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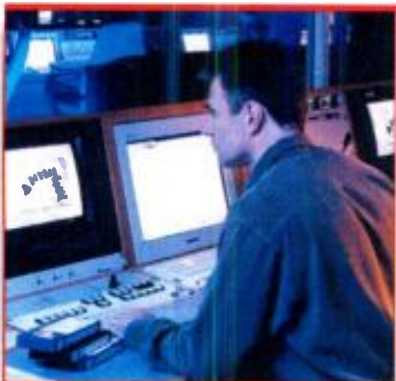
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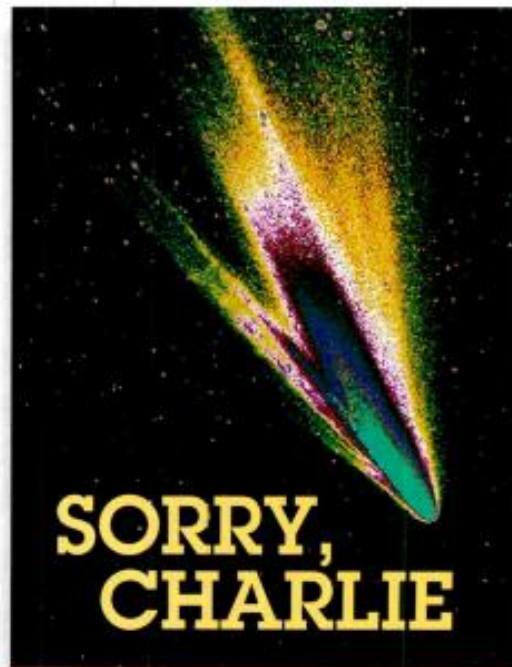


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RADIO

## Look who's not talking

In continued fallout from Opie & Anthony's sex stunt in St. Patrick's Cathedral, parent Infinity Broadcasting is taking advantage of WNEW-FM's firing of the New York shock jocks to drop the FM-talker format. The firing has cost Infinity several



million dollars in lost advertising, but Opie & Anthony's afternoon show was really the only thing working on the troubled station. Infinity's new CEO, John Sykes, is considering switching to either a Lite-FM or alternative-rock format that would be more expansive than Infinity's headbanging WKRQ-FM Edgewater, Fla. —J.M.H.

SYNDICATION

## On the fence on SNTA

Sony Pictures Television hasn't decided whether to participate in Syndicated National Television Association's conference for advertisers in New York Feb. 25-26. Sony's Steve Mosko says he may instead host his own gathering for advertisers. Sony has already ramped up its syndication pitch, hiring a marketer to increase its face time among advertisers. Sources say SNTA is charging \$300,000 per membership, then another \$150,000 for the conference. Syndicators participating in the show include Buena Vista, Paramount, Universal, Tribune Entertainment, 20th Television, Warner Bros. Domestic and NBC Enterprises.—P.A.

# BC EYE

Behind the scenes, before the fact

CABLE PROGRAMMING

## Terrible irony

Showtime had invited Washington-area schoolchildren to a premiere screening last week of *Bang Bang You're Dead*, an original drama about school violence based on the controversial one-act play by William Mastro Simone, who also executive-produced the Showtime drama. Ironically, the children were unable to attend because all outside activities had been canceled after a Maryland student was shot and seriously wounded outside his school by the sniper terrorizing the area. Teachers and others who did make the screening saw a powerful film and heard Mastro Simone praise Showtime Chairman/CEO Matt Blank for "putting your programming where your principles are."—J.E.



Photo: Jeff Snyder / FirmMagic

Showtime's Matt Blank (l) along with *Bang Bang* writer/producer William Mastro Simone (c) and co-star Tom Cavanagh



WASHINGTON

## Eye on Univision

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus is considering opposing Univision's takeover of Hispanic Broadcasting. Staffers for caucus Chairman Rep. Silvestre Reyes (D-Texas) (above) confirmed that the merger is being examined but would not say whether the group is yet inclined to ask federal regulators to block the deal. Programming diversity as well as potential layoffs will be factors in the decision, the staffer said. The Univision deal already is the subject of a \$1.5 billion lawsuit by Spanish Broadcasting against radio-station giant Clear Channel. Spanish charges that Clear Channel wrecked negotiations that could have led to a merger between Spanish and Hispanic. Instead, Clear Channel "required" Hispanic to enter a merger agreement with Univision.—B.M.

## TOUGH ON TICKERS

Disaffection with CNN's news ticker (or "creepy crawler" as some CNN viewers have dubbed it) appears to be infectious. Lou Dobbs



(pictured) and Aaron Brown have made no secret of their disdain for the ubiquitous crawl.

On *Moneyline*, Dobbs often reads—with relish—viewer emails on the crawl, most of them protests. When one viewer wrote that the crawl is "distracting, infuriating, arrogant, self-important, the yellow journalism of the 21st century," Dobbs cheered, "Go, Gerald!" He says his favorite emails are from viewers who've blocked out the ticker with duct tape.

Speaking at a recent media gathering, Brown responded to CNN research showing 67% of viewers prefer the crawl: "Prefer it to what?" he deadpanned, "Freeze-dried coffee?"—A.R.

### DIGITAL TICKER

COMPILED BY DECISIONMARK

#### Newest digital stations

WVPY-DT	Front Royal, Va. (PBS)
WVUT-DT	Vincennes, Ind. (PBS)
KHWB-DT	Houston (WB)
KETC-DT	St. Louis (PBS)
KRWF-DT	Redwood Falls, Minn. (ABC)
WAFF-DT	Huntsville, Ala. (NBC)
WHEC-DT	Rochester, N.Y. (NBC)
WMEA-DT	Biddeford, Me. (PBS)

#### Total DTV stations



# The Swanson domino effect

*His move to Viacom station group triggers dozens of high-level job changes*

By Dan Trigoboff

Fred Reynolds joked that, when he met Dennis Swanson, it was love at first sight. "He has a great philosophy, and an awesome track record."

What's more, "he's never not won," said Reynolds, president of Viacom's station group.

Reynolds had pursued the legendary WNBC(TV) general manager with considerable ardor. He jokes now that, to keep their meetings secret, they went on a virtual tour of New York's worst restaurants. Swanson proved susceptible to wooing, and without tipping his hand.

No sooner had Swanson retired from WNBC in July than he joined Viacom as



Says Viacom Station Group Executive Vice President Dennis Swanson, "We had to really attack the big markets, where's there's so much at stake, where we're not as competitive as we should be."

executive vice president for its station group, which includes woefully weak CBS O&Os in major markets.

Speculation during the spring suggested he was increasingly dissatisfied with the NBC station group's moves toward central-

ized management. And the General Electric-owned group, either first or second in all the top markets, didn't appear likely to shift back toward more local control.

But the courtship of Dennis Swanson was only the beginning of a high-level recruiting frenzy beyond anyone's memory. When was the last time general managers at two of the Big Three O&Os in the nation's No. 1 market changed within days? But that wasn't all. Within weeks, *all* the Big Three O&O news directors had changed in New York, as had four of Viacom's top-five-market GMs.

"I've been in television a long time," Swanson said recently. "I didn't need to sit around and think about this for six to 12 months. I thought we had to really attack

## Six degrees of Dennis Swanson

Even in a business known for rapid personnel changes—upward, downward and sideways—the repercussions of Dennis Swanson's emergence from his weekend retirement to take over the Viacom Station Group have been remarkable. Here are some key changes in major-market and network positions:

- **Dennis Swanson**, (retired) president/GM WNBC(TV) New York/co-chairman, NBC Olympics coverage, to executive VP, Viacom Stations Group
- **VP/news director**, WCBS-TV
- **Valari Dobson Staab**, president/GM, WTVD-TV Raleigh-Durham, N.C. (ABC), to president/GM, KGO-TV (ABC)
- **reporter**, WPVI Philadelphia (ABC), to anchor-reporter KYW-TV
- **Barbara Johnson**, executive producer, WABC-TV, to news director, WNBC
- **Joel Cheatwood**, executive VP, news, Viacom stations/news director, WCBS-TV, to VP, news research and special projects
- **Carol Fowler**, news director, WGN-TV Chicago (Tribune), to VP/GM WBBM-TV (Viacom) Chicago
- **Tom Remiszewski**, VP, creative services and programming, WNBC, to VP, creative services and marketing, Viacom Television Stations Group
- **Ken Plotnick**, assistant news director, WABC-TV to news director WABC-TV
- **Low Leone**, VP, sales, WNBC to VP/GM, WCBS-TV New York
- **Mark F. Lund**, sales manager, WBZ-TV/WSBK-TV (Viacom) Boston to VP, sales, WNBC
- **Peter Dunn**, executive VP sales, NBC stations, to VP/GM, KYW-TV Philadelphia (Viacom)
- **Fran Preston**, director, programming and special projects, WLS-TV Chicago (ABC), to station manager, WBBM-TV Chicago (Viacom)
- **Ron Longinotti**, VP/GM, KGW(TV) Portland, Ore. (Belo), to VP/GM, KPIX-TV San Francisco (Viacom)
- **Tony Pettiti**, VP/GM, WCBS-TV, to senior VP, Station Operations, Viacom Television Stations Group
- **Princell Hair**, corporate news director, Viacom Stations, to VP, news, Viacom
- **Marcellus Alexander**, VP/GM, KYW-TV, to VP, Television Department, NAB
- **Walt DeHaven**, VP/GM, WBBM-TV, to VP/GM, KCNC-TV Denver (Viacom)
- **Joel Goldberg**, assistant news director, WNBC, to director, Station Operations, WCBS-TV
- **Tony Pettiti**, senior VP, Viacom Stations Group, to executive producer, CBS Sports
- **Joe Ahern**, president/GM, KGO-TV San Francisco (ABC), to president/GM, WBBM-TV Chicago (Viacom)
- **Lew Leone**, VP, sales WNBC, to GM, WCBS-TV
- **Dan Forman**, news director, WABC-TV, to senior VP/station manager WNBC
- **Philip O'Brien**, managing editor, WNBC, to assistant news director, WCBS-TV
- **Dianne Doctor**, VP/news director, WNBC, to
- **Marc Howard**, anchor/

—Dan Trigoboff

# BIG GAME, B

Detroit - WDIV

NBC 11:00am

Rating/Share

**3.0/10**

Houston - KHWB

WB 12:00pm

Rating/Share

**2.7/8**

Seattle - KOMO

ABC 4:30pm

Rating/Share

**3.4/9**

Cleveland - WKYC

NBC 4:00pm

Rating/Share

**2.7/7**

Portland - KATU

ABC 4:00pm

Rating/Share

**3.0/8**

New Orleans - WWL

CBS 1:00am

Rating/Share

**5.1/15**

Source: NSI, WRAP Overnights, 9/30-10/4/02.



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Hosted By  
Donny Osmond

the big markets, where there's so much at stake, where we're not as competitive as we should be. So we've got to get the best general managers possible and get them in place early."

He may not be done. He continues to look for the right people for the right jobs.

The new station managers may also make some additional moves. "I believe in delegation," Swanson said. "I don't intend to micromanage these stations."

"I've never seen a pace like this," says

moted to replace Swanson, leaving his post as executive vice president of sales and marketing for NBC stations.

Comerford then hired Mark Lund (son of former CBS executive Peter Lund) to become WNBC's vice president of sales. He had been sales manager for Viacom's Boston duopoly, WBZ-TV and WSBK-TV.

CBS sources say reports of "fill-in-the-blank" salary offers have been exaggerated. But compensation differences are only a drop in the bucket compared with the

filling Viacom's long-open slot at KPIX-TV there—back to Chicago, where he had worked with Swanson at WLS-TV.

When Carole Black, now president of Lifetime Television, was the general manager of KNBC(TV) Los Angeles, Swanson was her counterpart in New York, and she marvels, "I think Dennis Swanson understands every single area of the business, knows how to make a great station and drive it to the top."

Some at CBS had doubts that News Director Dianne Doctor would leave WNBC, the top shop in the top market, for WCBS-TV. But the combination of the challenge, additional compensation and Doctor's regard for Swanson sealed the deal. (Also, WNBC had brought in WABC-TV News Director Dan Forman as senior vice president of news and station manager, adding a layer of management at the station Doctor was leaving.)

NBC sources naturally downplay the exits and note that it has lost no experienced general managers. But, while NBC's bench has allowed it to fill recent big-market GM openings from its GM ranks—Linda Sullivan from WRC-TV Washington to KNTV(TV) San Francisco-San Jose, Michael Jack from WCMH-TV Columbus, Ohio, to replace Sullivan—Viacom was able to offer two top NBC sales execs GM jobs in major markets.

Viacom has filled GM jobs in four of its top-five markets from outside its group. ■



**The pace is nothing more than Dennis attacking the whole product.'**

—Tom Dolan, TV executive recruiter

consultant and TV executive recruiter Tom Dolan, who was himself recruited to WLS-TV Chicago by Swanson in the 1980s "I don't think there's been a pace like this. The pace is nothing more than Dennis attacking the whole product," he adds.

Swanson's move caused a ripple of moves through the other networks' O&Os.

For instance, Lew Leone left WNBC (where he ran sales) to join Swanson and run WCBS-TV. He replaced Tony Pettiti, who first was moved into a group-management position, then to CBS Sports.

At WNBC, Frank Comerford was pro-

tremendous amount of money that can come from improved performance in a major market, they say: A single rating point for WCBS-TV in top-market New York can mean \$5 million for the group.

Not all entreaties have been successful, notably those to WMAQ-TV General Manager Larry Wert, news executives Frank Whitaker and Vickie Burns, and Research Director Toni Falvo, all in Chicago.

But Swanson was able to put together a deal that brought Joe Ahern—who had been running ABC's San Francisco station KGO-TV and had shown no interest in

## AT&T cable cuts 1,700

By John M. Higgins

Everyone has known for months that the layoffs were coming, but that doesn't make it any fun when they actually do. AT&T Broadband last week swung the ax on 1,700 workers in advance of the cable unit's takeover by Comcast.

The executive and management levels are taking the most hits. The cuts amount to 4.3% of the unit's workforce but repre-

sent a third of its 3,700 Denver headquarters staff. Comcast executives believe that AT&T had tremendously overstaffed its cable operation.

AT&T has notified 675 employees that they'll be gone when the deal closes next month. The rest will go over the next several months.

The company said no employee will receive less than four months' worth of pay

as severance and some long-time workers will get more than a year's pay.

"It's not a great situation," said outgoing AT&T Broadband President and CEO Bill Schleyer, "but we tried to do the best possible."

AT&T Broadband axed an additional 500 workers at the beginning of the year to get operating numbers up and push more responsibilities out to the systems. Comcast plans to keep the 2,000 employees at AT&T's Denver cable system and the staff at its Digital Media Centers division in Englewood, Colo. ■



# Early Show rises again, again

*CBS's latest rework of troubled program expected to focus on hard news*

By Steve McClellan

It's back to square one for *The Early Show* on CBS, with the network expected to announce this week its plans for a new format and four new anchor people.

There has been speculation that CBS might unveil its new talent first but not be ready with a new format until December. But network sources say the new format with the new cast will launch at the start of the November sweeps.

The new anchor team is expected to include Harry Smith, who co-hosted *CBS This Morning* in 1991-99; Hannah Storm, previously with NBC Sports; and Julie Chen, current news reader on *The Early Show*.

Sources indicate that the network has tapped its owned-station division for the fourth new co-host: Renee Syler, news anchor at KTVT(TV) Dallas.

In an effort to bring more on-air diversity to the program, CBS had been looking at several African-American women broadcasters for the fourth slot. Sources say it was in hot pursuit of Tamron Hall, co-host of Fox-owned WFLD(TV) Chicago's local morning news show but Fox wouldn't let her out of her contract. When Hall fell through, the network signed Syler, who is also African-American.

The network also considered Mallika Marshall (daughter of ABC's Carole Simpson), a Boston-based physician who does the *Healthwatch* segment for the CBS-owned WBZ-TV in the market. CBS also looked at Alison Stewart, former co-anchor on the overnight news program at ABC. No comment from the network on talent or format details.

Sources at the network also denied speculation that the new format will resemble the light and chatty *The View*,



A new *Early Show* format hosted by Harry Smith (l), Julie Chen (c) and Hannah Storm (r), plus Renee Syler, will reportedly launch at the start of the November sweeps.

ABC's popular daytime show. CBS still intends to do a harder news show than either *Today*, the ratings leader among morning news shows, or second-place *Good Morning America*.

"It will be built around a team of equal anchors," says one source. "But they don't want this thing to be *The View* or *Entertainment Tonight*."

Still to be worked out is the amount of time local stations will have to air local news and weather inserts. A committee of affiliate board members has met with key network officials (including CBS Television President Leslie Moonves, News president Andrew Heyward, *Early Show* producer Michael Bass and affiliate relations head Peter Schruth) to discuss the direction of the show. Both sides say the meetings have been productive.

A major point of contention is the local/national "co-op" broadcast (previously known as the "blended" broadcast) that a couple of dozen stations in mostly big markets (covering more than 40% of the country, according to one network source) air from 7 to 9 a.m. Stations carrying the co-op format air significantly more local content in the two-hour block than those carrying the standard broadcast. It was a format that the network came up with years ago, both to differentiate the broadcast from the competition and to dissuade CBS stations from abandoning the show altogether.

Now the network wants to abandon the

co-op broadcast because it's a logistical nightmare from a network production standpoint.

According to Bob Lee, newly named chairman of the CBS television affiliates board of advisors, the affiliates that air the blended broadcast love it. The ratings explain why: They tend to do 50% or better in the ratings than those that air the standard program, he says.

"The network came up with this idea of a blended broadcast, and, lo and behold, it worked," he says. "It would be a huge mistake to give it up."

Indeed, Lee and his colleagues on the Affiliate Futures Committee have also urged the network to consider using locally produced segments as a regular part of the new broadcast. "We made a pretty good case that there are some CBS affiliates who could bring a lot to the table in terms of content that viewers across America would find beneficial," Lee says.

CBS's most ambitious plan to escape the early-morning cellar effectively ended in the spring with the departure of Bryant Gumbel, who launched the *Early Show* three years ago with co-host Jane Clayson out of brand-new midtown-Manhattan studios created for the program.

The show made some slight gains in the key women demos, thanks to Clayson, who left two weeks ago. However, the show remains a distant third behind *Today* and *GMA* and often fourth behind local news competition. ■

# It's the fall canning season

ABC, first to act, puts the lid on *Push*, *Nevada* and *That Was Then*; NBC's *Just Shoot Me* next?

By Paige Albiniak

Although ABC and media buyers are crowing about the performance of its Tuesday-night schedule, it was the first network to announce cancellations last week, showing that it still has plenty of work to do on the rest of its schedule.

Getting the ax is ABC's *Push*, *Nevada* on Thursday nights at 9 p.m. ET. It will get its last airing on Oct. 24, right before the

be-determined special programming through November. ABC will move *Monk* to its new time slot, Mondays at 8 p.m., beginning Nov. 18.

*The Drew Carey Show* and *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*, which now air Mondays at 8 p.m. and 8:30 p.m., respectively, will move to Fridays as of Nov. 8, replacing *That Was Then*.

Regarding the switch, ABC Entertain-

Otherwise, NBC is struggling on Tuesdays from 8 to 9 p.m. with last week's seventh-season premiere of *Just Shoot Me* placing fourth in households and fifth in adults 18-49, performing even below last year's ill-fated *Emeril*. Dennis Farina's *In-Laws* at 8:30 p.m. didn't do much better, coming in fourth in households and third in adults 18-49.

Viewers came back to NBC for *Frasier*



## THE RATINGS RACE

Broadcast nets' rating/share

Sept. 30-Oct. 6

Adults 18-49		Households	
NBC	5.1/14	CBS	8.8/15
CBS	4.1/12	NBC	8.4/14
ABC	3.7/10	ABC	6.2/10
Fox	3.0/8	Fox	5.5/9
WB	2.2/6	WB	3.2/6
UPN	1.8/5	UPN	2.6/4

Source: Nielsen Media Research

NBC's *Just Shoot Me* is trailing ABC's Tuesday-night leaders.

sweeps. Also gone, at least for now, is the network's *That Was Then*, on Friday nights at 9 p.m., which ABC stuck in the "hiatus" netherworld after only two airings. Analysts are wondering how long ABC will be able to support medical show *MDs*, on Wednesday nights at 9 p.m., which is getting battered by NBC's ratings powerhouse, *Law & Order*.

"ABC's ratings are still down over last year because their bads are outweighing their goods," says Sam Armando, media director, broadcast research group, at Starcom Worldwide. "*Push* and *That Was Then* were really pulling them down."

To fill the hole on Thursdays, ABC will run the two-hour pilot of *Monk* on Thursday, Oct. 31, and then fill the slot with to-

ment President Susan Lyne says: "*That Was Then* was a good show in a bad time period. We have six remaining episodes that we fully anticipate trying in a different time slot later on."

Lyne also says *Push* viewers still can compete for the million-dollar-plus grand prize after ABC airs the seventh episode. The network will post revised rules on ABC.com.

Conversely, ABC has purchased full-season orders for the John Ritter comedy, *8 Simple Rules for Dating My Teenage Daughter*, *Life With Bonnie* and *Less Than Perfect*, all of which are turning in strong performances for the network in key demos on Tuesday nights.

at 9 p.m., which took first in the key ratings categories, and *Hidden Hills* at 9:30 p.m. retained enough of that audience to win the key adult demos.

Through Oct. 6, CBS is winning the race in households with an 8.9 rating/15 share to NBC's 8.6/14, while NBC is hanging on to its lead in adults 18-49 with a 5.2/14 to CBS's 4.3/12.

Elsewhere on the schedule, though having a tough year overall, UPN is happy enough with the performance of new comedy *Half & Half* on Monday night that it purchased a full-season order of the show, which airs at 9:30 p.m., to finish up a comedy lineup that includes *The Parkers*, *One on One* and *Girlfriends*. ■

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## THE WEEK THAT WAS

**THE WHOLE PROGRAM**

Just because you're No. 1 doesn't mean you have job security. Just ask **Jonathan Wald**, the ousted executive producer of NBC's *Today* show. He was canned 17 months into his stint at the helm of the ratings-leading morning news show. He and **Katie Couric** clashed over the show's direction. Leading candidate to replace him: **Tom Touchet**, a former senior producer at ABC's *Good Morning America*. ...

CBS continues to narrow the ratings gap with NBC on Thursday nights, according to the Nielsen fast affiliate ratings report for Oct. 10. In fact, CBS overtook NBC in the circulation battle, winning households and total viewers. And it was a competitive second in the key adult demos, where it has gained ground on NBC since the start of the new season. For the first time this season, *CSI* was the most watched program of the night, beating *Friends* in total viewers. ...

The WB got more good ratings news last Wednesday night with its last series premiere of the fall season, *Birds of Prey*, a drama about the illegitimate daughter of Batman and Catwoman. The show, which aired at 9 p.m. ET, turned in the second-highest performance in WB history in adults 18-34, with a 5.0 rating/14 share, and men 18-34, with a 5.4/15, according to Nielsen ratings. The WB's Wednesday tied the net's best score in adults 18-49 with a 3.4/9. For the night, the WB was No. 1 in men 18-34 and

**GET TOUGH**

NBC's Brian Williams (above) told an assemblage of journalists that tougher questions of government officials were especially important during "the most important era for news since [World War II]." Addressing the Radio-Television News Directors Association's Edward R. Murrow Awards ceremony at the Museum of Television & Radio in New York Tuesday, he said, "Airing criticism of our government does not make us critics of our government."

No. 2 in adults 18-34, persons 12-34, women 18-34 and women 12-34.

In addition, The WB has picked up the last nine episodes of freshman drama *Everwood*, starring **Treat Williams**, the first drama this season to be picked up for a full 22-episode run. ...

Weekly syndicated action hour **MGM/NBC Media Sales' *She Spies***, which got a three-episode preview on NBC this summer, debuted last week with a 1.9 rating on 278 stations covering 97% of the U.S.

**AND NOW THE NEWS**

The U.S. government is developing plans for an Arabic-lan-

guage television network that would provide an alternative voice to **Al-Jazeera**, the Arabic world's only 24-hour news network. There are also plans for a radio station in Iran. ...

The Big Three networks' decision not to carry **President Bush's** speech Monday on Iraq drew quick and sharp criticism from MSNBC's cable editor-in-chief **Jerry Nachman**. Only Fox aired the speech. The other networks said the White House did not formally ask them to cover the Cincinnati address. But Nachman called the possible threat on Iraq "the most important story in the world" and chided networks for showing comedies and reality shows instead.

MSNBC last Friday yanked **Ashleigh Banfield's** 10 p.m. ET show. She will share anchor duties on *MSNBC Investigates* and report.

**STRICTLY BUSINESS**

**News Corp.** engineered its takeover of the executive ranks of **Gemstar-TV Guide International**, ousting Gemstar CEO **Dr. Henry Yuen** and Chief Financial Officer **Elsie Leung**. News Corp. controls about 42% of Gemstar and has been angling to remove the two execs for some time. **News Corp.** veteran **Jeff Shell**, who has been co-president and COO for five months, takes over as CEO. The company's EVP of Finance **Paul Haggerty** succeeds Leung as COO. ...

NBC subsidiary **Telemundo** has agreed to buy three stations already affiliated with the Spanish-language network for \$53

million. The network has agreed to buy, subject to FCC approval, **KNSO(TV)** Merced, Calif. (Fresno-Visalia market) from **Sainte 51 Partners II** for \$33 million and **KDRX-LP** (low power) Phoenix and **KHRR(TV)** Tucson from **The Apogee Companies** (principally owned by **Roy Disney**) for about \$20,000,000. ...

**Viacom** plans to buy up \$3 billion more of its stock, banking that its fortunes and stock price are on the way up. ...

**Time Warner Cable** in Los Angeles and Orange County, Calif., is lowering from \$41.95 to \$39.95 for full basic to encourage customers to try its new video-on-demand and subscription VOD services. ...

**Robert G. Lee**, president and general manager of **WDBJ(TV)** Roanoke, Va., has been elected chairman of the CBS TV affiliate board. Lee succeeds **Ray Deaver**, who retired as general manager of **Gray Communications' KWTX-TV** Waco, Texas, at the end of last year.

**FCC OK'S IBOC**

Radio stations are free to launch a competitive alternative to satellite radio, thanks to the FCC's decision last week to approve in-band, on-channel (IBOC) technology that will make CD-quality sound an option for broadcasters. The technology requires listeners to buy radios equipped with digital receivers. IBOC is approved for round-the-clock use for FM and daytime-only use for AM, where atmospheric problems are still to be solved.

# Top cop slaps Capitol media

Montgomery County, Md., police chief says WUSA tarot-card scoop hinders sniper manhunt

By Dan Trigoboff

Last week's report from a Washington-area TV station that a tarot card with the message to police that "I am God" had been found near one of the sniper shootings there caused the police chief to blast the news media and accuse it of endangering the investigation.

"Do you want the police to work this case, or do you want Channel 9 to do it?" asked a clearly angry Charles Moose, chief of police in Montgomery County, Md., referring to Gannett-owned WUSA(TV) Washington, which broke the tarot-card story.

Moose suggested that such revelations could "hinder our ability to bring this person or these people into custody."

It was reported later by the *Washington Post* that the card included another message, asking that the card not be shared with the media. Some detectives felt that reporting the card's existence could jeopardize the dialogue with the possible killer.

Clearly, not all police agreed. WUSA News Director Dave Roberts noted that "the information was obtained from several credible sources active in the ongoing investigation. We made contact with



Complaining of media coverage, Montgomery County, Md., Chief of Police Charles Moose, asked angrily, "Do you want the police to work this case, or do you want Channel 9 to do it?"

appropriate police authorities, and a request to withhold the information was never made by the authorities."

WUSA said sources for Mike Buchanan's report "are active police professionals, intimately familiar with the case. Some spoke to 9 News out of a belief that more information should be made available to the public than officials have released so far."

Poynter Institute broadcast journalism ethicist Al Tompkins commented that "just because someone doesn't ask you to withhold doesn't mean you're finished with the obligation to know the short-term and long-term effect of your reporting. On the other hand, we should continuously try to find ways to report the information that we know. It forces us into a series of conversations. There's always conflict between [a journalist's duties in] minimizing harm and

in telling the truth."

A poll taken on WUSA's Web site reported that 75% of respondents through Thursday disagreed with the station's decision to report the discovery of the tarot card.

Moose has a history of clashing with the media. In 1998, as the Portland, Ore., police chief, he lashed out at local coverage of a standoff with a cop-killer and accused the media of potentially tipping off the shooting suspect, who killed himself rather than be captured (B&C, March 9, 1998). Three officers were shot, one fatally.

Though Portland news execs conceded that some strategic movements were inadvertently aired, police later acknowledged that the death and injuries could not be blamed on the coverage. The controversy led to a dialogue and agreement between police and local media on crisis coverage. ■

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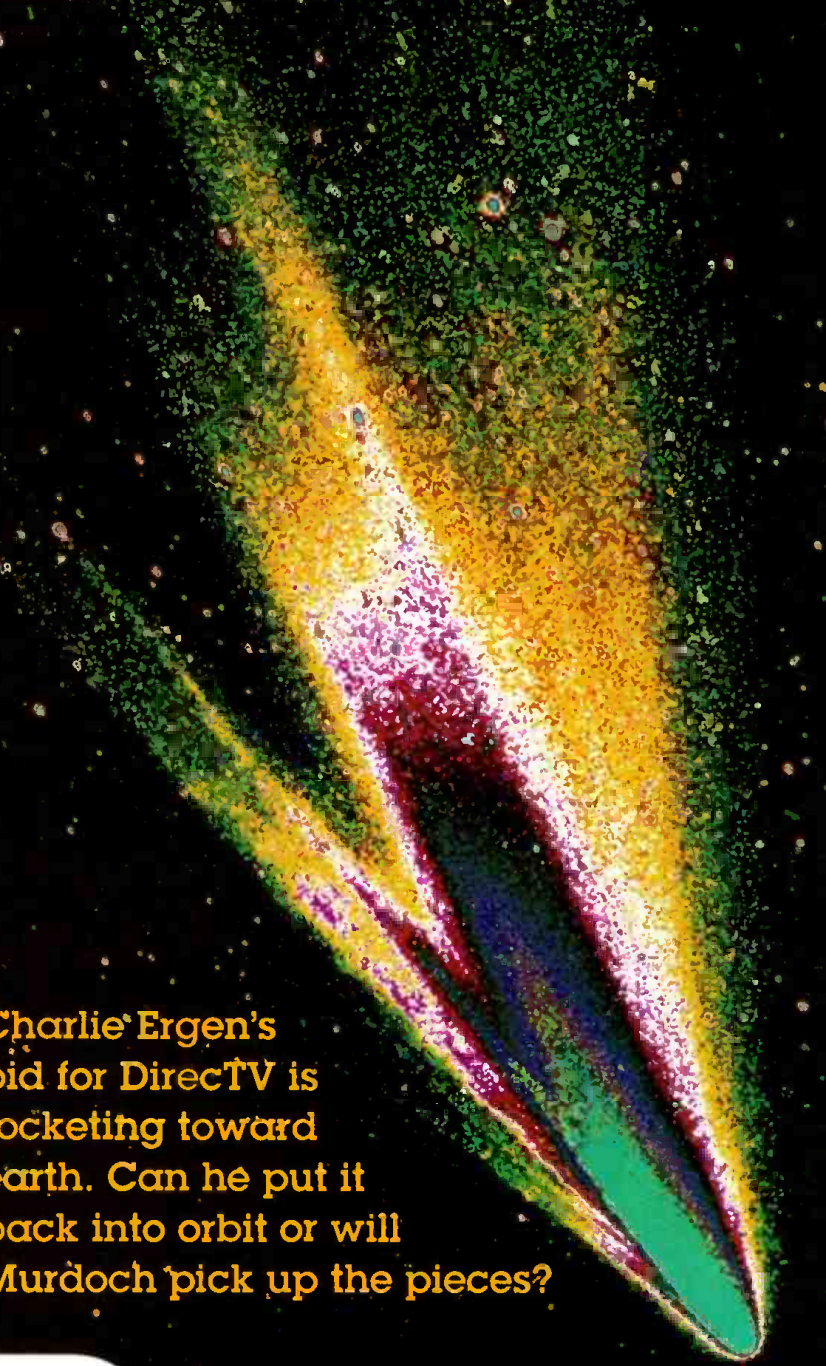
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Charlie Ergen's bid for DirecTV is rocketing toward earth. Can he put it back into orbit or will Murdoch pick up the pieces?

# Down in Flames

By John M. Higgins and Bill McConnell

## What's good for General Motors is not good for the country.

That's the harsh assessment FCC Chairman Michael Powell delivered in rejecting Charlie Ergen's \$30 billion bid to take over DirecTV parent Hughes Electronics, which is controlled by General Motors.

In voting 4-0 to shoot down the deal, the commission dismissed the central arguments that the EchoStar Communications chairman has spun in the 11 months and 11 days since the deal was first cut: that a single, strengthened DBS provider would compete more vigorously with cable operators and provide more services to customers than EchoStar and DirecTV could separately.

Instead, FCC officials—and probably anti-trust staffers at the Department of Justice—have riveted on how the multichannel video business would go from three players in most markets—one local cable system, DirecTV and EchoStar—down to two. In rural areas not served by cable, the number of players would go from two to one.

Now Ergen is furiously scrambling to keep the deal together, planning to file within 30 days a revised application for the FCC to transfer DirecTV's licenses. He's already making proposals to the DOJ, which DirecTV and EchoStar executives believe is also planning to turn down the deal.

Before the FCC's official rejection Thursday, Ergen acknowledged that he was proposing "structural changes" that would "mean new entrants in the marketplace." He wouldn't offer details, but analysts and industry executives believe that his checklist includes handing licenses for a satellite at 61.5 degrees west longitude to Cablevision Systems, which controls other frequencies in that slot. Another option would be to create "open-access" EchoStar and DirecTV's transponders, letting an outside company run a competitive DBS business on their birds. The most drastic option would be to cede EchoStar's satellite hovering at 119 degrees west.

FCC officials specifically objected to putting all three DBS "full CONUS" slots—those capable of delivering TV to the entire continental United States—in the hands of one company. In addition to 119 degrees west, a merged EchoStar-DirecTV would also have had full CONUS slots at 101 degrees west and 110 degrees west.



Charlie Ergen worked hard to build political support for the merger. But it was all in vain.

Despite considerable skepticism among satellite experts, Europe-based satcaster SES Americom says it plans to launch in late 2004 a DBS satellite at 105.5 degrees west, between existing birds owned by EchoStar and DirecTV. But, for SES to move forward, EchoStar must reposition somewhat its existing satellite and allow SES to piggyback on EchoStar spot beams used for local broadcast channels.

But Ergen is clearly floundering. "There's

no easy or quick fix here. They have a very steep hill to climb," said FCC Media Bureau Chief Ken Ferree. "We're looking at years out before there would be real competition provided by these services." FCC officials also noted that Ergen has had a year to make changes if he wanted.

The exploding deal is a huge embarrassment for General Motors, which pulled all the strings on the sale of Hughes, a "tracking-stock" subsidiary. GM is selling because

it needs cash to meet obligations in its car-manufacturing operation. In accepting EchoStar's \$30 billion bid (which valued Hughes at \$22 a share), GM, which owns 30% of the stock, rejected a competing offer from News Corp.'s satellite-hungry Rupert Murdoch, who started pursuing DirecTV in February 2000 (when Hughes was trading at \$32 a share and GM was seeking \$45).

But Hughes is trading at just \$9 a share. And selling it again (probably for around \$15 billion) could take a year to complete.

"Not only will GM probably get less," said one media investment banker, "but they have to wait for any money."

If the EchoStar deal craters, Murdoch will still be standing there, no doubt chuckling over his lobbying efforts against the deal. He dismissed as a "myth" well-documented assertions that he was lobbying against the merger. Though acknowledging continuing interest in DirecTV, he said he would have to wait to see whether he would pursue it again.

"A long time has gone since we last looked at that company," Murdoch said. "It had a lot of problems then. We have to see whether they're better or worse."

Murdoch would be no shoo-in. News Corp. was stretching to come up with its last offer and had to secure backing from Liberty Media's John Malone and



Chuck Dolan's plan for a rival DBS service may help revive EchoStar's bid for DirecTV.

## Is Chuck Dolan for Real?

Cablevision Systems Chairman Chuck Dolan is in desperate straits. His company's stock has dropped 83% this year. He's cutting back cable, retail and cellular-phone operations because he can't borrow enough to pay for them. After working for years to spin off the Rainbow cable-network unit, it's back in because he needs to tap the net's cash.

Yet Dolan is the man that EchoStar's Charlie Ergen is depending on to salvage his takeover of DirecTV. Dolan controls a slice of satellite spectrum and is constructing a bird that he contends could become a DBS service. And with regulators unwilling to let EchoStar create a DBS monopoly, Ergen needs to gin up another entrant.

While the venture could require billions of dollars, Ergen presents the financially strapped

Dolan as the man capable of launching a rival DBS venture that would compete with the giant EchoStar-DirecTV combination. Dolan's son, Cablevision President James Dolan, has acknowledged that the venture could cost another \$500 million to \$2 billion. While Ergen would not specifically say that Dolan's is the venture he plans to boost by ceding some precious spectrum, he voiced confidence in Dolan's plans. "I think that Chuck Dolan is a very credible business person who has a great track record and a history of successful businesses," Ergen said last week in New York.

Dolan has been toying with the DBS venture for a decade: Partnering first with Continental Satellite, then with Ford Aerospace and finally buying out Ford Aerospace acquirer

Loral last March. He has 11 frequencies for a satellite that would orbit at 61.5 degrees west longitude and serve most of the country. Dolan has \$300 million committed and says he will launch the bird next March.

Even though Dolan promises to bring in partners, investors are panicked that Dolan will pour cash into the DBS venture. "You need four million subscribers to get to the scale where it's profitable," said analyst Vijay Jayant. "Subscriber-acquisition costs right now are running \$500 each."

Industry executives believe that what Dolan really wants to do is sell the spectrum to Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. if the DirecTV deal goes through, and to Charlie Ergen, who will need spectrum for a solo EchoStar, if the deal doesn't. —J.M.H.

## 'The antithesis of what the public interest demands'

FCC Chairman Michael Powell on why the agency nixed the EchoStar-DirecTV merger:



"Today, the Commission has declined to approve the merger of EchoStar and DirecTV. The record in this case compels this result. The combination of EchoStar and DirecTV would have us replace a vibrant competitive market with a regulated monopoly. This flies in the face of three decades of communications policy that has sought ways to eliminate the need for regulation by fostering greater competition. I decline the invitation to turn our

national communications policy back so many years.

"The record before us irrefutably demonstrates that the proposed merger would eliminate an existing viable competitor in every market in the country. The case against approving the transfer application is particularly compelling with respect to residents of rural America who are not served by any cable operator. Those Americans would be left with only one choice for their subscription video service,

now and in the foreseeable future. But that alone is not the cornerstone of our decision. At best, this merger would create a duopoly in areas served by cable; at worst, it would create a merger to monopoly in unserved areas. Either result would decrease incentives to reduce prices, increase the risk of collusion, and inevitably result in less innovation and fewer benefits to consumers. That is the antithesis of what the public interest demands."

Microsoft's Bill Gates to make it work. Liberty acknowledges its interest. His old \$23 million bid included \$5 billion worth of stock in interactive-program-guide developer Gemstar-TV Guide International, then trading at \$30 a share. Gemstar shares now trade at \$3 each.

A breakup is widely expected to spark a fight between GM and EchoStar. Ergen can appeal the FCC's rejection a couple of ways. If regulatory approval isn't secured by Jan. 21, though, the deal calls for EchoStar to pay Hughes a \$600 breakup fee. Ergen would also have go forward with a planned \$2.7 billion acquisition of Hughes's 81% stake in ailing international satellite operation PanAmSat. But there are ways out, and Wall Street executives widely expect Ergen to balk at paying the fees.

While, early in the week, EchoStar and DirecTV begged the FCC for more time to revise the deal, Ergen knew the turndown was coming. At a poker game in a Hughes-rented room at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel Tuesday night, a relaxed Ergen hinted to other players (losers for the most part, a witness said) that he expected an adverse decision by the end of the week.

Adverse it was. Powell blasted the DirecTV deal, dismissing Ergen's proposal for rules to guide EchoStar's pricing in rural areas with weak or no cable competition, where DBS has a huge capacity edge. "The combination of EchoStar and DirecTV would have us replace a vibrant, competitive marketplace with a regulated monopoly,"

Powell said. "This flies in the face of three decades of communications policy."

Powell rejected EchoStar's assertions that the DBS providers don't compete with each other and must combine channel capacity in order to offer local broadcast channels in every market.

The ability to match local cable systems' delivery of local TV stations is considered to be key in competing with MSOs. "The record shows that each company standing alone will be capable of offering local broadcast stations to 80% to 85% of American homes in a very short time."

Although antitrust experts predicted the deal would go down in smoke almost as soon as Ergen's offer was announced, FCC officials say they were baffled by Ergen's inability to read the tea leaves. Beyond his initial offer to submit to a national pricing plan, no hint of additional concessions was revealed until last Monday.

Yet it's hard to blame Ergen solely for the communications breakdown. No commissioners other than Powell had more than cursory discussions about the deal. In the meantime, Powell and Media Bureau staff obsessively guarded any hint of their thinking in order to stem what they apparently view as the most terrible outcome of all: that their plans would be leaked to the press before set in stone.

Only two weeks ago did a shocked Ergen realize that the FCC was going to knock down his deal rather than take the customary route of waiting until separate

negotiations, possibly leading to EchoStar concessions, with the Justice Department concluded. Equally shocked were commissioners when they found out Ergen was willing to deal. "We were taken aback that they waited so long to say there were all these things they were willing to do," said one commissioner's aide.

Technically, the FCC cannot reject the merger outright. Instead, the decision is slated for a review by an FCC administrative law judge. The start of the administrative law process could take up to three months, and the proceeding itself conceivably could drag on for years.

Although administrative hearings for station license renewals were once quite common, examples of hearings for major mergers are scant. The last one occurred in 1966, when the Justice Department pressured the FCC to rethink its approval of the ITT-ABC merger. In that case, Justice fought a second FCC approval in court. On New Year's Day 1968, a little more than two years after the deal was announced, ITT dropped its bid rather than continue fighting the feds.

Despite Ergen's refusal to let the deal die, FCC officials and several Washington sources say he faces an almost insurmountable hurdle now. The biggest obstacle will be convincing either Justice or the FCC that new competitors would have a "significant market impact" within two years, a basic tenet of any condition imposed to offset a merger's harmful effects. ■



# Hallmark takes a trimming

*Lana Corbi out, as parent firm whacks 140 jobs and frets over growing deficit*

By Allison Romano

In March, Hallmark Channel chief Lana Corbi confidently told reporters her channel would break into the top 10 in cable Nielsens in just two years. Eight months later, she is out, and the Hallmark Channel is trying simply to hold on.

Corporate parent Crown Media Holdings Inc. ousted Corbi, formerly president and CEO, last Monday and shaved about 140 jobs, or 30% of its workforce. Most cuts came from Crown's international channel, as the company decentralizes international operations from Denver (which lost 80 jobs) to three foreign regions. That division's top exec, CEO and President Russel Givens, emerged unscathed.

Crown Media CEO David Evans adds Hallmark to his watch. Crown Media took over Odyssey Network in spring 2001 and relaunched it as Hallmark in August '01.

Corbi, a business-side veteran, took the Hallmark reins when veteran programmer Margaret Loesch left a year ago. It was her first shot at running the creative side.

With Crown focusing more on the U.S., "there were really two CEOs and only one business," she said. "For the health of the whole, you have to rearrange the parts." She will stay on as a consultant until year-end.

Crown has to pay the remainder of her contract, \$1.5 million in base salary over two years, according to company documents.

It's in a tough financial spot. Securities filings show it about \$804 million in debt and losing about \$150 million a year, with an accumulated deficit of \$580 million.

The company will take a \$20 million charge in the fourth quarter, including \$5 million in severance costs, and write down



Original movie *Johnson County Wars* logged a 1.1 rating, disappointing given its promo blitz.

\$60 million in programming costs.

To Salomon Smith Barney analyst Jill Krutick, the restructuring adds uncertainty to vulnerability. "A challenge for Crown Media will be to achieve improved ratings and profitable pricing for its channels in the face of growing competition," she said in a report.

The shakeups come as Hallmark's ratings are stagnating. By and large, it sits in the lower echelon of cable Nielsens, aver-

ture. In September, Hallmark registered a 0.5 rating, down 17% from 2001. Delivery to key demos was off: 16% in adults 18-49 and 19% in 25-54. August ratings were flat year-to-year in households, at 0.5, but up 26% in 18-49 and 28% in 25-54.

Distribution rose 13.4 million homes between September 2001 and September 2002, to 47 million subscribers, according to Nielsen Universe Estimates.



**"There were really two CEOs and only one business. For the health of the whole, you have to rearrange the parts."**

—Lana Corbi, former Crown Media CEO

aging a 0.4 to 0.5 prime time rating in recent months. The channel has seen a few spikes in the past year, including strong ratings for replaying ABC's *Roots* miniseries. Recent original movie *Johnson County War* logged an above-average 1.1 rating, a disappointment given its promotional blitz (including parading stars Burt Reynolds and Tom Berenger and a herd of cattle through Times Square).

The first year-to-year ratings comparisons since relaunch paint an erratic pic-

Evans contends the channel needs time more than radical changes. "It takes time to grow ratings, and there is a limit to what you can spend on [advertising]."

He is banking on time-tested acquired fare. Reruns of *M\*A\*S\*H* and *Touched by an Angel* join the schedule soon. He still plans to make 24 original movies and miniseries in the next two years. The exec in charge of those projects, though, former ABC miniseries chief Maura Dunbar, fell victim to the layoffs. ■

# Programming

## BroadcastWatch

COMPILED BY KENNETH RAY

SEPT. 30-OCT. 6 Broadcast network prime time ratings according to Nielsen Media Research

Week	abc	CBS	NBC	FOX	PAX	UPN	WB
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>9.4/15</b>	<b>12.0/19</b>	<b>7.2/11</b>	<b>3.6/6</b>	<b>0.8/1</b>	<b>3.0/5</b>	<b>4.7/7</b>
<b>MONDAY</b>	8:00 78. Drew Carey 4.1/7 8:30 85. Whose Line Is It 3.5/6 9:00 11. Monday Night Football—Denver Broncos vs. Baltimore Ravens 11.5/20	22. King of Queens 9.4/15 17. Yes, Dear 9.9/15 4. Ev Lvs Raymond 14.3/21 9. Still Standing* 12.0/18 5. CSI: Miami 13.2/22	50. Fear Factor 6.7/10 32. Third Watch 7.8/12 42. Crossing Jordan 7.1/12	83. Celebrity Boot Camp 3.6/6	117. Diagnosis Murder 0.8/1	96. The Parkers 2.9/5 89. One on One 3.3/5 92. Girlfriends 3.1/5 97. Half & Half 2.8/4	61. 7th Heaven 5.5/9 82. Everwood 4.0/6
<b>TUESDAY</b>	8:00 24. 8 Simple Rules 8.7/14 8:30 32. According to Jim 7.8/12 9:00 40. Life w/Bonnie* 7.2/11 9:30 42. Less Than Perf* 7.1/11 10:00 26. NYPD Blue 8.5/14	16. JAG 10.0/16 23. The Guardian 9.3/14 12. Judging Amy 11.1/18	56. In-Laws 6.2/10 48. In-Laws 6.8/11 19. Frasier 9.6/15 37. Hidden Hills 7.5/11 29. Dateline NBC 8.1/13	52. MLB American League Division Playoffs Game 1—Anaheim Angels vs. New York Yankees 6.6/11	123. Weakest Link 0.6/1 126. Just Cause 0.5/1 114. Diagnosis Murder 1.0/2	92. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 3.1/5 109. Haunted 1.4/2	75. Gilmore Girls 4.3/7 67. Smallville 4.8/7
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	8:00 26. My Wife & Kids 8.5/14 8:30 42. George Lopez 7.1/11 9:00 34. The Bachelor 7.7/12 9:30 67. MOs 4.8/8	38. 60 Minutes II 7.3/12 59. Amazing Race 5.8/9 61. Presidio Med 5.5/9	42. Ed 7.1/12 12. The West Wing 11.1/17 5. Law & Order 13.1/22	50. MLB American League Division Playoffs Game 2—Anaheim Angels vs. New York Yankees 6.7/12	120. Candid Camera 0.7/1 117. Doc 0.8/1 112. Diagnosis Murder 1.1/2	85. Enterprise 3.5/6 100. The Twilight Zone 2.6/4	85. Dawson's Creek 3.5/6
<b>THURSDAY</b>	8:00 64. Monk 5.4/8 9:00 91. Push, Nevada 3.2/5 9:30 61. Primetime Thursday 5.5/9	4.7/7 13.2/21 8. Survivor: Thailand 12.5/20 2. CSI 17.4/36 19. Without a Trace 9.6/16	14.3/22 1. Friends 17.6/28 10. Scrubs 11.8/18 5. Will & Grace 13.2/20 14. G Mrng Miami 10.7/16 3. ER 15.9/26	4.7/8 71. MLB National League Division Playoffs Game 2—San Francisco Giants vs. Atlanta Braves 4.7/8	123. It's a Miracle 0.6/1 115. Diagnosis Murder 0.9/1	83. WWE Smackdown! 3.6/6	103. Family Affair 1.9/3 107. Do Over 1.5/2 106. Jamie Kennedy 1.6/2 109. Off Centre 1.4/2
<b>FRIDAY</b>	8:00 67. America's Funniest Home Videos 4.8/9 9:00 99. That Was Then 2.7/5 9:30 58. 20/20 5.9/11	4.5/8 6.9/12 38. 48 Hours Investigates 7.3/13 29. Hack 8.1/14 65. Robbery Homicide Division 5.2/9	8.0/14 47. Providence 7.0/13 48. Dateline NBC 6.8/12 15. Law & Order: Special Victims Unit 10.1/19	3.7/7 89. Firefly 3.3/6 78. John Doe 4.1/7	0.6/1 126. Friday Night Flix—Anna's Dream 0.5/1 117. Diagnosis Murder 0.8/2	1.5/3 107. UPN's Movie Friday—Blown Away 1.5/3	2.5/5 103. What I Like/You 1.9/4 102. Sabrina/Witch 2.0/4 88. Reba 3.4/6 101. Greetings/Tucson 2.3/4
<b>SATURDAY</b>	8:00 78. ABC Saturday Night at the Movies—Air Force One 4.1/8	4.1/8 6.3/12 66. Touched by an Angel 5.0/10 40. The District 7.2/13 53. The Agency 6.5/12	3.8/7 95. 40th Anniversary of The Improv 3.0/6 76. NBC Saturday Night Movies—Men in Black 4.2/8	4.5/9 76. Cops 4.2/8 72. Cops 4.5/9 74. Cops 4.4/8 72. Cops 4.5/8	0.4/1 128. America's Favorite Movies—Camelot 0.4/1	KEY: RANKING/SHOW TITLE/PROGRAM RATING/SHARE • TOP TEN SHOWS OF THE WEEK ARE NUMBERED IN RED • TV UNIVERSE ESTIMATED AT 106.7 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS: ONE RATINGS POINT IS EQUAL TO 1,067,000 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-D = SEASON TO DATE • SOURCES: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH, CBS RESEARCH	
<b>SUNDAY</b>	7:00 67. Wonderful World of Disney—Toy Story 2 4.8/8 8:00 60. Alias 5.7/8 9:30 24. The Practice 8.7/14	6.0/10 7.5/12 18. 60 Minutes 9.8/17 34. Becker 7.7/13 42. Bram & Alice* 7.1/11 54. CBS Sunday Movie—Hell on Heels: Mary Kay 6.4/10	7.3/12 78. American Dreams 4.1/7 31. American Dreams 8.0/13 19. Law & Order: Criminal Intent 9.6/14 36. Boomtown 7.6/12	6.7/11 (nr) NFL Game 2 10.6/22 55. NFL Postgame 6.3/12 56. MLB National League Division Playoffs Game 4—Atlanta Braves vs. San Francisco Giants 6.2/10	1.0/2 123. Candid Camera 0.6/1 109. Doc 1.4/2 112. Just Cause 1.1/2 120. Body and Soul 0.7/1	2.6/4 105. Gilmore Girls 1.8/3 92. Charmed 3.1/5 97. Angel 2.8/4	
<b>WEEK</b>	6.2/10	8.8/15	8.4/14	5.5/9	0.7/1	2.6/4	3.2/5
<b>5-13</b>	6.4/11	8.9/15	8.6/14	5.0/8	0.8/1	2.6/4	3.0/5

# SyndicationWatch

SEPT. 23-29 *Syndicated programming ratings according to Nielsen Media Research*

## TOP 25 SHOWS

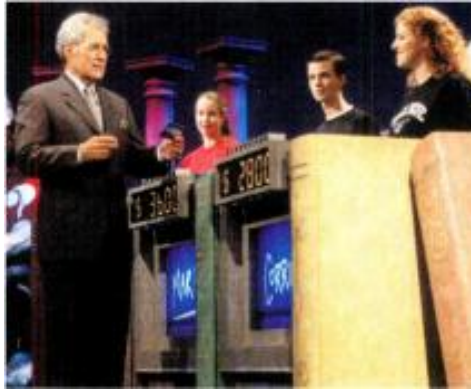
Rank/Program	HH AA	HH GAA
1 Wheel of Fortune	8.4	NA
2 Friends	6.9	6.2
3 Jeopardy	6.7	NA
4 Oprah Winfrey Show	6.1	6.2
5 Entertainment Tonight	6.0	6.1
5 Everybody Loves Raymond	6.0	6.7
7 Seinfeld	5.7	6.2
8 Seinfeld (wknd)	5.1	5.7
9 Judge Judy	4.9	7.1
10 Dr. Phil	4.2	4.2
11 Will & Grace	3.9	4.4
12 That '70s Show	3.5	4.1
12 Wheel of Fortune (wknd)	3.5	NA
14 Friends (wknd)	3.4	3.4
14 Live With Regis and Kelly	3.4	NA
16 Judge Joe Brown	3.3	4.4
17 Inside Edition	3.2	3.3
18 Home Improvement	3.0	3.8
18 King of the Hill	3.0	3.3
20 Entertainment Tonight (wknd)	2.9	3.0
21 Access Hollywood	2.8	2.8
21 Maury	2.8	2.9
21 Frasier	2.8	3.0
24 Divorce Court	2.7	3.5
24 Extra	2.7	2.8
25 Dharma & Greg	2.5	2.7
25 Everybody Loves Raymond (wknd)	2.5	NA

## TOP OFF-NET DRAMAS

Rank/Program	HH AA	HH GAA
1 ER	2.4	2.8
2 The Practice	2.1	2.3
2 The X-Files	2.1	2.2
4 Buffy the Vampire Slayer	1.9	2.0
5 Sabrina the Teenage Witch	1.1	NA

According to Nielsen Media Research Syndication Service Ranking Report Sept. 23-29, 2002  
 HH = Households  
 AA = Average Audience Rating  
 GAA = Gross Aggregate Average  
 One Nielsen rating = 1,067,000 households, which represents 1% of the 106.7 million TV Households in the United States  
 NA = not available

## Putting Columbus in Jeopardy



Taking to the road, Jeopardy helps boost local ratings.

The Jeopardy college championships were taped in Columbus, Ohio, last month, and Dispatch's WBNS-TV already is getting a ratings boost for King World's No. 1 game show—even though the taped shows don't air until November.

Taking the show on the road is quite an endeavor for King World, adding \$2 million to the show's budget to custom-build a set and move the crew for more than a week. But Jeopardy executive producer Harry Friedman agrees that the ratings jump and the buzz such

an event creates both in Columbus and nationally are more than worth it. That's why King World is packing up Jeopardy and Wheel of Fortune fairly often.

Talks involving King World, Dispatch Broadcasting, WBNS-TV and Ohio State University, where the event was taped, began months ago. WBNS-TV got the Wendy's fast-food chain, based in nearby Dublin, to promote the taping and provide information about ticket distribution. Dispatch also advertised the event in its newspaper, The Columbus Dispatch, and on its two radio stations, WBNS(AM) and -FM, as well as on WBNS-TV.

Comparing the Sept. 27-Oct. 8 ratings with the comparable period last year, Jeopardy on WBNS-TV is doing an average of 12.1/22 vs. 9.7/18. "We're up four shares and literally three ratings points, and I attribute that primarily to the hype and the partnership," says Frank Willson, director of marketing and design for the station. And those are the ratings before the championship shows air Nov. 11-15 and 18-22.

Thousands of DSU students began lining up at the student center, some as early as 4 a.m., to try out for the show. Only one made it to the championships; WBNS-TV, of course, hopes the Buckeye beats the representative from Ohio State's archrival, the University of Michigan.

Columbus is King World country, it would seem. WBNS-TV is Dr. Phil's top affiliate nationwide, so far scoring an average 8.7 rating/28 share in its 10 a.m. time slot, more than twice the show's national average. The show debuted in Columbus with a 10.0/27.

—Paige Albinia



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# StationBreak

BY DAN TRIGOBOFF

## RIOS HEADS KCOP NEWS

Longtime KTTV(TV) Los Angeles news VP Jose Rios will expand his duties to include oversight of news at Fox duopoly partner KCOP(TV). Rios's hour-long 10 p.m. newscast is a perennial winner, and the station has strong performers in its morning news and *Good Day LA*, now syndicated. A 20-year market veteran, Rios was news director at KCBS-TV prior to KTTV and was at KTTV when GM David Boylan began his tenure. All departments at the station have been consolidated, all under prior Fox-station leadership—including Boylan.

Rios's promotion means the departure from KCOP of another well-regarded L.A. news director, Larry Perrett. Questions over the future of both Perrett—also a former KCBS-TV news director—and KCOP news began when Fox took over the former Chris-Craft station.

The station's newscast was switched in June from an hour at 10 p.m. to a half-hour at 11, to avoid direct competition with KTTV and allow KCOP an hour syndicated-sitcom block at 10. News has continued, and Boylan said it will continue. Both stations are expected to share Fox's West L.A. facilities, a move delayed by union concerns.

## KRON APOLOGIZES FOR PRIVATE SCREENING

The title "Puppetry of the Penis" already suggests that



### Dunsmore game

The new man at WVNY(TV) Burlington, Vt.-Plattsburgh, N.Y., DMA No. 91, is Barrie Dunsmore, the well-known 30-year veteran of ABC News. Dunsmore has lived for years in the market with his young second family and recently decided to get back in the game, albeit on a part-time basis. He's clearly not in it for the money: "I'm doing it to keep my brain working." Look for station promos from longtime friend and colleague Peter Jennings—the best man at Dunsmore's wedding. "He's been beating up on me since I retired," says Dunsmore.

something other than Señor Wences's thumb would be showcased, but KRON-TV San Francisco staff didn't expect the kind of brief, no-briefs shot that made it on the air.

The shot of the "genital origami" practitioners—in a segment on its morning news show—was supposed to have been blocked to avoid the exposure of cast member Doug Friend, but the choreography proved flawed.

An on-air apology was followed by an off-air apology. "Even though the nature of

live television lends itself to surprises and unexpected activities," the station said, "we take full responsibility and assure viewers that this will not happen again."

Clearly, said station manager Craig Marrs, more caution could have been exercised, but it basically was a case of bad choreography, although station officials would not confirm or deny local reports that some staffers had been disciplined. Following the exposure, the performers were chastised by news managers and escorted out, station sources said.

## SINCLAIR NAMES NEWS CHIEF

Sinclair Broadcast Group, which is launching its combined local and centralized newscast in "beta market" WSMH(TV) Flint, Mich., Oct. 28, has named Joe DeFeo its corporate news director.

Veteran newsman DeFeo had been the news director of flagship station WBFF(TV) Baltimore, helping launch news there in 1991, but was tapped earlier this year to build the group's central news operation in Hunt Valley, Md. In appointing DeFeo, Sinclair credited his leadership for the station's numerous Washington regional Emmy awards and Associated Press awards. Sinclair says it intends to use its News Central to provide news to stations that currently don't have local newscasts.

## PRODUCING FOR PAX

KGW(TV) Portland, Ore., will produce a 10 p.m. newscast for Paxson's KPXG(TV) Salem, Ore., beginning in January. KGW said Tuesday that the KPXG newscast will have the same look as KGW's, including the same weekday anchor team of Joe Donlon and Laural Porter, meteorologist Matt Zaffino and sportscaster Colin Cowherd.

## CULLITON TO HEAD KNXV

John M. Culliton, who ran stations in Minneapolis and Los Angeles for the CBS group during the 1990s, has been named VP and general manager of Scripps's KNXV-TV Phoenix.

"John Culliton has a national reputation as an innovative television executive," said John F. Lansing, senior VP for the Scripps television station group and a longtime friend and associate of Culliton.

Since leaving KCBS-TV, Culliton helped found Internet Broadcasting Systems (IBS), which co-owns and operates Web sites for major broadcast companies, and Digital Cyclone, an online and wireless service affiliated with Belo and IBS. Culliton succeeds Brad Nilsen, who is leaving KNXV-TV after 21 years but will continue as a consultant, Scripps said.

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

# Focus Casper-Riverton

## THE MARKET

DMA rank	200
Population	128,000
TV homes	51,000
Income per capita	\$17,651
TV revenue rank	202
TV revenue	\$5,300,000

## COMMERCIAL TV STATIONS

Rank*	Ch.	Affil.	Owner
1	KTWO-TV	2 NBC	Equity
2	KFNB(TV)	20 ABC	Wyomedia
3	KGWC-TV	14 CBS	Chelsey
4	K26ES-LP	26 Fox	Wyomedia

\*May 2002, total households, 6 a.m.-2 a.m., Sun.-Sat.

## CABLE/DBS

Cable subscribers (HH)	35,000
Cable penetration	70%
ADS subscribers (HH)**	10,500
ADS penetration	21%
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>Jeopardy</i> (KTWO-TV)	13/39
Network show	
<i>ER</i> (KTWO-TV)	26/42
Evening newscast	
KTWO-TV	12/26
Late newscast	
KTWO-TV	21/45

\*\*\*May 2002, total households  
Sources: Nielsen Media Research, BIA Research



The Casper-Riverton, Wyo., market covers only five counties, but they're huge.

## Big, but thinly populated

It might take less time to call everyone in the Casper-Riverton, Wyo., market than to drive across it. The No. 200 DMA stretches hundreds of miles across the rural state, with a population of only 128,000. Its five counties, local execs note, are huge.

Tom Shannon, the relatively new general manager at KTWO-TV, the market's NBC affiliate and dominant station—the very definition of the big fish in a small pond, Shannon says—is undaunted by the market's size. KTWO-TV has finished replacing its microwave-based distribution system with a permanent uplink, which, he says, will extend the station's over-the-air reach to near-statewide coverage.

Competing against KTWO-TV in local news, says Mark Nalbene, who runs Fox affiliate K26ES for Wyomedia Corp. and ABC affiliate KFNB-TV, the market's No. 2 station, "doesn't seem economically feasible." Local executives believe that the lack of success competing in local news helped precipitate the diminution of the CBS affiliate's local presence. KGWC-TV's owners now keep only a small staff in Casper and run most operations from Cheyenne, DMA 197, where theirs is the dominant station.

The CBS station, being transferred from Benedek Broadcasting to Chelsey Broadcasting, is likely to change hands again, most interest coming from inside the market. KTWO-TV owner Equity Broadcasting expressed interest, but a duopoly might have regulatory hurdles, given the number of voices in the market. The inside track appears to belong to Nalbene, who might purchase the station with a corporation of his own.

The market dropped off more than 15% from 2000 to 2001, a bigger dip than in many DMAs. It retains a relatively high per-capita income and, local sales execs say, a moderate to low cost of living, which promotes discretionary spending as the market, which has had a significant local oil industry, grows in the service areas. The biggest advertisers are typically automotive, furniture and fast food. —Dan Trigoboff

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SONY PICTURES TELEVISION

# Armey takes aim at Belo

*House Majority Leader vows to continue trying to break up grandfathered Dallas combo*

By John Eggerton

Retiring House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-Texas) is trying to force Belo to divest itself of one of its Dallas media properties, taking a page from an earlier attempt by legislators to break up a media conglomerate they didn't like.

Armey's parting shot and his spokesman's suggestion that "several" other members expressed concerns about cross-ownerships raise questions about the FCC's ability to remove those restrictions in local markets. The commission is widely expected to eliminate or relax crossownership restrictions it imposed in 1975—a move Belo is pushing for—but concerned lawmakers could put up resistance. Already, Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.) is an avowed opponent of the idea.

The Belo-owned *Dallas Morning News* last week wrote a story suggesting that Armey had targeted the company in retaliation for its coverage of his son's failed attempt to capture his House seat.

Armey responded that the charge belonged "on the editorial page," and spokesman Greg Crist added that "the Scott Armey news coverage is an example of why the Armey amendment is necessary, but it was not its cause."

Crist conceded that Belo was the target but only because it was the only such "monopoly" in Armey's district. Armey "believes companies have a responsibility to provide fair and unbiased coverage where competition doesn't exist." He said Armey is concerned about what he feels is Belo's dominance of the market and wanted to "send a message."

That message, which Armey tried unsuccessfully to insert into a \$10 billion mil-

itary-appropriations bill, would have forced Belo to sell the *News*, WFAA-TV Dallas or *The Denton Record-Chronicle*. Crist said the Majority Leader will look for other venues for it.

The move was reminiscent of another attempt by lawmakers to add language to a big spending bill to strip an owner of a crossownership waiver.

In 1988, Hollings, at the behest of Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), inserted language into a spending bill forcing Rupert Murdoch to sell the *Boston Herald* and

more that doesn't have a competitor with a Sunday circulation exceeding 350,000; and a second daily newspaper with Sunday circulation of 25,000 or less."

Said Belo Chairman Robert Decherd, "There is no substantive reason or explanation for this unprecedented action. His misuse of congressional leadership powers for personal retaliation toward Belo is not in keeping with the positive results Congressman Armey has produced for his constituents during his long tenure as a member of the Texas congressional delegation."



**"There is no substantive reason or explanation for this unprecedented action."**

—Robert Decherd, Belo

*New York Post* (B&C, Jan. 4, 1988). That effort was said by some sources to have been prompted by Kennedy's dislike of *Herald* editorial policy, although the senator's office dismissed that as "absurd." The amendment was thrown out as unconstitutional by a Washington appeals court but not before Murdoch sold the *N.Y. Post* to comply (he eventually bought it back).

In 1974, President Nixon's Justice Department asked the FCC to deny license renewals of broadcast/newspaper combos in Milwaukee, St. Louis and Des Moines, Iowa.

Although the proposed Armey amendment did not name Belo, it did everything but. It would have required the FCC to force divestiture where "a media company owns, in a single market, a network-affiliated TV station; a predominant newspaper with Sunday circulation of 750,000 or

Armey's amendment might have made it further had Waco, Texas, Democrat Chet Edwards not flagged it. A source says his office got wind of the amendment when a House military construction appropriations subcommittee staffer noted the targeted language and asked if it applied to anyone in Edwards's district.

The *Morning News* said in its story that, after Scott Armey's April 9 run-off loss for his father's seat, the senior Armey accused the paper of "vicious unprofessionalism" and has since refused to talk to the paper or WFAA-TV about the defeat.

The paper had written several stories raising issues about Scott Armey's record as a Denton County judge, including what they said were votes for contracts benefiting political friends and steering money to a charity he was "close to." ■

# Changing Hands

## TVs

### **KNSO-TV Merced, Calif.**

**Price:** \$33 million

**Buyer:** NBC/GE (Jack Ireland, president, TV stations); No. 4 group has 24 stations, none in this market

**Seller:** Sainte Partners II LP (Chester Smith, general partner)

**Facilities:** Ch. 51, 4,170 kW, ant. 2,231 ft

**Affiliation:** Telemundo

**Broker:** Kalil & Co. (seller)

### **KHRR-TV Tucson and KDRX-LP Phoenix, Ariz.**

**Price:** \$20 million

**Buyer:** NBC/GE (Jay Ireland, president, TV stations); No. 4 group has 24 stations, none in this market

**Seller:** Apogee Cos. Inc. (James A. Johnson, president)

**Facilities:** KHRR-TV: Ch.40, 1,550 kW, ant. 2,028 ft; KDRX-LP: Ch. 48, 7.5 kW, ant. 1,562 ft.

**Affiliation:** KHRR-TV: Telemundo;

KDRX-LP: Telemundo

**Broker:** Kalil & Co. (seller)

## Combos

**WIXN(AM) and WIXN-FM Dixon, WSEY-FM Oregon, WCMY(AM) and WRKX-FM Ottawa, WJBD-FM and WJBD(AM) Salem, all ILL.; WATK(AM), WACD-FM and WRLO-FM Antigo, WDLB(AM) and WLJY-FM Marshfield (Wausau-Stevens Point), WLKD(AM) and WMQA-FM Minocqua, WRDB(AM), WBDL-FM and WNFM-FM Reedsburg, WOBT(AM), WHDG-FM and WRHN-FM Rhinelander, WOSQ-FM Spencer and WYTE-FM Whiting (Wausau-Stevens Point), all Wis.**

**Price:** \$19 million

**Buyer:** NewRadio Group (Mary Quass, president); no other broadcast interests

**Seller:** Marathon Media Group LLC (Chris Devine, president)

**Facilities:** WIXN(AM): 1460 kHz, 1 kW day; WIXN-FM: 101.7 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 328 ft.; WSEY-FM: 95.7 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 358 ft.; WCMY(AM): 1430 kHz, 500 W day; WRKX-FM: 95.3 MHz, 4 kW, ant. 200 ft.; WJBD-FM: 100.1 MHz, 1 kW, ant. 449 ft.; WJBD(AM): 1350 kHz, 430 W day/59 W night; WATK(AM): 900 kHz, 250 W day/195 W night; WACD-FM: 106.1 MHz, 10 kW, ant. 276 ft.; WRLO-FM: 105.3 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 541 ft.; WDLB(AM):

1450 kHz, 750 W day/1 kW night; WLJY-FM: 106.5 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 801 ft.; WLKD(AM): 1570 kHz, 5 kW day/500 W night; WMQA-FM: 95.9 MHz, 25 kW, ant. 289 ft.; WRDB(AM): 1400 kHz, 1 kW; WBDL-FM: 102.9 MHz, 4 kW, ant. 423 ft.; WNFM-FM: 104.9 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 449 ft.; WOBT(AM): 1240 kHz, 1 kW; WHDG-FM: 97.5 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 551 ft.; WRHN-FM: 100.1 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 335 ft.; WOSQ-FM: 92.3 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 299 ft.; WYTE-FM: 96.7 MHz, 50 kW, ant. 492 ft.

**Format:** WIXN(AM): Oldies; WIXN-FM: Country; WSEY-FM: Oldies; WXMY(AM): AC/News/Talk; WRKX-FM: Hot AC; WJBD-FM: AC; WJBD(AM): Country; WATK(AM): Country; WACD-FM: Nostalgia; WRLO-FM: Classic Rock; WDLB(AM): News/Talk/Sports; WLJY-FM: Easy;

WLKD(AM): Adult Standard; WMQA-FM: Soft Hits; WRDB(AM): AC; WBDL-FM: Mix AC; WNFM-FM: Country; WOBT(AM): Sports; WHDG-FM: Country; WRHN-FM: AC; WOSQ-FM: Country; WYTE-FM: Country  
**Broker:** Peter Handy of Star Media Group Inc.

## Clarification

Brokers for the WGOM(AM) and WMRI-FM Marion and WLEZ-FM Terre Haute, Ind., sale listed in the Sept. 30 issue were Roehling Broadcast Services Ltd. and Van Huss Media Services Inc.

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## Technology



FSU's mobile radar truck weighs 35,000 pounds and can withstand a Category Five hurricane.

# Inside bad weather

*New mobile radar truck holds key to improved forecasting*

By Ken Kerschbaumer

Even with dozens of TV-station meteorologists and national and regional weather services following the development of storms like the recently passed Isidore and Lili, the reality is that, for all the science involved, tracking tropical storms and hurricanes is still inexact.

By the 2003 hurricane season, though, forecasters hungry for information will have a new source: a mobile radar vehicle built by Florida State University. It has already been involved in tracking some of this season's storms and even made an on-air appearance for The Weather Channel during Tropical Storm Isidore. By next year, it will be further improved, and the Weather Channel intends to figure out how to easily get the radar information to viewers.

"We can be at the best place for the best data, which can be combined in real time or later with other kinds of data," says Dr.

Peter Ray, who drives the truck and is a professor at Florida State University's department of meteorology. "From that, we can get information that would otherwise be impossible to get."

For example, Ray notes, Doppler radar measures only the speed of wind blowing to and from the radar. But the radar truck can gather information that, in tandem with data from another Doppler site, could depict three-dimensional flow structures like updrafts and downdrafts, which could be used to determine where tornadoes might occur. It also can measure maximum wind speed every hundredth of a second as opposed to an average speed.

The flatbed truck weighs 35,000 pounds and has a large cab that contains all the operational equipment: transmitter, receiver, display and controls. On the flatbed is a 25,000-W generator and a horizontal radar antenna that lifts to the vertical and can

extend 30 feet. According to Ray, two pairs of outriggers extend more than 25 feet out from the truck, helping it withstand hurricanes of Category Five strength.

Terry Connelly, Weather Channel SVP, programming and production, says the truck is very powerful, precise and accurate. "It's so new," he adds, "that, when we used it for Isidore, we couldn't connect to it, but we did use a camera to get shots of the monitor showing the radar in the truck."

The advantage the truck offers, he says, is that the closer you get to a storm, the more accurate the measurements.

Doppler radar, like that used in the truck, plays a big role at all weather-forecasting services and stations. WGNO(TV) New Orleans used Doppler radar technology to track the eye of Hurricane Lili as it moved inland within the New Orleans market. Says chief meteorologist Bruce Katz, "We had several tornadoes and warnings, which the radar can depict. When a storm is coming in, it's the Super Bowl for the weather guy, where we can show off all of our tools and what we have."

The radar technology available in the FSU truck is particularly important because a hurricane is more than just wind and rain. "If we can get accurate simulations of what we're observing, then we can look at ways of even weakening the hurricane some while it's out at sea," says Ray. "Attempts in the past haven't been successful, but there may be other strategies and techniques that could reduce the amount of rainfall or wind speed. And if you reduce the wind speed even a few miles an hour, you can save buildings."

Getting the information to The Weather Channel directly will be the next challenge. There are ways to get the data out of the truck and to The Weather Channel, Ray says, but they require some setup. "That's impossible to do during a hurricane because everyone is busy. But there are a number of technologies that work, and which one to deploy is a matter of cost and effectiveness." ■

# Streaming deal worries NAB

*Small Webcasters required to pay 10% of gross revenues to recording industry*

By Bill McConnell

A new royalty deal may be enough to keep many small Webcasters afloat, but commercial broadcasters worry that their efforts to expand into a new technology platform could be crippled if they are saddled with a similar arrangement.

Last week, the U.S. House approved a royalty rate worked out between small Webcasters and the recording industry with exemptions intended to mollify broadcasters. Despite the House assurances, the NAB is expected to oppose the plan in the Senate.

Although commercial broadcasters are exempt from the royalty structure negotiated between independent Webcasters and the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) last week, station operators fear that the arrangement could become a template for their streaming-royalty negotiations. At the heart of their concern: Web-only streamers must fork over a huge portion of their gross revenues—more than 10%—for the right to play music. That's not just gross revenue from Webcasting; that's *all* revenue from audio or other entertainment programming and any other media- or entertainment-related businesses. To add insult to injury, revenue from any Internet or wireless services would be added, too.

"Even though broadcasters are exempt, we're concerned about the precedent-setting potential on stations that stream," says NAB spokesman Dennis Wharton. The NAB won't confirm plans to block Senate approval, but recording-industry sources predict an assault on the plan by radio-station owners if a vote appears likely.

If a similar deal applied to commercial broadcasters, revenue from radio and TV ads would be included in the royalty calculations as would cash from any additional

## Coming to terms

Independent Webcasters may be having second thoughts about the details of the royalty deal they negotiated with RIAA:

**Retroactive royalties:** Webcaster in business between Oct. 28, 1988-Dec. 31, 2002, pays 8% of gross revenue or 5% of expenses. Minimum payment equals \$500 for 1998, \$2,000 for subsequent years.

**2003-04:** Webcaster pays 10% of the first \$250,000 in gross revenue plus 12% of additional revenue or 7% of expenses, whichever is greater. Streamer with less than \$50,000 revenue pays \$2,000 minimum; others pay \$5,000 minimum.

**Non-commercial streamer:** Pays 20 cents/thousand listeners, \$500 minimum.

**Opt out:** A Webcaster may choose to pay Copyright Office-arbitrated rates of 70 cents per thousand listeners.

entertainment businesses the station owners control.

Whether the Senate will take up the House plan is unclear. With lawmakers aiming to adjourn for election campaigning next week, there's little time to negotiate a separate Senate bill. Passage of the House bill unchanged is a possibility, but that option probably requires its inclusion on a docket of non-controversial bills requiring a vote of two-thirds of the Senate.

Such a strong endorsement from the Senate is unlikely, especially now that closer reading of the details is giving small Webcasters second thoughts on the deal, which bases their fees either on gross revenues or expenses, whichever formula would provide the greater royalty. The fees

may be low enough for them to survive as a business, but few could make a lucrative business under those terms (see box), sources say.

For now, broadcasters that offer streaming continue paying royalty rates established by the Copyright Office, and an exemption clarifies that gross revenues and expenses won't affect any future royalty obligations of broadcasters.

Still, the NAB would like to see the exemption strengthened if the group can't kill the bill in the Senate.

The controversy over royalties came to a head in February when the Copyright Office established rates for both broadcasters' streaming and Web-only operators that go into effect Oct. 20. Broadcasters argue that they owe no streaming royalties to record companies at all and have taken the issue to court. Oral argument is scheduled Dec. 2 in federal appeals court in Philadelphia.

NAB argues that the threat of Copyright Office fees prompted many stations to drop Web operations. According to the latest numbers from BRS Media, stations on the Internet fell from a high of 5,710 to 3,940.

RealNetworks Vice President of Public Policy Alex Alben rejects the gloomy outlook for Web radio. RealNetworks, which offers streaming stations for a monthly subscription, is negotiating with RIAA to set royalties for subscription-only operations. Traditional ad-based operations will have leverage to boost more-favorable terms once the NAB's court battle is resolved.

"Things are turning around," Alben says. "The recording industry realizes it needs economic arrangements that allow Webcasters to survive. Webcasters in general will get a better deal when the FCC-licensed broadcasters bring their leverage to negotiations." ■

# CuttingEdge

BY KEN KERSCHBAUMER

## AP IS A SNAP

The Associated Press Broadcast Technology division introduced SnapFeed, software designed to allow a laptop computer to be used as a remote feed station. It requires a laptop with Windows 2000 or XP, 20GB memory and a Windows Media 8 encoder. The server side requires partitioning into C and D drives, Windows Media Player 7.1, Microsoft Message Queue Service installed, Microsoft IIS installed with FTP service, and Microsoft SQL Server 2000 or MSDE 2000. Once the software is installed, video can be edited and compressed on the laptop and then sent to the server via dial-up, ISDN, DSL, cable or even Inmarsat connection.

## WCNY GETS AGILE

WCNY-TV Syracuse, N.Y., has selected Leitch's AgileVision DTV system to help the PBS station make the transition to digital. Installation and testing are complete, and the system is meeting the station's initial DTV demands, according to Vice President, Engineering, John Duffy. AgileVision can handle splicing and statistical re-multiplexing of HD or SD content as well as data and logo insertion and PSIP.

## THOMSON SALES UP 6% IN THIRD QUARTER

Thomson Multimedia revenues for the third quarter were \$2.277 billion, up from



## XM taps Sony console

XM Satellite Radio has been doing more than just spinning records. A Sony Oxford console has helped in producing and mixing live concerts and studio recording sessions. XM Director of Broadcast Engineering Ed Schwartz says automation, multiple equalizers, Snapshot settings and ease of navigation make the console attractive. He also says the MADI buses on the console make it possible to bring in ancillary devices. Already, the console has been used on more than 30 hour-long concerts, ranging from rock to jazz and even classical and big band.

\$2.143 billion for the same period last year. The Digital Media Solutions division reported revenues of \$664 million, up from \$452 million. The newly acquired Grass Valley Group, Panasonic Disk Services, VidFilm, Still-in-Motion, Southern Star Duplitek and Victoria Films accounted for about \$150 million of the sales.

## ODETICS READY FOR PBS

Odetics Broadcast has introduced Airo-PBS, an automation system designed specifically for PBS stations. It uses a Windows interface and supports PBS traffic integration, PBS-specific metadata, archiving, multichannel DTV management, media transfer

and automated satellite ingest. The key to the PBS application is the use of other technology used by PBS, including ProTrack planning and traffic system, Scout program management, SGL Archive Manager, and Triveni Digital PSIP and DTV stream-management products.

## MULTIVU PICKS PATHFIRE FOR PR

Public-relations newswire company MultiVu is using Pathfire's Digital Media Gateway (DMG) to deliver video news releases, B-roll, public-service announcements and other video content to stations that use Pathfire DMG. The DMG uses digital IP multicasts to distribute content to dedicated video servers

where stations can access the content in individual files.

## EIGHT IS ENOUGH

Petersen Productions, based in Traverse City, Mich., recently used Media 100's 844/X editing system for the creation of eight television spots in the first month of the system's use. The system has real-time transfer modes and a set of motion graphics tools that make it easier for the facility to experiment with different looks for a spot. The system also supports unlimited layers of compositing and text with multiple applied effects.

## XETV IN SYNC

XETV(TV) San Diego has installed Ensemble Design's Avenue Signal Integration gear. The station purchased a 3RU frame of the system and installed a variety of analog-to-digital conversion gear, including the submodule for TBC/Frame Sync control. The control provides all the functionality of a standalone time-base corrector.

## A.F. GETS ENTERTAINING

New Jersey-based system design and integration firm A.F. Associates has formed the Entertainment Solutions Group in an effort to address new markets like theme parks, hotels, theaters, and sports and recreation facilities. The group will be appropriately headquartered in Orlando, Fla., with Howard Schlieper serving as director.

Lowell "Bud" Paxson's last name spells television, or at least one of its networks, Pax TV. The chairman of Paxson Communications Corp. has been involved in broadcasting—and selling—since his days at Syracuse University in the 1950s. He earned enough money during school from record hops and door-to-door sales to become a part owner and program director of WACK(AM) Newark, N.J., after he graduated in 1956. He moved over to television in 1965 and has since won fame and fortune through his aggressive entrepreneurship.

His distinctive approach came out of the old tenet "when you're stuck with lemons, make lemonade." In the late 1960s, while GM of WNYP-TV Jamestown, N.Y., he decided to give advertisers an opportunity to pay their bills in merchandise, which the station sold during the hour-long Auction Block show on weekend mornings. Those two hours a week ended up accounting for 35% of the station's revenue.

Auction Block was the seed of later direct sales successes, first on radio in the late 1970s, and then in 1982 with television's Home Shopping Network. He grew HSN with a combination of broadcast and cable outlets, taking it public in 1985.

In addition to HSN, Paxson also put together the Silver King Communications group of TV stations. He sold his interests in both in 1990, getting back into radio, eventually growing his group to 46 stations. In 1997 after the cable must-carry rules were upheld by the Supreme Court, he sold the radio group and launched Pax TV. Using a collection of UHF stations, cable carriage and DBS delivery, his family-friendly seventh network is now available to 87% of the U.S.

"I just remind myself all the time that I'm an entrepreneur," he says. "And entrepreneurial traits are nothing but the expression of a God-given urge to challenge the general tendencies, primarily to avoid boredom, and to embrace creativity with a passion."

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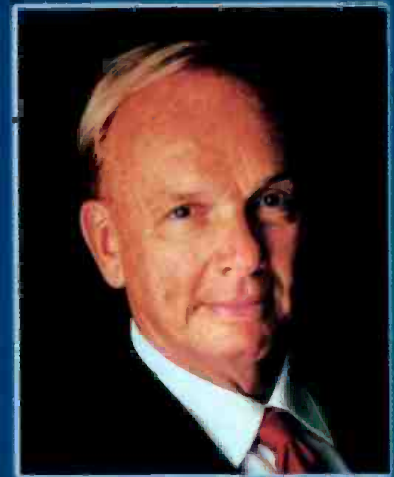
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**LOWELL PAXSON**

# Fame

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Lew Wasserman  
Oprah Winfrey

## AUTOMATION: STATION OPERATIONS



Encoda Systems staff ingests material at Viasat In London, where Encoda provides staff and automation for 10 channels.

# Reshaping broadcasting

The goal is no longer just to cut costs but to change the way a facility operates

**A**utomation systems are, in many ways, the infrastructure equivalent of the United Nations. Master control, traffic, the newsroom, sales: Increasingly, they are all under the purview of some form of automation. And, as with the UN, the goal is to help use resources in a way that makes the station a better place.

Unfortunately, as at the UN, the systems don't all speak the same language or protocol, making communication between them difficult, if not impossible. And, while protocols like MOS (Media Object Server) are fine for the newsroom and Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) is fine in billing, they aren't understood throughout a facility.

Nonetheless, automation, particularly in the age of digital, holds the promise of reshaping broadcast facilities. Smaller staffs mean a faster return on investment, and, with an automation system in master con-

## BY KEN KERSCHBAUMER

trol, one person can run a whole station, right?

Well, maybe not. One person can no doubt run it. But, when things go wrong, having human backup helps. So the reality of automation in 2002 is that cutting costs can't be the only goal; changing the way the facility operates also needs to be a goal.

In many ways, automation is at a crossroads. Mark Bishop, director of marketing for automation company Florical, sees new developments in automation focused on three areas: increased content localization, improved efficiencies, and turnkey systems for smaller stations.

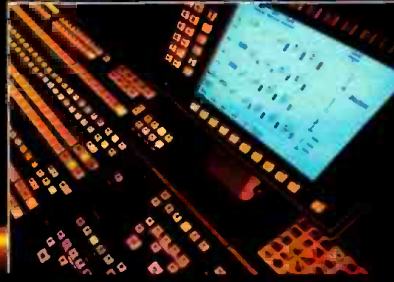
Over the years, most established broadcasters have been slow to adjust workflow to take advantage of large-scale technology changes, observes Jon Hammarstrom, Encoda Systems vice president, worldwide

sales and marketing. "Some of the inertia was the result of large capital investment; some of it was due to comfort with a process."

Whether efficiencies mean a smaller staff remains to be seen. Automation in centralcasting facilities makes it possible for four stations or more to be operated by one master-control operator.

"These more tightly integrated solutions can reduce the size of staff necessary to successfully operate a multichannel broadcast facility," Hammarstrom explains. "However, I would contend that it is the adoption of new technology in general, not automation specifically, that has enabled broadcasters to do more with less people."

But, at the end of the day, says Omnibus Systems chief technology officer Ian Fletcher, a station needs people in the transmission area who know what they're doing. Ultimately, that's where the revenue is col-



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# AUTOMATION: STATION OPERATIONS

**'It is now possible to implement a fully automated workflow from content ingest, through delivery, to eventual purging of the material from the facility.'**

—Steven L'Heureux, Odetics Systems

lected, "so cutting that area to the bone is usually not worth doing."

Facilities that focus narrowly on expense control and job elimination are missing opportunities to improve the efficiency and quality of operations, opines W. Lowell Putnam, president and CEO, Video Communications Inc.

VCI is involved in the traffic and billing side of the broadcast facility, where automation has just begun to extend its influence. The capabilities of automation systems have changed greatly, primarily thanks to the use of video servers and the implementation of local-area and wide-area

"The ultimate goal for broadcast operations should be to make the traffic system and the automation system exchange information in a seamless and bi-directional manner," says Putnam, "so that end-users get the answers they need without having to know where that information came from."

Fletcher concurs, adding that the bigger cost savings come about by looking at the facility operations: How are media ingest, archives and post-production run, and how is material moved around the facility?

Servers and related new technologies contribute to the blurring of the line between master-control operations and

dance Automation, whether simple built-in spot-playback software or advanced facility management. "In addition, the explosion of server-based broadcasting makes media database management—which is what modern automation really is—absolutely essential. It's simply no longer possible to find a video clip on the shelf, when that 'shelf' is virtual and is part of a multi-terabyte hard-drive array."

## THINK TOGETHER

Parochial thinking in many parts of the U.S. broadcast market is that traffic and operations are separate, with master-con-



WETA-TV Washington's master control (left) makes use of Harris automation. A BSkyB supervisor (center) can monitor and access all channel outputs across the system, which has centralized alarm functions. Florical's automation system (right) keeps WLS-TV Chicago running.

networking technology.

Automation once meant CART machines with robotic arms zipping tapes in and out of VTRs. Journalists in a newsroom were removed from the editing process, usually handing off lists of time-code to editors, who would then grab the footage from tape decks.

But servers and networking have changed that. Today, journalists can edit from their desktop, and other non-technical station employees can use technology to their advantage. Members of the sales team, for example, can have greater control over inventory, quickly see avails, be more closely tied in with master-control operations, and someday even be able to receive spot ads as a file to be deposited instantaneously onto the on-air server.

media-asset management, says Steven L'Heureux, president, Odetics Systems, a manufacturer of automation and CART machine systems.

He still sees a role for videotape, though. "It is now possible to implement a fully automated workflow from content ingest, through delivery, to eventual purging of the material from the facility. While technology now makes it theoretically possible to run a 'tapeless' broadcast facility, the industry is still implementing very sophisticated media-management solutions that utilize traditional videotape libraries in an on-line function for caching to the server."

In most cases, the server technology that stations are adopting to replace their aging VTRs mandate some form of automation, says Robert Johnson, president of Sun-

control operators pushing the buttons and traffic providing the list of events for the day.

Trafficking, in its simplest form, says Hammarstrom, could allow a traffic operator to put a spot on-air if a broadcaster gives him or her access to the air schedule. "Network technology would allow that to occur today with most automation systems, and the technology does exist to create the application."

Nonetheless, there are some roadblocks. Today, there are protocols for machine-to-machine, real-time communication, Putnam says, but their impact is very narrow.

Some systems support intelligent communication via many existing protocols. The new protocols have replaced the old method of periodic "arm's-length" file exchange with near real-time data exchange, L'Heureux says. "Our Airo system

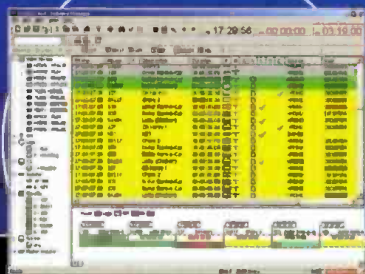


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## AUTOMATION: STATION OPERATIONS

supports near real-time file exchange between various systems through high-level protocols such as XML, which enables traffic solutions on any software platform to dynamically exchange data with the Windows 2000-based Airo system. MOS is another example."

Hanmarstrom sees two primary concerns in data-exchange protocols; both relate to conflict avoidance when dealing with shared assets. "To avoid conflicts, systems need to share the data concerning those assets, whether digital media or the equipment that plays the assets back. Historically," he explains, "conflicts have been minimized by dedicating equipment and media to a particular service like news or on-air operations. Increasingly in the digital environment, and with the advent of new workflow and operational processes, the risk of creating conflicts will increase rapidly."

Protocols per se do not exist for the exchange of data between proprietary systems, he adds. "We're likely to see common data resources being shared on some level in the not distant future."

### SHARE DATA

Next-generation broadcast-automation solutions will be built on an enterprise-class relational database, L'Heureux says, enabling the sharing of common database tables while permitting each system to maintain tables unique to its application. "This approach will eliminate the need to exchange files or to synchronize multiple, application-specific databases."

The ability to exchange or synchronize databases—like those in traffic, billing or automation—can improve a station's resource allocation and budget. "In addition, for regularly scheduled events, a rich interface eliminates the burden on master control to edit playlists or trigger events manually," says Putnam. "Smarter integration provides significant benefits, including time savings, reduced errors, and streamlined reconciliation and billing."

Stations that aren't looking to automation to reduce headcount can free personnel to do one of the few things humans can still better than computers: think outside the box. An automated process that can

## The search for a traffic standard

**One thing is clear with station automation:** Given the right amount of cooperation among vendors, the benefits and capabilities of a well-developed automation system could grow drastically. And traffic-system manufacturer Video Communications Inc. is looking for ways to bring about that cooperation.

According to VCI President and CEO W. Lowell Putnam, the company is currently developing interfaces between automation and traffic on a vendor/system basis. Those interfaces will allow the company to tap into the strengths of each automation system and to customize interfaces to specific requirements where appropriate.

"While this approach has allowed us to deliver some very sophisticated capabilities—such as wide support of billable and non-billable secondary events and management of both live and non-live events—automation functionality will advance much further with the creation and adoption of open industry standards."



**"Development of standard transactions could be enhanced to allow interfaces to include 'just-in-time' automation, which allows logs to be 'open' throughout the business day."**

—W. Lowell Putnam, VCI

For example, Putnam says, current interfaces are limited primarily to sending playlists either from traffic (finalized log) to master control or back (as-run log).

"The development of standard transactions could be enhanced to allow interfaces to include the concept of 'just-in-time' automation, which allows logs to be 'open' throughout the business day," he says. "That allows more sales time and easier handling of last-minute programming changes as well as other transactions to support show timing, status of media, etc."

Unfortunately, those standards, or even talks about those standards, don't exist. Putnam recently spent time on the West Coast visiting with various manufacturers discussing the possibility of setting standards. The problem is that many manufacturers are not comfortable discussing standards development outside the purview of an organization like the Society of Motion Picture & Television Engineers, Television Bureau of Advertising and National Association of Broadcasters. The particular challenge in this instance is that SMPTE

doesn't really care about the business side of standards and TVB doesn't care about the equipment side. That leaves NAB as possible mediator. Putnam says he has discussed the idea with the NAB but it's customers who may drive development.

"It's really going to be better to have customers go to NAB and say they want standards. One of the barriers in the past that made vendors reluctant to do this was that the technology they had was very proprietary and very customized or limited in terms of storage for general-purpose intelligence. But that's changing, and there is a generation of automation equipment based on Windows NT or Unix. All [the automation and traffic vendors] need is something to coax them to do something about standards."

Two manufacturers, Omnibus Systems and Pilat Media, are working on an integrated traffic/automation system.

"The ultimate dream is for the sales force to be able to sell spots up to 30 seconds to air," says Omnibus Systems chief technology officer Ian Fletcher. "The whole notion of files' being downloaded from traffic twice a day is so arcane it's madness."

At the International Broadcasting Conference last month, the two companies announced that they'll be working on creation of a system that handles scheduling, ad-time sales and transmission. "It will mean that sales could sell spots as late as they want," Fletcher says, adding that there will be no technical restriction, it will be more a business restriction.

"If they want to sell a spot with 15 or 20 seconds to air, it will be able to do it and just flow the information through the system instantly," he says. "We have to integrate the workflow and asset management so there is only one place where meta-data is stored."

The system is expected to be introduced at the NAB show next April.

Harris is developing a communications method that will allow presentation automation, news automation, media management, and traffic/scheduling to share real-time information, according to Director of Product Marketing Brian Lay. Similar to the MOS protocol used for linking news systems, the Harris protocol will enable linking of systems from any vendor.—K.K.



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# AUTOMATION: STATION OPERATIONS

**'More-tightly integrated solutions can reduce the size of staff necessary to successfully operate a multichannel broadcast facility.'**

—Jon Hammarstrom, Encoda Systems

reliably execute a schedule according to business rules, says Brian Lay, Harris director of product marketing, allows personnel to concentrate on jobs that require creativity. "In most cases, work previously done in master control close to airtime is now pushed back to traffic and scheduling."

Partnerships are likely to play an increasing part in improving automation. Sundance, for example, is working with PathFire, TeleStream, and MediaDVX on developing complete systems. "In the near future," says Sundance's Johnson, "commercials and programs will be sent digitally to small servers at the broadcast facilities

to stop everything, send the crew out for two weeks of training, and start up again when they return. It's rather like changing a tire on a moving vehicle.

"The issue," he continues, "is the duration and pain of the change, not whether it will take place. Ultimately, once any station in a given market undertakes control-room automation, it will be very difficult for competitors to match its on-air capabilities and financial results."

And that's the rub for those not involved with automation. The business landscape, Danilowicz says, makes it all but impossible for the typical general manager to meet

plains. VCI worked closely with The Weather Channel's sales and automation staff to define a simple enhancement to the business process from the moment of contract entry through spot scheduling, log production and then to playback.

"This automated capability, which would otherwise be so people-intensive it could not be justified," Putnam says, "helps give The Weather Channel an edge in their marketplace."

Another new business objective is a result of consolidation. As station groups grow and duopolies become more common, the groups are looking for ways to



Automation has reshaped news operations like Chicagoland (left), with a Harris system, and NY1 (right), with an Omnibus setup. Public broadcaster WNET(TV) New York (center) has improved operations with a Harris automation system (originally installed as a Louth system).

and then automatically moved to the transmission server."

That means a great deal less work for master control since the concept of timing shows and ingesting commercials will basically go away.

The changes a system like that being proposed by Sundance will place on a system go well beyond the technology. The challenge posed by automation—whether in the newsroom, the control room, or master control—is actually not with the technology at all. "Though all vendors have occasional problems and operational issues, the real challenge is in the transition to automation," explains ParkerVision Vice President of Business Development Matt Danilowicz. "Because TV is a round-the-clock, non-stop operation, it's not possible

financial targets without cutting costs.

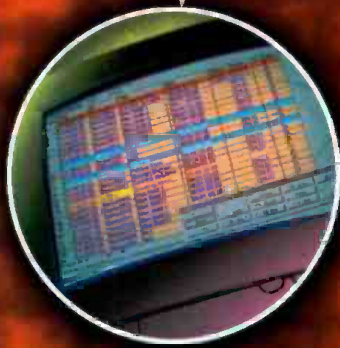
"It certainly doesn't allow purchases in technology without hard financial justification," he says. "So, while the fundamental capabilities of automation have advanced, it's the increasing pressures of the industry that now demand a more aggressive implementation of that technology, pushing it to maximum effectiveness and maximum impact on reducing behind-the-scenes technical staff."

The real issue, Putnam says, is the level and degree required to support specific business objectives. For some of VCI's clients, that level is very high and easily justified. "The Weather Channel is able to modify its programming at any given time to more closely match the audience interests of a sponsoring advertiser," he ex-

best serve viewers while maintaining or cutting current cost levels.

"We see many stations adding a UPN or WB affiliate and trying to do it at minimal cost," says Johnson. "These stations view an automation purchase as a 'must-have' because they know the station's workload will increase, but they do not want to add personnel."

The promise of a centralized operation does introduce challenges. Bishop cites working with multiple time zones and ensuring that the hub accounts for different signal path delays. "Zero Timing is required to take care of the path delays so the hub can use matched timing for common programming and can seamlessly mix material from the hub or from the regional station within the same break." ■



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## AUTOMATION: NEWS OPERATIONS



One person could run a newscast with a setup like this one from ParkerVision.

# Controlling the news

Newsroom systems help reduce the cost and complexity of getting the show on-air

It wasn't too long ago that discussions of automation in the newsroom meant cameras on robotic pedestals. But the video server and digital newsroom have added much complexity to that discussion, and journalists at a PC desktop can have more control over the news department than was dreamed possible 10 years ago.

In fact, it could be said that the newsroom is changing the definition of automation. Automated graphic systems based on templates filled in by the journalist, video servers that automatically handle ingest of news feeds and satellite-delivered material, instant access to the playlist: They all give new meaning to the concept.

Newsroom automation is also allowing creation of systems designed specifically for news demands.

Sundance Digital's NewsLink, for example, fully integrates MOS-compliant newsroom computers with video servers, editors

## BY KEN KERSCHBAUMER

and graphic devices, according to Fred Schultz, vice president of news automation. "It boosts efficiency of the director or technical director with a single interface that unifies control over all media devices."

Graphics company VertigoXmedia has been heavily involved in the Time Warner Cable 24-hour news operations, working closely with the Omnibus automation systems and AP's Electronic News Production System (ENPS).

VertigoXmedia President David Wilkins expects that the "next big thing" will be to allow users to collaborate on news production, eliminating the quasi-linear production processes in place in most stations today: "linking news-story creation, news-graphics creation and delivery so that anyone in the production chain can access information."

There are still gaps between equipment vendors, he notes, adding that Vertigo's technology is designed to bridge those gaps. "We can read stories in the AP ENPS newsroom system, add graphics components, save in a central server, and play out those same graphics on-air using Omnibus's automation system."

Omnibus Systems has worked closely with AP's MOS protocol. Chief technology officer Ian Fletcher points out that the pressure on a system handling news automation is much greater than, say, on an on-air system handling automation for a two-hour movie. With hundreds of items of content created and constant changes, the MOS protocol, he says, has made news automation possible. Giving journalists control over the creative content, graphics and everything else that goes on-air requires that all elements go through the newsroom system.

Master control has typically handed on-



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# AUTOMATION: NEWS OPERATIONS

**'Stations can redirect their resources towards the aspects of their business that matter most to their audience: more local coverage, more feet on the street.'**

—Matt Danilowicz, ParkerVision

air control to the news team at news time, and that continues with automated systems, says ParkerVision Vice President of Business Development Matt Danilowicz. "I think the situation may be more complex where station groups are looking to coordinate the actions of their different properties remotely. But," he adds, "automating the newscast is still mostly a local phenomenon."

As elsewhere, automation in news is almost always justified on the grounds of effect on the bottom-line. Danilowicz says it has invariably delivered both more and less than bargained for in the newsroom.

"When the networks first purchased newsroom computers, they justified them to their accountants as a means to reduce personnel costs," he explains. "In fact, very few journalists ever lost their jobs to newsroom computers, though, of course, the intangible benefits of the investment were enormous."

ParkerVision's next advances will have much to do with refining and enhancing the experience of the operator in the control room, Danilowicz says. "The PTV user interface continues to evolve to make it easier to implement late-breaking changes and to provide an ever-tighter linkage with the producer rundown."

Automation also may blend the role of

producers and directors, he suggests. "Some stations will see potential to collapse the producer/director role, while others will see value in retaining the separation."

News-department automation may come down to how best serve the viewers: Is it with more technical staff or more journalists and ENG crews in the streets looking for stories? "By reducing the cost and complexity of putting the show on-air," says Danilowicz, "stations can redirect their resources towards the aspects of their business that matter most to their audience: more local coverage, more feet on the street."

Consolidation also is driving automation grown, he adds, noting that ParkerVision has seen more regional groups going national, and larger groups getting larger. "If groups begin to operate more like networks by sharing more and more of their content, there will be ever more demand for control-room automation systems, newsroom systems and program automation systems to be able to interoperate across multiple properties at once."

It also may require a larger staff instead of smaller because the complexity of supporting that infrastructure could strain current staffing. And that could make justify-

ing more automation tricky in the current environment. "Even the most respected leaders in the TV news business have been cautious about making such investments," Danilowicz notes.

Combining server and networking technology with control-room automation changes the equation, he adds. "For example, playing back video for the newscast using PTV and tape decks still requires an operator to load tapes. Playing back video for the newscast using just a video server still requires an operator to trigger the server playback. But automation and servers in combination," he notes, "perform the work of someone solely dedicated to this function."

Despite the promise, VertigoXmedia's Wilkins sees a definite need for better ways to interconnect the various systems in a news facility. "The MOS protocol has solved part of the communication issues, but there is still room for improvement. For example, our Producer Xmedia platform uses XML-based templates to link the various steps in the production workflow. Our goal is to make the technical complexities associated with creating and sharing content between disparate systems transparent to the end-user." ■

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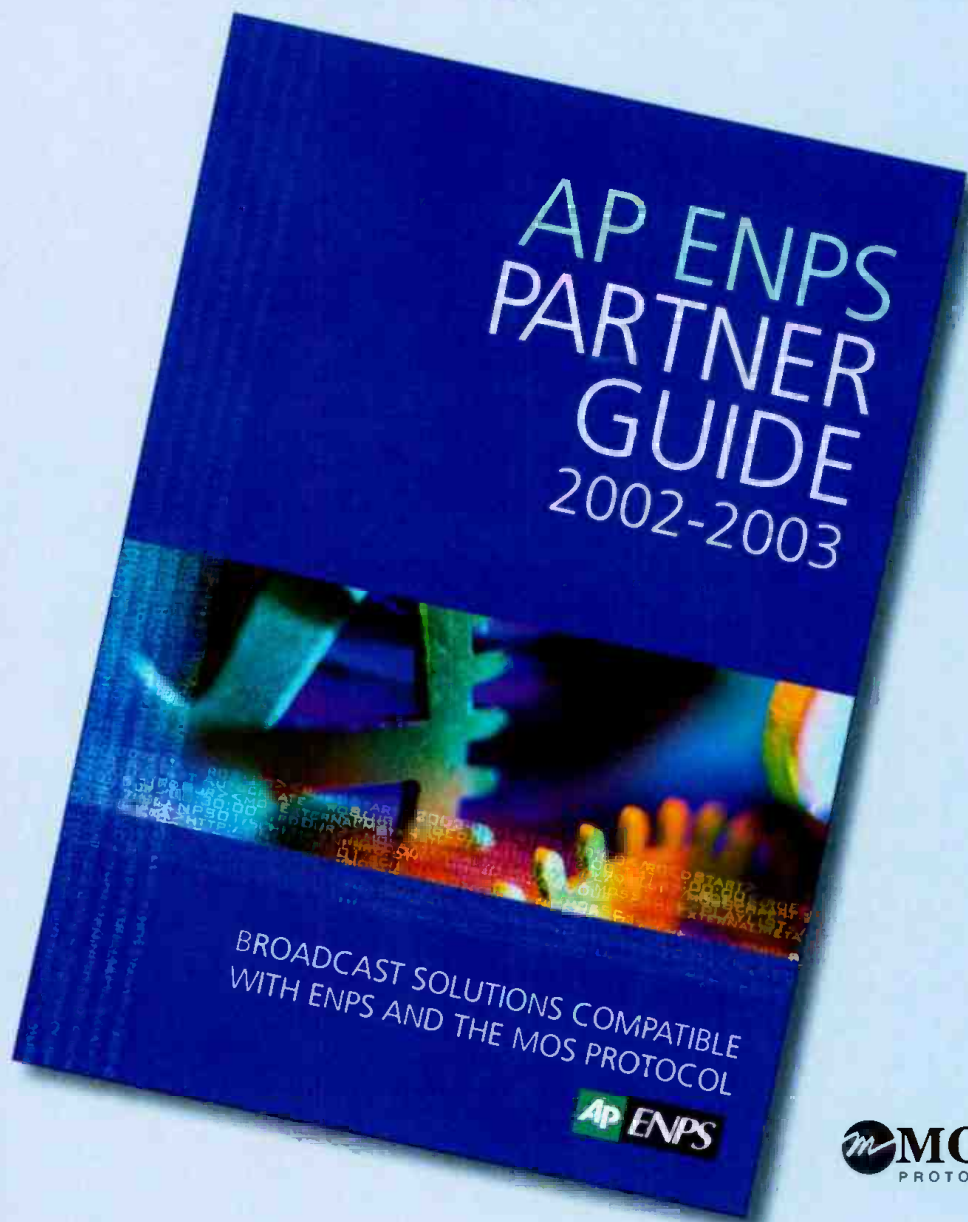
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# Cable's Hot Programs

*Broadcasting & Cable's* upcoming special report takes an inside look at the top "hot" cable programs that are helping the various cable networks stand out in the crowd. We'll break the report out by cable network and look at which show is a network's current signature program and examine what makes for a "hot" show. We'll also take a peek at which shows are on the cusp of being the next audience craze. Viewers watch programs and programs help create a personality for a network. Be sure to showcase your "Hot" show in *Broadcasting & Cable's* upcoming exclusive special report.

**Issue Date:**  
October 28, 2002

**Space Close:**  
Friday, October 18

**Materials Close:**  
Tuesday, October 22

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# People

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

### Broadcast TV

**Kyle Krebs**, local sales manager, KDFW(TV) Dallas, promoted to VP/general sales manager, KDFW(TV) and KDFI-TV Dallas.

**Carol Nelson**, national sales manager, WFTX(TV) Ft. Myers/Naples, Fla., promoted to general sales manager.

**Donn R. Colee**, director, programming and station marketing, WPEC(TV) West Palm Beach, Fla., named station manager.

### Cable TV

**Mark Allen**, principal and client team leader, Katalyst Venture Partners I, Conshohocken, Pa., joins Comcast Cable, Philadelphia, as senior director, call center development.

### Programming

**Melva Goffney**, director, research, Nickelodeon, New York, named senior VP, program research, NBC West Coast, Los Angeles.

**Dana McClintock**, VP, communications, CBS, New York, named senior VP.

**Elaine Bauer-Brooks**, VP, development and current programming, Imagine Television, Los Angeles, named senior VP, programming and development, Twentieth Television, Los Angeles.

At Touchstone Television, Los Angeles: **Alex Weinberger**, director, comedy series, promoted to executive director; **Nina Howie** and **Jodie Platt**, both managers, comedy series, promoted to directors; **Josh Barry**, director, drama series, promoted to executive director.

**Lisa Finkel**, publicist, *Good Morning America*, New York, named director, media relations, ABC News, New York.

### Journalism

**Esteban Creste**, producer/presenter, *De frente con Esteban Creste*, New York, adds managing editor, *Noticiero 47*, New York.

**Margaret Larson**, co-anchor, 11 p.m. weeknight newscast, KING-TV Seattle, is leaving the station at the end of the year.

## Obituaries

**David Somerville**, a media research and advertising veteran at Warner Bros., died Sept. 30 of complications resulting from a stroke. He was 47.

Somerville had been director of Warner Bros. corporate media research since 1996, focusing on domestic cable distribution.

**Arthur Lord**, an outspoken Emmy-winning former NBC News producer, died Sept. 25 of undisclosed causes. He was 60.

A New York native, Lord was hired by NBC in the late '60s as a news writer and producer handling reports for David Brinkley, Frank McGee and Chet Huntley. He retired from NBC in 1996.

Lord, who was often critical of the sensationalism found in journalism, voiced his disgust with the 1995 coverage of the O.J. Simpson case, even while heading up NBC's coverage of the trial.

**Zoraida Sambolin**, host, *Small Talk for Parents*, WYCC(TV) Chicago, and *Nuestros Ninos*, WSNS(TV) Chicago, joins WMAQ-TV Chicago as co-anchor, 11 a.m. news.

**Scott Swan**, weekday morning anchor, KTVX(TV) Salt Lake City, joins WTHR(TV) Indianapolis as weeknight co-anchor.

### Internet

**Jeff Rowe**, GM, of

Zap2it.com and TMS Movie Products, Los Angeles, joins America Online, Dulles, Va., as senior VP/executive producer.

### Radio

**Paul Agase**, VP, sales, Infinity Radio, Chicago, joins as station manager, WKSC-FM Chicago.

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THE FIFTH ESTATER

# TV's digital pioneer

*Goodmon likes to be first in embracing new technologies*

Last month, Capitol Broadcasting's Jim Goodmon ponied up nearly \$1 million for spectrum the FCC is carving out of frequencies once reserved for television. To many in the industry, he may seem nuts. Capitol was one of only three broadcast groups to buy licenses in the government auction, and Goodmon himself admits that he has no idea how to use the spectrum.

But Goodmon, whose grandfather A.J. Fletcher launched WRAL-TV Raleigh, N.C., in 1956, has never been afraid to take a plunge. In 1996, he made the family-owned station the country's first digital broadcaster. "I like being first, and I believed at the time the digital transition was going to happen a whole lot faster."

He admits to being disappointed by the slow pace of the DTV transition, but it hasn't stopped his bringing new digital services online at WRAL-TV and four sister stations serving Raleigh, Charlotte and Wilmington. (Capitol also owns WRAL-FM.)

While many station owners fret about the cost of DTV facilities

and wait for the networks to supply programming, Goodmon has created many services. And he hasn't waited for the government to grant him cable carriage: By developing quality HD and multicast programming, he has been able to strike carriage deals with the local Time Warner system, which views his digital programming as an enticing value-added service.

Among WRAL-TV's offerings: simultaneous transmission of CBS HD programming and a separate local news channel in SD. WRAL-TV also broadcasts 10 Carolina Hurricanes NHL games in high-definition. "Hockey is so much better in HD; it really adds a whole new dimension: the puck."

Famous local minor-league baseball team Durham Bulls, which Capitol also owns, will be seen in standard definition on WRAL-TV sister station WRZ-DT.

As other stations struggle to devise a game plan for datacasting, a complementary business possible with DTV, WRAL-TV updates news reports with datacasts to PCs equipped with digital receiver cards. Following the 9/11 attacks, WRAL-TV combined all its digital services to offer CBS coverage in HD, local church services in standard definition, and datacasts listing local business and school closings.

Last month, Goodmon paid \$888,000 for 12 of the new licenses covering North Carolina



**James Fletcher Goodmon**  
President and CEO,  
Capitol Broadcasting

**B. Aug. 31, 1943, St. Petersburg, Fla.; attended Duke University, Durham, N.C., 1961-65; U.S. Navy, 1965-68; operations manager, WRAL-TV, 1968-73; executive vice president, Capitol Broadcasting, 1973-75; president, 1975-79; current position since 1979; m. Barbara, Nov. 19, 1969; three grown children: Elizabeth Goodmon McIntyre, James Jr., Michael J.**

metro markets for spectrum now used for TV chs. 54 and 59 and ch. 55, the so-called C- and D-blocks of the 700 MHz band. "I think they will be part of the digital transition."

His aggressive plunge into DTV has set the example for the industry, says David Donovan, president of the Association for Maximum Service Television, the DTV trade group.

"Jim is the person everyone looks to as the example to make digital TV happen."

Grandfather A.J. and uncle Fred got into the radio business in 1939 at the suggestion of Frank, another of A.J.'s sons. As a young lawyer for the Federal Radio Commission, Frank Fletcher helped draft the regulations implementing the Communications Act and creating the modern FCC. Later, he helped found Fletcher, Heald & Hildreth, still one of Washington's top communications law firms.

Goodmon isn't shy about criticizing the FCC for failing to grant dual analog/digital carriage during the transition. "If the goal is getting digital TV into the homes of 85% of American homes, I don't see how that will happen without dual must-carry."

But he also takes broadcasters to task for failing to make public-interest commitments that would justify cable carriage. "Digital stations should have the obligation to provide public-affairs programs, and we should have an industry code of conduct."

Even if the digital transition hasn't taken off as quickly as he hoped, Goodmon has no regrets about embracing the new technology. "We need this transition to stay competitive," he explains. "It's no different than going from black-and-white to color or from propellers to jet engines. It's just a way to stay in business."

—Bill McConnell

# BROADCASTING CABLE

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#### MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONAL

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# Editorials

COMMITTED TO THE FIRST AMENDMENT

## Armev on the attack

It was déjà vu all over again last week. In 1988, as the FCC was considering whether to jet-tison the newspaper/broadcast crossownership rules, a powerful legislator slipped a provision into an omnibus spending bill that would have forced the breakup of a grandfathered major-market combo. The reason, or so the word on the street went, was that another legislator didn't like what the paper was printing. Fast forward to last week, and virtually the same scenario was playing out (see story, page 22).

The crucial difference is that, in 1988, Sen. Ernest Hollings, working with Sen. Ted Kennedy, succeeded in getting the measure passed (although it was eventually ruled unconstitutional), whereas, last week, House Majority Leader Dick Armev was discovered and the effort foiled, at least for now. That's the good news.

The bad news is that, remarkably, Armev vowed not to give up his attempt to force Belo to sell off either WFAA-TV Dallas or one of its two papers. He cited its dominance of the market in general but used as an example what he said was a vendetta against him conducted through coverage of his son's failed attempt to succeed him. Fortunately, Armev's salvo is a parting shot. He is retiring, so his time is limited, and his chances slim to none.

Still, it was a bit too close for comfort, made more uncomfortable by the suggestion out of Armev's office that a number of other members—they wouldn't name names—had registered similar complaints about newspaper/broadcast crossownerships. Our first instinct is to say, "Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain," but we've seen too many strange things not to warn broadcasters to be on their guard.

## Wings clipped

*The Wall Street Journal* last week called Michael Powell an "IHOP waffle" when it comes to deregulation. Well, there was no waffling last week, and no deregulation, either. The Powell FCC slammed the door hard on the EchoStar/DirecTV merger. It was unanimous and included language like "staggering public-interest harms" balanced by benefits that were at best ephemeral and speculative and at worst nonexistent.

It's lonely out on this limb, but we are staying here. The government has long been whining about competition to cable, but, when it has an opportunity to do something about it other than fulminate over its misreading of cable rate increases, suddenly creating a stronger competitor to cable becomes the public-interest equivalent of unleashing King Kong on a defenseless populace. Hardly. It would rather allow a new 800-pound gorilla to go toe to toe with the others, which we would argue include cable, traditional broadcasters and someday possibly a terrestrial service in the DBS band.

The FCC may be short on waffles, but we think they have some egg on their faces.

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