

# BROADCASTING CABLE

MAY 27, 2002

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## WINNING WITH LESS

For the first time ever, in the 2001-02 season, the Big Four didn't grab even a 50% share of the prime time audience

» PAGE 6

## HELPING CABLE'S LITTLE GUY

Never heard of the American Cable Association? Well, the lobbying group is trying to change that

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## SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT THE NEWS

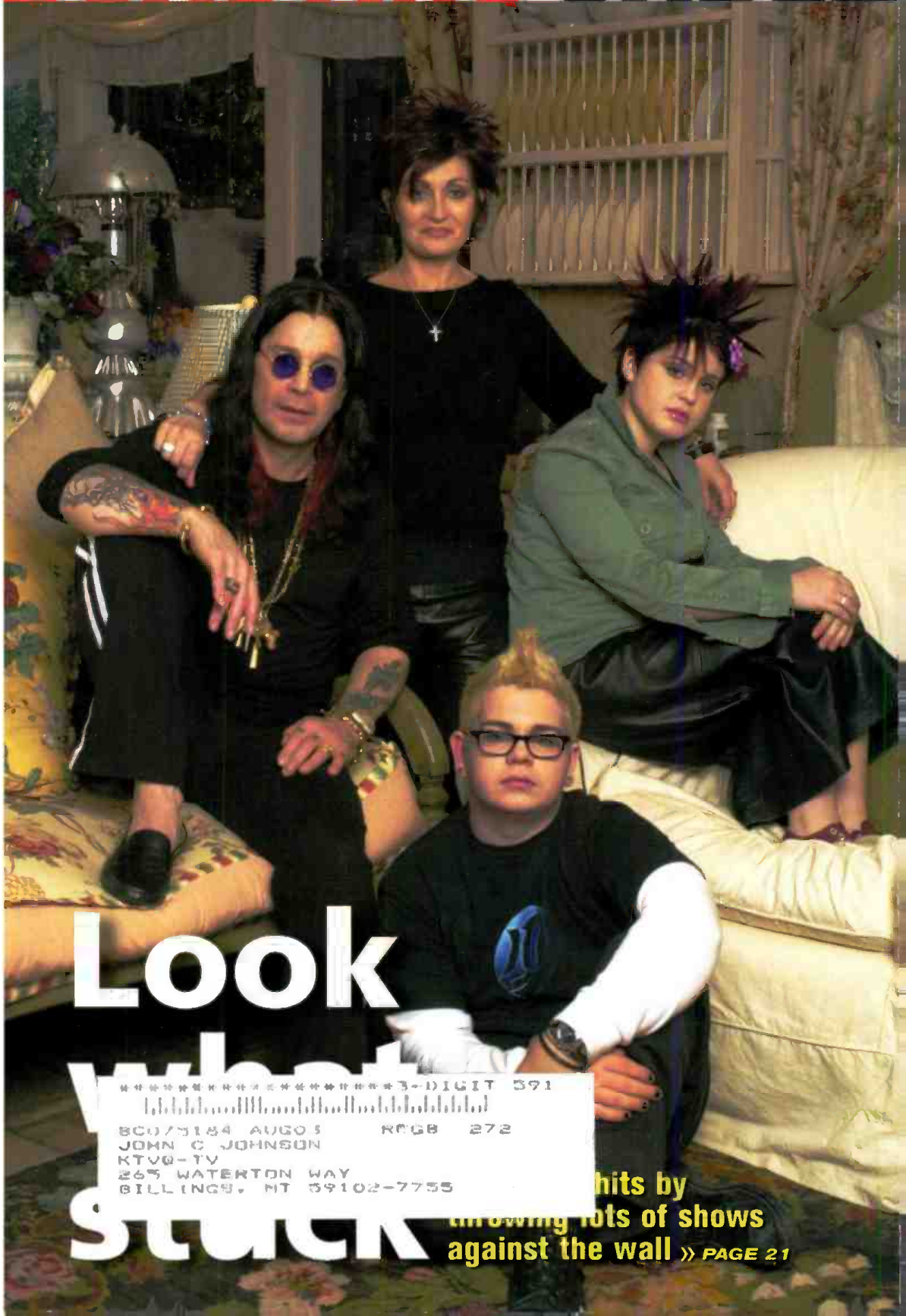
A new study says that, post-9/11, the network newscasts have gotten more frivolous

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## ARE ENG VANS SAFE?

Not safe enough, says California. Regulators there propose rules to safeguard against electrocution

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# Look what's stuck

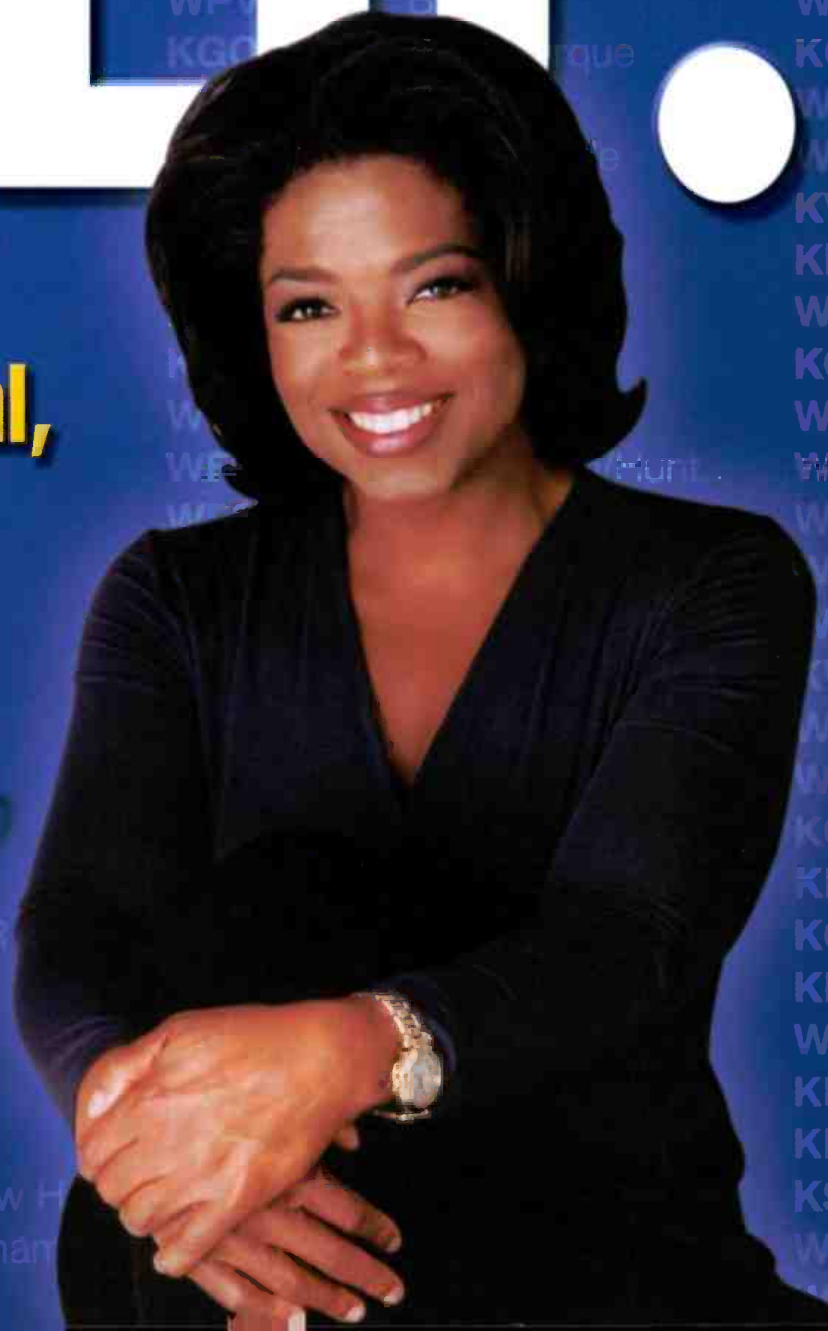
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hits by throwing lots of shows against the wall » PAGE 21

# SOULD!

**Earst-Argyle,  
D, Media General,  
t-Newsweek,  
g, Freedom,**

*rah*



WPTA Jonesboro KAIT Kansas City KMBC  
KHBS Bowling Green WBKO Cincinnati WCPO  
WCBD Jackson, TN WBBJ Milwaukee WISN  
WBTW Columbus, OH WBNS  
WTAI Dayton, OH KTVX  
KRTV Cleveland, OH WYFF  
KXLI San Antonio KSAT  
KTVU Grand Rapids WWMT  
KAVY William Bet WPTV  
WHA Memphis WMC  
WLN Nashville WVEC  
WABE New Orleans WWL  
KABE Omaha City KOCO  
WLS Hartford WGAL  
WPVI Baltimore WIVB  
KGO San Francisco KOAT  
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KVUE  
KFSN  
WRIC  
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**The  
Franchise  
Continues...**

## Top of the Week May 27, 2002



*The World According to Andy Richter* was one of three promising series to emerge at Fox.

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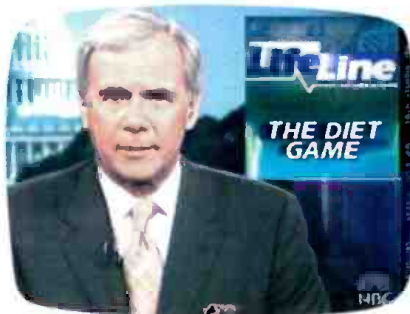
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PEJ thinks TV news has gone soft with stories like NBC's on "The Diet Game."

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Contestants redecorate friends' homes in TLC's *Trading Spaces*.

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The light is on at 400 DTV stations, but, at many, it doesn't burn brightly.



**BROADCASTING**

**Call it LPDTV**

NAB President Eddie Fritts claims that more than 86% of all U.S. homes are in markets with at least one DTV signal. But that doesn't mean they can receive it. One source estimates that nearly 30% of the more than 400 DTV stations are broadcasting at low power, making it difficult (or impossible) to reach many homes. Just how many homes? Don't expect an answer soon. That would require calculating the coverage of the low-power DTV broadcasters. The NAB isn't planning on that exercise anytime soon. The fuzzy math will remain.—K.K.

**LOBBIES**

**Binzel books**

Peggy Binzel, EVP of the National Cable & Telecommunications Association, is resigning. Washington cable circles have long buzzed that she was unhappy working for President Robert Sachs and felt that her freedom to operate on the Hill was limited. Binzel came to NCTA with the understanding she would succeed Sachs. But last fall, Sachs renewed his contract for another three years. Binzel will head an Atlanta-based trade association, sources say. Sachs has been said to be trying to woo back former EVP David Krone, who works for mentor Leo Hindery and the YES Network. But Krone says he has no interest in the job.—P.A.

**BCEYE**

**JOURNALISM**

**9/11: You are there**

As part of its Sept. 11 anniversary programming, ABC News, in a joint project with *USA Today*, will re-create the disaster from various vantage points inside the World Trade Center immediately after the planes hit. The documentary will build on a *USA Today* special report in December, which used floor plans, photos, architectural designs and testimony to tell the story of those who were in the buildings and survived.

"We can show through animation what it looked like to the people inside," says ABC Executive Vice President Paul Friedman. "We've come up with hundreds of individual stories, and we will be able to demonstrate many scenarios."

ABC, apparently out front in development of its 9/11 plans, also plans a detailed look at the reactions of government.—D.T.



**VET PUB TESTS TUBE**

*Variety*, the showbiz bible, is looking to pen its own chapter. Execs say the Hollywood mag is fronting a weekend news chatter—*Meet the Press* for the entertainment set—to cable news nets. The pitch from the magazine's brass, including Peter Bart and Charles Koonos, is that it will draw upscale eyeballs à la *The Wall Street Journal*. Nets pow-wowed with include MSNBC and Fox, but not CNN, although Bart appears regularly on CNN's *Lou Dobbs Moneyline*. For his part, Bart says *Variety* is not the pursuer, adding, "No deal is presently being discussed." Like B&C, *Variety* is owned by Reed Business Information.—A.R.



**SYNDICATION**

**Auction action**

Sony's Columbia TriStar Domestic Television has shot the pilot for a new daily half-hour syndicated program in collaboration with the popular auction site eBay. Shot in Los Angeles, the pilot is now in post-production. The interactive series includes elements of entertainment, magazine and game shows and will give TV stations local revenue opportunities. The pilot includes hundreds of participants who brought collectibles to the shoot. The first cut has been screened for eBay executives, including CEO Meg Whitman. The two companies are jointly developing the marketing strategy. Launch is set for fall 2003.—S.M.



**WAITING GAME**

Speculation is growing that the FCC won't fill its fifth seat until after the 2002 elections, possibly not until 2003. Nominee-in-waiting Jonathan Adelstein (above) remains hostage to the battle between Republicans and Democrats over other nominations and appointments, particularly judgeships.—B.M.

# KNOW-IT-ALLS DROPPED DOWN DEEP DARK HOLES.

(WHAT'S NOT TO LIKE?)



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# Winning, and losing too

*NBC wins season, but Big Four household share dips below 50% for the first time*

By Steve McClellan

Mainly because of big Nielsen-ratings declines at ABC, the four-network household share of prime time audience has fallen to an historic low this season: 47%. Not only is it a record low, but it's also the first time the four-network share has dropped below 50%, a sort of unspoken benchmark broadcasters dread to fall beneath.

The season that ended with the May sweeps last week is also the first time that basic cable's share of audience surpassed the Big Four's. Collectively, basic cable garnered a record 49 share in prime time, up 8%.

As expected, NBC won both the season and the May sweeps by solid margins and was the only major network to show growth across households, total viewers and the key demographics for the season, although UPN was up as well.

CBS is quick to point out that NBC was helped by the Olympics and that, among regularly scheduled programs, CBS was up 5% among adults 18-49 for the season and in second place behind NBC.

Counting all programs (including the World Series and Super Bowl), however, Fox was second among adults 18 to 49, just ahead of CBS.

For the May sweeps, NBC had the best growth story but not the only one. CBS was up slightly among adults 25-54 and held its ground with adults 18-49. Both



Jennifer Garner, shown here with Michael Vartan, stars in *Alias*, one of the few new series that stuck on ABC in the past season, when the network's Nielsen household ratings declined by 25%.

UPN and The WB grew at least one-tenth of a rating point in adults 18-34 and 18-49.

It's not news that both ABC and Fox struggled this year—ABC more so—declining by record levels in households and adults 18-49.

In a teleconference with reporters last week, ABC Entertainment President Susan Lyne put it plainly and to the point. "We did not perform well this year," she said. (Lyne can't get much blame. She got her job replacing Stu Bloomberg in January, when ABC was already in full-disaster mode.)

Lyne last week focused on what ABC can do to stem the slide and maybe even show a little growth next year.

There are a few bright spots: *Alias*, for one, succeeded as a new drama,

and *According to Jim* survived in the sitcom genre. Midseason comedies *My Wife and Kids* and *George Lopez* show life. And the reality hit *The Bachelor* proved to be a "weapon" that should help next season.

It was also crying time at Fox: "It was an unusual and challenging season," said Sandy Grushow, chairman of the Fox Television Entertainment Group.

Grushow and Fox President Gail Berman also tried to accentuate the positive, noting Fox's second-place finish among adults 18-34 and first-place finish with teens and men 18-34.

Despite this year's setbacks, Berman noted that three new promising series emerged from Fox's schedule this year: *Bernie Mac*, *24* and *Andy Richter Controls the Universe*.

As for The WB, it was a flat year, but the network touted the fact that it planted some solid new shows this season with *Reba*, *Smallville* and *Jamie Kennedy*.

It also has a lock on marketers that target *really* young women. And it broadened a bit this year, beating ABC among adults 18 to 24.

Like ABC, Fox didn't have much to laugh about this season, but its sitcom *Bernie Mac*, starring the comedian (shown here with little Jeremy Suarez), was a new show on which it can build.





For UPN, it was an up year and an up May—in fact the best May the network has had in five years. UPN is poised to show strong price increases next year—if only because it's being packaged with co-owned CBS, which held the line on ad rates for the season that just ended.

(Competitors suggest, though, that CBS may be willing to shave a bit off its own pricing to goose UPN's up.)

This season's audience-share decline for the four major networks was about 7% against the 51 share they retained last season.

The audience apparently migrated to cable, because UPN and The WB each ended the season an average 4 share this season, flat from a year ago.

The six-network share drops four points (7%) to a 55.

ABC alone dropped four points in household share this season and a record 25% in household rating.

Fox and CBS each declined a share point, while NBC was up two share points.

David Poltrack, CBS executive vice president, research and planning, said the four-network decline itself probably doesn't mean much in terms of ad sales.

## The six-network race

Full season, 9/24/01-5/22/02

Network	Rating/share (change)*					
	Households		Adults 18-49		Adults 18-34	
ABC	6.3/10	(-25%)	3.6/10	(-19%)	2.9/9	(-19%)
CBS	8.1/13	(-6%)	3.9/10	(-2%)	2.8/9	(-7%)
Fox	5.7/9	(-7%)	4.0/11	(-11%)	4.0/12	(-13%)
NBC	8.8/15	(+11%)	5.3/14	(+10%)	4.4/14	(+7%)
UPN	2.7/4	(+13%)	1.8/5	(+13%)	1.9/6	(+19%)
The WB	2.5/4	(NC)	1.6/4	(NC)	1.8/5	(-5%)

\*In rating, from 2000-01 season  
NC=No change

Source: Nielsen Media Research

"It's the individual network performance that matters," he explained. "This season you had the broadcast networks moving in dramatically different directions" in the ratings, he said, a reference to sharp declines at ABC and Fox.

But Jack Wakshlag, chief research officer for Turner Broadcasting System, took issue with Poltrack's position.

True, individual performance does count, and it counts a lot, he acknowledged.

"But, every year, there's some broadcast network that loses ground that the rest of them don't make up for, so broadcast is losing 4% to 5% of its audience every year to cable."

Still, cable's gains were as uneven as

broadcasting's declines, Poltrack argued back.

Of the top 20 cable prime time networks, just over half of them (11) were flat or down for the season.

And, just to provide a sense of how fragmented the TV landscape is, only seven of those top 20 cable networks cracked a 1 rating in prime time for the season. None of them reached a 2.

Still Wakshlag argues that, in a perfectly equitable world, the Big Four broadcast networks

would get 47% of the national TV ad-sales pie next year and cable would get 49%.

That's not going to happen, of course, although Wakshlag firmly believes that cable may be poised to take in a greater share of ad dollars in the upcoming season if the networks try to raise their rates beyond a certain level.

"A lot of it depends on how aggressive broadcasters are in holding to their price," he says. "If they want raise rates 8%, then maybe agencies can go to cable" to meet the cost-increase parameters set by their clients. On a cost-per-thousand basis, he says, "cable is so much cheaper now. But viewers to cable have two eyeballs just like the viewers to broadcast. There's no difference." ■



Former West Coast President Scott Sassa is exploring new responsibility options within NBC but has no contract.

## Man without a title

NBC Entertainment President Jeff Zucker is taking on additional duties, but what of Scott Sassa?

NBC last week decided to eliminate the title of West Coast president, which had been Sassa's job, leaving Zucker totally in charge of the programming arena.

Although he currently has no title, Sassa is not without a job. He is exploring several opportunities to remain with NBC and expects to make a

decision within a couple months.

Those opportunities mainly involve starting up or buying new businesses for NBC or possibly developing strategies for companies that are already in-house.

Sassa has been operating at the network without a contract since December.

If he does stay at NBC, he'll likely report to company Chairman Bob Wright and/or NBC President Andrew Lack.

Zucker essentially now has the job that was last held by the late Brandon Tartikoff, when the NBC Entertainment president oversaw all West Coast and entertainment areas. After Tartikoff left in the early '90s, the job was split in two, with Warren Littlefield assuming day-to-day programming and program development and Don Ohlmeyer taking on the then-new position of president, West Coast operations.—S.M.

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# Justice denied as Hollings prevails

*DoJ won't get oversight of all media mergers*

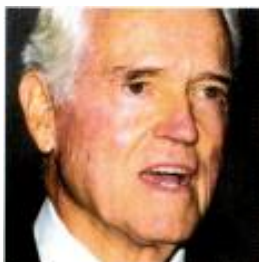
By Paige Albiniaik

After a prolonged and contentious tug-of-war with Sen. Fritz Hollings (D-S.C.), the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission have scrapped a new agreement that sent all media-merger reviews to Justice.

Hollings, chairman of two relevant Senate committees, had been bucking the change ever since word leaked last January. After five months of battling, the agencies last week finally gave in to Hollings' demands and scuttled the plan.

Hollings couldn't be more pleased. "I think it's appropriate that they abandoned this agreement," he said. "The FTC has

broad discretion to protect consumers in merger reviews, whereas the Justice Department is looking for crime. The FTC protects the public interest."



Sen. Fritz Hollings believes the FTC is better-suited to protect the consumer in merger reviews.

But Charles James, assistant attorney general in charge of the DoJ's antitrust division, still feels merger reviews would be completed more quickly had the two agencies been allowed to proceed as planned.

"The Department stands by its view that the agreement was good public policy working to make antitrust enforcement more effective," James said. "Since the agreement became effective, antitrust investigations were being commenced within a matter of days, and there were no clearance

disputes between the agencies." The FTC had no official comment.

In January, the two agencies were prepared to announce they would pre-assign industries so that, when a merger came along, they'd have predetermined the reviewer. Having a process in place would eliminate inter-agency battling over mergers and save time, the agencies said.

But before they could make the announcement, the agencies ran into trouble on Capitol Hill. Hollings, chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, made clear he didn't like the fact that James and FTC Chairman Timothy Muris had hammered out the deal without Congress's knowledge. Hollings also was unhappy that all reviews of media mergers would automatically fall to DoJ's antitrust division.

James and Muris went ahead with their plan in March, still without Hollings' blessing. They then encountered nothing but grief from Hollings, who publicly threatened to cut both agencies' budgets. Hollings also is chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Commerce, Justice and State Departments; that panel plays a key role in funding the DoJ and the FTC. ■

## Cross-platform construction

*Home Depot builds deals with Disney and Viacom; Disney's is estimated at \$100M*

By Steve McClellan

The Home Depot and its agency Initiative Media struck cross-platform deals last week with two of the biggest media companies, Disney and Viacom. The one with Disney was the bigger. Sources estimate its value at \$100 million, although none of the parties were commenting on the financial arrangements last week.

Here are the details:

■ In the largest single ad buy it has ever done, Home Depot agreed to spend approximately \$100 million over three years on three Disney broadcast and cable networks: ABC, Disney and Lifetime. Disney has agreed to develop a home-decorating program for the hardware/home-improvement chain to advertise in; *The Disney Paint Program* will be launched next January. As part of the deal, Disney agreed to

purchase Home Depot products for an unspecified number of its business units and is developing a line of paints to be sold in Home Depot stores.

"This is just the start of an expanding long-term relationship," said Bob Nardelli, chairman, president/CEO of Home Depot. Before Home Depot, Nardelli was an executive at NBC parent General Electric and a finalist for the CEO spot there but lost out to Jeff Immelt.

Said Disney President Bob Iger, "Disney's, ESPN's and

ABC's brand strength and broad scope provides unparalleled reach and opportunity for The Home Depot."

■ The Viacom deal involved a big tie-in with last week's *Country Music Awards* on CBS, where the first "Home Depot Humanitarian Award" was presented. The award recognizes a commitment to serving others. Viacom cable channel CMT, Infinity country-music stations, CBS TV stations and Westwood One radio network are among Viacom outlets involved. Sources say the overall value of the deal is smaller than Disney's, but no word on how much smaller. ■

# Bigger younger richer



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# Music biz asks for radio probe

*Groups say consolidation's leading to payola-like tactics that hurt listeners*

By Paige Albiniak

Groups representing recording artists, record companies, songwriters, merchandisers and consumer advocates want the government to take a hard look at radio consolidation, hinting that some practices by large group owners smack of payola.

In a statement delivered to Congress and the FCC Friday, 10 independent industry groups urged "the government to revise the payola laws to cover independent promotion to radio, to investigate the impact of radio consolidation on the music community and citizens, and to work to protect non-commercial space on both the terrestrial radio bandwidth and the emerging Webcasting models."

Sen. Russell Feingold (D-Wis.) is work-

ing on legislation to reform radio, a staffer confirmed.

The wide-ranging groups include the Recording Industry Association of America, American Federation of Musicians, American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, Association for Independent Music, Future of Music Coalition, Just Plain Folks, Nashville Songwriters Association International, National Association of Recording Merchandisers, National Federation of Community Broadcasters, and the Recording Academy, a part of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

"Today, for the contemporary-hit radio/top-40 formats, only four radio station groups—Chancellor, Clear Channel, Infinity and Capstar—control access to 63% of the format's 41 million listeners nationwide,"



Sen. Russell Feingold (D-Wis.) is working on a legislative proposal to reform radio.

the statement says. "For the country format, the same four groups control access to 56% of the format's 28 million listeners."

The petitioning groups are upset by payola-like practices in which artists and record companies pay for radio-station promotions in return for airtime for

favored artists. They also want the FCC to investigate how vertical integration in radio has forced up concert-ticket prices and made it difficult for non-affiliated artists to book tours. Clear Channel runs a concert-promotion company, SFX Entertainment.

"Artists, songwriters, labels and retailers," says Mike Bracy, of the Future of Music Coalition, "are united in opposition to large broadcasters' claim that consolidation has improved commercial radio." ■

## CARP is thrown back

*Library of Congress won't accept radio streaming royalty rate*

By Paige Albiniak

Radio broadcasters will get another chance at reducing the fees they will pay to stream their signals over the Internet. That's after the Library of Congress refused to adopt the rate agreed to last February by the Copyright Arbitration Royalty Panel (CARP).

Since February, radio broadcasters and Internet-only Webcasters have been lobbying fiercely against the rate, which CARP said should be 0.07 cents per song per listener for traditional radio broadcasters and

0.14 cents per song per listener for Internet-only radio stations.

The fees would be paid to record companies and artists, who initially wanted more but then accepted the suggested rates. Radio broadcasters already pay fees to music publishers ASCAP and BMI but much less than those CARP says should be paid to record companies.

CARP is managed by the U.S. Copyright Office, part of the Library of Congress. Librarian of Congress James Billington rejected the rate based on the recommendation of Mary Beth

Peters, registrar of copyrights. By law, Billington must issue a final decision by June 20; it is possible that decision will include new rates. But Billington also could remand the whole process back to a new CARP. That would be expensive, sources say. Administrative costs alone last time ran more than \$1 million, not counting legal fees.

This proceeding covers 1998-2002. This fall, the Copyright Office is supposed to hear arbitration for the next four years.

While sources say inter-industry negotiations aren't going on

yet, the June 20 date gives the industries an opportunity to hash out a rate on their own, which Congress would prefer. Two weeks ago, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and ranking member Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) pushed the industries to negotiate an independent settlement or possibly face legislation.

The House is also getting into the act. The House Courts and Intellectual Property Subcommittee has penciled in a June 13 hearing to examine the CARP process; in April, House Judiciary Committee Chairman James Sensenbrenner (R-Wis.) collected comments from involved parties in order to begin writing reform legislation. ■





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# Adelphia: From bad to worse

*The company is on the hook for family debt, now said to total \$3.1 billion*

By John M. Higgins

**A**delpia Communications is far from out of its financial crisis even though founder John Rigas and his family surrendered control of the ailing cable operator.

The resignation of Rigas and his three sons from Adelphia's board was aimed at coaxing bankers into affording Adelphia some badly needed cash to cure bond defaults, continue operations and keep the company out of bankruptcy court. Rigas-family companies agreed to steer \$1 billion worth of securities and cash flow from privately held cable systems to Adelphia to support loans that the cable company co-signed.

The big surprise from last Thursday's disclosure statements is the increasing size of family debts that Adelphia is on the hook for as well.

On May 2, Adelphia said it would be liable for \$1.6 billion of the family's debt, which analysts expected to total around \$2.7 billion. Now the company says it is liable for \$2.5 billion and the family's debt now totals \$3.1 billion. Adelphia offered no explanation for the rising debt levels, but it continued to alarm Wall Street executives.

Merrill Lynch junk-bond analyst Oren Cohen said that the removals of insider-dealing Rigas family members from Adelphia's board and executive ranks "do not address current leverage and liquidity concerns, which could still lead to a bankruptcy."

At the center of the crisis is \$3.1 billion in Rigas-family loans—backed by Adelphia's credit—to buy cable systems, plus various securities of Adelphia itself.

To bolster Adelphia's balance sheet, the Rigases agreed to turn over \$1 billion worth of Adelphia securities plus \$90 million in annual cash flow from their privately held cable systems. Analysts said the family turned over convertible bonds at the



**Removals of Rigas family members from the board and executive suites 'do not address current leverage and liquidity concerns.'**

—Oren Cohen, Merrill Lynch

rate of 91 cents on the dollar, three times what the same bonds have been fetching in the open market.

At the end of the day, it looks like the

Rigas family will have at least \$1 billion in personal debt backed primarily by 60 million Adelphia common shares that were worth \$170 million or so on Friday, a day after the Nasdaq lifted a week-long trading halt on Adelphia stock.

The Rigases are being rocked by new disclosures of just how extensively they used the publicly traded company to benefit themselves. It has been known for years that Adelphia systems leased real estate and cable converters from Rigas-family companies.

But *The Wall Street Journal* revealed all sorts of financial streams to the Rigases. Even as their holdings exceeded \$3 billion, they were steering Adelphia units to buy office furniture from a store controlled by the family, according to the paper, which also reported that Adelphia was helping pay for a golf course being built adjacent to the house of ex-CFO Tim Rigas. Family members regularly drew on company cash for other personal affairs. Now two federal grand juries are investigating the family's dealings with the public company. ■

## Payne promoted at B&C



Rob Payne gets a new post at this magazine.

Rob Payne has been named national sales manager/special projects at BROADCASTING & CABLE magazine, said Paul Audino, the magazine's publishing director, and Lawrence Oliver, vice president and group publisher.

Previously, Payne had been the magazine's sales development director.

In his new post, he will work closely with B&C's sales-management team to identify and develop new areas of growth, particularly in special sections, supplements and events.

Payne joined BROADCASTING & CABLE in 1998, having sold syndicated programming for MGM, New World/Genesis and Samuel Goldwyn. Also, he had held programming and research positions at rep firm Blair Television, now part of Petry.

## THE WEEK THAT WAS

**AT PRESS TIME:  
FCC DELAYS 60-69  
AUCTION, AGAIN**

The FCC Friday delayed for a sixth time the auction of spectrum now used for TV chs. 60-69. Bidding is now planned for Jan. 14. Auction of chs. 52-59 will go forward June 19 as scheduled. FCC Chairman **Michael Powell** said delay of the upper-channel auction is necessary to give lawmakers time to work out a compromise. Broadcaster **Bud Paxson** argues that another postponement violates the law.

**PROBE BIG MEDIA,  
SENATORS SAY**

**Sens. Fritz Hollings** (D-S.C.), **Herb Kohl** (D-Wis.) and **Mike DeWine** (R-Ohio) want the FCC to complete an investigation of media consolidation by the end of the year or before the FCC acts to change any media-ownership rules, whichever comes first.

"Diversity of voices and opinions are vital to competition as well as the discourse of our democracy," the three wrote. "Given the substantial, ongoing consolidation in the media industry and recent court decisions striking down rules that restrain this trend, we are extremely concerned that this competition and discourse is at risk." The FCC is currently looking at several media-ownership rules.

**EARLY SHOW  
GIVEBACK?**

At CBS's meeting with affiliates this week, **Meredith Corp.**'s Station Group President **Kevin O'Brien** will

propose that CBS give back mornings to its affiliates. He figures that, with **Bryant Gumbel** gone from *The Early Show* and with CBS looking for ways to reduce affiliate compensation, a compromise is to give local stations the early-morning slot, where CBS is a distant third. "To win against *The Today Show* and *Good Morning America* is a real uphill battle. But the stations that do local news in the morning are doing phenomenally. It would be extremely beneficial to CBS because of its O&Os in major markets."

Meanwhile, CBS and **Landmark Communications** agreed on a long-term affiliation pact for **WTVF(TV)** Nashville, Tenn., and **KLAS-TV** Las Vegas. Sources said Landmark got compensation in seven figures but it will be phased out over the course of the long-term pact.

**NOTED**

**Bridget Potter** has been named executive producer of *The Caroline Rhea Show*, the first-run talk/variety show for fall from **Warner Bros. Domestic Television Distribution**. The ex-NBC executive oversaw *Saturday Night Live* and *Late Night With Conan O'Brien*. She was also head of original programming at

**HBO** for more than a decade.

... *The Shield* lost another advertiser, bringing the number of advertiser defections to 16, according to the **Parents Television Council**, which has orchestrated a campaign against the **FX** series. The total number may be north of 20, because some original advertisers, like **General Motors** and **John Deere**, opted out after screening early episodes. The latest to flee is **W.C. Bradley**, maker of **Char-Broil** grills. ...

Production on TNT's original drama *Witchblade* was temporarily halted after series star **Yancy Butler**, checked into a rehabilitation clinic. *Witchblade* producers said the actress is being treated for an alcohol-related problem. *Witchblade* is slated to kick off its second season June 16, and, so far, the premiere is still on. ...

A prime time dose of **Nickelodeon's** *SpongeBob SquarePants* grabbed a 4.5 rating May 17, making it cable's best-watched show May 13-19, according to Nielsen.

Nickelodeon notched a 1.9 average in prime, second only to **Lifetime's** 2.0.

**FCC UPHOLDS  
INDECENCY FINE**

The FCC Friday upheld a \$2,000 fine against **Infinity Broadcasting**, affirming a new FCC policy allowing indecency complaints to be investigated even

if tapes or transcripts are not provided. **Infinity** appealed its notice of liability for a 1997 broadcast of the song "You Suck" by **KROQ-FM** Pasadena, Calif. A listener complained that the song, aired before 10 p.m., included profane terms for anatomy. **Infinity** said it didn't know if it had aired the original or edited version of the song. Broadcasters complained that the FCC was reversing its long-standing policy of requiring transcripts, but agency staff said procedure had not changed.

Commissioner **Michael Copps** declared that the previous policy placed "inordinate responsibility on the complaining citizen."

**THE SENATORS FROM  
BROADBAND, USA**

On Tuesday, **Sen. Joe Lieberman** (D-Conn.) will introduce legislation that calls on the administration to present its national strategy (the **Bush administration** says it has one, but it hasn't been seen). **Sen. John McCain** (R-Ariz) is expected to introduce a deregulatory bill next month.

**CORRECTIONS**

The May 20 Focus, on page 33, misidentified **Tony Kiernan**. He is general manager at **KHSL-TV** Chico, Calif., with operating responsibility, except programming, for **KNVN(TV)** Chico.

Also, the new mayor of New Orleans is **C. Ray Nagin**. A photo caption on page 28 of the May 13 edition had an incorrect first name.



TNT's *Witchblade* is taking an unexpected hiatus.

# It depends on what 'hard' is

*PEJ study says TV news lost its 9/11 edge; news execs challenge the definitions*

By Dan Trigoboff

TV news got a harder edge in the wake of Sept. 11, says the Project for Excellence in Journalism, but it didn't last. Some news executives, though, strongly question the organization's definition, which doesn't classify the Enron collapse or the Catholic Church sex scandals as hard-news stories.

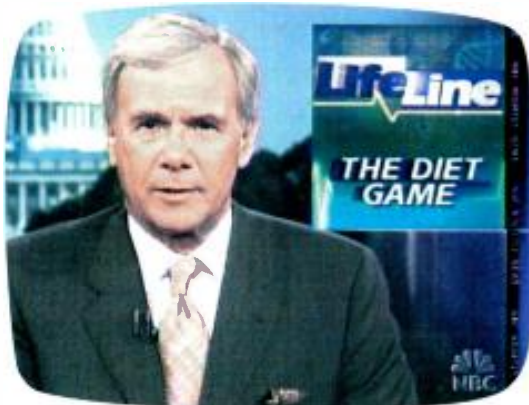
"Despite the war on terrorism and conflict in the Middle East, the news Americans see on network television has softened considerably since last fall, to the point that it now looks more like it did before the terrorist attacks than immediately after," says PEJ's new study. "Celebrity and lifestyle coverage, which last fall had all but vanished from evening news and was subordinated even in morning news, has returned to levels close to those of last summer."

Cutbacks have left the networks inadequately staffed to cover world events over a sustained period, researchers suggest, forcing a redefinition of the news that divides stories into breaking and feature and departs from the beat reporting of the past.

Whereas fewer than half of evening-news stories would fit the PEJ definition of hard news a year ago, 80% did so just after Sept. 11. Starting with the new year, though, the percentage fell back to just over half. In 1977, the study notes, two-thirds of evening-news stories dealt with what the study terms "hard news."

But news execs argue the study's classifications seem arbitrary, overly narrow. "Hard news" classifications include government, military, domestic and foreign affairs. Major stories like the Enron collapse and sex scandals in the Catholic Church fall into the categories of business/economy and religion, respectively.

ABC *World News Tonight* Executive Producer Paul Slavin voices concern about the study's methodology, finding the story



NBC coverage of "The Diet Game," with Tom Brokaw, may typify what provides grist for the PEJ's critique mill.

classifications vague at best. "Is business and economy a hard story or a soft story?" he asks rhetorically. "Aren't crime, law and business hard stories? What about an important story about a new drug? Aren't stories about investors, the fines against Merrill Lynch hard news? If those are soft stories, I'm guilty as charged."

Researchers counter that those Enron

**The country has responded to all three nightly newscasts with an increase in viewership, and that's the most important study.'**

—NBC News spokeswoman

and Catholic Church stories, while prominent, did not dominate mornings or evenings and would have only marginally affected the counts had they been classified as hard news. The story of Andrea Yates, the Houston woman who drowned her children, say, was a bigger story on morning TV than Enron was, and the Catholic Church story accounted for only 2% of evening-news and 1% of morning-news stories.

Feature stories, the study said, are back to 20% of evening newscasts and, predictably, even more in the mornings. The overall findings refute "the idea that television journalism

was somehow scared straight or fundamentally changed by the attack on American and the war on terrorism," PEJ says.

"Were it not for the Israeli-Palestinian crisis," the study says, "the story of network television this year would likely have been the trend toward its becoming even softer than before Sept. 11."

ABC's evening news was first in hard news for the period Jan. 1-April 5, with 54%, followed by CBS (unchanged from last year at 53%) and NBC (47%). Within

hard news, military and foreign coverage has replaced many domestic issues, PEJ says.

An NBC News spokeswoman observes that "these studies are often based on old assumptions on what news is. The fact is, the country has responded to all three nightly newscasts with an increase in viewership, and that's the most important study." A CBS spokeswoman says the network has "always been committed to hard news. That hasn't changed since 9/11."

Counters PEJ Director Tom Rosenstiel, "The evening news is only 19 minutes a night. The networks have two hours every morning and often an hour in prime time to do those other stories. They've shrunk the hard-news hole. 'What happened today' is now effectively about 8½ minutes."

Researcher Andrew Tyndall, who supplied the study's raw data, acknowledges there may be an "intermediate group" between the study's defined "hard news" and celebrity/lifestyle news. "There's no doubt that there's been a dramatic change in the levels of hard news since October," he says, "although I believe those levels were unsustainable. But there were those who commented that 9/11 was a wake-up call for the media. This report has documented that there was no radical, permanent change." ■

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# KCAL news anchor Jerry Dunphy dies

*The veteran newsman was stricken en route to work*

By Dan Trigoboff

**A**lthough past 80 and already having survived two heart attacks, open-heart surgery and a shooting during a robbery attempt in 1983, Los Angeles news anchor Jerry Dunphy, who died on May 20, was a newsman to the end. He suffered his fatal heart attack May 15 on his way to work.

Dunphy was perhaps the best-known of Los Angeles' broadcast journalists, and he had his own star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame. His news intro—"From the desert to the sea to all of Southern California"—was heard by generations of Southern Californians.

"We are," said a tearful Pat Harvey as she informed the KCAL(TV) audience of her colleague's death, "painfully aware [that Dunphy's refrain] will never be heard again."

Los Angeles media—notorious for aggressiveness on celebrity stories—had been uncharacteristically quiet about Dunphy's heart attack and hospitalization, apparently adhering to the wishes of his family.

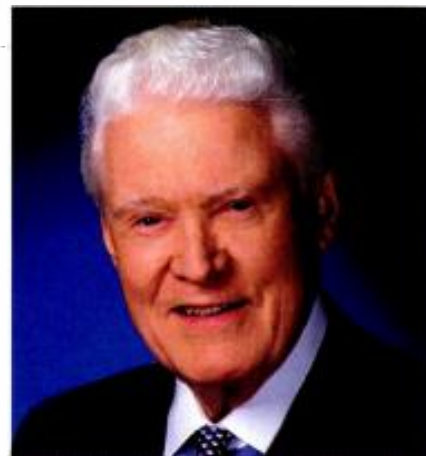
KCAL itself had barely updated the story between the time it reported Dunphy's heart attack Thursday until his death, although the station aired and posted a touching tribute on its Web site. The station also planned an hour-long tribute.

The KCAL story on Dunphy's death recognized not only Dunphy's accomplishments as a broadcast-news pioneer but also his career as a decorated Air Force captain in World War II.

Dunphy had been with KCAL since the mid 1990s, but he also spent years at KCBS-TV—including a historic stint in the 1960s with its predecessor, KNXT(TV)—and at KABC-TV.

Dunphy was frequently cast in small movie roles, as well, typecast as a television newsman or even as himself. The TV anchor Ted Baxter played by the late Ted Knight on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, was reputedly based—with much exaggeration—on Dunphy.

Twice-married, Dunphy had five children from his first marriage and one child



**Jerry Dunphy's was a voice that spoke to generations of Southern Californians.**

with his second wife. He is also survived by grandchildren and great-grandchildren. A statement from his family called the newsman "a constant beacon of truth and guidance in our ever-changing world." ■

## Twin Cities exchange

*Fox switches the affiliations of its Minneapolis stations*

By Dan Trigoboff

**F**ox is swapping the affiliations of its Minneapolis duopoly. WFTC(TV), now on a UHF channel (29), will become the UPN outlet, while UPN affiliate KMSP(TV), on a VHF channel (9), will become the Fox outlet.

The affiliation change has been expected since Fox established its duopoly last year.

Fox took over WFTC in a swap with Clear Channel, KMSP when it acquired the Chris-Craft group. KMSP has had the stronger local news, morning and sports presence in addition to the stronger dial spot.

The two stations will no longer compete in late news. WFTC will now carry a half-hour newscast at 10 p.m., and Fox's network programming will now lead into the market's leading 9 p.m. newscast on KMSP.

The two stations' operations will be combined at KMSP's new Eden Prairie,

Minn., facilities to facilitate the merger of the stations' news departments, Fox said, under Vice President and News Director Dana Benson. Each news department will have separate talent but will share management, assignment desks and equipment.

KMSP and WFTC Vice President and General Manager Carol Rueppel said the deal "aligns the best of both Fox and UPN.

We're not stripping one station for the benefit of the other. Our intention is to make both stations destinations for slightly different audiences."

WFTC will now carry UPN's prime time programming behind its current 5-7 p.m. comedy block, strengthening its

appeal to young adults, Rueppel said.

The Sept. 8 switch date coincides with the beginning of network and syndication fall launches and the NFL season. A six-figure promotion campaign is expected over the summer. ■

**Our intention is to make both stations destinations for slightly different audiences.**

—Carol Rueppel, KMSP/WFTC

# MTV

## Operating without a net

Cable's most unorthodox programming strategy thrives by taking chances

By Allison Romano

**P**ondering a new game show last year, MTV staffers piled into a conference room and took their positions. At this point at other networks, a tape would roll, and the decision makers would screen a few pilot episodes. At MTV, though, the executives were joined by Stryker, a personality at rock

bastion KROQ-FM Los Angeles, who, with the help of some other MTVers, performed a live, mock version of a genre-twisting game show called *Who Knows the Band?*

It debuted in the fall.

You've stepped inside the MTV development lab. Of all the cable networks', its program-development process is, perhaps not surprisingly, the most unconventional. Want proof? *The Osbournes*, the big MTV hit, was born out of appearances on *Cribs*, MTV's *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous* knock-off, in which the rocker and his family were first featured.

In a busy year, most basic-cable networks might green-light just five pilots, putting two or three on the air as regular series. A broadcast network might make 20 pilots. MTV moves at lightning speed, pumping out 50 potential projects. The mantra, quite simply, is that more is more.

It's determined to stay a teenager forever, even if it is turning 21 this summer. Its programmers are encouraged to think like their fickle, finicky teenage audience. "We don't have the luxury of running a *Seinfeld* or *Cosby Show* for a decade," said Van Toffler, president of MTV and MTV2. "Our audience demands us to be on the edge." Or over it.

Viacom's MTV will spend \$236 million on programming this year—27% of its total revenue, according to Kagan World



Days in the life of Ozzy Osbourne make for one of basic cable's highest-rated original series ever.

# HBO Original Series and Movies

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**a·ward-win·ning** (ă-ward-wĭn-ĭng)

*adj.* 1. to be the best in a competition of two or more. 2. an accomplishment that can only be given to one. 3. garnering acclaim from a panel of experts. *See HBO Original Series and Movies.*

---

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for Best Comedy Series and Best Actress  
in a Comedy Series: **Sex And The City**  
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2002 Golden Globe Award Winner  
for Best Drama Series and  
Best Supporting Actress in a  
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The Sopranos



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JIMMY JACKSON  
TERRY KERRY  
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**PREMIERES SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 8PM/7C**

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**ALBERT FINNEY VANESSA REDGRAVE**

**The GATHERING STORM**

SOME MEN ARE DISTANT  
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**SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 8PM/7C**

**HBO**

HERO FILMS PRESENTS  
**PAUL DOOLEY**

**PATH TO WAR**

CASTING BY GAMBON SUTHERLAND & BALDWIN

**PREMIERES SATURDAY, MAY 18, 8PM/7C**

**HBO**

HERO FILMS PRESENTS  
**EMILY THOMSON**

**Wit**

STORY BY MIKE NICHOLS  
SCREENPLAY BY MICHAEL CRONIN  
DIRECTED BY MICHAEL CRONIN

**SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 9PM/8C**

**HBO**

Media. Cable heavyweights like Lifetime, TNT, TBS and ESPN spend more, but their programming expenses account for 35% to 50% of their revenue.

MTV's costs depend on the show, of course. A game or in-studio show could run as low as \$50,000 per episode. Reality shows come in slightly higher, around \$200,000 to \$300,000. A scripted drama or a reality/scripted hybrid could run \$1 million per episode.

*The Osbournes'* first season now looks like a bargain. MTV spent about \$200,000 total for the show. The Osbournes and MTV are still trying to hammer out a deal to bring the show back. The two-season deal in the works may pay the family \$20 million.

There could be an option for a third year,



MTV and MTV2 President Van Toffler must reinvent his 21-year-old franchise to keep it forever young.



MTV President of Entertainment Weekly Brian Graden psyches out this year's 21-year-old viewer.

but MTV audiences can flee quickly. "The 21-year-old of today does not like the same thing as the 21-year old of last year," said President of Entertainment Brian Graden, the programming *wunderkind* who recently added VH1 programming to his duties.

"They are expert at reinventing themselves," said Zenith Media's Roy Rothstein. "When you're programming for 18- to 24-year-olds, you have to refresh and make bold moves."

It's also about balance. When the pop phenomenon à la 'NSYNC and Britney Spears was just beginning to blast sky high, *Total Request Live* looked like programming gold. But Graden wanted a "less saccharine"

show for nighttime. So he introduced Tom Green. "It's a constant dance," he said, "to make sure you never become overshadowed by any one show or one franchise."

When an idea makes the cut, MTV moves fast. A new series could be on the air just months after the first pitch meeting. Focus groups, marketing, promotion—who has time? MTV never even advertised *The Osbournes*, which now reigns as one of basic cable's highest-rated original series ever.

Development flows both internally and from the outside. About half of MTV's projects come from outside producers. Sometimes MTV signs up rookie producers, "the guy under a rock reading comic books," observed Toffler. Or established talent like Ben Stiller or Adam Sandler.

Director Spike Jones called President MTV Networks Music Group Judy McGrath to get her to watch tapes of an unknown Johnny Knoxville and kick-started another MTV hit, *Jackass*.

"We let people with an idea go ahead and make television," Toffler explained, "instead of having a team of writers and show runners reshape their idea."

McGrath recalls comedian Tom Green's coming into the office and shaving himself



The Osbournes inspired a rash of cover stories and became the water-cooler smash all networks crave.

## Ozzy envy

Why does everybody from President Bush to rival network chiefs love this MTV hit about a foul-mouthed dad and his dysfunctional family?

Not every family graces the covers of *Rolling Stone* and *Entertainment Weekly*. Or dines with President Bush and can boast that Mom is one of *People* magazine's "50 Most Beautiful People."

Just how did Ozzy Osbourne and his family become the toast of television?

It wasn't Ozzy's notorious rocker antics like biting heads off bats or even the moving boxes labeled "dead things" that captivated viewers. In fact, it was the opposite. What seemed to captivate was Ozzy's struggling with his TV, sticking his foot in the water bowl or running damage control over his daughter Kelly's tiny tattoo. *The Osbournes* made everyday life interesting.

The show became the water-cooler smash all networks crave. MTV served up its hard-to-reach teen audience and their baby boomer parents, eventually commanding \$100,000 per ad spot. Some episodes attracted as many as 6 million viewers, and, over 10 shows, *The Osbournes* averaged a 5.6 rating.

USA Network alone has been pitched on series for rockers Tommy Lee and Billy Idol. "Ozzy is lovable; you root for him," said USA President Doug Herzog. "At heart, it's a family show."

At last month's National Cable Show, News Corp. President and COO Peter Chernin said that, of any show on television, he most covets *The Osbournes*.

Contrary to rumors, the Osbournes are not likely to spend next season at their second home in London, said

Brian Graden, MTV entertainment president. But they can afford to live anywhere:

Even so, the Osbournes aren't packing for Europe—or anywhere—just yet. Despite indications in the press from the Osbournes, there's still no deal.

MTV has now negotiated with three different representatives for the Osbournes. The deal batted around may have MTV ponying up \$20 million for two more seasons.

The family already had creative control this season, with final approval for each episode. The question now is whether even a family as strange as this can sustain viewers' interest.

"I mean this as a compliment," Graden responded. "The Osbournes are crazy enough that the madness will continue."—A.R.

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in front of Graden. "We said, 'OK, you can have a show.'"

Some shows flop or burn out fast. Animation worked with *Beavis & Butt-head*, but another animated series, *Spy Groove*, flopped. Controversial but popular *Jackass* was a one-season wonder. An idea for a sock-puppet show never took hold.

Even the best MTV shows usually don't last more than two or three seasons. *The Real World* is the exception, largely because every element, from location to cast, changes. "By definition," said Graden,

MTV can, however, be the possessive partner that most producers dread. The network tries hard to nab rights to an idea, preferring to contract producers as freelancers. (Plenty of budding producers in Los Angeles and New York claim to be MTV producers but are roving freelancers.)

"Sometimes it can take longer to do the deal than to make the show," said *Real World* producer Murray.

When MTV owns a show, it controls domestic and international play, and most of the proceeds stay in MTV coffers. Some

freedom to buy and develop projects.

"I don't want the developers worrying about pleasing Brian Graden. They are on the line for the audience, not me," said Graden.

He never wants his staff to imitate its own hits. Despite *The Osbournes'* success, he insists he won't make another series about an aging rocker and his family.

That doesn't mean *The Osbournes'* won't inspire new up-close shows with stars—say, a series following P. Diddy as he searches for a new musical star (MTV won't comment).

Not every new project needs—or gets—a pilot. "You can blow \$10 million on 10 pilots or on 100," Graden said. "We might work through 200 'noodles' a year" on the way to 15 or 20 new shows.

Live presentations give developers a low-cost picture of a show. "Of course, you'd build a set and add graphics later. But, if the meat of an idea is there, we know it," said Senior Vice President of Music Development Lois Curren, who supervised *The Osbournes'*.

Sometimes they just wing it. Former MTV executive and current USA Network President Doug Herzog recalls working on the first *Real World* season in 1992. "We took Super 8 cameras and filmed kids in a loft for three days around Thanksgiving." Producers did something similar for *The Osbournes'*.

MTV orders fewer episodes than other networks, and its seasons are shorter. *The Osbournes'* did 10 weeks of episodes; NBC's *Friends* does nearly two dozen.

There are no theme nights, no nights for original dramas. The two "appointment" spots are *TRL* on weekdays at 3:30 p.m. ET and the "10 spot," which has become a horizontal block for popular originals like *The Real World*. Other than that, MTV is intentionally slapdash. Shows play at different times several days a week, in attempt to reach different viewers.

"For them to imitate the structure of a traditional network would be negative," said Lifetime's head of research and TV historian Tim Brooks. "That would remind teens that the network is really run by grown-ups."

A new batch of originals is being readied for launch. But there's no rest for an MTV developer, especially with a programming retreat next month.

"It's like seeing people prepare their master's thesis," said McGrath. "You need to be reading the tea leaves of the culture." ■



MTV original-programming hits include (clockwise from top left) *The Osbournes*; *Jackass*; animation hit *Beavis and Butt-head*, which was one of MTV's earliest break-the-mold hits; and *Remote Control*.

"when you're casting new 21-year-olds every year, the characters aren't even allowed to grow older."

Producers say MTV jumps for projects other networks would never touch.

"There's more willingness to be brave and bold. You don't have to dumb down your idea to appeal to a wider audience," said Jon Murray, who produces *Real World* and *Road Rules* with his partner Mary-Ellis Bunim.

MTV gives producers an unusual amount of creative space, said veteran outside producer Allison Grodner, responsible for CBS's *Big Brother* and MTV's reality/drama hybrid *Flipped*. "A lot of networks would have wanted to see a lot on paper, have back and forth meetings, and see dailies."

shows, like an animated version of *Spider-Man* slated for a winter debut, have to be licensed. When the rights get too pricey, MTV is willing to license, Graden said.

The network's internal development resembles a system of farm teams. There are eight development groups under Graden, including reality, news and documentary, and music-related groups. Ideas flow among them; the music group produces *The Osbournes*, but *Cribs*, where the family was "discovered," is from MTV's news and documentary group. Each team, staffed with four to 14 people, gets a development allowance. Some, like the scripted and documentaries groups, naturally command a bigger allowance, but all have the

Throughout the years there have been

things we can't **remember**, things we can't  
**explain** and things we're too afraid to **believe**.

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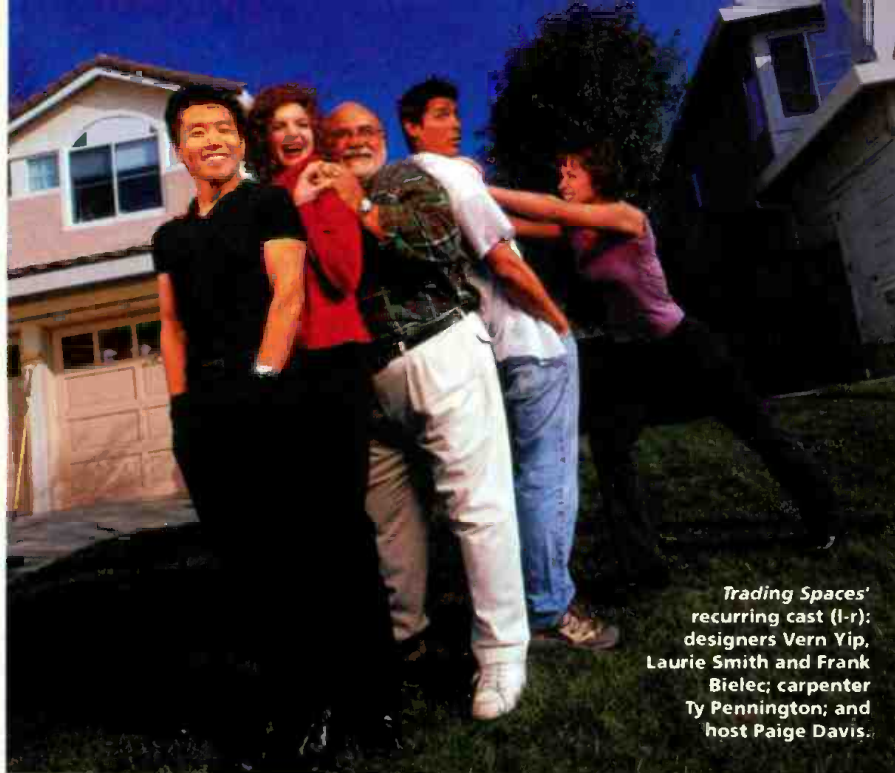
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*Trading Spaces'* recurring cast (l-r): designers Vern Yip, Laurie Smith and Frank Bielec; carpenter Ty Pennington; and host Paige Davis.



Designer Frank Bielec (c) consults with a pair of contestants.

# HOME deseccration

TLC's *Trading Spaces* is a breakout hit, at just \$90,000 an episode

By John M. Higgins

**H**ome-improvement shows don't get a better "money shot" than this. Pam is led into her suburban Tacoma, Wash., living room, where two good friends and a designer have worked two days on a surprise redecoration. Pam and her husband have in turn been redecorating a room in the friends' house. Now it's time for "the reveal," when a TV host escorts Pam—her eyes tightly shut—into her house to see the makeover for the first time.

Her friends had repainted her living room walls chocolate brown. And the bricks around her fireplace—the fireplace she begged not be touched—were now concealed behind a white wood panel.

Pam began sobbing. Hard. "I have to leave the room," she choked out. Fortunately, she neglected to turn off her wire-



Hosted by Paige Davis, *Trading Places* has friends redecorate each others' homes.

less mike, so fans got the audio of her crying from the next room. She is now forever known to fans as Crying Pam.

And there are many, many fans of TLC's breakout hit, *Trading Spaces*. Since its launch in September 2000 as a late-afternoon show, its ratings have steadily grown to the point where the show regularly scores a 2 or 3 Nielsen household rating in prime time, peaking one Saturday night in April at a 3.2 for a "celebrity" episode featuring but a single Dixie Chick. That was an all-time house-

hold record for TLC, which that night also beat all broadcast networks in adults 18-49.

And each hour-long episode costs TLC a mere \$90,000, a fraction of what broadcast networks spend.

*Trading Spaces* wasn't expected to be this big. "We really saw it as a fringe show, revitalizing our how-to slate," said TLC Programming Vice President Roger Marmet.

TLC needed to spruce up its late-day-time schedule, which started with soft, woman-targeted chronicles, such as *A Wedding Story* and *A Baby Story*, and then shifted into "hammer-and-nails" shows. Three years ago, then-General Manager Jana Bennett saw that the abrupt shift disturbed TLC's audience flow, driving many women away. She wanted a better bridge between early and late afternoon.

Months earlier, TLC executive producer Steve Schwartz's wife had pointed him to an article in *Metropolis* magazine about the BBC's *Changing Rooms*, which was part game show, part home-improvement show. The premise was simple. Two couples (friends or relatives) trade houses. Armed with a £500 budget (\$1,000 in the U.S. version), a designer and a carpenter, contestants repaint, reupholster and accessorize a single room in 48 hours. Neither side gets to see the room until it's finished.

Schwartz realized it might be a good 4 p.m. ET bridge, to carry TLC's 0.4-0.5 early-afternoon household rating through.

Repeating the British episodes wouldn't

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work well in the States, so TLC licensed format rights from Basil Productions, creator of CBS reality series *Big Brother* and now a unit of Endemol, which makes NBC hit *Fear Factor*. BBC America was scheduled to carry *Changing Rooms*, so TLC christened its show *Trading Spaces*.

TLC asked several producers to bid on the show and picked Ross Television, which is accustomed to TV-on-the-cheap through shows on TLC sister net Discovery Channel, as well as HGTV and TNN. Although the first season's ratings were strong, expenses ran too high. "The biggest expense you have in a show like this is travel," Schwartz said, pointing to the 15 permanent producers, designers and crew. "Ross is located in Knoxville, Tenn., and the travelling nature of the show made it very expensive."

So TLC put out another request for bids and gave the show to Banyan Productions, which is located in Philadelphia, closer to a wider variety of East Coast markets.

What's the appeal? Although there are often strained reactions to some of the designers' stranger color, upholstery or lighting choices, most homeowners express happiness, not outrage.

Banyan producer Denise Kramsey credits the recurring cast of designers, carpenters and host Paige Davis: "Fans really identify with them."

Self-described addict Karen Manghisi, a New Jersey college admissions director, likes the way the contestants do all the work but are largely at the mercy of the designers' sometimes odd whims. The designers "seem to especially enjoy raising the bar with their designs, knowing full well the neighbors have little power to stop them."

TLC is in production on a third season of 80 episodes, hopefully sprinkled with a few celebrities. Conversations have been held with Valerie Bertinelli, Rosie O'Donnell, Danny Bonaduce and Joan Lunden. (No appearance fees are paid, and the celebs actually have to do the labor.)

And, of course, TLC is inevitably looking for imitations. Marmet said the BBC is producing *While You Were Out*, a show in which, say, a husband sends his wife to her sister's house for a weekend, then redecorates the kitchen. Meanwhile, a crew is spying on the wife with hidden cameras to see what she's doing while the husband is working. The show launches July 6. Spooky. ■



Pat Robertson generated \$156 million in annual profit running *Bonanza* on the old Family Channel.

**THE FLIP SIDE**

By John M. Higgins

# What's so original about originals?

The broadcast nets put fresh product on-air every day

It's upfront season, so ad agencies are peppered by a swarm of cable networks trying to get a slice—sometimes just a crumb—of the \$8 billion or so that buyers should commit by August. (You know ad buyers are being overwhelmed when TechTV—which gets a 0.1 or so Nielsen rating—starts scheduling upfront pitches.)

Sitting through many of these presentations, we were bemused by how aggressively cable networks position their original productions as unique initiatives.

Yes, it was impressive when HBO started mixing its own movies in with theatricals and when USA and the Turner nets began trying their own series and original movies.

But we're more than two decades into the development of the cable-network business, and some of the biggest net-

works aren't doing what their broadcast rivals do every day: putting fresh product on the air. Two weeks ago, the broadcast networks announced their new fall-season schedules, which include 45 new series. No one thinks to call that "original programming."

When reality show *Combat Missions* ended recently, USA Network had no original series in prime time (two make-or-break series are coming in June). TNT has one whole series, *Witchblade*, on the schedule. TBS has *Ripley's Believe It or Not*.

Everyone has cut back on movie-production slates, but players like TNT still bray about how *King of Texas* is part "of a rich tradition of presenting Original Westerns."

That's 30 years after ABC came up with the *Movie of the Week*.

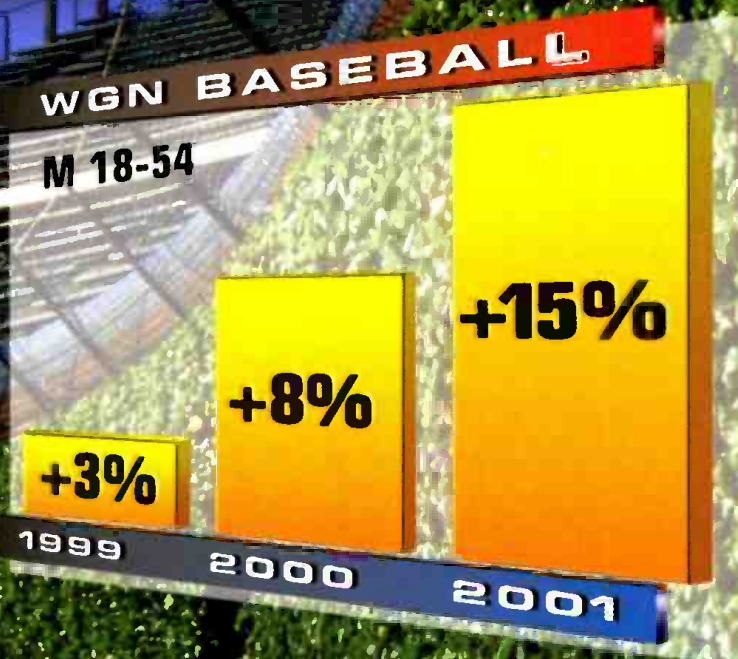
Lifetime is more consistent with originals (and brags a bit less), and, of course, smaller networks like Food Network, HGTV and TLC put on tons of originals—though, at \$25,000 to \$100,000 per episode, they're cheaper shows than scripted dramas.

Of course, there's the question of how big a contribution originals make anyway. Pat Robertson generated a whole lot more cash flow running *Bonanza* on the old Family Channel (\$156 million in annual profit) than Haim Saban did loading it with original programming as Fox Family. In fact, new owner Disney just wrote off \$463 million of Saban's old programming ideas.

So if Robertson could make tons of money on *Bonanza* reruns, how big an effort should Disney make with originals for ABC Family?



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Source: Nielsen Media Research, NFI-PNF II. Average all games April-September (1998, 1999, 2000)

## Programming

# The ubiquitous *Biography*

A&E's new schedule serves up its hit series in various disguises, including biopics

By Allison Romano

**D**rama isn't out of favor at A&E, it's just on hiatus. Until recently, the cable net hoped to have three original dramas on the air by fall. Now, with *100 Centre Street* burning off and a second series out of the picture, only period detective series *Nero Wolfe* remains.

According to A&E Senior Vice President of Programming Allen Sabinson, documentaries and original movies and miniseries are plenty to fuel the network. "Will we back away from drama?" he asked. "No. Are economic conditions favorable? No."

A&E is still trying to get mileage out of its *Biography* franchise. Spinoff series *TV-Ography*, launching June 3, delves into the stories behind TV shows and stars. It is part of A&E's upcoming programming slate, which also includes tributes and stunts for *Biography*'s 15th anniversary and 1,000th episode. On Friday nights, starting later this year, A&E will stage *Bio in a Movie*, airing a classic movie interspersed with *Biography* segments. Two more *Biography* cousins, *Bio in a Year* and *Street Scenes*, pop up as specials.

A&E is looking to jump-start its ratings after several flat months. Viewing levels are up slightly for May but remain around 1.1.

Sunday nights have been retooled and now feature *Nero Wolfe* (which is averaging a 1.7 rating this season), *City Confidential*, and, through the summer, *Law & Order*. But TNT takes over exclusive rights to *Law & Order* come September, when A&E will debut off-nets of *Third Watch* in its place.

A&E's documentary lineup is highlighted by *Old Friends*, produced by Julia Roberts, which traces the lives of and life-long connections among three women. A documentary series from director Michael



Apted, *Married in America*, which debuts in June. Apted plans to revisit the subjects of his documentary, newlywed couples, every year to update the story.

A&E is launching documentary *Cold Case Files* as a weekly series and bringing back *Minute by Minute*. Sabinson said he's developing three more documentary series but would not elaborate. Also on the schedule are five originals, including four-hour miniseries *The Last World* and six-hour series *Napoleon*.

Sister net The History Channel is rolling out five new series including *Basic Training*, *Secret Passages* and *Secrets of the Ancient World*. Among History specials will be *TR and the Birth of a Superpower*. ■

## Fisher in, Black stays

*Lifetime names programming vet Barbara Fisher EVP of entertainment*

By Allison Romano

**L**ifetime seemed to neatly wrap up a two-for-one executive deal last week. Cable's top-rated network tapped veteran programmer Barbara Fisher to be its next head of programming. Her appointment signals that Carole Black will stay as president and CEO of the women's net.

Black's contract expired last winter, but industry sources say she is ready to re-up with Lifetime. Earlier this year, talk was that Black might take the top spot at ABC Family and, more recently, that ABC might be

courting her to replace recently ousted ABC Television President Steve Bornstein.

Fisher, former president of Universal Studios Network Programming, replaces Dawn Tamofsky-Ostroff, now UPN's head of entertainment.

As executive vice president of entertainment, Fisher will oversee programming, scheduling and production. It's her first shot at network programming. At Universal, she created such hits as *Just Shoot Me* for NBC and *The Steve Harvey Show* for The WB. "It will be nice to be the buyer," she

said, "instead of the seller for a change."

With Lifetime regularly topping cable Nielsen ratings, Fisher isn't under pressure to make radical change. "I do have to be vigilant to continue [the success] and improve on it, though." ■



Barbara Fisher's mandate: Grow Lifetime's success.

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# Programming

## BroadcastWatch

COMPILED BY KENNETH RAY

MAY 13-19 Broadcast network prime time ratings according to Nielsen Media Research

Week	abc	CBS	NBC	FOX	PAX TV	UPN	WB
34	7.3/11	9.4/15	8.7/14	5.7/9	0.8/1	2.4/4	3.9/6
<b>MONDAY</b>	8:00 27. Dinotopia, Part 2 8.0/12	23. King of Queens 8.2/14 30. Yes, Dear 7.9/12 7. Ev Lvs Raymnd 12.7/19 13. Becker 10.3/15	26. Fear Factor 8.1/13 27. Third Watch 8.0/12	48. Boston Public 6.0/10	110. Miracle Pets 0.5/1	88. The Hughleys 2.1/3 83. One on One 2.5/4	58. 7th Heaven 5.0/8 78. Angel 2.9/4
	9:00 48. TV Guide's 50 Best Shows 6.0/10	20. Mary Tyler Moore Reunion 8.7/14	15. Crossing Jordan 10.1/16		96. Diagnosis Murder 1.1/2		
	7.6/12	8.8/14	8.6/14	4.8/8	0.6/1	2.6/4	3.4/5
<b>TUESDAY</b>	8:00 33. Dinotopia, Part 3 7.4/12	20. JAG 8.7/14 23. The Guardian 8.2/12	22. NBC's Funniest Outtakes 8.5/14 9. Frasier 11.3/17 23. Scrubs 8.2/12	63. That '70s Show 4.5/8 67. That '70s Show 4.3/7	110. Mysterious Ways 0.5/1	75. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 3.2/5	73. Gilmore Girls 3.4/6 72. Smallville 3.5/5
	9:00 27. NYPD Blue 8.0/13	18. Judging Amy 9.4/15	31. Dateline NBC 7.5/12	56. 24 5.2/8	105. PAX Mystery Movie—Diagnosis Murder: Last Laugh 0.7/1	89. Roswell 1.8/3	
	6.3/11	6.6/11	9.8/17	5.1/9	0.9/1	2.5/4	2.9/5
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	8:00 39. My Wife & Kids 6.6/12	42. 60 Minutes II 6.3/11	42. Ed 6.3/11	58. Magic's Biggest Secrets Revealed 5.0/9	109. Candid Camera 0.6/1	77. Enterprise 3.1/6	75. Dawson's Creek 3.2/6
	8:30 40. According to Jim 6.5/11		12. The West Wing 10.4/17	55. Bernie Mac 5.3/9	101. Touched by an Angel 0.8/1	91. Enterprise 1.9/3	83. Felicity 2.5/4
	9:00 56. Drew Carey 5.2/8	37. The Amazing Race 2 6.8/11	6. Law & Order 12.8/21		94. Diagnosis Murder 1.2/2		
	10:00 40. Primetime Special Edition 6.5/11						
	3.9/6	13.0/21	17.8/28	2.9/5	0.8/1	3.6/6	2.6/4
<b>THURSDAY</b>	8:00 70. ABC Big Picture Show—Con Air 3.9/6	11. Survivor: Marquesas 11.1/18 3. CSI 16.3/25 8. CSI 11.4/18	1. Friends 21.1/34 4. Will & Grace 14.6/22 2. ER 17.5/28	78. Fox Movie Special—The Nutty Professor 2.9/5	110. It's a Miracle 0.5/1 105. Touched by an Angel 0.7/1	71. WWF Smackdown! 3.6/6	91. Charmed 1.9/3 73. Charmed 3.4/5
	10:00 96. Diagnosis Murder 1.1/2						
	5.2/10	6.6/12	8.2/15	6.8/12	0.8/1	1.6/3	2.0/4
<b>FRIDAY</b>	8:00 60. America's Funniest Home Videos 4.9/9	48. The Price Is Right: U.S. Navy 6.0/11	34. Dateline NBC 7.3/13	37. M*A*S*H Reunion Special 6.8/12	101. PAX Family Movie—Trapped 0.8/1	93. UPN's Movie Friday—Rumble in the Bronx 1.6/3	89. Flix Friday—The Mask 2.0/4
	8:30 63. Instant Classic Bloopers 4.5/8	35. 29th Annual Daytime Emmy Awards 6.9/12	16. Law & Order: Special Victims Unit 10.0/18		105. Weakest Link 0.7/1		
	10:00 42. 20/20 6.3/12						
	5.4/10	4.5/8	4.7/9	4.4/8	1.1/2		
<b>SATURDAY</b>	8:00 53. ABC Saturday Night Movie—Air Force One 5.4/10	78. Survivor: Marquesas 2.9/6 63. Ultimate Manilow! 4.5/8 47. The District 6.1/11	42. NBA Playoffs—L.A. Lakers vs. Sacramento 6.3/13 83. Just Shoot Me 2.5/5 81. Law & Order 2.7/5	69. Cops 4.0/8 62. Cops 4.7/9 63. AMW: America Fights Back 4.5/8	99. Diagnosis Murder 1.0/2 94. All Around the Town 1.2/2		
	10:00 6.5/11	11.1/19	8.7/14	6.8/11	0.8/1		2.1/3
<b>SUNDAY</b>	7:00 60. Wonderful World of Disney—Dinosaur 4.9/8	17. 60 Minutes 9.7/18 5. Survivor: Marquesas Finale 13.4/21 14. Survivor: Marquesas Reunion 10.2/17	51. NBA Playoffs—Boston Celtics vs. New Jersey Nets 5.9/12 52. NBC's Outtakes 5.7/9 10. The Cosby Show: A Look Back 11.2/17	68. The Simpsons 4.2/8 46. The Simpsons 6.2/11 31. The X-Files 7.5/12	105. Candid Camera 0.7/1 99. Ooc 1.0/2 101. All Around the Town 0.8/1		87. Flix From the Frog—Sleepless in Seattle 2.2/4 96. Off Centre 1.1/2
	9:00 35. The Practice 6.9/10						
	10:00 19. The Practice 9.2/15						
	6.1/10	8.8/15	9.5/16	5.3/9	0.8/1	2.6/4	2.8/5
	6.3/10	8.1/13	8.8/15	5.7/9	0.9/1	2.7/4	2.5/4

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

# SyndicationWatch

MAY 6-12 *Syndicated programming ratings according to Nielsen Media Research*

## TOP 25 SHOWS

Rank/Program	HH AA	HH GAA
1 Wheel of Fortune	8.6	NA
2 Jeopardy	7.8	NA
3 Friends	6.8	8.2
4 Seinfeld	6.0	6.5
5 Entertainment Tonight	5.8	5.9
5 Oprah Winfrey Show	5.8	5.9
7 Everybody Loves Raymond	5.7	6.3
8 Judge Judy	5.5	8.1
9 Seinfeld (wknd)	4.9	5.6
10 Wheel of Fortune (wknd)	4.4	NA
11 Entertainment Tonight (wknd)	3.9	4.0
12 Live With Regis & Kelly	3.5	NA
13 Everybody Loves Raymond (wknd)	3.3	NA
13 Judge Joe Brown	3.3	4.5
13 Friends (wknd)	3.3	3.5
16 Frasier	3.2	3.5
17 King of the Hill	3.1	3.5
17 Maury	3.1	3.3
19 The X-Files	3.0	3.2
20 Inside Edition	2.9	2.9
21 Divorce Court	2.8	3.6
22 Stargate SG-1	2.7	2.8
23 Hollywood Squares	2.6	NA
23 ER	2.6	3.0
23 The Practice	2.6	2.8

## TOP OFF-NET SITCOMS

	HH AA	HH GAA
1 Friends	6.8	8.2
2 Seinfeld	6.0	6.5
3 Everybody Loves Raymond	5.7	6.3
4 Seinfeld (wknd)	4.9	5.6
5 Everybody Loves Raymond (wknd)	3.3	NA
6 Friends (wknd)	3.3	3.5

According to Nielsen Media Research Syndication Service Ranking Report May 6-12, 2002

HH/AA = Average Audience Rating (households)

HH/GAA = Gross Aggregate Average

One Nielsen rating = 1,008,000 households, which represents 1% of the 100.8 million TV Households in the United States

NA = not available

## Friedman expands game-show role

Columbia TriStar Domestic Television has renewed a multiyear contract with Harry Friedman, who will remain as executive producer of both *Wheel of Fortune* and *Jeopardy*, the two highest-rated series in first-run syndication. He also takes on the added role of executive consultant for CTD's new game show *Pyramid*. The deal follows Friedman's fourth Emmy win (outstanding game show, *Jeopardy*) on May 17.

The executive producer for *Pyramid* is Stephen Brown, who has written, produced and created more than 20 game shows (including *Love Connection* and the *Newlywed Game* remake) for syndication and cable.

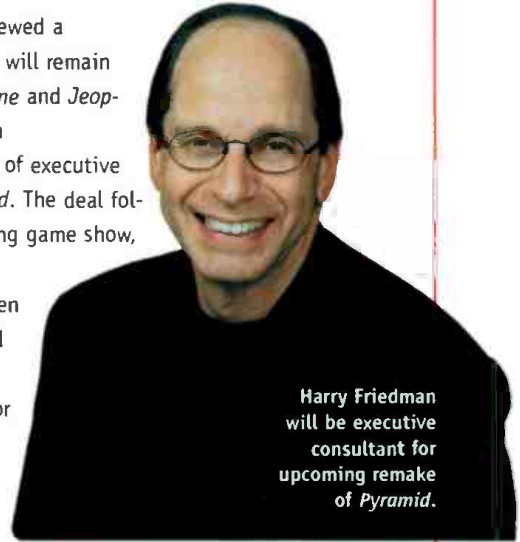
Friedman had this to say about his role on *Pyramid*: "I'll be helping get the production going, using the knowledge I've gained over the years in understanding the marketplace as it pertains to game shows."

As of February (the latest available sweeps ratings), *Wheel* has been No. 1 in viewership for 72 consecutive sweeps periods. *Jeopardy* has been No. 2 for 65 consecutive sweeps. Friedman has been executive producer of both since 1999.

CTD continues to talk up off-network sitcom *King of Queens* in the marketplace, with the first deal likely in the next couple of weeks. It's set to debut in fall 2003. Sources say the company is looking for an initial five-year deal to cover the first 125 episodes (through 2003). Still to be determined is whether the distributor will add an automatic-extension clause based on how long the show remains in production for network TV.

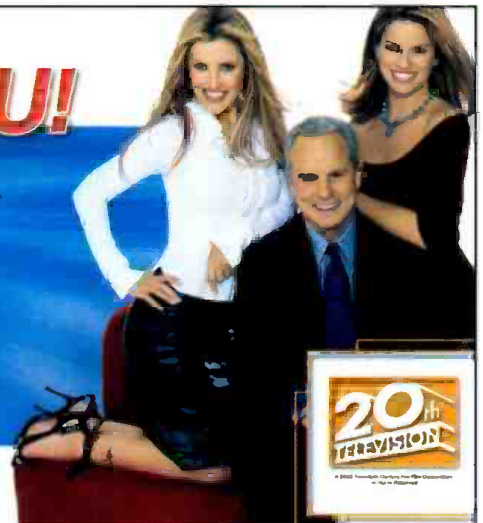
Only the first three years of the off-network package would be exclusive to broadcast syndication, with a cable window likely starting in year four. The cash-plus-barter deal would give stations 5.5 minutes to sell weekdays, CTD 1.5 minutes. Two weekend airings would be split evenly, with stations and the distributor both getting 3.5 minutes. Double runs are optional.

—Steve McClellan



Harry Friedman will be executive consultant for upcoming remake of *Pyramid*.

GIVE 'EM AN HOUR AND THEY'LL GROW ON YOU!



Source: NSI. WRA\* Overights. % HH Rtg Grwth w/o 5/13/02 vs. w/o 12/3/01, 5 Orig. Mkts: LA, AT, FX, SL, AU. HH Rtg/Sv

# StationBreak

BY DAN TRIGOBOFF

## KCOP TRIMS NEWS

On June 3, Fox-owned UPN affiliate KCOP(TV) Los Angeles will change its hour newscast at 10 p.m. to a half-hour at 11 p.m. The Fox duopoly management will move *Seinfeld* from its 11:30 spot on KTTV(TV) to 10 p.m. on KCOP, to be followed by *Frasier*.

The KCOP newscast had shown growth in recent sweeps but was down during the sweeps that ended last week, finishing last behind co-owned KTTV, KTLA(TV) and KCAL(TV) in the crowded news time slot.

John Frenzel, programming director for KTTV and KCOP, said: "We feel these comedies will give KCOP great counter-programming to the other local stations and will give the station a solid lead-in for UPN 13 News at 11 p.m."

Fox execs said Larry Perrett will remain news director at KCOP and Jose Rios will remain at KTTV, with each station retaining its own news staff. Attempts to further merge the departments have been stymied by each station's having contracts with different unions.

## FORT MYERS FLIER MIRE

NBC affiliate WBBH-TV Fort Myers, Fla., says it only wanted to link the histories of local businesses to the current celebration of the network's 75th anniversary. But, in presenting \$5,000 advertising "partnerships," in addition to commercials, promos and a share of the NBC anniversary



## Can you see me now?

WBCQ-CA Cincinnati, which lays claim to being the first low-power TV station on satellite, spoofs Verizon's "Can you hear me now?" ad series in a recent set of spots.

branding, the station offered in a flier "a news story on you or your family and how they have impacted Southwest Florida, which will air in the M-F 5 p.m.-6 p.m. newscast."

Asked about the ethics of such a pitch, GM Steve Pontius said he regrets the flier and offer, adding that nothing like it will be done again. A few sold spots have already run, and, although Pontius says the station is embarrassed by the situation, the rest will run as well—but, he adds, with clear separation from the news portions of the newscast. "We should have done that from the first."

The offer clearly violates recent Radio-Television News Directors Association guidelines opposing favoritism toward advertisers or content generated by anything but "journalistic merits." "It should be clear to all advertisers," they say, "that they have

no influence over news content." *Local Naples Daily News* Editor Phil Lewis called the invitation "disturbing" and a "blurring of the line between advertising and content."

## ARIZONA BANS NONCOMPETES

Arizona Gov. Jane Hull has signed a bill outlawing non-compete clauses in broadcast contracts. Such clauses generally ban an employee who leaves a job—sometimes even when fired—from working for a competitor for a period.

The right-to-work state seems an unlikely one for a law against noncompetes, but Republican State Senator Scott Bundgaard, its original sponsor, said his bill is entirely consistent with free enterprise. Opponents of the bill, including the Arizona Broadcasters Association, argued that the bill overrides parties' right to enter into contracts and would

burden smaller stations.

Lobbying went on right into the final days. Hull met with broadcasters hoping for a veto on Monday and with on-air talent and other station employees on Tuesday. Bundgaard his side would have been close to having enough votes to override a veto.

## EFFRON JOINS MSNBC

Longtime Post-Newsweek news exec Mark Effron will leave P-N to become MSNBC's vice president for live news programming. In more than 25 years at P-N, Effron—a protégé of the late local-news legend Jim Snyder—was a producer, assistant news director, news director and station manager before overseeing its news department.

Had he stayed with Post-Newsweek, Effron would have had to relocate to Detroit, where company headquarters moved when Alan Frank replaced Bill Ryan as president. Instead, he'll relocate to New Jersey.

## MILLER TO KTVT NEWS

As expected, former WFAA-TV Dallas news exec John Miller will replace Linda Levy as news director at KTVT(TV) Fort Worth, Texas. Levy will move to KRLD(AM) as news director at the all-news station.

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

# Focus Knoxville

## THE MARKET

DMA rank	62
Population	1,208,000
TV homes	478,000
Income per capita	\$15,987
TV revenue rank	62
TV revenue	\$70,000,000

## COMMERCIAL TV STATIONS

Rank*	Ch.	Affil.	Owner
1	WBIR-TV	10	NBC Gannett
2	WVLT-TV	8	CBS Gray
3	WATE-TV	6	ABC Young
4	WTNZ(TV)	43	Fox Raycom
5	WBXX-TV	20	WB Acme
6	WPXK(TV)	54	Pax Paxson

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

## CABLE/DBS

Cable subscribers (HH)	334,600
Cable penetration	70%
ADS subscribers (HH)**	95,600
ADS penetration	20%
DBS carriage of local TV?	No

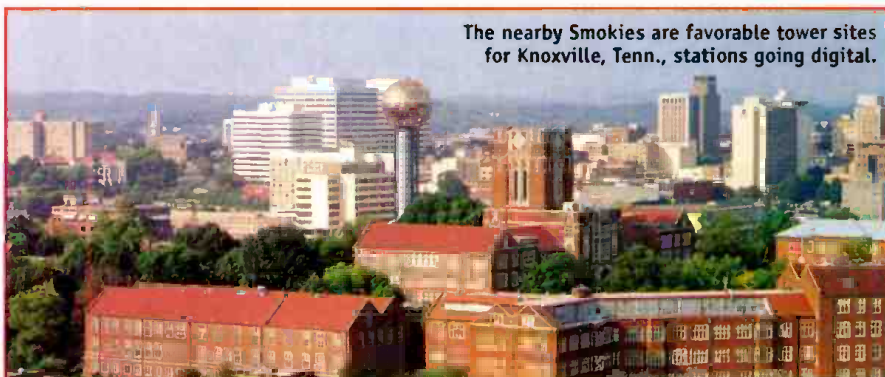
\*\*Alternative Delivery Systems, includes DBS and other non-cable services, according to Nielsen Media Research

## WHAT'S NO. 1

Syndicated show	Rating/share***
<i>Wheel of Fortune</i> (WBIR-TV)	13/22
<b>Network show</b>	
<i>Friends</i> (WBIR-TV)	19/29
<b>Evening newscast</b>	
WBIR-TV	18/33
<b>Late newscast</b>	
WBIR-TV	11/31

\*\*\*November 2001, total households

Sources: Nielsen Media Research, BIA Research



The nearby Smokies are favorable tower sites for Knoxville, Tenn., stations going digital.

## A healthy, stable market

WVLT-TV "Volunteer TV" General Manager Chris Baker loves SEC football. And why not? A December game in prime time—if the University of Tennessee is one of the teams involved—can bring the station a 50 rating. SEC football averaged a 17/39 last fall; the Vanderbilt-UT game did a 31/65, Baker says. And most stations in Knoxville, Tenn., need all the ratings wins they can get against powerhouse WBIR-TV.

Those numbers may be attainable this fall, but they won't be available. Except for Acme-owned WBXX-TV, no station in the market has yet agreed to participate in Nielsen's metered measurement, planned to begin in October. While Nielsen cites the superiority of meters over diaries and remains committed to making meters the standard in every market that can support them, stations complain about the increased costs and the timing: Budgets for 2002 were already complete when Nielsen made its announcement, local execs say. Participation will not likely come before 2003, if at all.

Local stations are preparing to go digital, moving their signals to taller towers. The rugged Smoky Mountains terrain that brings tourists and dollars into the market also provides favorable spots for transmission towers. "Basketball coaches always say," notes WTNZ(TV) GM John Hayes, "you can't coach height." Fox affiliate WTNZ, ABC affiliate WATE-TV and NBC affiliate WBIR-TV share a tower on Sharp's ridge, not far from WVLT-TV's; WPXK's will be on Cross Mountain.

The market is healthy, overall, neither overperforming nor underperforming; its population and revenue rankings are identical at No. 62. "Employment is good here," says Hayes. "Automotive advertising is good. So are health care, retail, fast food. As a Fox station, fast food is always a good category for us." Notes Baker, "The market seems to rise above the lows. It's not as prone to economic fluctuations. We in television still struggle to find good employees. It's a good market for employment." —Dan Trigoboff

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## Washington

# Noncom snag delays auctions

*Industry division, public-radio proposal, court decision keep new licenses on ice*

By Bill McConnell

**W**ith broadcasters clamoring for more channels, the FCC is working overtime to bring hundreds of new stations to the FM dial. But, ironically, broadcasters—both commercial and non-profit—are creating some of the biggest hurdles to getting those stations on the air.

Not that the courts and Congress haven't done their part. Last summer, federal judges struck down an FCC plan to require public broadcasters to bid against for-profit operators for new stations on the commercial band. Now nearly all the commission's options appear destined to land the regulators back in court.

The dispute stems from a 1997 law that threw out the FCC's decades-old comparative-hearing process. Instead, lawmakers ordered the commission to put new commercial channels out for bid. Congress, however, exempted channels reserved for nonprofit operators, located between 88 and 92 MHz.

Public-radio stations have always had the right to apply for channels outside their reserved band, but whether Congress meant for them to participate in the new auction process was hotly debated.

Two weeks ago, NPR floated its own plan in comments to the FCC. Under NPR's scenario, noncommercial operators would be allowed to apply for a commercial allotment in a market only when no noncommercial channels were available. In that case, a commercial allotment would be reserved for nonprofit operators, which would compete against each other according to a point system.

"We're really dealing with the last available spectrum," says NPR Associate General Counsel Gregory Lewis. "In large seg-

Stations in waiting	
Group	Allotments/applications
Delayed auction of FM licenses	350
Additional FM allocations	135
Canceled FM licenses to rebid	55
Noncommercial FM applications	920
Low-power TV/translator licenses	1,650
<b>Total licenses/applications</b>	<b>3,110</b>

Source: FCC

ments of the country, there is not a lot of spectrum left." Forcing nonprofits to bid or excluding them from the channels altogether as the FCC had suggested would leave new stations an option only for the most deep-pocketed radio businesses, even in medium-size markets, he said.

Broadcasters are likely to fight the NPR

**'We're really dealing with the last available spectrum. In large segments of the country, there is not a lot of spectrum left.'**

—Gregory Lewis, NPR

proposal, says Gary Smithwick, a Washington attorney representing applicants for roughly half a dozen licenses that have been stalled.

"NPR's plan is good for NPR," he says. "But there are broadcasters out there who are not afraid of competition and want to bring these stations online. Any approach that gives the advantage to NPR will end up in court."

An NAB official said the industry's major trade group would not comment until replies are due next month. In its own comments, NAB endorsed a ban on new non-commercial licenses in the commercial band.

The FCC was considering barring non-commercial operators from commercial portions of the dial. It also floated other options, including permitting public broadcasters to acquire commercial frequencies only when there are no competing commercial applicants and providing opportunities to add new noncommercial FM and TV channels on a community-by-community basis.

Although the FCC argued that Congress did not intend to exempt nonprofits from auctions of other channels, federal appeals judges ruled that a strict reading of the law shields them from bidding for those frequencies.

The decision forced the FCC to delay an auction of 350 new FM allotments and to forget even thinking about scheduling bids for another 190 FM channels that have been either added to the allotment

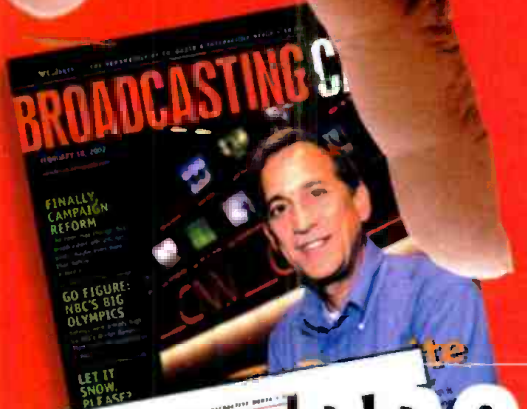
table or seized from operators that broke agency rules.

Because the licensing rules also apply to TV channels, the dispute is preventing the FCC from going ahead with bids for 1,650 low-power TV and translator permits. Also, any future broadcast allotments for full-power TV would be blocked until the issue is resolved.

The easiest solution would be for Con-



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gress to clarify the 1997 law's auction provisions. FCC Chairman Michael Powell has asked lawmakers to amend the law but says he can't wait to see whether consensus for new legislation builds. In the meantime, he reserves his ire for the judges, whose ruling he says clearly contradicts any logical reading of congressional intent because it would give public broadcasters power to

claim any new allotment for free.

NPR officials insist that nonprofit operators would get the advantage in very few markets. In a study of 25 randomly picked allotments from the 350 licenses ready for auction, in only four markets would an auction be blocked under NPR's plan, they say.

The National Federation of Community Broadcasters endorsed NPR's proposal.

The federation is represented by Washington-based Media Access Project.

Similarly, the Association for Public Television Stations is calling on the FCC to give "first-come, first-served" priority to noncommercial TV operators applying for translator licenses when they show there is a need to fill gaps in a market's public-television coverage. ■

# Cable's other association

*ACA is the long-distance lobby trying to raise its voice in D.C.*

By Bill McConnell

**I**n a sea of Washington lobbyists, the American Cable Association is easy to overlook.

It's not hard to see why. The trade group for independent cable operators isn't based in Washington. Nor are its lawyers. Nor are any of its members.

But with a host of key issues on the front burner at the FCC and Congress, Pittsburgh-based ACA is aiming for a higher profile and a much bigger voice in Washington.

Unlike the main cable trade group, the National Cable & Telecommunications Association, ACA's members don't own programming networks. They are just cable-system operators; most are small, although a handful rank among the top 25 MSOs.

By focusing on delivering cable service, ACA members say they reflect the true concerns of cable operators. They oppose NCTA on many issues. For instance, the ACA is fighting to preserve program-access rules, which require programmers affiliated with MSOs to sell their programming to other systems.

ACA isn't shy about asking regulators to impose conditions or block mergers either. NCTA is loath to comment on what often is a combination of two of its members.

"It became readily apparent a long time ago that small systems needed their own voice in Washington," says Mike Haislip, president of Armstrong Cable Services. "The costs of providing service stay very expensive when spread over 200 or even 200,000 customers versus 2,000,000 customers." Armstrong, with 210,000 subs, is the country's 18th-largest MSO. By contrast AT&T/Comcast, which would be the country's largest if allowed to merge, would boast 21.2 million.



ACA President Matthew Polka reps smaller operators.

ACA needs to become a true player at the FCC, where some of its key issues are bubbling. The FCC will decide by mid-summer whether to let program-access rules expire Oct. 5. ACA also is asking the FCC to block EchoStar's plan to acquire

DirecTV and is helping members apply for waivers to the FCC's mandated emergency-alert system improvements. The group also is on the same side as NCTA in opposing open-access rules for Internet service but would lobby for an exemption for small systems if the FCC changes course and decides to mandate carriage of competing ISPs on cable systems' platforms.

Perhaps ACA is making headway at the commission at long last. In order to curry ACA's endorsement for its FCC merger review, AT&T/Comcast officials last week

pledged to keep "Headend in the Sky," the dominant digital cable-delivery system for smaller markets, available with competitive pricing.

ACA's FCC lobbying has been handled by association President Matthew Polka, who puddle-jumps from Pittsburgh on a regular basis, or by Christopher Cinnamon, head of Chicago law firm Cinnamon Mueller. Last month, ACA members in town for their annual Washington conference added the FCC to their usual round of Capitol Hill visits to get some face time with commissioners and staff.

So far, ACA has barely been even a small player in agency rulings, where it has been overshadowed by the NCTA, say current and former agency staffers. It's a different story in Congress, however, where ACA, then named Small Cable Business Association, helped persuade lawmakers to exempt small cable systems from rate regulation after lawmakers socked the industry with a host of new regulations in 1992.

"ACA gets a fair amount of traction, given their numbers," says an aide to Rep. Edward Markey (D-Mass.). "They provide an unfiltered perspective not clouded by dominant programming interests."

It also helps that ACA's 930 member systems are scattered around the country and have systems in many lawmakers' districts. NCTA, Polka tells policymakers, is the lobbyist for the top 10 cable behemoths except for No. 9 Mediacom, an ACA member.

ACA took its current name in 1999 after a rival group, Cable Telecommunications Association, was absorbed by NCTA. SCBA was formed in 1993 but didn't hire Polka and other paid staff until 1997. ■

# Changing Hands

## Combos

**WJTN(AM) and WWSE-FM Jamestown, N.Y.**

**Price:** \$5.9 million

**Buyer:** Media One Group LLC (James T. Embrescia, managing member); no other broadcast interests

**Seller:** Goldman Group (Michael Goldman, president)

**Facilities:** WJTN(AM): 1240 kHz, 500 W day, 1 kW night; WWSE-FM: 93.3 MHz, 27 kW, ant. 643 ft.

**Format:** WJTN(AM): Full service; WWSE-FM: AC

**Broker:** Ray Rosenblum

## FMs

**WRNO-FM New Orleans**

**Price:** \$12.5 million

**Buyer:** Clear Channel Communications (Randy Michaels, chairman/CEO, Radio); No. 1 radio-station group owns 1,213 other stations, including WYLD(AM), WODT(AM) and FM, KFXN-FM, WNOE-FM, and WQUE-FM all New Orleans.

**Seller:** Wilks Broadcasting LLC (Jeff Wilks, CEO)

**Facilities:** 99.5 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 1,004 ft.

**Format:** Classic rock

**Comment:** Clear Channel is exchanging KKND-FM Port Sulphur, La., for WRNO-FM plus \$12.5 million (see below)

**KKND-FM Port Sulphur (New Orleans), La.**

**Price:** Swap (see item above)

**Buyer:** Wilks Broadcasting LLC (Jeff Wilks, CEO); owns 11 other stations, including KMEZ-FM, WSJZ-FM and WYLA-FM New Orleans

**Seller:** Clear Channel Communications (Randy Michaels, chairman/CEO, Radio)

**Facilities:** 106.7 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 981 ft.

**Format:** Modern rock

**WPVI-FM Charlotte Amalie, V.I.**

**Price:** \$1 million

**Buyer:** Pan Caribbean Broadcasting de Puerto Rico (Richard J. Friedman, president); owns one other station, not in this market

**Seller:** Benjamin Broadcasting Corp. (Johnathan K. Cohen, president)

**Facilities:** 104.3 MHz, 45 kW, ant. 1,608 ft.

**Format:** '70s oldies/classic hits

**KHDY-FM Plainview, Texas**

**Price:** \$750,000

**Buyer:** Raman Communications (Brad Moran, president); owns three other stations, none in this market

**Seller:** Rolling Plains Broadcasting (Ken Lane, president)

**Facilities:** 97.3 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 742 ft.

**Format:** Tejano

**Broker:** Bill Whitley, Media Services Group

## AMs

**KQAM(AM) Wichita, Kan.**

**Price:** \$2 million

**Buyer:** ABC Radio Inc. (John Hare, president, ABC Radio); owns 63 other stations, none in this market

**Seller:** Entercom (David J. Field, president/CEO)

**Facilities:** 1480 kHz, 5 kW day, 1 kW night

**Format:** Sports

**Broker:** Elliot B. Evers, Media Venture Partners

**KBMW(AM) Breckenridge, Minn.**

**Price:** \$1.2 million

**Buyer:** Triad Broadcasting Co. (David J. Benjamin, chairman/CEO); owns 41 other stations, including KLTA-FM Breckenridge

**Seller:** W-B Broadcasting Inc. (Thomas M. Vertin, president)

**Facilities:** 1450 kHz, 1 kW

**Format:** Country

**Comment:** Seller has filed an application to move the tower of the station. The buyer will also operate KGWB-FM Wapeton, N.D., under a JSA

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## Technology



Recommended codes for newsgathering vans would require training, equipment and inspections to prevent injuries—especially those caused by contact with overhead electrical wires.

# For ENG-van safety

*California proposals could be nation's first regulations*

By Ken Kerschbaumer and  
Dan Trigoboff

The massive burns and injuries suffered by KABC-TV Los Angeles reporter Adrienne Alpert two years ago when the mast of an electronic news-gathering van she was working from hit 34,500-V power lines cost her a hand, a foot and parts of her remaining limbs.

Her injuries—and others from accidents in several states during a remarkably brief

period in 2000—spurred Southern California's five labor unions working in TV news to initiate efforts toward the nation's first set of regulations for news vans. Proposed safety regulations would require training, equipment and inspections in an effort to prevent incidents like Alpert's, which are a leading cause of industrial accidents and injuries—especially from contact with overhead wires (see box for a list of regulations).

The proposal has taken a bit more than a year to reach its current stage and could be a round of comments and a public hearing away from enactment—a fairly rapid pace for negotiating the bureaucratic obstacle course. Unions credit the fervor and safety concerns generated by Alpert's and other accidents, as well as cooperation from government and area broadcasters.

Safety experts like Cohasset, Mass.-based Mark Bell have long noted that the victims of accidents may not always be limited to members of the industry and that injury to passers-by or spectators near an electrically charged area could lead to massive liability.

Certification and training, says Bell, are a necessity. "This is about professionalism, and all sides need to step up their safety awareness and practices," he contends. "Do we need more reminders that home-grown in-house safety practices, as have been used for almost 30 years, don't work?"

Bell also urges that the unions stop defending people who are involved in safety-related suspensions. "Companies need backing, too," he says. "Unsafe is unsafe."

Changes required by the present proposal, according to documents filed by California's Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board, would add an average of \$1,500 in additional costs for a new ENG vehicle, no more than \$3,000 to retrofit an existing one.

Early proposals from the five unions

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## Technology

involved would have been more stringent, requiring vans to be equipped with alarms warning of the proximity of live wires, and would have required at least two crew members for operation of an ENG van. The unions are the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, the NAB Employees and Technicians, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees, and the Communications Workers of America.

Conrad Tolson, of California's Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board, says neither proposal could win a consensus of the drafting committee—which comprised representatives of TV labor and management, along with representatives from public utilities and government. The committee considered not only the costs of such proposals but also their lack of standardization and demonstrated safety improvements.

Not everyone agrees. One of two comments that the Standards Board needs to address is from the Sierra Vista, Arizona-based Hazard Information Foundation (HIFI), which advocates installing proximity alarms on masts. HIFI recommends that if, as with overhead electrical wires, the hazard cannot be eliminated by design, guard or warning, "then rely on human protective gear."

The other comment is a clarification sought by ABC regarding quarterly inspections. Bell is concerned at how a company of ABC's size can't figure out how to spend an hour every three months to inspect a vehicle.

Truck manufacturers find themselves doing what they can to help limit potential injuries and deaths. Jack Feldman, Shook Electronics sales rep, Latin America, says his company has been endorsing the use of two products to help deal with the issue of ENG safety: the Wilburt DeTect and SigAlarm High Voltage Power Line Proximity Warning System. He says the additional cost is around \$2,800. HIFI endorses the SigAlarm.

The Wilburt device, Feldman says, has three functions: a sonar that will detect obstructions, an electric-field detector and an angle meter. "If the vehicle has too much tilt, you can't raise the mast." The "tilt" problem was a factor in the accident that maimed Alpert: Had the vehicle been level, the mast would have cleared the

overhead wires, but the vehicle was parked on a sloping surface.

But training is paramount, maintains Raymond Enama, senior program manager and senior instructor for San Diego Gas & Electric: "If Adrienne Alpert had been trained and understood the hazards, she would not have gotten injured." Alpert left the van after its mast contacted a power line; if she had stayed inside, she likely would have escaped injury.

Enama has seen plenty of accidents that resulted from someone's thinking that, as long as the wires aren't touched, they're safe. However, the wires aren't insulated and have an electrical field that can be deadly.

"For 50,000 volts and below, you need to keep operating equipment 10 feet away," he says. ■

### A plan for safety

Regulations proposed by California's Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board would require:

- Constant-pressure mast switches because they need constant attendance to operate and are located to enable continuous observation of the overhead environment by the operator.
- Level-indication device to let the operator know whether the vehicle is on level or sloping ground,

enabling the crew to assess the risk of elevating the vehicle mast into power lines that may not be directly over the vehicle. It can also prevent the mast from being raised if the angle is too great.

- Proper illumination to help locate overhead hazards in less-than-daylight conditions.
- Installation of audible and visual warning alarms to alert the driver that the mast is elevated.
- Warning signs in easily

seen locations on the vehicle.

- A single safety manual issued for each vehicle.
- All ENG work to be performed in accordance with Cal/OSHA's Article 37 of the High-Voltage Electrical Safety Orders.
- Employee training and certification at least once a year.
- Safety inspections of vehicles every quarter, including in-the-field inspections.

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## IN BRIEF

**WILLIAMS OFFERS BROADBAND**

Williams Communications has launched streaming-media services over its nationwide fiber-optic network. The new services include live and on-demand streaming, wholesale streaming, and subscription/pay-per-view streaming. The company will also provide exclusive live and on-demand streaming-media services to Digicast, which has broadcast more than 220 live sports and entertainment events over the Internet to a global audience.

**VOD VIA DBS?**

VOD-technology company Predi-Wave says it has developed technology for delivery of video-on-demand over satellite. The technology is based on a predictive statistical algorithm and built around a streamlined packet-based standard system incorporating patented hardware and software.

**IKEGAMI SCORES**

All Mobile Video is sending 13 Ikegami HK-388PW digital cameras to Japan for World Cup Soccer coverage. The cameras will be used by facilities provider Charter UK to broadcast matches. The Ikegami HK-388PW uses newly developed 640,000-pixel  $\frac{2}{3}$ -inch FIT CCDs and can instantly convert between 4:3 and 16:9 aspect ratios.

**XTEND TRIALS SERVICE**

Xtend Networks will demo its broadband-delivery system for use by cable operators at SCTE Cable-Tec Expo June 4-7 in San Antonio. The 3-GHz system allows cable ops to offer high-speed Internet and DTV without affecting programming. It uses the standard DOCSIS system and the company's XHub interface at the fiber node to increase bidirectional bandwidth.

# Bucks for TV brains

*TV lab is an appealing idea, but who's going to pay for it?*

By Paige Albinia

**B**roadcasters want to create a broadcast-technology lab, along the lines of CableLabs, to help the industry develop compelling digital products and services. They just aren't sure how to pay for it.

For the past year and a half, the Association for Maximum Service Television (MSTV) has been—off and on—pushing the idea of a high-tech lab where new ideas could be incubated and tested before rollout to the public.

At the National Association of Broadcasters' winter board meeting in January 2001, MSTV strongly pitched the idea. The industry was just finishing up months of fighting over which broadcast-transmission standard would be better—8-VSB or COFDM—and the engineering types thought it would be good if broadcasters had a place of their own to find out, instead of hiring out the work or leaving it to companies with their own agendas.

But the industry settled on 8-VSB, MSTV changed leadership, and the economy soured. By the time the annual NAB convention rolled around that April, the idea had faded. But two weeks ago, MSTV board members began talking about it again, and MSTV President David Donovan made a public pitch for it at the annual meeting of the Advanced Television Systems Committee in mid May.

Now Donovan and MSTV are developing a long-promised proposal that they plan to present to the NAB at some point, although it probably won't be ready for NAB's annual board meeting in Washington June 10-12.



MSTV President David Donovan pitched the TV lab to the Advanced Television Systems Committee.

NAB board members say they're interested in such a plan but so far have seen no proposal. All of them agree the main issue is funding.

Donovan likely will ask NAB, MSTV and the Consumer Electronics Association to chip in, along with the companies that make up the TV industry, including manufacturers.

"Broadcasters are not going to sit for a special assessment or allow part of their dues to be taken for a lab; plus not all broadcasters are part of NAB," says a broadcast executive. "It could only be done with voluntary contributions. There's no way you could mandate any group to pay."

Broadcasters are struggling with the down economy, the tough transition to digital television, and the lack of a digital business plan other than how to stay in business. That's exactly why a tech center built to bring broadcasting into the future might just save the industry. "It's a tough decision on both ends," says the executive, "but that's the reason we need a broadcast lab more than ever before to enhance the broadcast business."

What about the Alexandria, Va.-based Advanced Television Test Center, which still exists and is a co-venture of the major broadcast networks and the broadcast-related trade associations? ATTC was intended mainly to test digital-TV transmission standards. The new lab would be a kind of inventor's playground, with the serious goal of developing killer TV applications no home could be without. ■

**The lab would be a kind of inventor's playground, with the serious goal of developing killer TV applications no home could be without.**

# People

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

### Broadcast TV

**Sandy Montgomery**, VP, broadcast operations, KOMO-TV Seattle, named VP/station manager.

### Cable TV

**Larry Fischer**, executive VP, operations, Time Warner Cable Advertising Sales, Stamford, Conn., appointed president.

### Programming

**Tina Exarhos**, senior VP, communications and music marketing, MTV: Music Television, New York, named executive VP, marketing.

At Bravo Networks, New York: **Todd Tarpley**, VP, interactive, A&E Television Networks, New York, joins as VP, interactive media; **Greg Varhely**, manager, interactive media, appointed director, Independent Film Channel, VOD/SVOD.

**Vivian Schiller**, senior VP, CNN Productions, Atlanta, joins Discovery Civilization Channel, Bethesda, Md., as GM.

**Darren Metzger**, director, international home video and software, Nickelodeon/MTV Networks, New York, joins Hallmark Channel, New

York, as director, international advertising sales marketing.

**Ellen Flahive**, national sales director, PBS Sponsorship Group, New York, promoted to executive director.

**Jennifer Saltzgeber**, manager, original series development, MTV, Los Angeles, joins Oxygen Media, Los Angeles, as director, development.

### Journalism

**Mark Effron**, VP, Post-Newsweek Stations Inc., Hartford, Conn., joins MSNBC, Secaucus, N.J., as VP, live news programming.

**Wendell Edwards**, education reporter, WOOD-TV Grand Rapids, Mich., named reporter, KHOU-TV Houston.

### Technology

**Jeffrey Huppertz**, VP, marketing and business development, ClearBand LLC, Schaumburg, Ill., named VP, North American cable, OpenTV, Mountain View, Calif.

At Crown Castle International, Houston: **Jimmy R. Taylor**, VP/GM, Texas region, named president, spectrum site management, Houston; **Robert E. Paladino**, VP/global leader, Balanced

## Obituary

**Howard Randolph Holder Sr.**, former president of Clarke Broadcasting Corp., died May 6 in Athens, Ga. He was 85.

Holder, a highly decorated WWII veteran, began his career at WOC(AM) Davenport, Iowa, as announcer from 1946 to 1947. He went on to become news director and part owner of WRFC(AM) Athens, Ga., from 1948 to 1956. He became president of Clarke Broadcasting Corp. in 1956, holding that post until 1990, and had been chairman of Clarke's board since 1990.

Holder was president of the Georgia Association of Broadcasters (1961) and Georgia Associated Press Broadcasters Association (1963). He also sat on the board of the Associated Press Broadcasters (1983-91). He was inducted into the Georgia Associated Broadcasters Hall of Fame in 1993.

Holder is survived by his wife, Clementi; a son, H. Randolph Holder Jr., president of Clarke Broadcasting Corp.; three daughters; and three grandchildren.

Scorecard Collaborative, Lincoln, Mass., joins as senior VP, global performance.

### Advertising/Marketing/PR

At National Cable Communications: **Greg Goldman**, senior account executive, WAGA-TV Atlanta, joins as sales manager, Atlanta; **Jenna Madayag**, sales planner, San Francisco, promoted to account executive; **Kristen Wenzel**, manager, Northeast

region domestic television sales, Studios USA, New York, joins as account executive, New York.

### Correction

**Chris Wegemer** is VP, marketing, for EWTN Global Catholic Network, not national marketing manager as indicated in the May 20 issue.

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



Larry Fischer



Tina Exarhos



Vivian Schiller



Wendell Edwards

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

# Homeward bound

*After a year in France, Golson returns to broadcast technology*

**D**uring the past two decades, broadcast-technology manufacturing vet Chris Golson spent much of his time earning his stripes as Sony's "format-war guy." He joined Sony in 1984, just as the Betacam format was rolling out, and, in the 1990s, played a key part in Sony's battle with JVC and Panasonic in a battlefield littered with half-inch tape formats. And even though he left the tape battles behind him when he joined server manufacturer Quantum in 2000 and now, at computer-workstation and server manufacturer SGI, where he is senior director, media industries, he is still the tape warrior.

"For 15 years, we've been hearing about how tape is going to die and be taken over by servers. That will never happen because tape has its place and servers have their place," he says. "What's happened is, servers have become firmly and reliably established, but tape also continues either in acquisition and backup archiving. There are some developments in laser recording, but, for now, I

think tape will be around."

He experienced something of a culture shock when he moved from video-centric Sony to computer-centric companies Quantum and SGI.

"What I've been able to learn is that all of the problems of trying to integrate servers in the video world don't exist in the SGI world," he says. "If we want to integrate our SGI servers into servers from other manufacturers, we don't need PCI [PC interface] boxes to do that. We can do that seamlessly. Ethernet is our RS422 connection."

Golson was born in Mexico City and spent the first 19 years of his life in Europe because his father sold mining equipment throughout Europe and Africa.

Since he was 19, he has made the United States home. The freedom here, he says, is what made him stay.

He earned a degree in history at Tufts University and then attended Emerson College to become a filmmaker. He then moved to New York with his girlfriend of the time. She had aspirations of becoming a television reporter; he aspired to be a filmmaker.

Tiring of the starving-artist thing, though, Golson found inspiration in his girlfriend's medium and found employment at Barco, a video-monitor manufacturer. More than 30 years later, he's still in the industry, having spent 18 of those years at Sony.

The multicultural back-



**Chris Golson**  
Senior director, media industries, SGI

**B. June 18, 1952, Mexico City; B.A., history, Tufts University, 1974; Summer Management Program, Harvard Business School; filmmaking, Emerson College; national sales manager, Barco, 1981-82; East Coast sales manager, Elector, 1982-84; product manager, broadcast monitors, 1984-87, Northwest regional sales manager, 1987-89, director, marketing, 1989-90, VP, display products marketing, 1990-92, Sony; broadcast and production marketing, 1992-98, VP, national sales, 1998-99, VP, marketing, 1999-2000, Sony Broadcast and Professional Group; VP, corporate marketing, Quantum, 2000-01; current position since April; m. Catherine, 1992; daughter Lisa**

ground that Golson acquired growing up came in handy when he joined the electronics

manufacturer in 1984. His first job at Sony was product manager for broadcast monitors, building on the knowledge that he had gained at Barco.

His first challenge: to take the company's Trinitron tube that was a hit with consumers and get the TV engineering community to love it as well. "It was hated by the networks because it hid all the problems with the signal," he recalls. "It made everything pretty when engineers wanted to see how bad everything was."

And so Golson went to Japan, where hundreds of thousands of Trinitron sets were coming off the production line, in an effort to get Sony to help with development of a professional monitor that would sell only in the hundreds: not an easy task.

"I appealed to their engineering side and started pointing out defects in terms of purity and linearity," he says. "And I started to appeal to their intellectual side and getting them hooked on improving the quality of the television sets."

Last year, Golson returned to Europe, renting a house on the French Riviera to kick back, relax and recharge. He also fulfilled a dream of having his father's papers established in museums in the region. His father landed in France during World War II.

Today, Golson is back in Silicon Valley and back in the industry he calls home.

—Ken Kerschbaumer



# Classifieds

## Television

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To qualify, you must have an Engineering degree appropriate to discipline, and significant experience at management level in production facilities including non-linear editing and high-end graphics facilities. Experience in product and system design and development is also necessary. Superior written and verbal communication skills and ability to work at all levels within the industry are critical.

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# Editorials

COMMITTED TO THE FIRST AMENDMENT

## Clueless

Attention, GMs, news directors and sales managers. Go directly to <http://www.rtnda.org/>. Do not pass go. Do not collect \$200 from an advertiser. Click on "ethics," then on "RTNDA code of ethics." Read it. Post it. Follow it.

Last week, a red-faced WBBH-TV Fort Myers, Fla., had to explain a flier sent to advertisers offering "a news story on you or your family and how they have impacted Southwest Florida, which will air in the Monday-Friday 5 p.m.-6 p.m. newscast." The price: \$5,000. The explanation: Oops. Show of hands now. Who doesn't recognize that as an ethical breach wide enough to drive your ENG van through? Not KOLO-TV Reno, Nev., apparently, which floated a similar flier with, coincidentally, a similar \$5,000 price tag.

Less egregious, but also instructive, was WSTM-TV Syracuse, N.Y.'s, submission of a top-10 list along with its proposal for a three-year contract to air New York State Lottery drawings. No. 2 on the list: "Positive special-events news coverage of lottery events." Just a joke, said station management. Try just an embarrassing front-page story in the local newspaper driven by competitor's criticism. We would advise leaving the jokes to Letterman.

Back when a Chattanooga station tried selling news time (and prompted our song parody, "Pardon Me, Boss, I Sold the Chattanooga News Crew"), we took aim at what we thought was an isolated incident. It seemed so obviously to stink like a shipful of dead squid on *Fear Factor*. Apparently, it wasn't so obvious.

## Darts, then laurels

Forget *The Osbournes*; our favorite dysfunctional TV family is ABC News, a rich source of gossip and speculation for papers and trades. There was that business about replacing Ted Koppel with Letterman and cutting Peter Jennings' salary. Even *The New York Times* can't resist the Barbara Walters-Diane Sawyer bickering. Then, the always infallible conventional wisdom insists news has no real future at ABC because it lacks a complementary cable outlet.

So it was a bit surprising to see ABC News President David Westin on stage at the Waldorf-Astoria last Monday to accept a Peabody Award for the network's coverage of the Sept. 11 attacks. Every news organization was at its best that week. But, according to the Peabody folks—we know of no better jury—ABC was the best of the best. It was no fluke. Two years ago, ABC News won a Peabody for its Jennings-anchored millennium coverage, again against tough competition. (Then-CNN honcho Rick Kaplan was apoplectic over the loss.) Also picking up a Peabody last week was Koppel for his long-running *Nightline*. The added prestige should help ward off the suits who see his 11:30 time slot as an underperforming asset.

With so many egos at ABC and fiscal stress unlikely to abate, we wouldn't be surprised by more dirty laundry. Nor would we be surprised to see Westin on that stage again next year.

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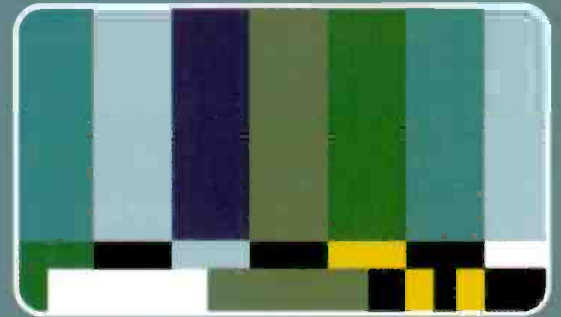
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Every year, we license billions of public performances of musical works from songwriters, composers and publishers. Operating on a non-profit-making basis, we distribute the fees we receive as royalties to Allee and hundreds of thousands like her. Tasks that would otherwise have to be performed by you.

Now, we have no doubt you'd enjoy doing business with someone as creative as Allee. The question is: do you really have the time to do business with 300,000 different Allees?

Managing the songwriter relationship.™

**BMI**