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NATPE 2000

Buyers down, sales up

SPECIAL REPORT

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Diversity takes center stage at TV networks

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TOP OF THE WEEK / 6
 BROADCASTING / 33
 CABLE / 42
 TECHNOLOGY / 45

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TOP OF THE WEEK / 6

NBC and Paxson cozy up NBC affils get first crack at joint service agreements that include programming, sales. / 8

Yellow light for digital radio SBA is concerned about digital conversion's effect on small broadcasters. / 12

Digital must-carry a must ALTV's Hedlund pushes for resolution of DTV signal carriage as top priority of 2000. / 16

'Attila' attacks the 'gang' Former FCC chairman Reed Hundt's new memoir takes shots at commissioners Jim Quello and Rachele Chong. / 17

For more late-breaking news, see "In Brief" on pages 64-65



Business better than usual

Revamped NATPE proved naysayers wrong; attendance, selling were up. / 6

◀ *New Line featured Mini-Me (Verne Troyer) pitching its New Line 8 film package that includes 'Austin Powers.'*



COVER STORY

Cover photo:
Rick Rowell / Matthew
Photographic Services

NETPE

New media meets the old in New Orleans / 20

BROADCASTING / 33

Diversity takes center stage at TV nets

Fox seeks an executive to oversee minority hiring; NAACP's Mfume may ask government's help. / 33

Warner Bros. is first on MARS High-speed ratings 'dream machine' from SystemLogic will offer specialized reports. / 34

Making the digital cut First-run is going digital, but syndicators are having to decide which library programs will get expensive makeovers. / 35

CABLE / 42

Ops studying sacrifice fly Trading cash flow for faster Web rollout: Will investors rally or panic? / 42

America's Voice gets laryngitis Still lacking cash, conservative political network moves through Chapter 11. / 43

TECHNOLOGY / 45

Second time is the charm PamAmSat relies on Arianespace to launch hybrid Galaxy XR satellite without incident. / 45

Charter taps S-A for digital upgrade MSO buys \$100 million in fiber gear and set-tops. / 45

WRAL looks at datacasting Pilot program with DTVPlus, LG Electronics investigates consumers' attitudes. / 46

SPECIAL REPORT / 24

Internet TV: Old TV made new Video on the Web is recasting concepts about video form and function. / 24

◀ *Pseudo.com's programming ranges from the staid to wrestling.*



Changing Hands.....51	Editorials.....66	Get w/the Program.....39
Classifieds.....56	Fates & Fortunes.....54	Nielsen Ratings.....41,44
Closed Circuit.....14	Fifth Estater.....53	Station Break.....37
Cutting Edge.....50	Financial Wrap Up.....13	Washington Watch.....18

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NAPTE: Better Than Usual

Revamped convention proves naysayers wrong; attendance and selling are up

By Melissa Grego and
Joe Schlosser

A lot of people arrived at the NATPE Conference wondering whether all sides could play nice and the annual television swap meet was still a viable selling destination.

With the domestic syndication companies sharing more of "their turf"—Internet, new-media and international exhibitors took up well over 50% of the conference floor—television execu-

tives were waiting to see if all the puzzle pieces would fit.

And, with a wave of consolidation on both the station and the syndication fronts over the past year, some studio heads were wondering if the real decision makers—the programming buyers—would make the trip to the Big Easy.

The answer to both questions was yes. "It was a great show on two fronts," says Tribune Entertainment President Dick Askin. "First, we wrote a lot of business. Second, the presence of the

Internet and new-media companies really showed how dynamic this business can be."

"We did a steady flow of business," says Universal Worldwide Television Senior Vice President Matt Cooperstein. "To me, it's still a programming buying and selling convention. When it came to the station groups, the buyers were here."

Attendance was up slightly from last year—17,520 vs. 17,440—with 25% international visitors and 18% from the new-media sector. NATPE President and CEO Bruce Johansen went on the offensive in recent weeks, attempting to quell what he deemed "negative" publicity about slowing attendance on the station side.

"Everyone was saying that there were going to be fewer GMs and fewer station people and fewer buyers on the floor," he says. "Enough about that, the bottom line is, deals were made and people were writing a lot of business."

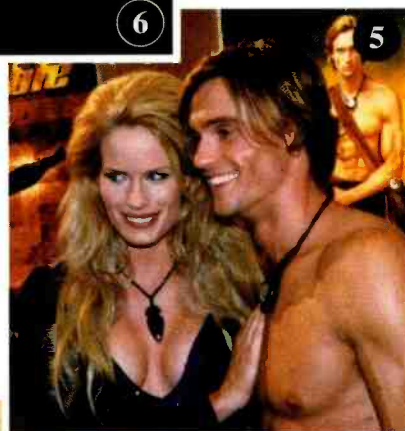
Johansen and his staff are already preparing for NATPE 2001 in Las Vegas, and he believes that more "positive" change is in store. "I think we just scratched the surface here," he says. "The floor is going to look even more different than it did this year, and I think people are welcoming that now. This is a business about

making money, and that is happening on the NATPE floor."

Pearson Television had a good convention even though things were a little different than in years past. "Despite the fact that many people said buyers were not here, for us, it was quite the opposite," said President of North American Distribution Joe Scotti. "We had constant traffic for two days straight. We have come here and done more with fewer people, less support staff and a smaller booth size."



1. Louie Anderson, host of Pearson's 'Family Feud,' with 'Baywatch Hawaii' cast at the Pearson booth. 2. The doctor and the judge are in: Paramount's Dr. Laura Schlessinger and Judge Judy Scheindlin. 3. Letter-turners Vanna White (center) and her international counterparts from (l-r) Germany, Denmark, Australia and Turkey. 4. Jack Hubley and friend have 'Wild Moments' at the Hearst-Argyle booth. 5. Monika Achnarre and Daniel Goddard of Alliance Atlantis' 'BeastMaster' raise pulses at the exhibitor's booth. 6. Warner Bros.' Judge Mills Lane squares off with James Curtis of King World's 'Curtis Court.'



The conference floor overall had a new look, with more than 160 new-media companies setting up shop and scores of international "pavilions." With all of the consolidation in the syndication business, new bedfellows were together at NATPE for the first time. At the Paramount booth, *Judge Judy* and *Judge Joe Brown*, formerly of Worldvision Enterprises, shared space with Mary Hart and the *Entertainment Tonight* gang.

The two newly merged syndication companies at CBS—King World and Eyemark Entertainment—had separate booths probably for the last time. The King World booth was used for domestic sales, while Eyemark's elaborate setup was the home of the international divisions.

"We all met together for the first time about three weeks ago in Florida and got to know each other," said King World's Stu Stringfellow of the Eyemark and King World sales forces.

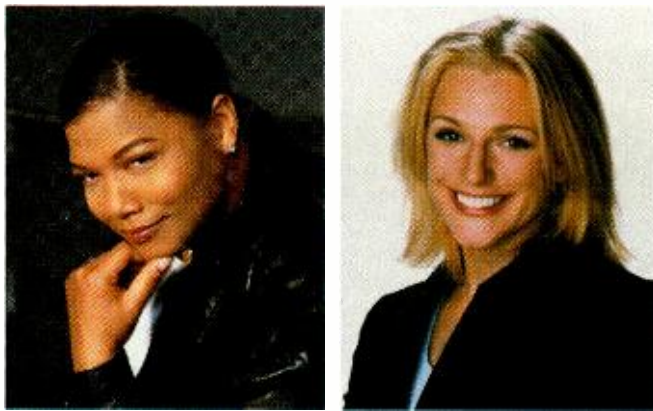
Eight first-run court and legal series were being sold at NATPE, as were a handful of action hours and new game shows. The first conversations and sales tactics for a number of highly anticipated off-network shows, such as *Will & Grace* from Warner Bros. and Carsey-Werner's *That '70s Show*, were also unveiled.

On the sales front, Columbia TriStar Domestic Television was the talk of the conference because of quick sales efforts on new first-run shows *Judge Hatchett* and *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*. *Mars* was picked up by the NBC owned-and-operated stations in a multiyear deal; the hybrid talker came away from New Orleans with 55% of the U.S. covered. CTTD's new court series *Hatchett* was also sold in more than 55% of the country, including the eight Fox O&Os. The Sony-owned studio also renewed action series *V.I.P.* for a third season in over 95% of the U.S.; Screen Gems Network surpassed 80%; and *Battledome* received a green light for a sophomore season with sales covering 92% of the country.

Paramount Domestic Television cleared late-entry reality series *Maximum Exposure* and co-venture action show *Queen of Swords* in over 65% of the country. *Dr. Laura* now stands at 88% for its fall launch, and the studio has also cleared six new off-network

shows for next season: *Spin City* (95%); *Clueless* and *Sabrina, The Teenage Witch* (82%); *7th Heaven* and *Moesha* (80%); and *Nash Bridges* (70%). "The good thing about this NATPE is that we didn't need a good NATPE," says Paramount's co-president Joel Berman. "We came in with a lot of these shows pretty well cleared, and we picked up markets we needed on a number of the shows here at the convention."

Warner Bros. Domestic Television and its Telepictures Distribution division cleared new game show *Street Smarts* on 80 stations, representing 72% of the country, for next season. The one-hour court series from Warner



Telepictures gave a green light to 'Queen Latifah' (l) for a second year. It has 65% coverage. The NBC O&Os were among the stations that picked up Columbia TriStar's 'Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus,' hosted by Eleanor Mondale.

Bros., *Moral Court*, stood at 62% at the end of last week, and Telepictures' *Queen Latifah* was given a green light for a second season with 65% of the country signed on once again. Warner Bros. President Dick Robertson says he is confident that freshman talker *Latifah* will pull itself into higher ratings and bigger profit margins next season.

Robertson says potential first-run series *Anthony Mark Hankins* and *Million Dollar Chance of a Lifetime* are still in development and may be sold for next season. Without them, the studio will have 10 new first-run shows on the air next fall and more than 15 in off-network play during 2000-01.

Buena Vista took *House Calls* into the show with clearances on the Chris-Craft/United Television stations and then added wsvn-TV Miami and WHDH-TV Boston, bringing its total to 35% of the country. Its *Ainsley Harriott* talker, tapped as the top new talk prospect by rep firm Petry, came out of the show cleared in over 85% of the country.

Twentieth Television's new first-run series *Power of Attorney* tacked on a

number of new stations for next fall. It arrived at the convention with little more than the 22 Fox O&Os and left sold in over 88% of the U.S. The Fox syndication unit also signed early deals for drama *The Practice*, including clearances on WPWR-TV Chicago, KBWB-TV San Francisco and WXYZ-TV Detroit. Long-running reality series *Cops* has been renewed in over 65% of the country for an eighth season in off-network play.

Studios USA's big new first-run reality series *Arrest & Trial* is cleared on 108 stations, representing more than 75% coverage. The studio also renewed its big three first-run talk shows (*Jerry Springer*, *Sally Jessy Raphael* and *Maury*) in over 90% of the country for next fall and in at least 50% for the 2001-02 season. New relationship series *Lover or Loser*, which will also air on co-owned USA Network next season, has been sold in 25% of the country on the syndication side. The weekly series *Back2Back Action* has been sold in over 90% for its first full season (2000-01).

New Line Television cleared new action hour *Matthew Blackheart: Monster Smasher* in 45% of the country, teen dating strip *First Date* in 48%.

MGM Television Distribution made presentations for late-entry game show *Sex Wars* and announced delayed sales on late-night series *Chat Room America*. President Hank Cohen said the show is being considered for possible cable, network or syndication play. MGM renewed sci-fi action series *Stargate SG-1* in 75% of the country for a third season and sold its movie package MGM's 75th Anniversary Film Package (*Silence of the Lambs, Platoon*) in over 62%.

Tribune Entertainment has cleared *Gene Roddenberry's Andromeda* in 141 markets covering 89% of the country for next fall and has renewed *Beastmaster* for a second season in 144 markets, representing 86% of the country, and veteran series *Earth: Final Conflict* has been renewed in 145 markets (88%).

Carsey-Warner picked up the syndication rights to *Better Homes and Gardens* from Paramount last month and quickly renewed the weekly series in 60% of the land for the 2000-01 season. The studio also sold off-network series *Cosby* in 79% and renewed *Profiler* for a second year in 90% of the country. ■

NBC and Paxson cozy up

NBC affils get first crack at joint service agreements that include programming, sales

By Steve McClellan

NBC affiliates will have a six-month exclusive window to negotiate joint service agreements (JSAs) with Paxson stations that could include sharing of facilities, programming and joint sales efforts, according to Randy Falco, president, NBC Television Network.

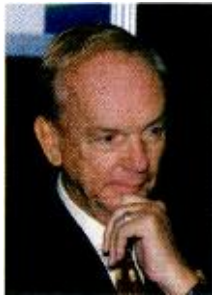
Following a pre-NATPE meeting with affiliates, Falco said he will send a letter to affiliates in the next three to four weeks outlining the opportunities that NBC stations might exploit in a JSA with co-located Paxson stations. Paxson has 72 owned or affiliated stations across the country. The exclusive window is an offshoot of NBC's \$700 million purchase of just under one-third of Paxson Communications last year.

Falco told reporters that the potential JSAs would give local NBC and Paxson stations the opportunity to share technical facilities and to have a joint sales team that would be overseen by the NBC station in the market, similar to the arrangement that now has the NBC network overseeing Paxson's national sales. Such arrangements, he said, would enable NBC stations to compete more effectively against radio stations and cable systems in their markets. Combining NBC and Paxson ad sales inventory in local markets would enable stations to offer advertisers spots at lower rates.

Falco also said the exclusive window will give the NBC and Paxson stations the chance to hammer out news-repurposing agreements that would allow for repeat broadcasts of the NBC stations' early-morning, midday and late newscasts on the Paxson stations. It will also allow those stations to align their economic interests and operate more efficiently, he said.

The six-month window will begin some time in February, with some flexibility as to exact dates, Falco said. But at the end of the exclusive period, if no deal is struck, the Paxson stations would be free to talk to other stations in the market.

At the network level, the two sides continue to talk about programming and promotion contributions that NBC can make to Pax TV. The goal, in the



Paxson's Pax TV goal: to become a 'contemporary family network.'

next two to three years, Falco said, is to have Pax TV "evolve into a contemporary family network," with a younger-skewing audience than it currently has. The current perception, based on consumer research, he said, is that Pax is a "religious kind of network." That perception could stem from some of the paid programming on the network and, possibly, the well-known religious beliefs of Paxson founder Bud Paxson, who is a born-again Christian.

Alan Frank, president of the Post-Newsweek Stations and chairman of the NBC affiliate board of governors, called the affiliate meeting "open, candid and useful."

Another topic of discussion at the affiliate meeting was the news-sharing arrangement among ABC, CBS and Fox. NBC was excluded from the deal, although, when it was announced in December, the networks involved said

they'd consider letting others in as well. NBC executives said at the time that they were looking into the matter. But yesterday the NBC affiliate board urged the network not to join the alliance, Frank confirmed. "We don't understand it," he said. "It's really not clear what it does other than helping Fox," he said. "The position of the board is that NBC should not do it."

On the programming front, NBC announced that it has picked up 13 more one-hour episodes of the game show *Twenty One*. According to NBC Entertainment President Garth Ancier, the network will try out different time periods for the show in the coming weeks.

In addition, Ancier said, the network made a pilot commitment for an upcoming animated comedy from Carsey-Werner called *Talking Dogs*, which uses special effects like those in the recent movie *Stuart Little*. "Technologically," he said, "it's a long way from *Mr. Ed*."

Ancier also said the network will develop a total of 15 comedy pilots for fall 2000, about double the number the network did last year. The deadline for making those commitments is Feb. 15. In addition, he said, NBC completed its drama development last week for the fall season, committing to 10 pilots, three more than last year. ■

Fox's problem child

Carey tells affils that, if ratings for kids block don't improve by next year, 'we'll do something else'

By Steve McClellan
and Joe Schlosser

Fox's afternoon children's programming block may go away in 2001. That would be fine with most of the network's affiliates. At a meeting with affiliates on the eve of NATPE, Fox Television Chairman Chase Carey promised stations that, if the kids block didn't show some improvement in the ratings over the next year, "we'll do something else," according to station executives who attended the meeting.

The kids block has been a ratings thorn for stations for some time, as competitors such as The WB and new cable networks have steadily eaten into its ratings in recent years. A year ago, Fox canceled a one-hour morning kids block that also wasn't doing much in the ratings.

At the meeting, Fox executives also qualified earlier statements that it would back down from trying to lay off some of the cost of the new NASCAR agreement (that starts next year) on stations. Last year, after affiliates reacted badly to such a proposal, network exec-

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utives told reporters it had "no plans" to charge stations for NASCAR. But at the meeting, Carey said it would not charge affiliates for the racing package for at least the first two years that Fox carries the event.

One Fox executive said privately: "We won't try to stick it to them in year three" to try to make up for no payments the first two years. Initially, Fox had proposed a \$5 million annual contribution to the NASCAR package, a relative token given Fox's bill of \$3.2 billion over eight years. Still, some stations remained suspicious. "The inventory deal left a bad taste in our mouth," said one Fox affiliate. "It really set the relationship back."

That was a reference to Fox's move last year to charge affiliates for prime time inventory in a deal that lasts three years. "After that and our agreement to pay for football and give up profit rights in Fox Kids," said an affiliate, "it's an understatement to say their timing was bad in trying to charge us for NASCAR."

Exacerbating the financial hit that most Fox stations took with the new inventory deal was a sharp fourth-quarter decline in the network's prime time

ratings. Sandy Grushow, chairman of Fox Television Entertainment, addressed affiliates for the first time since being promoted to oversee both Fox network programming and TV production. His mandate is to fix prime time with his now-direct-report Doug Herzog, president of Fox Entertainment.

As if the start of the season wasn't bad enough, the network is now facing the loss of three of its long-running staples for the 2000-01 season. Fox sources say *Beverly Hills 90210* and *Party of Five* will not be returning next season and the possibility of *The X-Files*' return is slim.

"It's been a challenge, and it's going to be a challenge," says Grushow, who ran Fox's entertainment division in the early '90s. "There is a lot of work to do, and there are a lot of holes to fill."

Three weeks ago, Grushow and Herzog told the Television Critics Association meeting in Los Angeles that they were looking to keep *Beverly Hills 90210* going all the way through the summer with fresh episodes. But now sources say the Spelling-produced drama will not be coming back for an 11th season and the unique summer

plan is dead. "They wanted a full-season renewal for the show in exchange for the summer plan," said one Fox executive. "We were not ready to give that."

As for *Party of Five*, sagging ratings and question marks concerning the return of stars Neve Campbell and Scott Wolf have forced Fox executives to look elsewhere for next season. And regarding *The X-Files*, Fox executives say they are still negotiating with the show's producers and star David Duchovny for another season of the Sunday-night hit.

If Fox does cancel its afternoon kids block, it retains the right to program the daypart, under a 10-year agreement negotiated just last year. Some stations would prefer to program the block (3-5 p.m.) with syndicated fare, but, unless Fox gives up its right to program the time itself, that won't happen. "That's not the issue," says Cullie Tarleton, senior vice president, Bahakel Broadcasting. "We want programming that works. Right now, it's a time period that's not working." At the meeting, Tarleton was elected chairman of the Fox affiliate board of governors, succeeding Raycom's Murray Green. ■

Kellner to affils: Help!

Loss of WGN superstation carriage means local stations must boost promotion

By Steve McClellan

WB head Jamie Kellner told affiliates at NATPE Tuesday that he has renewed his contract for several more years. The announcement quelled speculation that he might leave at the end of his current term to focus on his station group (Acme Television) or explore new opportunities altogether.

Kellner's decision to stay comes as The WB is going through a significant ratings slump. The network's ratings are down nearly 15% this season, the first dip in its five years on the air. Part of the problem is that superstation WGN no longer distributes its WB feeds outside the Chicago market. Last year, WGN's superstation coverage accounted for 16% of The WB's household rating.

The expansion to Friday also diluted The WB's ratings, Kellner said, and executives acknowledge that some of the network's well-regarded shows,



Jamie Kellner has a new contract and ratings that are down 15% this season.

such as *Dawson's Creek*, *Felicity* and *Angel*, either stumbled creatively or haven't lived up to their hype.

Kellner also acknowledged that the road to unqualified, firmly established success is longer and tougher than he originally

thought. Initially, he said, "I thought it would take five or six years. Now I think it will be more like eight years." Part of the challenge, he said, is more and newer kinds of competition.

Several times during the affiliate meeting, Kellner and his lieutenants stressed the need to promote much more aggressively at the local level.

Affiliate stations, he said, have to start spending more money to get the message about WB programs to viewers. Currently, he said, viewers clearly are not getting the message about where they can tune to watch WB shows.

Case in point: WGN. About 80% of WGN viewers (40 million out of 50 million households) who lost their superstation feed of WB programming have access to a local broadcast or cable feed of the programming. But many of those viewers have not found them after losing the superstation, said Kellner.

Ultimately, dropping the WGN feed will boost the reach of local WB affiliates, Kellner said. But, short term, "it's enormously disruptive. It's critical that stations accelerate their spending today [in program promotion and marketing] because that will determine where they are [in terms of viewership] five to 10 years from now."

Bob Bibb also said stations have to

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This Year

\$500 million+
85,000 station orders

Next Year

\$1 billion+
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expand their promotion staffs if that's what it takes. "If your competitors have a staff of a dozen professionals on their marketing team and you have two, you aren't going to get the job done."

The WB just added a key new promotional hire of its own: Carl Byrd, named VP, special projects, WB marketing. Byrd comes to The WB from The Gap, where he created the well-known campaign featuring twentysomethings jitterbugging in Gap khakis.

Susanne Daniels, president, WB Entertainment, said the network has taken steps to get some of the struggling WB shows back on track. She cited the addition of Greg Berlanti to the production team of *Dawson's Creek*.

On the comedy front, she said, the network has agreed to increase license fees 33% in order to attract top talent such as John Wells, Bruce Helford and Harold Ramis, all of whom are working on fall projects for The WB.

Also on The WB's agenda, Kellner said, is the development of a "vertical youth portal," designed to drive viewers both to WB shows and to the Web. Kellner has been in talks with online companies including Excite and Amazon.com, as well as with investment bankers, about creating a public offering for the WB portal business. ■

Thanks a 'Millionaire'

While ABC TV network executives were meeting with affiliates in New Orleans Monday, their boss, Robert Iger, was being introduced to analysts by Disney Chairman Michael Eisner as his new number two and heir apparent. Both the affiliates and the analysts came away from their meetings impressed with ABC's dramatic turnaround in fourth quarter 1999.

Some affiliates introduced a note of caution on the prime time turnaround, which is largely the result of the phenomenal success of *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* It's just one show, they said, wondering how long America's love affair with the network game shows will last.

Eisner also tried to stress to analysts that ABC had much hard work ahead and many issues to deal with. Still, he couldn't help noting that having *Millionaire* on ABC's prime time schedule was "like having three *ER*'s at the same time. We're encouraged and very happy" with the first-quarter results, he said.

The ABC network is already sold well into the third quarter, said Iger, who was named president and chief operating officer of Disney and a member of the company's board of directors.

Eisner told analysts the company would "take its time" in searching for replacements to fill Iger's two former positions: head of Disney's international operations and chairman of ABC Inc.

Affiliates said there was a long discussion with many questions about the previously announced news-sharing arrangement among ABC, CBS and Fox. But affiliate relations head John Rouse said the network was firmly committed to the project. Affiliates will be asked in the next month to let the network know whether they will participate in the venture.

Pat Scott, president of Fisher Broadcasting and head of the ABC affiliate advisory board, called the meeting "very positive." He said the board decided to form a "joint futures committee" to work with the network to create a business model for the new digital environment. No word yet on who will head the panel.

—Steve McClellan

Yellow light for digital radio

SBA concerned about digital conversion's effect on small broadcasters

By Bill McConnell

The FCC is ramping up its effort to create a digital radio service, but another branch of the federal government says the agency may be going too fast.

The Small Business Administration warned last week that the FCC doesn't know the financial impact that the digital switch could have on single-station owners and small broadcast groups. Until that information is available, the FCC should slow down, SBA said.

"The commission...offers scant reassurance that small broadcasters, which constitute 96% of all audio radio stations, would be able to afford digital equipment," SBA officials told the FCC in comments submitted to the agency.

The 1996 Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act, requires

federal agencies to demonstrate that their actions won't hurt small businesses. To comply with the law, the FCC must demonstrate that a mandated switch from analog will not weigh down small stations, SBA said.

The SBA's warning was a surprise to the National Association of Broadcasters, the radio industry's primary trade group. The NAB sees digital radio as a necessary step for keeping radio on par with advancements in TV, satellite and the Internet.

SBA officials explained that they based their position on comments filed by some small broadcasters in previous digital radio inquiries and on their own analysis.

On Nov. 3, the FCC said it is considering a new service that would allow radio stations to transmit digital signals that would be clearer and stronger than

today's analog system. Digital service also might allow radio stations to offer additional over-the-air services—such as data transmission—on the bandwidth that remains, because a digital signal requires less bandwidth than traditional analog.

But the SBA said allowing analog and digital services to exist concurrently, presumably for an indefinite period of time, might be the best solution for small broadcasters.

If it decides to forge ahead, at the top of the FCC's digital radio agenda will be picking a transmission method, and the leading candidate is known as "in-band, on-channel" or IBOC, which allows a station to broadcast both digital and analog signals on the same frequency. IBOC's advantage: Stations can continue their analog signals during the transition phase without being allotted scarce additional spectrum, as TV stations were. ■

FINANCIAL WRAP-UP

Week of January 24-28

WINNERS

	1/28	% change
dick clark	\$15.25	17.31
Walt Disney Co.	\$36.69	12.02
Saga Comm.	\$21.63	11.61
Fox Ent.	\$24.88	8.45
Chris-Craft	\$75.13	7.32

LOSERS

	1/28	% change
Entercom	\$54.06	(18.78)
Citadel	\$47.13	(18.75)
TV Guide	\$36.63	(18.61)
Sinclair Bcst.	\$8.00	(17.42)
Emms	\$96.81	(14.42)

BROADCASTING & CABLE/BLOOMBERG STOCK INDEXES

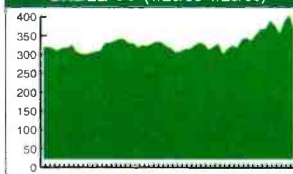
BROADCAST TV (1/29/99-1/28/00)



Week ending 1/28	
Close	328.91
High	331.76
Low	321.77

2.4%

CABLE TV (1/29/99-1/28/00)



Week ending 1/28	
Close	347.96
High	370.02
Low	367.25

9.4%

RADIO (1/29/99-1/28/00)



Week ending 1/28	
Close	1013.29
High	1086.85
Low	1013.29

10.7%

DOW JONES

Week ending 1/28	
Close	10739.80
High	11033.00
Low	10739.80

4.5%

NASDAQ

Week ending 1/28	
Close	3888.27
High	4167.41
Low	4069.91

8.2%

S&P 500

Week ending 1/28	
Close	1362.29
High	1410.03
Low	1362.29

5.5%

Shooting raises coverage issues

By Dan Trigoboff

The unpredictability of a police car chase has again been demonstrated for viewers, as a Phoenix audience several days ago watched as police shot a suspect to death after a wild pursuit, leaving pundits and public questioning the propriety of the chase-in-progress' emergence in an increasingly infotainment medium.

With at least one earlier suicide and another fatal shooting by police broadcast live from TV helicopters—both in Southern California, where the car chase has become a television staple—death cannot be denied as a possible outcome.

“Just because you can broadcast it live,” said former news director turned media critic Carl Gottlieb, “doesn’t mean you have to. That’s letting the technology determine the story. A car

chase is a legitimate news event. The question is: Does it warrant live coverage? Tape is a wonderful alternative in that it gives you time to think about how the story should be presented.”

Gottlieb and others believe news directors should determine live coverage based on the time of day and the event’s real impact.

Opinion in Phoenix itself, site of this most recent incident, runs that gamut. KTVK(TV), the only station to broadcast the shooting live—although viewers apparently did not get a clear picture of the shooting—defended its actions. Station management did not return repeated phone calls, but KTVK news chief Phil Alvidrez told the *Arizona Republic* he accepted the risks of live coverage, and was comfortable with them. The public has a choice, he noted, adding that he had received no complaints as yet.

“Either you’re committed to live coverage or you’re not,” said KNXV-TV News Director Bob Morford. “Phil is one of the best news directors I’ve competed against, and he’s committed to live coverage. I do not think it’s mandatory to go live and prove that you’re there covering the story.” KNXV-TV had a chopper at the scene and filmed it, but didn’t air the footage until regular news programs. “We decided not to go live.” Morford noted that viewers had both praised his restraint and criticized his “censoring” their news.

Bob Henry, news director at KPHO-TV, also chose not to cover the chase live. “If we choose to cover a car chase, it’s because safety issues are involved. I don’t consider car chases entertainment.” ■

AT&T cable cash flow off 23%

AT&T Corp.’s cable unit posted another sharp earnings drop during the fourth quarter, with weak core performance, pricey product launches and problems with its Tele-Communications Inc. takeover continuing to pound the unit’s cash flow.

For the three months ending Dec. 31, 1999, AT&T Broadband & Internet Services’ cash flow dropped 23% compared with the same period a year earlier, to \$547 million. That decline came in the face of a moderate 8% increase in revenue, to \$1.4 billion. Those numbers account for the various system sales and acquisitions completed during the year.

The core cable operation—basic, pay and digital services—saw its cash flow drop 6% during the quarter, an erosion of an already weak performance earlier in the year.

The MSO ended the year with 11.4 million basic customers, an internal gain of just 0.6%, weak even by cable industry standards these days. However, the company continues to be the biggest proponent of digital cable, adding 200,000 subscribers during the fourth quarter and reaching 1.8 million customers. That’s a 16% penetration rate for a version of the digital product that has very few of the interactive features exciting cable executives. Those subscribers are very profitable, throwing off around \$10 a month each in cash flow.

The big cash drain is coming in deployment of high-speed Internet and telephone service. The company’s high-speed Internet subscriber base hit 207,000, higher than the 175,000 target the company had set earlier. The company’s cable telephone service now has 6,800 paying customers.

—John M. Higgins

Religious guidelines rescinded

By Bill McConnell

The FCC Friday nullified new guidelines governing religious broadcasters' control of non-commercial stations. The guidelines, issued in December, drew a hail of criticism from religious broadcasters, industry and Capitol Hill as a violation of First Amendment and religious freedoms.

Although Chairman Kennard had wanted to seek public comment on whether the issue should be resurrected, the other commissioners refused to go along.

The nullification was good news to Paxson Communications' attorney John Feore; the company had been planning to ask the agency to wipe the policy from the books.

The guidelines, tacked to an FCC decision allowing a complex swap of two Pittsburgh TV licenses, stipulated that more than half of a religious broadcaster's programming must "teach" rather than "proselytize" about religion in order to qualify for a noncommercial license.

Cornerstone Television, a religious broadcaster involved in the Pittsburgh transaction, backed out of the station swap, saying it could not comply and still continue its Christian-programming mission. The transaction called for Cornerstone to sell its license for commercial station WPCB to Paxson for \$35 million. In return, Cornerstone was to pay \$16 million to a local public broadcaster for noncommercial WQEX.

Rep. Cliff Stearns (R-Fla.) one of the co-sponsors of legislation to reverse the FCC ruling, said he was "relieved that my colleagues and I succeeded in getting this decision withdrawn." Rep. Michael Oxley (R-Ohio), the lead sponsor, said legislation may still be necessary to prevent similar FCC action in the future. Paxson Communications Chairman Lowell "Bud" Paxson said "the FCC did the right thing." FCC Commissioner Gloria Tristani, however, voted against the reversal. ■

CLOSED CIRCUIT

BEHIND THE SCENES, BEFORE THE FACT

NEW YORK

Discovery's dilemma

Discovery's founder, chairman and CEO John Hendricks is eyeing an alliance with a broadcast network. Discovery, once the darling of cable operators, has seen its status slip a notch or two in the world of retransmission rights.

Without ownership in a major broadcast network, Discovery lacks leverage to get carriage for new channels, which is why Fox's Health Channel closed so many deals right out of the gate and six months lapsed before Discovery Health had any carriage. Discovery and Turner are the two major cable players lacking a broadcast partner, Disney having ABC, Viacom soon to have CBS and Fox having itself. Ted Turner has proclaimed his desire to buy NBC, saying The WB (owned by Turner corporate parent, Time Warner) wasn't really a network because it doesn't have sports or news. Hendricks has made no such public proclamation of his acquisitive interests, but sources say he's looking.

To the moon.com

To date, the classic animated homage to *The Honeymooners* has been *The Flintstones*, with its best friends/lodge brothers Fred and Barney not-too-thinly veiled incarnations of bus driver Ralph Kramden and sanitation engineer Ed Norton. Now, Level 13, the Web programming arm of Film Roman, plans to introduce an animated Web series, and perhaps potential broadcast series, featuring two characters also created in the spirit of Ralph and Ed. According to William Shpall, Film Roman COO, the two characters will be garbage collectors, with the setting moving west—but not much—to New Jersey instead of Brooklyn. Since Level 13 views its site as a testing lab for potential TV material, this new animated variation on a theme could also land in syndication.

CBS/Chris Craft on again

Sources confirm last week's buzz that CBS and Chris-Craft have resumed their talks about a possible sale of the Chris-Craft TV stations, and the company's 50% interest in UPN to CBS. The on-again/off-again talks have been in the works since last fall, when Viacom and CBS announced their plan to merge. Viacom owns the other half of UPN. The talks have stalled several times over price, and sources say that while conversations have resumed, nothing is imminent.

HOLLYWOOD

Pushing Access

Warner Bros. domestic TV is planning a "huge sales push" to upgrade time periods for syndicated magazine show, *Access Hollywood*, according to Warner Bros. Domestic Television Distribution President Dick Robertson. Warner Bros. took over distribution of the show a year ago from Twentieth TV, which had previously inherited distribution of the show when it bought New World. The show had been a co-production of New World and NBC Studios. Although Warner Bros. has 10 first-run shows to distribute for fall, more than a dozen off-net sitcoms, plus dramas and other library products, it sees the much-traveled *Access* as an underdeveloped asset.

NEW ORLEANS

Curtis making the cut

Court shows in general were getting a warm reception in unusually chilly New Orleans last week. One of the new court shows getting some particularly positive buzz at NATPE was the King World entry, *Curtis Court*. Word circulating on the floor of the convention last week was that KWP was doing brisk business with the show.

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D.C. counsels patience

Broadcasters point to pace of Internet competition in arguing for speed

By Paige Albinak

Broadcasters still are pushing hard to get relief from a variety of ownership restrictions, but the answer from FCC and Congressional staff remains, "Be patient," a response the industry doesn't much like.

Broadcasters want to know when they are going to get relief from various rules that keep them from operating freely in a marketplace that is allowing "upstart" Internet company AOL to buy media titan Time Warner. That's exactly what broadcasters asked FCC and congressional staffers at Monday's opening panel session hosted by the Association for Local Television Stations.

"It's been almost four years since the Telecom Act was passed," said Tribune lobbyist Shaun Sheehan. "Does it matter how many stations you can have when the Internet is just rolling through everything?"

"We'll have to see how much danger there really is before we lift off all the rules," said Andy Levin, counsel for Rep. John Dingell (D-Mich.), ranking member on the House Commerce Committee.

"These big mergers certainly cut off opportunities for new entrants," said Roy Stewart, chief of the FCC's Mass Media Bureau. "We are looking at the marketplace and trying to read just the ownership restrictions. I'm not sure we want to throw those things out so quickly."

"In terms of the Internet companies' running wild, that's a frontier that's open to broadcasters, too," said Tom Powers, mass media counsel to FCC Chairman William Kennard. "In the end, we want to make sure consumers' interests are protected."

The FCC already gave broadcasters significant regulatory relief last August, when it changed the rules so that broadcasters could own more than one TV station in major markets as long as the market sustained a certain number of separate media "voices." Due at the commission is the biennial ownership review, which already is two years late. Stewart said a report on the commission's progress should be out by the end of March.

The networks are pushing the FCC to raise the cap that limits the number of TV stations any group can own to 35% of the national viewing audience; they aren't getting very far, though, because most affiliates and independent stations oppose the move. Some broadcasters, such as Tribune, would like to see the prohibition lifted on

broadcast-newspaper crossownership, especially because the FCC has granted waivers allowing some TV station groups, such as Belo Corp., to own a newspaper. And Viacom-CBS is pushing the FCC to change the dual-network rule so that it can maintain ownership of both the CBS and UPN television networks. ■

Digital must-carry a must, says Hedlund

ALTV president pushes for resolution of DTV signal carriage as top priority of 2000

By Paige Albinak

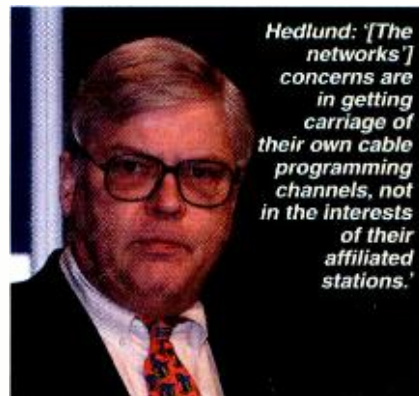
Digital must-carry tops the list of issues that Association for Local Television Stations (ALTV) President Jim Hedlund wants the FCC to settle, but vying for second place are a host of concerns competing for broadcasters' attention.

"The battle royal in 2000 will be over cable must-carry of our digital signals," Hedlund said in his "State of the Industry" speech at ALTV's conference on Monday.

In a panel earlier in the day, FCC staffers seemed less sure that this will be the year that digital must-carry is decided: The commission prefers to wait and see what the market does. Hedlund says that, without a clear policy that requires cable operators to carry broadcasters' digital signals and without a certain transmission format, "the day may never come when [the government] can reclaim our analog channels."

Not only is ALTV fighting cable on the must-carry issue, Hedlund said, but the group is also fighting the major networks, which say they would prefer to negotiate carriage of their signals in the market.

"[The networks'] concerns are in getting carriage of their own cable programming channels, not in the interests of their affiliated stations and certainly



Hedlund: '[The networks'] concerns are in getting carriage of their own cable programming channels, not in the interests of their affiliated stations.'

not of ALTV's member stations," Hedlund said. "My suspicion is that the networks' mentality runs something like this: 'We pooh-poohed Fox when it was launched, and Fox turned around and bit us in the ass. We're sure as hell not going to let WB, UPN or Pax do the same thing. So no must-carry!'"

Hedlund also questioned cable operators' claim that they don't have the capacity to carry broadcasters' digital signals while they are also carrying analog signals.

"If a cable system has a capacity problem, it is self-inflicted," Hedlund said. "The hardware and the software exist to remedy any capacity problems. We would never tolerate a local phone company saying it lacked capacity to meet demand. Why should we accept

that excuse from cable?

"The broadcasters are upholding their end of the bargain by spending hundreds of millions of dollars to go digital," he continued, directing his comments at government officials attending the conference. "Please uphold your end by making sure the American people can see our signals."

Hedlund urged the FCC to resolve issues surrounding a petition submitted by Sinclair Broadcasting asking the FCC to give broadcasters permission to use either the 8-VSB or COFDM formats to transmit digital programming. Currently, broadcasters can use only 8-VSB, and Sinclair says that standard has some major flaws.

Specifically, Hedlund is concerned that the FCC will auction off the block of spectrum between channels 60 and 69 to commercial interests that will then use the COFDM standard to offer broadband Internet and wireless services. The FCC has scheduled those auctions for May, with receipts due to the federal treasury in September. ■

Bigger is better, necessary

Consolidation, Internet are changing the face of media business and regulation

By Paige Albinak

The only time big can be bad is when big is monopolistic," said Rep. Billy Tauzin (R-La.), chairman of the House Telecommunications Subcommittee, at a NATPE panel on U.S. media consolidation.

"Certainly, antitrust law is quite clear on the question: Big by itself is never bad," said FCC Commissioner Michael Powell. "It often comes with a lot of efficiencies and benefits that accrue to the consumers."

Consolidation was a noticeable force at this NATPE convention. Almost every studio is owned by a media conglomerate, and almost every TV station is owned by a large group. That has changed the way TV stations buy programming: Very few programming decisions are still made at the local level.

Also, the Internet is bringing changes no one can predict. The mega-merger of AOL and Time Warner shows how important the Internet has become even though media companies have not yet figured out how to use the new medium to distribute their products without losing control.

"The Internet is opening up our world to dramatic distribution," said Peggy Binzel, senior vice president of government relations for News Corp. "The challenge is, how do we control our product? That's the scary part of it."

The first phase of the battle over Internet copyrights began two weeks ago when American entertainment companies and sports leagues sued Canadian Webcaster iCraveTV.com for streaming 17 TV signals in the Toronto market over the Internet without permission (B&C, Jan. 24). Most expect other Web sites like iCrave to pop up, especially as broadband services come online.

Media companies that own networks



are pointing to these mega-mergers and asking why they still must be held to ownership rules that appear archaic to them. "We are regulated in a 1940s manner," Binzel complained. "AOL and Time

Warner can merge, and we can't acquire one new TV station in Buffalo, N.Y."

"The question is whether there is truly public value associated with these ownership caps," Powell said. "I don't think these ownership caps make sense. We don't employ any caps like this in any other sector. When the government gets into the inadvertent position of choosing winners and losers, the government usually chooses wrong."

Tauzin agreed that ownership caps and crossownership rules should be removed for broadcasters, but said he is concerned about extensive vertical integration in other areas of the media business. He worries that consumers will be forced to buy bundles of programs and services they don't want just to get the one or two pieces they do desire. ■

'Attila' attacks the 'gang'

Ex-FCC Chair's memoir takes shots at Quello, Chong

By Bill McConnell

Ex-FCC Chairman Reed Hundt dishes up unsparing criticism of former colleagues James Quello and Rachele Chong in his upcoming book, "You Say You Want a Revolution."

Advance copies of the book, soon to be published by Yale University Press, were sent to reporters and telecommunications industry hands last week and provided details of Hundt's battles with the pair, whom, with fellow commissioner Andrew Barrett, he dubs the "Gang of Three."

During his tenure, Hundt says, they tried to thwart the Clinton Administration's drive to create children's TV rules, put V-chips in TV sets and wire

schools to the Internet. The ex-chairman's book also gives his inside view of the legislative fight over the 1996 Telecommunications Act.

Hundt levels particular criticism of Democrat Quello and Republican Chong for what he sees as their disloyalty to the Clinton Administration. Quello is alternately labeled as a "pseudo Democrat" and "quasi Republican." The 20-year FCC veteran also is depicted as ingratiating in his early meetings with Hundt, telling the new chairman, "You can count on me" to fight for lower cable rates. Hundt notes, however, that his office at the time already was under pressure to lower cable rates from Sen. Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.) and other Capitol Hill

Democrats, who he says blamed Quello for regulations that allowed prices to rise while he was interim chairman after the 1992 Cable Act.

Chong is depicted as ungrateful to the president who appointed her. Hundt recalls that, soon after the GOP captured Congress in 1994, Chong removed Clinton's picture from her office and replaced it with a photo of then-Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole. "Chong's loyalty was not to the president who made her a commissioner, but to the man she thought would be president and would make her the chair," Hundt writes. When Vice President Al Gore, Clinton's telecommunications point man, learned of the incident from Hundt, he "shook his head at Chong's apostasy."

Quello and Chong, taking their former colleague's criticism in stride, said they were amused by the "Gang of Three" moniker bestowed on them and Barrett. In fact, Quello said he had his



Hundt admits to working hand-in-hand with the Clinton administration, in his soon-to-be published book.

own label for Hundt during their tenure on the commission. "Because of his a u t o c r a t i c approach, I and my staff sometimes referred to him as Attila the Hundt and his chief of staff, Blair Levin, as Rasputin," Quello said.

Nevertheless, Quello stands behind Hundt's policy positions. "I never based decisions on whether I was a Democratic or Republican appointee but rather on common sense and what best serves the public interest and what's reasonable for the communications industry."

Quello said he will tell his side of the story in an upcoming autobiography.

For her part, Chong said Hundt appears to be harboring hard feelings from the era "when he realized each commissioner had a vote and consensus building was important." As for the photo incident: "Absolutely, that is false." Instead, she said, she displayed two photos of herself and family members, one with Clinton and the other with Dole. First prominently displayed on her office credenza, they later were moved to a less visible spot above a bookcase when she needed more space for paperwork.

Several Washington insiders said the real shocker in the book isn't the backbiting gossip but Hundt's frank admission that he was the instrument of Clinton administration policy. Although the commissioners are political appointees, they and the agency are supposed to operate independently of the White House and Congress. ■



WASHINGTON WATCH

By Bill McConnell and Paige Albiniak

Station cap threatens free TV, says NBC's Wright

The survival of free broadcast television is threatened by restrictions on broadcast station ownership, NBC President Bob Wright warned last week. As cable, Internet and other media continue to siphon viewers from broadcast TV, station groups must boost profits through consolidation and the ability to offer advertisers a local audience if they are to survive, Wright told the National Press Club in Washington. "It's very expensive to be in this business today. You must have more station ownership." NBC's 13 O&Os reach almost 27% of U.S. stations. The FCC's audience reach cap is 35% of U.S. households, and, so far, the regulators appear

unwilling to lift the cap.

Wright harshly criticized the National Association of Broadcasters for opposing the major networks' effort to raise the broadcast audience reach cap. So far the NAB has refused to support an increase, in large part because the bulk of its membership is made up of separately owned network affiliates, who fear they will lose bargaining leverage over programming if networks control more stations.

Newcomer Krone quits NCTA

After just four months at the trade group, NCTA No. 2 David Krone is leaving to join his old boss, Leo Hindery. Hindery, who recently left as president of AT&T Broadband and Internet Services, is president of Global Center, the

Internet division of Global Crossing. Krone was Hindery's chief Washington lobbyist when Hindery was president of Tele-Communications Inc. and was executive VP of AT&T BIS during Hindery's tenure. In October, he became executive VP of NCTA under new president Robert Sachs. Krone will relocate to San Francisco.

NTIA studies rural TV technology

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration is opening a public inquiry to examine how best to deliver local TV signals to small and rural markets via new technologies. "Consumers in rural and small broadcast markets could fall on the wrong side of the digital divide unless steps are taken to ensure that com-

munities have access to local news and information through new technologies," NTIA head Gregory Rohde told the NATPE convention in New Orleans last week. Rohde also plans to hold a roundtable on the issue with industry players in Washington in early March.

New cable rules challenged

At the request of consumer advocates, the FCC is asking for public comment on new cable audience reach measurements approved in October. Media Access Project said the FCC unlawfully increased the number of subscribers a cable company may serve when it changed the audience reach measure from the percentage of U.S. cable homes passed to the share of all multichannel subscribers. The changes increased permissible ownership levels by as much as 20%. Comments are due 15 days after last week's notice is published in the Federal Register.



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Enron Communications and its ePowered system made their first appearance at NATPE, one of about 150 new-media companies to set up shop. Enron provides a broadband Internet overlay to improve streaming media.

Convergence was made manifest at NAPTE 2000. Last week, more than 140 dotcoms and other new-media companies on the exhibit floor made it clear that broadcasting and cable no longer own television—or the annual convention.

There were dotcoms that stream video—or “broadcast TV,” some would say—in the hope of attracting viewers and advertisers or of spawning new syndicated TV shows. There were software and hardware makers that offered to lead broadcasters and other TV programmers onto the Net—for a fee, share of the revenue or partnership agreement. There were companies that combine the Net and conventional TV to create interactive TV.

Old media’s reaction to the newcomers was not entirely positive. Some feared that video streaming sites would further fragment the audience; others, that they would compete or steal programming. “How do we protect exclusive local syndicated product?” asked Association of Local Television Station President Jim Hedlund in a speech. “Already, a Canadian company [iCraveTV.com] is stealing signals and streaming them to a global audience. Today’s annoyance is going to become tomorrow’s nightmare. The day is coming when any program can

New, old media MERGE at NATPE

Dotcoms turn out in force, looking for distributors, investors, advertisers and producers

BY DEBORAH D. McADAMS

be seen anywhere, anytime, without commercial interruptions.”

Still, the new-media companies did not invade NAPTE to take over the industry. Most sought alliances and deals with syndicators, producers, broadcasters or even each other. Old media still has something new media covets. It’s called cash.

Roma Khanna would like to see some of that cash. She is vice president of SNAP! Media, a five-year-old company that creates video shorts for its own site and others. According to Khanna, SNAP! is trying to sell a piece of itself. Offers have been made to buy the company outright, but none were enough, she said. “We think we’re undervalued.” SNAP!’s

principal asset is talent: a contingent of animators and streaming video artists also skilled in Web design, Khanna said. Such people are "hard to come by."

Maybe so, but NATPE seemed to be crawling with them. David Neuman and Mika Salmi were surrounded by

streaming video creators and wannabes after a panel discussion on the Internet-TV nexus. Neuman is president of Digital Entertainment Network Inc. (DEN), a company that produces and syndicates streaming content, and Salmi is founder and CEO of AtomFilms, a dis-

tributor of streaming content.

Of all the NATPE dotcoms, AtomFilms most resembles a traditional television syndicator. Salmi's company, a mere 18 months old, already has deals with 35 TV stations and networks as well as about 15 Web sites. Customers

A marriage of convenience

It used to be you'd find Scott Carlin at the giant Warner Bros. booth at NATPE, making the big deal that would move a syndicated offering from hyperbolic concept to a firm go.

However, this year, the veteran syndication executive, who left Warner Bros. in October, was selling a *bigger* concept: DigitalConvergence.com, a new technology he's betting will finally marry the television set to the e-commerce transaction.

Beginning this fall on as many as 100 television stations and some cable networks, DigitalConvergence's patented software, called Concerto and formally unveiled last week, will instantly connect viewers from commercials on TV to specific e-commerce Web sites on their computers. See a Ford commercial imbedded with Concerto and instantly view the Ford Web site, detailing the specific Ford being advertised, on your computer.

The technology, being tested at Belo's WFAA-TV Dallas, will be offered "semi-exclusively" in the nation's top 10 markets this fall, and beyond that soon after.

Carlin expects to make deals by then with the top news stations in big city markets, plus, for demographic balance, at The WB, Fox or UPN station in those same big cities. That would give those stations a competitive leg up over their competition in town.

DigitalConvergence—which has \$50 million in backing from Belo Interactive, Young & Rubicam and Dutch bank ING Barings—is based on research that suggests that, in up to 80% of wired homes, the computer and television set are located virtually next to each other. And, in those homes, 15 million to 17 million people are watching television while engaged on the Internet. The idea is to marry the old media with the new, in ways that benefit both.

Snagging viewers through Concerto-embedded commercials makes those viewers "one click away from a transaction," says Carlin. And he thinks the stations that link with Concerto will be able to charge a 100%-200% premium to advertisers. He says he was ready to sign contracts with major station groups as NATPE was winding up last week.

And because Concerto will allow only a limited number of commercials to use the software—perhaps stations will air no more than a dozen Concerto-embedded spots a day—he thinks local stations may end up auctioning off the time to the highest bidders.

Scott Carlin shows off Concerto, which connects viewers of TV commercials to specific Web sites.



Radio Shack will be distributing as many as 50 million free CD-ROMS, making it easy for consumers to load Concerto.

DigitalConvergence.com will also unveil :CAT—a device that looks like a cat in the way a computer mouse looks like a mouse—a potentially radical sales tool. Users will use the :CAT wand to scan UPC codes on products or print ads. As they do, relevant company Web sites will pop up on their computers. Sears and other retailers are on board, ready to use the system in print ads, although as Carlin points out, any UPC can be fitted to work with :CAT. He says DigitalConvergence.com employees are matching up the bar codes of products made by 415,000 manufacturers. In other words, "that Campbell soup can is now an interactive product," Carlin says proudly.

The *Dallas Morning News* will use :CAT. So will *Forbes* magazine, which will send :CAT clickers to its 800,000 subscribers in time for its Best of the Web issue this fall. From then on, *Forbes* readers will be able to use the device to scan ads in every issue or get additional editorial material.

On the programming side, Concerto will also take viewers from a local newscast or other programming directly to that station's Web site if a viewer wants more information. Carlin thinks that will almost automatically make local stations' Web sites potent local portals and drive them to profitability.

But it's the demonstration for the commercial applications that got the most attention at NATPE. Carlin showed potential customers a Dell computer commercial appearing during a break from a local newscast. As Concerto's signature four-note chime—the beginning of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony—sounded, the Dell Web site popped up, showing the same computer as the commercial.

Probably no executive at NATPE was more noticeable last week because of where he was—and where he wasn't. As the trade show seemed to be making the turn from a competitive bazaar of syndicated program producers into a new-media boom town, Carlin was nearly a human embodiment of the changing shape of media.

At a NATPE panel, he joked that, if he and a partner, Michael Garin, hadn't made the move to DigitalConvergence.com, "we would wake up every morning for the rest of our lives and throw up."

—P. J. Bednarski

include HBO, which licenses Salmi's content for interstitials. Deals are modeled on TV syndication deals and run in the "thousands to the tens of thousands" of dollars, he said.

Neuman, a former programming executive at NBC, switched to the cyberside when he realized the potential for advertising in streaming media. "Television has 30-second pods" for advertising, he said. DEN's most popular show, *Frat Rats* on www.den.net, is saturated with product placements and a live click-and-buy link for the music that plays in the show. "Plus, we can have 30-second pods and banner ads. We can connect in a kind of *Clockwork Orange*-fashion with our audience."

But while online ad spending is said to be growing exponentially, Neuman is looking to Wall Street for his jackpot. He has filed the preliminary documents for an initial public offering.

When asked if Yahoo! would be taking a stake in any of the dotcoms at NATPE, Yahoo! Broadcast President Mark Cuban said the company would not rule out any "opportunity." A dotcom mogul by virtue of Yahoo!'s acquisition of his www.broadcast.com, Cuban said both DEN and AtomFilms look interesting.

A few of the content dotcoms were shopping their stuff to traditional syndicators. Among the hopefuls was Bikini.com, which offers cheesecake and surfer-dude Web programming. Howie Sonnenschein, co-founder of the site, said several syndicators stopped by to check out the content but none bought.

Other dotcoms were pitching to advertisers. Stan Weil is head of sales for the Hollywood Stock Exchange (hsx.com), a site that tracks the ups and downs of Hollywood stars and their movies and TV shows. "I'm an evangelist," Weil said. "I'm trying to sell the Internet [as an advertising medium] just as I did cable 20 years ago when I worked for Ted Turner."

Still other content sites were trying to sell advertising to the syndicators. George Keiffer, director of video products for Eyemark, said several dotcoms had approached him.

Companies with names like WorldNow, iXL, Zatso, Real Networks, Digital Island and InterVu all pitched traditional media companies on the virtues of personalized Web content, real-time streaming video and searchable databases. Each had some proprietary technological tweak on presenting Web content, and all were shopping for deals with old media.



Microcast President/CEO Paul Nash (l) and Executive VP James Bradhorst offer Web video programmers high-speed delivery and ad insertion.

Zatso, a company formerly known as ReacTV, courted local broadcasters. "You've got news content people want," Zatso President Roger Keating told a roomful of ALTV members. "Every body of research indicates people want news in video form from local sources they know and trust. As one looks at Internet opportunities, local stations are in possession of the most valuable content possible for them and their interests."

Keating takes local content and tai-

lors it for individual subscribers. "Viewers register free and describe their ideal newscast. Say they don't want violent crime stories, for example, or they ask for news from a specific market." These things Zatso will provide, he said, beginning this week in 23 markets. In return for their content, Zatso's broadcast partners get a share of the online ad inventory.

At least one new-media company pitching local broadcasters had one of the oldest and biggest names in telecommunications. AT&T director of new products Carl Smith said the phone giant needed local content to push its various delivery technologies. In AT&T speak, the strategy is to use local content to "increase multidevice customer subscriptions and usage behavior." In other words, AT&T believes people will buy Web-surfing fridge magnets if they give time, temperature and local traffic points. Local broadcasters aren't welcoming AT&T's pitch with open arms because they'd rather have people tune in for that information.

InterVu had better luck than AT&T in the local broadcast arena. A San Diego-based company that makes technology for on-demand as well as real-time streaming media, InterVu struck deals with three Seattle TV outlets: NBC affiliate KING-TV, PBS station KCTS(TV) and NorthWest Cable News. InterVu also aligned with a tech company called Wave System to create a pay-per-view spigot for streaming media.



Steve Bradbury, president of Marketing by Design and publisher of Cyberstuff.com, takes Web neophytes through the basics of the Internet, from its creation by the U.S. Department of Defense, to the current booming state of convergence and e-commerce.

Perhaps courting Tribune's stable of television stations, InterVu signed a long-term agreement to stream Pseudo Programming's 60 hours a week of original programming. Tribune took a 10% stake in Pseudo last summer "because it was a good fit," according to a Tribune spokeswoman.

And executives of the two-year-old Microcast felt they were in the right place at the right time. "There's pent-up demand for what we are doing," said President and CEO Paul Nash. What Microcast is doing is providing high-speed distribution and advertising insertion for video streaming sites. It hopes to make money primarily by sharing in the ad revenue. Over the past few weeks, said James Brandhorst, executive vice president, sales and marketing, "the programmers' interest in this space has grown white hot. Some of the biggest found themselves without an Internet strategy. That's what they are doing now, and we think we can help."

Other companies promise high-speed distribution—critical to the successful delivery of video over the Net—but Microcast also offers "value-added" services: ad insertion that targets consumers by area, time or demographics, and the ability to black out access to programming by ZIP code. The latter feature permits programmers to continue selling market exclusivity with some of their shows.

Microcast came to NATPE with tentative deals with more than a dozen programmers, including Pax TV, Showtime, Studios USA, The Weather Channel, Speedvision and WPIX(TV) New York. Nash said Microcast expects to firm up the deals within the next four or five weeks.

Replay Networks Inc. has a similar ZIP-code-oriented ad model, albeit one dependent on its own proprietary hard-drive television box. Replay's tentative deal is with everyone. The company recently announced its plans to go public.

Several other facilitators made news at NATPE, including Digital Island, which cut a deal with Foxsports.com to stream daily live Webcasts on Super Bowl XXXIV, and RealNetworks Inc., which will handle the streaming media for the NFL's Superbowl.com. SeeltFirst.com, which encodes analog or digital video that users can stop, back up or pull stills from, struck a deal to provide streaming video for 10 Sunbelt TV stations.

One dotcom company at NATPE offered a marriage of content and facilitating technology. Gerry Philpott's E-Poll.com offers real-time, interactive

polling capabilities with instant results. Philpott, also in charge of recruiting the dotcoms for NATPE, pulled off a deal with Columbia Tristar to do an interactive poll on its e-magazine, Showbiz.Scoop.com.

The bulk of the deals with facilitators involved either TV stations or dotcoms, but even some syndicators had their eye on the enabling technology.

The World Wrestling Federation was looking for further syndication deals for its wrestling franchise, according to spokesman Jim Byrne, but the WWF also has one of the most trafficked sites on the Web. "We're also shopping for streaming media technology," Byrne said.

Stay tuned for real-time, interactive Raw. ■

Level13.net TV without the middleman

The future of broadband video streaming Web sites is . . . to make pilots.

At least according to William Shpall, COO of Film Roman Inc., whose Level13.net Web site of streaming animated product is a backdoor way to discover a modest hit, nurture it and exploit it later.

With a background in distribution and entertainment financing (he helped rebuild Bankers Trust's West Coast media and entertainment division and also was Carolco Pictures' CFO), he sees the Internet and his site as an inexpensive way to locate young animators in the hope that one will turn out to be the next Matt Groening.



Film Roman's William Shpall is looking for gold in animation streamed from the Web site.

And that goal is now more possible because the broadband pipe will, eventually, make his video streaming Web site not much different from one of the major networks. "What's the difference," he asks, "between a signal you get over a cable modem or DSL and one you get through an antenna?"

Shpall is president of the Web site, which features weird and crude animated characters on 13 channels, including Willis and Jonah, two security guards Beavis and Butt-head could relate to.

"Our target market is 17 years old and above," Shpall said last week at NATPE. But his goal is to find gold in tiny cult-like animated features. After all, he recalls, *The Simpsons* started as a featurette on the old Tracey Ullman show. For Film Roman, which produces *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill* for 20th Century Fox Television, the trick is to find a way to get another hit but, this time, to own the rights to distribute it.

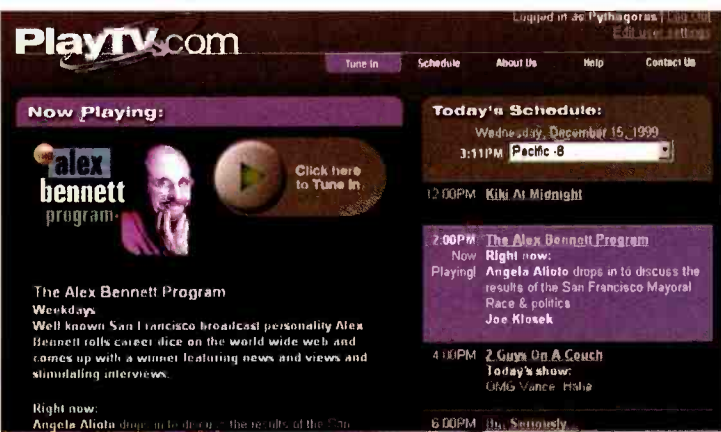
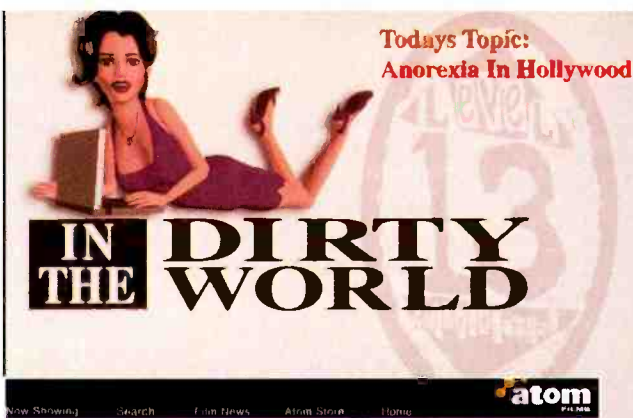
Level13 allows product to be sold either through direct sales of videotapes or by selling a Web-cult hit to a network. On the Web site, Shpall plans a merchandising channel and an animated version of product placement. He argues that it is an example of how the Internet can change the economy: "Let's ask what changes the Internet is making in our economic lives. It's disintermediating distribution."

In other words, the Internet has removed the middleman between producer and consumer.

"The Web is the audience-building tool I can't get to otherwise," he says. "One of Film Roman's problems is that we compete for shelf space with the same companies that control the shelf space. We're competing for space on The WB with Warner Bros., on ABC with Disney, on UPN with Paramount."

The Web site, he says, is "better than a focus group. Put an animated short on the Internet. If they like it, make a couple more. If that sticks, let's talk" to a larger distributor.

—P. J. Bednarski



Choices from the Web (clockwise from top left): Level 13's Babs Babylon; a snippet from a PlayTV talk show; hostess Jess from Pseudo.com; and video from independent film site AtomFilms.

Back to the future: Internet TV

Video on the Web is recasting concepts about video form and function

By Richard Tedesco

In the early days of television, viewers gathered around a small video screen, marveling at the sight of snowy black-and-white images piped into their living rooms, mostly short-form comedies or dramas.

The novelty of that video-in-a-box has long since worn off. But a variation on the form—more immediate, edgier and frequently more bizarre—now appears in even smaller windows on PC screens that recall the early TV experience in more ways than one.

Streaming video on the Web—with its slow-motion simulation at low

speeds and buffering interruptions at even the highest speeds—is even more primitive in its own way than TV images of half a century ago.

At least this throwback to early TV streams in color. What's more, the on-demand nature of Internet video points to one aspect already being realized. The Internet is successfully competing with—and supplanting—TV and radio as a ready source for news clips, whether it's brief shots of the latest school shooting or the touchdown pass that capped yesterday's playoff game. Given the current state of the technology, the shortest streams are certainly the most palatable. But streaming com-

PELLING images of human tragedies and triumphs represents a step toward a time when we will be able to see online everything that is on TV.

"Eventually, users will be able to enjoy the experience at their convenience 24-7," says Dick Glover, executive vice president of Internet Media for ABC. "What we're doing today is blazing a trail to that day." Like many industry executives, Glover anticipates a media world where convergence between Web-like content and television as we know it takes place—probably on a TV screen. Now, as he sees it, viewers can only contemplate the classic, passive "lean-back" experience of

traditional TV or the "lean forward" experience of interactive TV.

"There are people who are trying to make it an extension of television. But I think that runs counter to the Web," says Daniel O'Brien, Internet analyst at Cambridge, Mass.-based Forrester Research. "The digital underpinnings of this medium allow other things to be done."

Recognizable video content categories are already emerging on the new medium. National news and sports sites typically repurpose on-air video in clips but also show video produced specifically for the Web. Another layer of TV-Internet convergence involves sites for which news aggregators repackage and insert ads in local news streams. In a departure from any traditional TV form, niche programmers are pushing short-form content to Web videophiles in original shows akin to public access and streaming independent films with no other screening rooms. This is the leading edge of the Internet TV evolution.

Sports and news redefined

Sports and news provide fertile ground to test new video formats in this still undefined media landscape.

The National Basketball Association provides a graphic example of converged media with its NBA.com TV this season. That initiative, which combines a satellite-delivered 24-hour NBA channel with "wraparound" content from the NBA Web site, will stream a special Web package for the upcoming All-Star weekend.

The league plans multiple Webcam coverage of the All-Star game, permitting PC users to select camera angles on the site (www.nba.com) to focus on specific players. The NBA now streams two-minute highlight packages of nightly games on its own site.

Viewers eager to track the current presidential race can now access a daily 15-minute streamed update co-produced by ABC News and *The New York Times* on both news organizations' Web sites (www.ABCNews.com, www.NYTimes.com). Bernard Gershon, senior vice president of ABC News, sees it as a vehicle to "bridge" the traditional political news cycle of morning and evening news. As TV news organizations wage their old battle on this new media front, Gershon says, "internally, we all feel the pressure of breaking news on the other guys."

According to Scott Woelfel, general manager and editor-in-chief at CNN Interactive (www.cnn.com): "There are



MSNBC.com
editor-in-chief
Merrill Brown
offers five-minute
newscasts online.

ways to work online to let people get out of the [traditional TV] loop. We think there are some opportunities to create some new streams of programming."

Woelfel says news hounds like to "drill down

into topics" as technology improves. He foresees CNN developing a stand-alone broadband service within the next year: "It gives you the ability to do something that's a self-contained product."

MSNBC.com is now streaming what Merrill Brown, MSNBC.com editor-in-chief, describes as "nice, crisp five-minute newscasts" online (www.msnbc.com). Brown sees it as a forerunner of what could eventually become a stand-alone 24-hour news service on the Net. But for now, he figures "Headlines on MSNBC.com," streamed hourly and refreshed 20 times each day, is filling a niche to satisfy the news appetite of the average Web surfer: "We don't think a half-hour newscast is what people want. If you want to come to the Web for a newscast, we now have one."

Local news redux

Local news is being repackaged by Web programmers such as Zatso, BroadcastAmerica, SeeIt First.com and Microcast.

Zatso, formerly ReactTV, combines video from Reuters and The Weather Channel with stories from affiliate stations owned by Meredith Broadcasting, Scripps Howard and Media General in a mix of national and regional news that enables PC users to tailor newscasts by topic and locale.

Broadcast America recently launched its NewscastNow.com site with six of 30 TV stations that it has deals with to stream their newscasts. It provides the stations T1 lines, encoders and links on their own sites to the NewscastNow site (www.newscastnow.com). By year's end, it expects to have 150 stations online, according to President John Brier, who says his pitch is to give stations "a lot of exposure they wouldn't get otherwise."

Original video in TV's shadow

Inserting video ads is one key to the Internet's maturity as a mainstream medium. William Shpall, COO of Film Roman, which produces the eclectic Level 13.com animation site (www.level13.com) suggests that his company is hearkening back to the early days of TV by incorporating ads and sponsorships in the middle of original content. "What we can do—and what traditional TV doesn't allow—is to sell in-stream advertising and product placement."

But the most striking feature of Level 13, which was spawned by the animators who created *The Simpsons*, is its irreverent animated in-your-face humor that often spoofs TV forms. There is Babs Babylon, host of *In the Dirty World*, which apes TV gossip; *Willis and Jonah*, featuring two security guards as movie reviewers; and *Triping the Rift*, a *Star Wars* send-up that employs violence and sex for humorous effect. Level 13, says Shpall, "will



Pseudo.com CEO
David Bohrman

be produced in a different way for a different sensibility."

As Net video reflects some TV forms, it is mostly recasting those forms and refracting the images of the older medium in a clear departure.

Pseudo.com, Digital Entertainment Network, AENTV and PlayTV all produce short-form video primarily aimed at Generation Y and X surfers.

"The boundaries are disappearing, and those boundaries are going to be all over the place," says David Bohrman, CEO of Pseudo.com and former executive vice president at CNNfn.

Pseudo.com programming ranges from the staid to the frenetic, with a ros-



House of Blues Digital cybercasts free concerts nightly, while offering a weekly pay-per-view concert over the Net.

ter including *BizTech2000*, a straightforward business news show; *StarFreaky*, a celebrity homage with Jess, an irrepressible hostess who crashes parties to get interviews; and *And Justice for Brawl*, a show aimed at pro wrestling fans (www.pseudo.com). It is testing boundaries of content and length, according to Bohrman, who foresees a new music channel doing two-hour Webcasts, while its space news channel stays in a 10-minute orbit.

Aside from exploring new niches, building a sense of community around the shows by enabling chat sessions and other interaction is Pseudo's key to success, Bohrman says: "People are always going to want to sit back and be entertained. But being involved is going to be a component. How they fit together, no one has a clue."

But some programmers already purport to have a handle on the Web development curve. PlayTV.com launched last fall with a 12-hour slate of two-hour talk shows, including *Kiki at Midnight*, *2 Guys on a Couch* and *The Alex Bennett Program*, featuring the San Francisco broadcast personality. It uses instant messaging functionality from AOL and Microsoft and brings direct interaction with its surfing audience into the mix. Stefan Bouchard, PlayTV's vice president of business development, says the formula is sparking a special energy: "Magic is being created. The format of the shows needs to be tailored to this new medium."

Bouchard says PlayTV plans to cast "some great unknowns" in its audience in their own shows: "If you don't have

a home for your show, PlayTV can provide a home."

That's close to the philosophy being embraced by CMGI's iCast as it moves toward a delayed launch of its ersatz Webcasting service in mid-February. While it will carry music videos and radio stations (see *B&C Internet*, Jan. 17) it will emphasize self-created content from iCast members, which will be showcased on the site.

Indie insurgents

Independent film sites such as IFilm.com, AtomFilms and ClickMovie are creating a new class of Web video, giving exposure to unknown film directors. Dreamworks and Imagine Entertainment will do the same on Pop.com, launching this spring.

IFilm.com, which doubles as a distribution point and a community for young filmmakers, accepts video submissions from anyone. It also accepted \$35 million in financing last week from Sony, Eastman Kodak, Liberty Digital and others, suggesting this programming category has staying power.

Its inventory of indie films is at 1,000 features and counting, with one conspicuous success story: David Garrett and Jason Ward signed a development deal with Fox TV based on their dark comedy *Sunday's Game*, which debuted on IFilm (www.ifilm.com). Besides free streams, IFilm serves up some content for a download fee, like its current *Spike and Mike* animation festival (\$2) and *The Sadness of Sex*, a Feb. 14 debut directed by Rupert Wainwright and featuring Peta Wilson (from USA Network's *Le Femme Nikita*).

IFilm will serialize downloads of *Sadness* and plans to feature one film monthly for downloading, a practice it plans to extend to films that become popular on its site, according to Rodger Raderman, IFilm CEO, who says the overall content mission is "to mix it up a bit."

Tranz-Send Broadcasting is mixing a range of film inventory for its ClickMovie.com site (www.clickmovie.com). Tranz-Send says it has the rights to 40,000 titles, including vintage TV content, movies and educational films. And Scott Redmund, Tranz-Send's CEO, says it was in on the Web rights frenzy at the recent Sundance Film Festival.

Tranz-Send's TranzCast technology enables full-screen video using existing streaming software to create a "broadcasting infrastructure" for video that can be ported to TV. ClickMovie will

stream most of its content for nominal pay-per-view fees, according to Redmund, who sees independent desktop video production as a potential double play for video that can cross over from the Web to TV.

AtomFilms licenses rights to distribute independent films on the Web and in an after-market to HBO and other offline and online outlets, including Warner Brothers' Entertainment. It now has 800 films licensed—40% of them animation shorts—with features running 10 to 40 minutes for obvious reasons, says Matt Hulett, AtomFilms chief marketing officer. "Shorts kind of fit that niche with online user's short attention span," he says. "The consumer base online and in general is getting younger."

Hulett sees pay-per-view as a "very interesting" prospect and says AtomFilms will be "getting serious" in the next year about segueing into a broadband format that would support pay-per-view.

One music programmer is establishing a foothold there. By June, House of Blues Digital plans to schedule daily pay-per-view concert Webcasts, based on its success with some events thus far, according to Lou Mann, president of HOB Media Properties. He claims 40,000 to 50,000 viewers tried to see a December Webcast featuring Bonnie Raitt, Jackson Browne and Shawn Colvin. "That basically told me there's a market out there," says Mann. "If you put superstars on, people will come to see it."

HOB Digital cybercasts free concerts nightly, with weekly pay Webcasts at \$7.99 per "ticket," splitting revenues 50/50 with the performers. Mann declines to indicate the average response rate for those performances but insists that doesn't matter: "Whether you get 500 or 5,000 people to come, that's somewhat irrelevant right now. We're trying to change the mindset. We're trying to change the culture right now." ■



IFilm is streaming an animation fest for a small pay-per-view fee.

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A standard? Stream on

Multiple video streaming formats create problems for broadcasters and Net surfers

By James Careless

For most Web surfers, watching streamed video is a little like viewing Japanese animation. Besides the choppy video quality, the biggest problem is that there is no standard format for streamed media—so to watch video over the Internet, you've got to have the right player.

On the face of it, that doesn't sound like such a big deal. After all, there are only three streaming formats that are widely used—RealNetworks' RealPlayer, Microsoft's Windows Media Player and Apple's QuickTime. If you don't have the one you need, you can usually download it free of charge from the right Web site.

But for many, that's a headache. Not only do the various video players eat up hard-drive space, but the constant software upgrades force consumers to keep updating their players, not to mention the difficulty involved in negotiating multiple formats. And for broadcasters looking to provide video content on the Web, multiple formats mean additional cost and viewer complaints.

Dan Gambito, VideoSeeker product manager at NBC Interactive, says that the biggest problem visitors have concerning multiple Internet formats is a simple one: "They complain about not being able to watch the video."

The complaint is so widespread that Webcasters and surfers alike are beginning to demand one thing—a single, open streaming standard to replace today's proprietary technology.

That's certainly what Brian Kenner, chief technical officer and co-founder of InterVu, wants. InterVu streams video for CNN, NBC, MSNBC, Bloomberg, Universal Studios and Turner Broadcasting.

Because there's no single standard, supporting the different formats results in a lot of duplication—actually, triplication—of work, because each stream requires its own pool of servers and its own transmission system. Worse yet, this triplication occurs throughout the encoding process, because each of the three major formats handles video differently.

"That does create operational inefficiencies," Kenner says, which "ultimately have to be passed on to the customer."

Right now, InterVu's clients are putting up with triplication because streaming is still relatively new, he notes. However, they're losing money by doing so, because broadcasters simply can't run a business with the current infrastructure and streaming media costs.

"Broadcasters will make hard decisions soon," says Kenner, who predicts that the industry will no

longer tolerate the present multiple streaming standards situation. "There will be either one proprietary format, or there will be multiple vendors in a standardized format," he says. "That's exactly what's going to occur."

Exactly when it will happen, however, is unclear. And given that streaming video is a recent phenomenon, some in the industry are waiting for a bit more maturation before making a commitment.

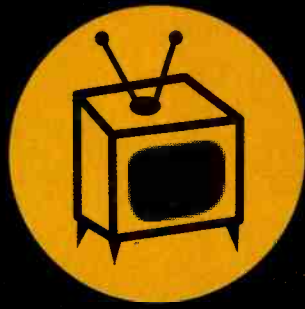
"Streaming video is still fairly new. And the standards, even within the particular proprietary formats, are still changing and evolving," explains Monty Mullig, CNN's vice president of Internet Technologies. "It's a little early to say 'Ah! This one is the right one from now forward.'" As a result, there actually is some upside to the competition going on right now with different formats, he says. Mullig expects the market to decide on a winning standard. But for now, it's everyone in the pool.

In the streaming competition, both RealNetworks and Microsoft have emerged as intense rivals, with neither showing any desire to adjust to the other's streaming format. Apple's QuickTime continues to look to make inroads, but with version 4.0 only having been released last June, QuickTime



RealNetworks' RealPlayer is Microsoft's Windows Media Player's biggest rival and, like the competition, has been growing through acquisitions.

Microsoft's Window Media Player is one of three media streaming formats vying for dominance on the Internet.



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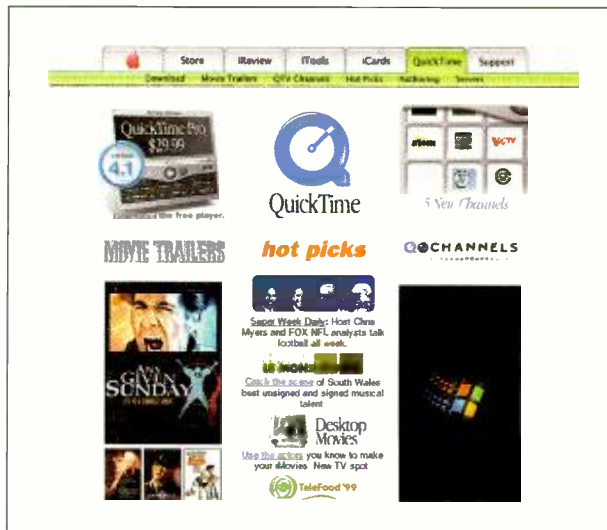
has a lot of catching up to do.

Right now, Webcasters are willing to live with multiple streaming formats. But, given the AOL Time Warner deal, it becomes clear that anything is possible.

In the early days of streaming there were two players that dominated the marketplace: RealNetworks and Xing Technologies. "Then Real bought Xing," says Peggy Miles, president of the Webcasting consulting firm, Intervox Communica-

tions. "So it is possible that we'll see some innovative partnerships, or somebody buying somebody again, or merging or somebody buying four or five other companies. Microsoft has, and so has Real."

In the meantime, broadcasters would



Having introduced its latest format update—version 4.0—only last June, Apple's QuickTime has a lot of catching up to do.

be wise to hedge their bets on streaming formats, Miles says. Of course, supporting multiple formats is "more expensive, because the vendors want to tie you in for an exclusive deal for a long period of time." Still, this is preferable to backing a single format

Almost a single standard

Today, the idea of a single streaming standard may seem like a pipe dream. But that wasn't always the case.

Back in 1997, RealNetworks and Microsoft—then the only two real players—agreed to improve interoperability between their two streaming platforms. In fact, Microsoft even bought a 10% stake in RealNetworks and licensed some of its technology to improve the Media Player.

But everything came to a crashing halt one year later. That's when RealNetworks CEO Robert Glaser told a Senate hearing that the Media Player bundled with Windows 98 was deliberately designed not to run with RealPlayer 5.0 files. (At that time, RealPlayer 5.0 was RealNetwork's latest model.)

"Although it has the option to do so, Microsoft has declined to pay for an update for our license, which would allow them to use the latest version of our technology," Glaser explained to the Senate Judiciary Committee on July 23, 1998, during the Microsoft antitrust hearings. The result: "Instead of either licensing our new products or peacefully coexisting with us, Microsoft has instead tried to stop our products from being used."

Not surprisingly, Microsoft takes an entirely different view of this incident.

"RealNetworks pledged to support the format and then went off separately and created a new and incompatible version of RealPlayer 5.0," says Kevin Unangst, Microsoft's lead product manager for streaming media. "We clearly had a common vision in mind, and the vision wasn't shared any longer." After the split, Microsoft sold off its stake in RealNetworks.

Putting aside the spin, a chance to end the current multiple format mess was missed. That's too bad for everyone, except perhaps for streaming vendors, who want to keep selling proprietary software.

—James Careless

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**'Broadcasters will make
hard decisions soon.
There will be either one
proprietary format, or
there will be multiple
vendors in a
standardized format.'**

—Brian Kenner, InterVu

that ends up losing the market fight.

As for the public, one can only hope that users are willing to keep downloading and maintaining multiple players until things get worked out. If not, streaming video could face the same fate as another cutting-edge technology: AM stereo.

Admittedly, this may seem like a far-fetched comparison. After all, the Internet is a hot property, while AM radio was declining when AM stereo came out. However, AM stereo might have allowed AM music stations to compete with FM stations from a sound-quality standpoint. But there were four competing AM stereo formats, leaving it up to consumers to pick the winner. And they did: They chose FM.

Could this happen to streaming video? Probably not, but there are lessons that apply. The Internet's potential as a video distribution medium could be seriously hampered as long as the multiple-format fight continues. Web surfers have notoriously short attention spans. By tolerating the current situation, broadcasters could be hurting streaming video as a medium, and thus their own futures. ■

Wanted: VP of diversity

Fox seeks executive to oversee minority hiring; Mfume may ask government's help

By Joe Schlosser

Fox plans to add a vice president of diversity in response to pressure from the NAACP and other groups for more minorities behind and in front of the camera, industry sources say.

The yet-to-be-hired executive would oversee a broad plan for increasing the number of shows with minorities in their cast and production ranks, the sources say. The plan is expected to be announced in the next few days. A Fox spokesman had no comment.

News of Fox's initiative emerged last Wednesday at NATPE, where diversity took center stage. During an early-morning session, NAACP President Kweisi Mfume said he won't rule out trying to enlist the government in his push for more network diversity.

ABC News anchor Connie Chung hosted the breakfast Q&A session with Mfume, who publicly broached the



Discussing diversity in the television industry with ABC News anchor Connie Chung, NAACP President Kweisi Mfume said that he would not rule out seeking government regulation on the issue.

subject of government intervention in the diversity effort. He and other minority leaders have reached groundbreaking diversity agreements with ABC and NBC over the past several weeks and are closing in on similar pacts with Fox and CBS. Mfume, a former Maryland Congressman, had downplayed any sort of government involvement in the effort until yesterday.

Although he didn't say there was a specific plan among the leaders of the minority coalition working with the networks, he did say, "There are a number of different things that would allow you to go down that street of government regulation. It's not something that I'm advocating, but we're not ruling it out."

Jacqueline Kong, a Hollywood producer and the executive director of Asian American Media Development, went even further during a panel session on diversity. "I think it's going to head in that direction unless some things are actually put into place beyond where they are now. All I can say right now is that [government intervention] is an option and that we are discussing it right now."

Kong and other minority leaders have been pushing the networks to install an executive at the vice president level to oversee implementation of the diversity agreements. The issue has become a

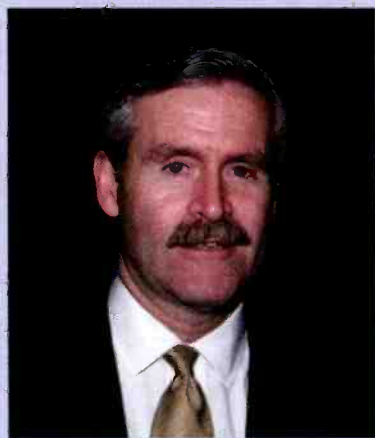
point of contention with CBS executives and has stalled the Tiffany network's expected diversity agreement, says Hispanic-American leader Felix Sanchez.

"CBS is resisting that idea, and I don't understand why," says Sanchez, who represents the National Hispanic Council of the Arts at the session. CBS Television CEO Les Moonves told members of the Television Critics Association earlier this month that he is opposed to "quotas" in any diversity agreement. A CBS spokesman would not comment on the VP-level position but said the network is close to unveiling a pact with the NAACP and other groups. Mfume told BROADCASTING & CABLE earlier in the week that negotiations with CBS have gone slower than he expected.

Mfume, Sanchez and other coalition members are also talking with executives at NBC and ABC. Both networks, which have already agreed to sweeping diversity initiatives, did not promise creation of vice president positions. ABC and NBC executives had no comment.

"If we don't have a vice president of diversity forcing the agreement with each of the networks, then the agreements are only as good as the goodwill of the current presidents," Sanchez says. "And with the high turnover in the industry of network executives, in order to have long-lasting solutions, we have to have an

Dowdle honored; FitzSimons accepts



Tribune Broadcasting President Dennis FitzSimons (above) accepts ALTV's Distinguished Service Award on behalf of his predecessor, Jim Dowdle. Dowdle, who retired last year and couldn't make it to the luncheon ceremony because he is recovering from heart surgery. In a letter read by FitzSimons, Dowdle lauded ALTV and encouraged its members to continue to work together for "free local TV."

enforcer and an ombudsman. That's something that we are focused on."

A big part of the diversity agreements with the networks has focused on the hiring of minority writers, producers and executives in the future. Kong says that, because of a lack of opportunities at the major networks, her Los Angeles organization has been forced into prepping potential writers

and executives for careers in television. Without minority organizations like the AAMD, Kong says, minorities will be in trouble if they are expected to join the ranks and simply fit in.

"It's like going to the major leagues without minor league training," says Kong. "You're going to fail."

Chung, asking whether the NAACP has gone after the broadcast networks in

an attempt to gain publicity for the organization, drew a chuckle from the audience and this reply from Mfume: "That's a good reach, Connie. The reason we are doing this is because it's the right thing to do. I'd like to think it's something a lot of people have talked about but don't have the [authority] or the voice to make a change. We didn't create this hole for the networks; they did." ■

Warner Bros. is first on MARS

High-speed ratings 'dream machine' from SystemLogic will offer specialized reports

By Melissa Grego

After a two-and-a-half year journey, MARS is within the grasp of Hollywood ratings numbers crunchers.

SystemLogic says that, following years of research, which included enlisting the help of several major studios to come up with specs for a "dream" ratings

machine, its Media Analysis Reporting System (MARS) is hitting the market this week. Warner Bros., one of the studios involved in the MARS research, is the first to sign up for the service.

MARS is a computer application that allows studios, advertisers and stations to produce "in two minutes" the kind of specialized ratings reports that would normally take at least a half

hour, a calculator, and lots and lots of longhand.

Executives who want to gather information on when to air or sell ads, or what program and what timeslot is best to target a specific demo, normally have to go through six or seven computations by hand, says Luke Lobo, SystemLogic's director of business development and strategic marketing.

"Users can be more productive using the data," he says. "Rather than spending time manually copying and pasting the data from one application to another, they can use that time to analyze the data."

SystemLogic has an agreement with Nielsen to house and process live Nielsen data on an IBM server, the RS/6000 S80 UNIX server, at SystemLogic's California headquarters. Subscribers access the system remotely and must have their own license for Nielsen's data to use the MARS application.

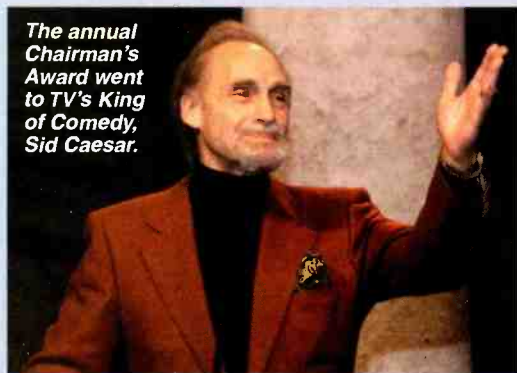
What sets the system apart from other ratings-analysis applications, Lobo says, is that its integrated interface enables users to cross-reference the national, sweeps and overnight modules at once. Once users learn how to use one part of the program, they can operate the entire system. Competitors focus on individual groups of data, he says.

MARS is possible, he adds, because of the scalability of the IBM system, which has the power and capacity to store all of the data sources in one warehouse.

In the coming months, Lobo says, the company will incorporate additional Nielsen data, such as cable numbers and Hispanic ratings groups.

Lobo would not say how much Warner Bros. paid to go to MARS. He did, however, say that the price is negotiable and will vary depending on the number of users. ■

NATPE hails Caesar



The annual Chairman's Award went to TV's King of Comedy, Sid Caesar.

NATPE kicked off its "21st Century Show of Shows" with a fitting tribute to comedian Sid Caesar and a new slogan: The Alliance of Media Content Professionals.

The organization opened its doors on a new century Tuesday with a pledge to be all things to everyone in the content business as the television industry adapts to a wave of new technology.

CEO Bruce Johansen started the 37th annual conference appropriately, entering the opening session via a TV monitor with a message: "NATPE is going to bring traditional media and new media together. Content is king and it's going to take center stage here this week."

Susan Grant, president of CNN Newsource Sales and outgoing NATPE chairwoman, said those in the television industry doubting NATPE's importance in the new millennium are in for a big surprise. "NATPE has never been more relevant," said Grant, who will be replaced this week as NATPE chair by Steve Mosko, Columbia TriStar Television Distribution executive vice president of sales. "It resonates even more with its members now than ever before."

Grant presented NATPE's annual Chairman's Award to former Show of Shows' star Caesar, who gave the thousands in attendance a sample of his classic comedy. Caesar had the audience roaring with a 10-minute performance that included every language (or Caesar's version of it) but English.

Bill Maher and a cast of syndication stars (Jerry Springer, Louie Anderson, Robin Givens and Mablean Ephriam) put on a NATPE version of ABC's Politically Incorrect. Maher said his show is "the most ripped-off show on TV. It's either us or Xena Warrior Judge. Everything from President Clinton to the recent White House-network PSA scandal was material for discussion on the Incorrect panel.

—Joe Schlosser

NATPE names new board

The number of blue badges, or registered buyers, at the NATPE conference this year was up, even though the number of station general managers was down, says NATPE President and CEO Bruce Johansen.

The decrease in general managers is not an efficient measure of the volume of business done at the convention, Columbia TriStar Television Distribution Executive VP of Sales Steve Mosko believes. "This is a sales convention," said Mosko, who succeeded CNN Newsource Sales President Susan Grant as chairman of NATPE. "All the key buyers are here, and they're doing business."

He cited his own company's sales activity as an example: The company arrived at the convention with two new first-run shows with no clearances and made major deals on both.

According to Johansen, this also was a "watershed" year in terms of new-media exhibitors (160), which accounted for about 18% of the total, up from 30 last year, or less than 1%.

In addition to the turning over of the chairmanship—a one-year, one-time job—from Grant to Mosko, the new members joining the board of directors were announced: Marcelus Alexander, vice president/general manager of KYW-TV Philadelphia; Madelyn Bonnot, vice president/general manager of WVUE-TV New Orleans; Stephanie Campbell, senior vice president of programming for DirecTV; Lisa Churchville, president/general manager of WJAR-TV Providence, R.I.; Thomas Frank, COO of Real Networks; Julie Kantrowitz, executive vice president of media sales for Warner Bros. Domestic Television; Garnett Losak, vice president/and director of programming for Blair Television; Marleen McDaniel, chair and CEO of Women.com Networks; Armando Nunez Jr., president of CBS Broadcast International; and Sean Perry, an agent in the syndication department of Endeavor Agency.

Also, Tony Vinciguerra, executive vice president and COO of Hearst-Argyle Television, was named a member representative of NATPE's Executive Committee, and Jon Mandel, co-managing director and chief negotiating officer of Media-Com, moved into the position of first vice chair. —Melissa Grego

Making the digital cut

First-run is going digital, but syndicators are having to decide what library product will get expensive makeover

By Joe Schlosser

The syndication industry is quietly arming for the digital revolution, and some of the top Hollywood studios are spending millions of dollars to get their programming ready. Not every show, though, is going to make the cut.

Off-network evergreens like *Cheers* and *M*A*S*H* are currently undergoing digital facelifts and will be HDTV-ready for syndication over the next year, studio executives say.

Paramount Domestic Television's John Nogawski, speaking at an ALTV panel titled "Programming: Still the King," said his studio is currently spending \$8 million to transfer nearly

300 episodes of *Cheers*.

"It's going to cost us a fortune to turn our whole library around," he said. "So we have to evaluate what product, programs, are worth making the convergence for. It's a long process, and it's expensive."

Nogawski says all current Paramount first-run shows are being shot in HDTV and that all of the studio's films have either been transferred or are being converted to digital. He would not say which shows in the vast Paramount Pictures library, a library that includes such classic series as *I Love Lucy* and *Happy Days*, will be made HDTV-ready. *Cheers* is currently in its second off-net cycle in syndication,

Columbia TriStar's Barry Thurston and Warner Bros.' Dick Robertson were among the syndicators weighing in on the digital switch.



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and Paramount executives are preparing the former NBC sitcom's third go in syndication.

Fox-owned Twentieth Television is currently transferring all *M*A*S*H* episodes and the studio's films to digital, according to President Rick Jacobson. Decisions on Fox library product,

he says, are still being weighed.

Columbia TriStar Television Distribution President Barry Thurston says, "When you realize our company has over 350 series and 70,000 hours of programming, you have to be selective and do it based on demand." All new CTTD shows are being shot in HDTV.

Tribune Entertainment president Dick Askin reports that it costs about \$20,000 extra per episode to tape a first-run action series like *Gene Roddenberry's Andromeda* in HDTV. It is smart to pay the extra money up-front, he says, as Tribune is doing, rather than having to go back and update a show. ■

Blues over 'Sopranos' spot

Emmis executive blasts CBS for carrying commercial for acclaimed HBO series

By Joe Schlosser

Where is local broadcast television going in America? According to Emmis Communications executive Madelyn Bonnot, not in the right direction.

Bonnot, one of seven industry executives on a NATPE panel titled "TV American Style," blasted CBS for airing a commercial for HBO's *The Sopranos* during a recent NFL playoff game.

"I have a problem when CBS runs a spot for *The Sopranos* on the same day of the show's season premiere and they do it during an NFL playoff game," Bonnot said. "It's revenue, and we love revenue, but when we start promoting the time and date of cable programs..."

CBS executives said the advertisements for *The Sopranos*, which ran on Jan. 16—the day of the HBO series' season debut—were not national network spots. CBS executives also said the ads were carried only by the CBS owned-and-operated stations and did not mention the "day and date" information that Bonnot claimed.

The second-season premiere of *The Sopranos* scored record cable ratings



The 'TV American Style' panel debated the current and future state of TV and the growing battle/relationship with the Internet.

that night, averaging a 16.2 rating/22 share, according to Nielsen Media Research. CBS executives would not say if there are any more ads coming from HBO or whether the CBS O&Os will carry more cable spots in the future.

Emmis Communications owns eight TV stations, including CBS affiliate WTHI-TV in Terre Haute, Ind.; five Fox affiliates, one WB outlet, and a single ABC affiliate. After the panel, Bonnot added: "Our stations don't do this and won't ever do this."

Also on the panel were Tribune Entertainment President Dick Askin, Lifetime Entertainment President Carole Black, Washington-based attorney Mickey Gardner, Micronet's Toby Burke, CBS' Gil Schwartz and

DirecTV's Eddy Hartenstein. The panel addressed the current state and future of television, as well as the growing battle/relationship with the Internet.

"The reality is, you are going to see a lot of change," said Askin. "Compensation has to change. When you are dealing with networks that are losing money or just breaking even, I think the whole of issue of compensation has to then be re-examined."

In terms of the hot issue of network ownership of local stations, Gardner told the audience not to expect the FCC to raise the current cap of 35% any time soon. Election-year politics and the current state of the television marketplace, he said, will spell "hard cheese" for big station owners like News Corp. and CBS.

All the cable and network panelists said they are not "threatened" by the future of the Internet, but they did say they are keeping close tabs on the growing computer side of things. "We have real brand loyalty at Lifetime, and we couldn't be the number-one network in all female demographics if we didn't," Black said. "I think new technology is fascinating and is going to play into everything. But I'm not that scared of it and not threatened by it."

CBS Communications' Schwartz said TV viewers do enjoy what the Internet offers but, at the end of the day, "they all want to sit and be entertained. Thank God." ■

Iger, ABC up

It's official, Robert Iger has been named president and COO of The Walt Disney Co. as well as a member of the board of directors, making him the clear heir apparent to Michael Eisner, chairman. The news came on the same day last week that Disney released its first-quarter earnings, which showed extraordinary gains driven by the company's media assets, particularly the ABC Television Network. Disney's media network segment posted a 73% gain in operating income to \$642 million on a 19% revenue gain to \$2.7 billion. Disney executives cited the strong advertising market and huge gains driven by *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* as well as rating gains by *Good Morning America* and *20/20*. They also said cable profits were up 30%.

They did not break out the broadcast percentage gain, but a Disney executive said last week they expected ABC to be profitable on the strength of the strong ad market, ratings gains and this year's Super Bowl.



'Reporter made me do it' defense rejected in Fla.

A Fort Lauderdale jury convicted a man of first-degree murder for the killing of his ex-wife at their daughter's gravesite, despite the defense claim that Emilio Nuñez was provoked by a local television reporter's incessant questioning. The jury deliberated only an hour and a half before convicting Nuñez after watching a stunning videotape made by a Telemundo camera of Nuñez firing 10 shots into Maritza Martin as she lay at his feet.

Nuñez's attorney accused reporter Ingrid Cruz, then with WSCV(TV) Fort Lauderdale, of manipulating Nuñez's anger at the gravesite, where he had agreed to be interviewed. Prosecutors said Nuñez held Martin responsible for their daughter's suicide, and wanted to tell that story. When Martin showed up, Nuñez produced a gun and began shooting. Much of the inci-

dent was taped before the Telemundo staffers themselves sought cover. At the trial, which was covered by Court TV, Cruz denied she had invited Martin to the cemetery to provoke a confrontation and said she had no idea Nuñez would be armed.

Noncompete clauses attacked in Mo.

The Missouri legislature is launching the latest attack on noncompete clauses in local broadcasting. The American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, which successfully fought to outlaw the clauses in Massachusetts and Maine, found a sponsor in St. Louis State Senator William Clay, who called the boilerplate contract provisions "inherently unfair." Clay, who faces opposition from the Missouri Broadcasters Association and Chamber of Commerce, does not accept the traditional argument that stations should be able to bar employees from jumping immediately

to local competitors because they spend valuable resources promoting a particular personality. "The people they promote didn't just fall off the turnip truck," said Clay. "They work; they gain experience to the point where they can be marketed that way." Nonetheless, the bill already has been narrowed from its original form to include only on-air staff.

Judge affirms cameras in New York courtrooms

Even though pretrial publicity forced the trial to be moved from New York City to Albany, TV stations will get access to the much-anticipated and racially charged trial of four policemen accused of shooting to death an unarmed man from Guinea, Africa. A New York State judge struck down as unconstitutional New York State's ban on courtroom cameras, clearing the way for Court TV's coverage of the trial of four white New York City officers charged with second-degree murder in the death of Amadou Diallo.

Agreeing with the cable network, Judge Joseph Teresi said justice must be accomplished "under the eyes of the people" and that broadcasting the trial would enhance the public's understanding of the judicial system and contribute to public confidence in the courts. The judge said the First Amendment creates a presumptive right to televise courtroom proceedings. New York has had a

longstanding ban on cameras in the courtroom, but many trials were televised under an experimental program created by the legislature. That program ended in 1997, however, largely due to fallout from the O.J. Simpson murder trial in Los Angeles.

La. reporter charged with sex, drug offenses

WVUE(TV) New Orleans said it was determined to report on charges of sexual misconduct and drug use against its reporter Mike Longman just as it would were a case brought against any other prominent local figure.

"We didn't change any rules," said Vice President of News Keith Esparros. "We were among the media staking Mike out. I felt we could neither be more lenient nor more harsh." Longman himself told his news peers he understood that they must do their jobs.

Two weeks ago during a raid on Longman's home, police seized videotapes showing several males, some possibly underage, engaged in sexual activity. Earlier, a 15-year-old told police he had had sexual contact with Longman. Esparros also went on the air, acknowledging "as a parent...how reprehensible and repugnant these charges are" as well as Longman's history in the market and intent to defend himself while he is on administrative leave. Longman admits to a substance abuse problem and intends to seek treatment. *All news is local.*
Contact Dan Trigoboff at (301) 260-0923, e-mail dtrig@erols.com or fax to (202) 463-3742.



Jurors in a Fort Lauderdale murder trial saw this video of a graveside shooting, filmed by a local Telemundo station. Photo provided by Court TV.

Send in the Marin

Emphasis on 'quality' news lures anchor who refused to work with Jerry Springer

By Dan Trigoboff

When Carol Marin joined CBS in 1997 she was emphatic: she would not be an anchor. "I never thought I would go back to anchoring," says Marin, whose last experience in the anchor seat at NBC-owned WMAQ-TV Chicago ended when she quit in a much-publicized huff over the station's hiring talkmeister Jerry Springer to do commentaries. "I didn't want to go back to it. Not the way it had become."

But for CBS' WBBM-TV, the notion of putting one of Chicago's most respected and popular broadcast journalists—one already in its employ—on the anchor desk to boost a low-rated newscast would appear to be a virtual no-brainer. But Marin needed to be convinced.

"When [WBBM-TV Chicago general manager Hank Price and news director Pat Costello] came to me about 6 months ago and asked if I would talk about anchoring a newscast, I said I'd talk about anything but I wasn't going to anchor a newscast. We spent all that time talking about quality."

Apparently they were persuasive. On Monday Marin returns to anchoring, and in a big way. Not only will she be anchoring WBBM-TV's 10 o'clock news, but she'll be anchoring solo.

Marin's comfort level appeared to survive even last week's rumors that Joel Cheatwood, part of the management team during Marin's unhappy, final days at WMAQ-TV, was expanding his role from station manager at KYW-TV Philadelphia to become an in-house consultant for CBS-owned stations. Cheatwood has been a largely successful, if controversial, director of news in Boston, Miami and Chicago with a reputation for fast-paced and colorful newscasts that are also criticized as crime-oriented and tabloid in style.

Cheatwood could not be reached, and CBS said it had "nothing to announce" late last week regarding Cheatwood's status. Marin says that "I am not at all concerned that Joel Cheatwood is going to be a factor in Chicago—because he will not have a consulting role here. My boss, Hank Price, has given me absolute assurance of that.

Moreover, all of my bosses have given me—and the newsroom—a firm and clear commitment about the quality and kind of news we will deliver at 10 p.m."

Given that the show will be called *The 10 O'Clock News, Reported by Carol Marin*, Marin plans to put her own stamp on it. "I see this newscast as a whole report. I'll be in the mix; I'll be senior editor. I won't be coming in just to read it, but to help construct it. I'll be involved in story conferences."

Certainly the installation of a 51-year-old solo female anchor suggests a direction different from the more youthful, male-female pairings of most stations (although not unprecedented: WJLA-TV Washington last year brought back 53-year-old Maureen Bunyan, formerly a fixture on rival WUSA-TV), as a solo anchor). But WBBM-TV insists it's more a return to basics, uncorrupted by testing and formatting, than a new direction. Marin agrees. "The only radical thing is to go back to what we used to do," she says.

"Having a solo anchor eliminates a little of the required choreography," she says, "choreography that absorbs time that could be given to a reporter" and that has developed not from news, but

from the formatting of news. "We're not trying to create some sort of format. There may be days where one story dominates, and it's possible to have three or four stories on a newscast. It's also possible to have 10 stories on a given day. We want to be flexible. We're not inventing some new thing here; we're working hard to be understated."

Her age, she says, "shouldn't be an issue. The sad thing is that it's seen by some people as remarkable" that a woman over 50 has been hired as an anchor. At *60 Minutes II*, to which she will continue to contribute, "I'm not one of the older ones."

"Viewers know that if she's going to put her name on a broadcast, it's going to be straightforward," says Price, whose newscast has been trailing for years. "I saw the need to differentiate our newscast from the other newscasts; to be more Chicago-oriented, to make decisions based on the news of the day, as opposed to making decisions based on our format. Then we started thinking, 'wow, what an opportunity if we could get Carol Marin.'

"We baited her," Price says. "We challenged her to have an opportunity to do what she says is important." Price notes that the assurances given Marin have the support of the CBS Station Group. Marin even flew to Los Angeles to meet with group head John Severino. "We've made a long-term commitment to Carol. John Severino is on board. But we don't expect this newscast to come right out of the box and turn things around overnight. I think we have very reasonable expectations. Our main expectation is a quality job. We'll let the ratings come later."

Her newscast, Marin says, will accent hard news. "I'm a better hard news reporter than a soft feature reporter," she notes, "but there are no absolutes. [And] I don't anticipate it being grim all the time. Hard news is not necessarily bad news. I am not opposed to smiling occasionally. There has to be a balance."

The newscast will not, she says, push against the wall that divides news and advertising. In 1995, Marin set the stage for her later showdown with then-



Marin: 'I'm a better hard news reporter than a soft feature reporter, but there are no absolutes. Hard news is not necessarily bad news.'

WMAQ-TV management when she was suspended for refusing to read a plug on a 6 p.m. newscast for a commercial tie-in to a public service campaign.

"There won't be any commercial insinuation into the newscast," she stresses. "The most dangerous ones look like some high-minded public service with a drug company or hospital—and they're all advertisers. These are implicit deals; where advertisers pay a fee to get a story done about

them. It's not just a problem with local television. It's in local radio, and in print. Show me the real estate section [of a newspaper] or the automobile section, and look at the remarkable so-called articles about advertisers."

And she won't enter "my idea of news hell. 'And now a report on the guy behind tonight's movie.'" If there's interest in a disease or other topic of a made-for-TV movie, she says, there will be interest on other days of the week.

"This notion of synergy," she says, "viewers and readers are sick of it."

"Whatever good will there is in this market for me won't be enough to keep viewers watching unless we deliver," she says. "This is one of the last really tough-minded hard-news towns, like Baltimore, Detroit, Boston and Pittsburgh. If you get into a cab in Chicago, the driver can tell you who all the general managers at the TV stations are, and who the past ones were. They pay attention to news here." ■



By: Joe Schlosser and Melissa Grego

Krieger in, Wiatt out

Hearst-Argyle Television Productions has named Ellie Krieger the new host of its syndicated weekly series *Living Better*.

Krieger, a registered dietician and former model, replaces former host Carrie Wiatt. Hearst-Argyle executives say Wiatt opted not to return to the show for the 2000-01 season.

Telco in Harmony

Santa Monica, Calif.-based Telco Productions has been named exclusive distributor for a number of Harmony Gold's movies and miniseries. Telco promoted the Telco 5 Collection, a package of five, four-hour miniseries produced by Harmony Gold, at the convention last week: *King of the Olympics*, *The Man Who Lived at the Ritz*, *Sherlock Holmes & the Leading Lady*, *Sherlock Holmes: Incident at Victoria Falls* and *Jack Higgins' The Confessional*.

Winning pitch

Toronto-based producer Jonathan Block-Verk was the inaugural winner of the Microsoft TV Interactive pitch contest. Block's

pitch, titled *Space Challenger*, a home-improvement game show, brought him \$50,000 and a development deal with Columbia TriStar Television Distribution and Microsoft. The competition attracted more than 100 contestants, who were given 60 seconds to pitch a panel of Internet and television executives.

Homes show

Hearst Entertainment and GoodHome.com are teaming to launch the half-hour lifestyle weekly *Homes & Hideaways* in fall 2000. Donna Hanover, *Good Day New York* correspondent and anchor of the Food Network's *In Food Today*, has signed on to host. The weekly will showcase the homes and getaways of celebrities. Hearst Entertainment is producing, while GoodHome.com is the show's "presentation sponsor" and will also add an interactive dimension to the show, which has been cleared on WNBC-TV New York.

Meyer joins history

As part of the expansion plans for The History Channel in Asia, Carl Meyer has been named regional managing direc-

tor for the Asia Pacific territory. Most recently founder/managing director of Hong Kong-based Marigot Communications Ltd., he will be responsible for heading up the channel's new offices in Hong Kong.

Startz deals with Catalyst

Emmy Award-winning producer Jane Startz, who created *The Magic School Bus* for PBS and produced the features *The Indian in the Cupboard* and *The Mighty*, is close to signing a deal with Toronto-based Catalyst Entertainment for three movies. Catalyst is actively seeking a broadcast outlet for the movies, to be budgeted at about \$2 million to \$3 million apiece: *Alexandra's Vampire*, *It's Only Me* and *Queen's Rhapsody*.

Sunbelt punches up Web sites

Sunbelt Communications is moving some of its local programming muscle to the Web. Las Vegas-based Sunbelt, which owns 10 TV stations, will use video streaming service SeeItFirst.com to encode and stream interac-

tive programming for its stations' Web sites. First up is KVBC-TV Las Vegas, which will be "showcasing local entertainment, restaurants and nightlife."

International Hallmark

Hallmark Entertainment is drawing international attention. Japan's Fuji TV has signed a deal for Hallmark's four-hour miniseries *Aftershock*, about an earthquake in New York City. Video distributor Pony Canyon will handle home video distribution in the region. French network M6 has bought the rights to several Hallmark miniseries, including its latest, *10th Kingdom*, as well as *Aftershock*, *Leprechauns*, *Jason and the Argonauts* and *Don Quixote*.

Sacks joins Carlton

Jeri Sacks, former vice president for pay/cable and ancillary sales, Tribune Entertainment, is joining Carlton America as vice president, domestic sales. It is the first major appointment for the newly formed U.S. development and production arm of Carlton International Media Group. In other Carlton America news, the company has signed an exclusive global distribution deal for made-for-TV movies from Longbow Productions. The first property under the deal is USA Networks' *Painful Secrets*.

Dr. Laura: Third time's the charm

After several close calls, Dr. Laura Schlessinger appears headed for daytime television. The controversial personality and author, whose syndicated radio program garners close to 20 million listeners a day, is in the midst of developing Dr. Laura for its fall debut.

The Paramount Domestic Television hour-long talk show has already been sold in more than 125 markets covering 85% of the country for next season. And it's clearly the most anticipated program offering in syndication for the 2000-2001 season. Schlessinger has flirted with working in television before—with Universal Television in 1996 and with CBS' syndication unit Eyemark Entertainment two years later.

This time, she says, she has received the freedom to run the kind of show she desires, and the studio—Paramount—shares her “family” values. The conservative talk-show host, who turned 53 this month, sat down with BROADCASTING & CABLE's Joe Schlosser and Melissa Grego to discuss her upcoming show—and her lifelong mission.

How long have you wanted to do television?

I have not aspired to do television. I did many years ago when I saw the *Donahue Show*. That was the first time interesting things were being discussed and positions were being argued on a very sophisticated level. But my heart was really into radio because, in radio, it's just three hours of nobody editing, nobody nagging and you are in control.

About five years ago, I was approached [about doing a syndicated show] by Universal, and they said this will be your vision and whatever it is you want to do. Then the ink was dry, and they suddenly moved from that position. Velma Cato, the executive producer who did the pilot with me, tried desperately to keep the pilot on track for our vision. That was a difficult problem. I walked out.

So why now are you getting back into television?

Over the last five years, Velma has been calling now and then. She would say that we have to do a TV show. I would tell her to go away. About nine months ago, she gets a cold and is home in bed. She called me after about two days of being at home trapped, watching television. Her whole tone was different. She said angrily, “Do you know what is on television? It's trash. You have to go on.”

We have an appointment with [Paramount Domestic Television President] Frank Kelly. Everybody else is around the table ready to talk business, and he and I spent a half an hour talking about parenting, comparing notes on our teenage boys. A half hour in, Velma said, “Can we talk about television now?”

He asked what happened at Universal, and I told the truth. He talked about Paramount and the kinds of things he believed in. I thought these are people I can work with. I thought this would be an opportunity to do something of value, because I'm on a mission. To do something that's meaningful would be worth our time.

How do you plan to make your TV show different from the radio show?

The only [similarity] will be the rant and rave at the beginning when there is an ethical issue. But what I want to do



Photo: Craig Matthew Photography

with the TV show, we haven't gotten that far into it yet. The basic concept is to present ethical issues that really impact life. All of the ways of looking at [an issue] will be presented. My point of view will also be presented, and an opportunity for the audience to get involved will be there, too.

Will there be a studio audience?

Oh, yes. I'm looking forward to interacting with them. Sometimes they will be a big part of a show, and sometimes they won't. There isn't going to be a strict daily format. One day, I could do a whole thing for an hour. The next day, I could have four subjects. Another time, I could spend the whole time in the audience.

What about phone calls and the Internet?

We are going to be doing man-on-the-street, and we are going to have cameras out there. We'll probably have some sort of Internet link.

Do you have authority over what gets on and what doesn't?

We are in control. This show was bought and sold with no format, do you realize that? We were bought by Paramount with absolutely no format. [Paramount executives] trust us. These are not people I need to sit down and say, sign here, and assure me this, this and this.

What exactly is your mission?

The English translation of the Hebrew phrase is to perfect the world. The Jewish perspective is, God created the world and it is our job to help perfect it. Just like God created the earth and the wheat, but we are the ones that take the wheat and make bread. We each have the obligation and the responsibility to live our lives in a way that helps perfect the world. I take that very seriously. ■

JANUARY 17-23

Broadcast network prime time ratings according to Nielsen Media Research



PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Fox's 'Malcolm in the Middle' was anything but; the freshman comedy placed 11th despite heavyweight competition from both NBC and CBS.

Week 18	abc	CBS	NBC	FOX	U/P/N	WB	
	10.4/16	10.0/15	6.7/10	7.6/11	2.0/3	2.7/4	
MONDAY	8:00		27. King of Queens 10.0/15	78. Freaks & Geeks 5.1/8	74. Life & Trials: Ally McBeal 5.4/8	99. Moesha 2.1/3	90. 7th Heaven 3.5/5
	8:30		36. Ladies Man 9.0/13			96. The Parkers 2.3/3	
	9:00	22. American Music Awards 5.9/9	7. Ev Lvs Raymd 12.3/18	61. Dateline NBC 6.8/10	29. Ally McBeal 9.8/14	104. Grown-Ups 1.9/3	104. Safe Harbor 1.9/3
	9:30		14. Becker 11.2/16			107. Grown-Ups 1.7/3	
	10:00		39. Family Law 8.9/15	45. Third Watch 8.4/14			
TUESDAY	8:00	13.4/21	10.0/16	6.4/10	5.0/8	1.6/2	3.3/5
	8:30	2. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? 19.2/29	29. JAG 9.8/15	73. Just Shoot Me 5.5/8	69. That '70s Show 6.1/9	99. I Dare You! 2.1/3	90. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 3.5/5
	9:00	19. Dharma & Greg 10.6/16	31. 60 Minutes II 9.7/15	81. 3rd Rock fr/Sun 4.9/7	74. Malcolm/Middle 5.4/8		
	9:30	42. Sports Night 8.5/13		49. Will & Grace 7.7/12	84. Party of Five 4.2/6	111. Shasta McNasty 1.2/2	92. Angel 3.1/5
	10:00	10. NYPD Blue 11.5/19	22. Judging Amy 10.4/17	64. Veronica's Clset 6.6/10		111. Dilbert 1.2/2	
WEDNESDAY	8:00	8.8/14	9.5/15	9.0/14	4.5/7	2.9/4	2.8/4
	8:30	47. Two Guys & Girl 7.8/13	61. City of Angels* 6.8/11	21. Twenty One 10.5/16	78. Beverly Hills 90210 5.1/8	102. 7 Days 2.0/3	92. Dawson's Creek 3.1/5
	9:00	54. Norm 7.3/11		53. West Wing 7.5/11	86. Get Real 3.8/6	87. Star Trek: Voyager 3.7/6	94. Roswell 2.6/4
	9:30	33. Drew Carey 9.4/14	17. CBS Wednesday Movie—Murder in the Mirror 10.9/17	34. Law & Order 9.1/15			
	10:00	41. Spin City 8.7/13					
THURSDAY	8:00	13.0/20	8.2/13	11.5/18	4.4/7	5.0/7	3.0/4
	8:30	49. Whose Line Is It 7.7/12	32. Diagnosis Murder 9.6/15	6. Friends 13.3/20	83. Fox Thursday Night Movie—Maximum Risk 4.4/7	80. WWF Smackdown! 5.0/7	95. Popular 2.4/4
	9:00	36. Whose Line Is It 9.0/13		9. Jesse 11.8/18			88. Charmed 3.6/5
	9:30	1. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? 19.6/29	57. Chicago Hope 7.0/10	7. Frasier 12.3/18			
	10:00	16. 20/20 Downtown 11.0/18	46. 48 Hours 8.0/13	39. Stark Rvg Mad 8.9/13			
FRIDAY	8:00	7.1/12	6.3/11	10.6/18	5.8/10	1.2/2	2.1/4
	8:30	72. Boy Meets Wrid 5.7/10	49. Winning Lines 7.7/13	12. Providence 11.3/19	82. Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction 4.6/8	107. I Dare You 1.7/3	96. Jamie Foxx 2.3/4
	9:00	69. Boy Meets Wrid 6.1/10	74. Cosby 5.4/9				98. Steve Harvey 2.2/4
	9:30	60. Sabrina/Witch 6.9/12	66. Now and Again 6.2/10	24. Dateline NBC 10.3/17	57. Greed 7.0/12	125. Shasta McNasty 0.7/1	99. Steve Harvey 2.1/4
	10:00	69. The Hughleys 6.1/10		25. Law & Order: Special Victims Unit 10.2/18		122. Dilbert 0.8/1	102. For Your Love 2.0/3
SATURDAY	8:00	7.8/14	7.5/13	3.9/7	6.1/11	KEY: RANKING/SHOW TITLE/PROGRAM RATING/SHARE • TOP TEN SHOWS OF THE WEEK ARE NUMBERED IN RED • TV UNIVERSE ESTIMATED AT 100.8 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS; ONE RATINGS POINT IS EQUAL TO 1,008,000 TV HOMES • YELLOW TINT IS WINNER OF TIME SLOT • (NR)=NOT RANKED; RATING/SHARE ESTIMATED FOR PERIOD SHOWN • *PREMIERE • S-T-D=SEASON TO DATE • SOURCES: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH, CBS RESEARCH • GRAPHIC BY KENNETH RAY	
	8:30		57. Winning Lines 7.0/12	88. NBA Basketball 3.6/7	77. Cops 5.3/9		
	9:00	47. ABC Saturday Night Movie—The Birdcage 7.8/14	56. Martial Law 7.1/12	85. NBA Basketball Game 2 4.0/7	66. Cops 6.2/11		
	9:30		42. Walker, Texas Ranger 8.5/15		64. AMW: America Fights Back 6.6/11		
	10:00						
SUNDAY	7:00	10.3/15	10.4/15	13.2/20	14.2/21	1.6/2	
	7:30	54. Wonderful World of Disney—First Kid 7.3/11	19. 60 Minutes 10.6/16	52. Golden Globes Arrival Special 7.6/12	(nr) NFC Chmpnshp 30.2/48		109. 7th Heaven Beginnings 1.6/2
	8:00		17. Touched by an Angel 10.9/16		5. NFC Postgame 14.1/22		
	8:30				14. The Simpsons 11.2/16		106. Felicity 1.8/3
	9:00	3. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? 17.4/24	26. CBS Sunday Movie—Fire Down Below 10.1/15	4. Golden Globe Awards 15.0/22	11. Malcolm/Middl 11.4/16		110. Jack & Jill 1.5/2
10:00	34. The Practice 9.1/14			42. The X-Files 8.5/12			
WEEK AVG	10.1/16	8.9/14	9.0/14	7.3/11	2.5/4	2.5/4	
S-T-D AVG	8.6/14	8.9/15	9.0/15	6.2/10	2.6/4	2.7/4	

Ops studying sacrifice fly

Trading cash flow for accelerated Web rollout: Will investors rally or panic?

By John M. Higgins

A combination of fear and envy is prompting some cable operators to consider backtracking from promises of double-digit growth in cash flow over the next year or two in order to spend even more heavily on deploying new products, particularly high-speed data service.

What cable executives hope is that investors will focus on the long-run value that operators can create by delivering tens, hundreds, or even thousands of new subscribers immediately. They would also be heading off attacks by telcos trying to steal the high-speed business by aggressively deploying DSL service.

The risk is that Wall Street would simply panic at the prospect of cash-flow growth's dropping from a sparkling 10%-15% to a relatively sluggish 5%-7% this year and slamming cable stocks.

Money managers and analysts report that executives at three cable companies have been feeling them out about the market's reaction to such a sharp adjustment. The one company open about studying such a move is Cox Communications Inc.

"It is something we have been considering," says Cox CFO Jimmy Hayes. "The fact of the matter is that we have a terrific first-mover opportunity" in high-speed data. If Cox executives decide to accelerate spending, they will disclose it by the end of the first quarter ending March 31. But Hayes cautioned that any reduction in cash flow would not be dramatic. "It's all about balance," he notes.

Comcast Corp. agrees in principle with the idea but contends that it can move aggressively while maintaining cash-flow growth at more than 10%. Charter Communications Inc. is considering sacrificing some cash-flow growth, but to pump growth of basic cable more than new services. The company also says it won't have to let cash-flow growth slip to the single-digit percentage range.

AT&T and Time Warner executives



CFO Jimmy Hayes says Cox may slow cash-flow growth to accelerate spending on high-speed data.

say they have no plans to significantly change their 2000 budgets.

Each percentage point of cash-flow growth is precious. Double-digit growth is, as one analyst puts it, "the Holy Grail" for investors, coaxing them to award a premium stock price for high growth. Wall Streeters say other operators are waiting to see how Cox's stock reacts before following the company's lead; Cox, they say, has a lot of credibility with investors.

A big cash-flow hit could be worth it. Bear, Stearns & Co. analyst Ray Katz already expects Cox to increase its data subscriber base by 210,000 units, from 180,000 in January to 390,000 by year-end. If Cox executives pump up the spending and cut 2000 cash-flow growth from the 12% Katz expects to about 7%, he estimates that, instead of adding 210,000 subscribers, they could sign on 510,000, totaling 700,000 subscribers at year-end. Those additional subscribers would be net cash-flow positive in the second year, creating hundreds of millions of dollars in new value.

"If the market doesn't believe it, they get hammered, or they get hurt," says Katz, who is advocating that some companies take the plunge. He believes

investors would probably hit an MSO's stock for a few days but the price would recover in short order. "I don't think they'll necessarily get hammered."

Another media analyst, even one who thinks operators should make the move, disagrees: "They disclose this, and they'll drop by 20%."

Some MSO executives agree. "Going to mid-single digits would be suicide," says a senior executive at one operator. A big risk is that investors would suspect Cox or another operator of trying to hide other, more fundamental problems in digesting recent acquisitions, the executive adds.

One reason operators are thinking about throttling cash flow back is the way Wall Street values some other stocks. They are jealous of the way Internet and DBS companies are rewarded for rapid subscriber growth even if their sales campaigns eviscerate, not just dampen, earnings.

Those companies have sold Wall Street on the idea that long-term value is better than short-term cash flow. CEOs in other industries, of course, are just as envious that MSOs are judged on their ability to generate operating cash flow with hardly any concern for their inability to generate net income.

But the big motive is fear of losing out to DSL and other means of high-speed data access. Telcos, particularly SBC Corp., are looking to eat cable's lunch by launching aggressive campaigns to deploy digital subscriber-line service. DSL allows consumers to surf at speeds of 1 megabit per second, far faster than the 56-kilobyte access permitted by conventional telephone modems. Further, high-speed access is available by satellite, notably from DBS service DirecTV. Other wireless schemes are in the works, with MCI Worldcom and Sprint Corp. snapping up microwave licenses that had been unsuccessfully used to offer wireless cable service.

Cable operators are widely criticized—particularly by customers—for moving too slowly in deploying high-speed Web access. They are basically in a race with telcos to deploy their net-

works to a given neighborhood. A Net junkie who takes DSL service will probably be lost forever.

Of course, telcos are in the same position. After sitting on DSL technology for almost a decade, they are only now getting sufficiently concerned about losing to high-speed cable that they are committing billions to upgrading their networks.

Still, the fact that operators are even considering the issue "is admitting that the time to market advantage is only meaningful if you take it now," says Morgan Stanley Dean Witter media analyst Rich Bilotti. "I would applaud them for taking it."

What would a cut buy them? In Cox's case, paring cash-flow growth from 12% to 7% would free up about \$90 million. Although Cox could step up deployment of digital cable or telephone services instead, analysts agree that virtually all of that would go for Internet subscribers. That competition could cost the company subscribers

Ready for broadband

Percentage of homes passed upgraded for high-speed Internet

	1999	2000	2001
Cox	55%	74%	84%
AT&T	51%	75%	82%
MediaOne	70%	80%	85%
Time Warner	85%	95%	100%
Cablevision	60%	80%	95%
Comcast	50%	70%	85%
Other	15%	15%	15%
Total	52%	65%	73%

Sources: Sanford Bernstein & Co.

forever.

A new study by Sanford Bernstein & Co. and McKinsey & Co. pegs the cost of adding a cable Internet subscriber at \$545, including the cost of the modem, installation and freeing up channel space. However, under accounting rules, much of that is considered long-term capital investment, so it doesn't have a negative impact on a company's

cash flow. And installation fees offset much of the installer cost that is indeed expensed against earnings.

A company could borrow to pay much of that without dramatically affecting cash flow. The big expense, Katz says, is marketing costs, which he pegs at an average of \$175 per customer.

However, boosting modem sales takes much more than dumping money into advertising and telemarketing. The most difficult part is carefully training installers, be they employees or contractors. Many system executives report that they could add more subs if they could roll more trucks. For Cox, say, adding an extra 300,000 subscribers could require 1,000 new full-time technicians on the street by March.

Hayes, though declining to discuss numbers, agrees that that is the biggest obstacle to accelerating data rollouts. "We want to make sure that, if we go that route, can we get the people?" ■

America's Voice gets laryngitis

Still lacking cash, conservative political network moves through Chapter 11

By John M. Higgins

One of the few chuckles in the halls of America's Voice has centered on the irony that a political cable network so rooted in get-the-government-off-our backs conservatism has run to a federal court for shelter from its debt collectors.

But that's the case of the Washington, D.C.-based network, which is struggling to find a fresh injection of cash to stay on the air after seeking Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection from its creditors. The company has managed to keep going since filing a formal bankruptcy court petition three weeks ago, dropping 14 producers and putting most live programming on hold. But its two-year-long effort to evolve from a nonprofit mouthpiece for right-wing activists to a mainstream, commercial news and talk network has clearly failed.

"We made our payroll, and we're selling advertising," says Richard Gross, a Washington bankruptcy lawyer representing America's Voice. "We'll hopefully find a buyer." Chair-



Despite attempting to don a nonpartisan mantle, the company has failed to secure funding or carriage.

man Robert Sutton said late last week that he was negotiating with two potential buyers interested in the network as a media property, not a political outlet.

However, America's Voice has not secured critical interim financing that would let it stay in operation while reorganizing its debt and operations. In the most successful bankruptcy reorganizations, companies arrange such debtor-in-possession financing just before filing, then begin to draw on the cash immediately.

The company has not yet detailed its

assets and liabilities, but Gross puts its debt at about \$23 million. Another industry executive estimates that the network has burned through another \$15 million in equity. Sutton wouldn't discuss those numbers, but said it will take another \$20 million-\$30 million to secure more distribution and get the network into the black.

America's Voice had arranged with an Internet company and political periodical *National Journal* to air 10 days of coverage of the Iowa presidential caucuses and New Hampshire primary. That means the network could load up on fresh programming that was already paid for during a hot news period. But talk shows featuring political adviser Mary Matalin, former Congresswoman Susan Molinari and columnist Robert Novak are on ice, with the network switching almost entirely to reruns until it gets more cash.

Fortunately, bankruptcy protection is rooted firmly enough in the U.S. Constitution to keep even the most strict constructionists happy, because America's Voice has pretty much tapped out its main financial resource, Elizabeth

Lurie. One of a group of early conservative backers, she has stuck by the network after a falling out with the network's founder chased others away in 1997. Industry executives say Lurie, who owns 92% of the network's stock, has covered the bulk of the network's losses over the past two years.

"She was pretty hands-on at one point," says an executive who once worked with America's Voice.

Lack of carriage has been the network's big problem. At the very least, America's Voice is handicapped by lacking the shelter of a larger network group like Discovery Communications or A&E that can use its core, successful channel to leverage carriage for a startup. Also, the company lacked resources to pay launch fees for cable carriage.

But America's Voice had greater baggage, much of it political, that it has struggled to shed. The operation was launched in 1994 as National Empowerment Television, led by Paul Weyrich, a prominent right-wing activist and president of the Free Congress Foundation. That group describes its main cause as "the Culture War," seeking to return America to, as Weyrich puts it, the traditional, Judeo-Christian Western "culture that made it great."

Indicating where he lies on the political spectrum, Weyrich tends to denounce such Republican Party stalwarts as Newt Gingrich and Trent Lott.

The network was unappealing even to the ranks of cable moguls, hardly a bastion of liberals, who were hesitant to provide much distribution. Also, two other news networks started up, MSNBC and Fox News Channel, the latter giving plenty of airtime to conservative politicians.

Financial backers tried to tone the network down. To redirect it, they tapped not a political operative but a TV veteran, Robert Sutton, to become chairman and CEO. "I'm probably the anti-Christ to most of the political people," Sutton said.

Among his first moves was to create a 10-person affiliate sales and marketing department, something that had been minimal under the previous regime.

Weyrich was pushed out in 1997 over his increasingly vitriolic attacks on other Republicans, and Sutton set about overhauling the network. The National Empowerment Television name had already been dumped in favor of America's Voice. Sutton start-

ed a new push for nonpartisan political discussion that would at least include centrist and sometimes liberal points of view. Despite its heavy nighttime lineup of Republican hosts, network executives have tried to hammer home that America's Voice had severed its roots and was truly nonpartisan.

Cutting a deal with DBS service EchoStar and AT&T Broadband and Internet Services' HITS digital cable package lifted the network to 11 million homes. The network is available full-time to 8 million homes.

But as losses at America's Voice mounted, the network's board realized that the operation couldn't be run like a political charity. It needed to be run like a business. That called for firm backing from a strategic investor, a media company that could at least bring clout and, hopefully, some programming experience. Media investment banker Communications Equity Associates was hired to try to find a buyer or investor.

Nevertheless, the crunch came in December. One of the bills that America's Voice had not been paying was its lease for a transponder on a GE Americom satellite. That company is accustomed to dealing with troubled network startups and had given America's Voice a number of breaks over the past months, partly on the assurances of its backers, insiders say.

But, in December, GE Americom notified America's Voice that it would have to pay up or lose its transponder. That would have been a disaster, one from which networks don't recover. So, on Dec. 30, the company filed a notice that it planned to file for bankruptcy protection. A formal filing came Jan. 10.

GE Americom gave the network until March 31 to come up with some money. Meanwhile, Gross says the network can continue operating for a while. "They've done terrific job of paring their expenses. They can keep it going." ■



CABLE'S TOP 25

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Sometimes truth really is stranger—and higher rated—than fiction. USA's 'Mary Kay Letourneau Story,' followed by an exclusive live interview with the ex-teacher, ranked in the Top 5.

Following are the top 25 basic cable programs for the week of Jan. 17-23, ranked by rating. Cable rating is coverage area rating within each basic cable network's universe; U.S. rating is of 100.8 million TV households. Sources: Nielsen Media Research, Turner Entertainment.

Rank	Program	Network	Day	Time	Duration	Rating Cable	Rating U.S.	HHs (000)	Cable Share
1	WWF Entertainment	USA	Mon	10:00P	66	6.0	4.6	4598	9.6
2	WWF Entertainment	USA	Mon	9:00P	60	5.9	4.6	4525	8.2
3	Movie: 'Mary Kay Letourn...'	USA	Tue	8:00P	120	5.6	4.4	4335	8.0
4	Letourneau: Live	USA	Tue	10:00P	60	5.1	4.0	3955	8.2
5	Movie: 'Conspiracy Theory'	TNT	Sun	8:00P	180	3.5	2.8	2737	5.0
5	Rugrats	NICK	Mon	7:00P	30	3.5	2.7	2680	5.5
7	Wild Thornberrys	NICK	Mon	6:30P	30	3.4	2.6	2593	5.6
8	Rugrats	NICK	Sat	9:30A	30	3.3	2.6	2544	9.2
8	Rocket Power	NICK	Mon	7:30P	30	3.3	2.5	2527	5.0
8	Rugrats	NICK	Tue	7:30P	30	3.3	2.5	2521	5.1
8	Movie: 'Abandoned and ...'	LIF	Sun	4:00P	120	3.3	2.5	2466	5.5
12	WCW Monday Nitro Live!	TNT	Mon	8:00P	60	3.2	2.5	2476	4.6
12	Rugrats	NICK	Mon	5:00P	30	3.2	2.5	2440	6.4
12	Movie: 'Matter of Justice...'	LIF	Sun	2:00P	120	3.2	2.5	2437	5.7
12	Franklin	NICK	Mon	9:30A	30	3.2	2.4	2424	9.2
12	Rocket Power	NICK	Mon	6:00P	30	3.2	2.4	2417	5.5
17	Walker, Texas Ranger	USA	Mon	8:00P	60	3.1	2.4	2419	4.5
17	Rugrats	NICK	Sun	9:30A	30	3.1	2.4	2392	8.1
17	Franklin	NICK	Mon	10:30A	30	3.1	2.4	2369	8.5
17	Hey Arnold	NICK	Tue	7:00P	30	3.1	2.4	2365	5.1
17	Rugrats	NICK	Thu	7:30P	30	3.1	2.4	2338	4.7
22	WWF Sunday Night Heat	USA	Sun	7:00P	60	3.0	2.3	2312	4.3
22	Spongebob	NICK	Sun	10:00A	30	3.0	2.3	2309	7.3
22	Spongebob	NICK	Mon	5:30P	30	3.0	2.3	2296	5.6
22	Movie: 'Dances with Wolves..'	LIF	Sat	4:00P	120	3.0	2.3	2294	6.5
22	Rugrats	NICK	Fri	7:30P	30	3.0	2.3	2286	5.0

Second time is the charm

PanAmSat relies on Ariespace to launch hybrid Galaxy XR satellite without incident

By Glen Dickson

PanAmSat successfully launched its Galaxy XR satellite from French Guiana last week, replacing the \$225 million satellite lost in a launch failure in August 1998.

Galaxy X was the victim of a Boeing Delta III rocket that exploded on liftoff from Cape Canaveral, Fla. For the replacement bird, Greenwich, Conn.-based PanAmSat relied on French launch-operator Ariespace and its Ariane 42L rocket. Ariespace also successfully launched PanAmSat's Galaxy XI satellite late last month.

Galaxy XR, a hybrid Hughes 601HP satellite with 24 C-band and 24 Ku-band transponders, will be located at the 123 degrees west longitude orbital slot, displacing PanAmSat's Galaxy IX C-band and SBS-5 Ku-band birds. Cable customers on the new bird will include Sundance, MTV (West), Nickelodeon (West), The Movie Channel (West), ESPN News; digital channels A&E, Lifetime and Showtime Westplex; and TVN Entertainment's NVOD service. Data and telecommunications customers include Hughes Network Systems, GCI and the State of California.

Since 11-year-old SBS-5 is nearing the end of its life span and will soon go

into inclined orbit, PanAmSat will follow an accelerated deployment cycle for Galaxy XR. Although the usual testing period for a new satellite is 45 days, the company plans to have Galaxy XR operational by the end of February. That will enable it to serve the large number of data customers currently residing on SBS-5.

"We had enough fuel on SBS-5 to tolerate the launch failure [of Galaxy X]," says Rob Bednarek, PanAmSat executive vice president and chief technology officer, "but we're cutting it pretty close."

Most of the cable traffic on Galaxy XR will come from programmers that currently reside on Galaxy IX. That bird will be moved to the 127 degrees west slot, where PanAmSat will form a new cable neighborhood.

Testing is still under way on Galaxy XI, which was launched Dec. 21, 1999. PanAmSat is taking its time evaluating the HS702 bird, a new Hughes model,

Bednarek says, but so far the satellite is working perfectly. It should be deployed in early March.

PanAmSat's next launch, the second of five scheduled launches in 2000, will also be a replacement bird. In March, the company will use Ariespace to launch Galaxy IVR, which will replace the Galaxy IV satellite that suffered an in-orbit failure in May 1998 and sent television programmers and paging companies scrambling for capacity. Customers on Galaxy IVR, which will be located at 99 degrees west, include National Public Radio, an original Galaxy IV customer that has been using interim capacity on Galaxy VI.

In June, PanAmSat will replace its original satellite, PAS-1, as part of a planned retirement. The satellite was launched in 1988 and is "still doing quite well," says Bednarek. PAS-1R will provide enhanced capacity to Europe and Africa. ■

Charter taps S-A for digital upgrade

The MSO buys \$100 million in fiber gear, set-tops

By Glen Dickson

In a deal valued at more than \$100 million, Charter Communications has selected Scientific-Atlanta to provide it with both fiber optic gear and set-tops as part of the MSO's rollout of digital interactive services.

The new S-A agreement, which adds to Charter's previous orders with the company, calls for 20,000 miles of plant upgrades, new S-A optical products and the purchase of 126,000 Explorer 2000 and 3000 digital set-tops during the first half of 2000. To date, Charter has received more than 76,000 Explorer 2000 set-tops and has installed S-A digital gear in 17 of its cable systems.

According to Charter senior vice

president of engineering John Pietri, the new S-A deal is just part of Charter's upgrade program for this year. The company plans to upgrade 42,000 miles of its plant to either 750 Mhz or 870 Mhz service this year, using S-A and other vendors, including Motorola [formerly General Instrument]. By the end of the year, Pietri expects to have 90,000 to 95,000 miles of Charter's total 185,000-mile plant upgraded.

Charter will use Prisma Digital Transport fiber optic technology, which allows the carriage of multimedia data over a Sonet digital ring, as well as S-A's "bdr" reverse-path technology. The NMSO is currently implementing "bdr" and two-way Prisma DWDM (Dense Wave Division Multiplex) tech-



Galaxy XR was launched from French Guiana on Jan. 24 using an Ariane 42L rocket.

nology at hubs in Simpsonville, S.C.; Hammond, La.; and Janesville, Wis.

Roughly three-quarters of the 126,000 S-A set-tops that Charter will buy over the next five months will be Explorer 3000s, which have twice the processing power and memory of the Explorer 2000. Although the set-tops will be used for some interactive services, Pietri says, they are "primarily broadcast digital boxes" that will be used to offer more channels to subscribers.

Charter is relying on both S-A and Motorola to supply it with digital set-



Charter has already received more than 76,000 Explorer 2000 set-tops.

top boxes and announced a deal for 1 million Motorola set-tops at the West-

ern Show in December. Pietri says he sees "definite differences" between the S-A and Motorola/GI boxes.

"The GI product we deploy today is the DCT-2000 series, and the [DCT-] 5000 has yet to be deployed in the field," says Pietri. "There are issues with the operating system on the box, so the GI product can be categorized as a broadcast box. With S-A, there are interactive capabilities on the 2000 and 3000 that will start to be deployed this coming month. It's primarily still used as a broadcast box, but the potential is greater." ■

WRAL looks at datacasting

Pilot program with DTVPlus, LG Electronics investigates consumers' attitudes

By Ken Kerschbaumer

WRAL-TV Raleigh, N.C., has begun a pilot datacasting program designed to give the station a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges of datacasting. The program is a joint partnership comprising WRAL-TV, DTVPlus and LG Electronics.

WRAL has set aside 2 Mbps of its DTV transmission bandwidth to carry the content, a repackaged version of WRAL Online, the station's Web site, according to DTVPlus Vice President and General Manager Sam Matheny. "What we do with that varies during the day," he says. "Sometimes we're using only 500 kbps and other times using full 2 Mbps."

The content is captured at 6 a.m. and then datacast continuously for the remainder of the day; as the pilot program expands, the content will be updated a few times a day. "Because it's broadcasting, it's only one way, but we're pushing the most popular content," Matheny explains. "We also have hooks in the content to drive [viewers] back into the site."

WRAL Director of New Media John Conway expects datacasting to create some interesting opportunities, especially when it comes to delivering broadband-type content. "We'll be able to send information that users now have trouble accessing. The potential is really unlimited, and we see a chance to deliver rich graphics and animations for weather updates as well as video loops and other near-broadcast-quality video clips."



WRAL-TV will repack its Web site for transmission on its DTV bandwidth.

DTVPlus, a division of Capitol Broadcasting Co. (WRAL-TV's parent company) devoted to deploying a nationwide datacasting network, is using the LG Electronics SkyScrapper data broadcasting system to schedule and manage the content. The system has three components: the SkyScrapper DataFab, a tool set for the content provider to specify data flows and manage subscriptions and conditional access; the DataHub, which allows the broadcaster to allocate, meter and bill bandwidth and manage the data; and the DataReceiver, used by the viewer to extract the data from the broadcast to the PC.

"Content contributors use the Internet to deliver us the data," says Matheny. "Then the SkyScrapper DataHub man-

ages the data and sends it out at a specified bit rate. Using the television model, we can have WRAL Web content on one data channel, MP3 content on another and local newspaper content on another. It's up to the consumer to decide which channels they want to receive."

For the pilot program, a few hundred SkyScrapper DataReceivers will be distributed in the viewing area, according to Matheny. But he makes it clear that, while the program is a closed system for the pilot phase, the datacasts are still within the ATSC standards. "We don't want to be tied to any one receiver card," he adds. "We've been in conversation with Hauppauge about their DTV receiver cards, and Broad Logic is another company to consider."

Beyond the Web site, Matheny says he has had conversations with some businesses regarding business-to-business applications, as well as with local newspapers. It's this potential—that Matheny finds most alluring about datacasting.

"Compared to other broadband roll-outs, the broadcaster can reach more people faster than any other method, once they get the receiver end figured out," he says. "The other broadband technologies—like DSL or cable modems—face hurdles we don't."

Competing with cable modems and DSL, however, isn't on Matheny's list of things to do—yet. "What we want to do is have a good base of information to take to NAB," he says. "The short-term goal is to have some good feedback from consumers and businesses." ■

TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

Isaac Hersly*President and CEO, Peak Broadcast Systems*

PREVIOUS JOB:
President and COO,
Chyron Corp.

THE NETWORK SIDE:
ABC, internship in
Engineering Department;
10 years as equipment
planning engineer,
Broadcast Operations;
six years as vice
president of engineering
and operations at ABC-
owned TV stations

EDUCATION: BS,
electrical engineering,
Fairleigh Dickinson
University; MBA, New
York University Graduate
School of Business

FAMILY: Wife Susan;
sons Greg and Adam

WOULD RATHER BE:
Skiing, usually in the
West

BEST LESSON: "Since
I've been on both sides
of the food chain, I've
found that contact and
interface with the
customer is one of the
most important goals in
developing and
maintaining a successful
business. Too many
companies are faceless,
so, when customers
have problems, they
don't know who to turn
to—and it could end up
to be a competitor."

Taking a Peak at graphics

Isaac Hersly brings a user's perspective to broadcasters' needs in graphics systems. In this interview with Edmond M. Rosenthal, he discusses the wide range of future applications for graphics and virtual sets.

How important have graphics become in news presentation?

It's a required enhancement to telling the story to the audience. What we're doing is keeping the audience there for the broadcaster or cable system.

Are graphics systems becoming friendlier to non-technical personnel?

What's important is that the input is from a PC. The writer can sit and write a story; then, using sort of a template-based system, press the button and out comes a huge database of logos, pictures or even video clips that will become a real graphic in real time without anyone else doing anything. No graphic artist has to be involved. A reporter who wants to put down a bar chart with three bars can instantly create a graphic.

How quickly are virtual sets being adopted by broadcasters?

The penetration of virtual sets is slower in this country than it is in the rest of the world. People here want to make sure the set is as realistic as possible. I think that our production values are such that we're being very selective.

How do you see their use evolving in news?

If it's a tool that enhances the visual presentation, instead of just a gimmick, it will help. For example, in a very small studio where they want to utilize lots of different ideas, the virtual studio will make it look like it's a larger studio, and different elements can be put into that virtual studio. Where you want to give a visual presentation of election returns or sports scores, you can do some 3-D manipulation with a virtual set.

Will the realism of virtual sets have to improve before they take firm hold in the U.S.?

Yes.

And how is that going to be achieved?

I think it's going to be achieved by the availability of better computer power to ensure that the set and the graphics perform more quickly. The performance of the machine is already at the point where it can be quite realistic. The technology is now at the point

where it will keep up with the demands of a moving camera and everything else.

How do you see HDTV changing broadcasters' needs in the graphics area?

Most new equipment today can handle high definition, but a lot of broadcasters do not have that technology in place. Our software is totally resolution-independent, so there's no retraining or redefining of our work process. For example, CBS is using the same graphics. They're just using the high-def output of a Silicon Graphics machine. The big issue now is whether you're feeding that machine to your standard-definition and your high-definition signal. Sometimes that can be an aspect-ratio issue, so you may need two machines.

Considering the Internet's current narrow-band limitations, do you see it as a medium for sophisticated graphics?

Yes, absolutely. We hope to show in the near future sophisticated 3-D publishing graphics for both the traditional video circuit and the Internet, simultaneously, without the customer having to re-create the content for the Internet.

Are Internet Web sites ready to spend the money on that sort of thing now?

I don't know if they're ready for it, but they keep asking, "How do I get the same look and feel as video out on the Internet?"

Do you have a market there as of yet?

We're testing it in one market outside this country.

When and if broadband delivery becomes common, will that change graphics needs?

I think it will increase the demand for more sophisticated graphics. I don't think people are going to go out right away and spend for it, so we've got to provide a solution where they can create and deliver graphics to both media at the same time with very little increase in expense.

What do you see evolving from the recent migration to the NT platform?

We see more movement toward NT as it becomes a more powerful system. We're seeing big improvements in graphics engines, which are not necessarily part of every NT box. So we're looking really for a combination of a stable NT box and a powerful graphics engine—and, hopefully, at a decent price. ■

Casting a wary eye on PTV

Manufacturers, studios weigh in on copyright issues with personal TV

By Peter J. Brown

Personal TV (PTV) devices like those offered by TiVo and ReplayTV have become one of the hot plays in the consumer market, thanks in part to a marketing campaign that centers on the units' ability to offer greater flexibility than traditional VCRs.

But some in the industry believe that PTV devices (also known as personal video recorders) pose issues that need to be ironed out. Otherwise, they say, video content creators and distributors could face the same problem the audio industry is encountering with the MP3 format: the uncontrolled redistribution of copyrighted content.

Two organizations now on the scene approach PTV from different directions: the TV Anytime Forum (TVAF) as a broad-based consortium of 28 companies, primarily hardware manufacturers and other PTV proponents; the Advanced Television Copyright Coalition (ATCC) as a group of six content providers, focused on the evolution of commercial relationships that ensure the rights of content providers. Both, however, see the problem as imminent.

Simon Parnall, manager of the system development group at U.K.-based NDS

Ltd., serves as chairman of the TVAF. "We have a window of about 18 months to resolve copyright-management issues," he says. "Video is only a few years away from what I describe as a replay of MP3."

Says Peggy Binzel, News Corp.'s senior vice president of government relations in Washington, D.C., and her company's representative on the ATCC: "We will be working hard to prevent a meltdown, and I think we will be fairly successful. Indeed, if we sit still and do nothing, a 'meltdown' in 18 months may be a little extreme, but serious implications in 18 months are probably not."

The TVAF

The efforts of the TVAF are clear, Parnall says. "We're trying to be as responsible as possible about what we see as the most contentious area: content-rights management. At the same time, everyone

realizes that this technology is going to happen. We are going to try and make sure that it happens in a way that is controllable, while keeping costs to the consumer reasonable."

Parnall emphasizes that anyone who views the TVAF as mainly a lobbying group or PR engine for pro-PTV hardware manufacturers is mistaken and that the "spread of members"—which include consumer electronics manufacturers, telcos and software vendors—supports this assertion.

Although no formal exchanges have taken place with other organizations, Parnall says a range of metadata-related groups are on the TVAF's list of important contacts who need to be brought into this industrywide effort. They include parties involved with MPEG-4, MPEG-7 and MPEG-21.

"Statistical multiplexing allows you to tap into background capacity, which can be used to deliver content directly to personal TV devices in non-real time," he explains. "This is making companies realize that the issue of protecting content, and not simply the pipe, is extremely important."

Rights management

Defining exactly what content-rights management entails is no simple task, primarily because it encompasses so many issues. Among them: the complexities of copy protection, the growing sense that content distribution over the Internet is a global problem, the affordability of large storage devices that can be used for a variety of purposes both legitimate and illegitimate; and the sense that technology is outpacing contract law.

Personal TV manufacturer TiVo says it will not add a digital output option until copyright issues are settled.



"There are many elements of content management in the realm of personal television that will only increase in sophistication over time," says Steve Shannon, vice president of marketing at Replay Networks in Mountain View, Calif. "Beyond that, I can't speculate."

Says ATCC's Binzel, "The next four to five years are going to be difficult as everyone involved tries to determine how to manage all the new technologies that make it easy to violate copyright. I am confident we will get there, but it will be an uphill battle."

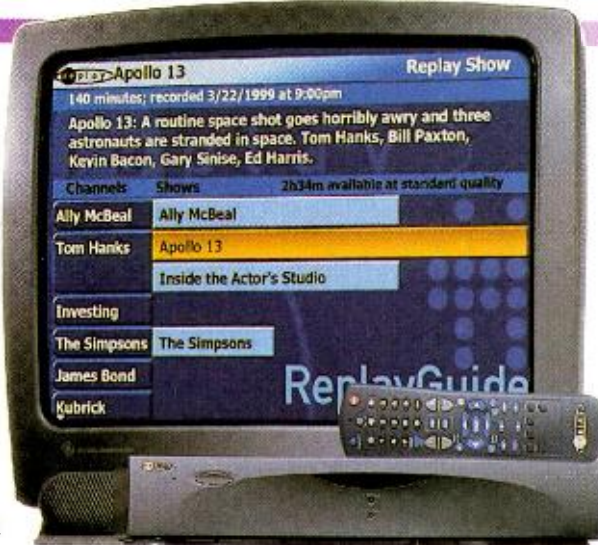
"If we allow our local distribution to be violated," she continues, "broadcasting as we know it in the U.S. will be gone in very short order. Taking down copyrighted content and then distributing it all over the world is no different than walking into Blockbuster and stealing a tape."

The Internet magnifies the problem, she adds. "The overriding issue is the Internet. The digital technological appliances may have copyright implications of their own, and yet the problems are amplified enormously by broadband Internet, which can convert a single copyright violation by one consumer into a copyright infringement around the world in minutes. ICraveTV [B&C, Jan. 24] is only the first salvo, or the first highly visible Internet broadband battle. ICrave is the first time that a commercial entity, for its own profit, is taking our televised content in full—copyrighted products for which we have paid—and redistributing that product over the Internet without either the permission of, or compensation to, the content owner or licensee."

The ATCC

The ATCC and TVAF are not on opposite sides of the fence. It's worth noting that both Parnall and Binzel are News Corp. employees. And several ATCC members have made investments in PTV.

"Almost all the members have investments in TiVo or Replay Networks, and many have investments in both," says ATCC's lawyer Bert Carp, a partner in the Washington law firm of Williams & Jensen. "The ATCC favors PTV technology. We just want to create the legal construct under which PTV service providers can operate successfully. There is an enormous difference between what the PTV services offer and



Replay Networks expects PTV to spawn new business models that disrupt and improve current ones.

what the analog VCR encompasses."

TVAF's Parnall sees a potential collision between legal issues and technology on a global scale—with the law losing out. "While the lawyers may be legally correct, they are practically incorrect: They are saying that consumers cannot engage in this activity [using a PTV device to record content], while the technology enables people to do just that."

Carp describes the ATCC as an informal group that meets at least once a month. Encore Media Group, a wholly owned subsidiary of Liberty Media Group, is the latest content provider to sign on. CBS Corp. and The Walt Disney Co. are already members. NBC, which has a stake in TiVo, has yet to sign on.

The PTV industry has no problem with ATCC efforts. "We like the idea of establishing standards around personal television to make it easier for the television industry to get involved with our business model," says Replay's Shannon. "Personal television will spawn some new business models that in some ways disrupt and improve current models. It is our goal to work with the television industry to leverage these new models in as productive a way as possible."



TVAF's Simon Parnall sees a potential collision between technology and legal issues.

"We are willing to work with any group that can help make that happen," he adds. "Of course, the major television industry players need to be at the table, too. I think we all need to participate in finding

solutions and new revenue in as efficient a way as possible."

Prospect of digital outputs

Another major concern is the potential appearance of PTV devices with digital outputs. Although such devices are not available today, it is an option that TiVo, for example, is actively exploring.

"There are no digital outputs at this time," says a TiVo spokesperson in Sunnyvale, Calif. "Through our partnership with Sony, we have discussed the future possibilities of adding networking capabilities in the form of a 1394 connector. This would allow for digital output, [which] will not be added until copyright issues can be resolved for all parties involved. We anticipate this happening in the near future."

At least one ATCC member adamantly opposes such an option. "Digital downstream," Binzel says, "is the main problem we will be working to prevent technologically, legally and legislatively."

For its part, the TVAF will begin looking at the implications of downstream digital output later this year as part of its second-phase activities, according to Parnall, although the focus in its first phase is on the more straightforward digital record-only environment.

Yet another controversial aspect of PTV devices is the ability for the viewer to skip commercials more easily. But Television Bureau of Advertising (TVB) President Chris Rohrs doesn't see a threat to advertising.

"These devices are better digital-based equivalents of the VCR, so being better is going to influence things," he says. "But there will be evolutionary changes rather than radical revolutionary changes."

For example, he explains, PTV may influence some of the placement of advertising in and around programs and could impact the structure or length of commercial breaks. "Commercials may become more integrated and woven into the programming. But consumers enjoy good advertising; they don't avoid it."

Not everybody is leery of PTV. It's no secret that TV broadcasters are considering directly accessing personal TV devices, possibly in late-night bursts. "TiVo is dangerous stuff," says one TV station group executive, "but it is also terrifically exciting from the datacasting standpoint." ■

iBEAM enters Williams' orbit

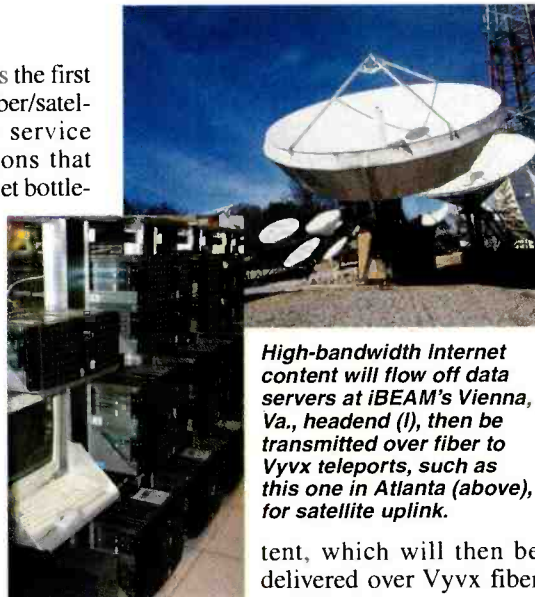
Hybrid fiber/satellite transmission service is intended to speed Internet delivery

By Glen Dickson

IBEAM Broadcasting Corp. is the first customer for a new hybrid fiber/satellite Internet transmission service from Williams Communications that aims to bypass traditional Internet bottlenecks in sending streaming media or other high-quality content (B&C, Jan. 17).

Sunnyvale, Calif.-based iBEAM, which distributes Internet content for traditional media companies, such as the BBC and Warner Bros., as well as new-media companies like Launch.com, has signed a three-year, multimillion-dollar deal for the Williams service. The company will rely on the vast fiber optic network operated by Williams' Tulsa, Okla.-based Vyvx unit, as well as new Ku-band transponder capacity that Vyvx recently acquired on Loral's Telstar 7 satellite.

iBEAM will use Vyvx's 125 points-of-presence (POPs) nationwide to acquire high-bandwidth Internet con-



High-bandwidth Internet content will flow off data servers at iBEAM's Vienna, Va., headend (l), then be transmitted over fiber to Vyvx teleports, such as this one in Atlanta (above), for satellite uplink.

tent, which will then be delivered over Vyvx fiber to iBEAM's data-control center in Vienna, Va. "There we multiplex all the traffic together, put our network control 'wrapper' around the traffic and encapsulate all the streams in our proprietary technology," says Tom Gillis, vice president of marketing for

iBEAM. "Then Vyvx delivers it to the teleport, it goes up on the bird, and it comes down all over the country at our large and growing network of servers."

iBEAM has about 40 server locations scattered across the country, where the streaming content will be received and fed into the networks of traditional ISPs. Feeding the content into the ISP network as close to PC users' homes as possible, Gillis says, can bypass the congestion and packet loss that has plagued streaming media. Using satellites to distribute popular streaming events, such as the *Drew Carey* Webcast in November that iBEAM handled for ABC and Warner Bros., he explains, will help lower programmers' costs for getting Internet content to consumers.

iBEAM will probably "phase out" a Hughes Network Systems satellite service that it has been using, Gillis says. "With Hughes, we had to procure the fiber acquisition part on our own. One of the things we liked about Vyvx was their expertise with both fiber and satellite. We found that to be unique in the industry." ■



CUTTING EDGE

By Glen Dickson

Motorola invests in 3-D firm

Motorola's Broadband Communications Sector (formerly General Instrument) has become a key investor in Dynamic Digital Depth Inc., a Canadian firm that has developed software to support 3-D television images. Motorola, which demonstrated Dynamic Digital Depth's "DeepSee" 3-D technology at the Western Cable Show in December, is the "lead commercial investor" in Dynamic's \$3.25 million

private equity placement on the Canadian Venture Exchange, says Dynamic USA President and CEO Chris Yewdall.

Orad acquires rival ELSET

Orad Hi-Tec Systems has completed purchase of Accom's ELSET virtual set product line, giving Accom \$4 million in cash as well as warrants for 70,423 Orad shares. Orad, based in Kfar Saba, Israel, will also acquire ELSET's intellectual property, Ac-

com's ELSET development team, and the ELSET technical sales and marketing staff located at Accom's Menlo Park, Calif., headquarters. "ELSET provides Orad with a unique and needed NT solution and the most advanced graphics visualization quality," says Orad President Avi Sharir.

S-A wins NTL contract, names PowerTV head

Scientific-Atlanta has secured a contract to sup-

ply U.K. broadband provider NTL with interactive digital set-tops. The deal calls for S-A to deliver a minimum of 250,000 set-tops over three years. S-A will base the new European digital set-top model, which will comply with the DVB and PAL standards, on its Explorer 3000 platform. In other news, S-A has named Steve Necessary CEO of Cupertino, Calif.-based PowerTV, its majority-owned subsidiary that develops interactive operating systems. Necessary is former corporate vice president and vice president of marketing for S-A. Power-TV is now deployed on 1 million set-tops in consumer homes.

CHANGING HANDS

The week's tabulation of station sales

COMBOS

WKLQ(FM) Holland/Grand Rapids, WBBL(AM)-WLAV-FM and WODJ(FM) Grand Rapids, all Mich.; WTCB(FM) Orangeburg/Columbia, WLXC(FM) Lexington/Columbia and WISW(AM)-WOMG(FM) Columbia, all S.C.; WGOC(AM) Blountville/Johnson City/Kingsport/Bristol, WJCW(AM)-WQUT(FM), WKIN(AM)-WKOS(FM) Johnson City/Kingsport/Bristol, WOGT(FM) East Ridge/Chattanooga and WGOW-AM-FM and WSKZ(FM) Chattanooga, all Tenn.; WBWN(FM) Le Roy/Bloomington and WJBC(AM)-WBNQ(FM) Bloomington, all Ill.

Price: \$176 million

Buyer: Citadel Communications Corp., Las Vegas (Lawrence R. Wilson, chairman); owns/is buying 53 AMs and 123 FMs

Seller: Bloomington Broadcasting, Bloomington, Ill. (Ken Maness, president). Upon completion of this transaction, Maness will assume a senior management position at Citadel.

Facilities: WKLQ: 94.5 MHz, 50 kW, ant. 499 ft.; WBBL: 1340 kHz, 1 kW; WLAV-FM: 96.9 MHz, 50 kW, ant. 499 ft.; WODJ: 107.3 MHz, 50 kW, ant. 492 ft.; WTCB: 106.7 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 787 ft.; WLXC: 98.5 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 328 ft.; WISW: 1320 kHz, 5 kW day, 2.5 kW night; WOMG: 103.1 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 300 ft.; WGOC: 640 kHz, 10 kW day, 810 W night; WJCW: 910 kHz, 5 kW day, 1 kW night; WQUT: 101.5 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 1,500 ft.; WKIN: 1320 kHz, 5 kW day, 500 W night; WKOS: 104.9 MHz, 1 kW, ant. 475 ft.; WOGT: 107.9 MHz, 2.85 kW, ant. 568 ft.; WGOW(AM): 1150 kHz, 5 kW day, 1 kW night; WGOW-FM: 102.3 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 287 ft.; WSKZ: 106.5 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 1,080 ft.; WBWN: 104.1 MHz, 25 kW, ant. 328 ft.; WJBC: 1230 kHz, 1 kW; WBNQ: 101.5 MHz, 50 kW, ant. 460 ft.

Formats: WKLQ: contemporary Christian; WBBL: sports; WLAV-FM: classic rock; WODJ: oldies; WTCB: AC; WLXC: rhythm & blues; WISW: news; WOMG: oldies; WGOC: top-gun-class country; WJCW: news/talk; WQUT: classic rock; WKIN: news; WKOS: oldies; WOGT: oldies; WGOW(AM): news/talk; WGOW-FM: talk; WSKZ: adult rock; WBWN: country; WJBC: farm; WBNQ: CHR

WENE(AM)-WMRV(FM) Endicott/Binghamton, construction permit for WBBI(FM) Endwell/Binghamton, WMXW(FM) Vestal/Binghamton and

PROPOSED STATION TRADES

By dollar volume and number of sales; does not include mergers or acquisitions involving substantial non-station assets

THIS WEEK

TVs ■ \$0 ■ 0
 Combos ■ \$210,333,316 ■ 7
 FMs ■ \$23,620,000 ■ 8
 AMs ■ \$3,405,000 ■ 5
 Total ■ \$237,358,316 ■ 20

SO FAR IN 2000

TVs ■ \$329,134,156 ■ 8
 Combos ■ \$524,925,816 ■ 22
 FMs ■ \$102,474,010 ■ 30
 AMs ■ \$36,285,000 ■ 24
 Total ■ \$992,818,982 ■ 84

WKGB-FM Susquehanna, Pa./Binghamton, N.Y.

Price: \$20 million

Buyer: Clear Channel Communications Inc., San Antonio (L. Lowry Mays, chairman; Randy Michaels, president, Clear Channel Radio); owns/is buying 20 TVs, 175 AMs and 342 FMs. Clear Channel also is buying AMFM Inc., which owns/is buying 124 AMs and 319 FMs

Seller: Majac of Michigan Inc., Binghamton (Marc and Jack Steenbarger [father and son], principals); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: WENE: 1430 kHz, 5 kW; WMRV: 105.7 MHz, 35 kW, ant. 570 ft.; WBBI: 107.5 MHz, 1.1 kW, ant. 554 ft.; WMXW: 103.3 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 1,014 ft.; WKGB-FM: 92.5 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 709 ft.

Formats: WENE: talk; WMRV: CHR; WMXW: AC; WKGB-FM: AOR
Broker: Kalil & Co. Inc.

KSAH(AM) Universal City/San Antonio and KLNT(AM)-KNEX(FM) Laredo, Texas

Price: \$8 million (\$5 million for KSAH and \$3 million for KLNT and KNEX)

Buyer: Rodriguez Communications LLC, Dallas (Marcos A. Rodriguez, chairman); owns one TV, one AM and three FMs. Rodriguez also has interest in two AMs and one FM
Sellers: KSAH: Ganadores Corp., San Antonio, Texas; KLNT-KNEX: Rio Grande Media, Laredo, Texas (Miguel A. Villareal Jr., president of both sellers); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: KSAH: 720 kHz, 10 kW day, 1 kW night; KLNT: 1490 kHz, 1 kW; KNEX: 106.1 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 213 ft.
Formats: KSAH: Spanish/news; KLNT:

Spanish/news; KNEX: CHR
Broker: Gammon Media Brokers Inc.

KTAN(AM)-KZMK(FM) Sierra Vista and KWCD(FM) Bisbee, all Ariz.

Price: \$2.95 million

Buyer: Commonwealth Communications LLC, San Diego (Dex Allen, principal); owns four AMs and four FMs

Seller: DB Broadcasting LLC, Sierra Vista (Marvin Strait and June Behan, principals); no other broadcast interests
Facilities: KTAN: 1420 kHz, 1.5 kW day, 500 W night; KZMK: 100.9 MHz, 3 kW, ant. -46 ft.; KWCD: 92.3 MHz, 51 W, ant. 2,217 ft.

Formats: KTAN: news/talk; KZMK: AC; KWCD: C&W

Broker: Kalil & Co. Inc.

WHAI-AM-FM Greenfield, Mass.

Price: \$2,333,316

Buyer: Conrver Broadcasting LLC, Chatham, N.J. (Richard L. Sharpe, Kirk Warshaw and Jonamy Broadcasting Inc. [Mary Cristinano, principal], 33.3% each); is buying WCFR-FM Springfield, Vt., and WMXR(FM) Woodstock, Vt./West Lebanon, N.H. Warshaw also has interests in three AMs and 12 other FMs

Seller: Haigis Broadcasting Corp., Greenfield, Mass. (Anne H. Banash, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: AM: 1240 kHz, 1 kW; FM: 98.3 MHz, 320 W, ant. 780 ft.

Formats: Both AC

KVRH-AM-FM Salida, Colo.

Price: \$575,000

Buyer: Three Eagles Communications LLC, Monument, Colo. (spouses Rolland C. and Paula A. Johnson, owners); owns eight AMs and 13 FMs. Rolland Johnson also owns four other AMs and nine other FMs

Seller: All-Heart Radio Inc., Salida (William J. Murphy, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: AM: 1340 kHz, 1 kW; FM: 92.3 MHz, 13.5 kW, ant. 655 ft.

Formats: Both light AC

Broker: McCoy Broadcast Brokerage Inc.

KATK-AM-FM Carlsbad, N.M.

Price: \$475,000

Buyer: Stubbs Broadcasting Co. Inc, Pactosa Springs, Colo. ([spouses] Don and Dianna Stubbs, principals); no other broadcast interests

Seller: Radio Carlsbad Inc., Carlsbad (Steve Swayze, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: AM: 740 kHz, 1 kW day, 500 W night; FM: 92.1 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 190 ft.

Formats: AM: Spanish/news; FM: country

Broker: Explorer Communications

FMS

KGMZ(FM) Aiea/Honolulu, Hawaii

Price: \$6.6 million

Buyer: Honolulu Broadcasting Inc., Naples, Fla. (Charles G. Giddens, president). Giddens also has interest in one TV, seven AMs and six FMs

Seller: Cox Radio Inc., Atlanta (Robert F. Neil, president); owns/is buying 21 AMs and 57 FMs including KGMZ(AM), KCNN-AM-FM, KINE-FM and KRTR-FM Honolulu and KXME(FM) Kaneohe/Honolulu, Hawaii.

Facilities: 107.9 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 1,965 ft.

Format: Oldies

WBRQ(FM) Cidra/Caguas P.R.

Price: \$3.6 million

Buyer: Arso Radio Corp., Caguas (Jesus M. Soto, chairman); owns two AMs and four FMs including WNEL(AM) Caguas. Soto also owns four AMs and one FM

Seller: American National Broadcasting Corp., San Juan, P.R. (Fernando Vigil, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 97.7 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 866 ft.

Format: Spanish/ballads

WLKZ(FM) Wolfeboro, N.H.

Price: \$1.7 million

Buyer: Tele-Media Communications LLC, Pleasant Gap, Pa. (Robert E. Tudek and Everett I. Mundy, principals); owns/is buying six AMs and 13 FMs

Seller: The Fifth Estate, Wayland, Mass. (Jay Williams, principal). Williams also owns WIZN(FM) Burlington, Vt. **Facilities:** 104.9 MHz, 570 W, ant. 1,053 ft.

Format: Oldies

Broker: Kozacko Media Services

Construction permit for WRQQ(FM)

Goodlettsville/Nashville, Tenn.

Price: Between \$9 million and \$10 million (includes the value of wVOL(AM) Berry Hill/Nashville, Tenn. [B&C Jan. 24], being bought from DBBC [buyer] by John H. Heidelberg [a seller])

Buyer: DBBC LLC, Atlanta (Lewis W., David W., John W. and Michael W. Dickey [brothers] and Richard W. Weening, principals). Weening and Lewis Dickey are principals of Cumulus Media Inc., which owns/is buying 78 AMs and 192 FMs.

Sellers: William E. Bennis II, Eleanor T. Meade, D. Whit Adamson, Ronald T.

Bledsoe, Charles Bone, C. Michael Norton, John Heidelberg and Katherine Stone. Bennis also owns one AM and three FMs, and Heidelberg is buying wVOL(AM) Berry Hill/Nashville, Tenn. **Facilities:** 97.1 MHz, 43 kW, ant. 474 ft

WZZI(FM) Vinton/Roanoke, Va.

Price: \$1.3 million

Buyer: Travis Media LLC, Roanoke, Va. ([spouses] Karen and Robert Travis, principals); owns WRVX(FM) Lynchburg, Va.

Seller: Carousel Entertainment LLC, Roanoke (H. Edward Hale, principal); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 101.5 MHz, 630 W, ant. 705 ft.

Format: Real country

KKAY-FM Donaldsonville/Baton Rouge, La.

Price: \$1.2 million

Buyer: Guaranty Broadcasting Corp., Baton Rouge (George A. Foster Jr., president); owns two AM and eight FMs including WTGE(FM) Baker/Baton Rouge and WDGL(FM) and wxCT(FM) Baton Rouge

Seller: Lafourche Valley Enterprises Inc., Donaldsonville (K. A. LeBlanc, president); owns KKAY(AM) White Castle/Donaldsonville, La.

Facilities: 104.9 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 299 ft.

Format: Good time oldies

KBVC(FM) Buena Vista/Salida, Colo.

Price: \$150,000

Buyer: Headwaters Media LLC, Lincoln, Neb. (Kimberly A. Johnson, managing member); no other broadcast interests

Seller: Rocky Mountain Media Ltd., Great Falls, Va. (Riley Murphy, general manager); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 104.1 MHz, 600 W, ant. 1,187 ft.

Format: Country

Broker: McCoy Broadcast Brokerage Inc.

Construction permit for KNWJ(FM) (formerly KHJP) Leone, American Samoa

Price: \$70,000

Buyer: Showers of Blessing Radio, Pago Pago, A.S. (Gary R. Sword, president); no other broadcast interests

Seller: Harnack Engineering Inc., Boyle, Miss. (Kirk Harnack, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 93.9 MHz, 370 W, ant. 1,253 ft.

AMS

WAJL(AM) Pine Castle/Sky Lake/Orlando, Fla.

Price: \$2.1 million

Buyer: Genesis Communications I Inc., Atlanta (Bruce Maduri, president); owns WFIV(AM) Orlando, WWBA(AM) Tampa, Fla. and WSGA(AM) Savannah, Ga.

Seller: Lapcom Communications Corp. Orlando (Steve Lapa, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 1190 kHz, 5 kW day

Format: Christian variety

Broker: Blackburn & Co. Inc.

WOCA(AM) Ocala, Fla.

Price: \$742,500

Buyer: Westshore Broadcasting Inc., St. Petersburg, Fla. (Ronald L. Roseman, president). Roseman also has interest in WTIS(AM) St. Petersburg and wsos(FM) St. Augustine, Fla.

Seller: Greater Ocala Broadcasting Corp., Ocala (Robert M. Hauck, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 1370 kHz, 5 kW day

Format: News/talk

Broker: Hadden & Associates

WLVS(AM) Lake Worth, Fla.

Price: \$400,000

Buyer: Radio Fiesta Inc., Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. (James M. Johnson, president). Johnson also owns three AMs and three FMs.

Seller: Goldcoast Broadcasting Co., Memphis, Tenn. (Sam Phillips, president); owns one AM and two FMs

Facilities: 1380 kHz, 1 kW day, 500 W night

Format: Regional Mexican

KAYR(AM) Van Buren/Fort Smith, Ark.

Price: \$160,000

Buyer: Cumulus Media Inc., Milwaukee (Richard W. Weening, chairman; Lewis W. Dickey Jr., vice chairman); owns/is buying 78 AMs and 192 FMs including KOMS(FM), KLSZ-FM and KBBQ-FM Van Buren/Fort Smith

Seller: LKR Communications, Van Buren (Larry Ruth, principal); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 1060 kHz, 500 W day

Format: Southern gospel

WVUV(AM) Leone, American Samoa

Price: \$2,500

Buyer: South Seas Broadcasting Inc., Cleveland, Miss. (Larry G. Fuss, president); owns KHJS(FM) Pago Pago, A.S.

Seller: Radio Somoa Ltd., Pago Pago (Lawrence S. Berger, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 648 kHz, 10 kW

Format: English/Samoan

AMPLIFICATION

The sale of WDMG-AM-FM Douglas, Ga. (B&C, Jan. 17), for \$1.6 million, was brokered by Media Services Group Inc.

—Compiled by Alisa Holmes

Lessons from Spiderman

Spiderman taught Hank Cohen early in his career how to take the lumps and bumps of climbing to the top of the entertainment world—literally.

Two decades ago, when “people would line up to meet Spiderman,” Cohen, now president of Santa Monica, Calif.-based MGM Television Entertainment, worked for Marvel Comics, portraying the cartoon character at malls and amusement parks across the Southwest. Though afraid of heights, he was to climb down a rope ladder from a helicopter in front of a crowd gathered for a mall opening in Little Rock, Ark. “I only had two rungs to go,” he explains. “I got lightheaded, and it scared me to death. I looked back up at the helicopter, then down at these kids, and I fell. I was out for, like, five minutes.”

Cohen dusted himself off and went on to entertain many more people as Spiderman and still describes his time in the job as “awesome.” He also has gone on to work in both network and syndicated television, winning an Emmy Award along the way.

The Emmy was the result of another trying situation. The writers went on strike when he, as director of specials at the ABC network, was in the midst of preparations for the telecast for the 1988 Academy Awards ceremony. Recalling that Cohen had written and directed plays during his Spiderman days, his boss set him to work writing the show, which was hosted by Chevy Chase.

“I wasn’t a scab; I didn’t get paid; I just did my job. At ABC, we didn’t know what we were going to do. We were going to have performers bring their own material, and a couple of them did, but a lot of the presenters didn’t,” Cohen explains, noting that ABC tried but was unable to acquire a waiver from the Writers Guild for the telecast. “I was nervous. I said [to Chase], ‘Listen, I just work for the network.’”

Because Cohen was not the writer of record for the show, he didn’t receive an Emmy statue for the win, but he did get a plaque, he says.

Cohen got his start in entertainment in college at the University of Texas at El Paso. His college baseball coach and father, Andy Cohen (renowned for being one of the first Jewish Major League Baseball players—in the 1920s), suggested during practice that he try out for a local production of *Death of a Salesman*. Cohen got the lead: “I said to myself, ‘I don’t get this feeling playing baseball.’”

He parlayed a recommendation from



“The Internet may be the new the kid on the block, but it’s here to stay. While it might close a few doors in television, it’s going to open up many.”

Henry Manus Cohen

President, MGM Television Entertainment, Santa Monica, Calif. b. Aug. 24, 1956, Elmira, N.Y.; B.A., Mass Communication, University of Texas at El Paso, 1978; Associate Programming Executive, NBC, Burbank, Calif. 1978-1982; director, Special Programs, ABC, Century City, Calif., 1984-1989; vice president, Television Dept., MGM Worldwide Television, 1991-1993; senior vice president, Creative Affairs, MGM Worldwide Television, 1994-97; executive vice president, Creative Affairs, MGM Worldwide Television, 1997-June 1999; current position since July 1999; divorced.

his first job in Los Angeles, as a page at NBC, into an entry-level position in specials at ABC, rising to the position of director. In addition to the Emmy Award-winning *Oscarcast*, he also spearheaded *America’s Funniest Home Videos* and the *American Comedy Awards* while at ABC. He then moved on to Lorimar Productions in 1989, heading comedy development. Since 1991, he has been with MGM Worldwide Television, where he was recruited to direct development.

Since joining MGM, Cohen has survived three ownership and five management changes. “You just have to buckle down and do your job,” he says of the comings and goings. “To think about it and sit and worry doesn’t change things. ... You just can’t not do your job because of it.”

Now five months into the job as president of MGM Television Entertainment, Cohen launched sales for two new first-run shows at last week’s NATPE convention in New Orleans, to which MGM returned this year after a three-year hiatus.

One of the new shows, interactive talk show *Chat Room America*, revisits the notion of getting viewers involved in the show, on which *America’s Funniest Home Videos* capitalized.

Noticing the public’s appetite for involvement during the development of the *Videos* show, Cohen says he sensed that the appetite would endure. “At the time, the biggest problem was how are we going to make sure we have enough videos? I just knew we would,” he says. “Talk radio was just kind of blossoming, and America wanted to be a part of things.”

Chat Room America incorporates the audience actively by inviting input via phone, the Internet and a live audience, and streams Internet comments on a backdrop on the set. While watching, viewers can also chat locally online with other viewers.

Venturing a guess at what his career will bring from here on, Cohen says, invites a reminder of the saying that the easiest way to make God laugh is to tell him your plans (or fall off a ladder attached to a helicopter).

The future of television, however, will certainly continue to involve the audience—and the Internet, he notes: “The Internet may be the new the kid on the block, but it’s here to stay. While it might close a few doors in television, it’s going to open up many.” —Melissa Grego

BROADCAST TV

Mark Mandel, director, media relations, ABC Sports, New York, named VP.

Donald F. "Skip" Cass Jr., VP and general manager, Texas Cable News, Dallas, named senior VP of parent company Belo Corp.

Carl Byrd, senior design director, the Gap, San Francisco, joins The WB, Burbank, Calif., as VP, special projects.

Jimmy Denton, account executive, WEMT-TV Johnson City, Tenn., named national sales manager.

Tom Raponi, director, sales, KTVU-TV San Francisco, joins KICU-TV there as station manager.

Kevin Byrnes, director, sales, NBC Television Stations Sales & Marketing, New York, joins WTVJ(TV) Miami as VP, sales.

PROGRAMMING



Aguirre

Sheila Hall Aguirre, international sales manager, Arter Argentina, Miami, joins Carsey-Werner International there as manager, new Latin America office.

Appointments, NBA Entertainment and NBA Properties, New York: **Heidi Ueberroth**, senior VP, international television and business development, named executive VP, global media properties and marketing partnerships; **Gregg Winik**, senior VP, programming, and executive producer, named executive VP.



Lange

Steve Lange, executive producer, *Extra*, Los Angeles, joins Weller/Grossman Productions there as general manager.

Susan Bernhard, regional VP, Host/Streetball International, New York, joins Trans World International,

the international television division of IMG, New York, as VP, sales and marketing.

JOURNALISM



Mitchell

Michele Mitchell, editorial writer, *The New York Times*, New York, joins CNN Headline News, Atlanta, as political analyst.

Warren Armstrong, anchor, KTXL-TV Sacramento, Calif.,

joins KFSN-TV Fresno, Calif., in same capacity.

Bob Morrison, managing editor, Texas Cable Network, Dallas, joins USA Radio Network there as news director.

Beth Shelburne, anchor/reporter, WTVA(TV) Tupelo, Miss., joins WFTX-TV Ft. Myers, Fla., as 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. anchor.

Ramon Zayas, interim weekend anchor, *Noticias 21*, WXTV(TV) New York, named weekend anchor.



Lah

Kyung Lah, reporter, KGTV(TV) San Diego, joins WBBM-TV Chicago in the same capacity.

Cordell Whitlock, reporter/fill-in anchor, WSPA-TV Spartanburg, S.C., joins KSDK-TV St. Louis as reporter.

Cameron Wong, reporter, ReacTV, San Francisco, joins KPHO-TV Phoenix as news, sports reporter/anchor.

Louis Aguirre, correspondent/actor, New York, joins WSVN(TV) Miami as reporter and fill-in anchor, Deco Drive.

J.D. Maher, interim meteorologist, KXTV(TV) Sacramento, Calif., named weekend weathercaster.

RADIO

Fran Epstein, advertising and media consultant, Reynolds Media and The Perrault Company, Houston, joins

Radio Disney there as general manager.

Wendy Larson, account representative, WBCN-FM Boston, joins Citadel Communications Stations, New Hampshire, as event marketing director. She will also serve as marketing consultant for WOKQ-FM/WPKQ-FM Dover, N.H.

Appointments, Cumulus Broadcasting, Chicago: **Mark Sullivan**, market director, sales, and market manager, Fayetteville, N.C., named regional director, sales, Central states region; **Scott Farkas**, market manager, Amarillo, Texas, named regional director, sales, Mid-South region.

Buddy Holiday, morning show announcer, KSBJ(FM) Houston, announced his retirement.

CABLE



Hall

Timothy Hall, senior VP, boys' toys marketing and product development, Hasbro Inc., joins Cartoon Network, Atlanta, as executive VP.

James T. Aitken, director, program development, WFAA-TV

Dallas/Fort Worth, joins Texas Cable News, Dallas, as president.



Coleman

Salaam Coleman, senior director, program enterprises and acquisitions., Nickelodeon Programming, New York, named VP, programming, strategy and acquisitions, Nickelodeon and Nick at Nite.



Meyer

Carl Meyer, managing director, Marigot Communications, Hong Kong, joins A&E Television Networks there as regional managing director, Asia Pacific territory. He will head the new History

Channel offices in Hong Kong.

Osvalko F. Torres, senior VP, business affairs, general counsel and secretary, Telemundo, Miami, joins HBO Latin America Group there as senior VP, business and legal affairs and general counsel.

Appointments, Playboy TV International, Miami Beach, Fla.: **Douglas H. Lindquist**, executive VP, satellite sales and international network operations, PEGI, Los Angeles, joins as executive VP, networks; **Marc J. Zand**, head, legal and business affairs, Cisneros Television Group, Miami, joins as VP, legal and business affairs; **Ana Teresa Arismendi**, director, finance, Cisneros Television Group, Miami, joins as VP, finance and administration; **Suzanne Jewell**, director, marketing, Playboy TV Latin America and Iberia, Miami, named VP, marketing and communica-



Salinger

Appointments, Starz Encore Media Group, Englewood, Colo.: **David Salinger**, VP, program planning and scheduling, named VP, program acquisitions; **Greg DePrez**, founder, City Media LLC,

Englewood, Colo., joins as VP, subscription video-on-demand.



Fanto

Appointments, Fox Sports Net, New York: **Sharon Fanto**, general sales manager, Fox Sports Net regional network, Detroit, named senior VP, regional ad sales; **Lisa Laky**, general sales manager, FSN

West and West 2, Los Angeles, named senior VP, regional ad sales.

Anne Ragsdale, general manager, advertising sales, Time Warner Communications, Central Florida Division, Orlando, Fla., named VP.

ADVERTISING/MARKETING/ PUBLIC RELATIONS

Martin Grant, president, CTN Media Group, New York, named chief operating officer.

Appointments, Rowan & Blewitt Inc.,

Washington: **David Bartlett**, executive, international news programming, WorldSpace direct digital broadcast satellite system, joins as VP; **Brooke Stevens**, co-host, WMAL(AM) Washington, joins as VP.

TECHNOLOGY

Donald R. Schroeder, VP, sales and marketing, CTS Corp., Elkhart, Ind., named VP, business development and chief technology officer.

Gregory S. Wilson, director, Space Sciences Laboratory, Marshall Space Flight Center, NASA, joins Baron Services, Huntsville, Ala., as executive VP, research and technology.

Peter N. Vicars, president and CEO, Teloquent, Billerica, Mass., joins Cayman Systems Inc., Stoneham, Mass., in same capacity.

David E. Vozzola, chief operating officer, Communication Resources International, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., joins ViaSource Communications there as divisional president.

INTERNET

Guy Pepper, senior director and special adviser to the president, NBC News, New York, joins ByeByeNOW.com, Pompano Beach, Fla., as chief executive officer.

Harold Morgenstern, senior account executive, ESPN Inc., New York, named director, Eastern region sales, ESPN Internet Group.

ASSOCIATIONS/FIRMS

Steven I. Klappholz, fund-raising program executive, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles, joins the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences Foundation, North Hollywood, Calif., as executive director, development.

Appointments, Consumer Electronics Association, Arlington, Va.:

Karen Chupka, VP, business and industry development, named VP, events and conferences; **Michael Petricone**, director, technology policy, named VP; **Evan Shubin**, director, CEA marketing, named VP, CEA sales and marketing.

Christina Thomas, president, Prime-time Entertainment Inc., New York, has formed Jigsaw, which will connect producers, distribution and financing in the U.S. and abroad. She will serve

as president.

OBITUARIES

John Newland, 82, director and host of the *Alcoa Presents* television series, died Jan. 10 of unknown causes. A precursor to such paranormal series as *Twilight Zone* and *The X-Files*, *Alcoa Presents* featured histories of the paranormal and occult phenomena. Newland hosted, acted in and directed all 99 episodes of the series, which ran from 1959 to 1961. Before *Alcoa*, Newland appeared in dramatic anthologies such as *Robert Montgomery Presents*, *Philco Playhouse*, *Studio One* and *Kraft Theater*. He went on to direct other series, including *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *Police Woman*, *Wonder Woman* and *Fantasy Island*. At age 51, he directed his first feature film, *My Lover, My Son* (1969), which featured Roy Scheider. He is survived by his wife, Areta; two daughters; and a granddaughter.

Robert William Prialux, 77, television news director, died Jan. 23 of cancer. In 1949, Prialux joined NBC and was associated there until his retirement in 1986. His first directorial breaks came via TV programs such as the *Kraft Theater*, *Philco Playhouse* and *Robert Montgomery Presents*. From there, he started covering special news events for the network and, in the process, helped pioneer several of television's technological breakthroughs. This included the first worldwide satellite linking program, the first space launch to use 48 cameras and the first satellite programs from Cape Kennedy and New York. Indeed, Prialux was chief director and pool producer on every space shot from 1950 to 1982, including all Apollo missions. He also originated several NBC shows, including *The Today Show*, *The Huntley-Brinkley Report*, *The Home Show* and the *Sixth Hour News*. Prialux served in World War II and was awarded the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, the Silver Star and the Croix de Guerre, France's highest honor. He is survived by his wife, Kathleen; six children; six grandchildren; a sister; and a brother. A son preceded him in death.

—Compiled by Mara Reinstein
mreinstein@cahners.com

CLASSIFIEDS

RADIO

HELP WANTED MANAGEMENT

GM Wanted: (Radio) Established 18 - 35 targeted FM in \$50 million Midsouth Market seeks a revenue-driven GM with a sharp eye toward profits. One of the few remaining major market, local-family-owned facility - no corporate bigwigs - you'll deal with the owner. Respectable ratings and promotion in place, however, we are not achieving the level of revenue deserved. Our winning candidate will be a passionate broadcaster with a specific plan. Great benefits package and a wonderful city your family will love. Send resume to Reply to Box 01630 EOE.

HELP WANTED SALES

Regional Sales Agent: Broadcasting's oldest promotion company, Community Club Awards, seeks aggressive regional sales agent for presentations to radio, television and cable executives. Draw against commission. Six figure potential. Independent contractor. No relocation required. Resume and picture to: Office Manager, CCA, PO Box 151, Westport, CT 06881.

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

KQED - Director, FM Engineering: The Director of Engineering will plan, implement, and supervise a technical facility that enables KQED-FM to produce and deliver a variety of programs and program services over analog and digital technologies—including FM, the Internet, digital cable casting and direct satellite radio. This includes the conversion of KQED-FM from its current analog plant to new digital facilities. Supervise FM engineering staff. Qualifications: BS, EE, or comparable degree and/or relevant experience. (Training in computer hardware, software and networking desirable). 6-8 years in field, including supervisory experience. Strong background in audio, electronic, and computer technologies. Familiarity with developments in digital audio broadcast technologies. Experience with FM/AM analog broadcast facilities. Experience with news production environment. Excellent verbal and written communications skills. Excellent interpersonal skills. Demonstrated experience in supervising staff training. To apply: By February 29, 2000, send resume, cover letter and list of four professional references to: KQED Director, FM Engineering Search, Livingston Associates, 4005 Iva Lane, Fairfax, VA 22032. For more information, including a detailed position announcement, e-mail Tom Livingston at livingst@erols.com, or call (703) 978-6970.

Director of Engineering: New Hampshire Public Radio, Inc. Seeking a Director of Engineering to oversee the technical operation of all (4 transmitters and 3 translators) broadcast network facilities including production studios, field equipment, satellite downlinks, digital microwave and FM fr transmission systems, digital editing and automation. Must be able to make a positive contribution to a working environment based on teamwork and mutual support. Send resume and 3 references to: Director of Administration, NHPR, 207 N. Main St., Concord NH 03301-5003. NHPR/E

HELP WANTED NEWS

News Editor: WNYC Radio, America's most-listened to public radio station, seeks an editor to coordinate the daily activities of the WNYC Newsroom. Under the direction of the Managing Editor, the News Editor will assign, edit, produce news, arts and cultural features, interview segments and commentaries for *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered*; coordinate coverage with NPR and other public radio stations, as well as serve as liaison with other news partners; schedule News Department staff and oversee their professional development; develop and be responsible for the editorial content of the News and Information sections of WNYC's web site, etc. The successful candidate will have a relevant Bachelors (Masters preferred) degree or equivalent, and ten (10) years related experience with knowledge of national and/or international news, editing skills, strong editorial judgement and superior interpersonal skills. To apply send cover letter with salary requirements, and resume to: Ms. Gerri Ippolito, Human Resources Director, WNYC Radio, One Centre Street 26th Floor, New York, NY 10007. Applications must be received by February 14, 2000. Minority candidates are encouraged to apply. Only candidates selected for interview will be contacted.

CNSNews.com, the Internet News Wire, has immediate openings for a Morning Staff Writer and a Copy Editor to work in its Washington Metro Bureau in Alexandria, Virginia. **Morning Staff Writer:** Works with Managing Editor and Morning Editor, write and report on general news; edit broadcast and print copy; publish copy on the Internet; edit and publish copy from stringers and other external sources; Works Monday-Friday, 5:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Minimum 3 years experience in wire service, broadcast or daily newsroom required. **Copy Editor:** Works with Managing Editor and Evening Editor; proofread copy for spelling, grammar, usage and style; assist in coordinating editing and news flow; publish copy on the Internet; assist with broadcast news writing. Works Monday-Friday, 12:00 noon - 8:30 p.m. Minimum 3 years experience in proofreading, editing and/or news writing required. Both positions are newly created positions resulting from the growth of the organization and relocation to the company's expanded headquarters. CNSNews.com is credentialled by the Congressional Press Gallery at the US Capitol and has a staff of 15 writers, editors and political cartoonists working from bureaus in London, Jerusalem and Alexandria Virginia, plus a growing network of stringers in the US and abroad. CNSNews offers a competitive salary with an annual bonus incentive plan, generous health, medical and dental benefits, life insurance, a tax-deferred retirement plan and the chance to work with a dedicated group of news professionals building one of the fastest growing news organizations on the Internet. Resume and clips to: Scott Hogenson, Executive Editor, CNSNews.com, 325 South Patrick Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. e-mail: shogenson@cnsnews.com EOE

HELP WANTED HOST

Morning Host/Announcer: Tired of ice and snow? It's 82 degrees and sunny here in Palm Beach. If you've got talent and want to be part of a winning team that's breaking the public radio mold fax your resume ASAP to: WXEL-FM 90.7 NPR for South Florida 561-364-4463 Attn: John LaBonia. TV 42 & 90.7 FM, PO Box 6607, West Palm Beach, Florida 33405, Tel 561-737-8000, Fax 561-364-4463, e-mail jlabonia@wxel.org

HELP WANTED PROMOTION

Producer Marketing/Creative WNYC Radio seeks a creative individual up to the challenge of creating fun, fresh, penetrating on-air promotional and positioning campaigns for America's most listened-to public radio station. Responsibilities include station imaging and the production of on-going promos for local talk programs, an adventurous News Department, off-beat music programs and nationally distributed news and cultural programs; coordinating with national program providers; participation and leadership in on-air fundraisers; involvement with the creation and management of staff's promotional efforts; vocal acting, etc. If you are a creative, crisp, witty writer skilled in analog and digital audio production with three years of promotional experience and a strong understanding of brand management, please submit a cover letter with salary requirements, resume and tape or CD to: Gerri Ippolito, HR Director, WNYC Radio, One Centre Street, New York, New York 10007. Closing date for applications: March 6, 2000. Only candidate selected for interview will be contacted.

SITUATION WANTED MANAGEMENT

Radio Station Developer highly skilled in all aspects for startups, turnarounds, or to take you to the next level. Permanent or interim, 813-920-7102. radio35@netscape.net

TELEVISION

HELP WANTED SALES

Broadcasting & Cable

International Group
ADVERTISING SALES

Cahners, the world's largest business to business publisher, is well-known for providing essential information to readers, users and marketing partners around the world.

Leading international television magazine group needs top sales person to sell advertising space across multiple titles. Successful candidate will have proven track record in sales and be an aggressive self-starter and closer. Experience in ad sales or the entertainment industry required. Knowledge of international TV industry a plus.

We offer a competitive salary and benefits package. Please forward your resume and salary history to: Human Resources Dept BCSLS via fax: (212) 463-6455 or e-mail: hrny-prx@cahners.com As an equal opportunity employer, Cahners provides a work environment free from all forms of discrimination. This commitment to a diverse workforce is the source of our strength.

HELP WANTED SALES

Senior Account Executive: Experienced Account Executive needed at the NBC Affiliate and #1 rated station in the Richmond market. Must have a track record selling specials, major sponsorships and innovating creative and enterprising sales opportunities. Experience with TVSCAN and Marshall Marketing a plus. Station provides exceptional support resources to assist in generating new revenue. Join a great team in one of the greatest lifestyle markets in the country. Send resume to Ellen Shuler, GSM - Fax: (804) 230-2500, e-mail: eshuler@nbc12.com PO Box 12, Richmond, VA 23225. EOE M/F/D.

Sales Manager: Immediate opportunity to join the number (#1) sales team for WTVD, an ABC owned station in Raleigh-Durham (29th market). Responsible for overall sales which includes the direct supervision of account executives and support staff. Must have strong leadership skills with a solid track record in traditional sales and new business development. Must have knowledge in budgeting, pricing, and inventory control. Five years of experience required. Contact: Chris Nesbitt, General Sales Manager, 411 Liberty Street, Durham, NC 27701. EOE

Sales Account Executive: WB32, Acme Television of Oregon (Portland DMA) seeks to hire an experienced salesperson for a fast growing station. Must possess great enthusiasm, energy and creativity. The ability to develop new business and manage existing accounts is essential. Self-starters who work well in a team environment are desired. Four year college degree with a minimum of four years broadcast sales experience is required. Send resume or submit an application to Local Sales Manager, KWBP-TV, 10255 SW Arctic Drive, Beaverton, Oregon 97005, or call 503-972-0740 and leave message. Position applications can be obtained at the offices during normal business hours. Resumes may be faxed to (503)-626-3576. KWBP is an equal opportunity employer. Position will remain open until Friday, February 11, 2000 or until filled.

National Sales Manager: KVDA-TV, the Telemundo affiliate in San Antonio, Texas - one of the great places to live in the USA - is looking for a National Sales Manager. A strong background in national sales plus experience in local new business development is preferred. Interested parties should send resume to Dave Sankovich, General Sales Manager, KVDA-TV, 6234 San Pedro, San Antonio, TX 78216. EOE,

KPRC-TV, a Post-Newsweek Station seeks a senior account executive with 3-5 years broadcast sales experience. This individual will be responsible for servicing existing local/regional accounts and new business development. Must have excellent written/verbal communication, presentation, organization and negotiating skills. Sales of sports, sponsorships and station projects on a continued basis is a must. Candidate must be aggressive, enthusiastic and a team player. Monthly travel required. Strong computer skills preferred, including knowledge of Nielson ratings, TV Scan, Scarborough and windows-based software. Please fax or send letter and resume to: Shannon Murphy Local Sales Manager, KPRC-TV 8181 Southwest Freeway, Houston, Texas 77074 (Fax) 713-771-4653

Local Sales Manager: Experienced, aggressive leader with strong people skills to train, manage inventory, and develop new business. Strong sales background required. Resume: Station Relations, WLEX-TV, PO Box 1457, Lexington, KY 40588. EOE

HELP WANTED SALES

Internet Sales: KNTV, San Jose's News Channel 11, and KBWB, San Francisco's WB, is seeking an Internet Sales executive. you will be responsible for generating revenue from the station's website initiatives in the Bay Area. Candidate must possess at least 3+ years' experience in advertising sales and demonstrate strong presentation skills. Previous experience with an interactive/online business ideal. Qualified individual is a team player who is creative, self-motivated and detail oriented. Position is based at KBWB-TV in San Francisco. To apply, please forward resume to: KBWB, Attn: Human Resources, 2500 Marin Street, San Francisco, CA 94124 OR fax to (415) 821-1518.

National Sales Manager, WWBT, Richmond - Seeking individual who has experience with national rep organization or senior account list to bring enthusiasm, leadership and exceptional people skills to the NBC Affiliate and dominant #1 station in the Richmond market. Join a great station and a great team in one of the best lifestyle markets in the country. Excellent benefits and compensation package. Send cover letter and resume to General Sales Manager, WWBT, PO Box 12, Richmond, VA 23218. Fax: (804) 230-2500, eshuler@nbc12.com EOE M/F/D

Account Executive: WDSU-TV in New Orleans has an immediate opening for an Account Executive with strong technical, bonding and closing skills. Prior broadcast sales experience a plus, but not mandatory for the successful candidate. Prospecting and direct client contact mandatory. Send resume with cover letter to Giovanna Savorgnan, Local Sales Manager, WDSU-TV, 846 Howard Ave., New Orleans, LA 70113. No calls, please. An Equal Opportunity Employer.

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

Director of Engineering and Operations: Looking to be involved in the decision process? One of the premier companies in the Northeast is in search of a Director of Engineering and Operations. Candidates must have minimum of (5) years experience in broadcast engineering/maintenance. Background in both radio and television is preferred. Management experience is required. In this position you will oversee the field operations staff and answer directly to the company President. This position requires considerable knowledge of RF and ENG systems. Working knowledge of maintenance and service on video equipment, including transmitters, microwave, and satellite. Responsibilities also include research and development of new products and systems. Some travel is required. Those interested in working for a large corporation need not apply. The ability to be a free thinker is a must. Compensation package is commensurate with experience and full benefit package is offered. If you are interested in being directly involved with the most highly visible and exciting projects in broadcasting, send resume and cover letter to: Human Resources, DSI RF Systems, Inc., 26H World's Fair Drive, Somerset, NJ 08873.

Master Control Supervisor: Paramount O&O has an opening for a highly motivated individual with experience in television master control operations. Duties include supervising, training, and scheduling master control operators. This position requires strong leadership and computer skills. Send resume to KTXH UPN20, Attn: Chief Engineer, 8950 Kirby Drive, Houston, TX 77054. EOE

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL**Victory Television
Network Opportunities**

Immediate openings for:
Chief Engineer and RF/Transmitter Engineer

Good pay and benefits! VTN is growing and all types of Engineers will be needed. If you are interested in these positions, or plan to move to Arkansas in the future, send your confidential resume to:

**Ron Brown, Director of Engineering,
Victory Television Network,
701 Napa Valley Drive, Little Rock, AR 72211
Fax (501) 221-3837; e-mail: ron.brown@kvtn.org**

VTN is an Equal Opportunity Employer

WCCB-FOX 18 in Charlotte, NC has an opening for Director of Engineering. This position offers a broad range of opportunities for the qualified candidate. WCCB is a fully digital 601 plant totally rebuilt from scratch in the last 9 months. All new! We are currently installing a new, fully redundant analog transmitter and have our digital transmitter on-the-air. The position requires a knowledge of television design, maintenance, planning and budgeting. The fully digital plant has additional installation and planning required for which the WCCB Director of Engineering will be responsible. You will also work with the Corporate VP Engineering to assist with design and implementation of digital television for other stations owned by Bahakel Communications. If you like great weather, a great place to live, a state of the art television facility, a very aggressive benefits package, know analog and digital television and would like to place your mark on a new facility, please contact WCCB-Fox-18 for immediate consideration. Send resume along with salary requirements to: Mark W. Turner, VP General Manager, One Television Place, Charlotte, NC 28205 or e-mail to Mturner@FOX18wccb.com. No phone calls please. FOX 18 is an equal opportunity employer.

Television Engineer- Min 2 years experience. General FCC or SBE Certificate preferred. Excellent salary and benefits including 401k. Only qualified applicants will be considered. Send resume to Personnel Director, WVIR-TV, P.O. Box 769, Charlottesville, VA 22902 No phone calls or faxes.

Fox 18, Charlotte's First All-Digital television station, seeks a self-directed, motivated and skilled maintenance engineer to support our new, state of the art facility. Broadcast equipment maintenance experience in a news-based environment and related technical school preferred. Significant skills in Beta and DVCPRO maintenance are a must. Strong interpersonal and communication skills are a plus. Ability to develop a working knowledge of Windows NT and broadcast oriented PC's is required. We're offering a competitive salary commensurate with experience, excellent benefits, and an environment that recognizes quality, performance, and forward thinking. Interested candidates should submit resumes and salary requirements to: Fox 18 WCCB-TV, One Television Place, Charlotte, NC 28205, Attn: Bob Davis, Email: bdavis@fox18wccb.com, Fax: 704-632-7382, No phone calls accepted. WCCB-TV is an equal-opportunity employer. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply.

HELP WANTED MANAGEMENT

General Manager -KAET- ASU is seeking an individual to be responsible for the management, planning, coordination & overall operation of KAET-TV, Arizona State University's non-commercial television station, & its related auxiliary services. From its studios on ASU's Main Campus in Tempe, AZ, KAET serves 80% of the state's population via its full power Channel 8 transmitter & a network of translators & cable systems located throughout Arizona. This service includes PBS & local programming. KAET-TV has a construction permit for a high power digital station, & co-owns & provides locally originated programming for classical music station KBAQ-FM. KAET-TV serves Arizona's K-12 teachers & students with instructional media through Arizona School Services through Educational Technology (ASSET), provider of television courses, CD-Rom & Internet-based instruction. KAET operates with a \$10 million annual budget exclusive of reserve & endowment funds & consists of over 150 full-time, part-time & student employees. *Required:* Master's degree in communications-related or business related discipline, with 8 yrs.' exp. in television, which includes at least 5 yrs. of senior management background. *Desired:* Demonstrated knowledge of & exp. in effective supervisory & managerial practices; evidence of considerable skill in interpersonal relations & effective communications; evidence of exp. & knowledge of public broadcasting in an educational setting; demonstrated knowledge of & understanding of the relationship between public broadcasting & higher educ.; demonstrated knowledge of public broadcasting issues; evidence of non-profit fundraising & development; demonstrated knowledge of planning & preparing operational budgets, as well as digital television technology. *Hiring Rate:* Competitive, DOE. To apply, submit cover letter specifying job title & SR# N-101498 & resume, in addition to the names, addresses & phone numbers of 3 professional references to: Arizona State University, Human Resources, Box 871403, Tempe, AZ 85287-1403. *Deadline:* February 21, 2000, 5pm. Fax: (480) 965-6640. AA/EOE.

HELP WANTED NEWS

WDIV-TV has an opening for an operations manager in the news department. Overseeing the operational end of news coverage and presentation, including live microwave, satellite operations, live shots, editing, tape handling, etc. Responsible for hiring, supervising, scheduling and evaluations of chief photographer and editors, under the direction of the news director. Also responsible for daily execution of union contracts and participates in planning for union negotiations. Handles budget lines relating to overtime, per diems, satellite expenses and helicopter hours. Acts as liaison with engineering department and outside stations. Minimum five years experience in news operations and must have strong people skills and some management experience. Mail resume to Deborah Collura, News Director, WDIV-TV, 550 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, MI 48226-3140. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Meteorologist/Intern - Richmond's No. 1 news organization is seeking a degreed Meteorologist with on air television experience. Also seeking a recent Meteorology graduate for a one year paid weather internship. Send cover letter with resume and a non-returnable VHS demo tape to Nancy Kent, News Director, NBC12, PO Box 12, Richmond, VA 23218. No calls. EOE M/F/D

HELP WANTED NEWS

Television News Director: Experience and Skills Necessary: Come and join one of the best broadcast companies in America. We are looking for an ultra-aggressive person to lead our news department. If you have strong journalistic, leadership and long range planning skills please send a resume and newscast tape. Education Requirements: College Degree. Mail or fax resumes WWAY TV3 P.O. Box 2068, Wilmington NC 28402. Fax (910)762-8367. NC No Telephone calls please. Person to Contact at WWAY-TV3: James Smith, General Manager. It is the policy of Cosmos Broadcasting Corporation (WWAY TV 3) that employment shall be based on merit, qualification, and competence. Employment practice shall not be influenced or affected by virtue of an applicant's or an employee's race, age, sex, religion, color, national origin, or disability. Females and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Sr. Promotions Producer: Take the next step and produce memorable promos on a Senior Level! The qualified applicant should exhibit intense moments of uncontrollable creativity and will have a minimum of 2 years prior news/television promotion experience. College degree and AVID or non-linear video editing preferred. Strong writing and producing skills are essential. Send demo reel and resume to WDAF-TV, Human Resources Dept.; 3030 Summit; Kansas City, MO 64108. EOE M/F/N/D

Special Projects Reporter: WDAF-TV, a Fox O & O in Kansas City, is seeking a creative reporter to join its Special Projects Team. Will report on stories/issues that are of high interest to our viewers. The qualified applicant must have a minimum of 2 years television news reporting experience and strong journalistic skills. Must also be a good researcher, story teller and able to look beyond the obvious. A college degree is required. For immediate consideration, send resume and demo tape (VHS) to WDAF-TV, Human Resources Department, 3030 Summit, Kansas City, MO 64108. EOE M/F/N/D

Reporter: Tulsa's #1 news station seeks aggressive journalist who wants to lead the newscast every night. Must have the ability to turn complex news issues into easy-to-understand T.V. Must be able to enterprise news stories on a daily basis, be a good storyteller, create memorable moments and produce creative live shots. Must have at least 4 years of experience in a television newsroom. Send resume and tape that demonstrates all of the above to: KTUL, LLC, Human Resources Department, P.O. Box 8, Tulsa, OK 74101. No Phone Calls Please. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Photojournalist: Photographer/Editor for mid 60's Toledo, Ohio, market. We are looking for someone with at least 1-2 years experience and a great attitude. We shoot beta and edit digitally and are a strong number one in the market. Any NPPA seminars are a plus. Salary commensurate with experience. Non-returnable tape and resume to Personnel Administrator-134, WTOL-TV, P.O. Box 1111, Toledo, Ohio 43699-1111. No Phone Calls. EOE.

Photographer: The best is looking for the best! KCRG-TV, eastern Iowa's 24 hour news source, is looking for a "hot shot" photographer. Great opportunity at a great television station. Send Tape and Resume to Personnel Coordinator, KCRG, PO Box 816, Cedar Rapids, IA 52407. EOE

HELP WANTED NEWS

SBS

SINCLAIR BROADCAST GROUP

Sinclair Broadcast Group, Inc. owns or programs 58 TV stations in 38 markets and has affiliations with all 6 networks. We reach nearly 25% of the U.S. and aggressively lead the evolution of broadcasting in technology, programming, promotion, and sales. We seek the one element which gives us the edge on the competition and the power to stay on top - the best people in the business.

• **Birmingham, AL WTTO/WABM (WB/UPN) General Sales Manager**

Sinclair Communications, one of America's fastest growing broadcast companies, is offering an outstanding opportunity for a proven, aggressive and dedicated sales leader. The winning candidate will be leading an experienced sales team in a progressive and growing Southern market. NSM or rep background with knowledge of TV Scan and Scarborough a plus. This is the position for a people oriented sales professional with a vision for the future. Send resume and references. Box #446

• **Cincinnati, OHWSTR (WB) National Sales Manager**

Immediate opening for a National Sales Manager. Successful candidate will possess superior negotiation and interpersonal skills. Must be familiar with Scarborough, Tapscan and Nielsen. Excellent earnings potential. Full benefits include medical/dental/vision/401k & stock purchase plan. Send resume. Box #447

• **Dayton, OH WRGT/WKEF (FOX/NBC) Night Assignment Manager**

Seeking an individual to execute the daily news coverage plan by efficiently managing and scheduling the news department staff and resources. Candidate should know our coverage area and be familiar with capabilities of equipment. Must be able to provide the newsroom with people-oriented leadership that inspires and motivates employees. Send resumes. Box #448

• **Nashville, TN WZTV/WUXP (FOX/UPN) News Director**

Looking for a dynamic News Director with a proven track record of success. We are converting a very successful news share to a full-blown prime time operation with a commitment to win. The ideal candidate must possess strong leadership skills, planning abilities, be a team player, with energy, maturity and commitment. If you have these qualifications then we want to hear from you. Send resumes. Box #449

• **Nashville, TN WZTV/WUXP (FOX/UPN) Commercial Photographer/Promotion Coordinator**

Seeking an individual who is detail oriented. Duties include shooting commercials, scheduling promos on the daily logs, helping with studio production and news coverage. Box #450

• **Oklahoma City, OK KOCE/KOKH (WB/FOX) On Air Promotion Producer**

Immediate opening. Responsibilities include tune-in/station image promotions, on-air promo scheduling and VOC production/scheduling. 1-3 years experience in promotions preferred. Rush resume, non-returnable reel, and references. Box #451

• **Pensacola, FL WEAR/WFGX (ABC/WB) News Photographer**

Seeking an individual with a minimum of one year television shooting/editing experience. Live truck experience helpful. Only those with strong NPPA work ethics and accuracy need apply. Box #452

• **Pensacola, FL WEAR/WFGX (ABC/WB) News Producer**

Immediate opening for an experienced and competitive News Producer with a passion for news. Individual must have excellent writing and visualization skills, who can motivate people in a teamwork environment. Send resume. Box #453

Mail your resume in confidence immediately to: Broadcasting & Cable, 245 W. 17th Street, NY, NY 10011, Attn: Box # _____

Sinclair is proud to be an EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER and a DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE WOMEN AND MINORITIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY

HELP WANTED NEWS

Assignment Manager: Dynamic individual will supervise the assignment desk and assist reporters, crews, Manager Editor and Planning Editor. This individual will also develop new sources and contacts and assist in special projects. The ideal candidate should be an experienced news professional with 5-7 years of newsroom experience and have exceptional people skills. Candidate should have knowledge of local, regional, national and international stories with ability to work effectively and professionally under pressure. **Producer - Good Day Philadelphia** Candidate will line produce a 2-hour live, local morning news, information and entertainment broadcast. Must balance multiple live taped segments both in studio and on remote. Lead daily story meetings, coordinate information with other producers, talent, and managers. Work with AM staff of 40+. The ideal candidate must be detail oriented. Creative approach and guidance needed for individual segments. Must have good balance between hard news and information/features needed for morning news broadcast. 3-5 years line producing experience. For immediate consideration, applicants should forward resume to: FOX PHILADELPHIA, Human Resources Department BC, 330 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106. Fax (215) 413-3832. No phone calls please. EEO/MF/D/V

Anchor: Midwest Fox O & O is seeking professional broadcast journalists to fill several key weekday and weekend co-anchor positions. Will also report for regular scheduled newscasts and participate in community service events. Must be able to exercise independent judgement and creativity while reporting news stories. Depending upon the position, qualified applicants will have 1-5 years experience anchoring in a regular assigned anchor role. Excellent communication and delivery skills are essential. College degree preferred. For consideration, please submit resume and VHS tape to WDAF-TV, 3030 Summit, Kansas City, MO 64108. EOE M/F/V/D.

Photographer: WHAS11 is looking for a photographer with excellent visual, composition and story telling skills. Minimum of two years broadcast experience required. Must have knowledge of beta sp and sony sx. Must have experience with non-linear digital editing and ability to operate the microwave units with the possibility of working weekends and nights. Ability to edit your own stories, creativity, and good use of Nat sound preferred. Background in live truck operations a plus. NPPA involvement and college degree preferred. Interested candidates forward resume, tape and cover letter to: Cindy Vaughan, Human Resources Director, HR #0002, WHAS11, 520 West Chestnut Street, Louisville, KY 40202. EEO. Belo Kentucky, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/D/V

Executive Producer: WTVD-TV, the ABC owned station in Raleigh-Durham, NC seeks a highly skilled and focused broadcast journalist to supervise producers, reporters and photographers working on daily newscasts. The Executive Producer will be scheduled to oversee our 11pm newscast and will also be assigned to supervise and produce other broadcasts as needed. We are searching for a person who demonstrates the ability to showcase stories and anchors with creative writing and innovative production techniques. Five years experience producing major newscasts is required. Supervisory experience is preferred. Send resume and non-returnable tapes to Rob Elmore, News Director, WTVD-TV, 411 Liberty Street, Durham, NC 27701. No phone calls please. EOE.

HELP WANTED NEWS

Producer- WAVY-TV, the #1 station in the Norfolk, Virginia, market is looking for a News Producer. We thrive on spot news and stories that give viewer benefit. Good showcasing skills are a must. We require a college degree and at least one year experience. Send your resume, cover letter and a copy of your latest newscast to Robin Freese, WAVY-TV, 300 Wavy Street, Portsmouth, VA 23704. No phone calls, please. EOE

NewsWriter/Producer Trainee: WTVD NewsChannel 11, the ABC-owned station in the Raleigh-Durham-Fayetteville market, seeks qualified applicants for its Minority Management Training Program. The purpose of the program is to seek out individuals who have demonstrated, through previous work experience, that they have aptitude, the knowledge and the ambition to be a television news producer. Candidate should have the potential and the interest in assuming a management position in a television news department. The trainee is supervised by news managers and will have various assignments within the news department including producing, research, assignment desk work, story and event planning and news writing. College degree in broadcast or print journalism and a minimum of 2 years prior experience in the broadcast industry required. This is a 12-month program. Send resume to: Monica Barnes, Community Affairs Director, NEWSCHANNEL 11, ABC, PO Box 2009, Durham, North Carolina 27702. EOE. No phone calls.

HELP WANTED RESEARCH

Sr. Research Analyst: WWOR-TV UPN9 has an immediate opening for a Sr. Research Analyst. This position works with the sales department. It involves research, utilizing Nielsen, developing material for sales pieces used for agency/advertiser presentations. Candidate must have excellent computer, organizational and communication skills. Must be able to work in a fast paced environment. Please mail resume to Human Resources, WWOR-TV UPN 9, 9 Broadcast Plaza Secaucus, NJ 07096. EOE

Research Director: WTVD, News Channel 11, ABC, in the rapidly growing Raleigh-Durham Market, has an immediate opening for the position of Research Director. Successful candidate should have at least 2 years experience and will work closely with the #1 sales team in the market to effectively utilize both quantitative and qualitative research to maximize advertising revenues. Candidates should be familiar with Nielsen Overnight & Sweep Data, Donovan Avail System, STAR & NSI Plus, Nielsen Galaxy, Scarborough & CMR's Adtel2K. Candidate must also have excellent written and communication skills and be highly proficient with computer software, especially MS Excel and MS Powerpoint. Send resume to Chris Nesbitt, General Sales Manager, WTVD-TV, PO Box 2009BC, Durham, NC 27702. EOE

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HELP WANTED INTERACTIVE DEVELOPMENT

Director, Interactive Development and New Media: Birmingham's NBC O&O is looking for a Director of Interactive and New Media. This position will be responsible for developing and implementing WVBTM NBC13's Interactive and E-Business strategies to grow the station's on-line presence/popularity, revenue, brand and profitability. You'll recruit, direct and develop a team of internet producers, designers and technical support personnel and be responsible for the overall design, construction and execution of the station website and related business partner sites to create a compelling interactive product. Requirements include a BA/BS degree or equivalent work experience. Knowledge of new media landscape and current industry trends. Demonstrated experience in defining and building complex web-based solutions. Strong communication, interpersonal and business skills. Experience in team management, product management and product marketing preferred. Send resumes to Human Resource Department, WVBTM NBC13, 1732 Valley View Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209. No phone calls please. EOE.

HELP WANTED
FINANCIAL & ACCOUNTING

KSAZ-TV/Phoenix. FOX 10 is seeking a VP of Finance. Qualified candidates must have Bachelor deg. in accounting/finance (CPA or MBA preferred). Strong accounting skills, 4-7 years accounting req. (broadcast pref.). Strong management, interpersonal and comm skills. Resp for management of all phases of accounting, general ledger, A/R, budgets, program amortization, financial reports and contract negotiations. Competitive salary, benefits and great working environment. Qualified applicants should Fax a resume and salary history/requirements to Human Resources (602)262-5123. EOE/MF/D/V.

HELP WANTED CREATIVE SERVICES

Senior Graphic Artist: WDAF-TV, a Fox O & O in Kansas City, is looking for a Sr. Graphic Artist. Responsibilities include designing 3D animations; news projects and ad print work. Strong background in layout and design, good people skills, and the ability to hit deadlines a must. Candidates should have at least 2-4 years of TV news graphic or post house experience. Graphic design degree or related degree needed. Working knowledge of Mac and SGI programs such as Flint, After Effects, Electric Image, and Photoshop a definite plus. For consideration, please submit resume and demo tape (VHS) to WDAF-TV; Human Resources Dept, 3030 Summit, Kansas City, MO 64108. EOE M/F/V/D.

Art Director: WTSP-TV in the beautiful Tampa/St. Petersburg market (ranked #13) has an exciting opportunity for the right art director. We need a great designer who can create a clean, yet striking graphic identity for the station. We need a strong manager who values a consistent graphic format. We need a creative thinker who can help take our promotion to a new level. And we need a team player who will manage an art staff, work with all departments, and passionately adopt the station's long-term strategies and goals. We offer a generous compensation package, resources within the station and within the corporation, an aggressive management team, blue skies and white sand. E/O/E/M/F/D Send tape, resume, and salary requirements to: WTSP-TV, Human Resources, P.O. Box 10,000, St. Petersburg, FL 33733

HELP WANTED CREATIVE SERVICES

FOX 5 WTTG-DC, the FOX owned and operated television station in Washington, DC has an immediate opportunity for a Broadcast Designer whose responsibilities will include the design & production of still & motion on-air graphic design for news, promotion, marketing, and sales departments. Qualified applicants should possess exceptional typography skills; professional working experience with Adobe After Effects & Photoshop; 2 years experience at a television station or video production house; solid communication skills; and a BFA in Graphic Design or similar concentration. Quantel, Flint, and Liberty experience a plus.

Please forward resume & demo reel (VHS, Beta, DVC Pro or Quicktime on Mac Zip) to:

Mary Talley, VP/Human Resources
WTTG/Fox 5
5151 Wisconsin Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016.
Job Code # 16070. EOE/M/F/D/V



Art Director: WTSP-TV in the beautiful Tampa/St. Petersburg market (ranked #13) has an exciting opportunity for the right art director. We need a great designer who can create a clean, yet striking graphic identity for the station. We need a strong manager who values a consistent graphic format. We need a creative thinker who can help take our promotion to a new level. And we need a team player who will manage an art staff, work with all departments, and passionately adopt the station's long-term strategies and goals. We offer a generous compensation package, resources within the station and within the corporation, an aggressive management team, blue skies and white sand. E/O/E/M/F/D Send tape, resume, and salary requirements to: WTSP-TV, Human Resources, P.O. Box 10,000, St. Petersburg, FL 33733

HELP WANTED PRODUCTION

WUSA-TV, the Gannet owned CBS affiliate in Washington, DC is in search of a creative production manager to join our team. The candidate will have a leadership role in overseeing the overall aesthetics of our on-air product. He or she will lead, organize and facilitate weekly quality control meetings and follow-up to make sure problems are solved. A minimum of 5 years directing experience preferred. Must be knowledgeable of graphics, sets, and control room operations. Responsibilities also include hiring, managing and training related staff. Candidate will also help oversee station production projects. Contact David G. Jones, WUSA-TV, 4100 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20016. email: djones@wusatv9.com Fax: 202-244-1547. No phone calls please.

EFP Director- Produce, write, shoot and edit commercials and PSA spots for FOX43. Experience in field shooting and editing is required. College degree in Mass Communications is preferred. Send tape and resume to Dave Whitener, Production Manager, FOX 43, 243 Wythe St., Portsmouth, VA 23704. No phone calls, please. EOE

HELP WANTED PRODUCTION

Production Manager: Seeking a highly motivated individual to lead a team of broadcast television production and print graphics professionals. Individual will preside over and participate in the production of programs and projects for broadcast and non-broadcast. Must have demonstrated understanding of and capabilities with linear and non-linear editing systems; studio and field production techniques; budgeting; and personnel management including hiring, scheduling, and evaluation. Knowledge of pre-press graphics a plus. Should be familiar with the following hardware and software applications: Panasonic MII format; Ross 630 Video switcher; Media 100 non-linear editing; Adobe Photoshop and After Effects. Highly rewarding position as leader on an award-winning team. Located in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Send resume and cover letter to Executive Secretary, WVPT-TV, 298 Port Republic Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22801. EOE/AA.

Commercial Writer/Producer: NBC-26/UPN-32 Television seeks a commercial/writer producer with a minimum of one year experience for our Production Department. Working knowledge of commercial idea, writing, fieldwork and final assembly required. Prior non-linear editing experience a plus. Send a non-returnable demo tape with salary requirements to: Personnel cw/bc, WGVA TV, 1391 North Rd, Green Bay WI 54313. EOE

HELP WANTED DIRECTOR

AETN, Director of Learning Services: Arkansas Educational Television Network seeks a successful leader/educator for network's Learning Services division, which is moving into a new expanded telecommunications facility in fall 2000. A member of senior management team, the position directs Learning Services operations in providing/facilitating educational programs, services, and technology training for Arkansas' citizens, schools, business and government. Requirements include a bachelor's degree in education, administration or education technology; plus five years relevant experience including two years in leadership capacity. Grant writing and administration experience preferred. Classroom experiences a definite plus. An advanced degree recommended. Position is a state grade 24. Salary range \$32,093 to \$43,540. Excellent benefits. Submit a State Application, current resume with cover letter, three professional references and salary history to: AETN: Human Resources Supervisor, PO Box 1250, Conway, AR 72033-1250 or apply online: www.aetn.org or arstatejobs.com. Application review begins February 1, 2000. AETN is an AA/EO/ADA employer. Women and minorities encouraged to apply.

HELP WANTED CREATIVE SERVICES

Graphic Designer Supervisor: The ABC owned station in Philadelphia is looking for a talented & experienced designer to lead the art department. Responsibilities include designing promotional & news projects, 3-D animations, & print work, as well as supervising other designers & monitoring station's overall look. Must have strong organizational & communication skills, & work well under deadline. Prefer 5+ years experience in TV graphic design. Quantel paintbox, Hal, MAC, Photoshop. After Effects and Electronic Image a +. Send non-returnable VT & resume (no calls/faxes) to Caroline Welch, Director of Creative Services, WPVI-TV, Suite 400, 4100 City Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19131. EOE

CABLE

HELP WANTED NEWS

Assignment Editor: Washington, D.C.'s only 24-hour local cable news stations is seeking an Assignment Editor with a minimum of 2 years of broadcasting experience to work in a dynamic, heavy news environment. Visit our Jobs link at www.newschannel8.net for further information. Please send cover letter and resume to: Director of HR, NEWSCHANNEL 8, 7600 D Boston Blvd., Springfield, VA 22153 or fax to (703) 912-5436. No telephone calls. EOE.

HELP WANTED PRODUCTION

Director of Production Management: MTV Networks is seeking a Director of Production Management for its Santa Monica, CA, office. Primary responsibility will be to translate MTV Networks programming concepts into cost-effective, efficient productions. You will maintain and monitor all relevant production systems and processes during pre-production, production, and post-production phases. 5-10 years of strong management/production experience including managing large groups of production managers, as well as strong leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills required. Must have direct experience in all types of production: film, video, studio, news, events and series-based productions. Please fax resume and salary history to Human Resources at (310) 752-8811. MTV Networks is an active equal opportunity employer. No calls, please.

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

Maintenance Engineer, Discovery Communications Inc., Bethesda, MD

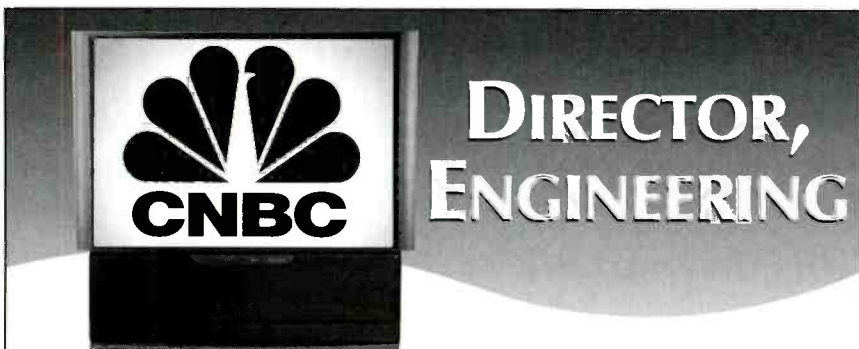
Discovery Communications, Inc. is seeking maintenance engineer to maintain, install, calibrate, and repair to a component level all the equipment in DCI's Bethesda based facilities. This equipment includes, but is not limited to: all formats of videotape recorders, (PAL and NTSC), GVG Switchers and edit controllers, Pinnacle Character Generators, Microtime DVEs, Alchemist and AVS standards converters, and Avid Media Composers.

Requirements: Candidate must have a degree and three to five years of installing and repairing analog and digital broadcast video and audio equipment. Candidate must have the ability to troubleshoot on system, as well as component level. Candidate must have a solid electronics background, with component level repair skills. Candidate must have a solid understanding of digital circuit theory, a solid understanding of analog and digital audio theory and must have a proficient knowledge of NTSC, PAL, and 601 television standards. Candidate will be expected to keep up to date with changing technology.



Contact David Shapiro
Director of Post Production Facilities
Discovery Communications Inc.
7700 Wisconsin Ave.
Bethesda, MD 20814-3579.
E-mail: david.shapiro@discovery.com
Fax: 301.771.3557

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL



Reaching 70 million homes in the United States, CNBC is a joint service of NBC and Dow Jones and the world leader in live business news. This success has created a challenging opportunity to manage the CNBC Technical Maintenance and Project Department.

Specific challenges will include supervising the daily maintenance of electronic equipment, ordering and tracking capital equipment and managing the salary, parts and repairs budgets. Other challenges will include creating weekly schedules for employees, establishing and administering on-going preventative maintenance programs for all video, audio, videotape, microwave and satellite equipment.

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When placing an ad, indicate the EXACT category desired: Television, Radio, Cable or Allied Fields; Help Wanted or Situations Wanted; Management, Sales, News, etc. If this information is omitted, we will determine the appropriate category according to the copy. NO make goods will run if all information is not included. No personal ads.

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Rates: Classified listings (non-display). Per issue: Help Wanted: \$2.50 per word, \$50 weekly minimum. Situations Wanted: 1.35¢ per word, \$27 weekly minimum. Optional formats: Bold Type: \$2.90 per word, Screened Background: \$3.00, Expanded Type: \$3.70 Bold, Screened, Expanded Type: \$4.20 per word. All other classifications: \$2.50 per word, \$50 weekly minimum.

Word count: Count each abbreviation, initial, single figure or group of figures or letters as one word each. Symbols such as 35mm, COD, PD etc., count as one word each. A phone number with area code and the zip code count as one word each.

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Broadcasting & Cable

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Ad Copy: _____

Date(s) of insertion: _____

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Nick Trigony, president of Cox Broadcasting, will retire at the end of 2000

and Andy Fisher, currently head of Cox's affiliate television unit, will assume most of Trigony's duties at that time. In the interim, Fisher will assume the new position of executive vice president, Cox Television, where he will oversee Cox's 11 TV stations. When Trigony retires, Fisher will be promoted to president of Cox Television, where he will also oversee the company's rep firms, program producer Rysler Television and the

Cox Broadcasting corporate staff. The radio unit, which also reports to Trigony, will then report directly to David Easterly, COO of Cox Enterprises, as will Fisher. Trigony has been president of Cox Broadcasting since 1990 and first joined Cox in 1986 as head of its radio division. Prior to that, he worked at both the Viacom and ABC radio units. Fisher has run Cox's affiliate TV division since 1990 and ran the company's flagship station, WSB-TV Atlanta, for the previous six years. Earlier in his career, Fisher

was a TV reporter and news director.

The nation's biggest radio group might blow Westwood One Inc.'s traffic-reporting businesses out of the air.

AMFM Inc. said last Monday that three-month-old Traffic.com will provide local traffic information to AMFM's radio stations and their Web sites in Philadelphia starting April 1. Unlike Westwood One's Metro Networks Inc. and Shadow Traffic, which rely on cameras, drivers, police reports and aircraft and

other vehicles (depending on the market), Traffic.com will use roadside sensors to track vehicle speeds and congestion. So instead of reporting that traffic is heavy on a certain bridge, Traffic.com will be able to tell drivers how long it is taking to get across the bridge and which lanes are moving fastest. Details of a national rollout over AMFM's 440 radio stations are still being worked out. But starting immediately, Traffic.com will sell 10-second national spots for AMFM. In return, Traffic.com gets advertising and promotion time on AMFM stations. Also as part of the deal, AMFM gets warrants to buy a minority stake in Camp Hill, Pa.-based Traffic.com.

The entertainment industry cannot merge all its content ratings systems into one,

Motion Picture Association of America President Jack Valenti said last week, responding to President Clinton's call for one system in his annual State of the Union address last Thursday. "The president was obviously given bad information by his staff," Valenti said. "It's impossible to have a common rating for TV, movies, music and video games."

The FCC last week issued rules on how it will handle complaints against satellite companies that are still carrying TV stations without consent six months after satellite TV reform passed Congress.

According to that law, satellite companies have a six-month grace period, which ends May 29, to carry any local station, after which satellite companies must get per-

Regent rules with IPO

Wall Street crowned Regent Communications Inc. last week. The radio firm's share price rose 44% on its first day of trading.

The Covington, Ky.-based company's stock was priced at \$8.50 per share, opened at \$10.50 and rose as high as \$12.25, or 44%, last Tuesday. Regent closed last Thursday at \$11.9375, an increase of 40.4% over its initial offering price. The IPO of 16 million shares garnered \$136 million, which Regent will use mostly to fund pending acquisitions in California, New York and Texas and to offset debt.

Regent's windfall epitomizes the recent popularity of radio company offerings on Wall Street. Regent scored big despite losses of \$2.5 million in the nine months that ended on Sept. 30, 1999, and \$3.3 million in 1998. According to Regent's prospectus filed last Tuesday with the Securities and Exchange Commission, "We expect to continue to experience net losses for the foreseeable future."

Offsetting that, perhaps, were Regent's well-known executives: Chairman Terry S. Jacobs, who founded Jacor Communications Inc. (now part of Clear Channel Communications Inc.), and President William L. Stakelin, also an industry veteran, who last April won the National Association of Broadcasters' National Radio Award.

Regent owns or is buying 28 FM and 14 AM radio stations in 11 small and mid-sized markets. Its stock is traded on Nasdaq under the symbol "RGCI." The

offering was managed by Prudential Securities.

Wall Street didn't seem quite so happy with Citadel Communications Corp.'s plans to pay \$176 million cash for Bloomington Broadcasting, which owns 20 radio stations. On Jan. 21, Citadel stock closed at \$58. Last Monday, when the deal with Bloomington was announced, the share price dropped to \$56.13. Last Thursday, it closed at \$48.81.

Citadel will buy four stations each in Grand Rapids, Mich.; Columbia, S.C.; and Chattanooga, Tenn.; five stations in Johnson City/Kingsport/Bristol, Tenn.; and three in Bloomington, Ill. (see "Changing Hands," page 51). All are new markets for Citadel, which owns or is buying 136 FMs and 60 AMs in 42 mid-sized markets.

Last Wednesday, Citadel announced that it plans to offer 7.5 million more shares, 1.8 million of which will come from "certain selling stockholders," a news release said. At some \$49 per share, that would raise \$279.2 million, which would be used to fund deals and pay down debt. On Jan. 1, Citadel filed a \$1 billion shelf registration with the SEC, which allows it to sell stock up to that amount at any time.

Meanwhile, last Wednesday satellite-car radio wannabe XM Satellite Radio raised \$128 million in an offering of 4 million more shares of common stock at \$32 per share. XM closed last Thursday at \$30.75.

—By Elizabeth A. Rathbun

Microsoft takes Intertainer stake



Intertainer's movie delivery will be integrated into Microsoft's TV software.

Microsoft made a major content play for its Microsoft TV platform last week with a \$56 million investment in Intertainer, representing a 20% stake in the broadband video service.

Intertainer, which delivers pay-per-view movies to PC or TV screens, is being integrated into the Microsoft TV software platform to run on General Instrument DCT-5000 digital boxes, according to Jonathan Taplin, president

and co-CEO of Intertainer, who confirmed the size of the stake. Intertainer will also be part of the software package in new WebTV boxes that Microsoft will market later this year.

"It gives us another great feature for the Microsoft TV platform," says Ed Gracyk, lead communications manager for the Microsoft TV platform group. "It's part of our overall goal to accelerate deployment of broadband services."

Intertainer is set to start its PPV broadband pitch at \$1-\$3.95 per feature in Baltimore with Comcast Cable, another Microsoft ally, this spring. The service was introduced to DSL customers of US West and Cincinnati Bell in December.

Intertainer's content partnerships with major studios, including DreamWorks, Warner Bros. and 20th Century Fox, drew Microsoft's attention, according to Gracyk, who says the Redmond, Wash., giant is looking to cement similar deals with other video sources for broadband distribution. —Richard Tedesco

mission, stop carriage or face stiff penalties. The FCC said in its order that it would make final decisions on complaints within 45 days of a filing.

Time Warner and EMI Group created the world's largest recorded music company last week, valued at \$20 billion, with the goal of making a major impact in downloaded digital music. That prospect looms even larger in the wake of the Time Warner-AOL deal. Each company is contributing its respective assets to the 50/50 venture to be called Warner EMI Music, with Time Warner making a cash

payment of \$1.3 billion to EMI shareholders to consummate it. Eric Nicoli, EMI chairman, and Richard Parsons, Time Warner president, will be co-chairman.

Since its stock price has more than doubled in the past year, radio programmer Westwood One Inc. is planning a 2-for-1 stock split. Shareholders will get one share for every share owned as of March 8, the company said last Friday. Westwood One shares were worth \$27.75 on Jan. 28, 1999, and by last Friday had risen 136%, to \$65.50. CBS Corp. owns 13% of Westwood One,

which is managed by CBS' radio arm, Infinity Broadcasting Corp.

Backers of the 8-VSB U.S. digital TV transmission standard last week pulled off the gloves in their fight with Sinclair Broadcasting by publicly charging that the Baltimore station group's earnings decline, not worries about technical problems, are behind the company's campaign to alter the DTV modulation method. "Technical issues should not be used as a proxy for some business situation Sinclair may be facing," said Michael Petricone, vice president of technology for the Con-

sumer Electronics Association. Faced with falling revenue, Sinclair wants to delay an expensive DTV rollout at its 54 stations as long as possible, he said. Claims of financial bias are "ironic coming from a company just emerging from bankruptcy," said Sinclair lobbyist Mark Hyman, noting that Zenith holds the primary patent for 8-VSB. Sinclair officials also questioned why the 8-VSB team used simulated programming for their demonstration rather than a signal from one of Washington's five DTV stations. But several FCC officials who saw 8-VSB demos of over-the-air programming at the Consumer Electronics Show earlier this month said they are convinced of 8-VSB's viability. Chairman Kennard is urging his four fellow commissioners to dismiss Sinclair's request to add COFDM as an option for broadcasters. If agreement doesn't come shortly, Kennard may schedule a vote for the commission's Feb. 17 meeting.

Correction: Due to a production error, Tribune Broadcasting Co. was assigned three TV stations that it does not own in the Jan. 24 "Top 25 Television Groups" special report. Tribune does not own WCBS-TV New York, KCBS-TV Los Angeles or WBBM-TV Chicago. Those stations are owned by CBS and were listed properly with that company's assets. The error does not affect Tribune's standing as the No. 4 TV group.

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COMMITTED TO THE FIRST AMENDMENT AND THE FIFTH ESTATE

All aboard

Playing the game of connect-the-dotcom's for a moment, the picture we get is of an industry moving at the speed of fiber optics into the multimedia/video/entertainment business. The Web folks were everywhere at the NATPE convention in New Orleans last week (including on the front and back cover ads of the pocket convention agenda), raising pulses and a host of issues as they talked of remaking the advertising models and making major inroads in video delivery and interactivity. Take pseudo.com. It creates and streams its own video and sells the advertising in it. Others can affiliate with it, flagging their own video-streaming destinations within it and selling their own advertising. The result is a video network with a theoretically infinite number of affiliated content providers. And pseudo.com is only one of many ventures that see the Net as the next great TV medium—first came broadcast, then came cable and now comes the Net.

With such competition no longer on the horizon, but right there on the floor of the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, it's time to free broadcasters from ownership regulations that stunt their growth. As program producers and packagers, broadcasters have been moving on to the Net. They haven't been particularly quick about it and that may be because they're hedging. Their big bet continues to be on the business of sending a single, advertiser-supported stream of analog video over VHF and UHF channels to the 100 million homes with plain old TV sets. At NATPE, the FCC and congressional types said that broadcasters need to be patient, that Washington was taking a "wait and see" approach to the growing Internet competition. Before the regulators provide relief, said Andy Levin, an aide to Rep. John Dingell (D-Mich.), "we'll have to see how much danger there really is."

Our fear is that by the time Washington sees the train dot-coming, it will be too late for broadcasters to get out of the way.

A ray of light

Finally, a judge who really gets it. Not only did New York State Supreme Court Justice Joseph Teresi allow TV cameras to cover the racially charged trial of four New York City policemen for the killing of an immigrant street vendor, but he properly determined that the state's general ban on televised trials was unconstitutional.

We have always disputed the notion that First Amendment freedoms clash with an individual's right to a fair trial. So it was good to read Justice Teresi's words: Justice must be accomplished "under the eyes of the people" and "greater exposure will enhance the public's understanding of the judicial system and contribute to public confidence in the system."

The convincing arguments of media lawyer Floyd Abrams and Court TV also appear to have given New York State Sen. James Lack a boost in his longtime efforts to open up trials. Legislators, who let New York's 10-year televised trial program lapse after the disastrous Simpson trial, now appear willing to reconsider.

Not all are on board. Within days, a Manhattan judge denied a request from a TV station to cover another high-profile trial of an accused mother-son grifter team in the death of a socialite. The judge distinguished it from the Diallo proceedings because that trial had been moved, raising community concern about the fairness of the proceeding, the judge said. Does the community have an interest in monitoring a trial only when the trial is moved away? While we agree with the importance of a community's monitoring an important trial, regardless of its location, we do not limit the public's interest by either geography or the size of a courtroom.

One New York newspaper suggested that Teresi overstepped, and wondered whether any of the state's judges would suddenly turn into Lance Ito, the maligned judge in the Simpson trial. But television won't make a responsible judge irresponsible. It will, however, expose a system that fails in its mission to protect the rights of the accused and the public—just as it will shed light on a well-run system that's doing its job. We can think of no better use of the medium.

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