

BROADCASTING CABLE

MARCH 4, 2002

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Special Report: Digital Cable

INDECENT EXPOSURE

Under pressure, the FCC opens the door for more complaints, more fines

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NBC'S EARLY VICTORY LAP

Network boasts its Olympics ratings success in February means it will win the whole season

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JUICY SIP OF SNAPPLE FOR VIACOM

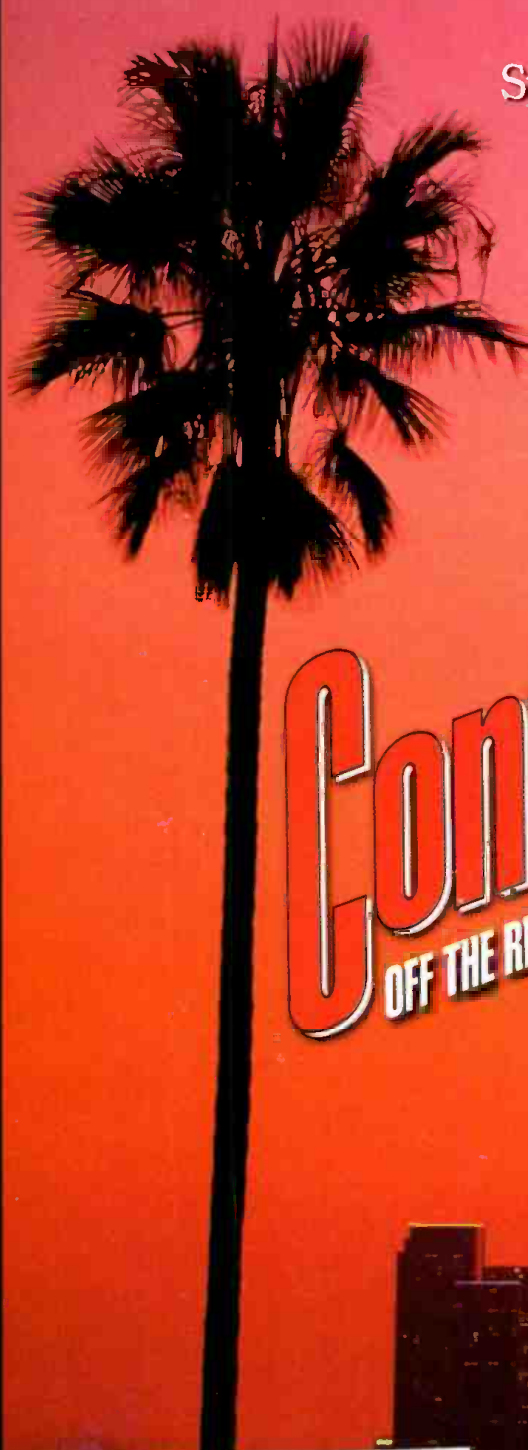
\$15M cross-platform deal will put beverage on TV nets, radio and billboards

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ECHOSTAR'S PEACE PLAN

In your dreams, says NAB. 'We continue to oppose the merger'

» PAGE 11



V.O.D. Confidential

OFF THE RECORD, ON THE QT & VERY HUSH-HUSH...

Everybody says it's the next big thing, but nobody's talking numbers

» PAGE 14



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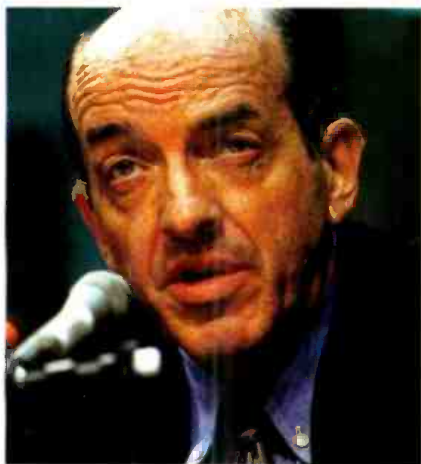
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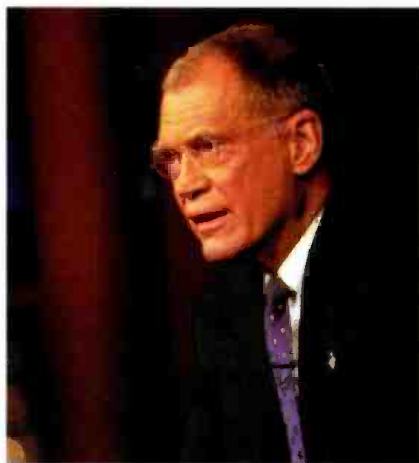
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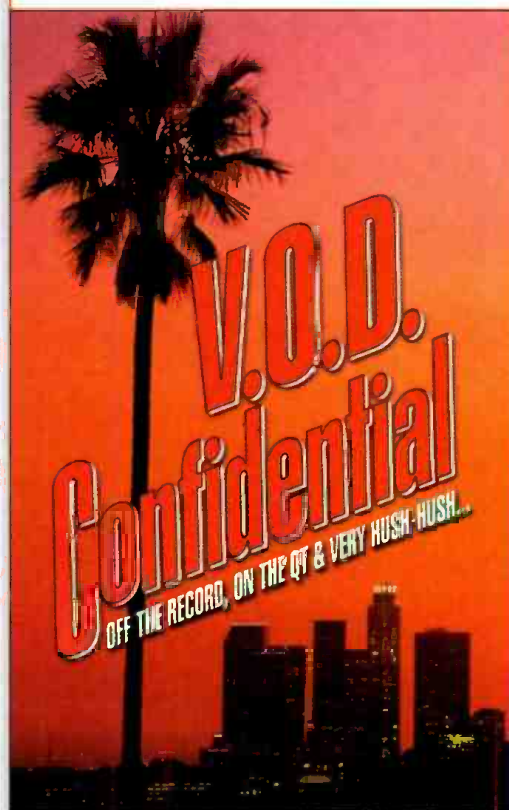
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Nielsen's new chief, Susan Whiting, hopes to close a major deal with Viacom soon.

RATINGS

Group deal

Viacom is negotiating with Nielsen on a long-term group contract that would cover ratings and research for the company's TV units, including CBS, UPN, the cable networks, TV stations, and syndication and TV production (Paramount, King World). One source said the deal's value would top the \$150 million, seven-year contract Nielsen signed with Time Warner in 1998. Disney is said to have approached Nielsen about a similar arrangement. But, apparently, the model doesn't work for everybody. Fox and Nielsen talked about a group contract, and Fox decided to pass, a source said. No comment from Viacom. A Nielsen spokeswoman would only say some clients have asked about such arrangements.—S.M.

BROADCAST TV

Instant HDTV

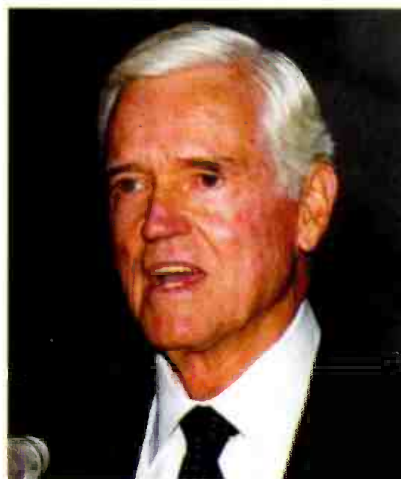
Could HDNet be coming to a digital station near you? Fox affiliate WRAZ(TV) Raleigh, N.C., plans to carry the satellite-delivered HDTV programming sometime this year, and there could be more. Digital broadcasters have enough bandwidth to carry both a standard-definition digital channel and a high-definition digital channel, and a ready-made supply of HD programming could be attractive to many, particularly Fox stations. That network is not planning to go high-def.—K.K.

BCEYE

POLITICS

Chairman's visit

Looks like the honeymoon could be over for FCC Chairman Michael Powell, who has been in office a little over a year. Last week, he took shots from both sides of the aisle. Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Fritz Hollings (D-S.C.) (right) called Powell a "disaster," while Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) accused the commission of distorting the law. Powell could be in for more heat March 7, when he makes his annual budget pilgrimage to Hollings, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice and State, which oversees the FCC's allocation. During this hearing last year, Powell and Hollings got on famously. This time, however, it could prove something of a face-off.—P.A.



REGULATION

Chairman's vote

Over lunch at The Palm in Washington last Thursday, former FCC Chairman Jim Quello gave his blessing to Jonathan Adelstein (above), nominee for the vacant fifth seat on the FCC. Quello, who has many friends at the FCC and on the Hill, thinks the aide to Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle will win Senate confirmation. "He's a compassionate Democrat with a sensible bipartisan approach," he says. "He's a pretty good, solid guy."—H.A.J.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TV stations could get help from the Warren court in their fight for digital copy protection. Broadcasters have long feared exclusion from copy-protection agreements among studios, manufacturers and cable. Now that the studios have agreed to include broadcasters, a big question is whether the government has the authority to write rules protecting broadcaster digital signals from duplication. A 1968 Supreme Court decision barring cable systems from importing distant network signals offers precedent, say top media companies in a joint legal memo. They said the need to protect over-the-air TV justified the importation ban, despite the lack of a specific congressional mandate. Home-recording-rights advocates and

other opponents of broadcast protections appear ready to compromise now that studios and stations are willing to limit restrictions to Web copying rather than personal use.—B.M.

REMOTE (TRAFFIC) CONTROL

It's hard enough to keep a TV station on-air when the traffic-system computer crashes. Try it when the computer is stolen. That was the task facing KQTV(TV) St. Joseph, Mo., last week when more than \$75,000 in computers disappeared, including an IBM mainframe that ran the station's Columbine traffic system. With the help of Denver-based automation vendor Encoda and a backup tape, though, the station managed to stay on the air for the four days it took IBM to deliver a new mainframe.—K.K.

New rules for risqué business

FCC's top enforcer now says it's up to stations to disprove complaints

By **Bill McConnell**

Pleading ignorance about their own programming is an increasingly precarious strategy for fighting indecency complaints, if recent comments from the FCC's top cop are any indication.

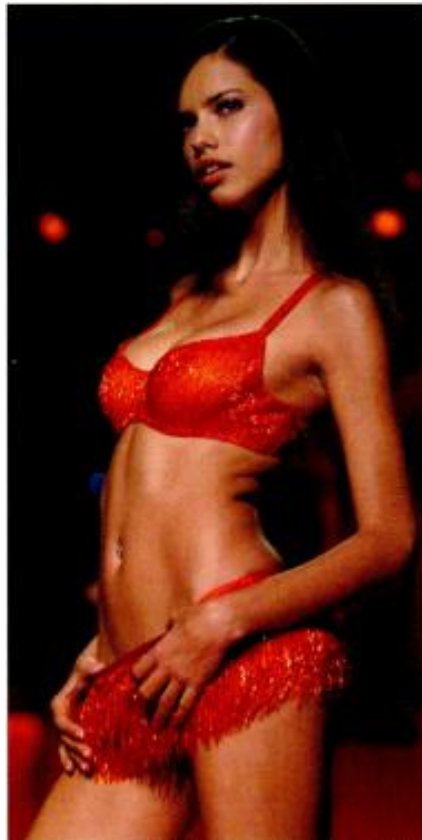
"If the station can't refute information in the complaint, we'll assume the complainant got it right," FCC Enforcement Bureau chief David Solomon told a group of broadcasters last week.

Alarmed broadcasters attending the National Association of Broadcasters' annual state leadership conference in Washington felt that Solomon's warning suggested a change in policy and that the FCC is subtly pressuring radio and TV stations to keep tapes of their broadcasts.

Solomon's comments came only a week after the commission proposed new consumer-complaint procedures that could increase the number of informal complaints by parents and others concerned about increasingly racy and raunchy programming. The sheer volume of complaints and the FCC's obligation to tally them may serve as a lightning rod for criticism against the industry, even if most of the complained-about bits aren't deemed indecent.

Even without a widely promoted process for filing consumer complaints, most indecency investigations originate as informal inquiries from individuals.

Of roughly 280 complaints in 2001, the FCC issued seven notices of apparent liability for indecency violations. Commissioner Michael Copps, who is pressing the FCC to step up enforcement efforts, predicts that the new process will lead to a tremendous



Too sexy for prime time? ABC's Victoria's Secret sweeps stunt last November upset FCC Commissioner Michael Copps.

rise in the number of recorded complaints.

The latest FCC quarterly report lists fewer than 40 indecency complaints a month. But Copps said, "It's become a rare morning when I don't walk into my office and find 30 in one day." The FCC is actually getting "hundreds or thousands" of indecency complaints.

Virtually all indecency fines are levied against radio, but Copps said TV stations need scrutiny. He made headlines when he complained about ABC's Victoria's Secret fashion-show sweeps stunt last November.

Pinpointing what is indecent has always been tricky. Technically, indecent programming "describes or depicts" sexual or

excretory organs or activities in a way that is "patently offensive by contemporary community standards," but what passes muster has been left to the commission to define through its actions. Under a 1995 court decision, broadcasters are forbidden from airing obscene programming at any time and from airing "indecent" content between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m.

But Solomon insisted that there has been no change in a longstanding FCC policy that leaves tape-archiving to licensees' discretion and denied any effort to tighten FCC indecency enforcement. "There's no requirement to keep tapes," he told the broadcasters. "People are looking for trends when they're not necessarily there."

In several cases over the years, he noted, the FCC has levied indecency fines against stations based solely on short but sufficiently descriptive accounts of broadcasts rather than tapes or full transcripts.

The most recent was a \$14,000 fine upheld in January against Emmis station WKQX(FM) Chicago for a listener's complaint about morning-show segments featuring a porn star describing a fetish sex act and another in which women described oral-sex techniques, accompanied by a soundtrack of women moaning. The FCC accepted the complaint because it provided sufficient detail and wasn't refuted.

The NAB is reluctant to draw the ire of policymakers and citizens' groups by waging public battle over indecency enforcement. It wouldn't comment on the FCC's policies.

But media critics fighting to halt what they see as the industry's dive into the gutter say Solomon's statement and recent decisions offer hope that the FCC will begin taking the issue more seriously.

Broadcasters have been allowed to "violate the law with impunity," opined Morality

AMA confronts NBC booze policy

Counter ad echoes Surgeon General's tobacco warning

in Media President Bob Peters, because the FCC generally has required complainants to provide tapes or transcripts to initiate an indecency investigation. He has lobbied the FCC for nearly two decades to make stations keep tapes. "If a listener's report about a possibly indecent program will be presumed correct," he said, "stations will have a difficult time rebutting without a tape."

It's not only the smut watchdogs who are taking shots at the programming on radio and TV.

Copps picked up the banner of indecency enforcement carried by his predecessor, Gloria Tristani and has urged broadcasters to keep tapes. Lawmakers are getting in on the act as well. In late January, Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.) ordered the FCC to report on the "declining standards of broadcast television" and the impact on children. The FCC also must explain what it's doing about objectionable programming. His request follows a mandated FCC staff report last June on the possibility of resurrecting the NAB code of conduct and citing "the further erosion" of standards.

The delicate balancing act between carrying out statutory obligations to punish indecency and protecting free-speech rights puts the commissioners in a thorny spot. But recognizing that they can't stay silent on the issue, FCC Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy insisted last week that she "will not shy away" from the responsibility. But she would rather let market factors such as audience rating determine a program's fate. Consumers' "ability to change the channel has a far more immediate impact on broadcasters than government regulation," she told the Media Institute.

The FCC is considering funneling general complaints to the Consumer Information Bureau, which would tackle the inquiries in a manner now used to resolve disagreements between phone companies and customers. Under that process, the bureau first gives the parties 30 days to negotiate a resolution. If no agreement is reached, the FCC can launch a formal investigation. ■

A Message to Parents from the American Medical Association



Part of the full page ad the American Medical Association ran in *The New York Times* criticizing NBC for accepting liquor ads.

By Steve McClellan and Paige Albinak

Opponents of NBC's decision to accept hard-liquor advertising applied more pressure last week to get the network to reverse course. But the network wasn't budging, insisting that it's approach to booze advertising is not only responsible but ought to be the industry standard.

The American Medical Association, which has called NBC's decision on allowing hard-liquor ads "shockingly irresponsible," took out a full-page ad in *The New York Times* last Wednesday as part of its campaign to make NBC a booze-ad-free zone once again.

There was also more pressure from Capitol Hill last week. Thirteen congressmen led by Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.) sent the network a letter urging it to reinstate the self-imposed ban that had been in place at the network for 50 years.

"We fear that your decision to air liquor ads will have a devastating impact on

young people—faced with the temptation to drink alcohol—and their families," the letter stated.

Wolf wants to hold hearings on the issue but must go through House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Billy Tauzin (R-La.). Tauzin does intend to hold a hearing on liquor ads later this year, says spokesman Ken Johnson.

"Several members of Congress clearly are concerned about the issue," he said, "but there has been no hue and cry on Capitol Hill to do something."

In the Senate, Commerce Committee Chairman Fritz Hollings (D-S.C.) also said he is interested in holding a hearing.

By dropping the ban on liquor commercials, the AMA ad said, NBC is "guaranteeing that our children and teens will be bombarded with such advertising throughout their formative years."

Kids and teens watch roughly 1,000 hours of TV a year, and 25% of American families have a TV set in a child's bedroom, the AMA claimed.

An NBC spokeswoman says the network hopes its 19-point liquor-ad policy becomes the industry standard.

Under NBC's rules, a liquor advertiser can advertise only in later hours and must first present a series of ads that more or less warn about the effects of drinking.

NBC has one hard-liquor advertiser—Guinness UDV—which is still in the PSA phase of its campaign and hasn't yet aired a single ad for booze.

AMA Chairman-Elect Dr. Edward Hill said the group is not yet aggressively pressing Congress for legislative action on hard-liquor advertising. For the time being, he remains hopeful the organization can persuade NBC to reverse course. ■

He Comes From Outer Space



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The package promoting the fruity beverage involves MTV, MTV2, UPN, BET, VH1, Nick at Night, CMT and TNN nets, Viacom Outdoor, and Infinity Radio's Opie and Anthony.



Snapple everywhere

Viacom Plus, beverage group agree to \$15 million cross-platform promotion

By Steve McClellan

It'll be the summer of Snapple on MTV and UPN. And, on Viacom's Infinity Radio, shock jocks Opie and Anthony will somehow find a way to be always talking about the fruity beverage. In fact, if you want to avoid overdosing on Snapple promotions on Viacom-owned media this summer, tune to CBS.

That broadcast network, with its older demographics, is the only Viacom outlet that is not part of a massive cross-platform deal between Viacom Plus and the Snapple Beverage Group, now owned by Cadbury Schweppes, and the first cross-platform deal of the 2002 season. Ad pros predict a record number of cross-platform advertising deals leading up to this year's upfront marketplace.

Even in a down economy—or perhaps



Viacom Plus's Lisa McCarthy says Snapple is "borrowing our brand connection with their consumers" to create a "cool, nutty, fun, hip and integrated campaign."

because of it—all the broadcast networks are brewing such deals, in which one brand gets its message across on a variety of media owned by the likes of Disney, AOL Time Warner, News Corp. and NBC, all of which are hatching their own platform plays. "2002 will be the year of the cross-platform deal," crowed one network executive.

Neither Viacom nor Snapple, nor the agency that put the deal together, New York-based Deutsch, would disclose the value of the Snapple package. But sources put its value at \$15 million.

Deutsch Executive Vice President Peter Gardiner said the pact is the biggest single ad deal Snapple has ever done. "But the value of these cross-platform arrangements goes well beyond just buying stuff," he said. "It's about promotion and events and even content threaded throughout the campaign. It really makes it more valuable than just a media buy."

The campaign will run from April through October and feature ads on MTV and MTV2, as well as on UPN, BET, VH1, Nick at Night, CMT and TNN. Viacom Outdoor and Infinity Radio's Opie and Anthony are also part of the package. The syndicated shock duo will weave mentions of Snapple products into their daily broadcast much as they do with Samuel Adams beer, which has become the unofficial beer of their broadcast.

CBS-TV is not a part of the Snapple deal because the beverage company's demographic target is adults 18-34, with a core target of 18 to 24. The MTV Summer Beach House will serve as home base for a summer-long promotion called "What's your story?" Viewers will be asked to go to the Snapple Web site and share their most interesting summer stories. The winning entry will be made into a Snapple commercial.

Snapple will use the campaign in part to launch a line of flavored-water products called Elements.

Viacom Plus Senior Vice President Lisa McCarthy said the company has two basic goals in striking platform deals. The first is to provide some unique benefit (such as the Beach House backdrop that will appear in ads on all the participating networks). The second is to get a bigger chunk of revenue than if the client had simply bought time from different Viacom divisions.

In effect, she said, Snapple is "borrowing our brand connection with their consumers" to create a "cool, nutty, fun, hip and integrated campaign." ■

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'One nation,' under scrutiny

Broadcasters are interested but skeptical of Ergen's 'local everywhere' proposal

By Paige Albinak

EchoStar Chairman Charlie Ergen last week offered his version of "a chicken in every pot": local stations in every dish. But opponents of EchoStar's proposed \$29 billion merger with Hughes Electronics, parent company of DirecTV, were not appeased by the companies' new plan to offer local TV signals in all 210 local TV markets.

While broadcasters were clearly interested in the proposal, which would get every TV station in the country up on a satellite, they remained suspicious of its author.

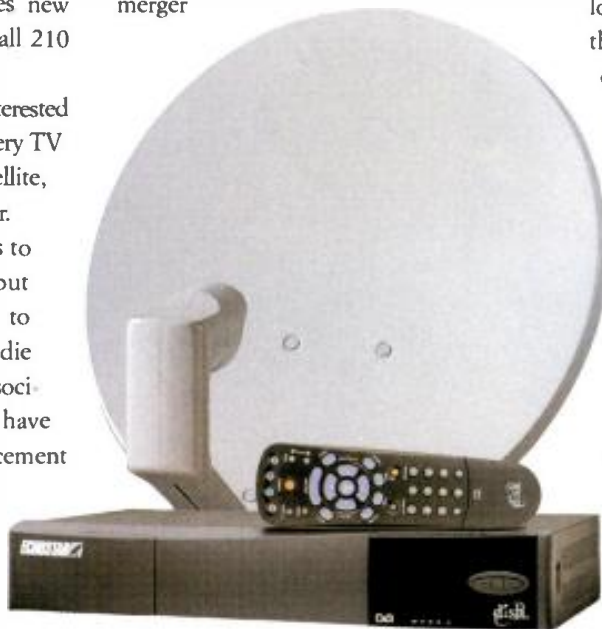
"Today's announcement appears to be a step in the right direction but needs to be carefully scrutinized to determine its legitimacy," said Eddie Fritts, president of the National Association of Broadcasters. "We would have more confidence in the announcement were DirecTV to be the surviving entity. Broadcasters have had a long and tortured history of bad-faith dealings with EchoStar and its chairman, Charlie Ergen. Accordingly, we continue to oppose the merger."

Ergen and DirecTV Chairman Eddy Hartenstein last week said they had not yet walked broadcasters through the plan but intended to as soon as possible.

On the satellite side of the argument, both the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC) and Pegasus Communications—each of which have exclusive deals to sell DirecTV in rural areas—said the plan doesn't solve any of the proposed merger's antitrust problems. Rural areas unserved by cable will still have only one multichannel-TV provider if the Department of Justice and the FCC approve the merger.

"We believe that today's announcement came as a direct result of the ongoing efforts of NRTC, our members, the House Rural Caucus, the House Western Caucus, influential rural-focused organizations and outspoken rural consumers," said Bob Phillips, president and CEO of NRTC. "We must, however, continue to push to ensure they address the other serious shortcomings in their merger application."

"[The plan] is neither sufficient to make the proposed merger



A merged EchoStar and DirecTV would charge all U.S. consumers the same rate for local TV signals, regardless of where they live.

of DirecTV and EchoStar in the public interest, nor does it demonstrate that the merger is necessary," said Pegasus CEO Mark Pagon. "Moreover, the merger parties have yet to address the most important question: Will consumers continue to have a choice of satellite-video and broadband-service providers after consummation of the merger? Without the assurance of choice, consumers, particularly those in rural areas unserved or underserved by cable TV, will be left to the mercy of an unregulated monopoly."

But EchoStar and DirecTV, with back-

ing from their trade association, the Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association, argue that this merger is exactly what consumers need to bring cable prices down.

"We can't be competitive to cable until we can provide local signals to all Americans," said Hartenstein.

Neither Ergen nor Hartenstein would address questions about the possible political motivation of their plan. They instead repeated that offering local TV signals in all local markets would be good business for the new company, saying they would do it even if the government does not require it.

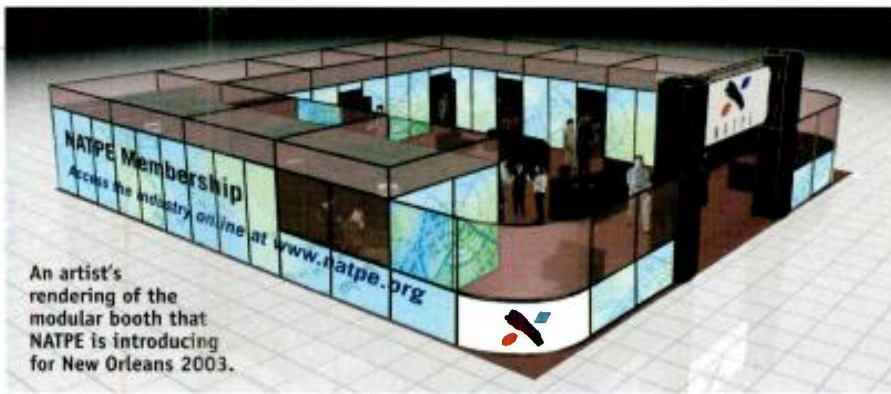
"If this merger is approved, we're going to do this," Ergen said. "It's a good business for us."

The merged company would charge all U.S. consumers the same rate for local TV signals no matter where they live, under a plan Ergen calls "one nation, one rate card."

The local-TV plan laid out by EchoStar and Hughes, Hartenstein said, would require the new company to use the two spot-beam satellites each company already has launched, two additional spot-beam satellites they plan to launch and one additional spot-beam satellite, which will cost more than \$300 million. The new satellite could be built, launched and offering all local TV signals within two years of the merger's approval, the executives said, but only if the merger is approved.

"This makes sense only because we would have the spectrum to do it," Hartenstein added.

Carrying all 1,650 local TV stations will take up approximately 30% of the combined company's satellite spectrum. Currently, EchoStar and DirecTV each dedicate about 20% of their total spectrum capacity to the carriage of local TV signals. EchoStar carries local TV signals in 36 markets, while DirecTV offers local TV signals in 41 markets. ■



An artist's rendering of the modular booth that NATPE is introducing for New Orleans 2003.

Reinventing NATPE

Organization outlines initiatives to bring studios back to show

By Joe Schlosser

NATPE will pick up the hotel tab and registration fees for top local station buyers to woo them to attend next year's show in New Orleans, part of a broad plan outlined last week to appease disgruntled studio hotshots.

NATPE President and CEO Bruce Johansen detailed several new initiatives for both domestic and international syndicators last week during a meeting in Los Angeles, including a cost-effective, modular booth structure with a top price of \$200,000.

The meeting came a little more than a

month after what even organizers described as a dysfunctional conference in Las Vegas, as Johansen recognized that NATPE needed to reinvent its annual television convention in a way that will bring top Hollywood studios back into the fold, essentially by paying for syndicators' best customers to attend the show. That idea seems to have been borrowed from organizers of cable's Western Show, which last fall agreed to pay the way for major cable operators, as a way of keeping cable networks from bolting the exhibition floor.

"It was an encouraging meeting, one that had a lot of healthy dialogue," Johansen said. "We wanted to hear what everybody had to say, and that's what we did. I think we are on the right track."

"I would say I was very encouraged and quite pleased to see all of the support and positive energy that was in that room trying to figure out how to make this convention work for all of its constituents," said Twentieth Television President Bob Cook. "I think the idea that was put forth by Bruce isn't bad. I don't think anyone wants to contemplate it for the long term, but, as a stop-gap measure to get us by New Orleans, I think it works."

Cook's Twentieth TV was one of more than 50 syndication companies that elected to set up shop at the Venetian hotel in Las Vegas last month rather than take their usual place on the NATPE floor. Cook says barring another downturn in the advertising marketplace, Twentieth will likely make the trek to New Orleans next January. A number of other syndication executives, speaking on condition of anonymity, seemed to agree with him. Also, it appeared, NATPE was receptive to the idea of having an official role in coordinating the hotel-suite arrangement sometime again in the future.

A representative from Warner Bros., whose syndication chief Dick Robertson, has led the charge away from NATPE, attended the meeting, but the studio wasn't commenting on its reaction to Johansen's latest plans.

They'll meet again later this month. ■

Balking at talking

Media groups ask for stay of video descriptions

By Bill McConnell

The TV and movie industries are asking the FCC to stay the April 1 launch of voiced descriptions of on-screen action intended to help the blind.

The NAB, NCTA and the Motion Picture Association of America have challenged the rules in court and last week said TV stations, cable systems and programming networks

should not be required to buy equipment to comply with rules that stand a "substantial likelihood" of being struck down. Oral argument in that case is Sept. 6.

The American Council of the Blind "categorically condemned" the industries' motion for delay. "Instead of doing the right thing, the trade associations have acted entirely irresponsibly."

The media groups argued in their filing that the FCC did not have congressional authority to impose video-description rules, only a mandate from lawmakers to study the issue and report back. They also argued there were First Amendment implications in compelling "creative" speech. In the motion for stay, the groups pointed out that current FCC Chairman Michael

Powell voted against the rules for that very reason when he was still a commissioner.

Despite that vote, Powell is expected to direct FCC attorneys to defend them in court because, as chairman, it is his job to defend standing FCC rules.

Rules that were issued in 2000 required Big Four affiliates in the top 25 markets to provide at least 50 hours per quarter of described prime time or children's programming. Cable and satellite systems with 50,000 or more subs must do the same for each top-five national non-broadcast network they carry. ■

ABC on the hunt

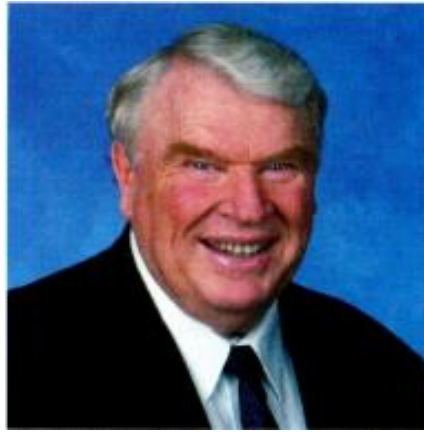
Signs Madden for MNF, chases Letterman for late night

By Steve McClellan

When the going gets tough in network land, there are usually two remedies: Produce your way out of trouble or raid the competition for their top talent.

ABC tried the latter last week, first bagging Fox NFL color commentator John Madden to join Al Michaels on *Monday Night Football*. At week's end, *The New York Times* reported, ABC was also chasing David Letterman, trying to get him to leave CBS and bring his late-night show to ABC. No one involved was talking, though CBS leakers were already speculating that Comedy Central's Jon Stewart could be a more than adequate replacement for Letterman.

Letterman's contract is up this summer, and CBS was not able to conclude a renewal during an exclusive negotiating period earlier this year. Last week, sources confirmed that Letterman was in serious talks with ABC, which would move the long-running *Nightline* with Ted Koppel out of 11:30 p.m. One source said it was possible *Nightline* could become a series of prime time specials. *Politically Incorrect* with Bill Maher, which now follows *Nightline*, will be gone by fall, regardless of what happens with Letterman.



John Madden will be taking a pay cut at ABC. His new four-year contract pays \$5 million a year, \$3 million a year less than at Fox.

Elsewhere, now that the Olympics are over, Bob Costas has nothing much left to do at NBC. Disney's ESPN is reportedly talking to him about moving to ABC, where he'd do NBA play-by-play (NBC passed on renewing rights), baseball on ABC Family and a show on ESPN. HBO is also looking to increase the number of Costas's *On the Record* interview shows. His NBC contract ends in May.

Monday Night Football and the late-night lineup are two problem areas for ABC. Ratings at *MNF* were down 10% last season, to an 11.3/19, according to Nielsen Media

Research, near the show's all-time low. Worse, the program's 18-49 demo was down 13%, to a 6.9.

In late night, *Nightline*'s ratings have also trended down in recent years, particularly among 18- to 49-year-olds, the demographic that most advertisers seem to covet. Season-to-date, the program's 18-49 demo is down 6%, to a 1.6.

CBS sources say the contract talks with Letterman have been particularly tough. He reportedly makes \$20 million a year and gets 10 weeks off but wants "substantially more" salary and several more weeks off as well. Letterman's importance to CBS extends to prime time, where his Worldwide Pants production company supplies one of the network's biggest hits, *Everybody Loves Raymond*.

Madden, meanwhile, is taking a pay cut to work for *MNF*. He signed a four-year contract that pays him \$5 million a year, which is \$3 million less a year than his reported salary at Fox. "This isn't about money," said the 65-year-old Madden.

Madden wrapped his deal with ABC last week in one day. Madden's agent at IMG asked Fox early in the week to let him out of the last year of his contract. Last Wednesday morning, Fox agreed. Roughly seven hours later, Madden had an agreement with ABC.

Analyst Dan Fouts and comic relief Dennis Miller are out after two years in the *MNF* booth. However, ABC is talking to Fouts about another sports job. ■

Rodgers leaves Discovery

In the latest shuffle at Discovery Networks, President Johnathan Rodgers is stepping down. A self-described network-builder, Rodgers said that, after six years with the company, Discovery no longer needs his guidance.

"I'd rather be with a start-up or a fixer-upper," he said Thursday on a call with reporters announcing his resignation.

Rodgers exercised a buy-out clause in his contract, which ran out Dec. 31, 2001.

Discovery has lost a string of executives in recent months, including husband-and-wife team Michael Quattrone, former head of Discovery Channel, and Kathy Quattrone, who was GM of Discovery Health, and Charley Humbar, head of digital networks.

Rodgers is one of cable's top African-American execs and was previously president of CBS's O&O stations. He hinted he'd be interested in working on a minority TV network and confirmed that he has spoken with executives from thinly distributed African-American network NUE-TV, which is backed by minority-owned radio group Radio One.

It was Discovery's fledgling status that attracted him in 1996 after a 20-year career at CBS. "When I got here, we had two channels, and the value was \$1 billion," said Rodgers. "Now we have 11 channels, and the value is \$20 billion."

Discovery President and COO Judith McHale will lead the search for his successor.

—Allison Romano

THE WEEK THAT WAS

**TAUZIN-DINGELL
PASSES, THEN STALLS**

The House of Representatives last week passed 273-157 the Tauzin-Dingell bill, which would deregulate regional phone companies to encourage them to build high-speed fiber networks. No further action on the bill, sponsored by Reps. **Billy Tauzin** (R-La.) and **John Dingell** (D-Mich.), is expected this year, given powerful Senate opponents. In fact, Senate Commerce Committee Chairman **Fritz Hollings** (D-S.C.) called the bill "blasphemy."

It may not even be necessary. The FCC has proposed rules that could similarly deregulate the phone companies to spur broadband deployment.

Although, under Tauzin-Dingell, the cable industry could face competition from a huge and newly unfettered opponent, the NCTA has not opposed the bill or asked that conditions be put on it. Even so, the industry is worried about how the government will treat cable and its rivals in the new digital world.

That's why phone-company competitors are so strongly opposed. Among them, though, is NCTA member company **AT&T Broadband**, wearing its telephone hardhat.

VIEW FINDER

Fox will feature a *Celebrity Boxing* special billed as "the battle of the bad girls," with "Long Island Lolita" **Amy Fisher** taking on former Olympic skating slugger **Tonya Harding**. Also on the

**A reason to celebrate**

BET Nightly News debuted last week, beamed out from CBS Broadcast Center in New York at 11 p.m., and the premiere was worth a party. From left to right is anchor **Jacquie Reid**, BET news and public affairs head **Nina Henderson-Moore**, CBS News chief **Andrew Heyward**, and **Will Wright**, executive producer of the newscast.

special: former *Brady Bunch* star **Barry Williams** vs. **Danny Bonaduce**, once part of TV's *Partridge Family*. About a decade ago in Chicago, in a surreal pairing, Bonaduce beat **Donny Osmond** in a boxing match. The network said the fights will be real, each lasting three rounds. A third celebrity-boxing pairing has yet to be announced. ...

Comedy Central is the leading contender to buy off-net rights to NBC's *Late Night With Conan O'Brien*, according to industry executives. The two networks are in talks for second-window rights to *Late Night*, but no deal has been done. NBC revealed its intentions to sell second-window rights to a cable net after signing O'Brien to a new four-year deal believed to be worth \$8 million per year.

Comedy Central last week also unveiled plans to air a limited play of the first season of ABC's *The Job* beginning

March 4. ABC is accepting promotional time on Comedy instead of a licensing fee, according to sources. ...

A&E is giving **Barbara Walters** and company a chance to share their *View* on cable. Beginning April 1, *The View* will re-air on A&E a day after its ABC broadcast. A&E owns a 37.5% stake in A&E. ...

The big story last Thursday was supposed to be *Survivor*'s return to CBS and the debut of NBC's new Thursday-night comedy *Leap of Faith*. CBS's *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* scored all-time high ratings at 9 p.m. ET/PT, attracting 28.8 million viewers, a 17.2 rating/26 share in households and a 10.5/24 in adults 18-49, according to Nielsen Media Research fast-national data.

Also on CBS, *Survivor: Marquesas*, the reality show's fourth installment, averaged 23 million viewers and an 8.9/22 in adults 18-49 for the hour, just about what the third

Survivor did.

NBC's duo of *Friends* and *Leap of Faith* also had strong outings Thursday. *Friends* attracted 27.5 million viewers and a 13.2/33 at 8 p.m. and *Leap of Faith* debuted with 20.9 million and a 9.9/24 in adults 18-49 at 8:30 p.m. ...

Julia Louis-Dreyfus's new NBC sitcom, *Watching Ellie*, debuted with an average 16.7 million viewers and a 7.1 rating/17 share in adults 18-49, according to Nielsen.

THE COMPANY'S LINE

Clear Channel's fourth-quarter cash flow was down 46%, to \$348 million, on an 11% drop in revenue, to \$1.9 billion. The cash-flow number was well below earlier company guidance, analysts said. For the year, pro forma cash flow was down 22%, to \$1.92 billion, on a 5% drop in revenue, to \$8 billion. ...

The Washington Post pulled a humorous TV spot that included the suggestion of a reporter in danger and references to a kidnapping. The spot, which ran several times on local stations, aired only days after the murder of kidnapped *Wall Street Journal* reporter **Daniel Pearl** was announced.

Eric Grant, director of community affairs for the *Post*, said that, in response to a query from BROADCASTING & CABLE, the paper determined that the spot was inappropriate now but could return later. The "reporter" in the spot is revealed to be a critic explaining his reaction to an action movie he's reviewing.

SPECIAL REPORT: DIGITAL CABLE

Video-on-demand is the future of cable, but, please, don't ask too many questions

V.O.D. Confidential

OFF THE RECORD, ON THE QT & VERY HUSH-HUSH...

BY JOHN M. HIGGINS

ASK ANYBODY in the cable business: Video-on-demand holds the potential to alter television more dramatically than anything since HBO aired its first theatrical movie, *Sometimes a Great Notion*, in 1973.

VOD could be about much more than reselling theatrical movies. Its deployment could obliterate what lies at the heart of a TV network: the schedule. Viewers could dictate what prime time is, watching *Friends* with breakfast instead of while the NBC sitcom is competing with *Survivor* on Thursday nights. Nature fans could stretch Discovery's Shark Week into Shark Month or compress it into just a couple of Shark Days.

That would alter the financial underpinnings of television, both remaking ad strategies and creating new revenue streams for both networks and producers. Cable operators sit in the middle of it all, happily controlling the platform and the toll booth that will make all this possible.

After first deploying VOD in 1999, cable systems were expected to put the service into a third of cable homes within a couple of years. It was the next big thing.

So how is the revolution going? Who knows? Cable operators may talk big about VOD, but, when it's down to dollars and cents or what they're learning about viewers' wants from VOD, they barely talk at all.

Some key Wall Street players express annoyance that operators won't provide real details that can be used to assess VOD sales.

"The companies haven't given us any results, so how do we know what VOD is doing?" said Sanford Bernstein & Co. media analyst Tom Wolzien, who has been taking up his irritation over the issue with cable executives in public, during companies' investor meetings. "They say, 'We wouldn't want people to use numbers that are premature.' But we're all big boys. What do they have to hide?"

Morgan Stanley media analyst Richard Bilotti concurs. "You can't squeeze it out of them."

Securities media analyst Doug Shapiro is a bit more sympathetic to mute operators: "It's way too early, and they're not marketing it. ... obviously, the numbers don't look good, or they'd be disclosing them."

Cable operators will point to the performance of all sorts of subsets of customers. Or they'll wax enthusiastic over anecdotal

SPECIALREPORT: DIGITAL CABLE

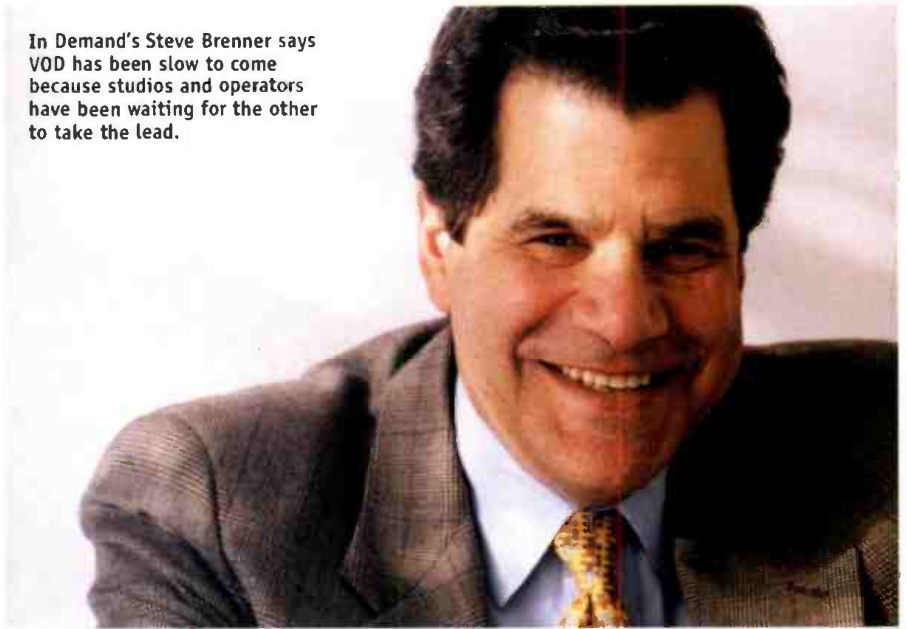
data about how eager customers swamped a server in one system or another. MSO executives also like to emphasize how customer satisfaction improves when VOD is thrown into the mix.

But then they say it's too early in the game to make purchase data public. For example, Cox Communications executives contend that the business is too rough to release sales results. Its VOD rollout in San Diego is still too young, and, because the service reaches only part of the market, the company can't really advertise it widely. Another problem: Cox has only a limited slice of the best theatrical movies to offer, films from Sony, Vivendi, Arista and DreamWorks.

The hush-hush treatment doesn't bother Cox Chairman Jim Robbins. "We're not in the business of telegraphing competitive intelligence to the satellite business. Let us get this thing going. Let us get some serious numbers on the books."

Cable operators say they don't have enough key pieces in place to paint a fair picture. But, when the cable industry might be fighting in Hollywood to get the same release window that video rental stores have, many

In Demand's Steve Brenner says VOD has been slow to come because studios and operators have been waiting for the other to take the lead.



MSOs are still toying with pricing plans instead. Marketing plans are still in test.

The product that could bring the greatest changes to TV networks—reselling TV shows à la carte through monthly subscription-VOD (SVOD) packages so that you

could buy an episode of *ER* whenever you wished—is very foreign to subscribers.

The few numbers available can be read two ways. Charter Communications Chief Technology Officer Steve Silva, for example, is excited that 20% of digital customers

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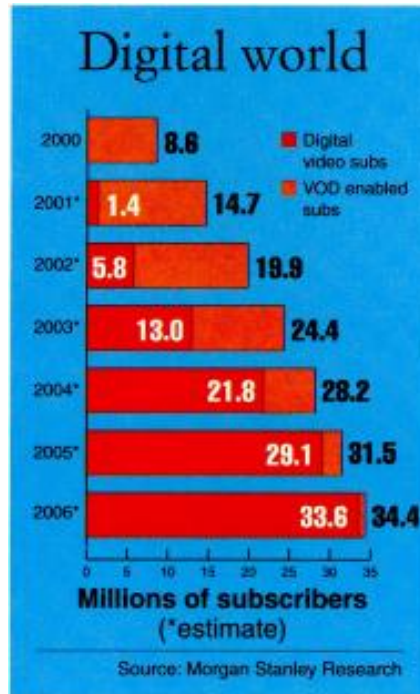
VOD programming as unique as your customers

with access to VOD product use it, making about 2.5 purchases monthly. Charter has launched VOD in eight markets serving about 1.3 million basic subscribers. "It's a very high usage," he said. "A 20% adoption rate this early in the product life cycle is very good. Once we start marketing it, we have higher hopes and expectations."

Another way of reading it: Charter's VOD customers purchase on average just half a title monthly, for a buy rate of 50%. That's half the company's monthly 90% buy rate for conventional pay-per-view movies.

No one is truly worried that those buy rates won't improve. But neither do they take seriously operators' favorite counterpoint, the launch of HBO's SVOD service. When AOL Time Warner's Columbia, S.C., system started offering HBO shows like *Sex and the City* and *The Sopranos* to 26,000 subscribers last July, eager customers tried to draw down so many packets of video bits that they crashed the system. That would tell you something, except that the service was offered for free, so, for consumers, it was a no-brainer.

What lies in the middle? "That's the question everybody is asking," said one MSO executive. "When are we going to make money on this?" Operators are pushing ahead to find out. At the end of 2001, Bilotti estimates, about 1.5 million cable subscribers could access some sort of VOD service. That's about 10% of operators' base of digital subscribers, customers who have moderately sophisticated digital set-top converters that allow direct interaction with their



system's headend. But it's just a sliver of U.S. operators' 67 million basic-cable subscribers.

Expect VOD to be accessible by the end of 2002 to about 6 million digital subscribers and 13 million at the end of next year. That would be 53% of digital subscribers and 20% of all basic subscribers.

Grabbing business from the Blockbuster Video store is the operators' first target. The home-video-rental market takes in \$8 billion annually. Last year, conventional pay-per-view cable generated about \$900 million in sales (including adult and events), according to an annual study by PPV dis-

tributor Showtime Event Television.

DBS services DirecTV and EchoStar do far better—\$1.3 billion in PPV sales last year—because they allocate 40 channels to it, which lets them start hit titles every 15 minutes. Analog-cable systems average just three PPV channels; digital-cable packages allocate 32. Viewers don't have to wait around as long for the movie to start.

Operators are toying with other product, too. The pay-movie networks like HBO and Showtime are the most natural for subscription-VOD because they have recognizable brands. But there are other avenues. Charter is offering a \$9-per-month subscription to a slate of kids video product. Cablevision's Rainbow Media unit has an ambitious project, Mag Rack, which offers subscription video packages focused on very narrow interests, from vegetarianism or photography.

The ultimate—something that is years away—would be to sell programs from networks after they air in their normal slots. So, for example, *60 Minutes* would no longer be a Sunday-night show. CBS could sell it for \$1 or give it to viewers who take commercials with it. (And, since cable operators will know so much about their subscribers, those commercials could be carefully targeted and fetch a higher price.)

That's in the future. Today's about roll-outs, fixing glitches, getting better movies.

Steve Brenner, CEO of VOD and PPV movie clearinghouse In Demand, says improving the movie product is critical, but he feels he'll nail down the right deals with all the studios in short order. "It's a little bit like chicken-and-egg," he said. "Studios want cable to make all the capital expenditure. Operators said why am I rushing into this thing when I can't get all the product? We're there to break that."

The promise for operators lies in the reaction of one Cablevision Systems customer, who was initially angered by the VOD system's glitches and poor customer service but is now an avid fan.

In two months, he said, "I've seen 34 episodes of the *Sopranos*, six *Band of Brothers*, all kinds of movies, including pay-per-view and free selections. It's amazing how much there is actually to watch. I couldn't give it up at this point, that's for sure. I think that this is how TV will eventually be watched—except for news. It's so convenient and practical that it's even better than DVD." ■

Who's got the digits?

Digital video subscribers (in thousands)

	2000	2001E	Chg.
Adelphia	723	1,484	105.3%
AT&T	2,430	3,500	44.0%
Cablevision	0	29	NA
Charter	1,070	2,150	100.9%
Comcast	1,216	1,875	54.2%
Cox	842	1,375	63.3%
Insight	152	262	72.4%
Time Warner	1,564	2,976	90.3%
Other	569	1,041	82.9%
Total	8,566	14,692	71.5%

Source: Morgan Stanley Research

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Midwest: 248/447-2785
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Satellite: 310/228-4505

 **SCRIPPS
NETWORKS**



Discovery Science staged a "Countdown to Beasts" programming marathon leading up to Discovery Channel's airing of *Walking With Prehistoric Beasts*.



It's like cable's outlet

mall

Digital-tier channels are filled with remnants and repeats from bigger parent nets

By Allison Romano

FOR CABLE OPERATORS, digital is a fairly clear success. Most operators have gotten 20%, even 30% of their basic customers to sign up. Sales are giving a clear financial boost. The promise of dozens of extra channels has clearly dampened the growth of rival DBS companies. Digital customers are churning out at an annoyingly high pace, but the billions of dollars spent on upgrades seem to be paying off.

The story for cable networks, though, is less clear. Networks developed for digital cable tiers are still thinly distributed by cable standards. Advertisers consider them an afterthought to analog buys. Operators don't want to pay full freight in license fees. And, from the viewers' standpoint, the channels are loaded with the cheapest possible programming, mostly recycled shows from a network's library.

There's no financial windfall in sight, and programmers are still playing digital as a way to lock up shelf space. Channel slots on cable systems became scarce—and expensive—in the mid '90s. Established programmers pounced on the slots created by operators' digital compression of signals; early on, operators needed the programming, and the networks hoped profitability would come later.

"It's like the Oklahoma land rush: Get the land while it's available," said Lifetime's head of research Tim Brooks.

"As distribution grows," said Lori McFarling, Discovery Networks senior VP of distribution and marketing, "you'll get the eyeballs and,

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eventually, a healthy advertising business and subscriber fees."

There are about 25 purely digital networks and a dozen more hybrid channels, such as BBC America or Oxygen, that would rather be on basic but are willing to settle for any carriage. There are about 14 million digital-cable subscribers and 18 million more on EchoStar and DirecTV's satellite system.

MSOs added almost 6 million subscribers to digital cable last year. Morgan Stanley estimates they will add about 5.2 million this year and 4.5 million next year.

Operators should focus on developing the programming, advises Sanford Bernstein & Co. media analyst Tom Wolzien. "They are going to top out unless they have compelling programming that people want to pay the money for."

Programmers understand that the value of their digital nets is in "sticky," targeted programming. "They need content that is compelling enough to keep viewers," said MTV Networks President of Affiliate Sales and Marketing Nicole Browning.

Most major cable programmers have added multiple digital services over the past four years. A&E counts Biography Channel and History International; USA has Trio and News World International. Discovery has five, the biggest being Discovery Science and Discovery Wings. MTV Networks just added MTV Jams, MTV Hits, Nicktoons and VH1 Mega Hits to bring its total to 13 services.

The digital network menu "is going to start to resemble the magazine rack," said Patrick Vien, who heads Trio, the new digital play from USA Networks. "Digital is more targeted. You don't have to satisfy volumes."

Without volumes, though, no one is making a buck. "All the big companies



Digital is into recycling, so R&B singer India Arie could show up on new digital services MTV Jams, MTV Hits and Vh1 Soul.

keep adding networks, and they can hardly stay even," said Wolzien. "The advertising money keeps getting diluted."

Digital channels can't count on the dual revenue stream from subscriber fees and ad revenue that fuels their analog counterparts. Most receive subscriber fees, but in-

siders say the amount is paltry compared with that paid for analog channels. One price break: Digital nets looking for purely digital carriage don't often pay launch fees.

As for ad revenue, most digital nets are eager for advertisers, but, without widespread distribution or Nielsen ratings, opportunities are limited. They are largely sold in concert with established sister nets.

"Some advertisers will follow viewers through the analog network to digital when they find that the niches appeal to a very particular viewer," said OMD USA Director of Entertainment Programming Guy McCarter.

But media buyers agree that digital networks are judged by different criteria than analog. Their universe and national footprint are much smaller. Where it takes an analog channel 30 million or 40 million subs to attract major advertising, a digital net is considered a viable ad vehicle with half as many.

Buying firm Horizon Media Executive VP Aaron Cohen believes only some clients will go on digital nets. "Digital distribution numbers are below the minimum for some advertisers, but others see it as a special audience with differentiated programming."

Programmers use digital nets to tinker with new formats. For instance, when original MTV digital property, "headbanger heaven" MTV X, goes dark, replacement MTV Jams will focus on red-hot genres R&B and hip-hop.

MTV diginets reach fewer than 10 million homes. "We view digital networks as laboratories," said Van Toffler, president of MTV and MTV2. "We can be creative and inventive, and, if we screw up, not that many people notice." ■

Arranged carriage

A sampling of cable networks receiving digital distribution or a combination of both analog and digital

DIGITAL NETWORKS

Biography
Cinemax multiplex*
Discovery Civilization
Discovery Science
Discovery en Español
Discovery Home and Leisure
Discovery Wings
Encore multiplex*
Fox Sports Digital Nets
G4
History International
HBO multiplex*

MTV Español
MTV Hits
MTV Jams
News World International
Nickelodeon Games and Sports
Nick Too
Noggin
Nicktoons TV
Showtime multiplex*
Starz multiplex*
Trio
VH1 Classic

VH1 Country
VH1 Mega Hits
VH1 Uno
VH1 Soul

*Premium services

HYBRIDS

Networks with significant proportion of distribution on digital and analog but actively seek analog carriage
BBC America

Bloomberg Television
Boomerang
CNNi
Discovery Health
Discovery Kids
DIY: Do It Yourself
ESPNNews
ESPN Classic
Fox Sports World
Golf Channel
Lifetime Movie Network
Lifetime Real Women
MTV2

MuchMusic USA
National Geographic
The Outdoor Channel
Outdoor Life
Oxygen
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Dreaming of fine living

Scripps' new digital network is all about 'pursuing your passions'

By Allison Romano

Yet another niche network is joining the potpourri of specialty services. But the newest player to join the ranks, Scripps Networks' Fine Living channel, is ditching the how-to instructional model.

"This is entertainment mixed with information. The notion is about pursuing your passions. It's not about buying stuff," said Fine Living President Ken Solomon, a veteran programmer who has worked in top spots at Fox and USA Networks.

But few cable subscribers will be able to test the channel right away. Scripps's newest progeny, is set to launch on selected, but still unnamed, Time Warner Cable digital systems March 17. Solomon is still hammering out deals with other MSOs and satellite providers. He projects that Fine Living will be in 10 million homes by year's end.

The network has solid distribution prospects on digital tiers. Scripps's other recent addition, DIY: Do It Yourself, has sprouted on digital tiers and DirecTV. Analog carriage has been tougher to come by, as Fine Living will soon see.

Its positioning is to show, not tell, viewers about areas of interest like travel, health and design. But Solomon denies that the channel is snobby, despite what the name suggests. "No one is going to mistake this for *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*," he said. One series, *Radical Sabbatical*, follows people who have abandoned the daily grind for a dream life in, say, Tuscany or Africa. *Ride of Your Life* surveys the coolest innovations in transportation.

Fine Living is billing itself as 100% original, launching with 14 series rotated throughout the schedule, but there's a twist.



Fine Living series *Radical Sabbatical* follows people who have abandoned the daily grind for a dream life in exotic locales.



Advertisers will be able to air two- to five-minute infomercials, says Fine Living's Ken Solomon: "This may be the future of TV advertising."

Sister networks HGTV and Food Network budget \$40,000 per 30 minutes of programming. Fine Living's budget is even trimmer. So the new channel is helping itself to Scripps video inventory and taking B-roll footage remixed by new writers and producers to end up with brand-new shows. About 25% of Fine Living's shows will be this revitalized strand.

Another tactic is piggybacking with Food and HGTV crews already going out on location.

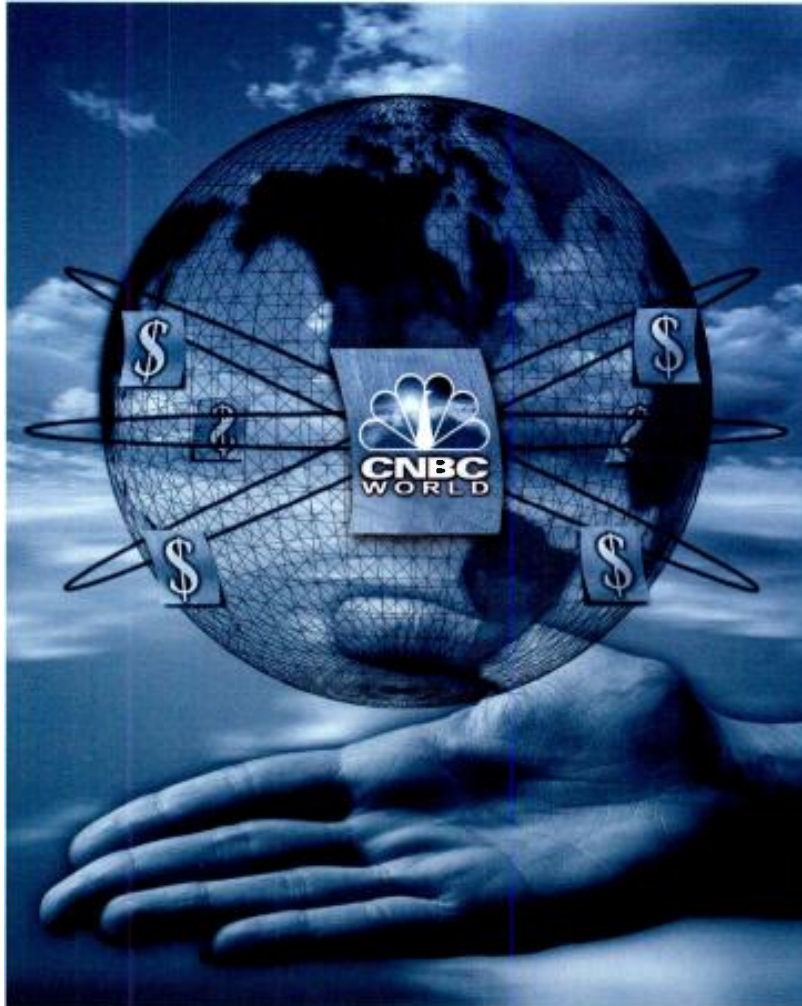
Solomon said that Fine Living has already secured about two dozen high-end advertisers—including automakers, financial services and airlines—but would not name names.

Fine Living benefits from a proven corporate parent, says Marc Goldstein, president of media-buying firm Mindshare. "We've bought new ESPN networks and new Turner networks because they are experienced programmers and distributors."

Still, spotty distribution will hold Fine Living back. "They're going after audience they admit is hard to reach" said Horizon Media's head of research Brad Adgate. "It's going to be a concept sell for a while."

To attract advertisers, Fine Living plans to air fewer commercial spots per hour—about 6 minutes compared with an average 14 minutes—but will allow advertisers to break away from the traditional 30-second ad. Instead, they can air two- to five-minute infomercials. "This may be the future of TV advertising," Solomon said. "The 30 second commercial isn't going to be around long." ■

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You think it was the curling?

NBC's Olympics and scripted shows deliver competitors a one-two sweeps punch

By Joe Schlosser

At the conclusion of the November sweeps, CBS President Les Moonves quipped, "For February 2002, I'd like to congratulate NBC right now for their victory aided by the brilliant scheduling of two weeks of the Olympics."

Moonves and other network executives knew that February's ratings book would be virtually useless as a sales tool by nearly every local station because of NBC's lopsided prime time advantage.

So no one is surprised. With a strong two-week performance from Salt Lake City and high ratings for its scripted fare, NBC attracted twice as many viewers during February than its closest competitor and won its eighth consecutive sweep in the key adults 18-49 demographic.

In fact, NBC execs now say that, because of February, NBC has locked up the prime time network races in both total viewers and adults 18-49 for the entire 2001-02 season. That means its competitors can play to improve stats the last three months of the season but not to win.

"We will win this season by the biggest margin of victory by any network in four years," said NBC Entertainment President Jeff Zucker last week on a call with TV reporters. "This is in a season that many had predicted would mark the end of NBC's dominance. Instead, our dominance has only grown, and the fact is, we would have had this huge margin even without the Olympics. The Olympics, of course, made it even bigger."

Through the Olympics, on Feb. 24, a few days before the sweeps technically ended, NBC was up 75% in adults 18-49 over last



A judging controversy, a come-from-behind win for a home-country teenager, and a strong patriotic appeal helped push NBC to a February-sweeps victory.

February, with a 9.6/24 Nielsen rating and 26.4 million viewers. At ABC and CBS, it was ugly: ABC was off 32% in 18-49s, with a 3.0/8, and down 38% in total viewers, at 7.9 million; CBS was down 36% in 18-49s, to a 2.9/7, and off 28% in total viewers, with 10 million. The WB was down only 6% in 18-49, to a 1.5/4, and 8% in total viewers, to 3.5 million.

Given the games on U.S. soil and a strong post-9/11 patriotism, NBC's Olym-

pics ratings came in as high as expected. Add a skating controversy, and NBC was off to the races. During the sweeps period, NBC set a record by winning 21 consecutive nights in adults 18-49, the most nights in a row by one network since the advent of Nielsen's peplemeters. The network averaged more than 24 million viewers per night and improved its adults 18-49 average by more than 70% from last year. It also won nearly each night before and after the Olympics in adults 18-49.

UPN's strategy to attract younger male viewers proved a smart move. With *WWF Smackdown!*, the latest *Star Trek* series in *Enterprise*, and male-themed films, UPN showed across-the-board growth from last February: up more than 20% in total viewers, adults 18-34 and adults 18-49. *Smackdown!* ranked second only to Olympics coverage on Thursday night during the month, and a broadcast of *Lethal Weapon 3* attracted UPN's largest Friday-night audience in the network's history.

At Fox, which started the month off with a highly competitive Super Bowl, network executives finally had some good results to talk about. Using the Super Bowl as its launching pad, they opted to go with nearly all original episodes during February. The network finished second to NBC in nearly every category for the sweeps, including an 18% gain in adults 18-49. *The Simpsons*, in its 13th season, had an especially strong sweeps period, and a number of Fox's new comedies continued to hold their own in key demos.

"We had a rough start to the season for a number of reasons, and we thought, with the Super Bowl, it would be a mistake to once again go out of business for two weeks during the Olympics," says Preston Beckman, Fox's executive vice president of strategic planning. ■



At a black-tie dinner at New York's Plaza Hotel last Monday, Broadcasters' Foundation Chairman Ed McLaughlin (l) presented the Golden Mike Award to the mother-son team that runs Radio One, founder Cathy Hughes and President and CEO Alfred Liggins. The dinner is the foundation's principal fundraiser.

Photo: Wendy Moger-Bross

Aid for broadcasters

By boosting membership, Broadcasters' Foundation intends to provide a place for the industry's needy to turn

By P. Llanor Alleyne

After a bout with cancer, a West Coast radio broadcaster found himself in dire financial straits, unable to support his blind wife and 15-year-old son. On the advice of a friend, he contacted The Broadcasters' Foundation, an industry group whose mission is to help financially troubled broadcasters.

The foundation came through with a monthly check. "We couldn't do it without them," says the man, who asked for anonymity. "We paid off the hospital bills. They are a godsend."

The foundation's mission is to help per-

sons who have worked in broadcasting and who have fallen on hard times. "They are regular people who have been in the engineering rooms of this industry," says Foundation President Gordon Hastings. For the most part, "this is not a glamorous industry. No one is making big money."

Hastings, brought on board in March 1996 to revitalize what was then known as The Broadcast Pioneers, says the group is helping 21 families with grants averaging \$500 a month, up from \$200 in 1996.

Those numbers will rise if the foundation's current membership drive is successful. To lead it, the foundation has brought

in non-profit maven David Meleczo. Membership now stands at 830; the immediate goal is to add 250 names by June. Dues are \$100 a year, but retired broadcasters are invited to pay whatever they want. "Some pay more, some less," says Hastings.

Dues are just a small portion of the foundation's income. Most comes from an avid fundraising centered on the group's Golden Mike Award. "This isn't an Emmy, a Cleo, an Academy Award," Hastings says. "We are not rewarding good ratings. We are looking for good community leaders, in keeping with the idea that broadcasting is a public trust. In accepting the award, the recipient is endorsing [our] mission."

Through the annual Golden Mike Award Dinner, golf tournaments, several other fundraising events and membership dues, the foundation netted \$300,000 in 2001. Of that, \$125,000 is used for the monthly grants. The balance—about \$175,00—is used to run the organization.

The foundation also maintains an endowment, now hovering around \$1 million, and hopes to build it to \$4 million before tapping the investment income for grants. Hastings pledges that every cent that comes out of the fund will go into direct grants.

He also wants to expand the services of the foundation, perhaps providing health insurance or even a retirement home.

Right now, though, Hastings simply wants to get the word out about the foundation: "My greatest concern is that there are people out there that need our help that we don't know about." ■

THE Time Period Improver!

Atlanta-WAGA 1pm

up 106%

GOOD DAY LIVE

2.7
Year Ago
Time Period

20th TELEVISION

Source: NSI, WAP Overights, wk of 12/1/01, 11/29-12/26/01, 1/3-30/02, Growth = wk of 12/3/01 vs. year ago TP 1/4-31/01, 18N Rtg

Programming

BroadcastWatch

COMPILED BY KENNETH RAY

FEB. 18-24 Broadcast network prime time ratings according to Nielsen Media Research

Week	abc	CBS	NBC	FOX	PAX TV	U/P/N	WB	
22	5.0/8	7.3/11	17.0/26	6.1/9	0.8/1	2.3/3	3.0/4	
MONDAY	8:00 38. My Wife & Kids 5.2/8	20. King/Queens 6.6/10	Wintr Olympics Sustaining	20. Boston Public 6.6/10	122. Miracle Pets 0.5/1	90. The Hughleys 1.9/3	74. 7th Heaven 3.3/5	
	8:30	22. Yes, Dear 6.5/9	6. Winter Olympics 17.1/26	31. Ally McBeal 5.5/8	117. Touched by an Angel 0.6/1	86. One on One 2.3/3	81. Angel 2.6/4	
	9:00 43. ABC Monday Night Movie—Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom 5.0/8	9. Ev Lvs Raymnd 9.2/13		105. Diagnosis Murder 1.3/2	82. The Parkers 2.5/4	84. Girlfriends 2.4/3		
	9:30	12. Becker 7.8/11						
	10:00	17. 48 Hours 6.8/11						
	10:30							
TUESDAY	5.5/8	6.6/10	22.8/34	5.0/7	0.8/1	1.6/2	2.0/3	
	8:00 42. My Wife & Kids 6.1/8	16. JAG 6.9/10	2. Winter Olympics 22.3/34	33. That '70s Show 5.4/8	117. Mysterious Ways 0.6/1	94. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 1.7/3	89. Flix Tuesday—Witchblade 2.0/3	
	8:30 38. According to Jim 5.2/8	33. The Guardian 5.4/8		55. Undeclared 4.4/7	117. Doc 0.6/1	95. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 1.6/2		
	9:00 58. Drew Carey 4.3/6	33. The Guardian 5.4/8		43. 24 5.0/7	108. Diagnosis Murder 1.1/2			
	9:30 64. Whose Line Is It 4.0/6	50. Judging Amy 4.5/7						
	10:00 13. NYPD Blue 7.4/12							
	10:30							
WEDNESDAY	5.1/8	5.4/9	19.7/31	4.6/7	1.0/1	2.1/3	2.1/3	
	8:00 25. My Wife & Kids 6.1/10	31. 60 Minutes II 5.5/9	Wintr Olympics Sustaining	60. That '80s Show 4.2/7	111. Candid Camera 0.9/1	86. Enterprise 2.3/4	79. Dawson's Creek 2.7/4	
	8:30 38. According to Jim 5.2/8	36. CBS Wednesday Movie—Breakdown 5.3/8	4. Winter Olympics 19.5/31	50. Grounded/Life 4.5/7	111. Touched by an Angel 0.9/1	91. Enterprise 1.8/3	95. Glory Days 1.6/3	
	9:00 60. Drew Carey 4.2/6			58. Titus 4.3/7	108. Diagnosis Murder 1.1/2			
	9:30 68. Whose Line Is It 3.7/6							
	10:00 28. Downtown 5.6/9							
	10:30							
THURSDAY	3.7/5	6.5/10	25.0/37	3.9/6	0.8/1	4.5/7	1.8/3	
	8:00 55. My Wife & Kids 4.4/7	11. CSI 8.5/13	1. Winter Olympics 26.8/41	65. Glutton Bowl: Eat Compete 3.9/6	117. It's a Miracle 0.6/1	50. WWF Smackdown! 4.5/7	91. Flix Thursday—Who's Talking Now 1.8/3	
	8:30 68. According to Jim 3.7/5	13. Ev Lvs Raymnd 7.4/11		117. Touched by an Angel 0.6/1				
	9:00 73. Drew Carey 3.4/5	23. King of Queens 6.3/9		107. Diagnosis Murder 1.2/2				
	9:30 77. Whose Line Is It 2.9/4	60. The Agency 4.2/6						
	10:00 67. Primetime Thursday 3.8/6							
	10:30							
FRIDAY	3.5/6	5.5/9	17.6/30	3.1/5	0.8/1	2.7/5	2.0/3	
	8:00 47. My Wife & Kids 4.7/8	28. 48 Hours 5.6/10	Wintr Olympics Sustaining	76. Fox Movie Special—Lost in Space 3.1/5	111. Weakest Link 0.9/2	79. UPN Movie Friday—Lethal Weapon 3 2.7/5	88. Sabrina/Witch 2.2/4	
	8:30 68. According to Jim 3.7/6	28. CBS Friday Movie—Primal Fear 5.6/10	5. Winter Olympics 17.7/31		122. Encounters With the Unexplained 0.5/1		91. Raising Dad 1.8/3	
	9:00 78. Drew Carey 2.8/5				116. Diagnosis Murder 0.8/1		82. Reba 2.5/4	
	9:30 84. Whose Line Is It 2.4/4				100. Maybe It's Me 1.5/3			
	10:00 68. 20/20 3.7/6							
	10:30							
SATURDAY	3.2/6	4.2/7	15.5/27	4.9/9	1.0/2	KEY: RANKING/SHOW TITLE/PROGRAM RATING/SHARE • TOP TEN SHOWS OF THE WEEK ARE NUMBERED IN RED • TV UNIVERSE ESTIMATED AT 105.5 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS; ONE RATINGS POINT IS EQUAL TO 1,055,000 TV HOMES • YELLOW TINT IS WINNER OF TIME SLOT • (NR)=NOT RANKED; RATING/SHARE ESTIMATED FOR PERIOD SHOWN • *PREMIERE • PROGRAMS LESS THAN 15 MINUTES IN LENGTH NOT SHOWN • S-T-O = SEASON TO DATE • SOURCES: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH, CBS RESEARCH		
	8:00	65. Touched by an Angel 3.9/7	Wintr Olympics Sustaining	50. Cops 4.5/8	114. Diagnosis Murder 0.9/2			
	8:30	75. ABC Bond Picture Show—You Only Live Twice 3.2/6	7. Winter Olympics 15.7/27	38. Cops 5.2/9	110. PAX Big Event—Pretend You Don't See Her 1.0/2			
	9:00			60. The District 4.2/7		46. Cops 4.9/8		
	9:30			50. The District 4.5/8		43. Cops 5.0/9		
	10:00							
	10:30							
SUNDAY	5.4/8	7.2/11	19.8/30	5.4/8	1.4/2	1.5/2		
	7:00	10. 60 Minutes 8.7/14	8. Dateline NBC 12.3/21	72. King of the Hill 3.6/6	111. Candid Camera 0.9/2	105. Steve Harvey 1.3/2		
	7:30	33. The Education of Max Bickford 5.4/8	2. Winter Olympics 22.3/33	48. King of the Hill 4.6/7	95. Doc 1.6/2	100. Steve Harvey 1.5/2		
	8:00 48. Wonderful World of Disney—Tarzan 4.6/7			15. The Simpsons 7.1/11		95. Doc 1.6/2	95. Jamie Kennedy 1.6/2	
	8:30			23. Malcolm/Middle 6.3/9		95. You Belong to Me 1.6/2	104. Off Centre 1.4/2	
	9:00 27. Alias 5.7/8	19. CBS Sunday Movie—The Rosa Parks Story 6.7/10		25. The Simpsons 6.1/9		100. Off Centre 1.5/2		
	9:30			55. Bernie Mac 4.4/6		100. For Your Love 1.5/2		
	10:00 17. The Practice 6.8/11							
	10:30							
WEEK	4.5/7	6.0/9	19.9/31	4.7/7	0.9/1	2.6/4	2.0/3	
5-1-0	6.6/11	8.1/13	9.2/15	6.2/10	0.9/1	2.8/4	2.5/4	

SyndicationWatch

FEB. 11-17 *Syndicated programming ratings according to Nielsen Media Research*

TOP 25 SHOWS

Rank	Program	HH AA	HH GAA
1	Wheel of Fortune	9.7	9.7
2	Jeopardy	8.2	8.2
3	Friends	7.2	8.6
4	Seinfeld	6.2	6.9
5	Everybody Loves Raymond	6.0	6.9
6	Entertainment Tonight	5.7	5.8
7	Judge Judy	5.6	8.0
7	Oprah Winfrey Show	5.6	5.7
9	Seinfeld (wknd)	5.3	5.9
10	Wheel of Fortune (wknd)	5.3	5.3
10	Friends (wknd)	4.0	4.2
12	Live With Regis and Kelly	.9	3.9
13	King of the Hill	3.5	3.9
13	Frasier	3.5	3.5
15	Andromeda	3.4	3.5
15	Everybody Loves Raymond (wknd)	3.4	3.4
15	Judge Joe Brown	3.3	4.5
15	Inside Edition	3.3	3.3
19	Maury	3.1	3.2
20	Mutant X	3.0	3.2
21	Montel Williams	2.9	3.0
22	Divorce Court	2.8	3.6
22	The X-Files	2.8	3.1
22	Jerry Springer	2.8	3.0
22	Access Hollywood	2.8	2.8

TOP TALK SHOWS

Rank	Program	HH AA	HH GAA
1	Oprah Winfrey	5.6	5.7
2	Live With Regis and Kelly	3.9	3.9
3	Maury	3.1	3.2
4	Montel Williams	2.9	3.0
5	Jerry Springer	2.8	3.0

According to Nielsen Media Research Syndication Service Ranking Report Feb. 11-17, 2002

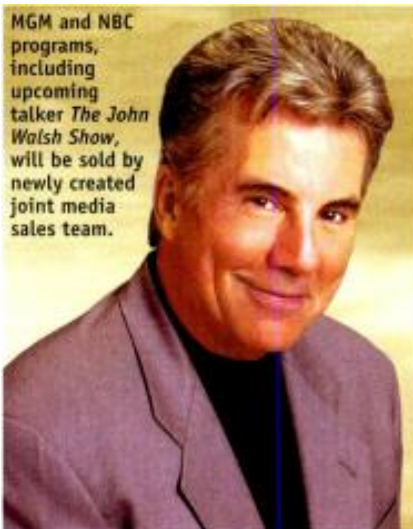
HH/AA = Average Audience Rating (households)

HH/GAA = Gross Aggregate Average

One Nielsen Rating = 1,055,000 households, which represents 1% of the 105.5 million TV Households in the United States

NA = Not Available

Target: Advertisers



MGM and NBC programs, including upcoming talker *The John Walsh Show*, will be sold by newly created joint media sales team.

After getting hammered on Madison Avenue last year, the syndication industry is directing increased attention and resources toward the media-buyer/advertising side of the TV business.

The top syndication studios are reshaping their media-buying organizations, ad dollars are being spent in trade publications that service advertisers, and now NBC Enterprises is getting into the game as well.

NBC's one-year-old syndication division has teamed up with MGM Worldwide Distribution to form MGM/NBC Media Sales Group. The New York-based division will be led by MGM

Media Sales Executive Vice President Michael Daraio. It's not the first time the two rivals have linked up; last year, NBC made a deal with the legendary Hollywood studio that put all international sales of NBC-produced programs into MGM's hands.

"This allows us to control our destiny a little bit more, and it also allows us to work much closer with the advertisers and maybe try to create a new model," says NBC Enterprises President Ed Wilson. "Plus we have a great working relationship with MGM on the international side."

In the past, NBC has farmed out media sales to syndicators that have barter-sales teams. Tribune, King World and Warner Bros. have all sold time for NBC shows this season. Warner Bros. will continue to sell *Will & Grace* and *Access Hollywood*, but all other MGM and NBC programs, including upcoming talker *The John Walsh Show*, will go through the new division.

"We are really complementary in terms of the programming we will be offering," says Jim Griffiths, president of MGM Worldwide TV Distribution. "Our sales teams will be walking into their meetings with a full complement of programs." —Joe Schlosser



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AVAILABLE FALL 2002



StationBreak

BY DAN TRIGOB OFF

THE CITY OF SISTERLY ENMITY

An apparent dispute between two on-air newspeople at NBC-owned WCAU(TV) Philadelphia spilled over to a police investigation last week, with accusations that one had threatened the other.

Anchor Sharon Reed was interviewed by police—with a lawyer present—regarding alleged threats reported by alleged target Alicia Taylor. The investigation ended with no charges brought, according to the police. Neither the station nor the women have publicly commented; their lawyers offered differing reports on whether Reed had admitted to police making the threats. Sources said Taylor took some time off; Reed was taken off the air and, insiders said late last week, was likely to be fired.

A battle of nasty messages and attacks has raged on industry Web sites, if not between the two women—as some believe—then among supporters. Comments have been highly insulting, personal and even racially oriented; both women are African-American.

Reed cuts a glamorous figure in Philly, linked with celebs like NFL star Donovan McNabb and actor Robert DeNiro.

WUSA WAKEUP WIN

As sweeps ended last week, Gannett's WUSA(TV) was poised to win the Washington early-morning-news race, nearly doubling its 5-6 a.m. audience from a year ago. Longtime mar-

ket leader NBC-owned WRC-TV, which won at 6-7 a.m., and Allbritton's WJLA-TV each dropped a bit at 5, but the Gannett station's late-2000 morning-show overhaul appears to be bringing new eyeballs to early a.m. as well.

It was seen as a rather dramatic move when then-new News Director Dave Roberts and then-General Manager Dick Reingold moved evening anchors Mike Buchanan and Andrea Roane to mornings.

WJLA-TV plans its own overhaul this week, with new anchor team Elliott Francis and Andrea McCarren. Anchor Don Hudson becomes a reporter.

WRC-TV again won the overall ratings race in the increasingly competitive market, with a February Olympics boost, particularly at 11 p.m.

OPEN MIKE, INSERT FOOT

There hadn't been such a commotion at WJFW-TV Rhinelander, Wis., staffers say, since E!'s Steve Kmetko dissed his former employer in *People*.

But the NBC affiliate at-

tracted national attention when Wisconsin Governor Scott McCallum—apparently unaware that his mike was on—called reporter Matt Barrie “a dumb son-of-a-bitch” following questions at a satellite press conference.

McCallum later called the station to apologize, but such a gaffe was destined for instant controversy and wide distribution. WJFW-TV News Director Heather Schallock said she'd have preferred omitting profanity from her newscast, but, with many Wisconsin TV stations on the same feed, such propriety was a luxury.

“Part of me was against airing it,” she said, “but we were not going to be last on a story we're a part of.” The station didn't mention the remark in opening the story but commented later that the governor needed to know when the mike was on.

The station also fed its video to the NBC Newschannel. Calls and messages rolled in, with some critical the airing but most supportive. No calls yet, the station said, from Dick Clark's *Bloopers*.

Court reporting

WNBC-TV New York's Jonathan Dienst was credited with breaking the story last week that NBC Sports commentator and former New Jersey Nets star Jayson Williams was set to surrender to prosecutors to be charged with manslaughter in the death of a limo driver at his New Jersey estate last month.

PRECAUTIONARY TALE

WVUE(TV) weatherman Bob Breck believes that his wife, Paula Zabrecky, died because no one recognized the signs of pulmonary embolism. He began a campaign last week to reduce chances of its recurring.

In two lengthy pieces last week, Nancy Parker examined blood-clot hazards. The pieces dealt with the widespread damage, death, the value of blood thinners and leg stockings as well as Breck's life with his childhood sweetheart. “The story was Bob's idea,” Parker said. “And Bob is a close friend. It was very tough to report on her life and how it was senselessly taken away.”

Breck believes even doctors ignored clear signs but wishes he had been more aware. “As I told my sons, I believe in trying to make something positive out of something negative. This shouldn't have happened, and it hurts. I lost my wife. Now I want to get the word out.”

All news is local. Contact Dan Trigoboff at (301) 260-0923, e-mail dtrig@starpower.net or fax (413) 254-4133.

FocusSpokane

THE MARKET

DMA rank	78
Population	990,000
TV homes	89,000
Income per capita	\$15,447
TV revenue rank	77
TV revenue	\$59,900,000

COMMERCIAL TV STATIONS

Rank*	Ch.	Affil.	Owner
1	KHQ(TV)	6 NBC	Cowles
2	KREM-TV	2 CBS	Be
3	KXLY-TV	4 ABC	Morgan Mphy.
4	KAYU-TV	28 Fox	Northwest
5	KSKN(TV)	22 UPN/WB	Belo

*November 2001, total households, 6 a.m.-2 a.m., Sun.-Sat.

CABLE/DBS

Cable subscribers (HH)	22,562
Cable penetration	58%
ADS subscribers (HH)**	93,360
ADS penetration	24%
DBS carriage of local TV?	No

**Alternative Delivery Systems, includes DBS and other non-cable services, according to Nielsen Media Research

WHAT'S NO. 1

Syndicated show	Rating/share***
Jeopardy (KHQ)	10/19
Network show	
CSI (KREM-TV)	18/32
Early-evening newscast	
KREM-TV	9/17.4
Late newscast	
KREM-TV	4.8/22.7

***November 2001, total households

Sources: Nielsen Media Research, BIA Research

Like a resort, with news

The Spokane, Wash., DMA comprises parts of three states—Washington, Idaho and Montana—and 24 counties and provides network programming for Canadian cities Calgary and Edmonton, Alberta, via satellite.

Northwest Broadcasting Inc.-owned Fox affiliate KAYU-TV also operates co-owned Fox affiliates KCYU-LP and KFFX-TV in Yakima-Tri-Cities (Pasco-Richland-Kennewick, Wash.). "We've pioneered the centralcast for more than a decade," says General Manager Jon Rand.

Local stations have been disappointed that they have not been carried on the many satellite dishes in the widespread, mountainous DMA. It wouldn't be especially difficult, says Rand, since the signals are already carried over satellite.

News is highly competitive in the market. "We may be the 78th-ranked," he points out, "but, to the credit of my competitors as well as ourselves, the quality of the news belies its market size. We have a great competition in news here."

Leadership in local-news ratings has shifted, from KHQ(TV) to KREM-TV. Key in KREM-TV's rise, according to General Manager Bud Brown, appears to be its hiring of anchor Randy Shaw, who had been fired at KHQ, after Shaw sat out a six-month noncompete.

Given the area's high participation levels in winter sports, Nielsen reports for February sweeps will likely show an especially strong performance by Cowles Publications-owned NBC affiliate KHQ, which won the November sweeps as well. Living in the Pacific Northwest, says Brown, "is like living in a resort. I think you'll find that the highest ratings for the Olympics, other than Salt Lake City, will be in the Northwest—Seattle, Portland and here."

Advertising is typically led by automotive and fast food, with retail furniture a strong participant as well. The market dropped off by about 15% last year, mostly after the first quarter. This year, the first quarter will be down from last year's. Still, local execs say, the 2001 market wasn't off that much when the political advertising that contributed to 2000's record year is factored out.

—Dan Trigoboff



HATCHETT RULES NEW YORK!

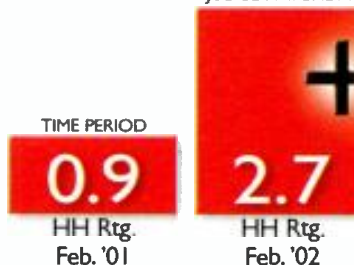
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JUDGE HATCHETT



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CTDTV.COM

Source: NSI, WRAP Overnights, M-F, 4:30 - 5:00p tp, Feb 01 Sweep, Feb 02 (2/18/02 - 2/22/02)

IN BRIEF

TAUZIN: HOLD THE HYPOCRISY

News organizations should be less hypocritical when it comes to covering politicians, Rep. Billy Tauzin (R-La.) told the NAB State Leadership Conference in Washington last week. Tauzin, chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, complained about CNN's listing the amounts politicians had received from Enron. Tauzin's view is that it is hypocritical for media companies to contribute to politicians, then implicitly criticize politicians for taking the money. Moreover, Tauzin said, the information was not presented correctly since corporations cannot give politicians money directly but only through corporate and political PACs, which is all a matter of public record.

AMBER JOINS EAS

A new child-abduction emergency code was added to the Emergency Alert System operated by broadcasters and cable systems, the FCC said last Tuesday. The code was one of several added to the EAS system.

The abduction alert can activate local AMBER plans, voluntary partnerships between law enforcement and the media to let the public know immediately when police believe a missing child is in danger. Until now, AMBER plans have been activated by the Civil Emergency Message code, a practice that can lead to confusion over the nature of the alert.

Broadcast stations and cable systems are now permitted to modify their existing EAS equipment but are not required to. New equipment installed after Feb. 1, 2004, must be capable of receiving the new codes.

Lott takes shot at FCC

Rankled by broadband position, he says the commission 'distorts' laws

By Paige Albiniak

Republican favorite Michael Powell may be at the helm of the FCC, but you wouldn't know it from listening to Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.)

"I've been very disturbed by the FCC for a long time," Lott said at the National Association of Broadcasters State Leadership Conference in Washington last week. "Like many agencies, they take the laws we make and distort them." Particularly disturbing to Lott is the FCC's take on broadband policy.

Two weeks ago, the FCC issued a rulemaking that would absolve phone companies of any requirement to carry competitive Internet providers on their high-speed networks. The FCC's proposal is similar to one sponsored by Reps. Billy Tauzin (R-La.) and John Dingell (D-Mich.) that the House passed last week. "They come in there just as the House is about to act," Lott told reporters after his speech. "It seems to me that's undercutting it."

With Lott one of the bill's major opponents in the Senate, joined by Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Fritz Hollings (D-S.C.), ranking member John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), the bill has virtually no chance of surviving there. Because Congress is unlikely to act on any broadband policy this year, what the FCC decides could have a major impact on the pace and direction of broadband deployment—one of Chairman Powell's top priorities, as he has said repeatedly since taking the helm in January 2001.

The FCC had no response to Lott's criticisms.

Lott also worried aloud about a decision by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals to send the 35% national television ownership cap back to the FCC for reconsideration. "I have



Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott is worried by decision sending 35% ownership cap back to FCC.

always supported some cap on ownership," he said. "I still think there is reason for it, merit for it, and I support it."

Lott's comments on the cap were music to the ears of his broadcaster audience because most local TV-station owners want the 35% cap left in place. They worry that the broadcast networks are too powerful and that soon there will be no more locally owned TV stations if deregulation continues apace. Powell has established himself as a deregulatory chairman, and his FCC is expected to increase the cap in the wake of last month's court decision.

For now, the 35% cap remains in place while the FCC considers its next move; although the networks and large station groups consider the decision a victory, the impact will not be felt immediately.

Lott also criticized the FCC for delaying a decision on whether Northpoint Technology should be given free access to direct-broadcast satellite spectrum. Finally, although he would not come out and expressly oppose EchoStar's proposed merger with DirecTV, he registered qualified opposition. "I am inclined right now to think that probably it is not healthy for competition and for even their own industry." ■

Changing Hands

TVs

WOWK-TV Huntington, W.Va.

Price: \$40.5 million

Buyer: Cary Communications (Albert B. Cary, Jr., CEO). Buyer also owns WBOY-TV Clarksburg, W.Va.

Seller: SJL Communications LP (George Lilly, president)

Facilities: Ch. 13, 141 kW, ant. 1,270 ft.

Affiliation: Fox

KXGR-TV Green Valley, Ariz.

Price: \$12.3 million

Buyer: Univision Communications Inc., the Spanish-language network and No. 7 TV-group owner (A. Jerrold Perenchio, chairman/CEO)

Seller: Pan(AM)erican Technology Group LLC (Donald E. Ledwig Jr., managing member)

Facilities: Ch. 46, 68 kW, ant. 3,593 ft.

Affiliation: Pax

WUHF-TV Rochester, N.Y.

Buyer: Sinclair Broadcast Group Inc., No. 10 TV-group owner (David D. Smith, President/CEO)

Price: Assumption of liabilities

Seller: BS&L Broadcasting (Joseph Koff, president)

Facilities: Ch. 39, 5,000 kW, ant. 499 ft.

Affiliation: Fox

Combos

KBMR(AM), KXMR(AM), KQDY-FM and KSSS-FM Bismarck, N.D.

Price: \$4.2 million

Buyer: James Ingstad; owns three other stations, including KCHK(AM)-FM Minneapolis, but none in this market

Seller: Anderson Broadcasting Co. Inc. (Dennis Anderson, president)

Facilities: KBMR(AM): 1130 kHz, 10 kW day; KXMR(AM): 710 kHz, 50 kW day, 4 kW night; KQDY-FM: 94.5 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 1,119 ft.; KSSS-FM: 101.5 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 988 ft.

Format: KBMR(AM): country; KXMR(AM); news/talk; KQDY-FM: country; KSSS-FM: classic rock

KONA(AM) and KONA-FM Kennewick (Richland-Kennewick-Pasco), Wash.

Price: \$4.13 million

Buyer: Commonwealth Communications LLC (Dex Allen, president); owns 21 other stations, including KOWL(AM)-KRLT(FM) Sacramento, Calif., but none in this market

Seller: Dean-Mitchell Inc. (Dean Mitchell, president)

Facilities: KONA(AM): 610 kHz, 5 kW day, 5 kW night; KONA-FM: 105.3 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 1,139 ft.

Format: KONA(AM): news/talk/sports; KONA-FM: easy

WCMA(AM) and WADI-FM Corinth, Miss.

Price: \$330,000

Buyer: Power Valley Communications Inc. (Rick Biddle, president); no other broadcast interests

Seller: Janice T. Jobe

Facilities: WCMA(AM): 1230 kHz, 1 kW; WADI-FM: 95.3 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 213 ft.

Format: WCMA(AM): country; WADI-FM: country

Broker: Media Services Group

KLTK(AM) and KWMQ-FM South West City, Mo.

Price: \$350,000

Buyer: Kerm Inc. (Kermit Womack, president); owns three other stations, including KURM(AM) Fayetteville, Ark., but none in this market

Seller: Drake Communications Inc. (Jeffrey M. Hutton, president)

Facilities: KLTK(AM): 1140 kHz, 200 W; KWMQ-FM: 100.3 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 328 ft.

Format: KLTK(AM): sports/talk;

KWMQ-FM: soft AC/talk

KIDI-FM Guadalupe and KTAP(AM) Santa Maria (Santa Maria-Lompoc), Calif.

Price: \$260,000

Buyer: Emerald Wave Media (George A. Ruiz, president); no other broadcast interests

Seller: Palma Ann Case

Facilities: KIDI-FM: 105.5 MHz, 350 W, ant. 1,342 ft.; KTAP(AM): 1600 kHz, 470 W

Format: KIDI-FM: Spanish; KTAP(AM): Mexican

FMs

WGVC-FM Newberry (Columbia), S.C.

Price: \$4 million

Buyer: Barnstable Broadcasting Inc. (Michael Kaneb, president/COO); owns 17 other stations, including WBZO(FM) Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., but none in this market

Seller: Sutton Radiocasting Corp.

(Douglas M. Sutton Jr., chairman/CEO)

Facilities: 106.3 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 328 ft.

Format: Rhythmic/oldies

WYNT-FM Upper Sandusky, Ohio

Price: \$825,000

Buyer: Clear Channel Communications (Randy Michaels, chairman/CEO, Radio); No. 1 radio group owns 1,213 other stations, none in this market

Seller: US Communications Inc. (Forrest Whitehead, owner)

Facilities: 95.9 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 299 ft.

Format: AC/country

WFCT-FM Apalachicola, Fla.

Price: \$650,000

Buyer: Williams Communications Inc. (Walton E. Williams Sr., president); owns three other stations, including WRHY(FM) Centre, Ala., but none in this market

Seller: Staton Broadcasting Inc. (Cecil P. Staton Jr., president)

Facilities: 105.5 MHz, 50 kW, ant. 328 ft.

Format: Adult standards

Broker: Gordon Rice of Gordon Rice Associates

KCGL-FM Powell, Wyo.

Price: \$450,000

Buyer: Legend Communications LLC (W. Lawrence Patrick, president); owns 11 other stations, including WJEH(AM) Gallipolis, Ohio, but none in this market

Seller: Powell Broadcasting Inc. (Jan C. Gray, principal)

Facilities: 104.1 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 1,795 ft.

Format: Classic rock

Broker: Patrick Communications

AMs

WBLV(AM) Springfield (Dayton), Ohio

Price: \$250,000

Buyer: Urban Light Ministries Inc (Eli Williams, president); no other broadcast interests

Seller: Ronald Yontz

Facilities: 1600 kHz, 1 kW day, 34 W night

Format: Talk

WZNN(AM) Lexington (Florence-Muscle Shoals), Ala.

Price: \$100,000

Buyer: Manuel Huerta; no other broadcast interests

Seller: Richard Dabney

Facilities: 620 kHz, 5 kW day, 99 W night

Format: Sports

—Information provided by BIA Financial Networks' Media Access Pro, Chantilly, Va. www.bia.com

Technology

Panasonic builds on the past

NAB intros look to fit compatibly into existing plant infrastructure and equipment

By Ken Kerschbaumer

Panasonic Broadcast & Television Systems will head to NAB with a number of products it hopes will answer the call for economical products that are flexible enough to meet demands for different formats and also fit within a broadcaster's existing infrastructure.

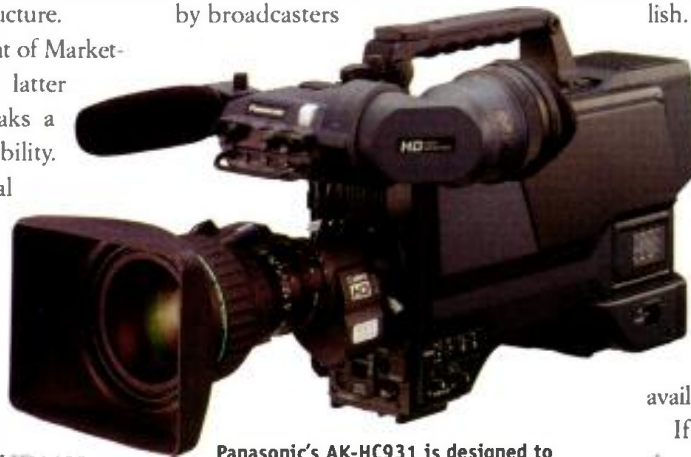
According to Vice President of Marketing Stuart English, it's the latter demand that makes or breaks a product's promise of affordability. "You can have an economical product only if it respects the infrastructure that exists," he says. "It won't be economical if it forces a brand-new infrastructure on you."

One product designed to fit that demand is a DVCPRO HD long-play VTR. The AJ-HD1600 VTR records on a 9-micron track width (DVCPRO formats typically record at 18 microns) to give the user 124 minutes of DVCPRO recording at 50 Mb/s on a newly developed DVCPRO extra-large cassette. English says the long recording time makes the VTR suitable for syndicated HD demands. There may be some concern from the engineering community concerning the

9-micron width, but he says it should pose no problems when coupled with the VTR's error-correction technology.

"The standard mode on DV is 10 microns, so we aren't so far away from what everyone knows as doable," he says.

The VTR also may find use by broadcasters



Panasonic's AK-HC931 is designed to replace an existing studio camera with a standard-definition product that can be upgraded for HDTV demands.

looking for HD slow-motion playback: It provides slow-motion playback of -1.0 to +2.0 in HD long-play mode. Other features include a small built-in video monitor and a format converter that can handle aspect-ratio conversion.

Panasonic's new AK-HC931 camera is designed to replace an existing studio camera with a standard-definition product that can be upgraded for HDTV demands.

"It uses HD optics and an HD imager based on three 1/2-inch 1280x720 1 million-pixel progressive-scan IT chips," says English. "It's a very compact camera that is designed for the shoulder, but it has a build-up kit for studio application."

According to English, the HD imager (which acquires 720p images) allows for very high-quality 480i imaging; changing the output section upgrades it to HD. List price for the camera is under \$50,000, and it will be available in September. Pricing on the HD upgrade will be available at a later date.

If 1080i output is desired, English says, the camera cross-converts from progressive to interlace.

There's little doubt that working not only in different formats but also in different frame rates is another challenge for broadcasters. English says using the AJ-FRC27 variable-frame-rate converter with the AJ-HDC27 Varicam HD cinema camera could help meet conversion needs in working with 1080p/24 production suites.

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"This system is designed to integrate 1080p/24 with variable-frame-rate field capture," English explains. "The camera can acquire images at four to 60 frames per second in one-frame increments throughout the entire range but lays down a constant 60-frame-per-second pattern on tape, comprising both new-information frames and repeat-information, or pad, frames."

English says the frame-rate converter, which has a VTR-type control panel and is a half-rack wide and 5 rack-units high, is designed for users that have 1080p-based editing stations. It extracts just the new-information frames from the 60-f/s sequence and plays those frames back at 24 f/s and 1080p resolution, realizing the frame-rate conversion entirely in the video domain, a process equivalent to off-speed film capture followed by telecine.

Panasonic is also working with leading non-linear-editing companies. Among them are Quantel and Boxx Technologies, both of which have integrated a similar frame-rate-conversion algorithm into HD-resolution editing systems.

Another new feature from Panasonic is the CineGamma option for HD cameras, addressing the issue of the difference in dynamic range of film and video. Because

film has a greater dynamic range and doesn't blow out the whites in images, it is much more suitable for outside production than HD video is. English says that, with the CineGamma option (which costs \$5,000), the digital-signal-processing section of the camera enables HD progressive-scan video to more closely emulate the gamma response of film. "The option can be retrofitted to existing cameras in the field and involves new hardware and software for the camera."



Panasonic's 18-inch BT-LH1800 is an LCD monitor that incorporates CRT features.

Panasonic also will introduce two HD/SD-capable LCD monitors: the 18-inch BT-LH1800 and the 15-inch BT-LH1500.

"Light weight and compact size are attributes of LCD," English explains, "but the big issue has been that, if you try to use an LCD screen, you

pay a lot of attention to getting a broadcast feel in terms of the things you expect to see on a CRT."

English says the LCD monitors offer those CRT features. Both have a contrast ratio of 300:1, 170-degree viewing angle and 30-ms response speed and, depending on optional input board, can display 1080/24 f/s, 1080i, 720p, 576i, 480p and 480i. The 18-inch version (list price \$7,000) has a resolution of 1280x1024 SGA; the 15-inch (\$6,000), resolution of 1024x768 XGA. ■

GVG looks to share news

NewsShare, NewsBrowse and NewsEdit LT designed to ease workflow

By Ken Kerschbaumer

The impending acquisition of Grass Valley Group by Thomson gives GVG's three product introductions this week a meaning beyond the typical NAB introduction. Many in the broadcast-equipment manufacturing community are curious about changes to the Grass Valley Group name and personnel once the acquisition is approved. Its new products—NewsEdit LT, NewsShare and NewsBrowse—hint a great deal of the company's future may be very similar to its present.

"As people go into NAB and see the things we're doing," says GVG Vice President, Marketing, Michael Cronk, "they're going to see some very positive signs."

With the company's Media Area Network system attracting major customers like NBC, it's no surprise that two introductions, NewsShare and NewsBrowse, relate to the MAN real-time shared-storage platform. According to Cronk, NewsShare, to be available sometime in June, allows the GVG NewsEdit editing and FeedClip systems to be connected directly to the MAN system.

"In NewsEdit installations, the user ingests

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DTV delays sought

Some 400 stations expected to ask for six-month extensions of deadline

By Bill McConnell

More than a-third of U.S. TV stations are expected to ask the government's permission to delay completion of digital facilities by the time a window for filing such requests closes today.

As of Feb. 28, the FCC received requests from 179 of the country's 1,100 full-power stations to grant a six-month extension to the May 1 deadline. But nearly 400 are expected to have filed by the end of Monday.

That would be slightly higher than the 32% of the industry predicted by the National Association of Broadcasters in August. Since then, the Sept. 11 attacks and the recession have made a shambles of the ad market and seriously strained the finances of many stations.

Despite the numerous delay requests, there is some good news for government officials trying to keep the transition to DTV on track: The overwhelming number of applicants say they need only a few extra months to complete construction, with most saying they won't need the second, six-month extension permitted by Congress.

"The bottom line is that most of these stations are going to be built this year," said David Donovan, president of DTV trade group Association for Maximum Service Television.

Belo and Clear Channel were among the early requesters and blamed construction problems in several of their markets on equipment delays, hazardous construction conditions due to winter weather, or difficulty in scheduling construction crews. Belo, which is on track with 14 of its stations, asked to delay DTV build-outs in Austin, Texas, and Tucson, Ariz., and for two out-

lets in Spokane, Wash. Clear Channel asked to delay construction in Albany, N.Y.

John Burgett, Washington attorney for both companies, said most delays are caused by a crunch of last-minute construction. "Everybody's rushing to get this done," he said. "Most want to do it right rather than rush to meet an artificial deadline."

LIN Television will ask for 10 delays among its 29 stations, although eight of those postponements are simply because the FCC has yet to issue construction permits. "In most markets, we're ready to go as soon as we have FCC clearance," said lobbyist Greg Schmidt.

Approximately 160 stations still have not received DTV construction permits, FCC officials said.

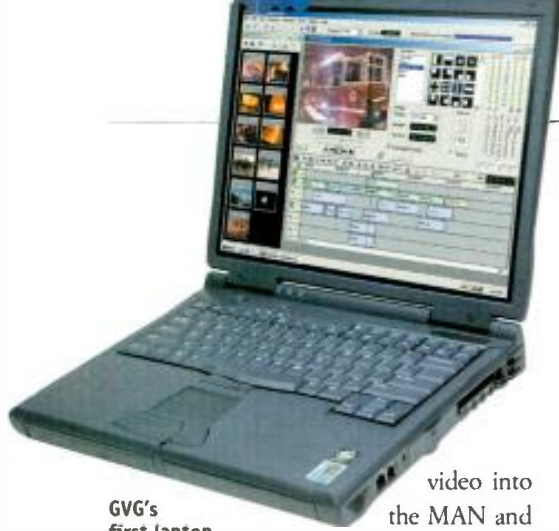
Currently 258 stations are broadcasting DTV, according to the NAB.

"You can't just look at the number of extensions to see if there's a big problem, but rather how long a delay people are seeking," Donovan said. "A bunch say they need only a month or two."

A read of the initial applications indicates that most stations are asking for relief because of problems that can be solved easily over time, with few complaints about zoning issues or lack of financing, either of which is harder to resolve and can delay a DTV-facility construction indefinitely.

Despite the positive prognosis for DTV construction, Donovan did not pass on an opportunity to take a dig at the FCC.

If not for uncertainty still clouding the ultimate success of DTV—a problem he blames on the lack of DTV carriage on cable, workable copy-protection standards, and a digital-tuner requirement for new sets—nobody, he said, would doubt stations' enthusiasm for DTV or care if some were seeking build-out delays. "If the FCC had taken steps to accelerate the transition, this wouldn't even be an issue." ■



GVG's first laptop nonlinear editing system, the NewsEdit LT, is expected to be available in June at a base price of \$12,900.

video into the MAN and creates a browse copy to do a rough cut," he says. "It then has to hand the edit-

decision list to the NewsEdit, which folds the material in from the MAN [for editing] before placing the material back onto the MAN." NewsShare lets the user directly access the video on the MAN.

A MAN with NewsShare and a few NewsEdit systems will cost about \$170,000, Cronk says. One MAN can support up to 48 channels, handling roughly 20 NewsEdit systems, depending on configuration.

Since GVG's Profile video server integrates protocols necessary to work with newsroom editing systems of such companies as AP and Avid, Cronk says, the MAN can easily be attached to them. "To them, the MAN looks like a big server with a lot of ports."

NewsBrowse makes frame-accurate, low-resolution copies of clips so multiple workstations can share the same media simultaneously. "It's an MPEG-1 frame-accurate browse system based on standard PC platform," says Cronk. "It allows the synchronous ingest of low-resolution with high-resolution material and can create frame-accurate cuts-only sequences [to] be conformed on the Profile or on the NewsEdit."

Expected availability is this summer, with typical application pricing about \$200,000.

The NewsEdit LT nonlinear editing system, GVG's first laptop editor, is due June, to start at \$12,900. It does cuts-only editing and traditional A/B-roll suite functions in a turnkey design on a 1.3-GHz processor, 60-GB storage and 256-MB RAM, Cronk says, adding, "It uses the same interface and techniques found on the Vibrant editor." ■

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SPECIAL	ISSUE DATE	SPACE CLOSING	MATERIALS DUE
Road to NAB 1: Television Convergence	March 18	Fri 3/8	Tue. 3/12
Road to NAB 2: Station Operations	March 25	Fri.. 3/15	Tue. 3/19
Road to NAB 3: Newsroom Operations	April 1	Fri. 3/22	Tue. 3/26
NAB Convention Issue • Top 25 Television Groups • RTNDA Coverage BONUS DISTRIBUTION AT NAB 2002	April 8	Fri. 3/28	Tue. 4/2
NAB Midweek Issue • Digital Facilities • B&C Technology Leadership Awards BONUS DISTRIBUTION/IN ROOM AT NAB 2002	April 10	Fri. 3/29	Tue. 4/2
NAB Wrap Up Issue	April 15	Fri. 4/5	Tue. 4/9

BROADCASTING  **CABLE**

People

F A T E S & F O R T U N E S

Broadcast TV

Robert J. Ramsey, station manager, WGN-TV Chicago, named VP/GM, KSWB-TV San Diego.

Robert Furlong, VP/GM, KUTP(TV) Phoenix, joins KPHO-TV Phoenix in the same capacity.

Rick Henry, president/GM, WISN-TV Milwaukee, joins WTAE-TV Pittsburgh, in the same capacity.

Tracey L. Beeker, director, licensing and marketing, PBS, Alexandria, Va., promoted to VP, strategic partnerships and licensing.

Appointments at News 14 Carolina, Charlotte, N.C.: **Jim Newman**, assistant news director, WBTV(TV) Charlotte, named news director; **Sherri Blankenship**, accountant, WSOC-TV Charlotte, N.C./WAXN(TV) Kannapolis, N.C., named business manager; **Shay Merritt**, director, TV33's programming and productions, AT&T Broadband, Atlanta, named marketing manager; **Cathy Lockhart Cloud**, recruiting manager, human resources, Jefferson Pilot Communications, Charlotte, joins as human-resources manager;

Susan Brami, director, sales, Cable Acast, Fayetteville, N.C., named sales manager;

Bronwyn Poplin, producer, *News This Morning*, WBTV(TV), named newsroom coordinator;

Phillis Shoemaker, assignment editor, WBTV(TV), named assignment supervisor; **Jim Travers**, chief photographer, WBTV(TV), joins as operations manager; **Shari Evans-Buford**, executive producer, Central Florida News 13, Orlando, Fla., joins as assistant news director.

Appointments at Viacom Boston Television, Boston: **Don Lowry**, VP, player development and community affairs, New England Patriots, Boston, joins as director, communications; **Al Turner**, director, sales, WBZ-TV Boston, adds to his duties executive director, sales; **Craig Carlson**, director, corporate development, North America, Arthur D. Little Corp., Boston, joins as director, corporate marketing.

Mark Walker, director, affiliate marketing, Englewood, Colo., joins KWHD-TV Castle Rock, Colo., and KWHS-

TV Colorado Springs, Colo., as director, sales and marketing.

Lisa Whitlock, community affairs director, KRIV(TV) Houston, adds KTXH(TV) Houston to her duties.

Debbie Brizendine, general sales manager, KVDA(TV) San Antonio, joins KHWB(TV) Houston, as local sales manager.

Cable TV

Appointments at Comcast Cable: **Stephen Rabbitt**, president/COO, Digital Access Inc., Bala Cynwyd, Pa., joins as VP, Eastern division, Bucks County, Pa.; **Thomas Jefferson**, regional director, human resources, Washington/Virginia region, promoted to regional senior director.

Programming

Sam Schroeder, senior VP, programming and operations, Comcast SportsNet, Philadelphia, named executive VP/GM, Comcast SportsNet, Mid-Atlantic, Baltimore/Washington.

Appointments at Hallmark Channel: **Andy Karofsky**, international VP, marketing,

Los Angeles, named VP, marketing; **Shira Kalish**, VP, marketing, Maxmanager.com, New York, joins as VP, advertising sales and alliance marketing, New York.

Drew Shearer, VP, finance, Columbia TriStar Television, Culver City, Calif., named in the same capacity, Columbia TriStar Domestic Television.

Promotions at Fox Cable Networks Group: **Jeff Lutzky**, director, affiliate sales strategy, Los Angeles, named, VP; **Ryan Smith**, manager, sales strategy, Los Angeles, named director; **Sandi Byars**, regional marketing coordinator, Irving, Texas, named regional marketing executive, Southwest region.

Erin Harvego, marketing director, Fox Sports Northwest, Seattle, joins Rainbow Sports Networks, Jericho, New York, as corporate marketing manager.

Appointments at VH1: **Melissa Cobb**, senior VP, production, Twentieth Century Fox Animation, Los Angeles, joins as VP, motion pictures, television, Los Angeles; **Kim Rozenfeld**, president, Half Full Entertainment, Los Angeles,



Rick Henry



Stephen Rabbitt



Andy Karofsky



Erin Harvego



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joins as VP, West Coast programming and development, Los Angeles.

Alex Coletti, producer, *Unplugged*, MTV Networks, New York, named executive in charge, programming and production, MTV2, New York.

Bill Shaw, president/CEO, Fox Television sales, New York, named VP/GM, WGN Superstation, New York.

Susan Carden, senior director, original programming and promotion, CN8 The Comcast Network, Philadelphia, promoted to VP, network programming. Appointments at In

Demand: **Sean Henry**, senior director, program planning and scheduling, Los Angeles, promoted to VP; **Richard Wellerstein**, senior director, movie programming, Los Angeles, promoted to VP, theatrical programming and acquisitions; **Jennifer Boudreaux**, senior director, financial planning and analysis, New York, promoted to VP.

Sean Gallagher, senior director, business and legal affairs, Granada Entertainment, Los Angeles, promoted to VP.

Lauren Mazzuca, manager, ad sales marketing, Westwood

One, New York, promoted to director.

Radio

Jack Hobbs, VP/GM, HBC Radio Network, Dallas, promoted to senior VP/GM/director, new-business development, HBCsi, Dallas.

Journalism

Alan Murray, bureau chief, Washington, *The Wall Street Journal*, joins CNBC, Atlanta, in the same capacity.

Advertising/Marketing/PR

Laura Molen, senior VP/national sales manager,

Paramount Advertiser Services, Hollywood, Calif., promoted to senior VP/general sales manager.

Richard Tunkle, account executive, radio sales, Interep, New York, named manager, new-business development, Arbitron, New York.

Changes at CBS Media Relations, New York:

Johanna Fuentes, junior publicist, promoted to senior publicist; **Kim Sartori**, press assistant, promoted to junior publicist.

—P. Llanor Alleyne
palleyne@cabners.com
212-337-7141

Voices

O P E N M I K E

VOICE RULE GOTTA GO

Editor: Your editorial "All news is local" in the Feb. 11 edition is "spot on," as my kids would say. While much is being made of raising or eliminating the 35% television-station ownership cap, of equal or greater importance in my opinion is the need to loosen the "eight-voice rule," which currently negatively impacts television operators in all but the largest television markets.

For all the reasons cited in the effort to repeal the 35% cap, this restriction must be loosened or eliminated. Does anybody really think that our only competition for viewers and advertising revenue in the medium and smaller television markets are the other television stations in that market? Aren't there already "governors" in place at other

regulatory agencies (namely, the Department of Justice) to prevent "undue concentrations" of revenue share within an individual market?

As a local station operator, I can tell you firsthand that we deal with the same cable and DBS monopolies, 500-channel viewing "options" and Internet intrusion issues as the largest companies pushing for "cap" reform, because we all ultimately face these challenges at the local level. But, as everyone should know, the smaller the market, the fewer dollars to go around and less financial wherewithal to face these challenges.

Which brings me to my main point. In large markets, duopolies are all about money. We (Nexstar) have no problem with that. However, in small markets, duopolies

are about survival plain and simple. They allow broadcasters to provide local news and community service in the face of the challenges and issues facing all of the players in the television industry, not just the largest companies.

We agree with the conclusion of your editorial that "at least the preservation of the news should be added explicitly to the list of waiver conditions for such small-market combos." However, Nexstar believes that, for medium- and smaller-market television stations to survive and ultimately have a chance to prosper, it is absolutely essential that the "eight-voice test" be modified, liberalized or eliminated.

—Perry A. Sook, chairman, president and CEO, Nexstar Broadcasting Group, Clarks Summit, Pa.

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T H E F I F T H E S T A T E R

In the game at kickoff

Bodenheimer was there when ESPN was 'little network that could'

George Bodenheimer started out at ESPN as a driver—a glorified title for a mailroom job—and, 20 years later, he's driving the entire network as president, overseeing all domestic and international operations.

ESPN has fared well under Bodenheimer's three-year watch. Having locked up a share of the National Basketball Association's TV deal last month, the network boasts rights to all four major American sports leagues. Ratings are up, and demographics favor the young-male viewers advertisers crave. ESPN's first original movie, *Season on the Brink*, debuts Sunday.

Bodenheimer joined the fledgling Entertainment and Sports Programming Network in 1981, shortly after graduating from Denison College. A family friend who worked in TV advised that, if he wanted to work in TV, he should go straight to cable. Better yet, go straight to Bristol, Conn., where a new all-sports channel was getting off the ground. Back then, ESPN had only 150 employees;

today, it counts about 3,000.

Bodenheimer accepted an entry-level administrative job and waited for a better opportunity. He gravitated to the business side early on, although he did sub as a cameraman once when a talk show was short-staffed. When an affiliate-sales position opened in Texas in 1982, the Greenwich, Conn., native was soon pushing ESPN to operators in five Southern states.

"We weren't on anybody's radar screen," he says. "What I quickly learned is every town in America considers itself a sports town. That made the selling pretty easy."

In those days, however, ESPN wasn't offering Major League Baseball and Sunday

Night NFL games. "We were the little network that could. We televised sports that no one was interested in putting on."

Today, ESPN airs 65 sports, from high-profile leagues like the NHL and NFL to high school cheerleading championships and bass fishing.

Bodenheimer returned to Bristol in 1989 as vice president of affiliate sales and marketing for the Eastern Region. By 1995, he was in charge of all ESPN sales and marketing efforts. That's when, he says, he first got involved with the programming side.

"News and information, especially *SportsCenter*, is our bread and butter," he says. Little by little, though, he is guiding his channel down a new path: enter-



George Bodenheimer
President, ESPN Inc.

B. May 6, 1958; B.A., economics, Denison University, 1980; ESPN, administrative department, Bristol, Conn., 1981-82; marketing rep, South Central region, 1982-85; marketing rep, Central region, 1985; national accounts manager, Rocky Mountain Region, 1985-88; director, affiliate sales and marketing, Eastern Division, 1988-89; VP, affiliate sales and marketing, Eastern Division, 1989-91; VP, national affiliate sales, 1991-92; VP, affiliate sales and marketing, 1992-93; senior VP, affiliate sales and marketing, 1993-95; senior VP, sales and marketing, 1995-96; executive VP, sales and marketing, 1996-98; president, domestic operations, 1998-99; current position since 1999; m. Ann, Aug. 4, 1984; three children

tainment programming.

He considers sports-themed entertainment a natural for the network. "There's an opportu-

nity to expand what sports fans look to ESPN for."

ESPN started with documentaries, then a few reality series and, now, a made-for-TV movie. Bodenheimer knows *Season on the Brink*, about embattled former Indiana University coach Bobby Knight, is a bold, expensive first project—reportedly \$5 million to \$10 million, plus another few million for advertising and marketing—yet he believes movies are part of an aggressive strategy.

"To me, it's risky not to expand our programming," he explains. "Our competition isn't just sports networks; it's all networks. Just standing pat is not good enough."

If the movie goes well, the next project may tackle the 1972 Munich Olympics, where Israeli athletes were taken hostage and killed. A script is in development. The network also may consider scripted drama or a comedy.

Besides the new challenge of entertainment programming, Bodenheimer faces a more-familiar struggle: negotiating with cable operators. MSO executives love to gripe about ESPN's subscriber fees, but he doesn't want to hear it. He calls his channel a "remarkable value" and says it's No. 1 in subscriber retention and acquisition, and local ad sales. "Privately," he says, "operators will acknowledge their relationship with ESPN is a win-win. But, publicly, they will fuel the rhetoric." —Allison Romano

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Television

SALESCAREERS

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

WABC-TV seeks an energetic and motivated Account Executive. Must have strong communication skills and be detail and service oriented. Responsibilities include development of new accounts and expanding existing business. Major market and local television sales experience preferred. Please send resumes to: Dan Donovan, WABC-TV, 7 Lincoln Square - 5th Floor, New York, NY 10023 or e-mail dan.e.donovan@abc.com. No telephone calls please. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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International satellite coordination bureau seeking experienced engineer to handle master control, some equipment maintenance and digitalization upgrades. Includes production coordination, some computer support and full responsibility for technical equipment. Must be self-starter, highly flexible, with emphasis on problem solving under pressure. Familiarity with SDI and MPEG essential, working knowledge of European language preferred. Send cover letter, resume and salary requirements to Bureau Chief, EBU, 524 West 57th Street, Room 4330, New York, NY 10019. Fax 212-956-7930, or email kkellogg@ebunwyk.com

DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING

Growing broadcast group is seeking a Director of Engineering for its 2-station operation in a medium sized market in the northeast. Successful candidate must have extensive knowledge of all facets of technical plant, manage multi-person technical staff & be able to set and achieve company goals. Excellent communication skills a must along with ability to function as a key member of executive team. Send a resume to: Box 0225, Attn: K. Parker, B&C Magazine, 275 Washington St., 4th fl., Newton, MA 02458.EOE

PRODUCER CAREERS

SUPERVISING PRODUCER

National Geographic EXPLORER, the award winning TV documentary magazine show airing on MSNBC, is looking for a talented Supervising Producer willing to relocate to our Washington DC headquarters. Must have extensive long-format documentary as well as news magazine experience. Must have ability to meet fast turn-around programming needs, recruit talent and crew, manage production teams, and meet high-quality editorial standards. Evidence of character driven stories and strong story skills required. International and multi-lingual skills highly valued. No phone calls please. Send resume via email to: ngsjobs@ngs.org or fax 202-857-7741 or mail to: Director of HR, National Geographic, 1145 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036. Equal Opportunity Employer.

SENIOR PRODUCER/DIRECTOR

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PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Meetings of the Public Broadcasting Service Board of Directors and its committees will take place at the PBS Offices, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, Virginia on March 20-21, 2002. Schedule and tentative agenda for each meeting follows:

Programming Policy Committee, 12:15 p.m., March 20, programming budget, programming and communications plans and other business.

Business Committee, in executive session, 1:45 p.m., March 20, PBS Businesses financial report and strategic plan discussion and other business.

Finance, Budget & Audit Committee, in executive session, 4:00 p.m., March 20, FY 2003 budget recommendation, DBS revenues formula, and other business.

Ad Hoc Committee on National Policy Issues, in executive session, 7:30 a.m., March 21, legislative and funding issues, and other business.

Nominating Committee, in executive session, 9:00 a.m., March 21, candidates for nomination and other business.

Education Committee, 10:00 a.m., March 21, PBS's education services, and other business.

Membership Committee, 12:15 p.m., March 21, program differentiation plan, common carriage, digital and HD programming, development issues, and other business.

Board of Directors, 2:00 p.m., March 21, reports from management and board committees on nominating, DBS, cable, programming policy, business, finance, education, membership, and national policy issues; and other business.

The meetings of the Programming Policy, Education, and Membership Committees and the Board of Directors are open to the public; however, some portions of these meetings may be held in executive session.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Our news staff wants an Executive Producer who makes decisions under pressure, can teach additional producing skills, is hands-on (both willing to line produce and/or work extra hours when needed) and deals with them as colleagues. Our Anchor staff and Assignment Editors want a superior communicator. Our News Director wants someone very creative (what's the next good idea?), focused on systems (how can we accomplish our goals?) and viewer-centric (what do the viewers want?). Our General Manager wants someone who cares about overall station goals, is personally dedicated to accomplishing the news agenda and will be ready for the next step in newsroom management when that opportunity occurs. In short, we need a leader. If you think you possess these multi-level abilities and would fit well into a professional and fun newsroom; please immediately e-mail a resume to bmorford@wcpo.com. (Bob Morford, News Director) WCPO will conduct Executive Producer interviews beginning at the RTNDA in Las Vegas. (April 7-10)

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/WRITER

National Geographic EXPLORER, the award winning TV documentary magazine show airing on MSNBC, is looking for a talented producer/director/writer willing to relocate to our Washington DC headquarters. Must have extensive experience in documentary, strong initiative, and be enthusiastic about travel. Must demonstrate evidence of character driven stories and strong visual imagination. Other highly valued characteristics: international and outdoor adventure experience, language skills, shooting skills. No phone calls please. Send resume via email to: ngsjobs@ngs.org or fax 202-857-7741 or mail to: Director of HR, National Geographic, 1145 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036. Equal Opportunity Employer.

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MANAGER

T-Commerce required for television satellite programming co. to develop strategies and business plans for television commerce and interactive TV advertising sales strategies for Latin America. Min. req. MBA plus 3 yrs exp. business planning for media and telecommunications industries. Send resumes to DirecTV Latin America LLC. P.O. Box 24800 Oakland Park, FL 33307.

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Television

NEWS CAREERS

MEDIA

Assignment Editor 2. Requires Bachelor's Degree, or foreign equivalent, in Journalism, Communications or a related field & 3 years in the job offered or 3 years exp. as an assignment editor for an international Spanish-language news organization/television network. (In lieu of a bachelor's degree, will accept 3 years of university study emphasizing one of stated fields, plus 2 additional years of the stated experience.) All of exp. must include booking international & domestic satellites. Exp. must also include managing a staff of at least 50 correspondents & reporters. Must be fluent in oral & written Spanish & English. Will coordinate newsgathering & field production for 24-hour Spanish-language multi-platform news & information operation with television, web & radio components. Manage story assignments relating to current events & issues pertaining to Latin America & other Spanish speaking countries. Provide logistical support & manage more than 50 correspondents & reporters worldwide. Coordinate delivery of news material through booking of domestic & international satellite feeds, fiber optic lines, telephone, facsimile, Internet & air carrier for distribution across multiple broadcasting platforms. 40 hrs/week. Salary \$52,000 to \$84,100/yr. Dep. On educ. & exp. Send resume to: Michele Barcelo, CNN en Espanol, 1 CNN Center, 4 South, Atlanta, GA 30348. EOE.

REPORTER/PHOTOGRAPHER

Requires broadcast writing and interviewing skills, along with excellent videography and editing ability. At least one year of commercial TV news experience is preferred. To apply, send tape and resume to Assignment Manager, WTVC, P O Box 60028, Chattanooga, TN 37406-6028. Equal Opportunity Employer.

NEWS DIRECTOR

Texas station looking for a news leader. KBTB, the NBC affiliate in Beaumont, Texas, is looking for a news director. We are a new facility that needs a strong journalist able to lead and teach a talented team. Qualified candidate would have at least 2 years management experience, preferably as a news director, assistant news director or executive producer. Send resume, news philosophy, newscast example and references to: KBTB, Attention: Phil Hurley, GM, 6155 Eastex Freeway, Suite 300, Beaumont, Texas, 77706 or e-mail to phurley@kbtv4.tv. No phone calls, please. KBTB is an equal opportunity employer.

ENG SUPERVISOR

WABC-TV is looking for an experienced ENG Supervisor. The ideal candidate will work closely with and directly report to the News Operations Manager. The Supervisor is responsible for coordinating pool feeds and live shots, creating the NABET schedules, assisting in personal training, managing inventory, overseeing vacation requests, handling vehicle accident reports, and handling other administrative tasks as required. Knowledge of ENG equipment and live shot coordination required. Prior experience in a union environment is strongly preferred. Applicants must also be proficient in MicroSoft Office Suite Word, Outlook, and Excel. Please send resume to: Ted Holtzclaw, News Operations Manager, WABC-TV, 7 Lincoln Square, New York, NY 10023. No telephone calls or faxes please. We are equal opportunity employer.

CREATIVE SERVICES

ART DIRECTOR

Top ten major network affiliate seeks highly creative, hot shot design director with 5 years experience in a major market station to manage on-air graphics and special assignments. Quantel Paintbox, Photoshop, Quantel HAL, Illustrator and After Effects required. College degree preferred. An EOE. Send resume and reel to: B&C, Blind Box 1024, 275 Washington Street, Newton, MA 02458. Attn: K. Parker 4th Fl.

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Please send tape/resume to: Recruiter, KCPQ/KTWTB-TV, P.O. Box 9520, Seattle, WA 98109, Fax: 206-674-1344 EOE. www.kcpq.com No phone inquiries please.

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TECHNICAL CAREERS

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National Public Radio is seeking an individual to maintain, troubleshoot, repair, install, and test technical audio equipment; and maintain accurate and complete maintenance records for all equipment serviced. This position will be located at the West Coast Production Center in Los Angeles, CA, NPR's new broadcast/production facility to be constructed in late FY 02. A strong background in digital technology is a must. To qualify you need a Bachelor's degree in Electronics Engineering or a related field, or equivalent experience required. SBE certification is desirable. Five to ten years broadcast and/or recording studio equipment maintenance experience; demonstrated ability to troubleshoot to the component-level; and proficiency using PC, word processing, spreadsheet, and database software required. Knowledge of Auto CAD is preferred. Job Code #CB053.

NPR is a growing multi-media broadcast operation. We offer a competitive salary and excellent benefits, including three weeks of annual leave. To apply, send cover letter and resume, identifying position by number and title, to: NPR; Human Resources Department; 635 Massachusetts Ave. NW; Washington DC 20001-3753; Fax - 202-513-3047; E-mail - employment@npr.org. Equal Opportunity Employer.

SALES CAREERS

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Teach undergraduate radio/audio and television/video production as well as some non-production media studies courses. Ph.D. or MFA in Radio/Television required. Significant university teaching experience and/or media industry experience expected. Salary: Competitive. Start: 9/1/2002. Send statement of interest, vita, and the names of three references by March 31, 2002 to: Ned Eckhardt, Chair, Rowan University, Radio/TV/Film, Glassboro, NJ 08028. (e-mail: eckhardt@rowan.edu).

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Editorials

COMMITTED TO THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Yellow flag

Shock jock Bubba, the Love Sponge, has just been acquitted of slaughtering a boar as part of an on-air stunt. Fox will follow its most recent reality offering—a glutton contest to see who could chug the most mayonnaise, for one—with a celebrity boxing match between Tonya Harding and Amy “Long Island Lolita” Fisher. Throw in the *Fear Factor* segment on drinking liquefied animal parts, including rooster testicles, spleen, gobs of fat and pig brains, and you’ve got a picture of why it is sometimes tough to defend this industry. Who was it that said reality programming is like heroin?

Whenever First Amendment defenders talk about holding their noses and defending anyway, this is what they are talking about.

The content calls above, however, fall under the category of each to his own taste (people do eat haggis, after all), though the word “pandering” has been competing with the word “Ugh!” to make it onto this page as regards this most recent trend (you will have noticed that both made it). But our criticism, which is meant to be a word of caution, or the internal debate that should go on at the networks about how much “pander programming” they can stomach is one thing. The government sticking its thumb on the scale is another, even if the scale contains pig brains.

Unfortunately, it was the combination of this sort of reality tripe with other forms of extreme speech that has the FCC worked up about broadcast content again. The agency is making it easier to make broadcast-indecency complaints and will assume that broadcasters are guilty of whatever is alleged unless they can prove their innocence. That is a troubling declaration from an agency whose ability to distinguish between smut and art is highly suspect, given its fine against Sarah Jones.

The FCC’s renewed urgency on indecency enforcement smacks of Republican “family” values combined with Democrat social engineering. It stinks like day-old *Fear Factor* props.

Just do it

The NAB, NCTA and MPAA have filed for a stay of the FCC’s video-description rules. The rules have already been challenged in court, so they have a perfectly sound argument for postponing implementation until that decision is made. They also raise defensible First Amendment issues about government-imposed creative speech. Lawyers could certainly argue, and do, that, unlike with captioning, there is a creative decision about what and how to describe the TV action not made clear by the dialogue. So here is what broadcasters should do if the court tells them they don’t have to describe: Do it anyway. Take some fraction of that multibillion-dollar figure rightly celebrated as local broadcasters’ investment in public service and invest it in video description. Not because they have to, but because it’s the right thing to do.

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