

# MEDIAWEEK

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THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE MEDIA

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Late client ad-budgets and time-shifted ratings standoff keep nets from selling **PAGE 4**

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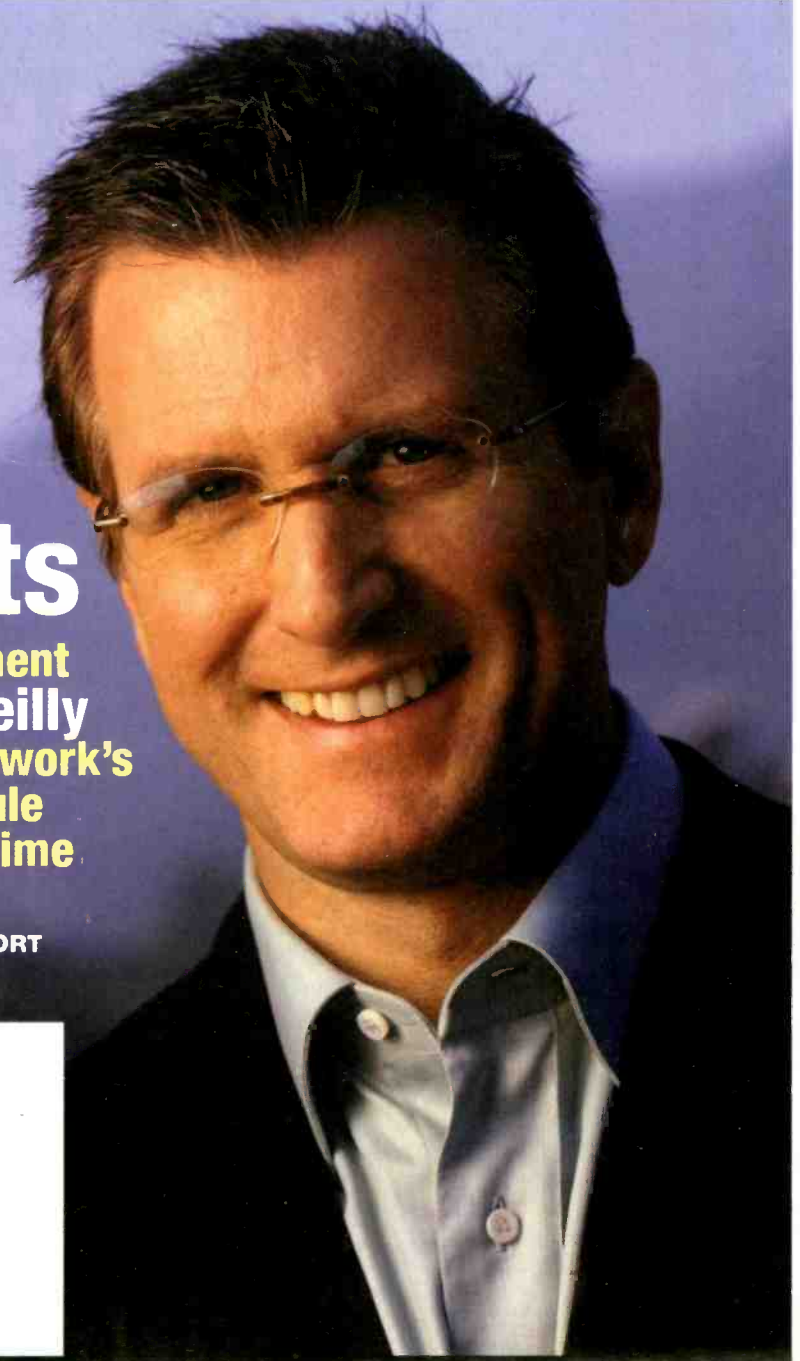
New 90-second slot frees up tight inventory roster **PAGE 8**

## Must See Results

NBC entertainment chief Kevin Reilly expects the network's new fall schedule will put prime time back on track

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NETWORK



# At Deadline

## ■ MCDOWELL BECOMES FCC'S THIRD REPUBLICAN

The U.S. Senate on May 26 confirmed Republican Robert McDowell to be a member of the Federal Communications Commission, giving FCC chairman Kevin Martin his first working majority. With McDowell as the third Republican member of the agency, Martin can more aggressively pursue plans that include pressuring cable companies to offer channels à la carte and liberalizing media-ownership rules. The agency has been at a 2-2 partisan deadlock for most of the time since Martin took office in March 2005. McDowell cleared the Senate without a recorded vote under a procedure that can be stopped by a single member's objection. McDowell is senior vp and assistant general counsel to Comptel, which represents smaller telephone companies and other competitors to the big Bell legacy firms.

## ■ FOX TV PICKS UP *HOUSEWIVES*

Fox Television has picked up *Desperate Housewives* from Disney's syndication arm, Buena Vista. Beginning in fall 2008 the program will be cleared weekends on the 10 owned-and-operated Fox stations slated to become MyNetworkTV affiliates this fall. The deal is for two years.

## ■ ELLIS NAMED *GOOD HOUSE* EDITOR

Rosemary Ellis, senior vp, editorial director of Rodale's *Prevention*, last week was named editor of *Good Housekeeping*. Ellis succeeds Ellen Levine, who formally moves to the newly created position of Hearst Magazines editorial director. Levine, editor of *GH* for the past 12 years, helped launch *O, The Oprah Magazine*, in 2000 and contributed to the launch of weekly *Quick & Simple* and lifestyle title *Weekend*. Ellis and Levine shift to their new jobs on July 17.

## ■ SIRIUS, CBS SETTLE STERN SUIT

Howard Stern and CBS Corp. on May 26 announced they reached a settlement in a breach-of-contract lawsuit brought by the CBS Radio unit against the shock jock. As part of the deal, CBS Radio will receive \$2 million in payments from Sirius Satellite Radio for CBS' broadcast recordings of *The Howard Stern Show*. No other terms and conditions were disclosed. CBS, which filed the lawsuit in February, charged that Stern had not returned recordings of his CBS radio program that under his agreement belong to the company. The suit also charged that Stern improperly used

his morning show on CBS' radio stations to promote his January move to Sirius Satellite Radio.

## ■ YAHOO, EBAY INK SEARCH, ADVERTISING DEAL

Yahoo and eBay announced plans last week to enter into a multifaceted partnership which will see Yahoo become the exclusive provider of both search and graphical ads on eBay.com, whose 50-million-plus monthly audience was mostly off limits to advertisers. As part of the new deal, eBay product results will appear more prominently on Yahoo search pages. Beyond advertising, Yahoo's content and services will be integrated within eBay's downloadable toolbar, while Yahoo will make eBay-owned PayPal its exclusive third party online payment service.

## ■ ADDENDA:

In Washington, the House expects to vote the week of June 6 on a Senate-passed measure that would raise **broadcast indecency fines** tenfold, to \$325,000. The Senate measure does not include some provisions of a bill the House passed earlier, such as fines for performers and language jeopardizing broadcast licenses for repeat indecency offenders... **Google** accounted for a whopping 50 percent of all Web searches conducted in April, according to the latest report from Nielsen//NetRatings, up from 47 percent share during the same month last year. Yahoo and MSN, Google's distant challengers, remain in second and third place, garnering 22 percent and 11 percent of searches respectively... **NBA playoff ratings** on cable and broadcast, through the Conference semifinal round, were up double-digits, according to Nielsen Media Research. ABC averaged a 3.6 rating for nine playoff games, up 16 percent from a 3.1 last year, while ESPN averaged a 2.8 cable household

rating, up 22 percent from a 2.3, for 15 games. Through 39 playoff games, TNT averaged a 2.9 cable rating, up 11 percent.

## ■ CLARIFICATION:

In the May 22 issue, *American Photo* was inadvertently omitted from the *Mediaweek* Magazine Monitor. *AP*'s ad pages for the May/June issue totaled 40.95, compared to 58.17 for May/June 2005, off 29.6 percent. Year-to-date, the bimonthly had 135.11 ad pages versus 160.50, down 15.82 percent.

## INSIDE MEDIaweek



Shop Etc.'s Lewis continues to tinker with the brand Page 24

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## Market Indicators

### NATIONAL TV: QUIET

With upfront presentations complete, network sales teams and media agencies are playing a cat-and-mouse game before solidifying upfront buys for next season. Most are predicting a protracted buying period.

### NET CABLE: STALLED

The waiting game begins as ad sales executives wait to see their broadcast counterparts' face cards. With activity at a standstill leading into Memorial Day weekend, observers anticipate a long, hot summer.

### SPOT TV: GAINING

Las Vegas, Sacramento, Washington, D.C. and Phoenix are heating up. Political is becoming more of a factor. Auto spotty, but more steady. Retail remains volatile. Most buyers still finishing third quarter buys.

### RADIO: FLAT

June is a little stronger, but overall the market is still soft and negotiable in some of the nation's largest markets, including New York, as advertisers try out-of-home and the Web.

### MAGAZINES: MIXED

Second-half gaining steam for many publishers. Teen titles remain strong, thanks to growth from tech and beauty ads. Women's lifestyle and fashion books holding steady, but women's service mags continue to lag, in part due to sluggish apparel ads.

## MEDIA WIRE

### ESPN's MNF In-Game Ads Outpacing Last Year

ESPN is pacing ahead of last year in pro and college football sales, according to Ed Erhardt, president of ESPN/ABC Sports Customer Sales and Marketing.

The network last week announced an extensive multimedia ad deal with Toyota and its Lexus brand to co-sponsor *Monday Night Football* on assorted platforms, including splitting the season-long sponsorship of the MNF halftime. "We have been selling *Monday Night Football* since March, with the most active categories being auto, home improvement, wireless and financial services," Erhardt said.

The number of in-game ad units in MNF is set by the National Football League at 43, significantly less than the 60 units for the Sunday afternoon games on CBS and Fox, so Monday inventory is tighter. Erhardt said interest has also been heavy in the Saturday night prime-time college football games that will begin airing on ABC each Saturday this fall. The Toyota deal with ESPN follows a sponsorship deal the automaker made with NBC for its *Sunday Night Football* telecasts.

CBS has done some NFL deals with auto and beer advertisers, according to John Bogusz, CBS Sports sales president and he expects talks with other advertisers to pick up in June. Likewise, Jon Nesvig, Fox sales president, said, "We've done a number of NFL and college Bowl Championship Series sales," but that the bulk of the NFL selling will kick off next month.—*John Consoli*

### Court Order Bars EchoStar From Going the Distance

A federal appeals court ruling leaves as many as one in 10 customers of satellite operator EchoStar's Dish Network facing possible service disruption.

The 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals last week told a lower court to issue an injunction barring EchoStar from providing network signals from distant cities. EchoStar, with about 12 million customers, had about 1.2 million distant network subs in 2002, the court said.

The ruling came in a case brought by affiliates alarmed at losing local audience as viewers (Continued on page 6)

THE UPFRONT BY JOHN CONSOLI

# It's Going to Be A Slow Ride

## Complications abound for broadcast market, from late budgets to DVR ratings standoff

**M**edia buyers are optimistic that the first broadcast upfront ad deals for the 2006-07 prime-time season will be done sometime this week. They also say that's dependent on network sales executives agreeing to distance themselves from the position of only basing audience guarantees on Nielsen Media Research's "live plus 7-day" ratings.

While ABC at this point last year had just about completed its upfront selling, ABC sales president Mike Shaw has taken the strongest public position against doing business with any agency that would not accept live plus 7-day ratings, which take into account time-shifted viewing from digital video recorders. And heading into this week, according to buyers, Shaw continues to be adamant about it.

"Mike Shaw will not be the first [network sales president] to break," said one major media buyer who declined to speak for attribution. "ABC should be the leader in this marketplace, but he can't because of his position on live plus 7."

If ABC is not going to set the marketplace pace, it will most likely be CBS, which has the highest-rated Thursday schedule. (Thursdays are targeted by movie companies and retailers willing to pay a premium to reach viewers before the lower-rated weekend.) Fox has also traditionally done early deals with movie companies. NBC, the fourth-place network in ratings, could try to cut some early deals, but as one media buyer, echoing several other buyers, put it: "There's not much urgency or interest in doing our first deals with NBC."

Media agencies are also standing firm—on the opposite side of the issue—on the eve of the market's movement. Cautioned one media agency executive, "Woe be the agency that breaks rank."

Heading into the Memorial Day weekend, Fox sales president

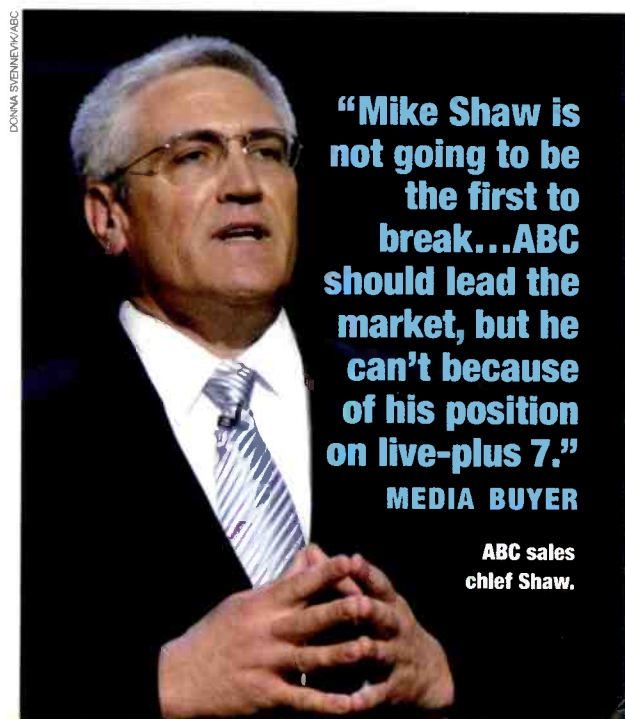
Jon Nesvig said, "There's been a lot of talk but no one can do anything until the ratings currency issue is resolved. Plus a certain amount of sparring has to go on before any deals can be done."

Another network sales exec, who also declined to be identified, added, "Everybody's talking, but nobody's listening. Live plus 7 is the big hurdle."

Donna Speciale, president, U.S. broadcast and programming for MediaVest, pointed to another damper on discussions: new media options for sale in this upfront. "Later this week, we should see more hearty discussions, but it is not going to be so cut and dry because of all the digital conversations," said Speciale. "It's going to take awhile."

Another buyer, who did not want to be identified, explained, "There is no reason to rush into this marketplace and do deals. I would hope that the agencies would proceed deliberately, thoughtfully, and do deals involving product integration and digital, as well as traditional :30s."

Yet another agency exec who spoke on



**"Mike Shaw is not going to be the first to break...ABC should lead the market, but he can't because of his position on live-plus 7."**

**MEDIA BUYER**

**ABC sales chief Shaw.**



condition of anonymity said he expects this upfront to mirror that of 2001, when deals were still being done in early July. Back then, though, the slowdown was the result of a dead market following the dot-com implosion. "Whenever this upfront buying starts, it's not going to be a 96-hour process like it has been for the past few years," said the buyer.

But everyone concedes this thinking could change if more than one of the major agencies decides to move all of its clients and spend with a frenzy. "Unfortunately, that's probably all it would take," said one agency exec.

One further complicating factor: This year, for the first time since 2001, advertisers seem to be in no rush to get their ad dollars laid into the networks. And if the agencies don't know how much money their clients want to spend, they can't spend it. Budgets have been coming in later and later each year, but this year has been the latest by far. Some agencies said they had still not received their clients' ad budgets by the end of upfront presentations on May 18.

Part of the advertisers' hesitance is based on the fact that the scatter market over the past four years has seen pricing close to or even equal to upfront pricing. Why rush to lock in prices in the upfront, when you can hold onto that money and decide to spend it—or not—later in the season and not have to pay a premium?

In addition, the lack of obvious hits among the broadcast networks' new slate of prime-time shows have advertisers and their agencies thinking that holding back dollars,—at times a gamble—may not be such a bad idea this upfront. Ideally, holding back dollars offers advertisers more options, i.e., being able to spend on spontaneous promotions during the season, and the freedom to spend on any new digital platforms that TV programs are added to during the season.

Several media agencies concede that their clients committed so much money in last year's upfront, they had few discretionary ad dollars left over to take advantage of the digital platforms nets began offering during the season. More than a few buyers told *MediaWeek* during upfront presentations two weeks ago that they plan to hold back millions of their clients' dollars in the upfront, for potential placement later in digital platforms that may arise during the season.

Neither cable nor syndication sales executives, meanwhile, are expected to benefit by the delay in broadcast buying. "Cable is sitting on the sidelines, waiting to see what happens with broadcast," said one cable network sales executive. "It missed its window and now it is going to have to wait." ■

THE UPFRONT BY JOHN CONSOLI

# Buyers: NBC Shifts Smart

## Network must counterprogram to compete, they say

**M**edia buyers were for the most part supportive of the bevy of scheduling changes NBC announced last week for its new 2006-07 season. Expectations were that NBC would move its new Thursday 9 p.m. drama, *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*. It did, to Monday at 10. But no one expected changes on every night of the week except for repeat-laden Saturday.

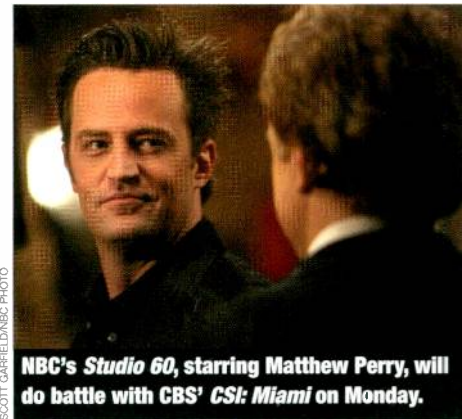
Buyers seemed willing to accept NBC Entertainment president Kevin Reilly's rationale of, "Let's just launch our new shows in the most opportunistic time periods."

Said one media buyer, who did not want to speak for attribution, "We are talking about the fourth-rated network here. NBC needs to be reacting to what the networks ahead of it do...so it can try to improve its ratings."

Donna Speciale, president of U.S. broadcast and programming at MediaVest, was not surprised by NBC's adjustments. "With *Studio 60*, in particular, the show has a better chance to succeed where it was moved," she said.

Marc Goldstein, MindShare CEO, echoed Speciale. "No one is surprised by these changes. If this was done once the season started, it would be bad. But the viewers really are not going to even be aware of this," he said.

Goldstein argued that shifting *Studio 60* out of the 9 p.m. Thursday time slot and replacing it with game show *Deal or No Deal* makes sense, because *Deal* will now be the only nonscripted show up against four dramas. Likewise, he added, moving *The Biggest Loser* to 9 p.m. on Wednesday makes it the only nonscripted show up against four dramas. Goldstein also said moving *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* to 9 p.m. Tuesday, leading into *Law & Order: SVU* creates a natural audience



SCOTT GARRELD/ABC PHOTO

NBC's *Studio 60*, starring Matthew Perry, will do battle with CBS' *CSI: Miami* on Monday.

flow, and moving *20 Good Years* and *30 Rock* to the 8 p.m. Tuesdays, makes them the only two sitcoms in that hour. "We are not going to penalize NBC for making these changes," Goldstein said. "These were changes NBC had to make to be more competitive."

Lyle Schwartz, executive vp/director of broadcast research at Mediaedge:cia, called the new NBC schedule "not bad," adding it will "not produce a significant evaporation of audiences." But Schwartz does not think *Studio 60* on Monday versus CBS' veteran drama *CSI: Miami* will fare much better than it would have on Thursday. "It might have worked better on Tuesday night at 10, against [new CBS drama] *Smith*, and [ABC drama] *Boston Legal*, which has slipped a bit."

Reilly defended moving *Law & Order* to 10 p.m. Friday from Wednesday at 10, even though audience levels dip on the night. "[CBS drama] *Numb3rs* has had a free pass on the night," Reilly said. "*Law & Order* fits the audience profile for the night, female 35-plus. We think we can win that time period." ■

TV PRODUCTION BY A.J. FRUTKIN

# Group Dynamics

## Three new comedies look an awful lot like *Friends*

**A**s network comedy remains mired in decline, it's no surprise that broadcasters would look to the *Friends* formula for inspiration. Among the notable trends to emerge from May's upfront presentations is a reliance on twenty- and thirty-something

ensemble comedies, including CBS' *The Class*, from Jeffrey Klarik and *Friends* co-creator David Crane. ABC and NBC announced similarly cast midseason comedies *In Case of Emergency*, and *The Singles Table*, respectively.

Of course, the creators behind most of

## MEDIA WIRE

turned to EchoStar's selection of CBS, NBC, ABC and Fox signals from New York, Los Angeles, Denver, Atlanta and Chicago. That may have improperly happened with "hundreds of thousands" of households, the appeals court said.

It was not clear when the lower court might issue the injunction. Affected customers could seek to receive local channels from EchoStar, switch to cable or turn to satellite rival DirecTV, which is controlled by News Corp. —*Todd Shields*

### Google Going Gaga Over New Video Ad Offering

Google's new video-based ad product, launched last week as the latest offering within the search giant's AdSense network, has the potential to catapult the search giant past major TV content providers when it comes to online video advertising, said company execs.

The new product allows Web publishers large and small to run video ads on their sites, regardless of whether these sites feature video content. Google executives said the network could eventually yield more inventory and scale than the largest Web video properties.

"We believe this network could potentially have the largest video ad distribution network in the world," said Gokul Rajaram, product management director, Google AdSense. Rajaram added that for TV advertisers, the video platform will also create an outlet for low-cost, large-scale copy testing. "It's like a 24/7 focus group," he said, adding that the new ads, which play only when clicked, offer advertisers the opportunity to reach a more engaged user than the pre-roll video ad units commonly attached to online video content. —*Mike Shields*

### CBS Corp. Puts 35 Radio Stations on the Block

Focused on large market radio, CBS Radio has been shopping part of its 179-station portfolio for more than a year. Last week the group officially put up a for-sale sign on 35 stations in 10 markets.

"We don't need to sell these stations, but these markets don't have the same growth profile that our other markets do," said Fred (Continued on page 8)

these comedies said *Friends* was the furthest thing from their minds when they came up with their shows. Crane and Klarik, for example, wrote three different pilots before they began pitching to the networks last development season. *The Class* was just the best of the bunch. "The fact that it was an ensemble was really a liability," Crane said. "We didn't want



ABC's *In Case of Emergency* is like *Friends*, 10 years later, says exec producer Levisetti.

people to think, 'Oh, there they go again.'"

Klarik and Crane looked to ABC's *Lost* and *Desperate Housewives*, and to their favorite reality shows for inspiration. "There are weeks where you don't see certain characters on those shows, which is what happens in real life. That's what we set out to do," Klarik said. "It's not like our characters meet, and from that moment on, their lives are entwined."

Crane further stressed that *The Class*' ensemble is far from a tight-knit, *Friends*-like

group. "I don't think you'll ever see the whole cast hang out together," he said, noting that they avoided creating a central hangout, like *Friends*' Central Perk coffee house. "We're not sure if by the end of the season these characters will all know each other anymore."

One thing that is similar between the two shows is the ages of the casts. For CBS, which is trying to age down, advertisers believe that's no coincidence. "You want to bring in shows with casts that represent the types of viewers you want to attract," said Shari Anne Brill, vp/director of programming at Carat. What's more, "If you want to get younger, you go with unknowns, because that's where the breakout potential is," said Steve Sternberg, executive vp and director of audience analysis at Magna Global USA. "Stars drive older skewing shows."

Of these three new comedies, ABC's thirty-something comedy *In Case of Emergency* may have the oldest and best-known cast, including David Arquette, Jonathan Silverman and *Ally McBeal*'s Greg Germann. Like *The Class*, *Emergency* also revolves around characters for whom life didn't turn out as planned. But executive producer Emile Levisetti acknowledged that the midseason comedy bears some resemblance to the NBC classic, in that it still revolves around a group of single, young-ish adults: "It's *Friends*, 10 years later." ■

#### NETWORK TV BY JOHN CONSOLI

## Sweeping Up the Season

### Fox takes 18-49 demo honors; CBS wins total viewers

**P**ropelled by ratings juggernaut *American Idol*, Fox last week claimed victory in the key adults 18-49 demo for the largely uneventful May sweeps. Fox also iced its second consecutive full-season 18-49 win and took viewers 18-34 for the seventh time in eight years.

CBS won the May sweeps and the season in total viewers, and while Fox captured the sweeps among viewers 25-54, CBS won that demo for the full season.

Fox's May sweeps and full season win in 18-49 was fueled not only by *Idol*, but also by stronger performances from drama hits *24*, *House*, *Prison Break* and *Bones*. In addition, Fox's Sunday comedy block produced double-digit ratings increases.

Several Fox shows also exceeded their 18-49 ratings or time-period ratings in the demo

from last season, including *House* (29 percent), *The War at Home* (24 percent), *Prison Break* (18 percent), *King of the Hill* and *Family Guy* (14 percent) and *Idol* and *24* (12 percent).

"Fox is in good shape for next season, because there is no reason to think *American Idol* will decline anytime soon, and some of Fox's new shows look pretty good," said Steve Sternberg, executive vp and director of audience analysis at Magna Global USA. Despite Fox's strong performance, Sternberg said "CBS is in the best shape going into next season, partly because it has the Super Bowl, but also because it has the most stable schedule."

With the fewest new series on next season's schedule, Sternberg said, "CBS will be able to best focus its promotional efforts."

Peter Liguori, Fox Entertainment presi-

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## MEDIA WIRE

Reynolds, executive vp and CFO of CBS, during last week's Morgan Stanley media conference.

The stations in Austin, Texas; Buffalo, N.Y.; Cincinnati and Columbus, Ohio; Fresno, Calif; Greensboro-Winston/Salem, N.C.; Kansas City, Mo.; Memphis, Tenn; Rochester, N.Y. and San Antonio, Texas, are the group's lowest revenue-producing clusters, but could fetch CBS as much as \$1 billion, according to BIA Financial Network.

Add that to the \$1.24 billion the company is getting for selling Paramount Parks and CBS has a nice war chest. But don't expect it to buy Univision or anything of that magnitude. "Our first priority is giving money back to our shareholders," said Les Moonves, president and CEO of CBS. "We are also looking for other ways of amassing content. We are looking at potential acquisitions in a smaller way on the Internet, in the news space," he said. —Katy Bachman

### ESPN Takes Bonds Show Out of Rotation, For Now

ESPN Original Entertainment's controversial docu/reality series *Bonds on Bonds* will go on hiatus after its May 30 telecast, but the ESPN exec overseeing the show said last week the sports net contractually can televise nine additional half-hours, and will do so if Bonds gets closer to Hank Aaron's all-time home run record.

"This was not a decision based on ratings," said Joan Lynch, executive producer of EOE. "In our opinion, the audience was not getting enough compelling content. The show had become a little slow with not enough happening."

*Bonds* had been averaging a 0.5 rating in recent weeks. Much of that was because Bonds has not hit as many home runs this season as expected. He tied Babe Ruth for second on the all-time list with 714, but has been slow at hitting 715, which is 40 behind Aaron.

Lynch said Tollin Robbins, the production company behind the show, will continue to follow and film Bonds this season, because they are producing a full-length documentary apart from the ESPN series. "If we decide to bring it back, there would not be a lack of material," she said. —JC

dent, said though it may seem likely that CBS will win the 18-49 race, Fox won the demo race this season without the Super Bowl. Liguori said getting Fox off to a solid start in prime time next season—despite the interruption of the Major League Baseball playoffs in October—will be to seamlessly start summer with fresh programming. For exam-



**American Idol's finale cemented Fox's victory with a huge 14.1 rating in the 18-49 demo.**

FOY MICHAEL/FOX

ple, the first day after the May sweeps ended, May 25, Fox premiered summer reality show *So You Think You Can Dance*, to solid 18-49 numbers. The show can be used all summer to promote its new fall slate, which Fox will launch in August and early September before the official start of the season.

Fox won May with a 4.8 rating in adults 18-49, up 7 percent over last May; CBS ranked second with a 3.7, a 10 percent drop; ABC was third (3.5, down 5 percent) followed by NBC (3.1, down 3 percent). For the season, Fox averaged a level 4.1 in 18-49; followed by ABC (4.0, up 8 percent), CBS (3.8, down 5 percent) and NBC (3.3, down 6 percent).

CBS won the sweeps in viewers, averaging 12.5 million per night, down 8 percent, topping Fox (11.6 million viewers, up 9 percent). For the season, CBS averaged 12.8 million viewers, down 2 percent, followed by ABC (10.7 million, up 7 percent), Fox (10 million viewers, up 1 percent), and NBC (9.7 million viewers, down 1 percent). ■

TV SPORTS BY ANTHONY CRUPI

## YES Calls Up New Avails

### Yanks net offers clients exclusive 90-second ad slots

While the rules that govern baseball have been tweaked occasionally in order to streamline the national pastime—witness the incredible shrinking strike zone and the drop in the Ks-to-walks ratio—the game hasn't changed much since Babe Ruth knocked the cover off the dead ball era in 1920.

YES Network president and CEO Tracy Dolgin approached the task of serving his ad partners with similar incremental tweaks, introducing a number of new branding opportunities. Dolgin's latest marketing play is a customizable ad pod that YES pitches as a "content break," offering clients a 90-second spot at the end of the fifth inning that serves as a showcase for movie trailers or TV specials. The spots are teased twice by the YES broadcast team, who also refer back to the promos shortly after they run.

Besides theatricals, the content breaks have been bought by cable nets looking to juice new series or specials. Fox is buying time for some of FX's original series as well as National Geographic Channel's upcoming *Space Race: The Untold Story* (June 4). Fox News Channel is also in the game, programming special news updates for the midgame breaks.

Michael Wach, YES exec vp of ad sales, said that the 90-second spots and related

booth chatter go for "a premium" over what a client would normally pay for an A position and two :30s, adding that the value of the package lies in its exclusivity. "The premium comes from being the only client in the 90-second break for that particular night," Wach said.

For YES, the initiative provides valuable elasticity. Because the net's 125-game slate of Yankees games sells out—"including the pre-game, post-game and batting practice shows," Wach said—the package squeezes more cash out of its limited inventory.

Other plays, including a product integration package tied to YES' reality series *The Ultimate Road Trip*, have helped swelled YES' coffers. According to Kagan Research, YES raked in \$44 million in ad revenue in 2005, up from \$38.5 million in '04. (*Forbes'* annual business of baseball report pegs YES' gross ad sales for 2005 at \$62 million.)

Dom Camera, chairman and CEO of DCA Associates, which handled Fox's buys on YES, said the broadcaster signed a three-year deal with the net that he said is priced at "seven figures, annually." Camera added that the segment throws to FNC should allow the news net to reach a younger audience: "If you're looking to grow past your core demo, this is the way to do it." ■



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market profile



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BY MARC BERMAN

Mr. Television



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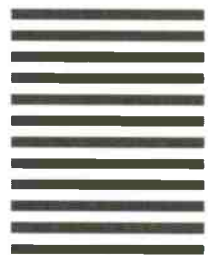


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CABLE TV BY ANTHONY CRUPI

# Cable Heeds Street Signs

## Stocks, subscribers are up as satellite sees softening

**T**hey're still a long way from the hearts-and-flowers stage of the relationship, but it appears that after years of studied indifference, Wall Street has begun to cozy up to the major cable operators. The change of heart comes on the heels of a record quarter for the industry, as the top multiple-system operators reversed a six-year trend by adding basic video subscribers in the first quarter of 2006.

All told, cable added more than 220,000 basic subs in the quarter, thanks in large part to aggressive pricing initiatives that some observers said are designed to boost share prices. "Cable is clearly responding to Wall Street," said Bruce Leichtman, principal analyst and president at Leichtman Research Group, who added that while the MSOs have their eyes on bigger game, meeting analysts' demands was easier than arguing the point any further. "There's nothing to it. They just give it away."

And while cheap bundles are boosting the rolls—introductory packages of low-end video, high-speed Internet and voice are now widely offered at price points of \$100 and under—reversals at two cable operators in particular have had a profound impact on the overall numbers. "Around 75 percent of the [basic sub] losses in the last few years were from two companies: Charter and Adelphia. So once you stop bleeding at those companies, the whole industry begins to level off," said Leichtman. As recently as the fourth quarter of 2004, both Charter and Adelphia combined for a net loss of 186,000 subs, Leichtman said. In first quarter 2006, Charter added more than 29,000, while Adelphia dipped slightly (2.1 percent) versus a year ago.

While cable put the brakes on its sub declines, its DBS rivals went retrograde. DirecTV added 255,000 net new subs in the first quarter, only half the 505,000 increase of a year ago. EchoStar's DISH Network saw its growth slow by 31 percent, adding 225,000 net subs versus 325,000 in first quarter '05.

As was the case with the MSOs, the satellite providers were merely following Wall Street's marching orders. "DirecTV got a little choosier. They made sure the subs they added were a better credit risk," said Kagan Research senior analyst Ian Olgeirson. "They're not

bottom-feeding as much."

EchoStar is also chasing more valuable subs, initiating stricter credit policies designed to minimize the number of non-paying customers. "If we're turning customers who don't pay us much or don't pay their bills, that's not necessarily a bad thing," said EchoStar chair-

### CABLE'S SUB GROWTH VS. SATELLITE'S

	2002	2003	2004	2005
Satellite	2.20	2.29	3.20	2.33
Digital Cable	4.77	3.21	2.84	3.10
Basic Cable	-0.78	-0.06	-0.58	-0.20

SUBSCRIBER GROWTH IN MILLIONS SOURCE: KAGAN RESEARCH

man and CEO Charlie Ergen during the company's recent quarterly earnings call.

Long the exception to the rule, Cablevision enjoyed its eighth consecutive quarter of basic sub growth, adding 39,000 new customers in first quarter. Once they take the bait, Cablevision subs tend to sign on for more advanced digital services. The company's digital penetration is a whopping 68 percent, and average monthly revenue per basic sub for first quarter was \$104.24, up 14 percent over '05 (both figures are industry highs).

Cablevision will have to continue to outperform if it's to withstand pressure from DBS foes and the emergent telco players moving into its turf. Verizon has been particularly aggressive in targeting Cablevision, landing video franchises in four Long Island, N.Y., towns, including one in Hempstead, just nine miles down the road from the MSO's Bethpage headquarters.

Cablevision COO Tom Rutledge said he thinks the Verizon threat is overstated. "I think on a national basis they have between 3,000 and 6,000 video customers," Rutledge said. "So they have between 1 percent and 2 percent penetration across their activated footprint."

If Wall Street is enthusiastic about cable's basic subs turnaround, it's even more jazzed about advanced digital services. "There's no single magic bullet for why they did so well, although the broad availability of phone on the three-product bundle probably helped," Olgeirson said.

At any rate, cable's been rewarded on the trading floor—MSO stocks have risen by about 20 percent since the end of last year. ■

# market profile

BY EILEEN DAVIS HUDSON



Bush toured the U.S.-Mexico border south of Phoenix last month as the immigration issue roiled.

PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVISAP PHOTO

season. The market now has 1.67 million TV households.

Gannett Co.'s NBC affiliate KPNX-TV has been the market's late news leader in both key demos and households for 45 consecutive books, says John Misner, the station's president and general manager (*due to its Olympics coverage, KPNX's late news ratings are not included in Nielsen chart on page 14*). KPNX is also the market's top biller, pulling in an estimated \$75 million in revenue in 2005, a 19.3 percent slice, according to BIA Financial Network.

For other markets, go to the Market Profile Index at [mediaweek.com](http://mediaweek.com)

While the station's late news has remained solid, its daytime schedule from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. has been completely overhauled in the last few years. The latest change the KPNX daytime lineup comes on June 5 with the launch of a half-hour noon newscast. In the fall, KPNX will launch *The Ellen DeGeneres Show* at 3 p.m. The station currently airs a double run of *Starting Over* at noon and 3 p.m.

Prior to last November's sweeps, KPNX rebranded and revamped its 6 p.m. news as *Arizona Nightly News* to more closely align with NBC's *Nightly News*, says Misner. The station also hired two translators to start a Spanish-language SAP feed of its 6 p.m. news. "We're the only Phoenix English-language TV station that broadcasts in Spanish," Misner says.

Gannett also owns a second NBC affiliate in the market, KNAZ-TV, in nearby Flagstaff. Gannett has owned the station since 1997 but put KNAZ up for sale. With changes in technology and the availability of cable and satellite, more people are tuning in to KPNX, says Misner, who also serves as gm of KNAZ. The Flagstaff station simulcasts much of KPNX's local programs. However, KNAZ produces its own local news at 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. It will be up to any future owner to decide whether to keep those newscasts, says Misner.

Belo Corp. is a powerful multimedia entity in Phoenix, where it owns two broadcast TV stations, two cable news channels and various online properties.

The market's former ABC affiliate, Belo's KTVK is one of the most successful Independent

## Phoenix

**BASKING IN THE DRY HEAT OF THE ARIZONA DESERT, PHOENIX HAS** become a burgeoning destination of choice for those looking for an enhanced quality of life and access to more affordable housing. Known as the Valley of the Sun, the fifth-largest city in the U.S. is the nation's

second fastest-growing city in terms of overall population. Demographically though, Phoenix has the country's fastest growing Hispanic population.

Technology heavyweights such as Intel and Motorola already have a sizable presence in Phoenix. Some existing companies are expanding there, and new firms are moving in, including America West Airways. The airline, which finalized its purchase of bankrupt U.S. Airways last September, is now headquartered in the area under its new U.S. Airways name.

In October, Internet search giant Google Inc., based in Mountain View, Calif., announced a plan to open a new engineering and customer support office in the Phoenix area. The company plans to hire hun-

dreds of employees for the new office, which will focus on engineering, operations as well as IT support functions.

The Phoenix (Prescott) DMA is experiencing such exponential growth that the market jumped two sizes in the past year, becoming the 14th-largest market in the country at the start of the 2005-06 television

### NIelsen MONITOR-PLUS AD SPENDING BY MEDIA/PHOENIX

	JAN.-SEPT. 2004	JAN.-SEPT. 2005
Spot TV	\$432,007,652	\$440,316,825
Local Newspaper	\$326,071,590	\$344,609,930
Spot Radio	n/a	\$153,366,660
Outdoor	\$42,177,302	\$43,744,410
Local Magazine	\$18,430,450	\$21,892,780
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$818,686,994</b>	<b>\$1,003,930,605</b>

Source: Nielsen Monitor-Plus



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# market profile

stations in the country. KTVK offers popular syndicated programs, including *Entertainment Tonight*, *Inside Edition*, *Dr. Phil* and *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. *Dr. Phil* airs at 2 p.m. followed by *Oprah* at 3 p.m. The shows are also double-run: 7 p.m. for *Dr. Phil* and 9 p.m. for *Oprah*. KTVK also produces eight hours of local news coverage daily, more than any of its network rivals. KTVK has launched a search for a new news director as executive news director Scott Deiner is leaving at the end of this month.

Belo's other broadcast TV station is WB affiliate KASW-TV, which will become the local CW affiliate in September. Executives for the Belo stations did not return phone calls seeking comment for this article. The company's 24-hour cable news stations include English-language Arizona News Channel and Spanish-language ¡Más! Arizona.

Meredith Corp.'s CBS affiliate KPHO-TV has made investments in talent and programming to boost market position. The station hired Mike Chamberlain away from rival

KTVK to be its morning news co-anchor. Chamberlain, who started on KPHO in mid-February, worked at KTVK for 18 years, mostly handling sports coverage.

So far this year KPHO has doubled its morning news ratings from a 2 share to a 4. "I'll be the first to admit it's coming off a small base," says Steven Hammel, KPHO vp/gm. Hammel says Chamberlain's hire is part of the reason for the station's recent growth in the daypart, but he also credits the station's greater emphasis on weather.

In September, KPHO will launch *Rachael Ray* at 4 p.m. Among new initiatives, KPHO began a marketing partnership with a local, upscale monthly magazine targeting the area's Hispanics, called *Latino Perspectives*.

Scripps Howard Broadcasting's ABC affiliate KNXV-TV plans to unveil a 4 p.m. news this summer. Although there are two competing local newscasts at 4:30 p.m., KNXV's will be the first at 4 p.m. The station has seen its news ratings improve over the course of the last year from being an also-ran to a news

contender. For instance, its 10 p.m. late news ranks third against the other 10 p.m. news competitors, up from last place among local newscasts last year.

Janice Todd is overseeing KNXV's growth trend. Todd, a longtime Scripps exec, was officially promoted to vp/gm of the station last August after serving as interim gm for four months. Todd most recently served as KNXV's general sales manager since 1999. The station promoted former national sales manager Kimberly Steele to the gsm spot to succeed Todd. KNXV has the rights to the National Football League preseason Arizona Cardinals' games.

Fox Television Stations owns three properties in Phoenix: Fox owned-and-operated station KSAZ-TV, UPN affiliate KUTP and Fox Sports Net Arizona on cable. Fox Sports Net Arizona this year carried 35 regular-season Phoenix Suns National Basketball Association games, 73 Arizona Diamondbacks Major League Baseball games and 41 Phoenix Coyotes National Hockey League

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## NEWSPAPERS: THE ABCS

games. The cable net also has rights to Arizona State University and the University of Arizona games.

KSAZ is a key player in the local news race. For instance, its 5 and 5:30 p.m. newscasts finished No. 1 in households in February, while its 10 p.m. newscast finished second only to KPHO's. KSAZ is launching a 6 p.m., 30-minute newscast on July 31. Along with the market's growth, "The appetite and the need for local news has grown as well," explains Pat Nevin, KSAZ and KUTP vp/gm. Nevin adds that since his station is routinely No. 1 at 5 p.m. (in households), he fully expects to win at 6 p.m.

KUTP, which doesn't air local news, will become the market's MyNetworkTV affiliate this fall. KUTP is the broadcast TV home of the Phoenix Suns, who at press time had just won Game 1 of the NBA's Western Conference finals.

As for KUTP's impending new affiliation, Nevin says he's excited about the fact that the new network will feature telenove-

	DAILY CIRCULATION	SUNDAY CIRCULATION	DAILY MARKET PENETRATION	SUNDAY MARKET PENETRATION
<b>Maricopa County: 1,264,269 Households</b>				
<i>The Arizona Republic</i>	392,533	497,754	32.0%	40.6%
<i>East Valley Tribune</i>	94,780	74,832	7.5%	5.9%
<b>Yavapai County: 77,629 Households</b>				
<i>The Arizona Republic</i>	11,540	16,196	14.9%	20.9%
<b>Pinal County: 69,943 Households</b>				
<i>The Arizona Republic</i>	14,033	16,546	20.0%	23.6%
<i>Casa Grande Dispatch</i>	8,858		12.7%	
<i>East Valley Tribune</i>	8,714	9,114	12.5%	13.0%
<i>Arizona Daily Star</i>	2,742	3,839	3.9%	5.5%
<b>Coconino County: 44,417 Households</b>				
<i>Arizona Daily Sun</i>	11,300	12,484	25.4%	28.1%
<i>The Arizona Republic</i>	5,890	6,383	13.3%	14.4%
<b>Navajo County: 32,590 Households</b>				
<i>The Arizona Republic</i>	4,598	4,482	14.1%	13.8%
<i>The Gallup Independent</i>	1,084		3.3%	
<b>Gila County: 20,813 Households</b>				
<i>The Arizona Republic</i>	4,063	5,601	19.0%	26.2%
<i>East Valley Tribune</i>	384	504	1.8%	2.4%

Data is based on audited numbers published in the Audit Bureau of Circulations' Fall 2005 County Penetration Report.

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# market profile

las (albeit in English), which have long been wildly popular in the Hispanic community (telenovelas on Univision and Telemundo are some of those networks' top-rated shows). Accordingly, he fully anticipates KUTP to outperform the national average for the new network.

The reason? Phoenix, the No. 9-ranked Hispanic market, has a persons 2-plus Hispanic population of 1.1 million, according to Nielsen Universe Estimates for 2006. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that Hispanics make up 38.5 percent of the Phoenix area's total population, and that 81 percent are of Mexican descent.

NBC Universal is in the process of adding an antenna and swapping its Telemundo station KPHZ-TV in Holbrook, Ariz., with noncommercial station KDTP in Phoenix,

owned by Daystar Television Network's Community Television Educators. KPHZ gm Thelma Abril says she expects the channel swap to be completed by July. KPHZ (analog channel 11) is now on KDTP's former home at channel 39 in Phoenix. Prior to the deal, in which NBC also paid CTE \$49 million, KPHZ had trouble reaching its target audience in Phoenix.

The Federal Communications Commission approved the unusual arrangement because it said the adjustment would give the Univision and Telemundo affiliates a more level playing-field in one of the nation's largest Hispanic markets. Besides moving its noncommercial programming to the Holbrook station, Daystar also picked up Telemundo's Class A low-power station in Phoenix, KDRX-CA, enabling it to con-

tinue to serve the Phoenix area.

Phoenix has long dealt with the immigration issues President George W. Bush addressed in his May 18 visit to Arizona. The visit was the first that followed his televised May 15 speech on proposed changes to U.S. immigration policy. Despite the life-threatening perils of crossing the desert, Arizona remains the busiest crossing-point for illegal immigrants on the U.S.-Mexico border.

One of the leading voices in reaching the area's large and fast-growing Hispanic population is Univision O&O KTVW-TV. The station is not only Phoenix's dominant Spanish-language outlet, but it also is one of the city's leading TV stations overall.

For instance, the February sweeps marked the seventh consecutive period in which KTVW ranked No.1 among adults 18-49 in total weekly viewing. Univision's 5 p.m. news, *Noticias 33*, is No. 1 across all major demographic categories, including adults 18-34, 18-49 and 25-54. For example, in February, KTVW earned a 3.5 rating in adults 18-49 at 5 p.m. versus KSAZ's 1.6, although KSAZ ranked first in households. Univision also owns the local TeleFutura affiliate KFPH-TV.

About 59 percent of the Phoenix DMA is wired for cable, slightly below the average for the top 50 markets, while satellite penetration of 24 percent equals the national average, according to Scarborough Research (see chart on page 16).

Cox Communications is the Phoenix area's dominant cable company. Other service providers serving the market include Cable ONE, Quest Communications, and Cable America. Cox's ad-sales arm, Cox Media, serves as the local interconnect. The interconnect reaches 816,500 subscribers in the DMA, or 81.9 percent of all cable TV households in the market, according to Nielsen Universe Estimates.

KPNX and KNAZ, which had been taken off Cable ONE's cable system lineup for a month at the start of the year, were reinstated in February just days before the Winter Olympics, after the two sides came to accord on a new retransmission agreement.

In local newspapers, Gannett Co. owns the state's largest newspaper, *The Arizona Republic*. Gannett purchased the *Republic* and the other properties owned by family-run Central Newspapers Inc. in 2000 for \$2.6 billion. Those other properties include a direct marketing company in Phoenix, Carantin & Co., and the area's largest Web site, azcentral.com.

The *Republic's* average daily circulation of 438,722 as of March (Continued on page 16)

## NIelsen RATINGS/PHOENIX

EVENING AND LATE-NEWS DAYPARTS, WEEKDAYS

### Evening News

TIME	NETWORK	STATION	RATING	SHARE	
4:30-5 p.m.	Independent	KTVK	4.4	10	
	NBC	KPNX	2.4	5	
5-5:30 p.m.	Fox	KSAZ	5.2	10	
	Independent	KTVK	4.5	9	
	NBC	KPNX	4.5	9	
	Univision	KTVW	3.6	7	
	CBS	KPHO	2.7	5	
	ABC	KNXV	2.6	5	
	WB	KASW*	1.6	3	
5:30-6 p.m.	UPN	KUTP*	1.2	2	
	Fox	KSAZ	4.6	9	
	Independent	KTVK	3.9	7	
	CBS	KPHO	2.8	5	
	6-6:30 p.m.	NBC	KPNX	6.3	11
		Univision	KTVW*	4.3	7
		Independent	KTVK*	4.0	7
		ABC	KNXV	3.7	6
Fox		KSAZ*	3.3	6	
WB		KASW*	2.7	5	
6:30-7 p.m.	UPN	KUTP*	2.7	5	
	CBS	KPHO	4.0	7	
8-8:30 p.m.	Independent	KTVK	3.7	5	

### Late News

9-9:30 p.m.	Fox	KSAZ	6.0	9
10-10:30 p.m.	CBS	KPHO	6.6	11
	Fox	KSAZ	4.9	8
	ABC	KNXV	4.0	7
	WB	KASW*	3.7	6
	Independent	KTVK	3.4	6
	Univision	KTVW	3.2	5
	UPN	KUTP*	1.1	2
	NBC	KPNX	#	#

\*Non-news programming. #Olympics coverage. Source: Nielsen Media Research, February 2006.



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# Special Report

MAY 29, 2006

# Upfront

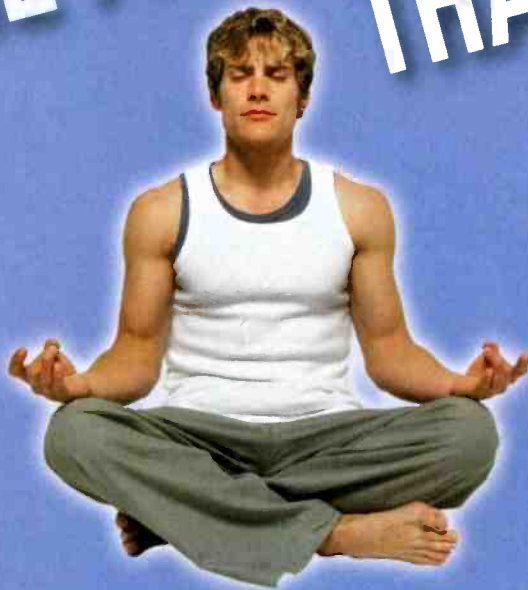
## THE PROGRAMMERS

Buyers look at the new schedules and make their picks for hits and misses in the new fall TV season

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# Upfront

## THE PROGRAMMERS

### EDITOR'S NOTE

AFTER ALL THE UPFRONT presentations were over and the last shrimp was served, what were viewers left with? A total of 26 new shows, 15 dramas and 11 comedies. While that sounds like a fairly even split, the dramas are getting the lion's share of the spotlight, while the comedies remain under the radar. Sure, NBC has a potential hit in the *Saturday Night Live*-inspired *30 Rock*, and buyers like CBS' *The Class* and Fox's *Til Death*. But where are the breakout hits?

"We're not waving a white flag, but we're trying to get really practical about it," NBC entertainment chief Kevin Reilly tells *Mediaweek*'s A.J. Frutkin in "Life of Reilly," which begins on page 6. "If the audience is not willing to go there with you, we ultimately say it's got to be about quality, not about any particular type of show."

However, there's one type of show that all the networks are embracing: the serial drama. We're not talking *Knot's Landing* here. Think *Mysterious*. Scary. Tense. With titles such as *Kidnapped*, *Jericho*, *Rumaway*, *Vanished*—all designed to hook viewers with the first episode, and keep them watching week after week.

"When they work, you get an incredible loyalty factor," one agency executive tells contributing writer Eric Schmuckler in "Serial Thrillers," beginning on page 12. The downside? As another exec explains, if a show doesn't grab viewers at the start—and new viewers feel they can't catch up—"you could be in real trouble, real fast."

Last season, there were 31 new network shows. Only nine are coming back this fall. How much trouble could a few new shows create?

Patricia Orsini, Editor, Special Reports



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Fifteen dramas and 11 comedies equal the networks' new offerings for fall.  
**BY MARC BERMAN**

KEVIN REILLY: VERN EVANS; MIDWINTER: WILL HARTINEC PHOTO

THE ANNUAL UPFRONT negotiations produce plenty of buzz about what the prime-time schedule will bring come fall: Which series will get a new time slot? Which newcomer promises to become the next *Desperate Housewives* or *Friends*? Which past-his-prime movie star will be brought out of mothballs to helm yet another sitcom?

But this year, advertisers and buyers at the upfronts also had mornings on their mind. Nearly two months after Katie Couric announced she would fly her longtime perch at NBC's No. 1 *Today* show for the *CBS Evening News* and Meredith Vieira of ABC's *The View* was tapped to take over, speculation about the future of the a.m. daypart—now generating nearly \$1 billion in annual ad business and solidly the biggest money-maker for the nets after prime—has refused to die down.

The subject of mornings heated up again last week, with news that Charlie Gibson—who, along with Diane Sawyer, co-hosts ABC's *Good Morning America*—would become anchor of the net's *World News Tonight*, leaving *GMA* at the end of June.

Americans are working longer, rising earlier, and developing an ever-growing appetite for news, weather and traffic along with their Pop Tarts. Advertisers have taken notice,

ter pricing. It is a good value point for advertisers and certainly a shining star for network TV."

To John Kelly, NBC's senior vp, news network sales, the appeal of the morning shows is clear. "In this world, where we're bombarded with information and news and data virtually 24 hours a day, we get 'em fresh, at the start of the day," he says. "Eyeballs are watching, and that brings advertisers."

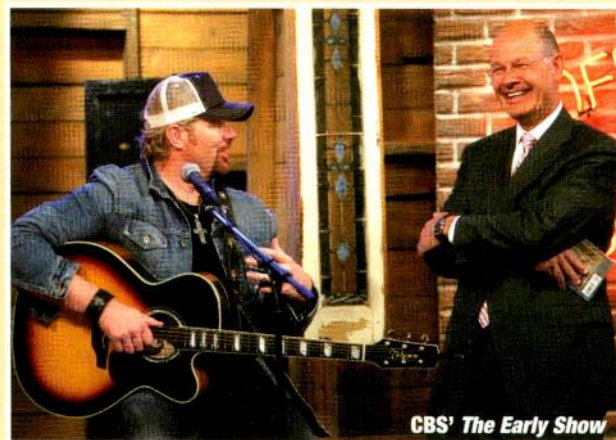
*Today* executive producer Jim Bell adds that morning viewers "wake up and want, in a post-9/11 world, to understand that everything is still in one piece. In a world of exploding niche programming, we're broadcasters, we still have a big-tent feel and appeal to as wide an audience as possible with news, medical information, books, music, entertainment. Morning television provides great range."

As for what's ahead for *Today*, with its record 545-week ratings domination, the Katie-Meredith changeover "has not diminished demand [among advertisers] by one iota," Kelly says. "I cannot think of one conversation with one client who has expressed apprehension or concern."

Naturally, the NBC folks are putting the best face on the *Today* transition. Bell says that while saying goodbye to Couric

# The Early Shift

Who stands to gain—and lose—from the changing face of the network morning news shows By Tony Case



feeding the three network morning shows—*Today*, *GMA* and CBS' *The Early Show*—a combined \$973 million last year, up from \$659 million in 2000 and \$321 million a decade ago, according to Nielsen Monitor-Plus. Local stations and cable channels are also attracting those early risers in masses, with Fox's *Fox and Friends*, CNN's *American Morning*, MSNBC's *Imus in the Morning*, ESPN2's *Cold Pizza* and others becoming players in the daypart.

Advertisers increasingly see mornings as a means of reaching informed, affluent consumers in a daypart that gives them a bit more bang for their buck. "Morning is less expensive than prime," explains Pattie Garrahy, CEO of PGR Media. "Pharmaceutical, healthcare, automotive and a lot of other categories that, as little as a decade ago, weren't looking at mornings as a place to be, now are embracing it wholeheartedly—and they're seeing the buying power of women."

Adds Marty Daly, senior vp, director of news and late-night sales at CBS, "The early-morning daypart has been a healthy daypart in terms of scatter advertising for many years. This year, it's one of the few dayparts with higher scat-

will be "difficult," Vieira is "the perfect choice. She feels right to us." He hints that the show (with 6 million viewers, compared to *GMA*'s 5.2 million and *The Early Show*'s 2.9 million) may experiment with *Today*'s tried-and-true format upon Vieira's arrival; for example, having Vieira and co-host Matt Lauer team up on segments. Morning "is a very unique time of day when you can still surprise people," Bell says.

For the most part, media buyers have high hopes about the Vieira-Lauer pairing. But that optimism is not universal. And No. 2 *GMA*, which has dramatically closed the gap with *Today* in recent years, stands ready to steal thunder from the front-runner should it underdeliver post-Katie. Meanwhile, CBS is holding out that *The Early Show*, the morning's perennial No. 3, will benefit should viewers opt to flip channels.

Adding to the drama during the upfronts: a flurry of news reports contemplating what's ahead for ABC's *GMA*. (This was the week before Gibson's jump was announced.) News of a possible shakeup at *GMA* was ill-timed. As Garrahy says, "The worst thing you can have during an upfront is uncertainty." Catherine Sullivan, ABC's senior vp, news sales, downplayed



the importance of who's sitting in the anchor chair. "In news, unlike entertainment, each network has its own specific brand identification. It's less about the person who's on the air than the philosophy of the news division," she says. "People have their habits and are comfortable coming to ABC in the morning. They love Charlie and Diane, but they love ABC because they trust ABC to be accurate and credible."

As for the *Today* makeover, some close watchers of the morning match-ups are taking a wait-and-see position. "I think Meredith Vieira is a very smart woman, but she has a harder edge than Katie," says one media exec who did not want to be identified. "Anytime you make a major change, you run the risk of creating sampling for your show, or sampling for your competitors. If the new talent is not appealing to [viewers], you're inviting them to take a look around."

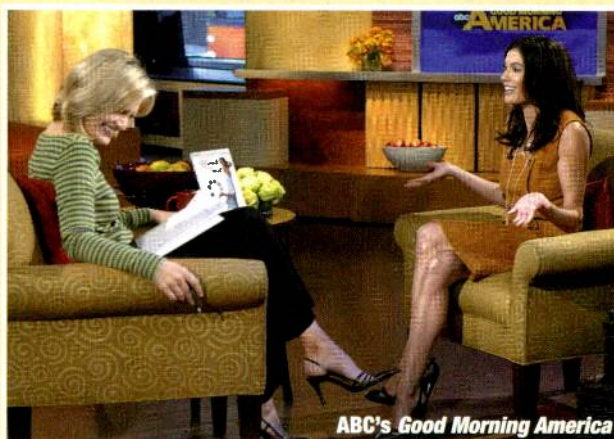
John Rash, senior vp, director of broadcast negotiations at Campbell Mithun, predicts that things at *Today* will be business as usual. "While the loss of Katie will present new challenges and create a potential disruption in [*Today's*] dominance, Meredith Vieira is a well-known personality who should mesh well not only with her co-host but with the show's tonality as

sails of the morning show. The *Today* show bested *GMA* by more than 2 million viewers in the late '90s, but over the last year *GMA* has come close to *Today* in the weekly ratings match-up and managed to pull off wins on certain days.

CBS' Daly—charged with drumming up business for the No. 3 *Early Show*—says that changes in the daypart "create enough uncertainty sometimes in an advertiser's mind, so the best way to buy early morning television on a national basis is to buy all three." CBS has found a lucrative moneymaker in sponsored features, including its wellness series Healthwatch.

The person with perhaps the greatest perspective about the morning marketplace is Steve Friedman, vp, morning broadcasts at CBS, who served as executive producer of *Today* twice—from 1979 to 1987, and again from 1993 to 1994. He also launched the offbeat a.m. show *Cold Pizza* on ESPN2.

Friedman won't predict how many viewers *The Early Show* might pick up, but he thinks it is well-positioned to benefit from the changing players at *Today* and *GMA* this fall. He speculates that some fans of Vieira on *The View* might follow her to *Today*, therefore hurting *GMA*. Likewise, the hoopla surrounding Couric's arrival at CBS and her becoming "the face of the



well." Rash looks for the horseshoe between NBC and ABC to rage on, while CBS is unlikely to see any real gains—either as the result of talent changes at *Today* or *GMA*, or as the result of Couric's star power once she's arrived at CBS. "[Interim *Evening News* anchor] Bob Schieffer's audience ascendancy has not fueled a surge in the morning news [ratings]," Rash says. "Katie Couric taking the anchor chair won't either, necessarily."

Adds Andy Donchin, Carat's senior vp, national broadcast director, "The *Today* show franchise is bigger than Katie Couric." Morning shows have become "appointment viewing," he adds, and "just like the evening newscasts, there are loyal audiences for CBS, NBC and ABC."

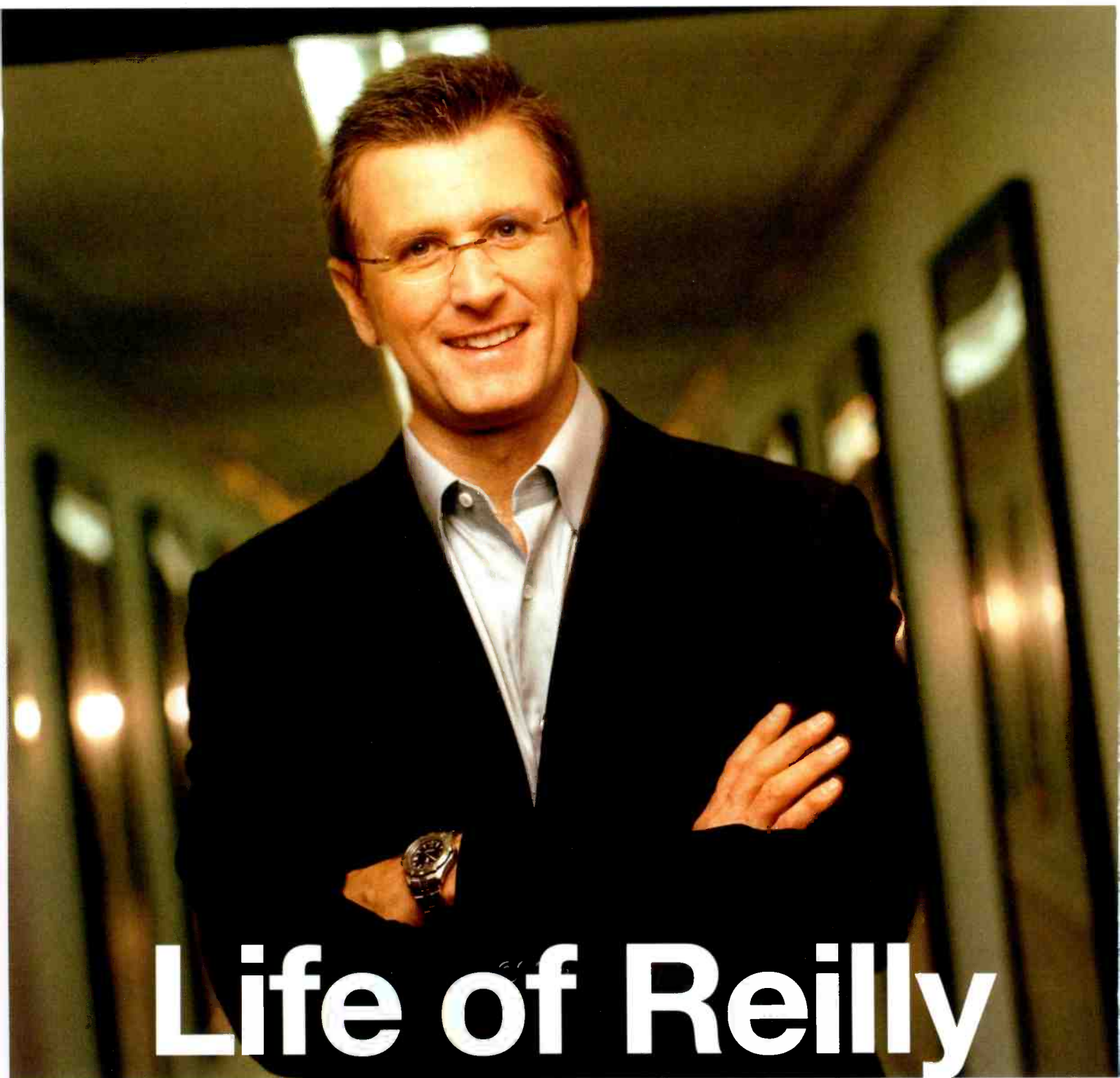
*GMA* executive producer Ben Sherwood says of the *Today* changes, "There's a great opportunity in the fall for *Good Morning America* to move closer to the ratings champs. It's a once-in-a-generation change." It would, in fact, seem a prime opportunity for *GMA*. So long as she stays put, Sawyer's mass appeal continues to make the show a player. And ABC's powerhouse prime-time lineup—with hits like *Desperate Housewives*, *Lost* and *Grey's Anatomy*—also is expected to continue lifting the

network" could have a positive spillover effect on the morning program, he reckons. With all the changes in mornings, sampling, he says, is all but certain, "and in our position, churning is good because it gives us an opportunity."

Friedman says he's tried to give *The Early Show*—with its multitude of anchors, including Harry Smith, Julie Chen, Hannah Storm and René Syler—a competitive edge by instituting a "looser" format. Friedman admits there's no reinventing the wheel here. "You can try to create a new pie, or get a bigger piece of the existing pie," he shrugs. "I'm not a believer in radical changes, being different just to be different. I believe [the morning shows] are talk shows in nature. Basically, everybody is doing the show we invented in the '80s and '90s."

Adds Friedman, "My philosophy here is for us to start doing the best job, get people talking about the show and sampling it when there's a change at the first-place show, and building audience from what we do on the air. And quite frankly, hope that somebody gives us a chance by screwing up." ■

Tony Case is a contributing writer to *Mediaweek*.



# Life of Reilly

**NBC's programming chief has fresh ideas for turning around the network's fading fortunes** Interview by A.J. Frutkin



FOLLOWING HIS SECOND full development season, Kevin Reilly remains upbeat about NBC's future. With such high-profile series as Aaron Sorkin's *Studio 60 on The Sunset Strip* and *The Black Donnellys*, from *Crash* screenwriters Paul Haggis and Bobby Moresco, NBC's entertainment president believes the network can only trend upwards next fall.

Of course, Reilly announced NBC's 2006-'07 schedule with a caveat: As the first network to present its fall lineup during the upfront presentations earlier this month and as the current season's fourth-place network among 18-49 viewers, Reilly knew going into the upfronts that he might have to shuffle the deck to avoid his rivals' reach.

At press time, NBC had yet to announce any changes to its fall schedule. But most analysts and advertisers agreed that ABC's repositioning of *Grey's Anatomy* on Thursdays at 9 p.m., along with the continued dominance in that time slot of CBS' *CSI*, left little sampling potential for *Studio 60*.

On the 25th floor of 30 Rockefeller Plaza, Reilly sat down with *Mediaweek's* A.J. Frutkin to discuss NBC's weakened position, the marketing power of NFL football on its schedule, and the network's aggressive push into digital content.

**A.J. FRUTKIN: Would you mind starting out by talking about last season?**

**KEVIN REILLY:** I do mind. One of the most trying things has been the fact of having to spend so much of my energy defending the past, explaining aging franchises going away, or why isn't *The West Wing* pulling the numbers or why isn't *Joey* as big as *Friends*, versus what we're building for the future.

What I was so excited about [at the upfront presentation] was, I finally felt like we were putting pieces on the board with our new development and with the NFL. I'm fairly certain that when you and I talk next season, there are going to be some elements there that'll be exciting and feel like something to talk about. Not "Why didn't this do that?" or "Boy, you guys are down." That chapter is just about closed.

**Looking toward NBC's future, were there things you did differently this development season from last?**

What's different is the product and the process. Last June, we went right back in business, to try to uncover some midseason pilots. It didn't work out to be successful with *Conviction* and *Heist*, but the thing that did prove to be successful was uncovering, I think, two winners for next season which we picked up early: *The Black Donnellys* and *Kidnapped*. We're doing it again. We now have a summer track and a winter track. We rolled a couple of things forward, so that means sometime between August and October, we'll shoot a batch of pilots, some of which may get on as early as next spring, some of which may just be early pick-ups for next year like we did with *Donnellys* and *Kidnapped*. Then we'll do another batch again in the winter.

That's the process side. In terms of product, what we did differently this year is we started saying, buy shows you believe in; don't buy by type: "This seems to be what we need" or "This is what's working out there." Make it personal. Make it a show that you yourself would watch and you believe would be somebody's favorite show.

**Part of the network's strategy seems to be keeping really strong shows at 10 p.m., leading into local news.**

Given our ratings challenge relative to, say, ABC, which has more steam with some bigger hits, they have struggled at 10 o'clock. Even a show like *Law & Order*, which is clearly not as strong as it once was, over-indexes in most of our major markets. It still provides a strong household lead-in, which is what stations look for. We have a pretty strong 10 o'clock story as far as I'm concerned.

**I understand the strategy of keeping 10 p.m. strong. But how do you get sampling for your new 8 and 9 p.m. shows if there is nothing strong leading into them?**

There is a moment in time in which you can move a program, where the audience is so hungry for that show that they're going to follow it wherever it goes and change their viewing habits. Clearly, ABC moved *Grey's Anatomy*; that was the right time to move that show. We were trapped by our own success. It was just a complacency. We did not move a lot of our tent poles when we probably could have used some of the *Law & Orders*, some of our other comedies [earlier in the evening], and broken them up to create launch pads for new shows. We had

real dominance at 10 o'clock, and some of those shows could have been used instead at 9 o'clock.

**Speaking of ABC, and *Grey's Anatomy* moving to Thursdays at 10, can *Studio 60* stay there now?**

I don't know yet. When you're in fourth place and you're announcing first, you're leading with your chin. What we decided to do is put out the schedule that we felt completely confident with and make a statement about a few of the shows we believe in. In a perfect world, this is where they would go. We have to [reassess this].

**Can you sell a schedule that's going to change?**

Yes, because the marketplace is not going to move as fast this year. From what I'm hearing from the ad-sales guys, it seems as though some clients are taking a bit more of a wait-and-see approach. So regardless of where the market ends up, this is not something that's going to be closed in a five-day spree. I also don't think anybody in the marketplace will be altogether shocked if NBC makes some changes. I think they probably would think we were stupid if we didn't.

**What do you think is a reasonable window for you to make those changes in?**

We may do a little tinkering with it right through the summer, which all networks do. But the fundamental schedule has got to be resolved within a week because it's going to trigger some marketing decisions on certainly our tent-pole shows, and just because it's going to impact our launches.

**On the subject of marketing, how will you use football on Sunday nights to promote your shows?**

It will be most effective for shows that are on Mondays and Tuesdays. Most effective just because they'll be top of mind. If you can drive viewers directly from Sunday to Monday, that's great. I think Fox has done that very effectively with *24*.

**But it's not just about proximity. It's also about demographics, right?**

The demographics kind of goes without saying. I think we know who watches football and I think if you try to push a very strong female show in football, you're not using your rating points very efficiently. Right now we have *Heroes* on Monday at 9. *Heroes* has a very strong male appeal. You could see the football promo. *Kidnapped* you could see the football promo, *Friday Night Lights* you could see the football promo. It's not a coincidence that we clustered those new shows earlier in the week.

**Both *The Office* and *My Name is Earl* have been critical successes and great for the NBC brand. But the numbers are just OK. Don't you have to grow the ratings for both of these shows if they are to become real moneymakers for you? How do you do that?**

Right, but first of all, the numbers were more than OK. In a tough year, I felt like we were at the 10-yard line with the chance to bring those things over the goal line, and it got fumbled in the last few weeks. *Earl* is still the No. 1 new scripted show of last season, and it is tied for the No. 1 comedy on television. We were averaging about a 5.2 [among viewers 18-49] up against *CSI* up until late March,

when we went into repeats. *The Office* was up almost 85 percent from last season and became one of the top five comedies. Those were just good numbers, period; they didn't need any clarifiers. We were doing a 4-plus rating in the last couple of outings, a 4.2 rating in the last week; it's still a damn good number.

If you look across the board, it tells you there's not a lot of shows pulling north of a 4 rating, so I don't make any apologies for those at all. Unfortunately, when we [lost some] audience going into repeats, we've got a male core there—that's a fickle audience. We didn't have the circulation on our network at that point to bring them back for the end of the season. That's one of the reasons why we want to put those shows in some proximity to other exciting shows, where we can relaunch the whole night and get people to come back. I do know that those are appointment shows.

**Even with a solid 18-49 rating, I would assume, in terms of total viewership, those numbers have to grow just to become that sort of watercooler ratings hit.**

I go back and look at NBC at the early '80s, when [Brandon] Tartikoff had my job. You know, it took him four years to turn around the network from the doldrums that occurred in the '70s. And you look back at certain shows like *Family Ties* that were on the air at the time, they were doing modest business. When *Cosby* reignited the schedule, all of a sudden they went to the next level as well.

My point is: One, it's not going to be necessarily incumbent upon those shows to drive the success of the entire network. And two, when the circulation gets up in the entire network, all of a sudden you're going to see those shows get to a place you never imagined.

**Part of NBC's identity has been that sort of two-hour block of "must-see" comedy on Thursday nights. Do you think that hurts the brand at all to move an hour of comedy off that night?**

I don't, because I think first of all, the brand is about the quality of the show, not any particular type of show. It's not about a mythical four-comedy block. I think we have the pieces right now between Tina Fey [*30 Rock*], *20 Good Years*, *The Singles Table* and, as backup, *Scrubs*. I think we have the comedy pieces to do that block and, frankly, we may. But with *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*, we had a show that seemed like it had all of the quality behind it that we wanted for Thursday night. When we stacked that night, it looked like the kind of appointment TV that Thursday night is about. One could also make the case that, like [ABC's] *Desperate Housewives*, it's a one-hour comedy.

**A show that goes behind the scenes of the entertainment industry might be considered Hollywood navel-gazing, and viewers have not traditionally cared for that. Conventional wisdom assumed you would choose either *Studio 60* or *30 Rock*, yet you chose both. Do you think viewers will watch both?**

Both shows deserve to be on. You've got creators like Aaron Sorkin and Tommy Schlamme, and Tina Fey, and you've got a cast like Alec Baldwin and Tracey Morgan on *30 Rock* and Bradley Whitford, Matthew Perry and Amanda Peet on



*Studio 60*. Ultimately, they're going to be apples and oranges. We're going to have a fairly madcap comedy in *30 Rock* and we're going to have a searing, sexy serial in *Studio 60*. If these were two cop shows, we wouldn't be having this conversation.

**The network developed more drama than comedy for next season. This isn't just about comedy being in a down cycle, is it?**

It's frustrating. It kind of defies logic, because you think in these times that people would like to laugh. I think one of the things we're competing with is that comedy does live on. *I Love Lucy* is as funny and fresh today as it was when it was shot 50-something years ago. Comedies do not age the way dramas do. An episode of *Miami Vice* today looks a little goofy. There was no more cutting-edge show, and yet you look at the pastel suits and that soundtrack and it kind of makes you wince.

The fact that comedy still exists in so many places—on cable and syndication, on DVD—we have reality comedy, we have talk comedy between the various stripped comedy shows. The scripted half-hour sitcom that was unique in television for some reason is becoming a much tougher nut to crack. The audience was always very forgiving on that genre. The audience was always willing to sample them and stick with them. It's just not the case right now.

**The traditional, multicamera comedy seems to be in particular trouble.**

We did have two single-camera comedies (*Earl* and *The Office*) that clearly were the

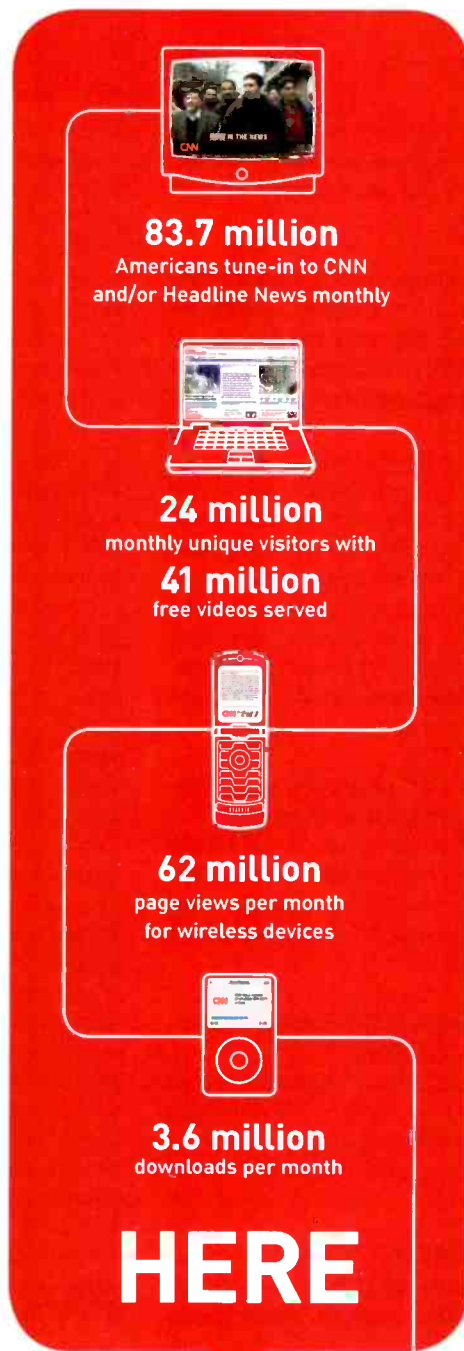
envy of the business, so you certainly see our competitors trying to chase that target. ABC made a very clear move to go after single camera. I don't think it's really about the form. Single-camera comedies are much harder to produce; they're much harder to finance. You're trying to do a 22-minute movie, which ends up costing not a whole lot less than a drama.

The comedy business is a frustrating situation. We're not waving a white flag, but we're trying to get really practical about it. We could say we're NBC, we're building comedy. But if the audience is not willing to go there with you, we ultimately say it's got to be about quality, not about any particular type of show.

**NBC has been very aggressive in digital TV. Yet you would think that along with *The Office* and having content available on the Web, *Earl* would be there. What are the challenges involved in working outside the company to make this happen?**

We don't know what's going to work and what's not, but we're experimenting. It's not something that guys in the back room do toiling away in the dark; we're giving them a seat at the table. We still play by the old rules, which is buyer/supplier, because we have a network to run. But we have gotten Touchstone TV, our partner on *Scrubs*, to do an iTunes deal. We talked to Twentieth, we talked to our other suppliers about trying to [do deals]. There's no set way; it's a case-by-case basis.

Whether we're the No. 1 network or the No. 4 network right now, there are some



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large-scale, long-term issues knocking at our door that you can either be in denial about or you can embrace. At NBC we're simply saying we're embracing them because they're here to stay.

**In the wake of comedy's decline, reality has staked out a lot of real estate. At a time when *American Idol* is gaining year to year, are you surprised by how quickly or how steep *The Apprentice* has declined? If so, are you doing anything to stave off that decline?**

Last year, in fact, we did three cycles, when you count Martha Stewart. And I think that hurt. Next cycle we are going to Los Angeles. There are some twists in the format itself, and I think we'll freshen it up. But we ultimately said, let's make it a once-a-year event rather than try to milk it for two cycles a year. *The Apprentice* is still a successful television program; it's just that it was such a phenomenon. I also think it suffered from the diminished state of the network in general. That's a program that anybody would be happy to have on their air.

**How would you define NBC's nonscripted programming? How does it fit into the overall brand?**

First and foremost, I want to get ahead of trends, and I think that we did that this year with *Deal or No Deal*. *Apprentice* did too. *Biggest Loser* did. *Biggest Loser* wasn't the second or third weight-loss show in the marketplace and I think that's really what we want to be defined by.

**Of course, NBC's summer series, *Treasure Hunters*, is a lot like CBS' *The Amazing Race*.**

Look, there is nothing new under the sun. You can say that *CSI* is a gussied up *Law & Order*. Even the best TV shows pay homage to something. There are the me-too shows and there are the ones that feel like they're on the next trend. That's what we're going to look to do.

**Having spoken to advertisers following your upfront presentation, it seems as if everyone loves *30 Rock*. The one I think that people questioned the most was *20 Good Years*.**

I don't know how many people you talked to, but I think if you go broader that's got a kind of a two-part answer. I think a lot of people really liked [*20 Good Years*]. I think the knee-jerk by some people was "That feels out of place" or "That's too old." And yet the complimentary say, "That kind of feels fresh by virtue of the fact that it seems so unlike anything else out there on anyone's network." I don't think it's a big stretch to imagine Jeffrey Tambor and John Lithgow being funny. Coming out of *Biggest Loser*, which is kind of a women's 35-plus audience, it felt like a really good fit.

**This is a business about failure. And if something like *20 Good Years* fails, do you have a contingency plan? How do you make contingency plans at this point? I know you're going into production on *Scrubs* and *Crossing Jordan*, even though they're not on next season's schedule. Can you turn those around as quickly as you need?**

Both these shows have demonstrated they can come on in the

middle of the season and reanimate their audience. They both have very loyal audiences, very different audiences. Then we've got Andy Barker and *The Singles Table*, so I think we've got shows on the bench.

The thing I'm probably most positive about is, I do believe we have four, five or six shows that are anywhere from really exciting to at least viable. We're going to come out of this with a couple of winners. If we get two or three more shows to stick, all of a sudden the whole landscape starts looking much different.

**Can you see, come the end of next season, that the network will be in a different position?**

Oh, we will be. A year ago if you asked me that question I would have said it's going to be about stabilizing. The stabilization is done. We've played through. We will be back.

**Is it good enough to get the network out of fourth place?**

I don't know. And it's not even going to be about fourth place, but it's going to be about penetrating the culture, selling to advertisers. The separation between the first and fourth place these days is not insurmountable. It's pretty clear that with a tenth of a rating point dividing these networks, the standings can turn overnight. I would imagine that that gap would be changed or we would be in a different place.

**How long does an executive in your position have to turn things around?**

These jobs, by their nature, are such all-consuming positions to get into the fabric of the leadership of the company, and to put your own stamp on it. Even in good times, anybody who's done my job will tell you that it takes probably a good two, three seasons to get just up to speed being able to play on all the levels that it takes—the talent level, the deal-making, putting your creative staff together. It really calls all of your skill sets to bear at once and just getting up to speed on all of that takes a lot.

**Having come to NBC from FX, and having had such success with *The Shield* and *Nip/Tuck*, does that seem like a lifetime ago?**

Yes, it's been a long couple of years. I'm going to look back and find this is probably the most valuable thing that ever happened. The character-building part of it has been painful, but really valuable. I said in the upfront that cliché "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." All clichés ultimately turn out to be true. I do feel that way.

**But there have to be times you look in the mirror and say, "OK, enough with the character-building."**

I am ready to start getting a little different energy on a daily basis, and it's nice to start seeing something coming back. That's the hardest part of it—not the rumor mill. The hardest part is, you work 18-hour days, you're putting a lot in and there's not a lot coming back. Nobody has a crystal ball, but I know when I'm sitting on something. We are sitting on some shows that are going to be successes, and that makes me excited to now live through the next year. ■

Based in Los Angeles, A.J. Frutkin is a senior editor covering TV production for *Mediaweek*.



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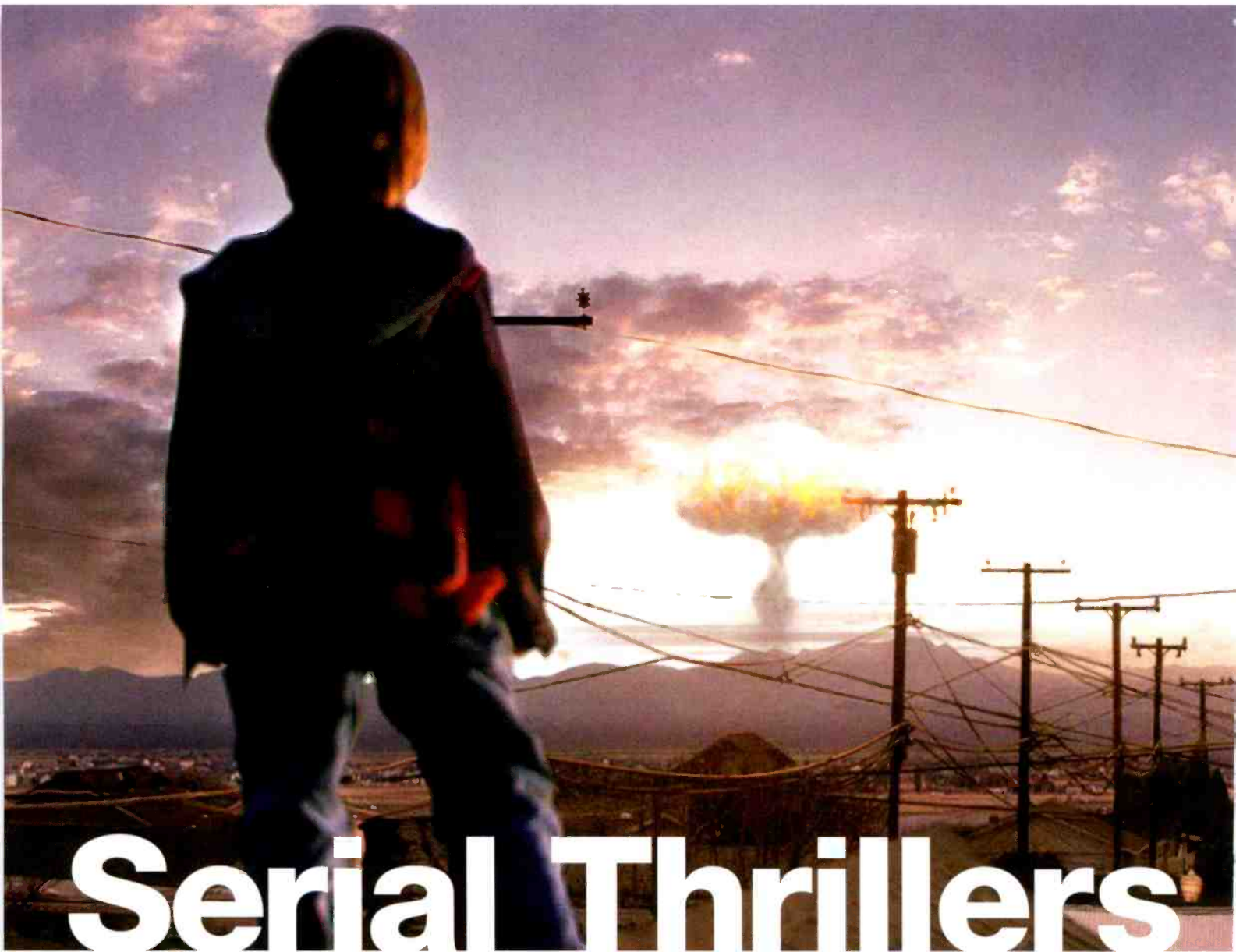


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# Serial Thrillers

The fall schedule is full of dramas the networks hope will hook viewers for the season. The challenge: Getting them to watch the first episode. **By Eric Schmuckler**  
Night-by-night match-ups **By Marc Berman**





**BOMBS AWAY** Some question the appeal of CBS' post-nuclear-war-themed *Jericho*, one of many new dramas this fall featuring mystery, tension and suspense.

VANISHED: PETER D'ONOFIO/FOX; RUNAWAY: BROOK PALMER/CW


WITH CABLE, DIGITAL AND game options growing like bacteria, how do you get viewers to sit down and watch network prime time? By grabbing them around the neck and refusing to let go, according to broadcast programmers. The success of serialized thrillers *24*, *Prison Break* and *Lost*—as well as the serial elimination of contestants in reality shows and the rebirth of serial drama with *Desperate Housewives*—has led to the dominant theme of the coming fall season: Don't you dare miss an episode!

ABC is banking most heavily on this concept, with four serialized thrillers on tap for fall or midseason—two with *Lost*-like mysterioso overlays. Heck, ABC even has two serialized comedies, *Let's Rob...*, a season-long comic caper featuring the Rolling Stone with the big lips, and *Big Day*, a whole season's worth of a single wedding (and you thought Jack Bauer had it rough).


But each of the other networks will be playing this card, too. Four shows feature season-long searches for missing people: ABC's *Traveler*, NBC's *Kidnapped*, Fox's *Vanished* and CW's *Runaway*. (These chases are so breathless that no one has time for more than a one-word title.) Even CBS, which has prospered with episodic crime dramas, is taking a flier on the form with serialized post-nuclear drama *Jericho*.

Creating the adrenaline rush of a crackerjack serialized thriller is a high

**MONDAY 9 P.M.**



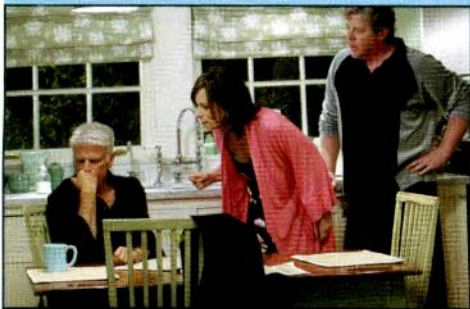
**FOX** *Vanished*



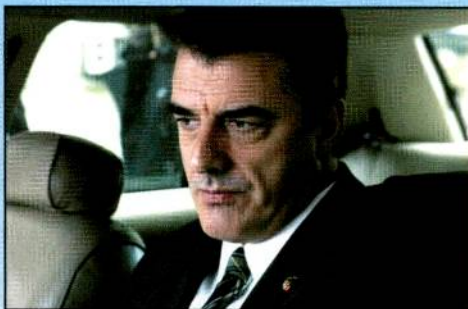
**CW** *Runaway*

**CBS' COMPETING TWO AND HALF MEN** is no *Everybody Loves Raymond*, and ABC's *The Bachelor* continues to lose steam. So there's a prime opportunity for one of Monday's new dramas—NBC's *Heroes*, Fox's *Vanished* and CW's *Runaway*—to make an impact in the competitive 9 p.m. hour. Although *Heroes*, which chronicles the lives of ordinary people with extraordinary abilities, could benefit coming out of *Deal or No Deal*, the more interesting battle lies in the match-up of the similar *Vanished* and *Runaway*. *Vanished* deals with the missing wife of a powerful U.S. senator, while *Runaway* tells the story of a man wrongfully accused of murder and on the run. With CW giving a last-minute reprieve to *7th Heaven*, one has to wonder whether the feel-good Camden clan will fit well into the more intense *Runaway*, or whether the net would have benefited from keeping *Everwood* in the time period. Leading out of *7th Heaven* is no picnic (failures include *Safe Harbor*, *Just Legal* and *Related*) and competing against a series with a like storyline makes *Runaway* even more of a longshot. *Vanished* could be simply filler for the time period until *24* returns in January, but compatibility with lead-in hit *Prison Break* makes *Vanished* a stronger pick, plus a good way to keep the time period warm. Keep an eye on *Vanished*; forget about *Runaway*.

TUESDAY 9 P.M.



ABC Help Me Help You



NBC Criminal Intent

**IN A TIME PERIOD** populated with four established dramas (including NBC's hastily relocated *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, which was originally scheduled Friday at 10 p.m. after losing its Sunday berth to football), ABC was wise to counterprogram with comedies. *Let's Rob...* follows an aging janitor who recruits a group of misfits for a heist to finance the opening of a bar (the target being Mick Jagger's New York apartment), while *Help Me Help You* stars Ted Danson as the self-obsessed leader of a therapy group. The sitcoms benefit from leading out of the relocated *Dancing With the Stars*, but no one should expect *Let's Rob...* to fully maintain *Dancing's* audience. ABC would have a better shot keeping viewers at 9 by putting *Help Me Help You* in the slot, considering Danson's past sitcom successes and the show's more recognizable storyline. But going for laughs in a time period drenched with drama could give the comedies a leg up over *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* no matter how they fall in the schedule. Although shifting *Criminal Intent* out of Sunday moves it away from ABC's *Desperate Housewives* (year-to-year, the drama is down by 1.1 million viewers, according to Nielsen Media Research), facing Fox's red-hot *House* and CBS sleeper *The Unit* could be an even worse fate. Oh, and CW fan favorite *Veronica Mars* airs there, too!

HELP ME HELP YOU: RICHARD CARTWRIGHT/ABC; LAW & ORDER: CRIMINAL INTENT: WILL HART/ABC

together. "I don't know that they all appeal to the same audience," he says, and besides, "People don't watch genres. They're not looking for a type of show; they're looking for shows that are interesting and different."

If it's different you want, there's still hope. The nets have largely backed off from the crime dramas that threatened to overrun the schedule, with an array of new shows from courtroom to high-school football to inside TV. There are even a few fresh examples of that most endangered of species, the sitcom. Let's take a look at the big board.

## ABC

ABC is in a strong position as the only network to show ratings growth this season, up 8 percent in the adults 18-49 demo, thanks to the hit triumvirate of *Lost*, *Desperate Housewives* and *Grey's Anatomy* (*Grey's* is the hottest show on TV after *American Idol*) plus reality hits *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* and *Dancing With the Stars*. With a solid base and promising development, ABC put a jaw-dropping 13 of its 22 hours and six of seven nights in flux.

Aggressive, or crazy? "They are in such a favorable ratings position that they rightly reason the biggest risk is taking no risk at all," argues Campbell Mithun's Rash. "If they can get one or two shows with the commercial

and cultural resonance of *Grey's*, it will be a significantly successful season."

While several ABC dramas looked striking and edgy, several analysts saw the new schedule as too risky. "They're changing an awful lot of time periods," says Jordan Breslow, Mediacom's manager, national broadcast research. "It's way too many programs and much too aggressive." A rival calls it a "spaghetti schedule": Throw it against the wall and see what sticks. And one top buying strategist predicts that ABC "is heading for a fall."

Isn't it interesting, adds Magna Global's Sternberg, that ABC's ratings rose without returning a single successful show from last season? (*Dancing* launched in summer and no one calls midseason's *What About Brian* a winner.) And it's been noted that *Desperate Housewives*, still prime time's top scripted show, is down by 12 percent after a mixed season creatively.

Perhaps the most striking of ABC's 12—count 'em, 12—new series is *The Nine*, a serialized drama about a group of people who were hostages in a bank robbery, with both flashbacks and reverberations à la *Lost*. *The Nine* leads out from *Lost* on Wednesday at 10. There was also support for two midseason entries—*Traveler*, which mixes *The Fugitive* with *Enemy of the State*, and *Day Break*, a cross of *The Fugitive* and (we kid you not) *Groundhog Day*.

ABC execs are high on *Six Degrees*, from *Lost* mastermind J.J. Abrams, which follows the mysteriously interconnected lives of six strangers in a *Crash/Short Cuts* sort of way. (Guest

risk/high reward proposition. "It's a challenge to get enough viewers to commit to so many prime-time serial dramas," says John Rash, senior vp/director of broadcast negotiation for Campbell Mithun. "But when they work, you get an incredible loyalty factor, and part of the viewer reward is the work and involvement they require."

The flipside to that loyalty? "You're asking a lot of viewers," says a network programmer. "If a person can only commit to two or three serials, how many can the schedule support?" There's also scheduling issues: Do you break up the season in blocks of six or eight, or 22 in a row for half a season, à la 24? Are they repeatable? Adds the exec, "If some of these don't open [and viewers feel they can't catch up], you could be in real trouble real fast."

Another question about season-long chases: What do you do for an encore? 24 has successfully answered that with "more of the same," but Stacey Lynn Koerner, president of Interpublic's new Consumer Experience Practice, notes, "A lot of these concepts didn't seem to cover multiyear arcs. We may be entering a time when you have single-season shows." Koerner, whose unit studies fan sites and communities, sees risk in the often-incomprehensible mythology surrounding thrillers like *Lost* and *Alias*: "We've seen a growing irritation among fans with formats that don't reward the viewer with at least a little resolution."

Steve Sternberg, executive vp/director of audience analysis at Magna Global, is wary of lumping all serialized thrillers



shot by Kevin Bacon still pending.) And if no one watching the clips had the foggiest idea of what it's all about, an ABC exec apologetically explains that "J.J. cut the trailer."

Analysts were sanguine about prospects for ABC's big move of *Grey's Anatomy* to Thursday at 9, opposite CBS' *CSI*. One agency exec figures that "*Grey's* could lose five share points and ABC will still make more money" on movie-mad Thursday. CBS-ers expect both shows to prosper, each losing maybe 10 percent of its rating while increasing network viewing in the time period. "*Grey's* will bring in the young audience and make *CSI* older," predicts Interpublic's Koerner. "And *CSI* being episodic is an advantage for [can't-miss] *Grey's*."

Shari Anne Brill, vp, director of programming with Carat, figures *Grey's* will take the time period in adults, but says CBS will still win the night. "CBS has *Survivor* to support *CSI*, while ABC's first hour [comedies *Big Day* and *Notes From the Underbelly*] is one of their weakest. A comedy about fertility? Men will run away screaming." If ABC really wanted to build the night, adds Sternberg, why not leave *Dancing* to lead off?

Launching two new dramedies on Friday, *Betty the Ugly* and *Men in Trees*, is a move competitors see as especially prone to collapse. Breslow agrees: "*Betty* is a disaster and Anne Heche [of *Men in Trees*] isn't going to capture an audi-

**"IF [ABC] CAN GET ONE OR TWO SHOWS WITH THE COMMERCIAL AND CULTURAL RESONANCE OF *GREY'S ANATOMY*, IT WILL BE A SIGNIFICANTLY SUCCESSFUL SEASON." RASH**

ence versus four established options. They don't have a leg to stand on." Counters an ABC exec, "Both shows are charming, and we know women are available on Friday. It's our 25-54 night." In fact, analysts and competitors were struck by the female-centricity of ABC's schedule (Wednesday and Saturday excepted). But prime time skews female, notes Rash, "so it may pay off."

Analysts thought Monday weak, with ho-hum reality skeins *Wife Swap* and *The Bachelor* and the mystifying return of underperformer *What About Brian*. Observers assume *Brian* is yet another sop to J.J. Abrams. ABC-ers swear up and down that's not the case, citing its young female demos and a creative uptick. But they give the game away by trotting out Internet buzz as a reason to keep the show. Versus last year's



## WEDNESDAY 8 P.M.



**CBS SHOULD HAVE TAKEN** note after the failure last fall of sci-fi drama *Threshold*—not to mention ABC's *Invasion* and *Night Stalker* and NBC's *Surface*. But this year, the net introduces *Jericho*, the confusing tale of a nuclear mushroom cloud creating havoc in a small Kansas town. *Jericho* faces off opposite the hasty, last-minute arrival of new NBC sitcoms *20 Good Years* and *30 Rock* (which were originally scheduled one hour later), and three established hours—ABC's *Dancing With the Stars*, Fox's *Bones* and America's *Next Top Model* on CW. With the three established hours all young and healthy, the question to ponder is this: Will there be an audience left for *Jericho* or the two comedies? In defense of NBC (which sure could use a break these days), *20 Good Years* and *30 Rock* (which was given an early "thumbs up" by many buyers) are the only comedies in the hour, and that could make a difference—a very big difference. Since a five-minute clip of *Jericho* at CBS' upfront had buyers scratching their heads, one has to wonder if the public response will be any different. At 8 p.m. in midweek, chances are it won't be. Although no one expects two unproven NBC comedies to move to the top of the charts, counter-programming is everything, and NBC was wise to open the night with comedies. Move over, *Jericho*.

*Monday Night Football*, expect the night to be down big time.

On the plus side, Tuesday's *Let's Rob...* was described as charming, though lead-out *Help Me Help You*, with Ted Danson, was not. An insider points out that "no one's watching us from 8 to 10 anyway, so *Dancing With the Stars* gets us going." Following *Desperate Housewives* on Sunday at 10 is *Brothers & Sisters*, a warm, multicharacter drama starring Calista Flockhart. "It's the right flow," says Koerner. Adds Rash, "It isn't *Grey's*, but it doesn't have to be." One of the net's best moves was replacing barely seen repeats with college football on Saturday. The NCAA has promised marquee match-ups, and ABC will likely have some Nascar races for this slot in the spring.

### CBS

CBS has been a model of reliability in recent years, refreshing its schedule this season with successful new shows like *Criminal Minds* and *The Unit*. The net is down by two-tenths of a rating point in adults 18-49 and now runs third in that demo due to double-digit losses in *Survivor*, *Two and a Half Men* and two of its three *CSIs*. But it still leads handily in 25-54. That's why CBS felt confident enough to add just four new series, stop feeding its addiction to crime dramas, dip a toe in the serial game and make an aggressive move with a top-15 show. "They did very well," says Koerner. "All four of their new shows could fail and they'd still be number one in homes. They have the least risk going into the new season."

On its Monday stronghold (CBS caught a break when ABC chose not to move *Grey's Anatomy* here) the net at 8:30 adds *The Class*, a twentysomething comedy from *Friends* co-creator David Crane. It's paired with *How I Met Your Mother* at 8 to create a younger, un-CBS-like hour. "That's exactly what we were going for," says an exec.

Tuesday, now solid from 8 to 10, ends with *Smith*, a heist show starring Ray Liotta. It will air in three- or four-episode arcs, so viewers can come in throughout the season. Heist shows are hard to do, but analysts like *Smith's* chances. "CBS has effectively counterprogrammed *Idol* with more of a male action night, and this show may play well with that," says Rash. Koerner says the show "is the only one on CBS that nontraditional fans think looks compelling and interesting."

Leading off Wednesday is the net's biggest gamble: *Jericho*, a post-nuclear-war serial set in a small Kansas town. Some found the premise and pilot hard to take. "What's the demo, masochists 18-plus?" cracks one buyer. Analysts wonder whether the show can play at 8, whether it's mainstream enough and, ultimately, whether it belongs on CBS. Says Rash, "It's a heavy idea and it could be compelling, but many people turn to TV for escapism."

Yet some analysts are intrigued by the show and give CBS props for trying something different. "The show's really about survival and people coming together; it's more about the hope and rebuilding," says Koerner. CBS expects plenty of attention will help open the show, but some worry about scheduling and repeating the net's first big serial since *Knot's Landing*. If things don't work out, CBS would like to bring comedy back to Wednesday and has *King of Queens* in its pocket.

The net feels confident breaking up Thursday, where it dominates, because it believes in James Woods-starrer *Shark*. While rivals wonder whether viewers really want to invite Woods into their living rooms every week, the actor is certainly compelling, and Koerner adds that co-star Jeri Ryan brings a male fan base. Analysts figure this to be the season's top-rated rookie and think it might even take the time period in 18-49 against a weakened *ER* and wild card *Six Degrees*.

Moving *Without a Trace* from Thursday to Sunday at 10 kills three birds at once. It improves and steadies a time slot previously held by the hard-to-sell movie, opens up a protected spot to launch *Shark* after *CSI*, and puts pressure on a weakened slot on ABC's best night. Look for *Trace* to clean up, especially after football ends on NBC. And the underrated *Cold Case* at 9 makes for a seamless two-hour block.

As for the logic behind Sunday 7 to 9, CBS cheerfully admits there is none. "We're schizophrenic there," says an insider, "putting our youngest show [*The Amazing Race*] after our oldest show [*60 Minutes*]." *Race* was the "odd piece out,"



says another, but recruits its own audience, and the night should improve and pull a higher CPM than the movie.

## NBC

The positive thing about NBC's new schedule—which it shook up dramatically late last week—is that most of its shows looked decent and nothing had the unmistakable stench of failure like *Inconceivable* or *LAX*. Analysts look forward to Aaron Sorkin's TV-biz dramedy *Studio 60*, Tina Fey's similarly themed comedy *30 Rock*, heartwarming football drama *Friday Night Lights*, taut serial thriller *Kidnapped* and even the aging boomer comedy *20 Good Years*. And NBC's new Sunday-night football package will provide a sorely needed promotional platform. "I had a good feeling about NBC's shows," says Breslow.

So much for the good news. NBC will need lots of help from its freshman class to rise from fourth place, with its 18-49 ratings down another 11 percent this season, the biggest loss of any broadcaster. Aside from *Deal or No Deal* and *The Biggest Loser*, most of its top shows are off by 20 percent or more, including *ER*, *Medium* and *Las Vegas*, while *The Apprentice* tumbled some 40 percent.

And now the really bad news: NBC's finely wrought plans came crashing down when ABC moved *Grey's* to Thursday at

**"A COMMUNITY CAN FORM AROUND [HEROES]. IF IT TAKES, IT'LL BRING A VERY DIFFERENT AUDIENCE TO NBC. BUT THIS MAY NOT BE THE RIGHT NETWORK FOR IT." KOERNER**

9. NBC looked to the Sorkin show as the possible successor to *ER*, but facing *Grey's* and *CSI* would have strangled the show in its crib. So NBC shipped it off to Mondays at 10, where it "only" faces *CSI Miami*.

Even before NBC hit the panic button, analysts were guardedly optimistic about *Studio 60*, citing the strong Matthew Perry/Bradley Whitford-led cast and the Sorkin pedigree. But Breslow "was unimpressed by the clips," and rivals are caustic. Says one, "It has all the self-importance of *The West Wing* in a setting that doesn't justify it." Even NBC-ers are soft-selling, cautioning that "shows about TV are narrow." Translation: Don't get your hopes up.

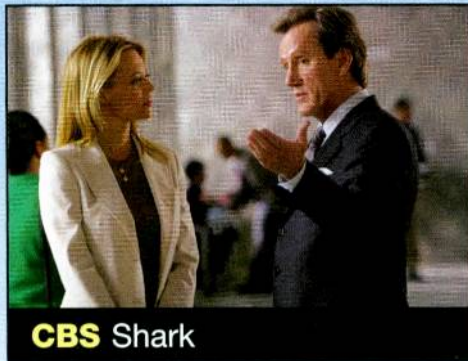
Earlier on Mondays, analysts are still scratching their heads over *Heroes* at 9. Ordinary people develop super powers and,



THURSDAY 10 P.M.



ABC Six Degrees



CBS Shark

ONCE UPON A TIME, facing NBC's *ER* meant certain doom for any new series. But with the fading medical drama heading into what could be an unlucky season No. 13, and with unproven mob drama *The Black Donnellys* stepping in at midseason, there's an opportunity for ABC's *Six Degrees* and CBS' *Shark*. *Six Degrees* tells the tale of six New Yorkers drawn together by a mysterious web of coincidences, while *Shark* is the more traditional tale of a high-profile defense attorney (James Woods) in Los Angeles who becomes a prosecutor facing a squad of inexperienced lawyers in the DA's office. Although both dramas could certainly benefit from formidable lead-ins (*Shark* airs out of time-period incumbent *CSI*, while *Six Degrees* airs out of the relocated *Grey's Anatomy*), *Shark* has three key advantages. Viewers accustomed to *Without a Trace* in the 10 p.m. hour are likely to be satisfied by the new series' similar appeal. While *Grey's Anatomy* is hot, *CSI* is established in the Thursday at 9 slot. Finally, the more formulaic *Shark* is a safer bet for attracting a mass audience than a potential cult favorite like *Six Degrees*. There's nothing wrong with creativity, but when it comes to entertaining the audience, lazy familiarity often reigns supreme. That will give the more generic-looking *Shark* an edge over *Six Degrees*.

yep, save the world. Sounds *X-Men*-ish, but an insider advises, "Think *Lost*." Most analysts don't give it much chance and think it could work better as a movie, but Koerner notes, "The story is a very potent one for young folks. A community can form around this show. If it takes, it'll bring a very different audience to NBC. But this may not be the right network for it." On CW after *Smallville* maybe?

*Friday Night Lights*, leading off Tuesday, could do some business if it's more about the teens and parents and not so much about football, say analysts, though it can be promoted in NFL games. "But it could go the way of [underachiever] *American Dreams*," one analyst warns. NBC killed any potential leadout flow of *Kidnapped* at 9 by instead double-stacking *Law & Order* (*CI* and *SVU*) from 9 to 11 with its shuffle last week.

In its new Wednesday 10 o'clock berth, *Kidnapped* stands a better chance against *CSI: NY* and ABC's untested *The Nine*, but there are two downsides. One, the original *Law & Order*, which already is fragile, may not travel well to an admittedly easier Friday night. And two, *Kidnapped* may simply be a serial thriller too many, and "it's a scary concept for people," Koerner cautions.

Buyers were really perplexed by the original flow of NBC's Wednesday schedule, but the new lineup seems no better. Any circulation *The Biggest Loser*—a top-30 show in the demo—would have brought to the night is largely squandered at 9, while *20 Good Years*, with John Lithgow and Jeffrey Tambor as thrill-seeking, middle-aged-plus friends, is

left to sink at 8. "It's not about demos or focus groups—it's just funny," offers one buyer, while Koerner calls it "*The Golden Girls* for guys." But let's face it: This is the kind of tired, old sitcom CBS would have been crucified for. As for *30 Rock* at 8:30, Breslow reports, "We all loved it, but it's completely incompatible with the old-guy comedy. It could play better on Thursday."

Skipping ahead to Friday, *Law & Order* will help at 10. "Friday will work for them; it holds up well against CBS," says Breslow.

On Thursday, which is key to NBC's future, returning comedies *My Name is Earl* and *The Office* are a step in the right direction—but not a huge step. NBC is also protecting *ER*, still its top show, by throwing *Deal or No Deal* to the wolves. Who knows? Maybe it's brilliant counterprogramming.

## FOX

Along with CBS, Fox's schedule is considered the most solid, led by the amazing *American Idol*—the only real hit on television, per Sternberg. The net won the 18-49 race for the second year running and gained a tick if the Super Bowl is excluded (it's down a tick for all programs). Fox proved it's no mere *Idol* threat, with double-digit gains for *24* (name another fifth-year show to do that), *Family Guy* and *Nanny 911*, while *House* blossomed into a top-10 hit. Meanwhile, the net improved time periods with freshmen *Prison Break*, *Bones*, *The War at Home* and *American Dad*. Oh yeah, and it had the top-rated new show of the year in *Unan1mous*—a meaningless distinction, as this *Idol* satellite ain't coming back.

By now, Fox viewers are acclimated to a half-season strategy that brings back *Idol* and *24* in January, while shuffling the prime-time deck a bit. For the fall, analysts believe the net probably helped itself, with a schedule that feels relatively stable despite changes on six nights. Monday leads with *Prison Break*, whose loyal audience will follow as it morphs into another *Fugitive*. Following at 9 is *Vanished*, a serial thriller "that makes absolute sense for the time slot," says Brill. Compared to last fall's *Arrested Development* and *Kitchen Confidential*, chalk this up as a plus night.

Leading on Tuesday is *Standoff*, a drama about married hostage negotiators without a single hint of *Moonlighting* breeziness in the clips. Breslow is unconvinced: "It may look good as a stand-alone, but can it work as a series?" Fox can use an episodic series like this on its serial-packed schedule, notes Rash, but male viewers may gravitate toward *NCIS*. And analysts were impressed by Wednesday's *Justice* at 9, with the first-rate Victor Garber as a high-priced, high-tech defense attorney for rich scumbags. But Rash warns about the "challenge of getting viewers to identify with and rally around a celebrity defense attorney when these types are vilified nightly on cable news."



with what is widely hailed as the funniest new show of the year: *'Til Death*, with Brad Garrett and Joely Fisher as a cynical married couple living next door to newlyweds. "The comic beats were very good," says Brill. Analysts were less enthralled with 8:30 entry *Happy Hour*—following young singles yukking it up in Chicago—but it is tonally similar enough to hold its lead-in, they figure. NBC's *Earl* and *The Office* will hang on to win, but Fox should be happy with a 9 share here; Brill adds that Fox's block "will trump ABC's comedies."

Fox ought to do better in the Friday-night death slot with female-oriented reality combo *Nanny 911* and *Trading Spouses* than with last year's disappearing act by *Malcolm in the Middle* and *Killer Instinct* (yes, I looked it up). Saturday's stet, while Sunday is tweaked with *American Dad* sliding to 8:30 for a five-show animation block. And a bow, please, for *The Simpsons*, which barely lost a step in its 17th season while closing in on *Gunsmoke's* record.

And where is the Fox show that traditionally blows up on the launching pad? Votes go to *The Winner*, an unwatchable midseason sitcom with *The Daily Show's* Rob Corddry. But cognoscenti lean toward Spike Feresten's Saturday night talk show. By bombing at the upfront, Spike may have Schimmeled himself off the air.

**FOX'S SLATE OF SITCOMS—INCLUDING 'TIL DEATH, WIDELY HAILED AS THE FUNNIEST SHOW OF THE YEAR—WILL "TRUMP ABC'S COMEDIES." BRILL**

**CW**

UPN's old nickname—"the Used Parts Network"—surely applies here, and that's not a bad thing. CW launches with the best bits of its predecessor networks—plus a few more bits—and, thus, will boldly go where no weblet has...oh wait, they canceled *Star Trek* last year.

Still, it's easy to see why insiders consider this a slam-dunk. "If every show does as well as last year," says David Poltrack, exec vp/chief research officer for CW half-parent CBS, "with the stronger stations and promotion, this network is far ahead financially because it has all the top-billing shows." Dawn Ostroff, the net's president of entertainment, believes CW has a decent chance to transcend weblet status.

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FRIDAY 8 P.M.



ABC Betty the Ugly



FOX Nanny 911

**NBC TOOK WINNING ADVANTAGE** of this hour this season, courtesy of game show *Deal or No Deal*, which arrived with great success in midseason. But a hasty move to Thursday at 9 p.m. (opposite CBS' *CSI* and ABC's relocated *Grey's Anatomy*—good luck!) suddenly frees up the hour for new ABC comedy *Betty the Ugly* and Fox benchwarmer *Nanny 911*. Can an oversized square peg named Betty working in the fashion industry and a strict disciplinarian named Jo Frost find success opposite CBS sleeper *Ghost Whisperer*, NBC's relocated *Crossing Jordan*, and CW's *Friday Night Smackdown*? Although you have to give ABC points for trying to push the envelope with the anything-but-traditional (and hour-long) *Betty the Ugly*, you have to wonder about its shelf life. How long, after all, will Betty really be that frumpy? After all, braces aren't forever! What might sound promising could turn into a one-joke wonder, so it looks like Nanny Jo Frost could have an advantage—a large one—if the similar appeal *Ghost Whisperer* and *Crossing Jordan* cancel each other out. In the world of prime-time TV, never underestimate the value of a non-scripted show with a happy ending each week. Now, if Jo Frost can give *Betty the Ugly* some fashion tips, maybe this would be a battle more worth noting.

believes CW has a decent chance to transcend weblet status.

While Brill says the net's scheduling is "nearly perfect," questions remain. Monday, surprisingly, leads off with *7th Heaven*; producing studio Paramount made the cast and creators an offer they couldn't refuse. Execs made the effort because they think the veteran family drama fits nicely with the 9 p.m. *Runaway*, a serial about a family on the lam. But isn't this more a thriller than a family drama? "The shows don't work well together," declares Breslow.

Tuesday brings the pairing of *Gilmore Girls* and *Veronica Mars*, a combo so irresistible that the net brought back the latter despite ratings that verged on a rounding error. *Veronica* was always a WB show on the wrong network, say execs, and its creative strength and passionate fan base have earned it this shot.

A cynic might note that the CW drew roughly the same number of series from the Warner and Paramount studios—though Warner makes more full hours—and can imagine a scenario where the Warner guys said, "You want to bring back [Paramount's] *Veronica*? Then pick up our *One Tree Hill*." Network and studio execs are appalled anyone could think such thoughts. "We are totally about putting on the best shows," says Ostroff. So please explain: If *Veronica* was such an awkward fit that it fumbled a big lead-in from *America's Top Model* last year, why should *One Tree Hill* do any better on Wednesday next season?

Thursday's intact pairing of *Smallville* and *Supernatural* works fine, and *Friday Night Smackdown!* does its thing. As for Sunday's lineup of African-American comedies, Brill scores it a missed opportunity. "Everybody Hates Chris will languish at 7," she says, and using 9 o'clock for *Top Model* repeats is a waste. Better to drop the repeats to 7, she says, and put Chris at 8, "where it can give *The Simpsons* a run for its money. Then put *Girlfriends* and [promising spinoff] *The Game* from 9 to 10, since African-American women are less likely to watch *Desperate Housewives* and it's an alternative to Fox's male comedies."



**SUNDAY 10 P.M.**



**ABC** Brothers & Sisters



**CBS** Without A Trace

**WITH GREY'S ANATOMY** moving to the choppy waters of Thursday at 9, it's no surprise that CBS would try to capitalize on the opportunity. Since NBC is committed to *Sunday Night Football* in fourth quarter—sending *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* to Friday and *Crossing Jordan* to the benches—CBS shifts *Without A Trace* to 10, replacing the *Sunday Night Movie*. Meanwhile, ABC hopes to keep the time period warm with *Brothers & Sisters*, an ensemble drama about a family of adult siblings who must cope with the death of their father. Although no one expects *Brothers & Sisters* to match the numbers of *Grey's Anatomy*, leading out of *Desperate Housewives* certainly won't hurt. But will it be enough to top *Without A Trace*? Chances are, it won't. At one time a comfortable second behind NBC's *ER*, *Without a Trace* now owns Thursday at 10, with an average 18.7 million viewers this season. Comparably, that's 6.4 million more than *ER*. Although the initial success of *Without A Trace* was dependent on blockbuster lead-in *CSI*, the show, four years in, should be able to stand on its own. And by shifting the compatible *Cold Case* to the lead-in 9 p.m. slot, there is no reason to believe that *Without A Trace* will squander the opportunity.

## MYNETWORKTV

It's impossible to analyze the fledgling MyNetworkTV by the standards of the "real" networks, since it was hatched for syndication, quacks like syndication and will likely be bought from syndication budgets. MyNetworkTV is trying to import the telenovela concept that is so successful around the world, with execs citing 70 shares in Bolivia and the Ukraine or some such. "You're talking about comparisons to less-developed media markets," notes Rash, "that don't have the range of choice we have."

Two hour-long, closed-end soaps will be stripped from 8 to 10 p.m. for 13-week cycles under the rubrics *Desire* and *Secret Obsessions*. They feature unknown lovelies and smoldering prettyboys, with past-sell-by-date stars like Bo Derek and Sean Young sprinkled on top. Budgets are said to run around \$100,000 per episode. Many analysts are inclined to estimate the thing at a 2 share and forget it. But some see more to it. Says Jason Maltby, president/co-executive director of Mindshare Broadcast, "If one of these things taps into the bilingual Hispanic market, all bets are off." Adds TV veteran Stan Moger of SFM Entertainment, "The biggest cost for something like this is the scripts, and they've got a bunch that are proven to work, but just need translating. Buyers will be all over this."

With broadcasters pulling teeth to draw viewers once a week, how much can a five-a-week serial expect?

"I'd be happy if they watched twice a week, with hardcore viewers every night," says Jack Abernethy, the Fox TV Stations CEO shepherding the project. Will affiliated stations sit still for a 1 rating when they could just run movies? "I wouldn't be doing this if I wasn't expecting a 3 or 4 household rating eventually," he replies. "My biggest problem is planning for success." ■

Eric Schmuckler is a contributing writer for *Mediaweek*.

BROTHERS & SISTERS: SCOTT GARFIELD/ABC; WITHOUT A TRACE: CRAIG BLANKENHORN/CBS



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1) Source: MRI Fall 2005. Base Adults 18+. Rank based on % composition among past 7-day viewing. #3 in both HH \$75k+ and \$100k+ homes and #3 in all of cable for median HH.

FINE SCREENS  
NETWORKS

**SITTING PRETTY** Univision's *La Fea Mas Bella* (The Ugliest Pretty Girl) one week this month beat ABC, WB and UPN in adults 18-34.

Spanish-language nets fight for cross-platform supremacy

# Digital Dominance

By John Consoli

MUCH LIKE THE ENGLISH-language networks, the battle among the Hispanic broadcast nets to bring in more revenue is expanding to digital and other nontraditional platforms. And while Univision is still the 2,000-pound gorilla when it comes to ratings and viewership, arch rival Telemundo may have a distinct advantage when it comes to the digital arena.

While Univision is locked into a decade-long deal with Televisa to provide novelas (most of which air in Mexico first), Telemundo has been producing dramas in the U.S. through its own studios, meaning the network owns the rights and can program the shows on whatever platforms it wants. Owning its own novelas not only enables Telemundo to offer product integration, but also allows deals for putting content on cell phones and offering shows via video-on-demand.

Though Univision boasts broader reach when it comes to cross-platform opportunities for advertisers—encompassing Univision, TeleFutura, Galavision, the Univision Radio Group, Univision Music and its network Web sites—Univision Communications president and COO Ray Rodriguez acknowledges that Univision cannot offer novelas via VOD or stream them on the Web. “Our concentration is elsewhere

now,” he said during a press conference at the recent upfront.

Univision is locked in a legal battle with Televisa over a number of issues, including who owns the rights to stream the novelas in the U.S. But as Rodriguez says, “It is not a front-burner issue right now.” That potentially is good news for Telemundo, which devoted considerable time during the upfront—much like sister network NBC—to digital offerings on which to distribute not only novelas but sports, music and lifestyle programs.

Telemundo also has made a deal to create the site Yahoo! Telemundo, which will offer Telemundo content and links to other sites from Telemundo and its sister net mun2.

The third Hispanic broadcast net, Azteca America, which owns TV networks in Mexico and produces Spanish-language programming for distribution worldwide, also owns its own U.S. content. Like Telemundo, it holds an advantage over Univision in that it can offer product integration in its shows as well as via other platforms.

While Univision reaches 98 percent of U.S. Hispanic households and Telemundo reaches 92 percent, Azteca America is seen in only about one-third of the country. But its markets include those with heavy Hispanic viewership, including Los Angeles, New York, Miami, Houston, Dallas, Chicago and Phoenix. Univision could go over the \$1 billion mark in this upfront buying period, while Telemundo is expected to approach \$400 million. Azteca’s upfront take, meanwhile, will be under \$100 million.

While Telemundo touts its sizable season-to-date ratings increases (albeit off lower bases) of 68 percent in prime time, 58 percent in early morning, 42 percent for evening news and 15 percent for daytime, and while Azteca says it is now getting a 5 percent share of all-day Hispanic audiences, it is still Univision that draws the bulk of Hispanic viewers.

Univision’s Rodriguez says now that Nielsen Media Research is issuing Hispanic network data under its National Television Index in addition to the National Hispanic Television Index, allowing direct ratings comparisons between Hispanic and English-language nets, Univision will benefit tremendously. After next season, NHTI will be eliminated, with all networks getting measured only under the NTI. “For the Spanish media to grow their share of ad dollars, they need to be fishing in the same ocean as the English-language networks,” Rodriguez says. “The NTI is where the big money is.”

Using NTI data, Univision, on four of seven nights each week over the past two months, has beaten at least one of the Big Four broadcast networks in prime time among adults 18-34. This month, Univision’s novela *La Fea Mas Bella* (The Ugliest Pretty Girl) on one week beat ABC, WB and UPN among adults 18-34. And in March, Telemundo produced the highest 18-34 prime-time ratings in its history.

How that will play out in the current upfront buying period remains to be seen. The Hispanic nets still boast only about half of the some 300 total national advertisers, and many advertisers remain hesitant to make the additional investment to produce ads in Spanish. But Steve Mandala, Telemundo’s senior vp, sales and marketing, says pre-upfront conversations with GlaxoSmithKline and Merck had him confident that the pharmaceutical giants may jump into the Hispanic TV marketplace for the first time. ■

John Consoli is a senior editor covering network TV for *Mediaweek*.





WIRELESS



TELEVISION



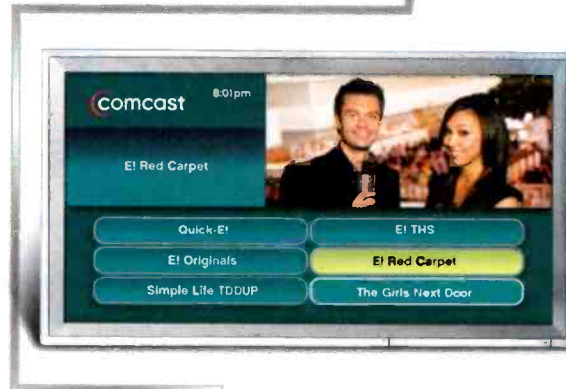
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# By the Numbers

Fifteen dramas plus eleven comedies equal the networks' new offerings for fall.

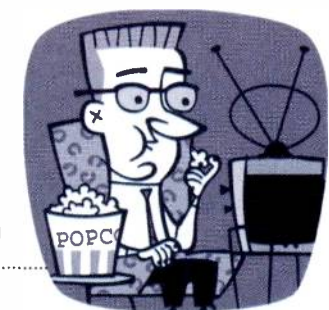
- The number of new network series this fall—15 dramas and 11 comedies: **26**
- The number of new network series last fall—19 dramas, 10 comedies and 2 reality series: **31**
- The number of new series to focus on a missing person—*Kidnapped* (NBC), *Runaway* (CW), *Vanished* (Fox): **3****

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- The number of sitcoms on The Big Three: **13**
- The number of comedies NBC had on its fall schedule in 1997: **18**
- The largest number of new shows on any network (ABC): **9**
- The number of new shows to include a numeral in the series title—*Six Degrees* (ABC), *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip* (NBC), *The Nine* (ABC), *30 Rock* (NBC), *20 Good Years* (NBC): **5****

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- The number of editions of NBC's *Dateline* in fall 1998: **4**
- The total number of newsmagazines scheduled for fall 2006: **4**
- The milestone number of episodes Fox's *The Simpsons* will be hitting in 2006-'07: **400**
- The last year in which NBC opened a season without any Tuesday comedies: **1987**
- The last year in which CBS opened a season with only four comedies: **1985**
- The last year in which CBS opened a fall season without a Sunday movie: **1985**
- The last time NBC kicked off the fall season with a scripted drama in the Thursday 9 p.m. time period: **1979**
- The last year with no regularly scheduled movie showcase on the broadcast networks: **1960****



TERRY COLON

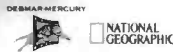


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# market profile

(Continued from page 14) 31 reflects a 2.1 percent decline compared to the same period ended March 31, 2005, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations' FAS-FAX report. The paper's Sunday circ fell 3.2 percent to 556,465.

The *Republic* has recently experienced several major changes to its management team.

Among them, Randy Lovely was promoted to executive editor in December 2005. He served as the paper's managing editor for nearly four years. Last September, John Zidich was named the *Republic's* president and publisher. Zidich previously served as the paper's president and COO.

## ARBITRON RADIO OWNERSHIP

OWNER	STATIONS	AVG. QTR.-HOUR SHARE	REVENUE (IN MILLIONS)	SHARE OF TOTAL
Clear Channel Communications	3 AM, 5 FM	25.3	\$87.4	35.1%
Bonneville International	2 AM, 2 FM	11.9	\$39.3	15.8%
Sandusky Radio	1 AM, 3 FM	9.9	\$33.9	13.6%
CBS Radio	3 FM	9.9	\$28.6	11.5%
Univision Communications	2 FM	9.8	\$16.5	6.6%
Entravision Communications	2 FM	3.6	\$9.2	3.7%
Riviera Broadcast Group	1 FM	1.5	\$4.7	1.9%

Includes only stations with significant registration in Arbitron diary returns and licensed in Phoenix or immediate area. Share data from Arbitron Winter 2006 book; revenue and owner information provided by BIA Financial Network.

## SCARBOROUGH PROFILE

### COMPARISON OF PHOENIX To the Top 50 Market Average

	TOP 50 MARKET AVERAGE %	PHOENIX COMPOSITION %	PHOENIX INDEX
<b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b>			
Age 18-34	31	33	106
Age 35-54	40	37	94
Age 55+	30	30	100
HHI \$75,000+	35	29	83
College Graduate	14	13	93
Any Postgraduate Work	12	10	83
Professional/Managerial	27	22	84
African American	12	3	27
Hispanic	15	23	149

### MEDIA USAGE-AVERAGE AUDIENCES\*

	TOP 50 MARKET AVERAGE %	PHOENIX COMPOSITION %	PHOENIX INDEX
Read Any Daily Newspaper	51	41	82
Read Any Sunday Newspaper	58	49	84
Total Radio Morning Drive M-F	21	20	97
Total Radio Afternoon Drive M-F	18	16	90
Total TV Early News M-F	28	30	108
Total TV Prime Time M-Sun	39	40	104
Total Cable Prime Time M-Sun	15	14	92

### MEDIA USAGE-OTHER

	TOP 50 MARKET AVERAGE %	PHOENIX COMPOSITION %	PHOENIX INDEX
Accessed Internet Past 30 Days	63	63	100

### HOME TECHNOLOGY

	TOP 50 MARKET AVERAGE %	PHOENIX COMPOSITION %	PHOENIX INDEX
Owns a Personal Computer	68	66	97
Purchase Using Internet Past 12 Months	46	44	96
HH Connected to Cable	64	59	93
HH Connected to Satellite/Microwave Dish	24	24	100
HH Uses Broadband Internet Connection	37	35	94

\*Media Audiences-Average: average issue readers for newspapers; average quarter-hour listeners within a specific daypart for radio; average half-hour viewers within a specific daypart for TV and cable.  
Source: 2005 Scarborough Research Top 50 Market Report (August 2004-September 2005)

As part of its purchase of Ashland Media Group of Phoenix in 2003, Gannett acquired *La Voz*, the smaller and younger of the two main Spanish-language weeklies. The other is the privately owned *Prensa Hispana*.

Last October, Phoenix-based New Times Media announced its planned purchase of Village Voice Media. The merger of the country's two largest alternative weekly newspaper publishers closed on Jan. 31. The deal created a chain of 17 free alternative-newsweeklies with a combined circulation of 1.8 million in the nation's largest cities.

Before the merger, New Times' flagship was the *Phoenix New Times*; New York's storied *The Village Voice* had served as the flagship of its namesake company. The merged company uses the Village Voice Media name. Although the deal involving the two heavyweights proved highly controversial, the Justice Department said last December that it would not block the merger.

Clear Channel, Bonneville International, Sandusky Radio, CBS Radio, Univision and Entravision Communications are the top players in the 15th-ranked Phoenix radio market. Univision's Regional Mexican KHOT-FM was the No. 1 station in the winter 2006 Arbitron survey, finishing with a 5.5 share total day among listeners 12-plus, just ahead of Clear Channel's News/Talk KFYI-AM and CBS' Oldies station KOOL-FM.

The market's No. 1 billing station, however is Clear Channel's Adult Contemporary KESZ-FM, which earned an estimated \$18.5 million in 2005 revenue, according to BIA.

Among recent months' changes, Bonneville, on May 8, finalized its \$77.5 million purchase of Emmis Communications' popular Urban KKFR-FM. Bonneville plans to flip KKFR to become a simulcast of its News/Talk KTAR-AM, but has said it will relocate the Urban format to another station because of that station's ratings and billings strength in the market. In the winter book, KKFR tied for seventh overall with a 3.9 share.

KKFR has competed aggressively with Clear Channel's Rhythmic Contemporary Hit Radio KZZP-FM, which earned a 3.7 share in the most recent survey. In April, CC announced that KZZP's HD2 digital subchannel would carry a Spanish Oldies format.

Phoenix-based Clear Channel Outdoor and CBS Outdoor lead the outdoor advertising marketplace. Clear Channel's local inventory includes bulletins, mobile panels, taxi media, airport and mall advertising. CBS offers bulletins, 30-sheet posters, bus shelters and bus benches.



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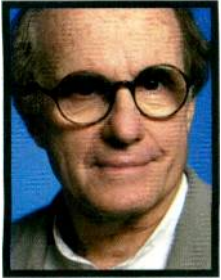
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## THE BLUNT PENCIL ERWIN EPHRON

# The Bent Acronym

## A collection of scrambled letters from the Internet

**LIKE THE CRUSTY PART** of muffins, acronyms are the tasty tops of words. At best they're sharp as lemons; Nixon's Committee to Reelect the President, or CREEP, comes immediately to mind. At worst they're good fun comfort foods, like Keep It Simple Stupid's KISS.

We live in the age of acronyms; a sped-up world compressed by the ease and ubiquity of messaging. As our inboxes swell, the need to respond overwhelms the need to communicate, creating a perfect breeding ground for the three letter reply. **DYA?**

I thought I had mastered the acronyms of media, CPM, GRP, CPP and :), until I started reading the Internet press and found myself confounded by letters I did not know, thrown out with a casualness usually reserved for lint. Instead of expediting comprehension, these nameless acronyms had me making up words to fill in the missing body parts. Like the infamous EBITDA, or Earnings Before I Took Down the Auditor.

See how well you do in this little quiz I call "Ace the Acronym" or ATA for short. I'll put the words in context to give you a sporting chance.

The first is easy. It's CTR, as in: "[Blank] reports there seems to be no relationship between CTR and brand awareness for Internet advertising, in spite of the fact that many marketers are focused on CPC." Any clue? How about multiple choice? CTR is which of the following:

- 1) Client's Tense Reaction
- 2) Consumers Toasting Roosters
- 3) Click-Through Rate.

You're right. CTR is Click-Through Rate, the number of consumers clicking as a percent of consumers exposed to an Internet ad that offers a place to click. And a bonus answer: The same number of consumers divided into cost gives us CPC or Cost-Per-Click.

Next is RSS, as used in "Recently, I set out to take the pulse of agencies and marketers on the RSS issue...and combined with reflections on my own experience in the RSS trenches, I've learned a number of things." What is this RSS that the writer has learned about?

- 1) Reality Shows Suck
- 2) Recurring Silly Solutions
- 3) Really Simple Syndication

You're right again, it's No. 3. Really Simple Syndication, which no matter how it's abbreviated, doesn't really sound simple. RSS is a form of Internet distribution mainly used by news Web sites and blogs to feed content or summaries that link to full content for interested users. Think of it as a digital cross between King Features and the Munchkins.

No. 3 on the scorecard, XMOS is practically extra-

terrestrial, as in "XMOS revealed that that interactive advertising contributed significantly to brand impact." What (or who) is the XMOS?

- 1) Exhumed Memos On Significance
- 2) X-Man On Staff
- 3) Cross-Media Optimization Studies

Yes, the most unlikely definition is correct. XMOS is short for Cross-Media Optimization Studies, a significant body of research conducted by the Internet Advertising Bureau. It is truly a bent acronym. The gaffe here is using X for the word Cross, which violates the Geneva Accord on Acronymics (GAA).

Our fourth acronym, HTML, is perhaps the most difficult, as in "Please be careful where you put your HTML. The walls have ears and eyes and noses."

- 1) Heroic Transfer of Marketing Learnings
- 2) High Trans-fatty Meat Loaf
- 3) Hypertext Markup Language.

It's Hypertext Markup Language, which certainly deserves to be truncated if not totally trunked. HTML is a protocol designed for the creation of Web pages with text and other information for display in a Web browser. HTML's grammar structure is the HTML DTD that was created using SGML. And I'm afraid that uses up all of our available letters.

The final acronym is SEM, as in "Think of search as a ball. SEMs might hold it now, but throw it to the agencies or pass it to the techies, and it becomes something else." Who (or what) are these SEMs holding the ball?

- 1) Svelte and Exquisite Maidens
- 2) Socially Empowered Mushrooms
- 3) Search Engine Marketers

If you guessed Search Engine Marketers, you are right. These are the companies dedicated to improving and expanding the use of online search as a marketing tool.

And here, in an almost Biblical Sense (BS), the wheel turns full circle, which seems proper for a wheel. Search Engine Marketers set the price for acronyms. Are you a drug company that wants to contract SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)? That will cost you big.

And leave it to an SEM (Acronym Media is the company) to search out the last word on Internet acronyms: TWAIN or Technology Without An Interesting Name.

That caps the well. An acronym that tells you almost nothing, but does it quickly. ■

**Erwin Ephron is a partner of Ephron, Papazian & Ephron, which has numerous clients in the media industry. He can be reached at [ephronny@aol.com](mailto:ephronny@aol.com) or at [www.ephronmedia.com](http://www.ephronmedia.com).**





**OPINION**  
**ALAN WURTZEL**

## Pause on This

### Why DVR viewing will not kill the TV spot anytime soon

**OVER THE PAST YEAR** or so, as the digital video recorder moved beyond early adopters and into the mainstream, a crescendo of voices has been predicting the death of ad-supported broadcast television.

Pundits predicated its demise largely on the DVR's ad-skipping ability. With viewers not seeing ads, marketers will no longer buy airtime, and—poof!—there goes broadcast TV. So the thinking goes. Sounds reasonable, but as a researcher, I prefer to base my predictions on actual facts. And now, for the first time, we have some real data on the impact of DVR use.

Most industry observers have been focusing on the *ratings* impact of the DVR. But from our clients' point of view, all that matters is the effectiveness of commercials, and whether or not they achieve their specific marketing objectives. The data tells us, quite clearly, that there is *no significant impact* on ad recall and ad recognition among DVR users compared to nonusers. This is the finding of a recent study by Millward Brown, a leading marketing research firm with expertise in measuring ad effectiveness. The four major networks sponsored the study, and because we wanted it to be fair and impartial, asked Millward Brown to use its widely acknowledged methodology without any changes by the sponsoring networks.

The reaction to Millward Brown's study has been interesting. For some, the research presents such a cognitive dissonance that it is dismissed out of hand. It's the equivalent of saying the earth is flat because my eyes tell me so. That was a fairly predictable response as long as the DVR existed without any real data on its use and impact. But now we do have data, and it is telling a very different story—counterintuitive as it might seem.

What would explain these results? After all, one of the DVR's main selling points is its ability to let you zip through ads, right? Well, a couple of things: First, even among DVR owners, most viewing—61 percent in Millward Brown's study—is live. Second, the vast majority of DVR homes have a single DVR but many TV sets. So a great deal of viewing takes place where ad-skipping is not even an option. Furthermore—and some find this tough to believe but the data confirms it—not everyone watching on a DVR skips *all* the commercials *all* the time.

Interestingly, a newly released British study arrives at the *same* conclusions. It found the impact of the DVR to be far less than anticipated because viewers don't time-shift as often as they say they do, and when they do fast-forward, DVR users pay increased attention to commercials.

Finally, much of the original perception of DVR user behavior comes from the experience of early adopters. But early adopters behave differently than mainstream con-

sumers. They tend to be far more extreme in how they use technology. Once the technology diffuses into the mainstream, much of the early adopter behavior is significantly moderated. I believe that's the case with DVRs.

Let me be clear. I'm not saying DVR-users don't fast-forward some commercials. They do. And I'm not saying advertising and media executives should bury their heads in the sand and pretend they don't need to adapt to technology change. What I am saying, however, is the threat of the DVR to the economics of broadcast television has been vastly overstated. And this conclusion is based on data from a number of sources: Millward Brown, Nielsen Media Research and studies conducted by broadcast networks and other independent research companies.

Commercial avoidance has been part of the TV business as long as people have felt the need to get off the couch and head to the kitchen. In fact, an analysis of Nielsen ratings shows that the commercial ratings impact from "surfing" in non-DVR households—who watch only "live" TV—is actually greater than in DVR homes.

It is ironic that at this time of year, when networks, advertisers and clients are engaged in significant negotiations with billions of dollars on the line, we seem to be arguing over how to make our business smaller. The fact is, broadcast network television remains the most powerful marketing and sales medium ever known. Yes, technology is changing the game, but let's keep some perspective. It's clear that as of now, the DVR is not having an adverse impact on commercial effectiveness.

As a researcher, my primary interest is finding the most accurate measure of TV viewing. I believe without question it is the "live plus 7" data stream, because it captures all viewing of a program. But I also recognize it has some marketing and logistical issues. So as a reasonable substitute until we can resolve those, it's clear the best alternative is "live plus same day." In fact, the "live"-only measure significantly distorts the count by eliminating all DVR viewing. As the number of DVR homes in the Nielsen panel increases along with the consumer penetration level, that distortion will get only worse. The only rationale for not using "live plus same day" is if you assume commercials viewed off the DVR disc have no value—and that's exactly what the research shows is not the case.

Broadcast TV has always shown an ability to adapt to technological change. It adapted to the remote control, the VCR and even to competition from hundreds of cable and satellite channels. It will adapt now to the DVR. ■

**Alan Wurtzel is president of research and media development for NBC Universal.**

## CALENDAR

■ **WebTrends** is offering a free all-day seminar at the Marriott Financial Center in New York on June 1 that focuses on how to move beyond Web analytics in order to succeed in the changing world of marketing. For more information, go to [www.webtrends.com/seminars](http://www.webtrends.com/seminars).

■ The 65th annual **Peabody Awards** will be presented at a June 5 luncheon at the Waldorf Astoria in New York. Jon Stewart, anchor of Comedy Central's two-time Peabody Award winner, *The Daily Show With Jon Stewart*, will be the master of ceremonies. Contact Stephanie Baumel at (212) 983-9898 for information.

■ The two-day **Digital Marketing Conference**, hosted by Adweek Magazines, will explore how ad agencies, media companies and clients can adapt to the rise of fragmented and customized media. The event will be June 8-9 at the Marriott Marquis in New York. Go to [www.digitalmarketing-expo.com](http://www.digitalmarketing-expo.com).

■ Magazine Publishers Association's new series, Meet the Innovators, will sponsor **Technologies Shaping America** on June 6 at the Harmonie Club in New York. The luncheon will examine the ongoing media business transformation with media innovator Peter Meirs, director of Alternative Media Technologies, Time Inc. Go to [www.magazine.org](http://www.magazine.org) for more details.

■ A panel for marketing execs, **Breakaway Brand: Secrets Behind the Most Successful Brands** will take place June 13 at the Time-Life Building in New York. Senior execs will distill the differentiators of the world's most recognizable brands. Go to [NYAMA.org](http://NYAMA.org).

■ The **Online Video and Advertising Forum** will be June 16 at the Puck Building in New York. Panels will discuss whether video should become part of an interactive marketing and advertising strategy and what determines the success of an interactive video marketing campaign. To register, e-mail [registration@incisivemedia.com](mailto:registration@incisivemedia.com).

### **Nylon, MySpace to Showcase Musicians**

Fashion and style magazine *Nylon* and online community MySpace.com collaborated in *Nylon's* June/July issue to celebrate the best of MySpace musicians. Hitting newsstands May 30, the issue will unite 225,000 *Nylon* readers with more than 70 million MySpace members. *Nylon* also created a digital magazine for the issue, free at [www.nylonmag.com/digital](http://www.nylonmag.com/digital). After the June/July issue, *Nylon* will publish a digital, downloadable version of subsequent issues for 99 cents each, or for \$4.95 per year.

### **Cablevision, FX Net Create VOD to Tout FX**

Cablevision and FX Networks have teamed up to launch a video-on-demand barker channel designed to promote the linear FX net. The FX Preview Channel will feature exclusive VOD content from series such as *Rescue Me*, *The Shield* and *Nip/Tuck*, as well as original content, sneak previews, exclusive behind-the-scenes footage and interactive polling. The channel will be available to all of Cablevision's 2.1 million digital subscribers. Launched with the help of media agency Media Storm Advertising, the VOD channel will be ad-supported.

### **WBEB Follows CBS in Signing for PPM**

Jerry Lee, the owner of Adult Contemporary WBEB-FM in Philadelphia, last week signed a four-year contract for Arbitron's Portable People Meter electronic audience ratings service. Lee's move follows CBS Radio's \$221.2 million, seven-year deal for the PPM and other research services. The PPM rolls out to the top 50 markets in July, beginning with Houston. Pending the requisite Media Rating Council accreditation, Philadelphia would be the second PPM market to launch.

### **Last Comic Standing, Interactive Style**

NBC has partnered with Time Warner Cable to offer viewers several interactive features tied to the upcoming summer series *Last Comic Standing*. Starting on May 30, Time Warner's digital cable subscribers in 10 select markets will be able to tune in to the fourth installment of the standup competition show, and participate in live polls or answer trivia questions using their remote controls. NBC officials say that this premiere marks the first such interactive application for a prime-time show.

### **Telephia First to Measure Mobile TV Use**

Telephia, a San Francisco-based market research firm focused on the wireless industry, is preparing to launch the first audience measurement service to track mobile TV usage on cell phones and other mobile devices. The company is in the process of building a national panel and intends to debut the service in the U.S. late this year, expanding to Europe and Asia in 2007.

### **XM Falter, Sirius Gets Serious**

XM Satellite Radio cut its year-end subscriber forecast to 8.5 million from 9 million, with a total subscriber revenue of \$835 million. The news sent XM's stock to a 52-week low. XM also faces several class-action suits and a lawsuit filed by record companies. The FTC is inquiring into XM as well. Competitor Sirius Satellite Radio, on the other hand, has reaffirmed its positive forecast of more than 6.2 million subscribers by year's end.

### **Guru Guides Brings Magazines to TiVo**

TiVo last week introduced Guru Guides, which offers program recommendations from the editors of a number of magazines, including *Sports Illustrated*, *Vanity Fair* and *Entertainment Weekly*. Guru Guides will offer subscribers a list of programs selected by editorial staffers from each of its partner titles. Other publications that have signed on are *Billboard*, *Automobile* and *Star*.

### **Yahoo Media Group Execs Expand Roles**

Yahoo last week reorganized its Media Group. David Katz, who led Yahoo's sports and entertainment groups, will head up Yahoo Studios, a new division within the Media Group that focuses on developing and producing original and user-generated content. CNET vet Vince Broady will head Yahoo's games, entertainment and youth properties. Scott Moore will add Yahoo Health to his responsibilities of overseeing Yahoo News, Finance and Tech.

### **MarthaStewart.com Caters to Connections**

MarthaStewart.com will feature a robust community section that incorporates a host of social-networking applications when the site relaunches in early 2007. The newly revamped site will allow Martha Stewart's legion of fans to connect with one another while featuring new content offerings and enhanced search-functionality. ■



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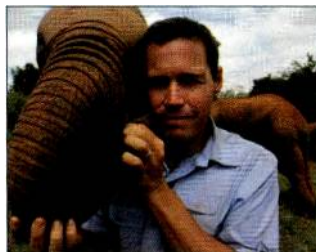
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	All Radio	AM Radio	FM Radio
All Home	81.1	10.5	70.6
In Car	29.0	21.4	7.6
At Work	10.0	8.3	1.7
Other			

**VI. WORKING WOMEN**

	All Working Women	AM Radio	FM Radio
All	62.0	10.0	52.0
18-24	72.0	10.0	62.0
25-34	68.0	10.0	58.0

**II. CIRCULATION & COST DATA FOR SELECTED DAILY PAPERS IN THE TOP 100 MSA MARKETS**

MSA	Paper	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
1	New York (NY)	1,128,200	1,108,000	1,088,000	1,068,000	1,048,000	1,028,000	1,008,000	988,000	968,000	948,000	928,000
2	Los Angeles (CA)	1,028,000	1,008,000	988,000	968,000	948,000	928,000	908,000	888,000	868,000	848,000	828,000
3	Chicago (IL)	928,000	908,000	888,000	868,000	848,000	828,000	808,000	788,000	768,000	748,000	728,000

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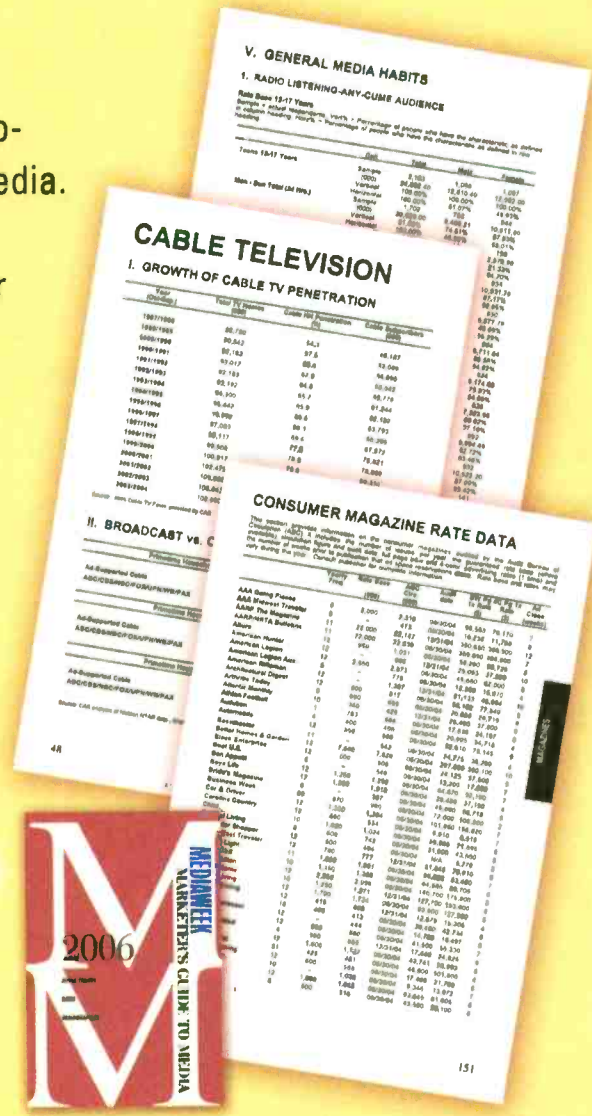
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## MOVERS

### INTERACTIVE

**Michael Barrett**, executive vp, AOL Media Networks, is leaving the company to become chief revenue officer at Fox Interactive Media in June. Barrett headed up ad sales for the Time Warner-owned portal since a reorganization in early 2004.

### CABLE

A&E Television Networks has elevated **Jennifer Ball** to vp, affiliate marketing, and **Nani Shin-Wannemacher** to vp, affiliate sales and marketing, Northeast Region. Ball joined AETN in 1999 and Shin-Wannemacher in 2000...Cartoon Network has upped **Josh Feldman** to vp, Cartoon Network ad sales and marketing. A 12-year Turner Broadcasting veteran, Feldman most recently served as sales manager for Adult Swim...**Kim Hurwitz** has been named affiliate relations director of The Tube Music Network, a digital multicast channel devoted to MOR rock videos. Prior to joining The Tube, Hurwitz served as director of marketing at DirecTV, overseeing the satellite company's pay-per-view operations.

### TV STATIONS

**Tod Smith** was named to head up Fox affiliate KMSB-TV and UPN affiliate KTTU-TV (soon to be a MyNetworkTV affiliate), Belo's duopoly in Tucson, Ariz., as president and general manager, effective June 14. Smith comes to Belo from Peter A. Mayer Advertising, a New Orleans ad agency...**Theresa Gamba** was named vp of programming, advertising and promotion for KABC-TV, ABC Television's Los Angeles flagship. She was most recently vp of programming and station marketing for ABC-owned-and-operated KGO-TV in San Francisco.

### RADIO

**Michael Oringer** was named senior vp and general manager of the Altitude Group, CBS Radio's integrated marketing division. He was most recently director of marketing for the northeast region of Coca-Cola...**Alfredo Rodriguez** has joined Clear Channel Radio as general manager of La Preciosa Network. He was most recently program director for KHJ-AM, Liberman Broadcasting's Regional Mexican station in Los Angeles.

EDITED BY LAUREN CHARLIP



**Self** vp, publisher **Kim Kelleher** (r.) does "the bump" at *Workout in the Park*, with editor in chief **Lucy Danziger** (l.) and Fox TV's **Lisa Edelstein**.

## Quicktakes

**MAY'S BEEN A BUSY** month in New York, what with magazine awards, upfronts and scores of sundry bashes. But after all the vodka tonics and extra helpings of canapés, it's time to cast an eye toward the important issues of summer, i.e. are we ready for swimsuit season? *Self* magazine's Workout in the Park, a four-city fitness bonanza, provided a nice kickoff, it made its way to Central Park's Rumsey Playfield May 13. More than 5,000 readers turned out for a calorie-burning blitz with three different soundstages and classes ranging from Bikini Body Bootcamp to Cardio Striptease, to our favorite, Crumpin' and Clownin' (the very latest hip-hop dance style involving a lot of jig-gling). Energy was high, aided by one of the first sunny Saturdays New Yorkers had seen in a while—there were plenty of whoops and hollers in a vast sea of (mostly) women dancing around sponsor-provided loot bags. "To look out from the stage and see hundreds of women doing the moves—it's a big thrill," fitness director **Meaghan Buchan** said. Several *Self* staffers weren't up for the more fast-and-furious classes; it seems there's a baby boom in the ranks. Maybe they put something in the Propel Fitness Water?...Speaking of healthy women, *Women's Health* vp/publisher **Kate Kelly Smith** surprised clients at a screening of *The Da Vinci Code* May 22 in

played—a Rodale first—and word is the audience went wild with applause (and we all know how rarely audiences applaud at pre-movie ads). It was part of the magazine's new national consumer advertising campaign running in select cities in front of *Poseidon*, *Mission Impossible III* and *Da Vinci* among others...May 17, the day of the **People en Español** 50-most-beautiful-people bash, editor **Richard Pérez-Feria** sent a casual IM to Enrique Iglesias, inviting him to stop by the party. Fans had lined up in front of Skylight Studios, in the lower West Village, around

four that afternoon to watch the red carpet proceedings. By all accounts, the Latin stars love their fans. *Lost*'s Michelle Rodriguez (see photo p. 22) strode off the red carpet, tailed by frowning security guards, to sign autographs and take photos with screaming fans. And when Iglesias showed up unannounced, the buzz rose to a roar. He was just as gracious. That morning he had closed **Univision's** upfront presenta-

tion with a few songs as a favor to **Ray Rodriguez**, Univision Communications president and COO. In the '80s, Rodriguez was CEO and worldwide manager for papa Julio. "He has a lot of his father's mannerisms, and has the same passion for show business as his Dad, but I think he's better looking," Rodriguez—Ray, that is—said afterward.

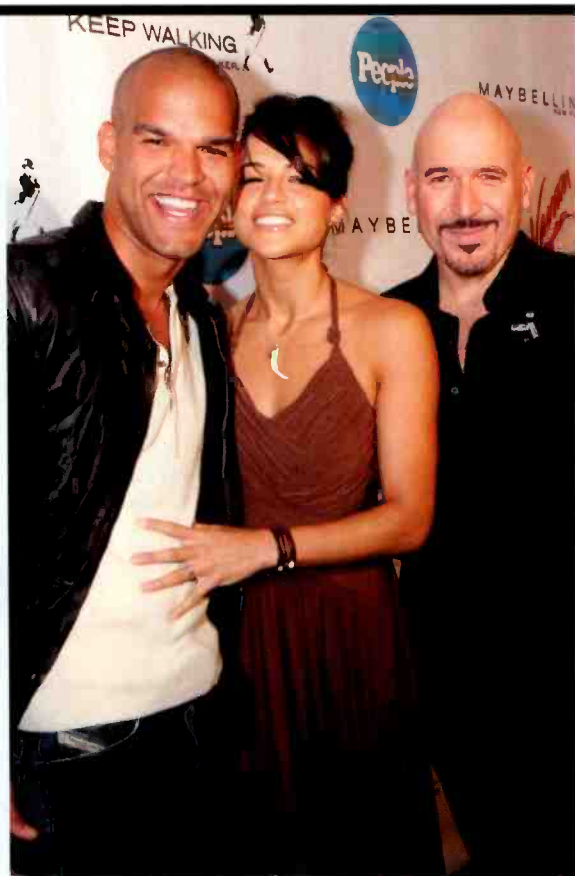


**Poppin' fresh:** Tina Johnson, *WH* editor in chief (left) taste-tests with Smith.

## DISH



▲ Oprah Winfrey and friends gathered May 11 at New York's Core Club to raise a glass to the "Oprah & Friends" channel, launching on XM Satellite Radio in September. From left to right: home-design guru Nate Berkus, spiritual teacher and author Marianne Williamson, Winfrey, XM CEO Hugh Panero and longtime Oprah-buddy Gayle King. Winfrey and King are slated for a weekly show together. Other friends' shows, including Dr. Mehmet Oz and Winfrey's trainer Bob Greene, will run daily.



▲ *Los!*'s Michelle Rodriguez (center) elbowed her way off the red carpet at at *People en Español*'s "Los 50 más bellos" party May 17 to greet cheering fans and sign autographs outside Manhattan's Skylight Studios. Amaury Nolasco (left), of Fox's *Prison Break*, enjoys a moment with Rodriguez and *People en Español* editor Richard Pérez-Feria.



▲ At Book Expo in D.C. May 19, AOL Book Maven bloggerista Bethanne Patrick interviewed *New York Times* puzzle-master Will Shortz for a podcast. Patrick admitted that one of the proudest days of her life was when she completed the Sunday *Times* crossword—in ink. From left to right: Patrick, Shortz and Jennie Baird, executive director, AOL Coaches & Books.



▲ Lovin' from the oven: *Bon Appétit* threw this year's "Chef's Night Out" party downtown at the brand new Chinatown Brasserie, which opens its doors in June. *BA* editor in chief Barbara Fairchild (left), Food Network's Giada De Laurentiis (center) and *BA* vp and publisher Paul Jowdy were on hand May 7 to welcome chefs and foodies alike to town for the James Beard awards.



# ADWEEK MAGAZINES

PRESENTS



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BY STEPHANIE D. SMITH

## Finding the Perfect Fit

Hearst continues to tweak *Shop Etc.*'s editorial pages and circulation strategy in order to build the brand

TWO YEARS AGO, HEARST MAGAZINES EMULATED CONDÉ NAST'S SUCCESSFUL shopping monthly *Lucky* by introducing a small-sized, product-focused version called *Shop Etc.* But as Hearst works toward building a viable business, it has put the magazine through a few wardrobe changes.

Last fall, *Shop Etc.* swapped its cover formula of bags and shoes for celebrities such as Angie Harmon. Then in April the title went further, doing away with page flaps that separated sections, adding newsier columns, and enlarging the trim to a standard-size format. Now, in an about face, *Shop Etc.* will switch its covers back to products with the June/July issue.

Editor Mandi Norwood explains the changes as nothing out of the ordinary. "The thing about working on a relatively young brand is that you have the privilege of trying new things without people throwing up their hands in horror," said Norwood.

Cynthia Lewis, *Shop Etc.* vp, publisher also noted that product covers this spring tested well with readers, resulting in higher sell-through averages than celeb covers. "Product is the right direction," she said. Readers don't think they can be a celebrity, but by showcasing a great Hogan bag on the cover, she ex-

plained, they could think it could be theirs.

Although some women's titles, including *Lucky*, use celebrities to boost newsstand sales, John Harrington, editor of *The New Single Copy*, noted that strategy may not work for a magazine still building its newsstand base. "One of the things about celebrity covers is volatility. With celebrities, you may have a cover that sells 800,000 copies or one that sells 200,000," he said. "With advertisers looking at each issue, that creates more problems when looking at the rate base."

Moreover, as *Shop Etc.*'s demographics skew older—the median age is 36 versus *Lucky*'s 29.9—"maybe celebrity wasn't as appealing to the demographic that they're targeting," surmised Pattie Garrahy, CEO of PGR Media.

Beyond *Shop Etc.*'s editorial tweaks, the magazine continues to work out kinks on the business side. *Shop Etc.* launched with three cover prices—\$1.99, \$2.99 and \$3.49—to find



The Hearst title this spring banished celebs from its covers and switched back to products.

its newsstand sweet spot. While it has since stopped selling \$1.99 copies, as of March, nearly a third of its distribution was marked at \$2.99, say executives familiar with *Shop Etc.*'s newsstand strategy.

Harrington believes *Shop Etc.*'s price fluctuations may be an effort to find the balance between maintaining its 600,000 rate base and becoming profitable. "Many publications that are trying these lower prices under \$2 or \$2.50 are finding that it's not enough. You may be able to sell copies, but you're not able to generate enough revenue to make it profitable," he said. "At \$1.99, *Shop Etc.*'s circulation was high enough to maintain rate base, but [Hearst] probably wanted to see if the magazine could get more revenue out of the newsstand."

Media buyers are still waiting for *Shop Etc.*

60sec. With



### Alison Tocci president/group publisher, Time Out New York

**Q.** All 18 Time Out editions—from Abu Dhabi to New York—in May were redesigned for the first time in the company's 15-year history. Why now? **A.** Instead of everyone growing separately, we want to grow them together. It behooves all of us to bring certain functions uniformly in certain cities. It's as simple as having the search fun action in the exact same place on all the Web sites. We're introducing new heads, decks, typefaces and larger photos. London was first to redesign, then New York's May 3 edition and Chicago's redesign went live

with the May 24 issue. **Q.** Will you be publishing Time Out elsewhere in the U.S.? **A.** We're interested in Los Angeles definitely, and then possibly San Francisco. **Q.** You recently launched a video-on-demand channel in New York. Are there plans to expand? **A.** We are putting that on our Web site as of July, so that anybody can get the information no matter what city you're in. The next [VOD] city is Chicago. Since its inception in December, TONY On Demand has had over 500,000 views for our reviews of theater, dining, kids' events. **Q.** How will Time Out stave off competition from free newspapers and the Web? **A.** The Internet is the bigger source of competition for us than any other publication. I don't see a whole lot of crossover with us from newspapers such as the *Village Voice*, *AM New York* and *Metro*. People looking for the depth of cultural coverage aren't finding the same thing in *AM New York* and feeling like they can substitute one for the other. **Q.** Since Time Out gets the scoop on all the best events, what's on your summer calendar? **A.** I'm looking forward to the Rufus Wainwright recreation of the Judy Garland concert at Carnegie Hall in June. I saw him sing *Over the Rainbow* at the Cindy Sheehan anti-war rally at Hammerstein Ballroom recently and he brought the audience to their knees.



to be reviewed by the Audit Bureau of Circulations. And that wait may be over soon. Figures for August through December 2005/January 2006 issues are expected to be audited this fall. However, *Shop Etc.* has not yet decided whether it also will be audited by BPA Worldwide, as it had said it would in October 2004 (a Hearst spokesperson says the dual audit plan was merely a "consideration").

While the editorial tweaks and circ uncertainties may raise a red flag to some media observers, others say they are willing to look the other way. "If it were a single title from an independent company, I would be a little more concerned," said Garrahy. "If *Shop* makes more dramatic changes, then it can be damaging. It's got to settle here and see how it works."

Hearst does have plans to grow *Shop Etc.* In August the monthly will raise its rate base by 12.5 percent to 675,000 and expects to announce two more increases in 2007. In September, the magazine will launch an e-commerce site, *ShopetcUSA.com*, an online mall where consumers can shop from a selection of *Shop Etc.* advertisers.

But *Shop Etc.* is still playing catch-up to *Lucky*. For the second half of 2005, *Shop Etc.* sold on average 175,000 copies per issue, according to publisher's estimates. *Lucky* sold 263,181 copies during the same period. For the second half of 2005, *Lucky's* paid circulation grew 5.6 percent to 1.1 million compared to the year prior, according to ABC; though newsstands sales fell 9.8 percent for the period.

As for advertising, *Shop Etc.'s* pages through June rose 9.3 percent to 313 over 2005, reports the *Mediaweek* Monitor. Pages for *Lucky* stayed flat compared to the year prior but are more than double what *Shop Etc.* carried, at 776.

## Forever Young Celeb mags become youthful

Young readers are continuing to flock to celebrity weeklies, according to the latest data from Mediemark Research Inc.'s spring magazine audience estimates. And as a result, median household income is falling, too.

"A lower household income could be reflective of younger people living at home with their parents, or living with multiple people," said Barbara Borg, director of eastern print group for OMD. "You would think that the younger the age, the lower the income, unless it's a professional type of

MEDIaweek MAGAZINE MONITOR								
BIWEEKLIES MAY 29, 2006								
	ISSUE DATE	CURRENT PAGES	ISSUE DATE LAST YEAR	PAGES LAST YEAR	PERCENT CHANGE	YTD PAGES	YTD LAST YEAR	PERCENT CHANGE
<b>BUSINESS/ENTERTAINMENT</b>								
ESPN The Magazine	22-May	45.16	23-May	67.08	-32.68%	539.22	603.08	-10.59%
Forbes	5-Jun	146.13	6-Jun	122.65	19.14%	1,378.62	1,361.27	1.27%
Fortune®	29-May	111.06	30-May	94.47	17.56%	1,157.91	1,218.39	-4.96%
National Review	19-Jun	21.16	20-Jun	17.92	18.08%	213.20	199.00	7.14%
Rolling Stone <sup>D</sup>			2-Jun	64.02	N.A.	507.74	555.42	-8.58%
<b>DOUBLE ISSUE</b>								
<b>CATEGORY TOTAL</b>		<b>323.51</b>		<b>366.14</b>	<b>-11.64%</b>	<b>3,796.69</b>	<b>3,937.16</b>	<b>-3.57%</b>

@=One less issue in 2006 than 2005; 0=Double Issue pages reported May 15, 2006.

WEEKLIES MAY 29, 2006								
	ISSUE DATE	CURRENT PAGES	ISSUE DATE LAST YEAR	PAGES LAST YEAR	PERCENT CHANGE	YTD PAGES	YTD LAST YEAR	PERCENT CHANGE
<b>NEWS/BUSINESS</b>								
BusinessWeek	29-May	45.98	30-May	55.20	-16.70%	1,026.26	1,063.55	-3.51%
The Economist®	20-May	53.00	21-May	63.00	-15.87%	833.00	870.00	-4.25%
Newsweek <sup>E</sup>	29-May	32.00	30-May	37.53	-14.73%	761.60	725.76	4.94%
The New Republic	29-May	7.28	30-May	5.82	25.09%	107.55	110.68	-2.83%
Time <sup>E</sup>	29-May	22.40	30-May	42.06	-46.74%	816.07	815.95	0.01%
U.S. News & World Report	29-May	18.95	30-May	19.64	-3.51%	632.71	618.31	2.33%
<b>CATEGORY TOTAL</b>		<b>179.61</b>		<b>223.25</b>	<b>-19.55%</b>	<b>4,177.19</b>	<b>4,204.25</b>	<b>-0.64%</b>
<b>SPORTS/ENTERTAINMENT/LEISURE</b>								
AutoWeek	29-May	25.72	30-May	24.16	6.46%	468.30	467.87	0.09%
Entertainment Weekly	26-May	41.83	27-May	47.83	-12.54%	591.64	634.99	-6.83%
Golf World	26-May	26.33	27-May	23.27	13.15%	529.22	542.92	-2.52%
In Touch	29-May	21.33	30-May	11.00	93.91%	307.86	238.65	29.00%
Life & Style <sup>+</sup>	29-May	11.16	6-Jun	21.17	-47.28%	167.45	151.31	10.67%
New York	29-May	55.00	30-May	70.30	-21.76%	1,276.90	1,108.80	15.16%
People	29-May	76.47	30-May	74.34	2.87%	1,504.68	1,587.75	-5.23%
Sporting News	2-Jun	10.58	3-Jun	11.67	-9.34%	301.78	327.92	-7.97%
Sports Illustrated	29-May	39.31	30-May	45.53	-13.66%	812.68	792.54	2.54%
Star	29-May	16.33	30-May	13.17	23.99%	395.16	335.70	17.71%
The New Yorker®	29-May	24.44	30-May	36.61	-33.24%	664.58	816.76	-18.63%
Time Out New York	24-May	76.71	25-May	87.94	-12.77%	1,279.21	1,281.28	-0.16%
TV Guide (redesign) <sup>T</sup>	29-May	11.83	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	338.84	N.A.	N.A.
Us Weekly	29-May	28.17	30-May	38.83	-27.45%	753.97	746.49	1.00%
Woman's World	30-May	7.00	31-May	5.67	23.46%	153.66	144.99	5.98%
<b>CATEGORY TOTAL</b>		<b>472.21</b>		<b>511.49</b>	<b>-7.68%</b>	<b>9,545.93</b>	<b>9,177.97</b>	<b>4.01%</b>
<b>WEEKEND MAGAZINES</b>								
American Profile	28-May	11.40	29-May	8.90	28.09%	219.14	212.85	2.96%
Life®@	2-Jun	4.33	3-Jun	6.73	-35.66%	169.34	134.73	25.69%
Parade	28-May	10.95	29-May	10.24	6.93%	284.01	277.87	2.21%
USA Weekend	28-May	9.77	29-May	11.43	-14.52%	298.20	281.52	5.92%
<b>CATEGORY TOTAL</b>		<b>36.45</b>		<b>37.30</b>	<b>-2.28%</b>	<b>970.69</b>	<b>906.97</b>	<b>7.03%</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>688.27</b>		<b>772.04</b>	<b>-10.85%</b>	<b>14,693.81</b>	<b>14,289.19</b>	<b>2.83%</b>

@=One less issue in 2006 than in 2005; E=Estimated page counts; +=One more issue in 2006 than in 2005; T=Relaunched Oct 17, 2005, with different rate base; @@=Two less issues in 2006 than in 2005.

CHARTS COMPILED BY ROBIN ELDRIDGE

book. It could be that the younger people are pulling that number down somewhat."

The median age of Time Inc.'s *People*, which over the years has added more youthful flare to its covers, declined to 40.7 from 41.5 last spring. Readers of Wenner Media's *Us Weekly's* boast a median age of 30.8, down from 31.7 last spring and 34.8 in 2002 when then-editor Bonnie Fuller created the title's successful "stars are just like us" formula. Fuller has also been responsible for helping to lower the median age for American Media Inc.'s *Star*, which is now 36.2, compared to 37.4 last spring and 41.6 in 2004, when *Star* converted from a tabloid to a glossy format. Bauer Publishing's *In Touch* this spring fell to a median age of 28.5 from 29.6 the year prior.

But celebrity weeklies' more youthful glow

has come with a price. Median income has fallen for most titles. *Us Weekly* readers reported a median income of \$63,920 this year, a decline from from \$66,219 the same period the year prior. *People's* household income of \$63,264 this year was nearly even with last year's figure of \$63,114. Moreover, *In Touch* claimed a median household income of \$63,723, compared to \$64,727 a year ago. (*Star's* readership actually grew wealthier. Household income rose 15.9 percent to \$52,334 this year, vests \$45,171 last spring.)

George Janson, Mediaedge:cia's managing partner, director of print, points out that the category's overall increase in readership could explain the lighter wallets: "As magazines tend to get more mass, a lot of times you'll see the household income come down." ■

BY MARC BERMAN



## Surviving Summer

I AM BORED ALREADY. ALTHOUGH THE RECENT WEEK OF UPFRONT PRESENTATIONS was a rush, it also means the traditional September-to-May TV season is coming to a close. And the arrivals this week of a new season of *The Last Comic Standing* on NBC, *Game Show Marathon* on CBS, El's

*The Simple Life: Till Death Do Us Part*, and the burnoff episodes of canceled Fox sitcom *Stacked* tells me it could be a long, dull summer. While there is some hope courtesy of new seasons of FX's *Rescue Me*, TNT's *The Closer* and HBO's *Deadwood* and *Entourage* plus a handful of original scripted network and cable series, it won't be enough to cure the typical summer doldrums. And the start of the new fall season is...gulp...three-and-one-half months away.

But instead of whining like I do every year, here are some proactive suggestions on how to cure the pending summer depression. If you're not out enjoying a warm summer breeze or taking a dip in the pool, here is what you should do:

### 1. Catch up on what you missed.

Discover gems that you might not have watched this past season. Although it may be a repeat, it's not necessarily a repeat to you. So sit back and enjoy unsung heroes like CBS' *Ghost Whisperer* and *Close to Home*, the WB's *Gilmore Girls*, Fox's *Bones* and UPN's *Everybody Hates Chris*, *Girlfriends* and *Veronica Mars*. You won't be disappointed.

**2. Check out Saturdays.** Saturday may be considered a death trap in the traditional season, but three nonscripted shows that keep on ticking in the summer are CBS' *48 Hours Mystery*, and Fox's *Cops* and *America's Most Wanted*. If you have not experienced *48 Hours Mystery*, you are missing the

Instead of whining about summer repeats, here are some tips for getting the most out of your off-season viewing.

true "must-see" forensic crime-solving drama. And, let's be honest, there is something addictive about the scantily clad, lowlife trash populating *Cops*, and seeing a fugitive or two being caught on *America's Most Wanted*.

**3. Buy DVDs.** Catch up on some of your favorites, past and present, via DVD. But take it easy. Don't sit through three, four or five episodes at a time. Instead, savor the shows, one episode at a time. Here are some good ones to catch: *The White Shadow*, *Fame*, *Northern Exposure* and *Hill Street Blues*. For fans of classic sitcoms, season one of *Hazel* ("Hi'ya, Mr. B!") was just released. And, for *Seinfeld* lovers, you have the first seven seasons to choose from.

**4. Revisit ABC's *Lost*.** Even a repeat of the best hour of TV is worth watching again because you will discover new clues that were subtly hidden the first time around.

**5. Head to cable.** In addition to season two of *The Closer*, TNT will unveil *Saved*, the story of a conflicted paramedic (Tom Everett Scott) in Portland, Ore., struggling to find his place in life. It debuts on Tuesday, June 13 at 10 p.m. out of *The Closer*. And Showtime is kicking off *Brotherhood* on July 9. It's the tale of two brothers—one a gangster and the other a politician—determined to protect their Irish neighborhood. Fans of science fiction, meanwhile, may want to check out *Eureka* on July 9. It centers around a U.S. Marshal (Colin Ferguson) who uncovers a mysterious scientific creation unleashed by two towns of eccentric inhabitants. And HBO comedy *Lucky Louie*, premiering on June 11, features comedian Louis C.K. as a perennially out-of-work middle-aged auto mechanic emasculated by his more successful breadwinning wife.

**6. Give original summer programming a try.** Dig deep and you will find some original shows on the broadcast networks. Although the long delay of NBC's *Windfall* (which focuses on a group of lottery winners and debuts June 13 at 10 p.m.) might seem like nothing more than a burnoff measure, it is new. So give it a shot.

**7. Original nonscripted is synonymous with summer.** Mark your calendars for new seasons of CBS' *Big Brother* (an all-star edition) and *Rock Star: Supernova*, NBC's *The Last Comic Standing* (and leftover episodes of *Fear Factor*) and Fox's *Hell's Kitchen* and *So You Think You Can Dance*. New options in reality include ABC's romantic-themed *Get the Guy* on June 12, NBC's *The Amazing Race*-like *Treasure Hunters* on June 18, CBS' *Desperate Housewives*-like *The Tuesday Night Book Club*, and NBC's *America's Got Talent*, hosted by Regis Philbin, on June 21. Also look for ABC's *Buy it Now*, *Master of Champions*, *One Ocean View* and *The One: Making a Music Star*.

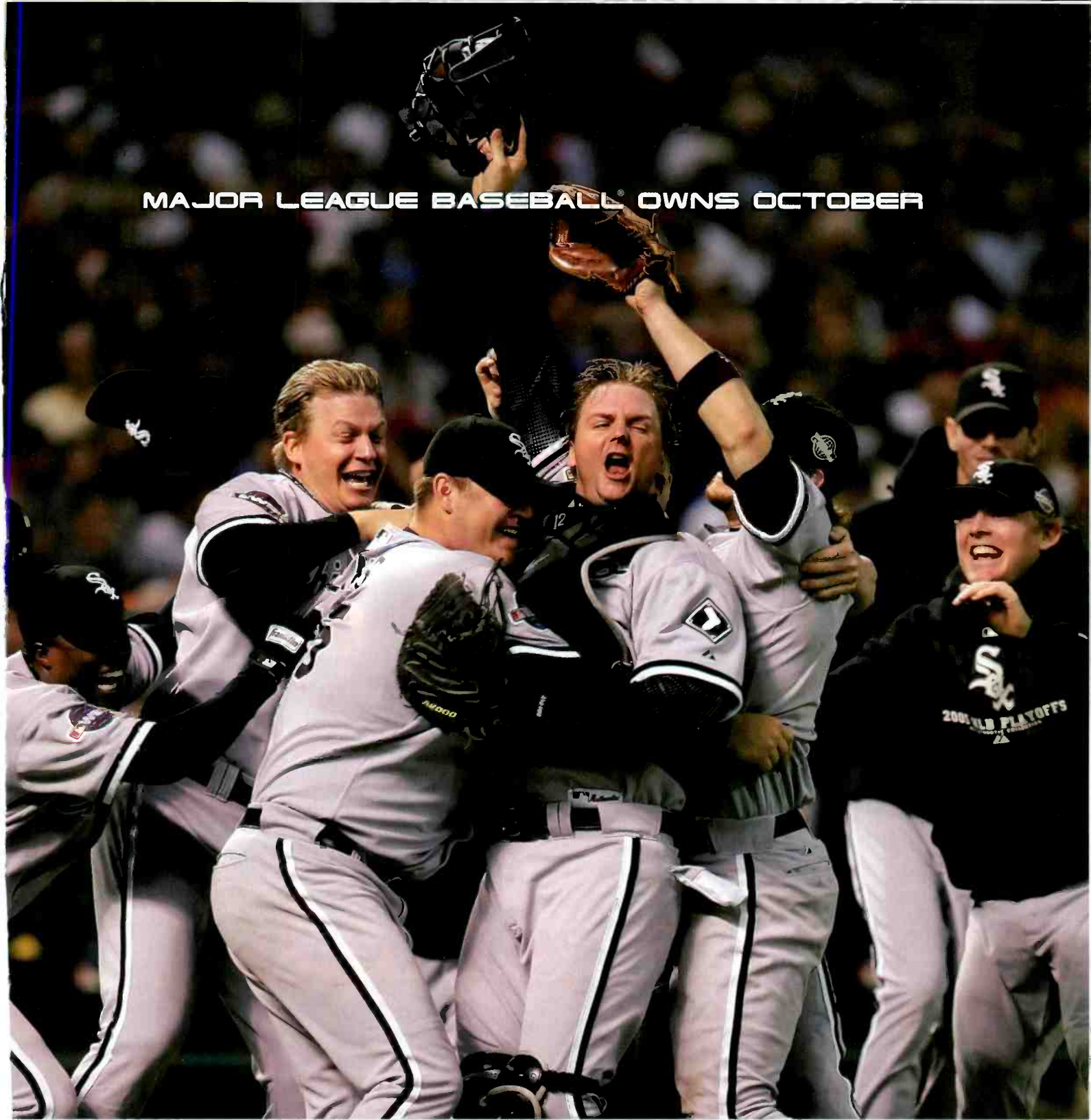
And if there's nothing that tickles your fancy, don't fret—it's only another 113 days until the start of the new season. ■

**Do you agree or disagree with Mr. TV? Please e-mail [mberman@mediaweek.com](mailto:mberman@mediaweek.com) and let him know if you would like your response published in an upcoming issue.**

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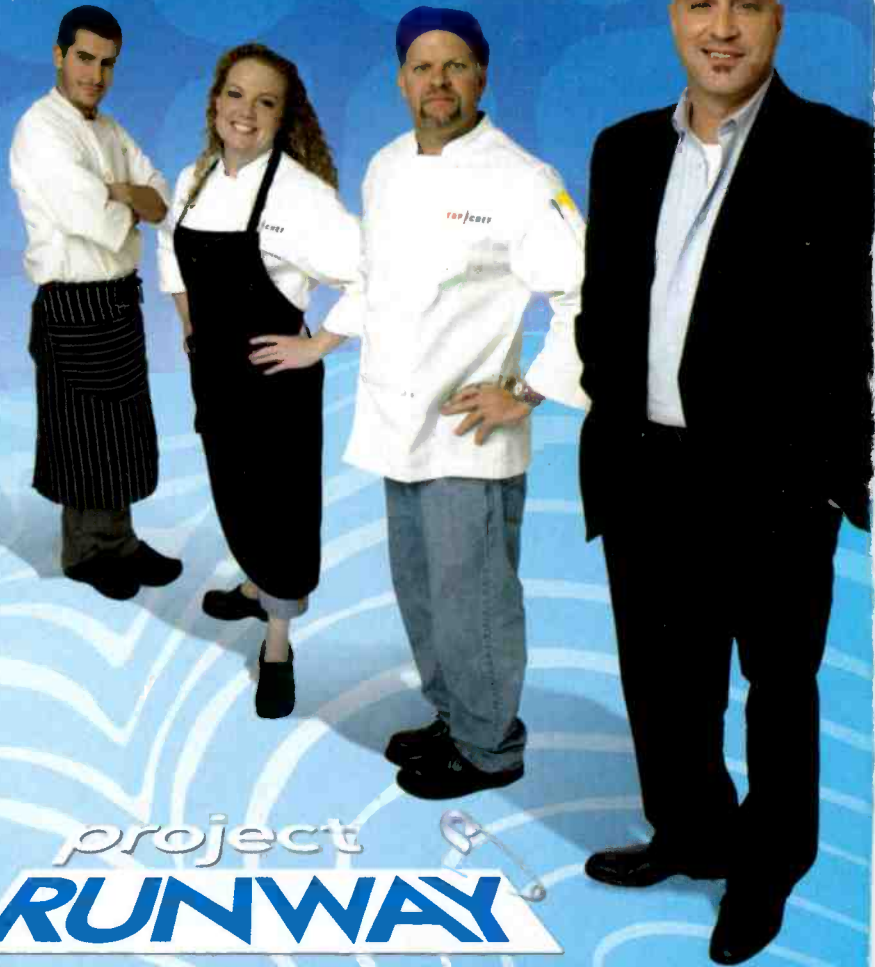




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what  
happens

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POINT 1 Source: Nielsen Media Research, 12/26/05-4/23/06 (Live +7), 4/23/06-5/3/06 (Live + 3D) P18-49 AA (000). All food related cable program average. Premiere episodes only. POINT 2 Source: IAG Research. Based on Toyota in program placements. 1Q06. Excludes programs with <50 sample. A25-S4. POINT 3 Source: Nielsen Media Research, Galaxy Explorer, 12/07/2005-03/08/2006. Wed 8p-11p, ranked on all ad-supported cable network programs with more than 3 telecasts, based on A18-49 Live + 7 AA (000). POINT 4 Source: Nielsen Media Research, Galaxy Explorer, Finale (3/8/06). Most viewed program [3/30/98-12/25/05 Live + 7: Total Day; ranked on all telecasts: P2+ (000)] Subject to qualifications, available for request.