

New Oklahoma City outlet to program news and STV

Golden West's KAUT will offer locally oriented information during the day, syndicated shows in early evening and then seven hours of pay fare

The nation's first locally oriented all-news television station by day and subscription operation at night is scheduled to begin operation today (Nov. 3) in Oklahoma City.

KAUT(TV), owned by Golden West Broadcasters, will program all news between noon and 5 p.m., syndicated programming between 5 and 7 p.m., with the subscription fare beginning at 7 and running to 2 a.m.

Jerry Birdwell, vice president and general manager of the channel 43 operation, admitted the all-news/STV format is "somewhat ambitious." He said the news portion of the station will try "to capture Oklahoma City being itself," whether that means covering a tornado or the state fair or a little league baseball game.

KAUT will rotate three anchors and present an on-air appearance somewhat similar to that of the Cable News Network. Birdwell said there will be a "strong emphasis on weather" and local news and specialized hours during the day. For example, one hour might be business and finance, another, a women's feature, said Birdwell, adding the programming will be daytime oriented. Thus, Birdwell said, sports coverage "would not be that expanded."

The subscription portion is operated by Video Entertainment Unlimited (VEU), a division of Golden West. Costs of the Zenith decoders GW uses are \$50 and \$35, respectively, for installation and deposit. The monthly subscriber rate for the STV service is \$22.50, and a small UHF antenna is recommended by KAUT to guarantee good reception.

GW doesn't expect piracy problems. The decoders can all be controlled from the studio, according to Tony Cassara, president of GW's television division.

The VEU movie programming includes "Rocky II," "10," "Close Encounters" and "Superman." Ken Belford, vice president and general manager of VEU, says a "prime difference" between VEU's and other pay programming services, is that KAUT will not "run a movie to death," but repeat offerings only four or five times.

VEU is also investigating pay-per-event

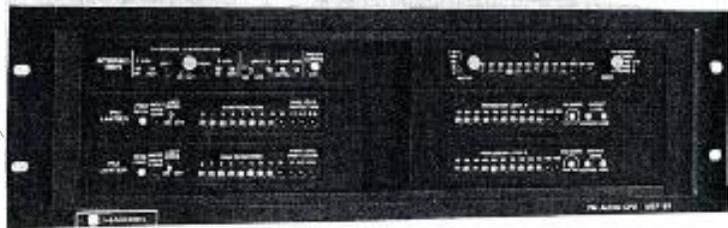
possibilities, including the annual football showdown between Oklahoma and Nebraska. Southwestern Conference football is part of the subscription offering, which is to be transmitted via Westar I.

Birdwell said he is "very pleased" with the marketing effort of the all-news portion so far, although he says advertising commitments are "never fast enough."

Part of his problem, he says, is educating advertisers and the public as to what exactly KAUT's format will be and what it can do.

To the suggestion that cable will eventually make STV operations obsolete, the station's management points to the below-average cable penetration of 7%-8% in the five-county area surrounding Oklahoma

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