Clooney's* actions. Plus, the ratings for all those shows—including *Hard Copy*—are down, and all that coming together at one time will have an effect. You might see the shows trying to be more polite, or at least trying to be perceived as more polite. It think next year will be the real test, because it's not going to be the hot year, in terms of spot TV, that this year was. And advertisers always tend to be more cautious about buying when spot sales are softer. They're going to put more pressure on the shows to be friendly, and there's going to be more call for them to watch their Ps and Qs. But this isn't just because of *George Clooney*. It's more of a groundswell."

Janeen Bjork

VP, Director of Programming, *SeiTel*

"There's obviously strength in numbers, and it really appears that *George* got people to rally behind him. If that's the case, there will be a long-term effect. The "stalkerazzi" and their ambushing of celebrities—I think [the shows] will curtail that. Absolutely. Do you want to have the hip names, the biggest tickets and the big draws, participating in your show? If you don't, you're dead. So if the stars maintain their posture and stick together, there'll

definitely be long-term changes in the way these shows conduct themselves."

Bill Carroll

VP, Director of Programming,

Katz Television Group

"If [Clooney] and the others who have made an issue of this keep a close eye on it and then someone [or some show] strays from their [standards], then it will have a long-term effect. If [Clooney and stars who have joined his *E.T.* boycott] aren't as vigilant, than it will change. I take [Clooney] at his word that he's going to tape [*Hard Copy*] every night and point out if they go astray. He has, either by design or by default, become the crusader on this issue. As for

Paramount, it's not in their best interest to essentially cut off its nose to spite its face. *Hard Copy* is an important part of their operation, but *Entertainment Tonight* is the most important part, and you have to protect your bigger franchise."

"None. Short-term, maybe. But newsmakers in politics, sports and Hollywood have been trying to control the slant on their publicity for a long time. I doubt ultimately if Clooney will be any more successful than his predecessors."

Peter Brennan
Executive Producer
'Judge Judy'

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HOLLYWOOD

Betsy Sharkey*Second Chance at Romance*

Fox's quirky marriage
comedy 'Ned &
Stacey' is back, trying
for more laughs and
fewer plot twists



A few days before the Nov. 17 premiere of the second season of the Fox comedy *Ned & Stacey*, star Thomas Haden Church was on the Sony lot riding a bicycle built for two with a Barbara Bush look-alike as the cameras rolled.

There were many takes. Church never lost his balance.

The scene, which will fold into an upcoming episode, is yet another attempt by the high-octane advertising executive that Church plays to make sure Stacey knows he couldn't care less about having a relationship with her.

It's a good thing that Church, like Ned (whom *Time* has called "TV's most original yuppie jerk"), is used to high-pressure situations—in fact, he seems to thrive on them. It is also good that Church has that unerring sense of balance. Both of these qualities should serve the actor well in the television world that *Ned & Stacey* finds itself trying to survive in this year.

The series is the only one of Fox's 1995 freshman comedy class to earn a shot at a second year. It was picked up late—as Church describes it, at the 59th minute of the 11th hour. But it was given the best time slot on the network—Sunday nights at 8:30 p.m., hammocked between Fox's highest-rated comedy, *The Simpsons*, and the network's highest-rated drama, *The X-Files*.

There is, however, new management at the network following the departure last summer of Entertainment chief Jon Matoian. It was Matoian's team who initially courted Church, worked to get him to do a show for Fox and made the decision, just prior to the upfront schedule announcements last spring, to give *Ned & Stacey* a second year. Now running the show at Fox is Peter Roth, who left the helm of Twentieth Television to move into the network's top programming post. Roth and Church have talked over breakfast and there is the prospect of a strong working relationship, but there is also no long history between them. Church, though, is pleased that Roth decided to stick by Matoian's decision to give *Ned & Stacey* another shot.

"We've got Emmy-winners on both sides of us and they're Fox's two highest-rated shows," says Church during a break in the middle of a recent 12-hour day. "Peter Roth, who I don't know very well, has shown consistent support for the show, but it's a numbers game. If we don't hold [the ratings], they'll pull us. I'd say we've got about four to six weeks to demon-

strate that we have some staying power."

Ned & Stacey has returned as a sharper, funnier and a smidge softer comedy. Everyone connected with the show seems more at home with its complicated premise of a '90s marriage of convenience—Ned needed a wife to get a promotion at his ad agency, Stacey was desperate to get out of her parents' house.

For the premiere, which followed several weeks of extensive promotion, *Ned & Stacey* earned a 6.1 national rating/9 share in the Nielsens, 2 share points below *The Simpsons*. Yet the premiere was up 33 percent in rating



and 12.5 percent in share over Fox's averages in the 8:30 Sunday slot last season. If the show holds to last year's pattern, the numbers should build over time—the first season's finale last spring was *Ned*'s highest-rated episode.

"It was such a high-concept show that it was a true yeoman's task to get the audience not to constantly slam their heads into the premise," says Church. "This season, we don't have to spend so much time in exposition. People know who Stacey [Debra Messing] is and who Ned is...and everybody's relationship to the other people in the show."

That base of understanding might not seem terribly critical, but it shapes the way the show is written and acted. It forms the basis for the dialogue between comedy and viewer, according to Church. "On any good television comedy, in the early going the audience doesn't know the characters, so you have to paint the character in very broad strokes and the comedy is more obvious," he says. "As you get farther down the road, the audience learns the characters. That is some of the best and smartest comedy you can have, when the audience can start to anticipate things and you can play off of that anticipation. You can get a lot smarter comedy and much subtler comedy out of that relationship with the audience, and that's what we're approaching."

It was because Church believed that *Ned & Stacey* had that kind of comic potential that he ultimately signed on to do the show after a six-season run playing Lowell, the Dadaesque mechanic on the NBC comedy *Wings*. Ned offered a chance to play a complete opposite in character type. And it also offered Church a shot at playing a leading man.

"I had already experienced a kind of pigeonholing in the industry with the character of Lowell from *Wings*," Church says. "It was hard for people to consider me for more serious roles, whether comic or dramatic. I wanted to get into another series because I thought it would be the quickest way to broaden the industry's opinion and assessment of me."

**Dedicated follower of fashion:
As Ned, Church has become a
magnet for big-name designers**

Church had a stack of scripts that he was considering, but the quirkiness of *Ned & Stacey*, and the writing, caught his eye. Yet Church was not who *Ned & Stacey* creator Michael Weithorn thought he was looking for. "The way Michael tells the story, Fox was pressing him to meet with me, but all they had to show him were episodes of *Wings*," Church remembers. "And he looked at them and told Fox, 'This is the last guy I would ever have as a smart-ass advertising executive.' Then he and I met and he said that I literally rocketed from the last guy to the only guy. The day after I met Michael, they offered it to me."

It took a while to work out the deal with Church. He wanted, and got, a piece of the show. He carries an executive consultant title and takes that role seriously. He has the final say on all of his dialogue. However, Church has found that he often defers to Weithorn; the two have an easy rela-

"We've got about four to six weeks to demonstrate that we have some staying power," says Church, who has a piece of the show.

tionship. When a scene finishes shooting, it is Weithorn that Church spends the most time talking to.

"Michael's a wonderful writer," says Church, noting that Weithorn has blended Church's personality with Ned's to create a well-defined character. "We live in a society that feeds on micro-bursts of information and entertainment and human emotion and interaction. I have a remarkably short attention span, and that is something Michael picked up on immediately and has written the character to."

"Ned's a guy who's extremely ambitious and quick-minded," adds Church. "That doesn't mean he's smarter than everybody, but he's just quick-minded and that's the way I am. Anytime I'm having a conversation or processing information, I'm coming up with 10 other scenarios of how I can deal with this, or 10 other solutions to the problem. What it really does is create a helluva lot of white noise in my brain. But that's the kind of guy that Ned is. He gets tripped up by his own progressive-mindedness, his own aggressions, his assertion."

Ned is always in a rush to get what he's after, whether it's love or a promotion. And he does it all with a great degree of style. In fact, Church has become quite a favorite of designers since he traded in his grease-covered overalls at *Wings* for his Madison Avenue existence on *Ned*.

"[Church] wears a lot of Ermenegildo Zegna, an Italian designer that creates all of his own fabrics, and then he wears other designers, Donna Karan, Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren," says Diana Eden, *Ned & Stacey* costume designer. Church nearly always wears a vest on the show, usually a nine-button created by Los Angeles designer

HOLLYWOOD

David Hawkins. The ties are conservative, but bright. "On television, when it's not a large screen, subtlety isn't that helpful," Eden says. With Church, Eden says she's going for an overall look of Old World elegance.

When Fox tested the pilot for *Ned & Stacey*, Church came away as the highest-testing comic male star in the network's history. That is something of an achievement at a network that has been home to such comics as Jim Carrey and the Wayans brothers. "If it's true, it's a product of me the actor matching the sensibilities of the character in a very well-written show," says Church. "It's such a delicate balance to find critical and commercial success."

In another six weeks, Church will know if *Ned & Stacey* has found that bal-

ance. In the meantime, Church will try to keep his, navigating the tricky world of sitcom star and a growing film career. He just finished the Mike Figgis-directed *One Night Stand*, for New Line, and he was the executive producer of the independent *Scotch & Milk*, which will soon hit the festival circuit. Most of the time that he is not on the *Ned & Stacey* set these days, Church is working on Disney's live-action version of *George of the Jungle* (he's playing the bad guy). The movie is due out next summer. "I don't have a day off until the Christmas break," says Church. "I'll have two weeks. I can't wait."

But for now, Church is back on the bike built for two with his Barbara Bush look-alike, pedaling for all that he's worth. ■

How obsessed with O.J. are we? *The Los Angeles Times* recently ran a front-page story on E!'s daily reenactment of the civil trial proceedings, with analysis from many of the legal pundits who made a name for themselves during Simpson's criminal trial.

The Backlot...

"It's not O.J. It's Faux J," wrote the *Times*' Greg Braxton. E!'s nightly updates, which are not a spoof but attempt a serious mirror of the proceedings, generally were praised by attorneys quoted in the article. University of Southern California law professor Erwin Chemerinsky deemed the reenactments "absolutely ethical. I don't blame E! for doing them, I blame Judge Fujisaki for not allowing the public to see for themselves what's going on." Laurie Levenson, a dean at Loyola Law School and an O.J. commentator for CBS News, characterized the reenactments as "very very well done." (A CBS representative said that the network does not consider reenactments news. But then, neither does E!) For E!, the civil trial coverage has helped the network double viewership in the time periods versus a year ago (E!, which reaches 41 million homes, does not release actual viewership numbers). *The O.J. Civil Trial* airs live weekdays at 5 p.m. PST (that airtime often is less than an hour



Fresh Juice: Stephen Wayne Eskridge (right) plays O.J. on E!

after the day's testimony has wrapped up) and is repeated at 10 p.m. E! says it plans to stay with the reenactments show until the trial concludes.

Grace under fire: In another ripple effect of the Simpson trial, it will be interesting to see how many viewers show up to watch criminal-trial lead defense attorney Johnnie Cochran on his new Court TV talk show. On the program, styled after CNN's group scream, *Crossfire*, Cochran will sit across a table from Atlanta prosecutor Nancy Grace. The show, *Cochran & Grace*, will launch on Jan. 13. Meanwhile, agents for Christopher Darden, who is repped by the William Morris Agency, are reportedly in talks with an unnamed network for the O.J. prosecutor to host a reality-based series that will look at court cases. A feature film on Darden's book, *In Contempt*, is already in the works.

First, you pitch your idea to a network. If you're lucky, they buy it. You go on the air, get decent reviews and a dismal audience and the show gets canned. That used to be it, but not anymore. Network-hopping, once unthinkable, is becoming an accepted piece of the prime-time equation. The latest beneficiary is *JAG*, the expensive action drama that anchored NBC's Saturday nights last season, moved to Wednesday and then was cancelled. *JAG* will resurface on CBS in January. The Paramount-produced show will return with all its key stars—David James Elliott, Catherine Bell, Patrick Labyorteaux and John M. Jackson.

As if... Hollywood will be totally networked in late '97, when the first Apple Cafe is set to open in L.A. The cyber-themed coffeehouses will play off the computer-maker's user-friendly theme, "a cyber cafe for the rest of us," and will feature lots of the latest Apple technology. You'll be able to sip cappuccino, fire up the ol' Powerbook and plug into the Net at any table. The Apple Cafes are being built by Mega Bytes International and are being designed by Landmark Entertainment Group, creator of attractions including Universal Studios' Jurassic Park: The Ride. After Los Angeles, Apple Cafes are planned for London, Paris, New York, Tokyo and Sydney. A percentage of the restaurants' proceeds will be donated to the Artists Rights Foundation. Check please.

New Media

By Cathy Taylor

No longer walking
the line between
beginners and the
techno-savvy,
CompuServe goes
for the first-timers

Up for Renewal

Even if there is a lot at stake in leading the design of the new CompuServe interface, it isn't nearly as risky as vp/technology development Bob Horton's last job. Before coming to CompuServe, Horton's business was designing user interfaces for "process control systems." In other words, his job was to make it really easy for a plant worker to figure out which button to push to prevent the chemical factory from suddenly blowing up. "In that case, a user interface has to be very simple, very intuitive," he says. So it's not surprising that Horton appears quite calm about

his current job leading the crew that created the new CompuServe 3.0 interface. Available to Windows 95 users only (though the Columbus, Ohio-based company has also upgraded its former interface for those using Windows 3.1), the new interface is a vast improvement over its predecessor, a static, darkly colored affair that was so confusing that using e-mail for the first time required a call to customer service.

The new CompuServe looks much more user-friendly, employing a navigation bar of six items along the left side of the screen and such other useful features as folders that can be clicked upon to bring them to the top of the desktop. For Horton, the challenge has been to reconcile CompuServe's old-line techno-savvy customers with struggling newbies who have never used an online service and tended in the past to choose AOL over CompuServe. "It's very difficult to meet the needs of all those kinds of users and maintain simplicity," Horton says.

During the testing phase, the company let hundreds of consumers fool around with the new interface, Horton estimates. Of the experience, he says: "I should always learn to expect to be sur-

prised in one way or another." The testing emphasis was clearly on newcomers to online services.

For example, Horton and his design team thought that giving users both a "main menu" button and a "table of contents" button would help them better navigate the service. Instead, users couldn't figure out what the difference between the two buttons was. The "main menu" button survived on the navigation bar and the "table of contents" idea died.



Finding yourself on Pathfinder's new Personal Edition just got a lot easier

Such fine-tuning is important, but it's unlikely that it will be the sole savior of CompuServe, which once upon a time was the world's leading online service (it currently has about 3.3 million subscribers). Eclipsed in the past two years by America Online (7 million subs), the company has suffered a variety

of setbacks, most related to flat subscription growth for its flagship CompuServe Information Manager service. These days, any good news at CompuServe tends to be quickly overshadowed by bad. Last week, the company announced that it would shutter Wow, a family-oriented service which, when it was launched eight months ago, was supposed to be CompuServe's answer to AOL.

'Pathfinder' Gets Personal Giving the People What They Want

Bashing Pathfinder seems to be the current participation sport in new media circles. With that in mind, it's time to look at the Time Warner *über* new media property's latest wrinkle. That's the launch of Pathfinder Personal Edition, a customizable version of the pathfinder.com Web site that points in the direction of where new media content looks likely to go.

For one, it's a positive step beyond the logo looniness that has given an Excedrin headache to some information-overloaded Pathfinder visitors. For a relatively inexpensive \$4.95 per month, Pathfinder visitors can now get rid of all that, or most of it at least. (Personal Edition is free to CompuServe subscribers.)

Personal Edition allows visitors to restructure Pathfinder to suit their own needs. Subscribers can go through lists of content by topic and decide what sort of stuff they want—articles on Madonna or articles on Matisse. The service also immediately provides a five-day weather forecast for the user's zip code.

It will be interesting to see how Pathfinder uses the data it collects on each subscriber. Personalized content is supposed to be aligned—using the vast resources of Time

New Media

Warner—to user preferences each time a subscriber signs on. The idea is not exactly new—companies such as The Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition have customized versions already up and running. But the depth and breadth of Time Warner's content makes Pathfinder a more comprehensive service.

A special piece of software, called OM Express, permits subscribers to have their edition delivered to them. Unlike other offerings, which deliver a text screen of highlights to the e-mailboxes of their subscribers, this service delivers full HTML pages—actual color Web pages, right to desktops.

A few quibbles after a firsthand sampling of the personalized version of Pathfinder: It was a little difficult to understand the positioning and ultimate purpose of the “options/styles” button that runs along the left side of the home page next to buttons such as “read” and “edit.” The option allows people to pick from different categories, such as “Athletics,” “Newsroom” and “Hollywood.” Given those names, this Personal Edition subscriber thought she was picking categories of content. In fact, the customization that was at work involved adorning one's Web pages with Hollywood-style stars or digital-looking graphics.

The feature itself is kind of fun

and certainly enhances the overall feeling that the new Pathfinder is there to serve visitors (rather than being a forum for a bunch of feuding Time Warner editors). It was just confusing, that's all.

Further, the first service that can provide intelligent sorting of information is still anxiously awaited. A specific request in Pathfinder's sports section for information on the New York Mets (hope springs eternal) secured nothing but off-season updates of the dispute between baseball players and owners.

TCI and Microsoft Still Something To Talk About

Despite TCI's decision to pull out of the Microsoft Network, it looks as though TCI chief John Malone may still have Microsoft founder Bill Gates on his speed-dial. Speculation about what Microsoft and TCI are talking about run the info-autobahn gamut from set-top boxes to Internet services and programming.

By pulling out of its 20 percent share of the revamped Microsoft Network earlier this month, TCI got its \$125 million investment back. TCI would seem to be placing its hopes on @Home, another

fledgling attempt to get the masses online.

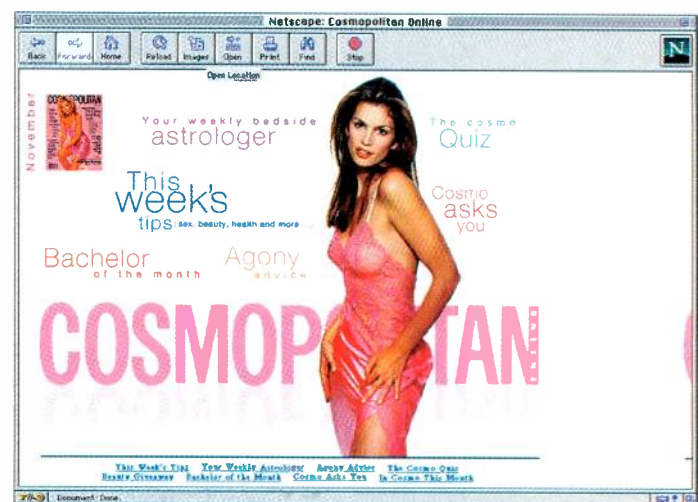
@Home, which TCI owns with Cox, Comcast and others, does not yet have any online services signed to its list of 60 or so media affiliates that receive special billing and, in some cases, are developing high-bandwidth versions of their sites. An @Home representative confirmed last week that MSN is in talks with @Home about striking a relationship. Though @Home is also said to be talking to other online services about similar arrangements, the possibility of MSN being distributed through @Home raises some intriguing possibilities.

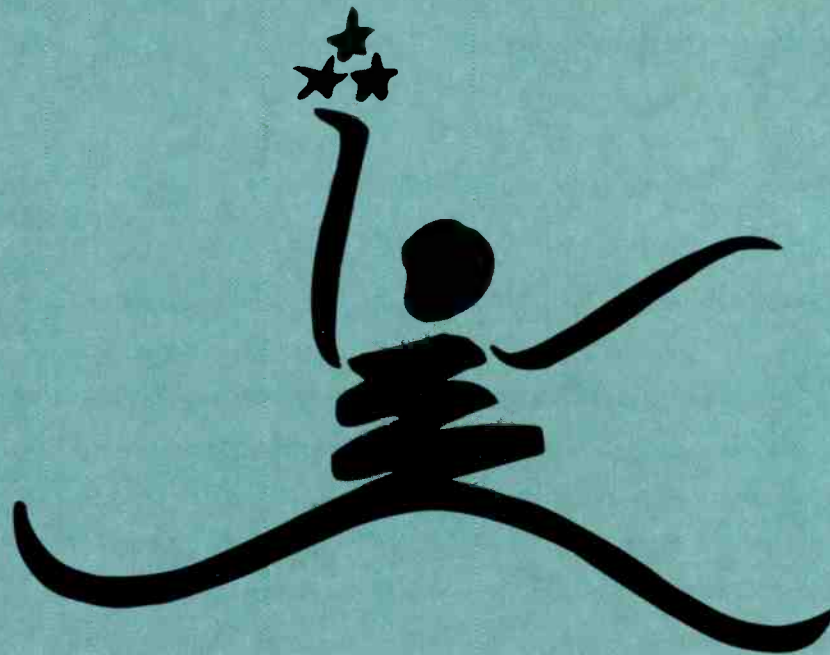
MSN is outspending other services for content, and at this stage looks to have the best opportunity at cracking the code for creating successful interactive content. @Home has the potential to deliver 45 percent of American homes, making it the most ambitious cable-modem effort in the country. But there's more. Other problems aside, MSN has been limited because the service runs only on Microsoft's Windows 95 operating system, which has far from total acceptance in the PC market. However, being a Web-based service, perhaps a deal with @Home would finally make it worthwhile for MSN to break out of its Windows 95 box. Just a thought. ■

Site Lines

cosmomag.com

We recently made a quick stop at cosmomag.com, the new online version of *Cosmopolitan*, and (as with the print version) it was difficult to tell whether the site is a better destination for women or men. One isn't likely to see Cindy Crawford in such a come-hither pose in *Glamour*. Either way, the site, which is infused with the *Cosmo* spirit and doles out beauty advice and horoscopes, is sure to become a hot destination. Women will like its, um, cheeky content. Men will no doubt have their own reasons for visiting. As one male coworker remarked after viewing a leggy model superimposed over the horoscope section's Cancer symbol, “I've never been envious of a one-dimensional cartoon crab before.”





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Magazines

By Jeff Gremillion

Major publishers like Time Inc. are joining up with advertisers to produce special-order custom publishing titles

Have It Your Way

To paraphrase Mark Twain (sort of), reports of the demise of custom publishing appear to have been greatly exaggerated. Some magazine executives have predicted that custom publishing will soon fade away, or at least level off. They reason that with production costs so high, publishers will be less willing to commit resources to someone else's brand. Yet a spate of new projects—and the activities of Time Inc., a powerful recent convert—indicate that custom publishing is still very much alive. Custom and contract publishing activities generate \$1.3 billion in revenue per year for publishers,

according to the MPA. Some ambitious projects can cost up to \$2 million to produce.

Hachette Filipacchi Magazines, one of the most active custom publishers, this month launched *Unlimited*, a manly lifestyle quarterly from Philip Morris that was mailed to about 2 million smokers. G+J recently published a country lifestyle magazine for Gaylord Entertainment Co. that is being distributed to tourists in Nashville. Condé Nast reportedly may soon jump into custom publishing with a new division, possibly headed by *Vogue* publisher Ron Galotti.

Perhaps the most interesting news in custom publishing comes from Time Inc. While the country's largest magazine publisher has dabbled in small custom projects for years, it is only now hitting its stride with a string of projects involving several titles. "We just started this division 15 months ago," says Timothy Hildebrande, president of Time Inc. Custom Publishing. "Everybody kept saying we should be in the custom publishing business. Then Jim [Graham, senior vp of corporate sales and marketing] took over a year ago and this became a priority."

Time Inc. Custom Publishing in September launched its first project, a contract with KeyCorp, the large Cleveland-based bank. KeyCorp has replaced its branch-office brochures with three Time-produced finance/lifestyle titles aimed at different subsets of the bank's customer base (such

as young families and entrepreneurs); a fourth magazine will launch next year. Editorial in the magazines, which will be published several times per year, consists of articles that have previously appeared in Time Inc. books, whose logos run along with the reprinted stories.

Hildebrande says that Time Inc. Custom Publishing plans to announce at least five new projects in the next 30 days. "We will work with a limited number of companies," says Hildebrande. "We will give them access to our brands, all this content and all our database information."

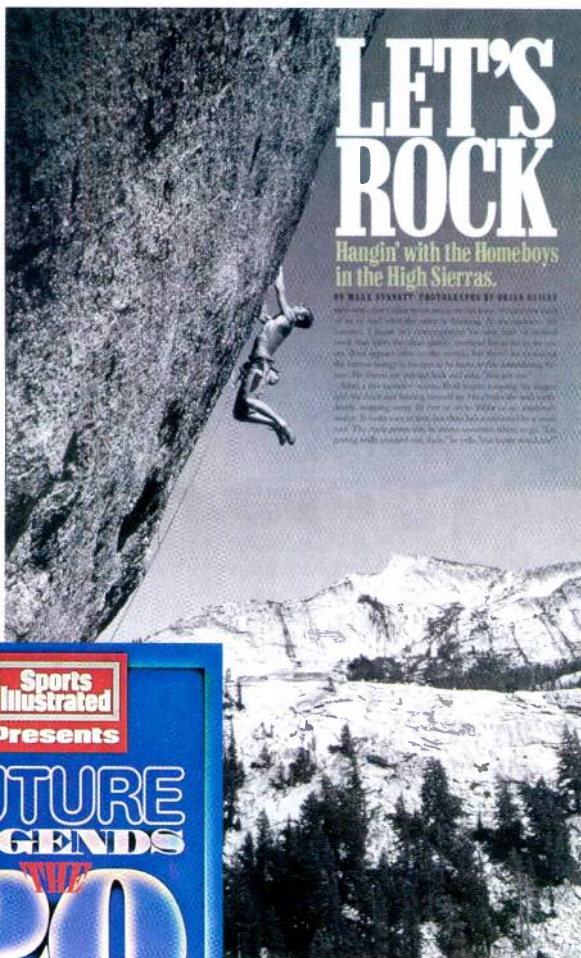
Graham has said that custom publishing is projected to generate \$30 million in annual profit for Time Inc. by 2001. "Given the power of our brands, the quality of our journalism, plus our marketing experience and expertise, the potential is certainly there for a key new revenue source," said Don Logan, president/ceo of Time Inc.

Time Inc.'s *Sports Illustrated* is making custom deals of its own, as is *Sports Illustrated for Kids*. "We're definitely open for business in the world of custom publishing," says Matt Barr, publishing director of Sports Illustrated Presents, the two-year-old custom and commemorative unit.

The division's edit staff of about 25 produces national and regionally targeted one-shot preview issues and commemoratives, such as the recent newsstand special devoted to the New York Yankees.

"Custom publishing is a priority for us right now, because we recognize its huge potential," says Barr. "It's a great opportunity for manufacturers to leverage the SI brand." Clients so far have included Ford, Jim Beam and General Mills' Wheaties, which shrink-wrapped SIP's "Future Legends" issue to its cereal boxes. Some of the editorial content, as in the Wheaties case, is produced especially for the issue; in other projects, the edit is repurposed. Barr says that to avoid "diluting" the effectiveness of the SI brand, the division plans only three or four custom projects per year.

Clarey Simpson, publisher of



Reach rewards: Custom books like *Unlimited* (Philip Morris, above) and *Future Legends* (General Mills) deliver targeted readership



Sports Illustrated for Kids, recently agreed to take over publishing the NBA's four-year-old *Inside Stuff*, a bimonthly aimed at teenagers. The second *Kids*-produced issue of *Stuff* is in production now. *Stuff* is a little different than most other Time Inc. custom books in that it does not include the *SI* logo. "You can leverage your expertise, not just your name," Simpson says. "We're not only looking for ways to extend the franchise, but also for ways to make more money."

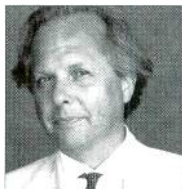
'Index on Censorship' Free-Press Magazine Courts U.S. Readers

The small band of U.S. readers of the London-based *Index on Censorship* is a devoted crew. Many of them recently crowded into a downtown Manhattan bookstore to hear selections from the small-format bimonthly's current "banned fiction" issue. Editor Ursula Owen was in town for the reading, and to try to drum up more U.S. readership for the nearly 25-year-old title. "We're trying to break into America in a big way," Owen says.

The magazine—which carries minimal advertising, usually trade-outs with other high-minded journals such as the *New York Review of Books*—has a total circulation of only 12,500, one-third of which is in the U.S. Owen wants to add at least another 1,000 readers in the States in short order. Direct mail and promotional efforts aimed mostly at academics and journalists are under way.

Index has been a chronicle of the fight for a free press around the world, providing a forum for many dissidents to publish their work. The magazine has contributors around the globe, filing dispatches that keep readers aware that some writers still face death sentences for the stories they would print. Under Owen, *Index* has expanded into opinion and debate, publishing essays on the downside of free expression.

60 SECONDS WITH...



Graydon Carter

Editor in Chief, *Vanity Fair*

Q. What are you doing in London? **A.** We're doing a huge portfolio of "Swinging London."

It'll be a big portion of the March issue. It's design; it's literature. Football, food, art, music.

I'm working with a team of writers and photographers. We're shooting about 40 people. David Kamp [formerly of *Spy* and *GQ*] has been working on this story for about two months. **Q.** The December issue is getting lots of reaction in L.A. You have pieces on Ovitz, Murdoch, Tommy Mottola. And you couldn't have timed your George Clooney cover any better. **A.** It's the ultimate New Establishment issue. [Bryan Burrough and Kim Masters'] piece on Michael Ovitz is the most in-depth profile ever of the man. There's not a dinner party or a cocktail party out there that does not begin with, "Have you read the Ovitz piece?" It had total saturation out there. **Q.** So London's swinging and L.A. is red-hot. Does anybody care about New York anymore? **A.** New York is always the top of the heap, no matter what. London has its ups and downs. Berlin is a city kids are flocking to right now. Nothing much is happening in Paris. But New York is always the place to be. **Q.** Someone said I should ask you about your kids and your cars. You've got great collections of both. Will you be adding to either any time soon? **A.** I've got a first-rate collection of kids. And I've got the automobile fleet of a third-rate Hollywood producer. The interest is there—the bank account is not—to have the sort of fleet I'd like. **Q.** Of kids or cars? **A.** Cars. No more kids; four is enough. But if my wife will allow me to start parking on the lawn, then definitely more cars.

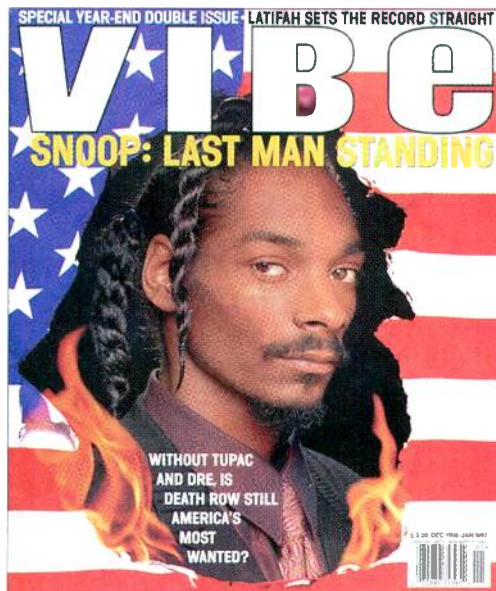
The New 'Vibe' Cover America Burns for Tha Doggyfather

For an example of just how evolved we are in this country when it comes to free expression, look no further than the December issue of the urban-youth monthly *Vibe*, with a burning U.S. flag on its cover. *Vibe* editor Alan Light said that the decision to use the provocative image—a hole burning through Old Glory's center, framing cover subject Snoop Doggy Dog—just seemed right. "Death Row [the rapper's record label] is certainly steeped in controversy," said Light. "And Snoop himself is no stranger to gestures of defiance and controversy."

Light said that nobody "up the chain of command" at *Vibe* (which is owned by Quincy Jones and former Time Inc. executive Robert Miller) had any problems with the

potentially inflammatory cover. As of last week, the magazine had not "gotten any particular reaction" from the public about the image. Light added. ■

**No flag waver-ing:
Light says higher-ups did not oppose
the December cover**



Must-Reads

A compendium of praiseworthy articles from recent issues:

"The Killer Cadets," Skip Hollandsworth's blood-curdling tale of two Texas teenagers and the young woman they murdered, in *Texas Monthly*, December

Ted Williams' eloquent defense of swamps, **"What Good Is a Wetland?"** in the November/December *Audobon*

Life senior editor Robert Sullivan traces the history and significance of the Virgin Mother in **"The Mystery of Mary,"** December

MOVERS

NETWORK TV

Larry Hancock has been named director of prime-time series programs for NBC Studios. Prior to joining NBC Studios, Hancock was director of creative services and marketing for MCA/Universal Pictures.

CABLE

International Family Entertainment promoted **Diane Linen Powell** to senior vp of corporate communications, the first woman at the company to serve as an executive officer. Powell most recently was vp of corporate communications...Discovery Networks International promoted **Rex Recka** to be its vp of programming, up from director of programming; also, **Rick Rodriguez** was named vp of programming for Discovery Communications—Latin America, moving up from director of programming...American Sky Broadcasting, the DBS joint venture between MCI and News Corp., hired **Ellen Agress** to be its senior vp and general counsel, coming over from NBC, where she was vp of legal policy and planning. ASkyB also named **Tom French**, the former vp of consumer marketing at United States Satellite Broadcasting, its vp of marketing...National Cable Communications promoted three: **Andrew Ward** was bumped up from vp and general sales manager to senior vp and director of sales for all NCC's 13 offices; **Susan Nolan**, most recently vp of the Eastern region, was upped to senior vp of sales planning and strategic development for NCC nationwide; and Pat
(continued on page 24)

The Media Elite

BY MARK HUDIS AND ANYA SACHAROW

From Tabs to TV

Is it our imagination, or are the Aussies taking over American media? *New York Post*-ers Steve Dunleavy and Neal Travis must've taken a cue from their boss, Australian media don Rupert Murdoch: the two columnists are branching out, with the help of high-profile New York attorney Barry Slotnick, to launch their own reality-based TV show under the company banner Three Eagles.

"We see a gap," explains a fairly tight-lipped Travis, who essentially invented the *Post*'s gossipy Page Six and is a longtime friend of Slotnick's. Travis is keeping the new show's format, topics and name a mystery, though he will share some of the thoughts behind its conception.

"It's sort of hard to explain without giving away too much," Travis says, "but it will be very old-fashioned television. It'll

[have] news and reenactments, be very story-driven, and we'll have celebrity hosts for each one." Travis says the format is easily ripped off, which is why the partners hope to link each installment with a big-name celebrity host to give the show an inimitable cachet.

"From our own experience with the tabloids, what our show will do is what the tabloids have tried to do, only much better," Travis says. "But it's easy to take our idea, so we want to link talent with each show. For instance, if we were doing the history of suntanning, we'd want to get George Hamilton." Sounds like a barn-burner.

The trio's first show, due out next spring, features Slotnick client Anthony Quinn as its host.

Of the founding triumvirate's credentials, Travis says: "Barry knows everybody. He makes good deals, he's fascinated by the

entertainment industry. Also he's very well wired. Dunleavy [former reporter for *A Current Affair*] is a marvelous TV man and has an incredibly high Q rating."

The Three Eagles expect to put together four two-hour shows initially and air them during prime time. And, of course, they hope to find a broadcast home at—where else?—Fox.

"We're all family," Travis adds conspiratorially. —MAH

RS' Travers Trips Down Movie Lane

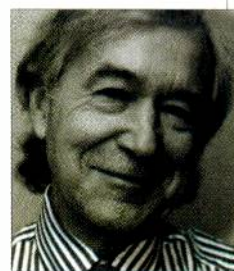
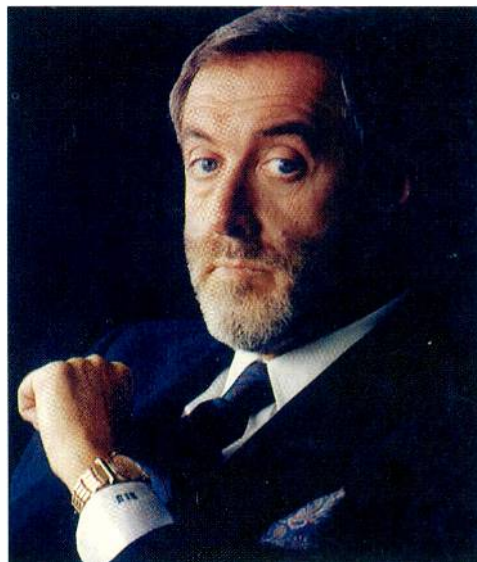
If you want a professional film critique, you have many choices: Kael, Ebert, Maltin. But if you want to know which star said, "If you have a vagina and a point of view, that's a deadly combination," you need Peter Travers.

The film critic and senior features editor for *Rolling Stone* is the proud papa of a new book,

The Rolling Stone Film Reader—The Best Film Writing From Rolling Stone Magazine From 1967-1996 (Pocket Books), featuring essays, interviews and, of course, reviews. The essays are a trip down movie memory lane, with titles like "Demi Moore and Other Brat Packers in Crisis" and "Surviving *Heaven's Gate*."

The book finishes with a list of 50 movies dubbed by Travers as "The Fifty Essential Maverick Movies of the Rolling Stone Era," and includes unlikely picks such as *Night of the Living Dead*, *The Brood* and *Batman*.

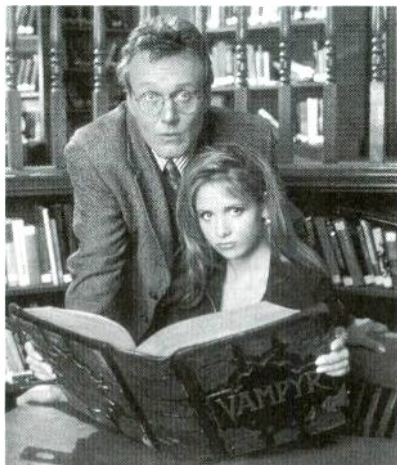
For the record, *Esquire* scribe Bill Zehme's interview with Sharon Stone (p. 54) is a thing of beauty. —MAH



Spinning tab stories into scripts: *NY Post* columnists Travis (top right) and Dunleavy (bottom right), along with Bernie Goetz's lawyer, Barry Slotnick (above), are Three Eagles

Elite Coffee Break

You know him as the seductive sipper in those brewing-affair Taster's Choice commercials. But all that caffeine has had Anthony Head up nights filming episodes of The WB's upcoming *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Head plays "The Watcher" to (former *All My Children* temptress) Sarah Michelle Gellar's Buffy, guiding her vampire-eradicating strategies on The WB's midseason entry. Winter should be hot for Head: in addition to *Buffy*, he's booked for more Choice interludes.



Head and Gellar in *Buffy*

JAMIES SORENSON

Past Doesn't Keep Nader From 'Future'

Ralph Nader apparently doesn't hold a grudge. Despite a thrashing from *Forbes* in the early '90s, Nader turns up as a contributor in the latest issue of *Forbes ASAP*.

"The [articles about Nader in *Forbes*] still tarnish his reputation a bit. There's still a bit of a black mark against him," says Rich Karlgaard, editor of *ASAP*. The articles detailed Nader's unholy alliance with lawyers seeking to profit from lawsuits filed by Nader and his consumer-watchdog cronies against negligent companies, manufacturers of faulty products, and other assorted scoundrels. Needless to say, the series riled many in the Nader camp.

But in the Dec. 2 "Big Issue" of *Forbes ASAP*, usually a *Forbes*-subscriber exclusive but available on newsstands this month for the first time, Nader lets bygones be bygones and contributes an essay entitled "Digital Democracy in Action" to the "Seers & Sages on the

Techno-Future" section.

Karlgaard seems to have quite the people-person touch. Not only did he manage to wangle a piece by Nader, who stresses the need for consumer and civic responsibility in the information age, but he also coaxed a 7,300-word feature for the same issue from the word processor of Tom Wolfe, who had not penned a major magazine feature in more than five years. —MAH

MEDIA DISH

Brack Keynotes 4/Color Conference



At the first "4/Color: State of the Industry" event to address issues concerning people of color within the magazine industry, held earlier this month in New York (from left): Vaughn Benjamin, vp of Media Credit Association for MPA; Reginald Brack, chairman of Time Inc.; and Krista Martin, publisher of 'NSBE' magazine

'Cooking Light' Celebrates 10 in Low Style



On hand for low-fat fare and wine-tasting at the magazine's 10th anniversary bash at New York's f.stop were (from left) Steve Bohlinger, associate publisher, 'Cooking Light'; Sharon Daw, media supervisor, Wunderman Cato Johnson; and Christopher Allen, publisher, 'Cooking Light'

*Audits & Surveys 1996

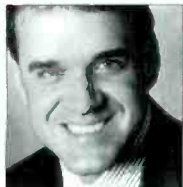
DISCOVER THIS:

A magnifying glass bends light rays, making close objects larger and sharper – two words that perfectly describe our viewing audience in **Latin America.***



Call Cathleen Pratt-Kerrigan in New York at 212-751-2220, x5121 or Fernando Barbosa in Miami at 305-461-4710, x4211.

MOVERS



**Discovery Net
ups Recka**



**TNT pockets
Pool**



**WKQI wakes up
to Bubala**

(continued from page 22)
Byrne, national sales manager in the Chicago office, was upped to regional vp for the Midwest...Country Music Television promoted **Camille Rojas** to programming manager for CMT Latin America, up from programming coordinator...Primestar by TCI hired **John Craine** as director of support operations. He comes from MCI Communications, where he was senior support manager for the Mass Markets Sales & Service center; the company also hired **Diane Keeton** as manager of marketing, bringing her over from Echostar Communications, where she was marketing manager...Fox News Channel hired **Jim Mills** as senior editor of Capitol Hill, overseeing coverage from there for the news network. Mills had been a producer for C-SPAN...TNT has hired two new vps of development and original programming, based in Los Angeles: **Marci Pool** and **Michael "Spike" Seldin**. Pool comes over from Warner Bros., where she was vp of development for TV and theatrical films for The Wolper Organization. Seldin had been head of development and feature acquisitions at Morgan Creek Productions.

AGENCIES

Melissa O'Donnell has joined Ohio-based Stern Advertising as a junior media buyer. Stern recently graduated from

Cleveland State University... **Shira Astra** has been named assistant media planner at The Weightman Group in Philadelphia. She comes over from LevLane Advertising in Bala Cynwyd, Pa.

RADIO

WKQI-FM Detroit has hired **Matt Bubala** as executive producer of the *Danny Bonaduce and the Q-Crew Morning Show*. He had been an executive producer at KMPC in Los Angeles.

STATIONS

Yuma, Ariz., NBC affiliate KYMA-TV has added **Paul Heebink** as its general sales manager. He had held the same post at WTVW in Evansville, Ind...Tribune's KHTV-TV in Houston has hired **Deborah Cline**, formerly manager of financial planning for Tribune Broadcasting, as controller...And Tribune Television Network Sales has promoted two: **Christopher Schultze**, from senior research analyst to director of research, and **Richard Treanor**, from research analyst to senior research analyst.

PRINT

Missy Chase has been named publisher of *Eating Well*, a Woman's Day Group title. Chase had been home furnishings director for *Gourmet* since January. Prior to that, she had been with *Elle Decor* for four years.



ROSS WEIR

Fox News has a lot of company on the "Wall"

Rupert Gets His Wish—Sort Of

It's probably not what Rupert Murdoch had in mind, but the fledgling Fox News channel is now available to every resident in New York City. It's one of several business-news services rotating on 21 video monitors in a new "Business Information Wall" at the New York Public Library's high-tech Science, Industry and Business Library at 34th Street and Madison Ave. The wall, donated by Paine-Webber Group, also shows CNN, MSNBC, Bloomberg Television, CNBC and C-Span; the video feeds (complete with ads) rotate throughout the day. Three L.E.D.

displays provide running headlines from Dow Jones and Reuters News Services and stock quotes from the New York Stock Exchange. The monitors are silent, but several have "Soundstiks," phone-like devices that transmit audio, and four others display closed-captioning. In a final piece of good news for Rupert, the video wall is fed not by Time Warner Cable but by upstart Liberty Cable Co. Andy Feldman, the consultant who organized the information, says, "Liberty had the most extensive array of business programming at the time." —*John Flinn*

Easthouse, ITC Executive, Dies at 35

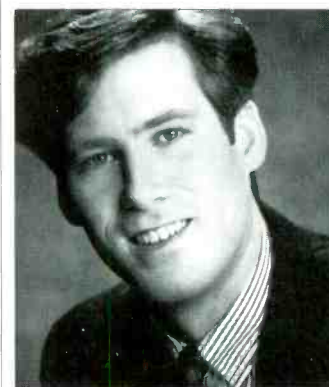
Richard Easthouse, a TV syndication sales veteran and top-ranking sales executive for Los Angeles-based ITC Entertainment, died on Oct. 27 of complications from AIDS. First joining ITC as manager of Northeast sales in 1990, Easthouse moved up in 1995 to vp of domestic TV for the Northeast region.

Rich Colbert, a former senior executive vp of ITC Domestic Television who now serves as president/ceo of Los Angeles-based IntelliVentures Inc., described Easthouse as "one of those rare colleagues and friends whose unique qualities provide lasting inspiration."

Prior to joining ITC, Easthouse was national sales manager for Fox affiliate

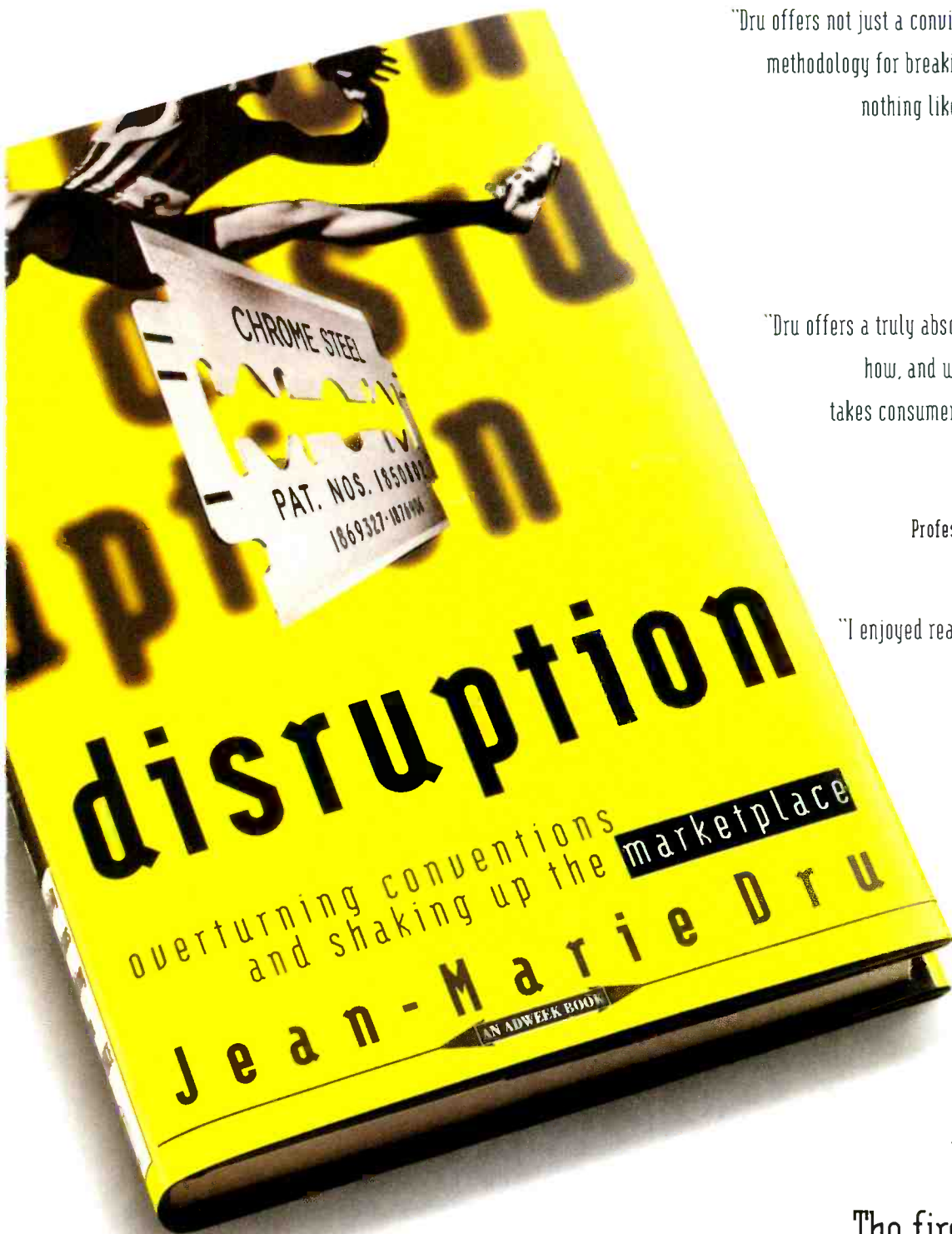
WOLF-TV in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Easthouse's family requests that donations in his name be made to Miracle House, P.O. Box 30931, New York, NY 10011; and the Aris Foundation, 1550 The Alameda, Suite 100, San Jose, CA 95126. —*Michael Freeman*



Richard Easthouse

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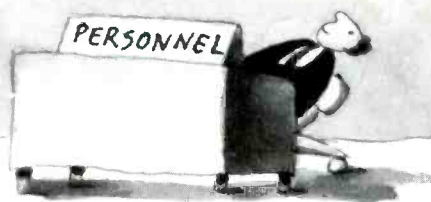
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CULTURE TRENDS

MTV Around the World

Week of 10/18/96

MTV Europe

Artist	Title
1. The Cure	Gone
2. Outkast	Atliens
3. Skunk Anansie	Twisted
4. Babybird	You're Georgeous
5. Wingfield	Gimme Gimme

MTV Brasil

Artist	Title
1. Magneticos	Istambul Ou Paragauy
2. Camisa De Venus	O Ponteiro Ta Subindo
3. Os Devas	Bandeira 2
4. O Bonde	Juca Pereira
5. Anistia	Alivio

MTV Japan

Artist	Title
1. TRF	Silent Night
2. Ranran Suzuki	...Of You
3. Great 3	Glass Roots
4. Ice	Love Makes Me Run
5. Kuroyume	Like An Angel

MTV Latino

Artist	Title
1. Maldita Vencidad	Ojos Negros
2. Tintoreos	Nunca
3. P.O.D.	Selah
4. Los Piojos	Marado
5. Tricky	Christiansands

MTV US

Artist	Title
1. The Smashing Pumpkins	Thirty-Three
2. Snoop Doggy Dog	Snoops Up Side The Head
3. Garbage	Milk
4. The Chemical Brothers	Setting Sun
5. Dru Hill	Tell Me

Culture Trends is a compilation of data collected from *Billboard*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, MTV and Nielsen Media Research to track current trends in the movie, television, video and recorded music marketplaces.

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CULTURE TRENDS

Culture Trends is a compilation of data collected from *Billboard*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, MTV and Nielsen Media Research to track current trends in the movie, television, video and recorded music marketplaces.

Billboard's Top 20 Albums

Compiled from a national sample of retail, store and rack sales reports, for the week ending November 23rd, 1996 provided by *SoundScan*.

This Week	Last Week	Peak Pos.	Wks on Chart	Artist	Title
1	New	1	1	Makaveli	The Don Killuminati : The 7 Day Theory
2	New	2	1	Mo Thugs Family	Family Scriptures
3	5	1	35	Celin Deion	Falling into You
4	7	4	45	No Doubt	Tragic Kingdom
5	1	1	2	The Beatles	Anthology 3
6	3	1	3	Van Halen	Best of Volume 1
7	8	2	6	Kenny G	The Moment
8	16	4	7	Soundtrack	Set It Off
9	6	6	2	Babyface	The Day
10	2	2	2	Ghostface Killah	Ironman
11	11	2	21	Toni Braxton	Secrets
12	9	2	3	Westside Connection	Bow Down
13	12	12	2	Alan Jackson	Everything I Love
14	13	1	74	Alanis Morissette	Jagged Little Pill
15	New	15	1	Reba McEntire	What If It's You
16	4	4	2	E-40	Tha Hall of Game
17	10	3	3	Journey	Trial by Fire
18	15	5	20	Keith Sweat	Keith Sweat
19	14	1	4	Counting Crows	Recovering the Satellites
20	18	3	9	Blackstreet	Another Level

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MTV's Buzz Clip

Buzz Clips are usually by new, up-and-coming artists who MTV believes have special potential. Of the 40 videos that MTV designated as Buzz Clips since January 1994, more than 75% have been certified gold or platinum.

Week of 11/18/96

Artist/Group: **Tool**
Song/Video: "Track #1"
Director: **Adam Jones**

Ask almost anyone what Tool's image is, and they won't be able to give a direct answer. Actually, the band takes pride in the fact that they haven't had to play any "lame fashion games." They've always been able to put art first. As *The New York Daily News* put it "...Can metal achieve beauty without selling out? Ask Tool. This L.A. quartet marries the gorgeously melodic vocals of Maynard James Keenan (vocals) with riffs as grotesquely brutal as a plane crash..."

Artist/Group: **Fiona Apple**
Song/Video: **Shadowboxer**
Director: **Jim Gable**

This 19-year-old smoky-voiced chanteuse writes and sings with depth and insight beyond her years; she also presents her talents with a self-assured charisma befitting her big-city New York roots. This first single is from her debut LP, *Tidal*. Beware of the undertow.

Artist/Group: **Marilyn Manson**
Song/Video: **The Beautiful People**
Director: **Flora Sigismondi**

Marilyn Manson continues its assault on the morals, ideologies and nightmares of American culture with their second release, *Smells Like Children*. This South Florida band was the first to be signed to Trent Reznor's Nothing record label -- in fact, Trent Reznor produced and mixed the album.

Artist/Group: **Cake**
Song/Video: **The Distance**
Director: **Mark Kohr**

Rather than ignore contradiction, Cake revels in it. Testifying to the broad scope of their audience, the band has already appeared on concert bills with artist ranging from the Meat Puppets and the Ramones to Al Green, the Meters, Jonathan Richman and the Monks of Doom. With their self-produced second album *Fashion Nugget*, Cake delves deeper into the maelstrom -- searching for an elusive place where romance and rejection can tango together, where humor and tragedy can share a few beers.

Nielsen's Top 15 Network Programs

These are the top 15 Network programs for the week ending November 10, 1996.

Rank	Program	Network	Rating	Share	Rank	Program	Network	Rating	Share
1	E.R.	NBC	24.9	41	9	Touched by an Angel	CBS	15.2	23
2	NFL Football	FOX	22.3	36	10	60 Minutes	CBS	13.8	22
3	World Series, Game 4	FOX	21.6	33	11	Cosby	CBS	13.2	21
4	Seinfeld	NBC	19.2	30	12	CBS Sun. Movie	CBS	12.6	19
5	Friends	NBC	18.0	29	13	20/20	ABC	12.4	23
6	NBC Sun. Movie	NBC	16.1	24	13	Drew Cary Show	ABC	12.2	19
6	The Single Guy	NBC	16.1	25	15	Grace Under Fire	ABC	11.7	18
8	Mon. Night Football	ABC	15.9	27					

Source: Nielsen Media Research R=Repeat S=Special

CULTURE TRENDS

Billboard's Top 15 Video Rentals

For Week ending November 16, 1996

Title	Label
1. Toy Story	Walt Disney & Buena Vista Home Video
2. Primal Fear	Paramount Home Video
3. Twister	Warner Home Video
4. Fargo	Polygram Video
5. The Birdcage	MGM/UA
6. Eraser	Warner Home Video
7. The Craft	Columbia TriStar
8. Fear	MCA/Universal Home Video
9. Multiplicity	Columbia TriStar
10. The Arrival	Live Home Video
11. James and the Giant Peach	Walt Disney & Buena Vista Home Video
12. The Truth About Cats and Dogs	FoxVideo
13. Beautiful Girls	Miramax & Buena Vista Home Video
14. Up close and Personal	Touchtone and Buena Vista Home Video
15. Before and After	Hollywood Pictures & Buena Vista Home Video

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Nielsen's Top 10 Syndicated TV Programs

These are the top 10 Syndicated programs for the week ending November 3, 1996

Program	Rating
1. Wheel of Fortune	11.9
2. Home Improvement	10.6
3. Jeopardy	9.7
4. Oprah Winfrey Show	8.3
5. Seinfeld	7.8
6. Nat'l Geo on Assignment	7.5
7. Simpsons	6.4
8. Entertainment Tonight	6.3
9. Home Improvement	5.8
10. Wheel of Fortune	5.6

Source: Nielsen Media Research

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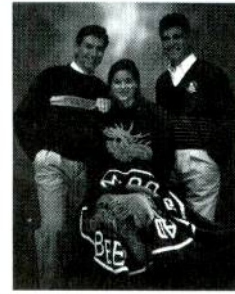
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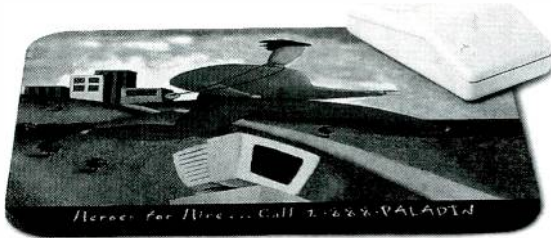
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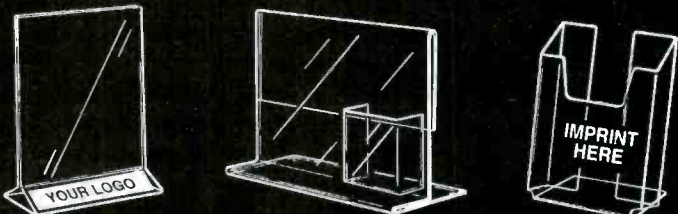
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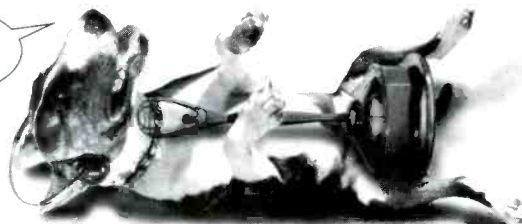
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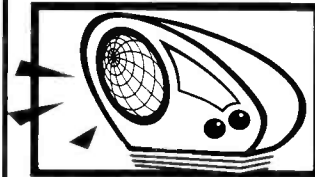
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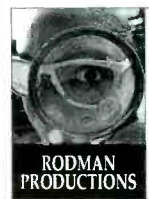
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To qualify, you must have 3-5 years' direct marketing experience, preferably in a business to business environment. Supervisory experience is highly desirable. Prior experience working with external vendors preferred. College degree in marketing or business is recommended. Experience developing and using databases, and working in health insurance or managed care a plus.

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Resourceful individuals with excellent communication and organizational skills to liaison between creative development and account services teams. Need to have a minimal understanding of the Web development production process.

Art Directors Creative

Candidates with strong design skills & creativity, expert level of digital production skills & WWW design will be responsible for concept, creation & direction of client Web sites. Interactive media & traditional advertising experience, proven project & people management skills, and effective resourcefulness required.

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Qualified candidates will possess a bachelors degree in a related field, advanced degree in marketing or business desirable. Five or more years of senior level corporate communications experience at a major advertising/public relations firm and/or a major health care company. Experience should include all aspects of internal/external communication strategies, as a company spokesperson before the media and community groups, qualitative and quantitative market research, and a demonstrated track record of incorporating market research into campaign planning and measurement. Proven leadership skills coupled with strategic thinking and the ability to translate complex concepts and ideas into practical, tactical action required.

Interested candidates should forward a cover letter and resume including the title of the position for which you are applying and salary history/requirements to:

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Large Out-of-Home Media Company seeks an "idea person" who is Mac-savvy. Agency background a plus. Must be a team player and be able / willing to work under pressure.

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CALENDAR

The 5th annual **International Children's Television Festival** is running through Dec. 15 at the Museum of Television & Radio in New York. Contact: 212-621-6600.

The 2nd annual **Worldwide Television Summit Conference**, with featured speaker David Stern, commissioner of the NBA, will be held Nov. 25 at the New York Hilton Hotel. Contact: 212-489-6969.

The 4th annual **Fall Internet World conference and exhibition** will be held Dec. 9-13 at the Jacob Javits Convention Center, New York. Contact: 1-800-MECKLER.

California Cable Television Association presents **The Western Show**, Dec. 11-13 at the Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, Calif. Contact: 510-428-2225.

The **National Association of Television Programming Executives** will hold its 34th annual **program conference and exhibition** Jan. 13-16 at the Ernest Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. Contact: 310-453-4440.

The 19th annual **International Sport Summit** will be held Jan. 15-16 at the Marriott Marquis in New York. David Downs, vp programming, ABC Sports, will be among the featured speakers. Contact: 301-986-7800.

The **Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau's** 10th annual **Sales Management School**, focusing on building winning sales teams, will be held Jan. 16-18 at the Del Lago Conference Center in Houston. Contact: 212-508-1235.

Media Notes

NEWS OF THE MARKET

Argyle Socks DISCUS Decision

San Antonio-based eight-station group Argyle Television has taken a strong stand following the Distilled Spirits Council's decision to end its voluntary ban on broadcast advertising. In a statement issued last week, Argyle president Blake Byrne said: "We do not wish to be a party to possibly persuading underage people to use hard liquor." Argyle has prohibited any of its stations from accepting liquor ads.

'Breakfast' Without Hibberd

After just four months and lackluster ratings, *Fox After Breakfast* has broken up the host team of Tom Bergeron and Laurie Hibberd, who were so successful on the show's two-year cable run. Hibberd left the show as of Nov. 15, declining the producers' offer of a rotating guest-host position. For now, the show has rotating cohosts, starting last week with Gladys Knight. This week Florence Henderson has the gig.

HBO Leads Cable ACE Winners

The usual suspects were the big winners of the 1996 Cable ACE Awards (the cable industry's Emmys), held Nov. 16 in Los Angeles and carried on TNT. HBO led the cable networks with 28 wins, including several for *The Larry Sanders Show* and its original movie *Truman*. ESPN and A&E each picked up six awards and Lifetime hauled in five. The nascent Independent Film Channel also won its first award.

Pact Drawn for Cartoonists

After a short stint without a contract, Hollywood's unionized cartoonists and producers have reached a tentative pact that will be effective through the year

2000. The 2,000 members of Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Local 839 will now vote on the contract, which was accepted by the union's negotiators last week. The tentative pact provides increases in scale wages—three separate 3 percent increases over four years—and health and pension benefits. It also tries to spell out the relationship between the union and computer animation artists.

Wired News to Desktop

The HotWired Network last week launched a new product, "Wired News," which will

employ a number of different online distribution channels to deliver the daily column to computer users. The distribution partners include Netscape In-box Direct, the PointCast Network, the @ Home Network, GeoWorks and others.

New Line's New Signs

New Line Television has been on a talent-signing spree of late, most recently making a script deal with the writing team of David Weisberg and Douglas Cook (*The Rock*). The two will develop dramatic series for network TV. New Line currently



CARTOON NETWORK STUDIOS

Moviegoers will see Cartoon Network fare such as *Swamp and Ted* via a new MaTOONays program

Movie Houses 'Toon In

The Cartoon Network plans a brand-strengthening move through a partnership with General Cinema Theaters and Kraft Foods that will bring Saturday-morning 'toons and kid-friendly films to 50 movie houses. The program, dubbed MaTOONays, kicks off Jan. 11 with 20 minutes of new World Premiere Toons followed by a feature film. Among the family fare planned for the events are Universal's *Babe* and MGM's *All Dogs Go To Heaven 2*. Kraft, which has such brands as Kool-Aid and Jell-O, will show 30-second promotional spots on screen before the entertainment and may hand out product samples. Response to test-marketing earlier this year spurred the '97 plans.

Media Notes

CONTINUED

has pilots in development based on the feature films *The Player* and *Mortal Kombat*. The studio also recently signed writer Ed Redlich (*The Practice*), producer Jacob Epstein (*Sliders*, *Hill Street Blues*) and Emmy-winning producer Richard Kramer (*thirtysomething*) to develop dramatic series. New Line has pilots in the works for ABC, CBS, Fox and The WB.

Fox Gains NY Affiliate

Elmira, N.Y., station WYDC has begun its affiliation switch from UPN to Fox. Standfast Broadcasting-owned WYDC will take a smattering of Fox offerings,

including Fox's Kids Network, sports and Saturday prime-time and late-night. WYDC will add Fox's Sunday prime-time schedule in January and will carry the complete Fox lineup in pattern in January 1998, when its UPN contract expires.

Pet 'Duck' Debuts on WB

The Daffy Duck Show launched last weekend (Nov. 23) as the lead-off show in the Kids WB lineup. The show, a pet project of WB chief Jamie Kellner, will be paired with *Steven Spielberg Presents Animaniacs* in the 8-9 a.m. block. To make room for *Daffy*, *Freakazoid* moves from

Saturday morning to Friday afternoon for a new block called *Freakout Fridays*. *Freakazoid* leads the hour block, which will consist of a rotating half-hour show and an episode of *Freakazoid*.

Staff Shuffle at KXLY, Spokane

Mark Wright, early and noon news anchor at the Spokane, Wash., ABC affiliate KXLY-TV, has been promoted to co-anchor for the station's main early- and late-evening newscasts. Wright replaces anchor Barry Judge, who is leaving the station. KXLY also has named a new executive news director.

Michael Espinoza, who left the post after the Nov. 5 election to join KFSN, the ABC affiliate in Fresno, Calif., will be replaced by Paul Brandt, formerly of NBC affiliate KHNL-TV in Honolulu. Wright's successor on the morning and noon newscasts is expected to be announced when Brandt takes over in December.

Nat'l Wildlife Airs Pair

National Wildlife Productions plans an all-out cable assault, with two of its projects airing on the same night, Dec. 1. *Wildlife Encounters in Alaska*, hosted by Ali MacGraw, debuts on The

Think Visual



Travel Channel at 8 p.m. The program highlights ways to experience native wildlife without having a negative impact on the environment. Then at 9 p.m., *The Last Great American Gold Heist*, hosted by actor/director Mario Van Peebles, premieres on TBS. The show documents the impact of mining in remote areas of the American West. National Wildlife Productions is the production arm of the nonprofit conservation group National Wildlife Federation.

Mattel at WB's Holiday Table
Kids WB and leading toy manufacturer Mattel are teaming up

for a Thanksgiving All-Star Cartoon Comedy Special. Four animated series will run back-to-back from 9 to 11 a.m., with interstitial segments giving a unified theme to the morning. Stars from The WB's prime-time shows will be featured in the interstitials talking about how to make the most of the holiday. Mattel will sponsor the special programming block, which includes *Animaniacs*, *Waynehead*, *Road Rovers* and *Superman*.

All American Signs Grinker
All American Television, the Los Angeles-based syndicator of *Baywatch* and other weekly



Gregory has left *Gourmet* for the top post at *Garden Design*

'Garden' Gets Gregory

Meigher Communications' *Garden Design* has a new publisher, Rob Gregory, formerly of *Gourmet*. Gregory had been ad director and second in command at the Condé Nast epicurean title for three years. Gregory, who has also been ad director for *Scientific American*, replaces Susan Rerat, who is moving to Europe. Meigher publishing director Joe Armstrong has also named Cara David ad director of *Saveur*; David had been publisher of Cahners' *Modern Bride*.

series, has signed an exclusive production and programming alliance with Charles Grinker Productions. Grinker, who created and produced such PBS series as *A Walk Through the*

20th Century With Bill Moyers, will develop and produce non-fiction programming for the broadcast networks, cable and syndication, to be distributed worldwide by All American.



Welcome to Primetime.



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BIG DEAL

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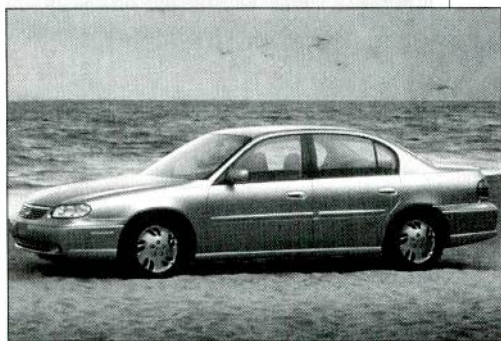
Agency: Campbell-Ewald, Warren, Mich.

Begins: December

Budget: Undisclosed

Media: TV, print

General Motors' Chevrolet division next month will reintroduce the Malibu to its lineup after a 14-year absence through TV and print ads. Chevy executives would not discuss the launch budget, but insiders suggest it could be comparable to the \$93 million the automaker spent last year—according to Competitive Media Reporting—in introducing the redesigned Lumina sedan.



The Chevy Malibu makes an estimated \$90 million comeback

The new Malibu sedan, which replaces the Corsica in the Chevrolet portfolio, is just now arriving at dealers and already has been named Car of the Year by Peterson Publishing's *Motor Trend* magazine. Print ads in national newspapers will tout that award, said Jeff Hurlbert, the division's category director of car brands. TV support is not expected until after the New Year, when inventories will be higher.

The theme of the Malibu campaign is "The car you knew America could build," which is intended to emphasize the car's ability to compete with imports in its midsize segment, Hurlbert said.

Research showed that consumers want features, but not at too high a price, Hurlbert said. As a result, advertising will position the Malibu, with a \$15,995 base price, as a smart buy.

—Tanya Gazdik

Real Money

ADVERTISING ACTIVITY IN THE MEDIA MARKETPLACE

BLOCKBUSTER ENTERTAINMENT

Agency: Bernstein-Rein Advertising, Kansas City, Mo.

Begins: Nov. 25

Budget: Undisclosed

Media: TV, print, radio, newspaper inserts
Blockbuster Entertainment's holiday campaign from Bernstein-Rein Advertising breaks today. Additionally, a new brand campaign from Bernstein, replacing "Make It a Blockbuster Night," is expected to break in January. The 1997 branding assignment follows a competition with Blockbuster's other national agency, Young & Rubicam in New York. Details of the brand campaign were not disclosed.

The holiday campaign airs through Dec. 24. Themed "We Can Help," it includes network and spot TV, radio and print. TV spots show Blockbuster store employees helping customers pick out holiday gifts, set to the 1980s tune "I Can Help" by Billy Swann.

Fort Lauderdale, Fla.-based Blockbuster plans additional marketing to support the campaign, including point-of-purchase merchandising promoting such videos as *Toy Story* and *Independence Day*. Two eight-page free-standing inserts for video and music products will be distributed through newspapers on Thanksgiving and are expected to reach 55 million people.

Spending for this year's campaign was not disclosed. Blockbuster spent \$27.2 million during the 4th quarter of 1995, according to Competitive Media Reporting.

—Ellen Rooney Martin

PETCO

Agency: Cohen/Johnson, Los Angeles

Begins: Late November

Budget: \$10 million

Media: Spot TV, direct mail, newspaper inserts

As the \$15 billion specialty pet retail market shakes out to two dominant players, No. 2 Petco (Phoenix-based PetsMart is No. 1) is gunning for a wider retail presence, opening some 50 new stores in 1997 supported by \$10 million in spot TV, direct mail and newspaper inserts in the company's expansion markets.

Additionally, Petco becomes the first pet retailer to team with Visa on a credit card. A Petco-Visa card, issued by MBNA, will be available next month, said Brian K. Devine, chairman, ceo and president of the San Diego-based chain. Card benefits will include a year-end rebate on 3 percent of Petco purchases and 1 percent of what cardholders charge elsewhere. In-store registration, signage and a direct mail drop to 675,000 Petco Pet Club members will support the card.

Petco, which opened two stores in New York City last week, will soon add a half-dozen in Midwest and Rocky Mountain states with the acquisition of Pet Food Warehouse of Minneapolis and Denver-based Pet USA later this year, bringing the number of stores to 325 in 21 states. As Petco hits 30 states in the next two years, it will consider a national marketing initiative, Devine said. Media spending will double next year, he added. —Bernhard Warner

CLOS DU BOIS WINE

Agency: Zuckerman Fernandes MacDaniels Sproul, San Francisco

Begins: Now

Budget: \$4-5 million

Media: Outdoor, radio

A French accent is used for humorous effect in the San Francisco agency's first Wine Alliance campaign. The agency won the estimated \$4-5 million account after a review in September. The first ads are designed to build the brand of the Wine Alliance's Sonoma County winery Clos Du Bois, in Geyserville, Calif.

Priced at \$7-12 per bottle, Clos Du Bois is popular among knowledgeable wine drinkers, "but [most] general wine consumers don't know how to pronounce the French name, so they don't buy it," said Ira Zuckerman, agency chief executive officer. "Our goal is to make them more comfortable with the brand."

The campaign consists of three outdoor ads breaking this week and four radio spots that started airing earlier this month in the Miami and San Francisco markets. The outdoor work is appearing in the San Francisco Bay Area until the end of the year. The tagline in the radio and outdoor ads:

CMR TOP 50

A Weekly Ranking of the Top 50 Brands' Advertising in Network Prime Time

Week of Nov. 4-10, 1996

Rank	Brand	Class	Spots	Prime-Time Ad Activity Index
1	BURGER KING	V234	91	2,284
2	MCDONALD'S RESTAURANT	V234	39	979
3	DODGE TRUCKS (DAKOTA)	T117	27	678
4	PONTIAC AUTOS (GRAND AM)	T111	22	552
5	SATURN CORP.	T111	19	477
6	SPRINT LONG DISTANCE (RES.)	B142	18	452
7	ACE HARDWARE STORES	V345	17	427
	EVEREADY ENERGIZER BATTERIES	H220	17	427
9	LITTLE CAESAR'S	V234	16	402
10	1-800-COLLECT	B142	15	376
	LINCOLN AUTOS (TOWN CAR)	T111	15	376
	SEARS DEPT. (MULTI-PDTS.)	V321	15	376
13	DURACELL ALKALINE BATTERIES	H220	14	351
	HBO HOME BOX OFFICE	V423	14	351
	TARGET DISCOUNT STORES	V324	14	351
16	BUENA VISTA (RANSOM)	V233	13	326
	RED LOBSTER RESTAURANT	V234	13	326
	TYLENOL EXTRA-STRENGTH GLTB.	D211	13	326
19	DISCOVER CARD	B150	12	301
	JC PENNEY DEPT.	V321	12	301
	MERRILL LYNCH STOCKBROKERS	V213	12	301
	SEARS DEPT. (BUS. TECHNOLOGY)	V321	12	301
	U.S. ARMY	B160	12	301
24	OLIVE GARDEN RESTAURANT	V234	11	276
	WARNER BROS. (SPACE JAM)	V233	11	276
26	MAYBELLINE GREAT FINISH NAIL POL.	D115	10	251
	POP SECRET(JUMBO POP POPCORN)	F212	10	251
28	CANON (COPIERS)	B313	9	226
	EXCEDRIN (EXTRA-STRENGTH TAB.)	D211	9	226
	HEALTHY CHOICE (PASTA SAUCES)	F117	9	226
	JERZEES SPORTSWEAR	A117	9	226
	NINTENDO N64 (GAME SYSTEM)	G450	9	226
	STARBURST FRUIT TWIST	F211	9	226
	TOY STORY (VIDEO)	H330	9	226
	TRISTAR (MIRROR HAS TWO FACES)	V233	9	226
	TYLENOL CHILDREN'S (LIQUID)	D211	9	226
	WAL-MART (MASTERCARD)	B150	9	226
38	AT&T LONG DISTANCE (RESIDENTIAL)	B142	8	201
	BURLINGTON COAT FACTORY	V311	8	201
	CALVIN KLEIN CK BE (FRAGRANCE)	D113	8	201
	GENERAL FOODS INT'L. (COFFEE)	F171	8	201
	HONDA AUTOS (ACCORD)	T112	8	201
	JELL-O (INSTANT PUDDING)	F115	8	201
	LEXUS AUTOS (ES)	T112	8	201
	L'OREAL PREFERENCE	D141	8	201
	MAXWELL HOUSE ITLN. EX RS	F171	8	201
	METROPOLITAN LIFE INS.	B220	8	201
	NEW LINE (SET IT OFF)	V233	8	201
	NISSAN MOTOR CORP.	T112	8	201
	PLAYSTATION	G450	8	201

Ranked in order of total spots. Includes ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX, UPN and WB. Regional feeds are counted as whole spots. Spots indexed to average spots for all brands advertising in prime time, i.e., if McDonald's Index=1308, McDonald's ran 1208 percent more spots than the average.

Source: Competitive Media Reporting

"From Sonoma County. Not France."

The radio ads use a narrator with a French accent who dismisses his French connection. In one ad he says, "I have a French name—but so what? I am a normal American person, just like you." He then explains the pronunciation of the brand name and tells about the winery's awards.

—Joan Voight

ALBERTO-CULVER

Agency: To be determined

Begins: April

Budget: \$10 million

Media: TV

Alberto-Culver will pump \$17 million in total marketing support next year to Cortexx with Gelatin, an ambitious line extension for perhaps the company's most obscure haircare brand.

Cortexx ships to mass retail channels Jan. 13, with advertising breaking in April. Of the total budget, \$10 million will be earmarked for a TV campaign that runs intermittently through October 1997. The company will drop three FSIs, in May, July and November.

An agency assignment hasn't been made, although Lois, Chicago, the shop that handles Culver's other brands, is vying for the account along with a pair of other unidentified agencies. The company has invested no advertising into the Cortexx brand this year, according to Competitive Media Reporting.

The new line features a shampoo and conditioner for normal hair and a matching set for those with dry, color treated or permed hair. It claims to reduce hair loss from breakage and splitting by 60 percent. Culver will use that therapeutic edge to put Cortexx with Gelatin up against some of the best-known brands in the "repair" shampoo niche, including Infusium, Aussie and Neutrogena. It will also hype the product's gelatin ingredient, which it calls "unique in haircare."

Through August of this year, advertising spending by competitors went like this: J&J spent \$12 million on Neutrogena, per Competitive Media Reporting; Clairol spent \$7.3 million on Infusium; and Redmond doled out \$2.9 million on Aussie.

Media Person

BY LEWIS GROSSBERGER



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White Man's Birdin'

YOU CAN RUN, YOU CAN SCREAM, YOU CAN SQUEEZE off a warning burst from your automatic weapon, but

to no avail. When the fourth week of November rolls around, it's time for Media Person's retelling of the beloved Holiday Classic, and no force in the universe can stop it. Stand back, everyone, because once again, here comes the guaranteed 87 percent historically accurate and family values-oriented story of the First Thanksgiving, In the year 1620, as you would know if you watched *Jeopardy!* more often, the Pilgrims sailed on the Mayflower, bumped into Plymouth Rock and began the daunting task of learning to spell Massachusetts.

Food was scarce and the winter cruel but the stalwart Pilgrims quickly adapted to local customs such as catching fatal diseases and wearing expensive furs, first making sure the original owner was no longer inside. It seems their governor, William Bradford Clinton (who seemed suspiciously merry for a Pilgrim) had neglected to tell his people to sow their seeds as he was too busy running for reelection and sowing his own seeds, though not, unfortunately, in the fields.

But despite the fact that most of the Pilgrims dropped dead that first harsh winter, even the deceased ones felt they were better off than they'd been back in England with its blasphemous tabloids and its one sensationalistic TV channel, which constantly broadcast tips on how to catch and torture Pilgrims.

The New World was a far better place for it had not only cable but also church multiplexes, offering a variety of sermons from six different pulpits, plus all the popcorn you could eat. Also, the Pilgrims realized they could stay warm by working themselves into a frothing rage against all the sex, violence and commercials in America's young but spirited entertainment industry.

From the naughty, bawdy colony of New

Amsterdam came *NAPD Blue Law*, a racy show about a squad of stern Dutch uncles who rode around town giving no-nonsense lectures to brazen hussies showing too much ankle.

On the Florida-based SIN (Spanish Inquisition Network) the eternally youthful Ponce de Leon, host of the daily talk show *Ponce*, got in trouble when one of his guests, an Indian, insulted another guest, a conquistador, and the conquistador wiped out the Indian's entire tribe

The Indians imparted such indispensable survival tricks as watching the Weather Channel for clues on when to come in out of the rain.

plus the studio audience while Ponce was still in the opening credits.

From the little-known Northwest territory came tales of a wondrous tinkerer named Gates and his amazing invention, Windows I. It was said that with his magical new hardware, you could actually stand inside your home and see what was going on outside.

There was also *The Hex Files* on the heretical Foxtail Network, a marvelous entertainment featuring a pair of sexy young investigators who ride from town to town, checking reports of weird occurrences and hanging the witches responsible for the trouble.

But there was more to life than show business, as the Pilgrims quickly learned. While his people worried about the practical matter of

whether they would have enough gallows, stocks and ducking stools for the coming holiday season, Governor Clinton only talked about his visionary scheme to build a bridge to the 18th century. Eventually, the Pilgrims decided he would better serve them in Washington as President, especially since there would be no Washington or President for another 160 years.

The Pilgrims' biggest problem, however, was food, especially after they polished off their last helping of shoeleather a la molasses. Swallowing his pride, even though it carried no nutritional value, Governor Clinton appealed for aid to Chief Massasoit, the great sachem of the Wampanoags. But Chief Massasoit turned Clinton down, finding him unacceptable on the character issue. In desperation, the governor appealed to Chief Wampanoag, the great massasoit of the Sachems.

Wampanoag immediately went on CNN (the Corn Niblet Network) where he ordered his tribesmen to teach the struggling (original-ly an Indian word meaning "dense") Pilgrims the ancient lore of the woods. The Indians imparted such indispensable survival tricks as burying fish in the furrows for fertilizer and keeping an eye on the Weather Channel for clues on when to come in out of the rain.

Using their new knowledge, the Pilgrims eagerly got to work.

After toiling and sweating in the woods for nearly a half hour, they needed a rest and declared a three-day feast of Thanksgiving. The Indians brought venison, duck, trout, sweet potatoes and buffalo hump on rye. The Pilgrims brought a turkey, which the Indians dumped under the table when their hosts weren't looking as they considered it dried-out crud.

After the feasting came the entertainment, featuring Chief Michael of the Jackson Tribe, a weird holy man who sang like a bird, danced like a bear and looked like a girl.

It all went down in history as the First Thanksgiving, the beginning of a 376-year tradition of magnificent gluttony whose spirit never dies. And that's why, even today, whenever someone crams himself so full on Turkey Day that he has to hurl, somewhere an Indian smiles.



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you're
walking a
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in major
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Source: 1996 Subscriber Study
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